Kenyan perspectives on the added value of collaboration

Partners for a disability-inclusive society

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Kenyan perspectives on the added value of collaboration: partners for a disability-inclusive society

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Abstract

Northern CSOs struggle to operationalize North-South partnerships in a way that stimulates local ownership of development programs. Evidence shows that programs are more effective and sustainable if they reflect local priorities.

This study aims to determine what supporting roles Northern CSOs can take to accommodate collaboration in the South. Specifically, it investigates perceptions of Southern CSOs on the added value of collaboration. In this context, CSOs is an inclusive term for all NGOs, charities, advocacy groups, and (inter)national non-state associations, which all are particular types of organizations within civil society.

To understand the priorities in the South, a case study was conducted among disability CSOs in Kenya. The main question was: what is the added value of collaboration according to Kenyan CSOs that address disability issues? The results are based on semi-structured interviews with fourteen diverse Kenyan CSOs, where respondents shared experiences of successful collaboration. A typology of CSOs with similar strategies and localities was developed. In order to capture the added value of collaboration, we structured relevant forms of collaboration, the benefits, and the supportive roles of collaborative partners.

This research suggests that Kenyan CSOs have different priorities regarding relevant forms of collaboration, motivated by their specific strategy and locality. More research is needed to test the validity of the proposed typology. One lesson is to be attentive to local forms of collaboration, such as community-based collaboration or those taking place in different in-country networks. They are of added value as knowledge brokers and coordinators. Second, for advocacy CSOs, networks have value as coordinators: joint action increases their leverage. Last, Northern CSOs are valued as connectors, but a structured approach to link local activities to (inter)national arenas is lacking.

These results suggest that Northern CSOs should clarify with what types of CSOs they collaborate. When this is clear, it can offer ideas for accommodating existing strengths and addressing barriers perceived by Southern CSOs. Northern CSOs can take on the role of a connector to stimulate consultation of local CSOs and communication between different networks. Ultimately, Southern CSOs find the most added value in open source platforms where they encounter CSOs both in the North and South and can initiate supportive collaborations themselves.

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1. Introduction

There is a general understanding that development programs are more effective if they are locally owned. Although many Northern CSOs have adopted partnerships, it is still unclear how Northern CSOs can ensure Southern leadership. The Liliane Foundation is one such Northern CSO that better wants to understand the priorities of its Southern partners.

This chapter we will provide background information on the topic of this study. I will introduce the findings of current research on local ownership and partnerships and explain the dilemma of the Liliane Foundation. I will then introduce our research questions and the structure of the remainder of the thesis.

Local ownership and partnerships

This research is situated in the debate on ways to ensure local ownership of development programs.

In recent years, there has been a rise in managerialism in international development. Many programs are critically evaluated on their effectiveness. Critics have pointed out that many development interventions did not produce sustainable change Arts (2017).

Evaluations and research on these programs showed that local ownership is a prerequisite to ensure that programs have a lasting impact. Local ownership encompasses the idea that development programs should be designed and led by local actors. In the field of international development, this implies that Southern actors should have the authority about interventions in their countries. The logic is that initiatives that have emerged locally based on local priorities have more traction than those imposed from the outside. Moreover, the commitment to action is less dependent on the input from external actors and thus will last longer (Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen, 2003; W. J. Elbers, 2012).

Apart from increasing the effectiveness of development programs, local ownership should ensure equity between the North and South. Local ownership also addresses the paternalism that characterizes the attitude of Northern scholars and practitioners in international development. It is accompanied by a moral appeal to regard Southern actors as sovereign and to respect self-determination (Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen, 2003; Hately, 1999; Wong, 2013).

A precondition for realizing local ownership is to create a more egalitarian relationship between Northern and Southern actors as the basis of future programmes. In this research, I will focus on the relationship between Northern and Southern CSOs, who play a big part in developing and executing development programs.

North-South partnerships are common in international development cooperation and are considered essential to ensure Southern ownership. The idea is that actors relate to each other based on equality and reciprocity and that Southern CSOs can execute autonomy and leadership regarding interventions in their countries (Ashman, 2001; W. J. Elbers, 2012).

Despite the ideals, research on North-South partnerships shows a gap between theory and practice. Many activities in partnerships undermine the autonomy of Southern CSOs.

These undermining activities can be partially explained by the organizational structure of development cooperation that encourages Northern control. Development programmes have to meet more criteria to ensure their effectiveness and efficiency. These management practices come from developments in Northern society and lack input from the lived reality in the South. However, the rules and standards that come with this need for control and accountability influence how partnerships get established (W. J. Elbers, 2012; Hately, 1999; Yang, 2022).

This phenomenon trickles down into North-South partnerships; they are partially influenced and imposed from the outside, and there is little room for local initiatives. Northern CSOs still control key resources, such as the money needed to execute programs. This way, they still act as donors and impose standards to account for the investment. Northern CSOs often set targets that Southern CSOs have to meet. There are three problems. Several authors point out that because Northern CSOs control key resources, Southern CSOs are more likely to take in a subordinate position and try to comply with imposed standards (see (W. J. Elbers, 2012; Mowles, Stacey, & Griffin, 2008; Yang, 2022). Second, Southern CSOs are held accountable for targets that do not necessarily reflect local priorities (Mowles et al., 2008). Third, instead of seeing Southern CSOs as capable and trustworthy partners, the effectiveness and efficiency of Southern CSOs are 'questioned and challenged' (Lewis, 2004, p. 9).

Here, the current situation stalls. Apparently, North-South partnerships fail to give autonomy and leadership to Southern CSOs. However, it remains unclear what practices in partnerships are valued by Southern CSOs and what Northern CSOs can do to ensure their activities reflect local priorities.

The Liliane Foundation and collaboration

With this research, I not only aim to enrich the academic understanding of this problem, but I also seek relevance for the practical dilemma of a Northern CSO: the Liliane Foundation. The Liliane Foundation is looking for insights on safeguarding local ownership in how it relates to its Southern partners.

This research is part of the 'Breaking down Barriers 2.0' trajectory. Breaking down Barriers was initiated by the Liliane Foundation and the African Studies Centre (Leiden University) in 2015. Breaking down Barriers 2.0 aims to produce academic knowledge that promotes disability-inclusive development. This knowledge should enable the Liliane Foundation and its Southern partners to design better policies and interventions for the inclusion of children and youth with disabilities.

The Liliane Foundation seeks to promote local ownership by working in partnership with its Southern counterparts and stimulating collaboration among its partner organizations (POs) in the South.

The Liliane Foundation has appointed Strategic Partner Organizations (SPOs) in Southern countries to foster local ownership of its programs. The SPOs are a means to hand over more responsibility and authority to Southern countries. Within every country, an SPO has more decision-making power regarding the design of programs. This way programs should reflect priorities in each respective country while aligning with the Liliane Foundation's framework. Second, POs communicate with the SPO instead of reporting directly to the Liliane Foundation. The SPO guides POs and should help them network effectively (Liliane Foundation, 2012).

The Liliane Foundation seeks to stimulate networking among POs in the South. The assumption is that networking is a means to strengthen local organizations and that networks are more effective in realizing sustainable change. The belief is that networks enlarge the impact of POs because they provide opportunities for learning, specialization, and delegation of tasks. Especially with regard to creating a disability-inclusive society, there is a need for coordination among organizations for persons with disabilities to realize structural and sustainable change (Liliane Foundation, 2014, 2021).

While the Liliane Foundation would like to stimulate networking because of its expected benefits, it does not want to impose something from the outside. This paradox brings the Liliane Foundation into a complex situation.

In Kenya, for example, the Liliane Foundation has many POs compared to other countries (approximately 40). It delegated responsibility to the SPO for maintaining and strengthening this network of POs. The expectation is that these POs should be able to network and enjoy the benefits of collaboration with like-minded organizations in the county. However, there seems to be little intrinsic motivation among POs to engage with each other (personal communication, May 2021).

The Liliane Foundation wants to solve this puzzle. Why do these POs not want to network? What *are* the motives for POs to collaborate? How can the Liliane Foundation relate to its POs in a way that strengthens local leadership and reflect local priorities?

Incorporating Southern perspectives on collaboration

It is not surprising that both scholars and practitioners struggle with the concept of partnerships. Part of the struggle can be attributed to the lack of attention to Southern perspectives on North-South collaboration, and general beneficial collaborations for Southern CSOs.

Much of our understanding of why collaboration in international development is beneficial and what it should look like has come from research done by Northern-based scholars. It thus has a bias toward Northern perspectives (Brass, Longhofer, Robinson, & Schnable, 2018).

Research on collaboration has primarily focused on the power imbalances between Northern and Southern CSOs. Partnership and local ownership are often analysed for their ability to overcome these imbalances and focus on Northern CSOs' influence over their Southern counterparts. Little research has been done that focuses on collaboration between CSOs in the South, or that departs from Southern perspectives and tries to re-establish means of collaboration from these understandings (Brass et al., 2018; Margit Van Wessel, Naz, & Sahoo, 2020).

The **academic aim** of this research is to enrich the current academic debate by incorporating perspectives of Southern CSOs on collaboration. I want to investigate the added value of collaboration according to Southern CSOs. With this, we do not only focus on collaboration between North and South but also incorporate national and local activities.

Incorporating Southern perspectives on collaboration is essential because this can advance the ownership and leadership of Southern CSOs. Margit Van Wessel et al. (2020) list three mechanisms that interplay to produce this result:

1. By incorporating Southern perspectives, it becomes clearer what Southern CSOs are pursuing, and in this way, they become more visible in discussions about reshaping collaboration patterns. This visibility can counter the dominance of Northern CSOs in defining the conditions of collaboration and lead to more informed decision-making.
2. A better understanding of Southern CSOs' practices and wishes can help Northern CSOs to reposition themselves. It gives them possible entries to better accommodate the needs of Southern CSOs.
3. Discussions about collaboration often assume that international efforts are needed to solve the issues at stake. A better understanding of Southern perspectives may shift the focus to a form of collaboration that supports national or local activities (Margit Van Wessel et al., 2020).

The **societal aim** is to provide Northern CSOs – in this research, the Liliane Foundation – with a better understanding of possible roles they could take on in partnerships. These roles can reinforce existing strengths of collaboration or seek to address remaining gaps that prevent Southern CSOs from realizing the potential value. Second, incorporating the views on collaboration of their partner organizations in the South can by itself enhance Southern ownership of policies and programmes. In this research, I will specifically focus on the case in Kenya.

Thus, starting from Southern perspectives on collaboration opens up the current debate. It addresses the Northern bias and can lead to a better understanding of Southern priorities regarding collaboration.

The research

With this research, I seek to answer the main question:

What is the added value of collaboration according to Kenyan CSOs that address disability issues?

I divided the main question into more specific questions I will address in this thesis. I mention these questions below (sorted by chapter).

Chapter 4. *What are forms of collaboration relevant for these CSOs?*

This is a necessary contextual question because little research has started from Southern conceptualizations of collaboration.

Chapter 5. *What is the added value of in-country collaboration?*
Chapter 6. *What is the added value of collaboration with the global North?*

The two sub-questions above seek to differentiate between North and South. It directs our focus to identifying strengths of collaboration within a Southern context before paying attention to the perceptions of Northern actors.

To answer the research question, I have conducted semi-structured interviews with fourteen disability CSOs in Kenya. I have tried to include a diversity of CSOs: both POs of the Liliane Foundation and CSOs that are currently not in the picture of the Liliane Foundation. I wanted to know what forms of collaboration were relevant to them and what collaboration added to their organizations. However, I did not want to impose our ideas and frameworks of collaboration; thus, I approached the concept of collaboration inductively.

What is to come?

In this thesis, I try to understand the added value of collaboration according to disability CSOs in Kenya.
In Chapter 2, I discuss the **theoretical framework.** I dive deeper into the evidence that establishes the relevance of local ownership. I focus specifically on the proposed solution of North-South partnerships: what are its supposed benefits, and what is the critique? I try to establish where the shoe pinches. I then take a side-step from the partnership as a specific form of collaboration. In the **conceptual framework,** I discuss other notions of collaboration that might be relevant for CSOs. I also pay attention to why one would want to collaborate: what are the possible benefits?

Chapter 3 contains the **methodology** of this research. I will discuss the research context and the chosen methods of data collection. Here, I will also pay attention to how I analysed the data.

In the following chapters, I present the **results**. I will explain the case of disability CSOs in Kenya. I will first introduce a typology of the CSOs and an overview of relevant forms of collaboration (Chapter 4). For each type of CSO, I address what collaboration within Kenya adds to their specific strategies and what prevents them from fully attaining value (Chapter 5). Chapter 6 will address what international collaboration adds to each type of CSO and what is lacking in the current course of events.

In the final chapters, I establish the strengths and limitations of this research (Chapter 7: **discussion)** before I draw **conclusions** (Chapter 8).

Last but not least, I try to translate the findings into the daily practices of the Liliane Foundation. What **recommendations (Chapter 9)** follow from this research?

2. Theoretical and conceptual framework

In this research, I aim to investigate the added value of collaboration according to disability CSOs in Kenya. I situate my search in the contemporary debate on local ownership and specifically on ideas on how to operationalize North-South partnerships in such a way as to promote Southern ownership.

