



INDIGO: A Case Study of an Innovative Model of North-South Collaboration in Health Research Capacity Strengthening

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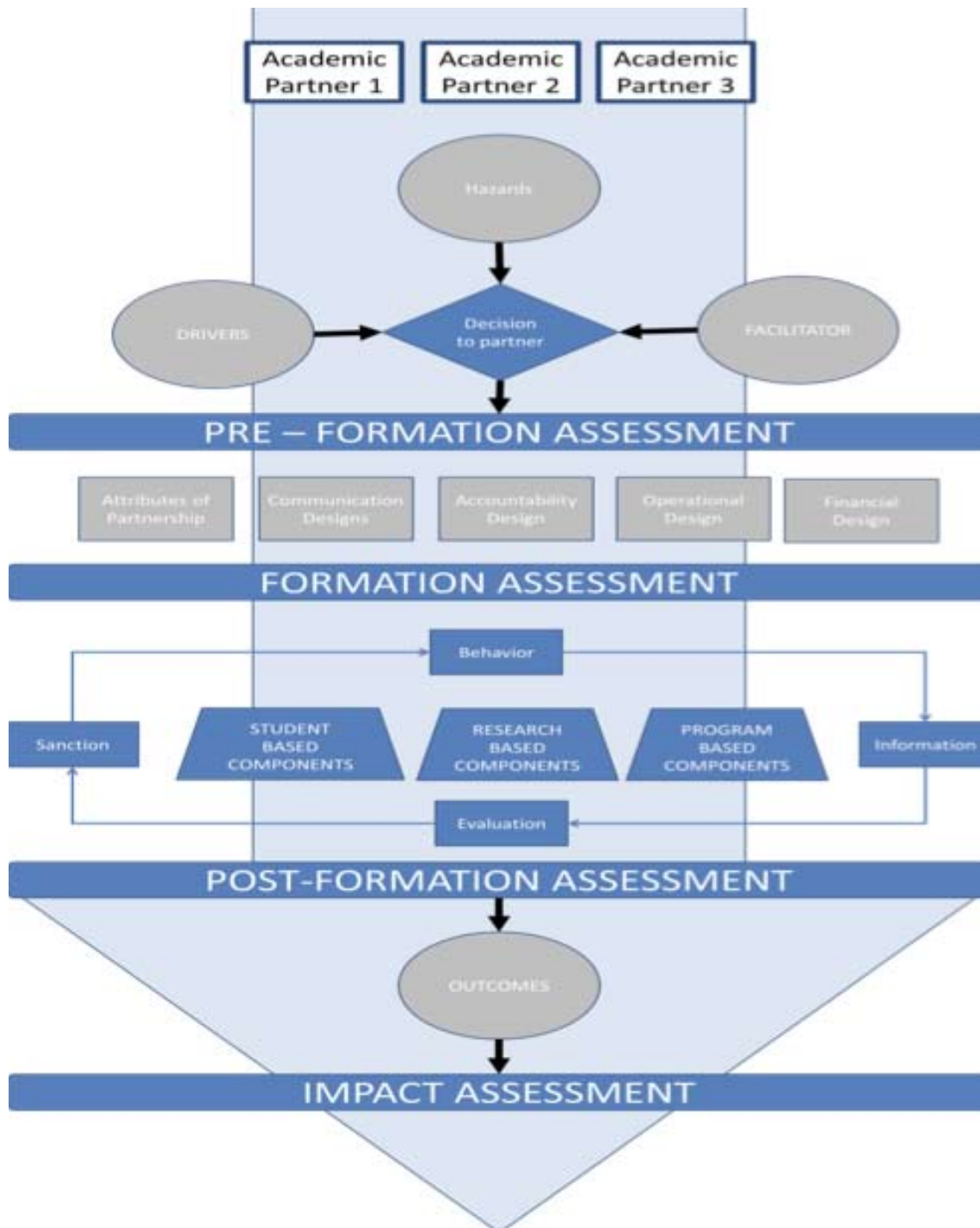
The “partnership approach” has gained increasing traction for institutional capacity building initiatives. This case study focuses on learning from the establishment and early stages of operation of the International Doctorate in Global Health (INDIGO) programme. INDIGO represents an innovative model of partnership collaboration, providing a four-year doctoral programme in health research – engaging African, European and North American institutions - for students from sub-Saharan Africa.

The case study is based upon document review and semi-structured interviews with key INDIGO stakeholders, including students of the program and faculty and staff of collaborating institutions. The INDIGO programme has to date taken two cohorts of students through the foundational first year of the program – where students undertake substantive and methodological studies involving all institutional partners - and into their later years of study

with their home institutions in Africa.

Successful implementation of the programme has involved negotiation of some major challenges of potential relevance to other inter-institutional collaborations regarding health research capacity strengthening. These include: (1) developing competency in interdisciplinarity; (2) formalizing student and supervisor roles and responsibilities across multiple institutions; (3) managing expectations and maintaining trust through operational difficulties; (4) fostering community and managing incentives for exploratory collaboration; and (5) maintaining strategic focus in the face of major structural challenges.

The case study concludes by presenting an over-arching systems framework regarding the origin and maintenance of these challenges as a potential guide to academic partnering ventures. The model potentially serves as a phased guidance template for partnership implementation.



The preparation of these briefs was supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada