Best Practise in Collaborative R&D Projects Involving Partners from Developing Countries

Gavin Bunker
Monitoring Officer
Monitoring Framework

- Stage 1 - Grant Confirmation
- Stage 2 - Project Kick Off
- Stage 3 - Quarterly Monitoring
- Stage 4 - Project Close
Stage 1- GCL

- Collaboration agreement - Install sense of urgency
- Disconnect wrt timelines with OS funders - COL/CA
- Finance - UK individual claims, OSP Hub and Spoke via LP, locked into EXR on GCL start
- OSP must achieve deliverable to release funds
Stage 2 - Kick Off Meeting

- KOM difficult to arrange - OSP attend by audio
- Beware time zones/differences!
- PM to follow up with OSP afterwards
Stage 3 - Quarterly Reporting

- Scope
- Second Level Plan
- Risk Management
- Exploitation
- Project Management
- Finance
Impact areas

- Communication
- Socio Economic considerations
- Cultural differences
- Project Management
- Skills shortage
- Environment
Communication

- Technology and access to it: Internet/mobiles
- OSP slow in coming forwards with information
- OSP often say yes to be polite
- Report writing is often difficult
- Change requests need more guidance - virements
Socio Economic issues

- Labour laws: Local, Governmental, Tribal & Social
- Security: Local team, UK staff - On cost/risk
- Cost of local labour engagement
- Risk of political take over: NGO presence rather than Ltd company.
- Land ownership - long negotiation required
- Supply chains incomplete
- Corruption: What’s in it for me approach?
Cultural Differences

- This is not the way we do it here!

- Strong hierarchy may exist - Social aspects of decision making

- Respect the line of communication

- Important not to lose face
Project Management

• Strong PM is essential

• Beware slippage in SLP and time creep - Miss growing season!

• Regular contact - Feeling loved and important

• More visits required - Virements maybe needed

• More help needed with reports and finance

• Beware! OS funders may have different payment rules!

• Maximise opportunity when partners OSP visit UK

• Staff going native - Beware!

• Don’t always believe what you are told!
Skills shortage

- IT and access to it
- Report writing - Quarterlies, interim and final reports
- Financial Control not aligned with funders requirements: Cannot produce an IAR
- Required skills not aligned with requirements of WPs: Knowledge Gap
Environmental

- Outside of our control
- Plan B is very important!
- Health & Safety
- Risk Management
Summary

- Communication: Key
- Understanding of cultural differences: Vital
- Strong project management: Essential
Thank You

Gavin Bunker. PhD

gavinbunker@btinternet.com

Mb: 077 31 789 182