This chapter will first highlight the current theoretical ideas in this debate and where the shoe pinches. The second part will restate where I want to contribute and my chosen angle. Here, I will discuss some key concepts used in our research.

2.1. Theoretical framework

Inclusive development

Inclusive development has recently become more important in theory *and* practice. It is a countermove to the sole focus on economic growth in past development programs. Evidence indicates that economic growth does not directly decrease poverty. Moreover, economic growth often increases inequality in Southern countries (Gupta, Pouw, & Ros-Tonen, 2015; Reinders, Dekker, Kesteren, & Oudenhuijsen, 2019).

Inclusive development seeks to address poverty and inequality. It directs attention to the need to consider the intersectionality of inequalities at economic, social, and political levels. International development programs' outcomes should reflect structural and sustainable changes. Further, there is a need for inclusive processes, e.g., participatory decision-making, to address structural inequalities. Thus, inclusive development considers both income and non-income dimensions of development and directs attention to the need for inclusive processes and outcomes (Gupta et al., 2015; Reinders et al., 2019).

This research will focus on CSOs as they are essential to international development. Today, an increasing share of donors support CSOs because these organizations should be able to realize an inclusive and sustainable impact. They can reach areas, provide services that markets and governments cannot, and are responsive to marginalized societal groups. The democratic structures of CSOs allow them to represent marginalized groups at different levels of decision-making: from local to international arenas (Jordan & Van Tuijl, 2000; Makoba, 2002).

Often CSOs are grouped as a type of organization that is neither state nor market. In this research, CSOs is an inclusive term for all NGOs, charities, advocacy groups, and national and international non-state associations, which all are particular types of organizations within civil society (Hutter & O'Mahony, 2004, p. 1).

Current literature does distinguish between 'Northern' and 'Southern' CSOs. I will use this terminology too, and follow the definition of Margit Van Wessel et al. (2020). They define Northern CSOs (who often reside in the geographical North) as "those CSO that have direct access to substantial, mostly Northern-based funding and commonly act as 'fundermediaries', distributing funding to other CSOs, (many of which located in the geographical South) and steering much of their work" (p. 718)

Disability-inclusive development

One aspect of inclusive development is the attention to the social dimension of development programs. Inclusion here means a targeted approach to reaching the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of society, including people with disabilities (Gupta et al., 2015).

There has been a call for disability-inclusive development because general development programs often fail to reach people with disabilities. The goal of disability-inclusive development is to ensure that "all phases of the development cycle (design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation) include a disability dimension and that persons with disabilities are meaningfully and effectively participating in development processes and policies" (IDDC, 2010 in: (Kuipers & Sabuni, 2016, p. 2).

There is growing recognition of the need for participatory decision-making and reducing the risks and vulnerabilities associated with disabilities. Three causes can be distinguished that make people with disabilities extra vulnerable to poverty. People with disabilities are denied equal *opportunity*; they often lack the income and assets to attain necessities – food, shelter, clothing, and acceptable levels of health and education. They often feel less *empowered*; there is a sense of voicelessness and powerlessness in their relation to society. Last, people with disabilities face more *insecurity* due to their vulnerability to adverse shocks and often the inability to cope with them (Arts, 2017; Eide & Ingstad, 2011; Gupta et al., 2015).

The established link between poverty and disability calls for disability-inclusive efforts (where people with disabilities are included as actors and beneficiaries) to realize sustainable development. To ensure that the rights of people with disabilities are met, development programs should mainstream disability and address the inequalities between people with and without disabilities. Next, they should support specific initiatives to enhance the empowerment of people with disabilities. International and local collaboration is required to adequately address disability-related problems because its complexity demands a cross-cutting approach (Arts, 2017; Liliane Foundation, 2014; MacLachlan & Swartz, 2009; Mattioli, 2008).

Southern-inclusive development

The second aspect of inclusion implies involving the knowledge and aspirations of people in the South in international development cooperation. I will elaborate more on the why and how in the following paragraphs (Gupta et al., 2015).

Local ownership

I started by stating that inclusive development came into being as a critique of traditional development programs. Below, we will explain its main flaws and why it is necessary to include the perspectives of Southern organizations in development programs.

Critique of development programs

Critical evaluations of past development programs pointed to their inefficiency and inefficacy. For example, programs failed to produce sustainable change or programs failed to reach those people for whom it was intended. The identified causes were corruption, misappropriation, and bureaucracy. In response to this, a new system was adopted that would guarantee the effectiveness of programs, with an emphasis on systematic approaches and efficiency (Aagaard & Eberhard Trykker, 2020; Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen, 2003).

In this new system, international development programs are subject to managerialism. An inherent assumption of managerialism is that change follows a predictable path and, thus, that adherence to standards and control of variables can increase the effectiveness of development programs. In the following paragraphs, we will further address how managerialism affects the relationship between Northern and Southern CSOs (Aagaard & Eberhard Trykker, 2020).

Simultaneously with critiques on the inefficiency of development programs, there has been growing critique on the power asymmetry that characterizes international development cooperation.

The critique of the international cooperation between Northern and Southern CSOs is that it is accompanied by standards and conditions that solely reflect the priorities experienced by Northern CSOs. North-South relations often bear the characteristics of a principal-agent relationship. Under the influence of managerialism, Northern CSOs, as fundermediairies, face tighter procedures from donors. Funding is less flexible, contracts are shorter, and impacts must be well-defined and measurable. This is all to increase upward accountability and ensure efficiency. Southern CSOs are often seen as contractors responsible for implementing pre-defined outcomes. Because Northern CSOs control most money, they often use this to exercise control over Southern CSOs. Money, conditionality, and advice often go hand in hand with implementing policies that Northern CSOs regard best (Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen, 2003; W. Elbers & Arts, 2011; Gore, 2013).

Doing development differently: ownership

Local ownership has been proposed to make change more sustainable and address the unequal power between North and South.

Ownership has already been coined as a critical aspect before the mainstreaming of inclusive development. In order to realize ownership, governments and organizations in Southern countries should define development strategies *and* ultimately be responsible. Northern countries should take on a supporting role in mutual consultation with Southern leaders. Ownership is believed to be the answer to making development programs more efficient, effective, and sustainable (Abrahamsen, 2004).

It is helpful to distinguish between ideas on *country ownership* and *local ownership*. The ideas of ownership found broader acceptance in a time when development programs were mainly bilateral, and thus it made sense to talk about governments' leadership. However, from the 1990s onwards, civil society became a more prominent force in international development both in the North and South. *Local ownership* includes handing over responsibilities and leadership to a plethora of actors involved in designing and implementing development programs. Among those actors, there is a significant role for civil society organizations (CSOs). In the following paragraphs, we will focus on *local ownership* and the role of CSOs (Abdel-Malek, 2015).

When there is local ownership, solutions to development problems are homegrown. This way, development programs are believed to be more effective and sustainable. They are more likely to target truly relevant problems and reflect local priorities. Moreover, if solutions come from within the targeted groups, they have more traction, and their effects will be more durable than if initiatives are imposed from the outside (Arensman, van Wessel, & Hilhorst, 2017; W. J. Elbers, 2012).

North-South partnerships

One way to realize local ownership in international development is to foster an equal relationship between Northern and Southern CSOs.

The ideal

An essential step in realizing local ownership is rearranging North-South collaboration, so Southern input is equally incorporated. The main barrier that needs to be addressed is the Northern dominance in international development. Partnerships have been proposed as a new type of working relationship that should address the power imbalances between the North and South. The aim was to hand over autonomy and responsibility to organizations in the South (Arensman et al., 2017; Margit Van Wessel et al., 2020).

In North-South partnerships, Northern CSOs seek to avoid imposing their vision on Southern CSOs but instead want to be equals that facilitate strategies set out and 'owned' by Southern CSOs (Abrahamsen, 2004). Southern ownership captures a situation where Southern countries can 'exercise effective leadership over their development policies and strategies, and coordinate development actions' (Abdel-Malek, 2015, p. 79).

Partnerships carry with them values such as equality, mutuality, and reciprocity. Especially relevant here is the idea of mutual accountability (Abdel-Malek, 2015). Sometimes these are even called 'locally driven partnerships' (Arensman et al., 2017, p. 1311): apparently, there is a need to re-emphasize that the ultimate goal is to realize local ownership.

The partnership model presupposes a new type of role for Northern CSOs. Often, the idea is that Northern CSOs should strengthen the capacities in the South in order to stimulate participation and realize local ownership. We will problematize this idea in the following section. Second, partnerships should result in mutual responsibility. Southern CSOs should take ownership of their priorities and make sure that projects are effective, and Northern CSOs should align their policies and practices to local priorities. Ideally, Northern and Southern CSOs use each other's comparative advantage. Northern CSOs can bring funding and access to international arenas and strengthen Southern CSOs' capacity, while Southern CSOs bring in contextual knowledge and linkages (Abdel-Malek, 2015; Margit Van Wessel et al., 2020).

Where the shoe pinches

Partnerships have become mainstream in development cooperation. However, the question remains whether this signifies a real change in how Northern and Southern CSOs collaborate. The shoe pinches on three sites.

Ambiguous notion

One group of scholars directs attention to the ambiguity surrounding this new way of doing development. The ideals of more equality between North and South and realizing locally relevant development are widely embraced. However, the operationalization of North-South partnerships often remains ambiguous (Arensman et al., 2017; Reich, 2006).

For practitioners, very tangible questions are still unaddressed. Richmond (2012); Saxby (2003) highlight that it remains unclear *whose ownership* should be fostered in partnerships. If the primary responsibility for development projects is not with states anymore: 'who is, or who represents the locals?' (Richmond, 2012, p. 359) Who is the other partner? The most marginalized, civil society, the national level, or traditional elite centres? The second question is, *what* do these local actors seek to own? Are we talking about the implementation of programs or also the design? Given that Southern actors have diverse agendas, what political goals do Northern CSOs want to foster?

Some authors suggest that it might be more suitable to talk about *local leadership* for practical purposes. Hellmüller (2014) states that the concept of local ownership loses much of its relevance in practice. Suppose Northern CSOs take the local context as a starting point and support initiatives that are already undertaken; then Southern CSOs are in the 'driving seat' of development programs. Thus, these programs are, by definition, locally owned (p. 93). The remaining question to be addressed is: who of these local actors should be in the driving seat and execute *leadership*? The notion of local leadership draws attention to the more practical and political choices that are made. Hellmüller (2014) explains: "The idea here is not to arduously squeeze out a compromise between opposed actors that are at best carefully and slowly tiptoeing toward each other, but to instead put all available energy behind selected people who appear to be forging ahead in the 'right' (n.b. as defined by the outsiders) direction" (p. 36). Margit Van Wessel et al. (2020) adds to this by emphasizing that there should be clarity about with "whom and for what to work, and how to collaborate" (p. 720). If this is clear, partners can divide responsibilities, and Northern CSOs can make an informed decision about their role in facilitating Southern leadership.

Hollow notion

A second critique is that partnership is not only an ambiguous notion, but worse, it has become a hollow concept. North-South partnerships do not reflect more equality but are characterized by the same Northern dominance, albeit in a package with a different label.

One group of authors highlights an essential aspect that has stayed the same: Northern CSOs still hold the most money and seek ways to control its spending. Arensman et al. (2017) summarize this problem by stating that in practice, partnerships are still 'donor-centred instead of people-centred' (p. 1311). Northern CSOs still primarily act as a donor instead of fellow organizations seeking joint change. It is precisely this that maintains a power imbalance between Northern and Southern CSOs, making it unrealistic to claim that organizations start from a situation of equality. Additionally, often Southern CSOs are resource-dependent and thus reliant on Northern CSOs. Thus, Southern CSOs are more vulnerable to external control, and donor dependence infringes on the autonomy of Southern CSOs (Abrahamsen, 2004; O'Brien & Evans, 2017; Margit Van Wessel et al., 2020).

Some authors take it a step further and state that partnerships *disguise* continued dominance on the side of Northern CSOs. Crawford (2003) argues that partnerships remain externally driven and that processes for decision-making serve to maintain the Northern exercise of power (international agendas are seldom seriously challenged). Abdel-Malek (2015) adds to this and states that Northern CSOs impose conditions on partnerships that undermine the self-determination of Southern CSOs. These conditions turn priorities away from Southern CSOs to match Northern conceptions of effectiveness.

This dominance becomes visible in the inability to realize mutual accountability. Southern CSOs must adhere to Northern-developed standards and measurements to guarantee the effectiveness of joint projects. W. J. Elbers (2012) explains this 'partnership paradox'. The rise of managerialism amplifies the tendency of Northern CSOs to control the conditions for collaboration. Development CSOs have to prove the efficiency and effectiveness of their activities to ensure future funding. The rules and standards that come with this need for accountability influence how partnerships get established. Northern CSOs that act as donors impose the standards they have to meet on Southern CSOs' activities. Often these conditions result in a preference for collaboration with professionalized Southern CSOs.

Moreover, W. S. Elbers, L. (2020) explains how managerialism hampers efforts to realize local ownership. The preference for professionalism promotes managerial practices above 'grassroots legitimacy' (p. 4). Activities *within* partnerships further infringe upon Southern ownership. Often there is top-down decision-making with little room for local participation, and there is a 'rigid and linear approach to planning', which makes it difficult for Southern CSOs to adapt and adjust programs to changing conditions (p. 4). Arensman et al. (2017) explain that part of the tension lies in merging two different goals: effectiveness and ownership. Effectiveness assumes that there are objective standards to be adhered to, while ownership seeks to acknowledge the differences in proposed solutions and problem assessments.

