

mented, while southern NGOs see it as a process of empowerment or augmenting their political clout. They are perforce more radical than the northern partner, which is often uncomfortable about such political aspects, as are northern government aid agencies. Partnership means the northern NGO must better understand the political situation of southern partners, but does not necessarily mean just giving in to the southerners' definition of the situation.

Elliott also points out that problems of communication are inherent in these forms of collaboration: "Ideologically and sociologically, the language of discourse between...the northern [NGO] donor, the local NGO and the client group...is unlikely to be shared...a fact which makes the ability of the donor to interpret and to 'hear' the client group particularly important....It is for this reason... that some of the best NGOs...put a great deal of time and effort into building a relationship with the community on the community's terms."⁶³ The issue of making partnerships genuine remains a challenging one and only dialogue and effort to understand will make it possible to cooperate across cultural divides.

In Elliott's view, "deficiencies in [middle and senior] manpower is the most important single constraint on the effectiveness of local NGOs."⁶⁴ Thus there exists a great need for institutional capacity-building of southern NGOs, in which northern NGOs can assist. In the past, however, northern NGOs have by and large followed the familiar course of "seconding expatriate [volunteer] staff to the institution concerned in order to transfer the mastery of a particular technology", which may not be culturally or socially appropriate.⁶⁵ Elliot does not dispute the need for expatriate workers, and on the whole prefers the use of expatriates

63. *Ibid.*, p. 66.

64. *Ibid.*, p. 61.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 61.