Paternalism

It seems thus unclear if and how Northern CSOs position themselves differently in partnerships. However, there is one way in which many Northern CSOs do actually try to change the status quo: capacity-building. Remarkably, as Reich (2006) points out, literature studying the respective roles of Northern and Southern actors rarely addresses how the collaboration process should be altered. Instead, there is a strong focus on the power or capacity of Southern CSOs to take responsibility for realizing development agendas. In light of this, many North-South partnerships incorporate knowledge transfer from North to South to strengthen Southern organizations.

These practices reflect an underlying paternalistic idea that presumes that Northern CSOs are more capable or professionalized than Southern CSOs, reinforcing inequalities. Seldom it entails two-way processes of learning, adaptations, and growth. Further, although capacity building and organizational strengthening are buzzwords in North-South partnerships, it is unclear what factors actually strengthen Southern CSOs' capacity. Often, capacity-building trainings seek to stimulate Southern CSOs to better conform to the managerial practices of Northern CSOs (Contu & Girei, 2014; Lewis, 2004; Mowles et al., 2008; Reich, 2006; Richmond, 2012; Yang, 2022).

Richmond (2012) pessimistically concludes that current Nort-South partnerships merely reflect *local participation*. This captures the idea that local actors have little say in what they have come to own but are expected to participate. Their role is to comply with and facilitate Northern ideas on development. In this view, the focus on capacity-building is logical. Southern actors are still perceived as 'weak or incapable receivers' that do not have the agency to steer development themselves (p. 360).

Southern experiences

Although most studies have a Northern bias and study Northern practices in partnerships, multiple case studies depart from Southern experiences of North-South partnerships.

Some studies focus on how Southern CSOs experience the status quo. Hoksbergen* (2005) studies the perceptions of the conditions in North-South partnerships. Corbin, Mittelmark, and Lie (2013) have identified what Southern CSOs perceive as successful and limiting partnership factors. Olawoore and Kamruzzaman (2019) have studied whether Northern and Southern CSOs share the same ideals in partnerships.

A final group of authors contests the view of passive and helpless Southern CSOs and takes the agency of Southern CSOs as the point of departure. These authors highlight the constant negotiation taking place within partnerships. Mallarangeng and Tuijl (2004) direct attention to the ability of Southern CSOs to insert their own agendas. Richmond (2012) emphasizes that Southern actors are not merely grateful recipients and complying participants. Instead, they seek to modify conditions in such a way as to 'enable autonomy and self-determination' (p. 371). Case studies of W. Elbers and Schulpen (2013) highlight room for manoeuvre in the institutional design of partnerships. Gabrielle (2021) studied the tactics and leverage of Southern CSOs.

Research gap

The power imbalances between the North and South have been studied extensively. In most studies, North-South partnerships are judged on their ability to live up to the ideals of equality. The studies show that practices within partnerships fail to hand over autonomy and leadership to Southern CSOs.

Existing research in this area has a Northern bias. Northern-based scholars have carried out much research, and the idea of partnerships is a product of Northern society. However, case studies have been conducted that enhance the understanding of Southern perspectives on partnerships (Brass et al., 2018; Fowler, 2000).

Including Southern perspectives is a valuable entry point to realizing Southern ownership. With this research, I want to further this debate by shifting the focus from partnerships as the only form of collaboration to studying what Southern CSOs regard as valuable modes of collaboration. Margit Van Wessel et al. (2020) clearly explain why these perspectives are essential. They state that it is essential to clarify what Southern CSOs are pursuing in their context because this can bring new ideas on reshaping international collaboration. Further, it can provide Northern CSOs with a better understanding of practices that do support Southern activities. Last, it is often assumed that international collaboration is needed to address development issues. A better understanding of Southern collaboration may direct attention to successful national and local practices.

Concluding remarks

The literature review, as outlined above, has helped to position our research within the frame of inclusive development. It justifies, on the one hand, our focus on disabilities; on the other, it directs attention to the relevance of studying perspectives of Southern CSOs.

Studies have shown that previous development programs did not provide satisfactory results. However, if development programs come from *within* those societies it seeks to affect, if development cooperation safeguards *local ownership*, then a critical step is made in addressing power asymmetries and enhancing the effectiveness of development programs. CSOs have a significant role in designing and executing these programs and have embraced *partnerships* as a new model of North-South collaboration. However, despite its ideals, the shoe pinches when we look at the *practices* within partnerships. They still reflect unequal power between the North and South.

The operationalization of North-South partnerships is problematic because Northern roles in partnerships fail to reflect Southern priorities. Two characteristics of development cooperation can explain this problem. On the one hand, managerialism results in tighter control and measures that keep power to Northern CSOs. This trend undermines the ability of Northern CSOs to be flexible and receptive to the priorities of Southern CSOs. On the other hand, there is little knowledge of these priorities, for example, regarding Southern perspectives on the added value of collaboration.

Many scholars have scrutinized what obstructing roles Northern CSOs take on within partnerships. Ironically, the perspectives of Southern CSOs on international collaboration seem lacking in this debate. If we want to foster local ownership, it is essential to start from the wishes and needs of Southern CSOs. Moreover, it may be that precisely these perspectives can give valuable entry points on how to operationalize North-South partnerships effectively.

In the second part of this chapter, I will clarify some concepts I use in this research.

2.2. Conceptual framework

The research

As explained in the introduction of this thesis, it is critical to include the perspectives of Southern CSOs if we want development programs to reflect local ownership.

To summarize, the academic debate outlined above centres around international collaboration and is biased towards Northern perspectives on its supposed relevance. MGJ van Wessel et al. (2018) point out that we know little about how Southern CSOs see collaboration. What forms of collaboration are relevant, and why are they considered relevant or beneficial? How does collaboration shape the role of CSOs?

These are critical questions as departing from the priorities of Southern CSOs is the way to foster Southern leadership. Second, these perspectives can shed light on what strengths should be harnessed and thus gives new input for Northern CSOs on roles they can take on in partnerships (MGJ van Wessel et al., 2018).

The central question of the research is: **What is the added value of collaboration according to Kenyan CSOs that address disability issues?** With this research, I try to understand *how* and *why* CSOs collaborate. I shift the focus from North-South relations to the multiple collaboration forms relevant to Southern CSOs. There are two important conceptualizations that we want to address below. First, I clarify my approach to collaboration. Second, I explain how I understand added value.

Collaboration

The theoretical framework establishes that North-South partnerships have been proposed as a way to address Northern dominance in international cooperation. However, with this research, I want to capture *all possible collaborations* relevant to Kenyan CSOs that address disability issues.

Below, I will explain how I approach the concept of 'collaboration' in this research.

Within the literature on collaboration, we can distinguish two streams: those who consider collaboration an umbrella concept that encompasses various inter-organizational relationships or those who define collaboration as a specific form of relationship (AbouAssi, Makhlouf, & Whalen, 2016).

In the latter view, collaboration specifically encompasses those efforts with *shared ownership* of the process and the final outcome: shared resources, decision-making, and a shared mission (AbouAssi et al., 2016). Coston (1998) follows this understanding and states that collaboration encompasses those relationships with relatively *equal power sharin*g. She introduces a continuum of power relationships with repression and rivalry at the one end and complementary and collaboration at the other. According to Coston (1998), collaboration distinguishes itself from other relationships because responsibilities are equally shared.

In line with the general critique of partnerships as ideals that are detached from reality, I take a more pragmatic approach to collaboration. I will study various inter-organizational relationships. For example, Margit Van Wessel et al. (2020) provide a more nuanced understanding of collaboration than the view above. They state that there can be instances of collaboration, where organizations try to realize their individual goals or where activities do not demand shared understanding or coordination.

On top of this, little is known about what collaborations Southern CSOs engage in. Therefore, providing an initial idea of *all relevant forms of collaboration* is helpful before critically evaluating the level of autonomy within.

In this research, I will depart from the conceptualizations of collaboration from the respondents. I will ask for valuable relationships and joint activities relevant to their organizations, but I do not necessarily select instances of equal power sharing or shared missions.

As stated above, I am interested in diverse forms of collaboration.

I will define these forms based on the actors involved and seek to identify characteristic activities. These actors do not necessarily have to be limited to other CSOs (Northern- or Southern-based). From previous studies on civil society, I expect that other actors, such as the media, government offices, or the general public, may also be relevant. In addition, to address disability issues, CSOs are likely to engage with public institutions such as schools, hospitals, and rehabilitation centres (Liliane Foundation, 2014; Taylor & Doerfel, 2005)

I will differentiate between different instances of bilateral collaboration (with two actors) and multi-stakeholder collaborations (meaning configurations where multiple actors from diverse backgrounds collaborate).

Added value

In the discussion about North-South partnerships and international collaboration, there is the implicit assumption that collaborating is good. With this research, I will try to indicate what that means. I ask how Kenyan CSOs *benefit* from collaboration. How does collaboration *add value* to these CSOs?

There is a consensus that collaboration can create added value. However, there is a divergence in approaches to capture this value.

When returning to the field of international collaboration, some authors refer to this concept of added value. Kis (2012), for example, states that partnerships lead *to new structures and mechanisms*. Abdel-Malek (2015) states that North-South partnerships will lead to better *coherence* when different actors coordinate and align their policies.

If we focus on the added value for individual CSOs, often collaborating actors come from diverse backgrounds. When they join forces, they find added value in *synergistic results* (Dyer & Singh, 1998*)*. Through collaboration, actors can achieve things they could not have accomplished alone. Some scholars refer to this synergy as maximizing *mutual benefits* (Brinkerhoff, 2002; Coston, 1998).

It all starts with this diversity among actors. Brinkerhoff (2002) and Coston (1998) argue that collaborating actors can benefit from each other's *comparative advantage*. As Margit Van Wessel et al. (2020) state, these benefits manifest themselves when actors *complement* each other, when they bring "different qualities, capacities or resources" together (p. 718). Bryson, Crosby, and Stone (2006) use a slightly different nuance and discuss *merging* of information, resources, activities, and capabilities.

More practical, for CSOs, collaboration adds value through the possibility of *accessing funds* and other previously unavailable *resources* and the *added exposure* derived from collaboration (Abrahamsen, 2004; O'Brien & Evans, 2017). O'Brien and Evans (2017) further state that the reoccurring engagement of collaborating parties has value, for it increases each individual's *performance*. For example, individual CSOs can *amplify their voice* or *increase their legitimacy* through association and thus easier succeed in advancing their agendas.

The second step is directing this comparative advantage towards *attaining objectives*. These could be at least individual objectives (Margit Van Wessel et al., 2020) but could also be mutually interesting goals (Bond & Carmola Hauf, 2007).

W. S. Elbers, L. (2020) focuses on the added value of Northern CSOs in partnerships. He operationalizes added value by distinguishing *enabling roles* that support Southern CSOs in realizing their objectives.

Building on the insights above, I understand the added value of collaboration as follows.

In the first instance, I focus on *benefits*. These help an organization better position itself and either be more effective or efficient. Here, I will pay attention to the more practical side of collaboration.

In the second instance, I borrow from W. S. Elbers, L. (2020) and focus on what enabling roles collaborative partners fulfil. This approach can be thought of as more abstract or more overarching. I am curious how the other supports the CSOs in realizing their objectives.

Concluding remarks

For this research, two concepts are of primary importance. First, I want to give an initial overview of *relevant forms of collaboration*. I use a pragmatic approach and will not try to disentangle the inner dynamics that characterize the collaboration our respondents engage in. Instead, I will first categorize what actors and what kind of activities are involved, and I aim to come up with a meaningful framework.

Second, I am curious about the *added value* of these various forms of collaboration. What *benefits* flow from it, and what *enabling roles* do these collaborative partners fulfil that further the objectives of the CSOs?

In the next chapter, I will further explain the methodology of this research.

3. Methodology

This chapter will describe the nature of this research and how data have been collected and analysed.

The chapter is divided into five parts: I will restate my research objectives (Chapter 3.1) before elaborating on the study site (Chapter 3.2.). In Chapter 3.3., I will introduce my chosen methods and reflect on them. Then, I explain how I collected data (Chapter 3.4). In Chapter 3.5., I explain my last step: data analysis.

3.1. Research objectives

The theoretical framework illustrates that it is not easy to establish North-South partnerships that stimulate local ownership. One of the difficulties is the Northern bias in research: little is known about relevant collaboration from the perspective of Southern countries. As a consequence of this knowledge gap, it is unclear what roles of Northern CSOs in partnerships support existing strengths and address weaknesses as experienced by Southern CSOs. The Liliane Foundation is one of the Northern CSOs that faces a practical dilemma regarding taking a position that safeguards local ownership. In Kenya, it wants to stimulate networking to strengthen Southern CSOs. However, it does not want to impose its ideas on its partner organizations.

With this research, I seek an answer to the following question: **What is the added value of collaboration according to Kenyan CSOs that address disability issues?** This research has a dual imperative. I want to enrich to current academic debate by incorporating Southern perspectives. Second, I aim to provide the Liliane Foundation with a better understanding of the possible roles it could take on in its partnerships that enable Southern ownership.

3.2. Study site

Motivation for studying Kenyan CSOs

The choice of Kenya as a country of study is motivated by practical considerations of the Liliane Foundation.

Historically, the Liliane Foundation engaged in bilateral collaboration with individual partner organizations (POs) in Kenya, but it is now transitioning to more Kenyan leadership. Since the 1990s, the number of POs has mushroomed. During these years, the Liliane Foundation collaborated with over 100 POs in Kenya. The Liliane Foundation has a relatively large share of partners in this country compared to other countries.

Maintaining this situation has become increasingly problematic. For one, the mounting management tasks were a burden. Second, during the years, the Liliane Foundation has reconsidered its role and rearranged its collaboration structure to stimulate Kenyan leadership and ownership. In recent years, the Liliane Foundation has appointed strategic partner organizations (SPOs) in several countries that have responsibilities regarding the in-country management of POs. In 2015, the Liliane Foundation appointed Cheshire Disability Services Kenya as its SPO in Kenya. This organization has replaced the previous SPO position because the former could not fulfil the coordinating function that was expected in this position. Under this new policy, the number of POs has been scaled down, and Cheshire Disability Services Kenya currently works together with 40 POs within the country (Cheshire Disability Services Kenya, 2021).

The SPO in Kenya is responsible for the management of the network of POs. The Liliane Foundation has observed two positive trends flowing from the network structure in other countries where it has implemented the same structure. For one, the network can help the SPO to delegate tasks, and POs in the network become stronger from participating. Moreover, the network structure will come with a natural cycle where POs fade out that have diverging missions and where the network can invite new POs that can offer a valuable contribution.

Despite the new structure and fewer POs in Kenya, the Liliane Foundation observes little intrinsic motivation among POs to collaborate. The Liliane Foundation wants to understand Kenya's contextual factors better.

With this research, I aim to incorporate the views on the added value of collaboration of diverse CSOs that address disability issues in Kenya. I will first provide more contextual information about the position of CSOs, and the position of people with disabilities in Kenya. In paragraph 1.4., I will further describe the characteristics of disability CSOs that were incorporated in this research.

Characteristics of Kenyan CSO landscape

Civic space in Kenya has been fluctuating, and recent developments point to shrinking freedom for CSOs. In the run-up to the most recent elections in August 2022, the CIVICUS monitor has registered restrictions, resulting in violations of the freedom to peaceful protest and freedom of expression in the media. The constricting situation was a reason for CIVICUS to place Kenya on the watchlist in June 2022. Kenya is marked as a country where civic space is obstructed. This classification implies that although CSOs exist, power holders undermine them with legal and practical constraints (CIVICUS, 2022).

Despite these developments, Kenya has a lively and long-standing CSO community, with over 8,000 registered active CSOs in 2018 (United States Agency for International Development, 2020). This phenomenon is founded upon Kenya's strong tradition of communalism: *Harambee*. The CSOs are widespread and heterogeneous; they are dispersed among all sectors of society and are dedicated to service provision, direct advocacy, and lobbying (Brass, 2021; Kanyinga, 2014).

Children with disabilities in Kenya are among the most vulnerable groups in society and face many barriers to meaningful participation. They encounter stigma and prejudice, poor parent-child interactions, difficulty accessing proper healthcare and services, institutionalization, and lack of education (The Action Foundation, 2021).

Kenya has legislation and offices to protect and enhance the rights of people with disabilities. However, implementation is often weak, which has drawn the attention of a multitude of CSOs.

In 2019, Kenya adopted the Persons with Disabilities (Amendment) Act. This act aligns with the UNCRPD and the Kenyan Constitution of 2010. The act prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in multiple sectors of society, including education, employment, and health. The National Council for Persons with Disabilities is charged with implementing the Disabilities Act. The government mainly acts through this council on disability-related issues. County officers ought to audit and supervise organizations in all 47 counties. However, the council lacks the capacity and funding for proper supervision (Kanyinga, 2014; Rohwerder, 2020).

Exact figures are lacking regarding the number of organizations actively promoting the rights of children with disabilities. The existence of overarching coalitions suggests an active community across the country.

The United Disabled People of Kenya is the main coordinating body for disabled people's organizations (DPOs) and has approximately 200 member organizations. Its goal is to strengthen the capacity of its member organizations, monitor progress in the realisation of the rights of persons with disabilities, and strengthen collaboration in order to ensure that disability issues are prioritised in the development and implementation of policies and programme frameworks (Kabare, 2018; United Disabled Persons Of Kenya, 2020).

Recently another significant coalition has emerged that unifies 47 organizations across eight counties in Kenya to advocate for the inclusion of children with disabilities. This coalition includes DPOs, child and youth-focused CSOs, and policymakers. Among its members are ANDY, the Commonwealth Foundation, and Able Child Africa (Able Child Africa, 2021; ANDY, 2021).

Kenyan disability CSOs face some severe restrictions; however, there are coordinating bodies that try to remove the structural barriers that people with disabilities face.

3.3. Chosen methods

In this paragraph, I will argue for my chosen methods and reflect on some commonly associated issues.

Qualitative research

In order to capture the perspectives of Kenyan CSOs, I have used qualitative methods.

This research is a case study of Kenyan disability CSOs. With its specific focus, the case study allows for a thorough analysis of an individual unit. As explained above, the case of disability CSOs in Kenya bears practical relevance for the Liliane Foundation.

As established in the theoretical framework, current research on local ownership and international collaboration typically refers to the 'South' as a unit of analysis. With the case study, I seek to open up the box of the South. On the one hand, the study of *Kenyan disability CSOs,* with its focus on a specific country and theme, provides an opportunity to study details that other methods may overlook. In my analysis, I seek recurring patterns open to being tested for generalisations and application in different contexts (see Chapter 3.5.). On the other hand, qualitative research allows me to get a fuller understanding of the priorities of Southern CSOs for international collaboration. In this case, I specifically research the collaboration practices and perspectives of Kenyan CSOs (Kumar, 2018).

I have used exploratory and inductive approaches to the topic of this study.

By conducting semi-structured interviews, I have explored how respondents conceptualized 'collaboration' and 'added value'. Semi-structured interviews are considered to be especially suitable for studying people's perceptions. I have chosen this approach to be receptive to what aspects the respondents prioritized and to be open to including additional qualities that we had not incorporated into our conceptual framework. This exploration is especially relevant because Northern perspectives often dominate research and practice in this area (Bernard, 2017; Diefenbach, 2009; Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2020; Kallio, Pietilä, Johnson, & Kangasniemi, 2016).

Second, I have chosen an inductive approach because this research topic lacks academic coverage. I sought to remain open to new insights or new interpretations of the research problem that might emerge. Last, it allowed me to be sensitive to the socio-cultural context in which this research took place. During and because of the interviews, I discovered some forms of collaboration that have not been studied extensively but were nevertheless significant for respondents. Therefore, I conducted additional interviews with three respondents to better understand these forms of collaboration and their added value (Bernard, 2017; Hennink et al., 2020).

In addition to the semi-structured interviews, I have collected data from secondary sources.

I have consulted websites and year reports from the organizations involved to obtain background information on the nature of the participants' organizations. With these sources, I could obtain data on the reach of the activities and the dominant strategies. However, the nature and quality of these secondary sources differed significantly, and no additional data were available for all respondents. Therefore, I excluded some aspects in my analysis, such as the money flow, the number of staff, or impact measurements, that could have further enlightened and nuanced our understanding of the nature of the involved organizations (Kumar, 2018).

Reflections

Below, I will reflect on three important aspects of qualitative research: observer bias, issues of validity and reliability, and ethical considerations.

Qualitative research can potentially result in *observer bias*.

I have been aware of this element during data collection and analysis. The semi-structured interview leaves room for respondents' interpretations of the topics. I tried to encourage this by asking open-ended and follow-up questions and paraphrasing to verify if my understanding was correct. I have further tried to minimize observer bias by recording and transcribing all the interviews. However, my research did not leave room for data triangulation and respondent validation to verify the inferences I have drawn from the obtained data (Kumar, 2018; Noble & Smith, 2015).

Some pitfalls of semi-structured interviews negatively impact their *validity and reliability.*

There are some common problems that negatively impact the internal validity of semi-structured interviews. One common problem is that respondents take on a 'socially accepted answering attitude' (Diefenbach, 2009, p. 881). During the interviews, I was aware of buzzwords that potentially hid the actual perspective of the respondents. I sought to overcome this by asking for information on real-life experiences. Instead of asking for opinions, I aimed to understand what a situation was like. I gathered details on the 'who, what, where'. I conducted two interviews with each respondent to improve the quality of the interviews: it left more time to explain the set-up of the research beforehand and to build rapport, while it also left room for respondents to reflect on the first interview in the meantime and correct, add or ask questions about the previous session (Diefenbach, 2009).

The second set of issues is face and content validity, which is related to 'establishing a logical link between the questions and the objectives' of our research (Kumar, 2018, p. 154). In order to safeguard content validity, I ensured that respondents elaborated on domestic and international collaboration. I sought to counter the limited number of respondents by selecting diverse respondents. I tried to increase the face validity by adding an additional research question to capture the diverse understandings of the concept of 'collaboration' to which the respondents drew attention. A second step was to let go of previous categorizations of the benefits of collaboration and develop a new framework that captured the relevant aspects of respondents (Diefenbach, 2009; Kumar, 2018).

Last, I discuss some issues related to the reliability of semi-structured interviews. The results of the conducted interviews did suggest that there were similar, recurring answers. However, the codes and categorization deduced from the interview answers should be tested on internal consistency. External consistency could not be verified and tested by running two independent processes of data collection (Kumar, 2018).

I did take into consideration three *ethical issues* that are common in this type of research.

The first issue is informed consent. As a first step, I approached respondents by email. I explained how I received their contact information, and explained the nature of the research in written format and in a short video. The initiative to respond and get further involved was now on the side of the other. When interested in participating, I sent an additional information sheet and a consent form (see appendix A). As the last step, during our meeting – and before the recording of the interview – I discussed the research and consent form and asked if anything needed to be clarified. Verbal consent was repeated and recorded (Ngozwana, 2018).

Second, respondents were free to withdraw from further participation without giving any reason (Ngozwana, 2018).

Last, I considered issues of confidentiality and anonymity. These considerations were especially relevant given my involvement with the Liliane Foundation. I did not share any contact information with the Liliane Foundation. Quotes are anonymous – details that could reveal the identity of the respondents have been left out. By clustering respondents, I could describe relevant activities without setting a direct link to a single organization (Ngozwana, 2018).

3.4. Data collection

Below, I will explain how I selected respondents and how I gathered data.

Sampling

For this research, I searched for respondents who were CSOs with a clear focus on disability issues. It was a logical step to start the semi-structured interviews with the SPO of the Liliane Foundation in Kenya.

This SPO was my first respondent and coordinator of the Liliane Foundation network in Kenya. I asked this organization to provide contact details of three other CSOs in the disability field that differed in size and location and were not necessarily limited to the Liliane Foundation network. Following an introduction email sent by the SPO, I sent an email with an introduction and a short video.

From these initial contacts, I approached new respondents through snowballing. At the end of the interview session, I asked respondents to provide details of two very different CSOs in the field and approached these by email.

In table 1, some main characteristics of respondents' organizations are listed. Respondents were urban and rural-based. Some organizations solely focused on disability; others had a disability program as part of a more general strategy. For these organizations, I focused on disability-related activities. There were independent organizations and organizations that were part of a bigger umbrella. I included organizations speaking on behalf of people with disabilities and disabled people's organizations.

Spectrum of respondents' organizations

Characteristics	Number of respondents
Urban-based / Rural-based	7/7
Sole disability focus /Disability program as part of bigger scheme	9/5
Independent / Part of alliance	8/6
Speaking on behalf of people with disabilities / DPOs	8/6

Table 1. Spectrum of respondents' organizations

Activities

All data were gathered during September and October 2021.

I conducted 30 semi-structured interviews of an hour with 14 respondents. I scheduled time for two semi-structured interviews with each participant that lasted about one hour. These took place on two different days with no longer than a week in between. However, in three cases, respondents preferred to combine the interviews in one longer session or with a short break. In addition, I conducted follow-up interviews with three respondents to gain a better understanding of the differences between networks.

In some cases, I encountered unforeseen circumstances. Sometimes multiple people wanted to participate in the interview despite the instructions beforehand that indicated the wish to engage with one person in the organization. In other cases, respondents were hard of hearing, had difficulty articulating, or had an intellectual disability. These circumstances demanded some flexibility but were easily solved by using additional chat box support, paraphrasing and repetition, and adaptation of word choice.

I developed an interview guide in advance (see Appendix B) to conduct the interviews. There were specific topics that I sought to cover while remaining flexible in their order and additional information that respondents considered relevant.

All interviews were conducted online with video calling. I recorded my interviews. A third party provided literal transcripts of these recordings. Transcribers did sign a memorandum of understanding to safeguard the anonymity of respondents (see Appendix C).

3.5. Data analysis

The interview data were analysed thematically. I have coded the data in Atlas.ti to identify broad themes and patterns. I have coded for types of actors that respondents collaborate with, and for identified benefits to uncover broader themes and patterns.

In order to classify forms of collaboration, I applied codes to collaborative actors. Where possible, I have used the phrasing of respondents (see Appendix D). Second, I grouped and further specified our initial codes to develop a meaningful framework as used in the remainder of our thesis. I have differentiated between situations of bilateral and multi-stakeholder collaboration, and I have grouped bilateral collaborations under a heading, for example community-based or collaboration with government agencies.

I did depart from the categorization of possible benefits as explained in the conceptual framework. Instead, I have used an inductive approach to provide a meaningful representation of important benefits as identified by respondents. I first coded using the phrases used by respondents; then, I clustered overlapping codes. As the final step, I built a framework by categorizing benefits into four distinct clusters (the code book can be found in Appendix E).

Concluding remarks

During September and October 2021, I conducted semi-structured interviews with fourteen disability CSOs. For each respondent, at least two hours were available to understand respondents' experiences with and perspectives on collaboration. The data were categorized and analysed to capture recurring themes and to build a meaningful framework that reflected respondents' priorities.

I will elaborate on the results in the next part of this thesis.

Results - guide to analysis

The coming chapters will answer the research question: **What is the added value of collaboration according to Kenyan CSOs that address disability issues?**

As stated in the introduction, I aim to address two research gaps with this research. By starting this research from the lived reality of Southern CSOs, I bring a new perspective to the debate on local ownership, which currently has a Northern bias. Second, as discussed in the theoretical and analytical framework, I will start with a conceptualization of collaboration understood by Southern CSOs.

In order to answer the general research question, I will address three sub-questions in the following chapters.

Chapter 4 will discuss what forms of collaboration are relevant for Kenyan CSOs that address disability issues. I will start this chapter by drawing a typology of the CSOs that were part of this research. For each type of CSO, I will then explain with whom they collaborate and what activities they undertake together. I will use this typology throughout all the analytical chapters. The second part of this chapter explains four forms of collaboration relevant to Kenyan CSOs: community-based collaboration, collaboration with institutions, collaboration in national and international networks, and individual relations with the global North. The chapter concludes with a summary of relevant collaborations for each type of CSO.

Chapter 5 will answer what Kenyan CSOs perceive as the added value of in-country collaboration. I will use the typology as introduced in chapter 4. For each type of CSO, I will discuss how they benefit from collaboration with different actors in Kenya and how these collaborative relationships strengthen their respective strategies. In addition, I will pay attention to the limitations that CSOs experience in fully realizing the potential added value.

In the final analytical chapter, I will pay attention to what Kenyan CSOs perceive to be the added value of collaboration with the Global North. The set-up is similar to chapter 5: I will discuss for each type of CSO what benefits flow from collaborating with the Global North and how the different forms of collaboration strengthen their respective strategies. Last, for each type of CSO, I will discuss what barriers they currently perceive and their wishes for strengthening the added value of collaboration with the Global North.

4. Relevant forms of collaboration for disability CSOs in Kenya

The current academic debate on local ownership has a Northern bias. It, therefore, fails to consider what forms of collaboration exist in Southern countries. The following chapter aims to enrich the academic discussion by elaborating on the forms of collaboration relevant to Kenyan CSOs that address disability issues.

In this chapter, I argue that multiple types of CSOs address disability issues in Kenya and that they have different priorities regarding collaboration. I start this chapter by presenting a typology of the various CSOs in this field (Chapter 4.1.). Next, I discuss with whom these CSOs collaborate and what they undertake together (Chapter 4.2.). Because this research has an inductive approach, I follow respondents' conceptualization of collaboration. I distinguish four different forms of collaboration that respondents perceived to be of importance: (a) community-based collaboration, (b) collaboration with institutions, (c) different networks, and (d) collaboration with the Global North.

I conclude this chapter by summarizing the different forms of collaboration that are relevant for each type of CSO.

4.1.Clusters of Kenyan CSOs

The research respondents represent diverse CSOs committed to enhancing the lives of people with disabilities. The interview results indicated a pattern in relevant collaborations for different groups of CSOs that employ similar activities.

The typology is based on the clustering of respondents who indicated similar partners to be relevant. I coupled general background information of the respondents' organizations with these clusters. I have found that an organization's strategy and the geographical reach of its activities are indicators to explain the variation in relevant collaborations.

In the following paragraphs, I will divide the respondents' organizations into three types of CSOs based on their strategies and the geographical reach of their activities. Let me first discuss the different strategies CSOs typically employ.

CSO strategies and geographical reach

Respondents in this research employed different strategies to improve the lives of people with disabilities. In order to meaningfully differentiate between the diverse strategies, I follow the work of Schuftan (1996) and differentiate between three main strategies.

Service delivery is a strategy to ensure that products or services reach less served beneficiaries. This strategy entails mobilizing resources, such as money, (volunteer) time, and energy, to transform the current suboptimal flow of services (Schuftan, 1996).

CSOs in this research are committed to improving the services provided to people with disabilities. They run a care home or a rehabilitation centre, or refer people with disabilities to the right institutions. By doing this, these CSOs try to ensure that people with disabilities have access to the proper health care, education, and employment. There is a gap in the existing structures that CSOs seek to fill.

Capacity-building organizations aim to 'empower and build the capacities of clients for self-help' (Schuftan, 1996, p. 579). Whereas the service delivery strategy assumes a more passive role of beneficiaries, capacity building stimulates clients to articulate their own needs and wishes.

Among CSOs in this research, this strategy entails forming and professionalizing groups of people with disabilities or groups of parents of children with disabilities. CSOs bring people together, educate them on their rights, guide them in the political landscape, or create access to platforms to incorporate their views.

Advocacy is a strategic means to include the "political voices of those currently underrepresented" (Schuftan, 1996, p. 579). This strategy entails producing demands for action on behalf of underrepresented people, making national and international institutions aware of current problems, and holding them accountable to commitments they have already made (Brown & Moore, 2001; Schuftan, 1996).

CSOs that employ this strategy raise awareness and lobby to remove the societal barriers people with disabilities face. These CSOs direct their activities at making taboos and barriers discussable. They point out the physical, attitudinal, and legal barriers that prevent the inclusion of people with disabilities and press for policy change.

Respondents often combine the two strategies of capacity building and advocacy (see Appendix F).

CSOs that employ the advocacy strategy are also engaged in mobilizing people in society and building the capacity of smaller organizations. I have chosen to group capacity-building strategies under the header of advocacy. CSOs choose, for example, to formalize groups in the communities and bring them along to strategic meetings with key persons in the community. Other CSOs invite community-based organizations (CBOs) and disabled people's organizations (DPOs) as members of advocacy networks and help them to professionalize. This will be further discussed in the next chapter.

The figure below (Figure 1) illustrates respondents' strategies. The figure shows service provision on the top and advocacy below. Respondents are grouped either below or under in the graph, or in the middle when they employ service provision and advocacy strategies.

The horizontal axis in Figure 1 illustrates the geographical reach of an organization's activities.

Organizations on the left side of the graph have a national presence via close ties with employees or network members throughout the country. When moving to the right, we encounter CSOs active in two counties or one bigger county (organizations 3, 4, and 5 in Figure 1). On the extreme right, we encounter organizations whose activities are limited to a specific town (organizations 2, 6, 7, and 13 in Figure 1) (see Appendix F for organizations' characteristics).

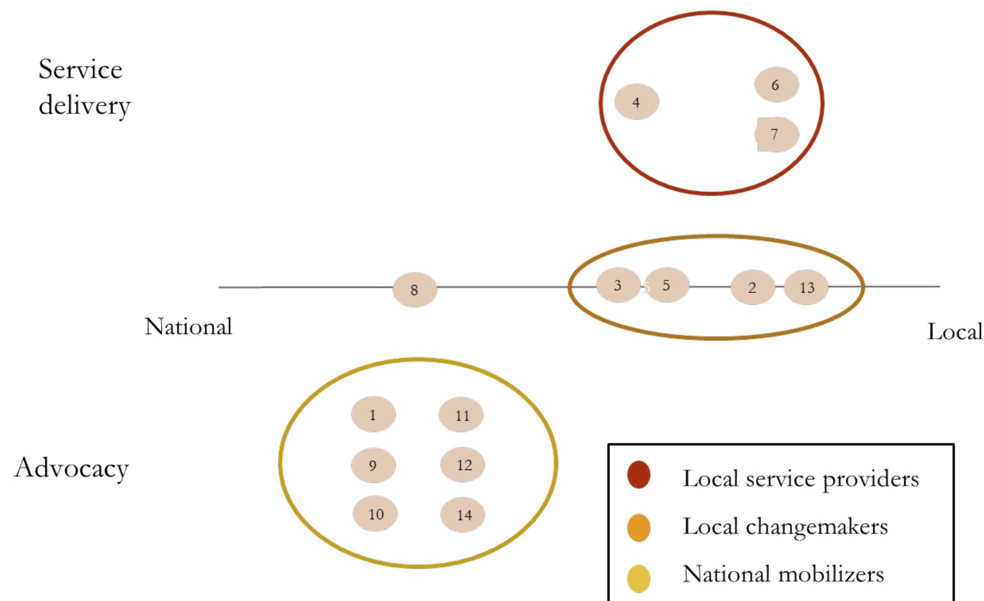

Figure 1. Types of CSOs addressing disability issues

Types of CSOs addressing disability issues

Respondents' organizations are divided into three clusters based on similarities in their strategies and the geographical reach of their activities.

In Figure 1, we have marked these clusters with circles. Based on these clusters, I have developed a typology of organizations that address disability issues in Kenya. These are ideal types delineated from reality – organizations carry out multiple and sometimes overlapping functions, some of which are less visible to outsiders. However, I will argue that it is crucial to make this distinction and emphasize differences between organization types because these have important implications for an organization's priorities regarding collaboration.

For analytic purposes, I have provided names to these clusters to indicate their respective strategies and reach of activities. I will use these names to keep referring to these clusters for the remainder of the analysis.

> **Local service providers** are a group of CSOs that target their town or county and are primarily concerned with providing services to people with disabilities. These CSOs run care homes or have a program that provides funding for medical treatment and education to people with disabilities.
>
> **Local changemakers** are a group of CSOs that direct their activities to their town or county, just like local service providers. They offer services to people with disabilities and refer them to other regional organizations and institutions. In addition, they employ activities to raise awareness about disabilities and the barriers that people with disabilities face and mobilize people in their communities to achieve local change.
>
> A significant part of the respondents could be called **national mobilizers**. These CSOs have committed themselves to advocacy and represent an even amount of CSOs speaking on behalf of people with disabilities and organizations run by people with disabilities (DPOs). National mobilizers engage in advocacy activities by organizing events and campaigns to raise awareness of the barriers people with disabilities face and the need to make society more inclusive. On top of that, most national mobilizers build the capacity of smaller organizations and offer them a platform.

CSO number 8 is an outlier (see Figure 1): this is the only respondent organization with a national reach committed to both service delivery and advocacy. It runs mobile medical clinics across Kenya and professionalizes local groups of people with disabilities.

It is also worth taking a second look at the empty parts of the figure. There are no CSOs with a national presence committed fully to service delivery. In order to provide quality services to people with disabilities, CSOs apparently choose to be physically present in the area. The empty space at the bottom right of the figure indicates that organizations with a strong community presence seldom commit themselves fully to advocacy.

4.2. Collaboration: who and what

Now that we have an overview of the diverse CSOs that address disability issues in Kenya, I will discuss what they perceive as relevant collaborations.

Respondents collaborate with various actors, from individuals in the community to Northern CSOs. The collaborations also differ in formality (from informal joint efforts to contractual relations) and complexity (from bilateral relations to networks with actors from diverse backgrounds). The findings are significant because they indicate that engagement in informal collaborations is just as relevant (and for some CSOs, maybe even more relevant). Second, I have found that Kenyan CSOs are members of diverse networks.

I have clustered the relevant collaborative relations into four groups: (a) community-based collaboration, (b) collaboration with institutions, (c) collaboration in national and international networks, and (d) collaboration with the global North. In the following paragraphs, I will elaborate more on these four types of collaboration by discussing the actors and activities involved.

a. Community-based collaboration

In this paragraph, I will discuss with whom CSOs collaborate in the community and what activities they undertake together. I will then return to the typology (Chapter 4.1.) and discuss for which types of CSOs this form of collaboration is relevant.

Bond and Carmola Hauf (2007) conceptualize **community-based collaboration** as referring 'specifically to collaborative efforts that are anchored in partnerships among individuals and groups within the community and, as such, bring together those stakeholders who affect and are affected by the issue at hand' (p. 568). Community-based collaboration has two distinctive qualities: those directly connected to the issue are joined together in search of a solution, and stakeholders from different parts of the system address the issue at hand. Depending on the issue, organizations can regard very different actors as relevant stakeholders (Bond & Carmola Hauf, 2007).

For CSOs that address disability issues, community-based collaboration is interlinked with community-based rehabilitation (CBR) programs. The idea behind this setup is to stimulate the involvement of community members in programs that aim to enhance the quality of life for people with disabilities. CBR programs include activities related to the strategy of service delivery, such as: "the selection and training of village-based CBR workers; the identification, assessment, and referral, where appropriate, of disabled children and adults; the design of aids and appliances by local craftsmen; and the teaching of simple rehabilitative techniques to family members for use with their disabled child" (Miles, 1996, p. 503) In addition, CBR programs can also include activities related to advocacy. Miles (1996) lists, for example, awareness-raising, public education, community development, and the promotion of integrated education (p. 503).

Although there is a general understanding of relevant activities to realize CBR, it is not entirely clear with whom CSOs collaborate to achieve CBR and in what activities they engage with whom.

Joint activities of CSOs and community actors

Respondents mentioned five actors in the community whom they collaborate with (see Table 2). Below, I will discuss what activities CSOs undertake together with these actors.

Community volunteers are individuals that have received training from the CSO and are now able to perform some tasks for the CSOs. The first step in service provision is to *identify* those people that are eligible and in need of additional services. Community volunteers undertake this task in remote regions and *refer* them to the specific CSO, who can follow up. One respondent explains:

> *"Sometimes you'll find they tend to hide their children and so for that purpose we find we have support groups in those regions. So the members of those groups are people we use as volunteers and we ask them to go and find out if there is any child with disability in their neighbourhood and refer them to us"* (Local changemaker with rehabilitation centre, September 2021).

In the long run, it is relevant for these CSOs to *monitor* how people are faring; this is a joint effort. In addition, community volunteers play a role in organizing *fundraising events* in the community. One respondent illustrates:

> *"So at the local level, when the child goes to the hospital, the people I was calling the volunteers are engaged to kind of now talk about the need that is there. So they arrange a meeting […] in the community […] They talk about the child and the bill, for instance the bill needs to be paid. Then they organize like a fundraising, we call it a fundraising drive"* (Local service provider with two care homes and an outreach program, October 2021) .

The collaboration between **teachers** and CSOs consists of joint *monitoring* of the welfare of children with disabilities and joint efforts to ensure that children with disabilities receive the *services* to which they are entitled. In this case, service provision entails providing access to education and ensuring that the school is an enabling environment. The primary responsibility for education lies with the schools. However, CSOs maintain regular contact with teachers to update how children are faring and if they must address problems together. One respondent illustrates:

> *"And then we are in constant contact with the schools we work with […] Do they have any issues that needs to be taken care of? We've had instances in the past where by the school had to close early because they looked and saw that they had shortage of food. […] And we've been able to intervene and ensure the school doesn't close and ensure that children get the education they require"* (Local changemaker with rehabilitation centre, September 2021).

Within the community, **churches** provide CSOs with a platform for *awareness-raising* events. Here, the church and CSO deliver a shared message on the need to include people with disabilities and mobilize people to get involved to support this mission. Sometimes, as in the case of the following respondent, no separate events are necessary, and regular attendance of church services has the same effect:

> *"[…] so in the church we have our own wing […] and there is a day the church has set aside, every 3rd Sunday of the month, our girls animate mass. They become the choir, they do the singing. Of course they can't do the reading but the other Christians including the choir stay aside and allow themselves to be led by our girls . That is one way that we collaborate and we feel we are included in the society"* (Local service provider with a care home, September 2021).

The collaboration with **parents** consists of *joint service provision* and *monitoring*. CSOs organize meetings with parents to exchange information and address worries and difficulties. By collaborating with parents, CSOs aim to motivate and help them to provide good care themselves. Simultaneously, the parents' input is valuable in identifying the barriers children with disabilities face. One respondent illustrates:

> *"Also, we usually have focus group discussions with parents, and we discuss about the right to education and showing them the importance of also giving their children education […] So during those meetings, a lot of topics come up for example, education and like, where do you take your child? Is the school, what are some of the barriers you're facing as a parent, […] and that's where information comes about"* (Local changemaker, DPO addressing psychosocial disabilities, November 2021).

Some CSOs choose to stimulate the formation and professionalization of parents' groups. In addition to gaining insight into parents' experiences, these CSOs also organize *awareness-raising* events in the community together with these parents' groups. One respondent illustrates:

> *"Then we go to the community and the parents are the lead of the awareness day. So we go to where they live and we act just like a backup for them. So, an example, last year, on our awareness day, we managed to go door to door […] And we gave them information about disabilities and different kinds of disabilities. And our parents were the lead in this, they would show us what to do and where to go and how to go about it. So we just supported with the funding and the resources"* (Local changemaker, DPO with community program, October 2021).

Last, some CSOs collaborate with **disabled people's groups** in the community. CSOs assist in forming and structuring disabled people's groups similarly to the parents' groups. They teach disabled people in the community about group processes but also teach them about their rights and guide them in the political landscape. Disabled people's groups *lobby for better services and create awareness* alongside the CSOs. One respondent illustrates:

> *"We work with disabled persons' groups themselves and equip them, empower them through training so that then they able to speak on their behalf […] We train them on their rights […] Then we also help them to raise their self-esteem; you know you can't just walk in a government office when you are looking like you are going there for help, for assistance maybe because you are hungry. So we help, we train them [to] be able to have the information at fingertips because one of the things we also empower them to have clear data of the different disabilities we have within our area; how many girls or boys or men or women and what kind of disabilities […]. So they are able to understand, to articulate all those things then they have all the details so when they go to a government office they are empowered, they speak with authority*" (Local changemaker with a rehabilitation centre and community program, September 2021).

Community-based collaboration			
	Local service providers	**Local changemakers**	**National mobilizers**
Community volunteers	Identification, referrals, monitoring, and fundraising	Identification, referrals, monitoring, and fundraising	
Teachers	Monitoring and service provision	Monitoring and service provision	
Churches	Awareness-raising	Awareness-raising	
Parents	Monitoring and service provision	Monitoring, service provision, and awareness-raising	
Disabled people's groups		Awareness-raising and lobbying	

Table 2. Community-based collaboration

Local CSOs and community-based collaboration

Table 2 summarizes community-based collaboration. Not surprisingly, only local service providers and local changemakers indicated that community-based collaboration is relevant to their organizations.

Local service providers' primary strategy is to ensure that people with disabilities receive decent services. By collaborating with community actors, a CSO tries to ensure that services reach remote areas and that children receive appropriate treatment at home and school. These CSOs also address the stigma that still surrounds disability. The church is the central platform to address and involve the community at large, and community volunteers play a role in maintaining relations with the community.

In addition to providing services, local changemakers deliberately try to change attitudes and practices in the community. Table 2 shows that local changemakers collaborate with parents' groups and disabled people's groups for advocacy purposes.

Table 2 suggests that national mobilizers have lost their connection with the community, but this is not necessarily the case. The table shows that these CSOs do not collaborate with these actors *directly*. However, by collaborating with CSOs that are active locally, national mobilizers indirectly try to change communities.

b. Collaboration with government agencies

The following paragraphs discuss what activities CSOs and government agencies undertake together. Because of the focus on disabilities, CSOs collaborate with health care, education, and social services agencies. It will conclude by differentiating between the types of CSOs.

Joint activities of CSOs and government agencies

CSOs and government agencies undertake joint activities directed at service provision and advocacy. Brass (2012) argues that because of the weak state of the Kenyan government, it has become necessary for both parties to join forces to ensure enough capacity to provide services.

The joint activities of CSOs and government agencies are grouped into three. We base the division on the level of involvement with the government. Table 3 provides an overview of the joint activities of CSOs and government agencies.

In the first instance, CSOs ensure service provision by working with the existing structures. They *refer* people with disabilities to the right institutions. One respondent illustrates:

> "*We are able to connect them with staff in the ministry of health. They assist them to get some services and if they need treatment they are treated, if there are drugs that they need they are given drugs*" (Local service provider with two rehabilitation centres, September 2021).

For some CSOs, the relationship entails more than mere referrals. These CSOs undertake *joint projects* with government agencies. CSOs contribute to the execution of government projects to ensure that they are disability-inclusive or plan and execute outreach activities with government agencies, such as assessments or meeting camps in the community. With these jointly organized camps, CSOs aim to ensure that services reach all:

> *"So we have a number of teams that come together for a common assessment, to increase the magnitude of service. So that the same client cannot go for educational assessment today, tomorrow he'll go for training on disability rights, another one goes for referral. So we bring them together for purpose of a holistic service"* (National CSO with medical clinics and advocacy program (organization number 8), October 2021).

In addition, CSOs are also involved in *the planning and design* of government policies.

In line with the findings of Brass (2012); and Ekirapa, Mgomella, and Kyobutungi (2012), CSOs are members of committees and stakeholder fora where they try to influence policies but also have a role in the implementation of programs. There are national fora and committees, but these can also be found at the village level. This form of organization ought to make institutions more responsive to communities' needs and ensure more equitable access to services (Ekirapa et al., 2012). For these purposes, CSOs gather data on the prevalence of disability, existing needs, and current gaps in service delivery. There is a preference for networks instead of bilateral collaboration for these activities.

One respondent collaborates with the county in a forum:

> *"We normally do social audit for the county government project and then after that we share the findings of the social audit with recommendations, where we now have an accountability forum with the county government officials, where we share with them the findings and then they are able to tell us that we are going to do this and this as per your recommendations"* (Local service provider with two rehabilitation centres, September 2021).

Last, CSOs try to *change existing governing structures* because the current system generally excludes people with disabilities.

In order to change current practices, CSOs educate government officials on disabilities. In addition, they stimulate the formation of platforms where people with disabilities are represented and can influence policymaking. For example, CSOs merge disabled people's organizations into their advocacy networks or push for the inclusion of people with disabilities in decision-making bodies. One CSO mobilized people in its community to take a seat on a regional board:

> *"We were able to select seven persons with disabilities who are now recognized by the county government as a board for the disabled of [county]. And here, whenever there is anything, a project that the government is doing in this region, they have to invite the seven people to represent persons with disabilities' interests before they do anything. […] and whenever the government is doing anything then the people in board will be able to put on their view, you know will be able to be well represented, be considered for anything that its budgeted […] we have that group team there to help our interest"* (Local changemaker with community program, September 2021).

Collaboration with government agencies			
	Local service providers	**Local changemakers**	**National mobilizers**
Government agencies	Service delivery, and planning and design of government programs	Service delivery, planning and design of government programs, and changing structures	Service delivery, planning and design of government programs, and changing structures

Table 3. Collaboration with government agencies

CSOs and differing level of involvement with government agencies

Table 3 summarizes the joint activities based on the typology of CSOs that address disability issues.

All types of CSOs actively engage relevant agencies: they do not merely maintain relations to ease referrals but also provide input for programs and undertake joint activities with government agencies. By collaborating with government agencies, CSOs try to ensure that existing services reach people with disabilities and that future programs are disability-inclusive. Local changemakers and national mobilizers have an advocacy strategy. These CSOs also undertake activities with government agencies that change existing structures that exclude people with disabilities.

To influence the government's decisions and governance structures, CSOs seldom provide their input alone. Often these activities take place in networks. These are discussed below.

c. National and international networks

As pointed out above, respondents indicated that membership in a network is an important means to influence government decisions. The results show that CSOs are members of multiple networks, some of which have not received much academic attention.

In the academic literature there is much focus on collaboration in **international advocacy networks**. In today's globalized society, it is a logical step to join forces across borders and address injustices internationally. International advocacy networks include international, national, and local organizations and movements. By linking domestic and international arenas – sharing information and campaigning across borders, the actors in these networks aim to address injustices and foster change in both spheres (Keck & Sikkink, 2014).

Current literature pays relatively little attention to the activities in national networks**.** As an exception, Kraemer, Whiteman, and Banerjee (2013) coin the concept of **national advocacy networks** and highlight the relevance of within-country strategic alliances and activities. These national advocacy networks consist of professional organizations and less formalized groups that jointly challenge the existing national order. In their study of CBOs, van Stapele, Woensdregt, Nencel, and Rwigi (2019) refer to national advocacy networks where NGOs and state organizations engage in strategic partnerships. The goal of this relationship is to enable NGOs to inform policies and interventions.

According to respondents in this research, the in-country networks in Kenya are more diverse. There are not only national networks but also local networks. On top of that, respondents are active in networks that do not engage in advocacy. This diversity is not brought forward in the existing literature.

The following paragraph will summarize the relevant networks for these CSOs. I will make a distinction based on the level and the type of activities that members of these networks undertake together. I will start locally and work my way up to the international advocacy network. Last, I will show that our typology of CSOs is helpful: different types of CSOs regard different networks as important.

Joint activities in networks

The first network is situated at a community level. I have labelled this as a **grassroots network** (see Table 4) to emphasize the common denominator: members have ties with the community. In grassroots networks, members operate in the same geographical area, but the issues they address could differ significantly. Because of their proximity, members know each other personally: this is the glue of the network. These networks include other CSOs with ties in the community, schools, health institutions, and local government officials. One respondent illustrates:

> *"Some are schools, others are NGOs, others are small projects, others are big projects. So they are varied. […] Yes, a diverse group of people, but they're all playing a big role in their communities, they are different communities in essence"* (Local changemaker with a rehabilitation centre and community program, October 2021).

The network members do not come together for joint advocacy; they operate in a network to share contacts and resources. One respondent indicated that fostering these local networks and maintaining relations is a means to mobilize the local population and stimulate local ownership of CSO activities:

"[We] want to maintain the links to the community, we want to have a network, we want people we can work together with, we want to share what we are doing as [an organization] with the outside community. So that then the members who have come, the journey we have gone with them, then the community is able to see, and hear and learn and even take part in the development and in the processes" (Local service provider with a care home, October 2021).

CSOs are members of these networks because it eases service delivery. Because network members know each other's activities, they can share resources or organize joint fundraising (this will be discussed further in Chapter 5). In addition, CSOs that address disability issues use this network to refer people to institutions that can provide additional services to their activities:

"Like now maybe they say there is a free operation for example in [health facility], so we are able to refer our children there, where they go and get surgeries, corrective surgeries at a very fair, fair price if I can call it that way" (Local service provider with a disability program in diocese, September 2021).

Respondents are also part of local networks where members come together to foster the inclusion of people with disabilities. I have labelled these **local advocacy networks**. Although the goal of the network is different, members are the same type of actors as in the grassroots network. An important addition is the participation of parents' groups and disabled people's groups (discussed in the paragraph on community-based collaboration).

These networks stimulate frequent and informal contact with community actors (this is in line with the findings of Reith (2010)). CSOs use this network to engage in strategic meetings with key actors, such as school boards and health officials, to foster dialogue and influence policy. These meetings could have either an informal or formal character. Institutions better recognize the networks as a whole than individual organizations. As members of these networks, the disability CSOs are approached by institutions for consultation. They deliver statistics and additional evidence to inform public policy. Within these networks, we also encounter the fora where CSOs provide input in the planning and designing of government policies (discussed in the paragraph on collaboration with government agencies).

During these meetings, CSOs try to bring to the forefront the needs of the communities where they are active. Often, CSOs are accompanied by parents' groups and disabled people's groups. They discuss common agendas and advise agencies based on their day-to-day experience. As a network, the community can gather evidence on compliance with existing laws and hold governments accountable or press for policy change *(Brown & Moore, 2001)*. In the example below, the local advocacy network pressed for the participation of people with disabilities in public decision-making:

"So in Kenya, there is no single law that can ever be implemented or be passed in the parliament without the participation of everyone. And in this case the PWDs. […] So we went with the DPOs and the network and were able to challenge the county assembly, the clerk that is, that you've been having public participation yes, but you've never had any submissions from the people with disability. And therefore this is what brought in the essence of them being on the table, because the groups already existed, but methods and ways of on which they were participate actively were still missing. So this was anchored in the law, so it was only a matter of implementation that it took place" (Local changemaker with rehabilitation centre and community program, October 2021).

In addition, a CSO organizes events and campaigns with other community actors to mobilize support. One respondent illustrates:

"Sometimes, you know, we have like December 3rd when we celebrate the day of disability. So we identify one place and all of us, all stakeholders report there, actually we fundraise together and we meet together and in this place it will be information giving or creating awareness and doing everything. We do it together other than doing it as one organization, we now come together and do it as a network. And it has succeeded very well" (Local changemaker with rehabilitation centre and community program, October 2021).

National advocacy networks foster the inclusion of people with disabilities nationwide. The membership of these networks includes CSOs, government and health institutions, and private companies. Noteworthy here is the membership of Disabled People's Organizations. These are more professionalized and independent operating organizations compared to disabled people's groups. Notably, among Kenyan actors, they are recognized as fully functioning organizations.

It is helpful to make a distinction between government-led and autonomous networks. These government-led networks did not start from an intrinsic wish of CSOs to collaborate; instead, network membership is a precondition for funding. One respondent illustrates:

> *Interviewer: "Why did you decide to become a member of this network?" Respondent: "Number one, because I had to. It's a requirement of the government. […] I think if you need to get government funding or government support, you need it. It's an arm of the government, it's like a parastatal of the government. So for you to get government support or government recognition, you need to be identified with it"* (Local changemaker, DPO, October 2021).

The above contrasts with autonomous national advocacy networks, which originated from a shared wish to address disability issues together. These networks come into existence when there is momentum to address an issue and dissolves when the urgency fades:

> *"You find that they come together and create a network – a loose network not really registered but that is just to drive their agenda space, their agenda. Like now in the country Kenya next year we are going into elections and already you are seeing networks coming out from different organizations […] so what happens with such kinds of networks is that when the activity around which they are formed is over then they also fizzle out - they die out"* (National mobilizer who is currently chairing an international advocacy network - on existing networks in the country, October 2021).

Respondents provided several examples of joint activities in these national advocacy networks. CSOs and schools bundled forces in a committee, which was able to co-write chapters of educational policy documents. CSOs and companies set up a joint campaign to create awareness of barriers that people with disabilities encounter and ease access to assistive devices. CSOs (including DPOs) initiated a campaign to create awareness of voting rights to foster inclusive elections.

> *"So the national network was organizing forums of which people with disabilities can be engaged with the government to look at the referendum. And so I got the call to join the advisory team and I was able to give my advice and give my opinions"* (Local changemaker, DPO, October 2021).

Last, CSOs included in this research elaborated on their membership in **international advocacy networks.** These networks include Northern CSOs, Kenyan CSOs, and government and health institutions.

There are two types of networks: autonomous networks and networks created by Northern CSOs. Currently, many Northern CSOs have adopted a 'country up' focus as a way to relate to their partners in the South (Goodman (2016in); (MGJ van Wessel et al., 2018, p. 18). From this position, Northern CSOs seek to build the capacity of their partners through activities such as 'resource transfer, trainings and organizational strengthening' (Wetterberg, Brinkerhoff, and Hertz (2015) in: Van Wessel et al., 2018, p.18). Respondents are part of such international advocacy networks through their partnership with a Northern CSO. The network members are scattered all over the country; hence they mainly engage in exchange activities; visiting each other's organizations and getting a feel of each other's strategies. As a network, the respondents joined a campaign initiated by the Northern CSO to advocate for inclusive education across the country. However, these advocacy-related activities are not a recurring phenomenon to date.

"It is one of the ideas that the network has, though we have not been successful in doing a project together. But it is one of the things that we really want to do. You know, like write proposals together but we have not managed to do any of that. […] We need leaders who are you know are able to push the other members you know to be more committed […]We realized that sometimes the leaders of an organizations do not attend the meetings. The meetings are attended by, you know, representatives, but sometimes the representatives are not able to take back the right information to the leaders for them to be able to you know make certain decisions" (Local changemaker with a rehabilitation centre and a community program, September 2021).

The situation above contrasts with the international advocacy networks that started from an intrinsic wish to advocate as a network. Northern CSOs are among the many actors that decided to join these networks. One respondent explains:

"Actually when it comes to advocacy the Kenyan organizations decide the agenda, they set their agenda. […] Of course, international organizations would have their interest. So in the engagement we have to decide how do you also integrate the interest of the other organizations into the local agenda that they stand for. Otherwise we've not seen a situation where a local organization is entirely championing an agenda of an international organization a 100 percent. That has to be contextualized, yeah" (National mobilizer who is chairing an international advocacy network, October 2021).

Although Northern CSOs do exercise less power over Kenyan CSOs in these networks, the unique position of Northern CSOs allows the network to address issues both nationally and internationally (we will discuss this further in chapter 6 on the added value of collaboration with Northern CSOS).

Members of these international advocacy networks share information, form consortia to execute joint projects, and set up campaigns. These campaigns can have a national character (as in the example that follows) or merge with a global campaign, for example, as part of a women's movement. One national mobilizer shares:

"When we work with organizations based in Kenya we are able to lobby, to advocate on issues locally, nationally but again when we work again from organizations from the West we are able again to take our issues to another level, at international level at global level, yeah" (National mobilizer – DPO who is a member of multiple networks, November 2021).

Types of CSOs and different network membership

Table 4 provides an overview of the four types of networks and the types of CSOs participating.

Worth noticing is that CSOs with a local reach do not participate in national networks, and CSOs with a national reach do not participate in local networks. Second, respondents indicate that membership in some national and international networks is a precondition for funding, either from the government or from a Northern CSO.

Collaboration in networks			
	Local service providers	**Local changemakers**	**National mobilizers**
Grassroots network	Mobilizing resources, and service delivery	Mobilizing resources, service delivery, and awareness-raising events	
Local advocacy network		Strategic meetings, awareness-raising events, and joint campaigns	
National advocacy network			Strategic meetings, and joint campaigns
International advocacy network		Exchange visits, and joint campaigns	Joint campaigns

Table 4. Collaboration in networks

d. Bilateral collaboration with the global North

This paragraph will elaborate on the fourth and final form of collaboration that respondents regard as important: collaboration with the global North.

As discussed above, local changemakers and national mobilizers encounter Northern CSOs in international advocacy networks. Sometimes Northern CSOs are among many actors in international advocacy networks (as in the networks important for national mobilizers). In other instances, we see that Northern CSOs themselves initiate a network (as local changemakers indicate), just like the Kenyan government does.

In addition to these multistakeholder collaborations, Kenyan CSOs collaborate bilaterally with Northern actors. Respondents indicated two types of collaboration: charity-based collaboration with Northern individuals and project-based collaboration with Northern CSOs.

Joint activities of CSOs and Northern actors

For some CSOs, private giving and charity are important ways to relate to the Global North.

Charity-based collaboration refers to those relationships where one (person or institution) provides gifts to one (person or institution) who is to be in need (Hately, 1999, p. 4). Respondents indicated that individuals from the Global North get in touch with the CSO through shared membership in a bigger (church) community or personal connections. People often establish charity-based collaboration when visiting the project site.

> *Interviewer: "How do you come into contact with these people in the (European country)? […] Respondent: "We've had friends who have been visiting us in [town], […] we were working with them here building schools. […] So they have been visiting us. So one friend comes and he introduces you to another friend and another friend and another friend so that is how we have been managing to do all these things"* (Local service provider with medical facilities, September 2021).

Once established, this collaboration can last a long time and thus are a solid base. Another respondent has maintained relations for over ten years after an initial visit:

> *"But we have had people who have been with us for the last ten years and they have supported us and they have kind of always fundraising, even on our behalf and they're sending a bit of money. […] I would say that will be the assurance. That they have always been there, maybe they have seen what we have been doing, because some of them have come here to experience […] And they have been able to maintain that relationship. […] So most of the donors who we have had over the years are individuals who are very convinced about what we do and they were really happy to support us"* (Local service provider who runs two care homes, October 2021).

The respondent further explains that these Northern donors do not interfere in the design and execution of a CSO's activities:

> *"I am not able to point out at any projects that we have been able to work with international organizations […] They have been able to support us in our projects directly by giving money, but not at the level of implementing same project"* (Local service provider who runs two care homes, October 2021).

The relationship above contrasts with the project-based collaborations between Northern CSOs and Kenyan CSOs. The academic debate on local ownership focuses on these types of relations – between *organizations* in the North and South.

Project-based collaboration can entail activities designed to educate powerholders in the community on child rights or the realization of a vocational centre for youth with disabilities. These projects run for multiple years. A respondent explained how the two organizations decided to realize physiotherapy outreach clinics jointly. Negotiation took place to settle the different phases of this project and the responsibilities of the two parties. In addition, they set targets to quantify the project's impact.

Although respondents referred to these collaborations as *partnerships*, studies on this phenomenon show that activities often reveal a wish for control and conditionality on the side of the Northern CSO: the 'partnership paradox' (W. J. Elbers, 2012). The results show instances where Kenyan and Northern CSOs negotiate areas of common ground and interests. The quote that follows shows two interesting aspects. The Kenyan CSO had something to sell that the Northern CSO did not have yet. The Kenyan CSO approached the Northern CSO to point out additional input it could offer to the Northern CSO. Second, the Northern CSO had an open attitude. Instead of clinging to existing formulas, the Northern CSO was open to trying new activities and following the Kenyan CSO's suggestions.

> *"So if they [Northern CSO] have a program on education and you are working on education, then they find synergy, they find a way of merging the programs. So I find it better in terms… it's easier in terms of getting resources and getting the financial backup. But also on my side it's supporting them in the number of kids they want to achieve. […] So last year we were working during COVID on hygiene and wash programs and everyone was like, wash hands, wash hands. And I was like, "have you thought about children with disabilities?" and they [Northern CSO] said, "no, we haven't." One thing I admire about NGOs, especially those who are not in the disability movement, is they acknowledge they don't know, and they have the willingness to learn. So you find for them, it's like, we have been doing education for years and we have never thought about special education and capacity building of children with disability." So it's a place of learning for both DPOs and NGOs* (Local changemaker, DPO, October 2021).

Project-based partnerships involve executing activities to realize the project and the activities necessary to justify the project funding. For Kenyan CSOs, fulfilling these conditions and maintaining good relations are essential to ensure future funding. These activities include reporting, monitoring, updating, and attending training sessions and conferences. The latter two activities are exemplary for the understanding among Northern CSOs that they need to be a mentor and thus need to equip Southern CSOs with enough tools in order for them to take up a leading role in the future (MGJ van Wessel et al., 2018).

Some CSOs negotiate in this space. While they seek to comply with these conditions and hence be a trustworthy and accountable partner, they also use these relations of trust to insert their own agenda (Syal, van Wessel, & Sahoo, 2021). For example, respondents indicated that they try to steer mandatory activities to their benefit. Reports written for one Northern CSO are adapted to fit the requirement of the other. A CSO presents a testimonial story to both a Northern CSO and local media, or program managers bring forth wishes among the staff for a specific type of training session that they consider urgent.

In other cases, however, Northern CSOs leave little room for bottom-up initiatives, and Kenyan CSOs are left just to execute the work. Although this was not discussed often during the interviews, one respondent articulated this clearly:

> *"They [Northern CSOs] will usually, they already have like their plan and this is how we're going to do this together. They'll usually stipulate everything and then go like, do you want to do this together? Do you have other suggestions? And how soon can we get this done? And they usually have their timelines and do their things and to move on to the next maybe issue so that they can amplify their own agendas"* (National mobilizer – on the difference between Northern CSOs and Kenyan organizations, November 2021).

Types of CSOs and collaboration with the global North

Table 5 provides an overview of the two forms of bilateral collaboration with the Global North.

Local service providers and local changemakers indicated that charity is a beneficial way to relate to Northern actors. Noteworthy is the finding that local service providers do not engage in bilateral collaborations with Northern CSOs (this will be addressed in Chapter 6).

Local changemakers and national mobilizers collaborate with Northern CSOs in joint projects. These project-based collaborations entail additional activities (these will be addressed in Chapter 6).

Collaboration with the Global North			
	Local service providers	**Local changemakers**	**National mobilizers**
Charity-based collaboration	Donations and visits	Donations and visits	
Project-based collaboration		Joint projects	Joint projects

Table 5. Collaboration with the Global North

4.3. Conclusion

This chapter has discussed what Kenyan disability CSOs regard as relevant forms of collaboration.

It has proven helpful to distinguish between different CSOs based on their locality and strategy. These are indicators of the different priorities among respondents. Table 6 provides an overview of bilateral and multi-stakeholder collaboration forms that are relevant for each type of CSO.

Priorities for collaboration		
Type of CSO	**Bilateral collaboration**	**Multi-stakeholder collaboration**
Local service providers	Community-based collaboration Collaboration with government agencies	Grassroots networks
	Charity-based collaboration	
Local changemakers	Community-based collaboration Collaboration with government agencies	Grassroots networks Local advocacy networks
	Charity-based collaboration Project-based collaboration	International advocacy networks
National mobilizers	Collaboration with government agencies	National advocacy networks
	Project-based collaboration	International advocacy networks

Table 6. Priorities for collaboration

Local service providers prioritize maintaining close ties with actors in their community. Activities are directed at ensuring service provision and at creating awareness.

Worth noticing here is the membership in grassroots networks. These have not been studied extensively before. Members in the network are active in the same community, albeit with a different focus. Local service providers meet institutions to whom they make referrals for additional services and meet actors with whom they exchange resources.

A second significant finding is that local service providers primarily engage in charity-based collaboration with Northern actors. These are durable relations and often originate from visits to the project site.

Local changemakers collaborate primarily with community actors and, contrary to local service providers, collaborate with Northern CSOs. These CSOs distinguish themselves from local service providers with their additional advocacy strategy.

This strategy explains the different priorities in bilateral collaboration, visible in the parents' and disabled people's groups. They collaborate with these groups in awareness-raising and lobbying. Second, the advocacy strategy explains local changemakers' membership in local advocacy networks. As members of these networks, they can provide input to change policies and organize joint campaigns.

It should be noted that local changemakers engage in project-based collaboration with Northern CSOs, for example, to educate about disability rights or to jointly realize a vocational centre. The results show that negotiations take place to settle the conditions for these joint endeavours.

The last type of CSO is the national mobilizer. Their priority is to collaborate with other CSOs in joint advocacy.

Membership in (inter)national advocacy networks is essential to influence policies. National mobilizers and local changemakers are members of advocacy networks, in addition to bilateral collaboration with government agencies. The nature of bilateral collaboration is focused more on coordination and planning, whereas the activities in networks are directed at influencing existing structures. The networks are a means for CSOs to participate in fora and organize joint campaigns with other CSOs.

Thus, this chapter has directed attention to the diverse actors and collaboration structures relevant to Kenyan disability CSOs. The results show different foci explained by the nature of the CSO.

This general understanding of the relevant collaborative relations is the stepping stone to discussing their added value. Chapter 5 discusses the added value of in-country collaboration, and chapter 6 the added value of collaboration with the Global North.

5. The added value of collaboration within Kenya

The previous chapter examined the different forms of collaboration relevant to Kenyan disability CSOs. This chapter discusses what makes collaboration relevant. The focus is on the added value of collaboration within Kenya. If Northern CSOs want to accommodate Southern priorities, it is helpful to understand collaboration patterns within a Southern country and what value these add to Southern CSOs.

I will work with the typology of CSOs introduced in chapter 4. For each type of CSO, I will indicate what benefits flow from collaboration and what roles these relations fulfil in enabling these CSOs' strategies.

First, I will clarify the different components of the added value.

5.1. Added value

In order to establish the added value of collaboration, I wanted to gain insights into two components, as explained in our conceptual framework.

Respondents were asked how collaboration benefitted their organizations. The answers resulted in rather direct results for the organizations. However, maintaining collaborative relations also positively impacts an organization’s strategies. I tried to capture this by including the enabling roles partners fulfil.

Benefits of collaboration

Respondents listed a wide variety of benefits that can flow from fruitful collaboration. These results did not fit an existing categorization.

As the conceptual framework discusses, benefits flow from complementarity among collaborating actors. Existing categorizations proved to be problematic for the answers given by respondents in this research. Let us take the example of the possibility of receiving training as network members. Does this collaboration result in new qualities (improved ability) or new resources (knowledge) (Margit Van Wessel et al., 2020)? Is this training possibility an additional resource (knowledge), activity (the possibility to attend), or capability (improved ability) (Bryson et al., 2006)?

Hence, I have developed a new categorization to avoid duplicating or excluding benefits and reflect respondents' meanings as accurately as possible. This categorization reflects a more pragmatic approach, and there are thus some similarities with the work of Abrahamsen (2004) and O’Brien and Evans (2017).

The table below presents an overview of four categories of benefits and corresponding sub-categories. Throughout the text, I will underline references to the columns, and their corresponding sub-categories are written cursively.

Benefits of collaboration in Kenya			
Cost-saving	**Learning**	**Increased network**	**Increased impact**
Sharing responsibilities	Benchmarking	Contacts	Increased leverage
Combined fundraising	Training	Visibility	Coordination
Funding	Updating	Access to donors	
Expertise	New strategies		
Material			
Services			

Table 7. Benefits of collaboration in Kenya

I shall clarify the labels that are used in table 7.

In some circumstances, collaboration allows a CSO to save costs directly. For example, when the partner takes on the responsibility to execute necessary tasks, such as a school board that ensures its school has ramps. I differentiate between 'funding', where a CSO receives the money directly from a partner, and 'combined fundraising', where CSOs team up to write joint proposals to access funding. Last, a partner can directly make its expertise (skills), material (physical objects/devices), or services available to a CSO. This is cost-saving as these are offered for free or against reduced rates.

Collaboration offers learning opportunities. Benchmarking is the practice of learning from others' failures and successes in order to improve one's organization. Training allows one to learn new skills (for example, bookkeeping), while ideas for new strategies are captured directly from contact with others (for example, incorporating learning disabilities). Updating allows one to learn about relevant developments in the field – for example, how the COVID pandemic has affected people with disabilities in different areas.

Collaborating with a specific partner can snowball and enable a CSO to access new networks. Directly, a partner can provide information and contact details on other interesting actors. The association with a partner can indirectly improve a CSO's visibility in the broader field. Finally, engagement with specific actors can be a precondition for a CSO to access donors. This is the case, for example, when donors specifically target consortia or networks as potential interesting actors for collaboration.

Last, CSOs can amplify their impact by joining forces. Collaboration can result in increased leverage by joint protection of interests or an amplified voice. Coordination of complementary levels means that a CSO can harmonize its activities with actors in other places or levels of society. A CSO can, for example, partner with actors in a different region or have close contact with different experts on education to enlarge its impact.

Enabling roles of partners

In order to capture the added value of collaboration, I have also examined the enabling roles partners fulfil in realizing the CSOs' objectives.

The typology of disability CSOs in Kenya (see Chapter 4.1.) has already directed the attention to the organizational goals of respondents in this research. They are related to a CSOs' strategy and targeted locality of activities.

Based on the analysis of joint activities (see Chapter 4.2.) and perceived benefits of collaboration (see Table 6), I have distinguished six enabling roles that partners fulfil. I have partly used the overview as used by W. S. Elbers, L. (2020) and have complemented these with new roles based on the insights of this research. I have provided an overview of these roles in Table 8. I will refer to these in the paragraphs that follow.

Enabling roles	
Mobilzer	Establishes connections and conducts dialogue in communities; stimulates communication between CSO and community; participates and assists in project events
Knowledge broker	Researches, analyses, and disseminates knowledge to the CSO
Cooperative participant	Contributes as much as possible to the agenda of the CSO
Allies	Helps and supports other people who are part of a group that is treated badly or unfairly
Performers	Directly performs the necessary tasks
Coordinator	Organizes the different activities and people involved in something so that it works effectively
Funder	Provides money to pay for an activity, event, or group
Connector	Links CSO to new audiences or arenas

Table 8. Enabling roles of CSOs' partners in Kenya (based on Elbers 2020)

In the following paragraphs, I will distinguish between local service providers, local changemakers, and national mobilizers (see Chapter 4). For each type of CSO, I will discuss the benefits of collaboration and how their partners enable the CSOs to realize their core mission.

5.2. Local service providers and personal connections

This paragraph will discuss how local service providers benefit from collaboration.

I will start by discussing the benefits of community-based collaboration. I then proceed to discuss the benefits of collaboration with government agencies, and last, I will discuss collaboration in grassroots networks. A shared characteristic of these forms of collaboration is that the proximity and regular contact with others allows for building personal connections. I will also examine local service providers' barriers regarding collaboration with other CSOs. I conclude this paragraph by pointing out how collaboration enables local service providers to realize their strategies.

Community-based collaboration

Table 9 shows that community-based collaboration is cost-saving. Local service providers work together with community volunteers. The CSO can delegate *responsibilities* to community volunteers, enabling local service providers to reach out in remote regions because these volunteers handle the first contacts and referrals (see Chapter 4.2. on community-based collaboration). Volunteers also *raise funds* in the community. Local service providers use this money when they have to pay for the treatment of beneficiaries in public institutions.

Collaboration with teachers is cost-saving because once they are aware of the need to include children with disabilities, they share *responsibilities* for proper care and come up with ideas to provide an inclusive environment. In addition, it results in learning opportunities. Teachers provide *updates* on a child's progress and additional needs. One respondent illustrates:

> *"At the moment what is active in terms of regular collaboration with the school is basically about referring the children, the issue of checking how the child can be supported in school, if there are some initiatives that can be happen or should happen at home. Then there is that mutual collaboration in the school and the program towards that child. So that is what is actually very regular and actively happening in the school"* (Local service provider, October 2021).

Among two out of three respondents, churches were the centre point of the community. This is cost-saving because CSOs can share *responsibilities* with the church. Churches can provide CSOs with a platform from which they can address a larger public. The church itself can be a model of the desired change by actively involving people with disabilities in church-related activities (see Chapter 4.2. on community-based collaboration).

Local service providers pay attention to the children's family setting to ensure it has a safe and enabling basis for further development. Collaboration with parents offers learning opportunities because it provides these CSOs with *updated* information. Because of the stigma surrounding disability and questions regarding a child's development, CSOs often group parents. The groups allow parents to share experiences and make it easier for a CSO to provide parents with information on disabilities and the child's needs. Here, the community volunteers also play an important role because they can visit individual families and update the CSO on changing needs.

Collaboration with government agencies

Collaboration with government agencies is cost-saving (see Table 9). Local service providers can access *services* for free or under favourable conditions.

In Kenya, people with disabilities can receive small bursaries once registered with the government. CSOs help people with disabilities in this registration process. For CSOs, it is beneficial when local officers know them; this speeds up processes and allows CSOs to benefit from certain government programmes. One respondent illustrates:

"So we agreed with the local government that because this is a charitable home, he will be giving me some people they come and work so like during the Covid 19 they cleared our farm, they cleaned the compound so it was very easy for me to run without the expenses going to the farm or to the compound. So we have worked hand in hand with local government, they also when they have food stuffs they call me to go and collect" (Local service provider with care home, September 2021).

Another respondent identified similar benefits from regular contact with medical facilities in its proximity. This recurring collaboration builds a trust relationship and enables a CSO to access *services* on favourable terms.

"But from our experience most of the children and our beneficiaries come from very humble backgrounds […] And so we have had an arrangement with at least three hospitals around our place of where we work, and these hospitals have given us a possibility where if we have a child with disability going to the hospital, they are treated first. Then later the hospital sends an invoice and then we are able to go back to the family and together with the community we do a mobilization or fundraising to clear the bill" (Local service provider with two care homes and an outreach program, October 2021).

Collaboration in networks

Table 9 indicates the benefits of grassroots networks. Local service providers find it cost-saving to be members of grassroots networks. Network members can engage in *combined fundraising*, for example, when there is a medical bill. A surplus of *material* is shared in the network, as seen in the example below. When applying as a network, it is easier to obtain *services*. For example, network members jointly applied for disability registration cards to speed up processes.

"Some of our members are working in a hospital, […] so [it] tells us that they are doing free surgeries for children with disabilities and I had some that required corrective surgeries so I had to approach [the] hospital and the girls went through surgeries free of charge but I would not have known this if the item was not put in the group" (Local service provider with a care home, September 2021).

The quote above also indicates that networks offer learning opportunities. Members are *updated* on relevant developments.

Last, local service providers can increase their impact. The *coordination* of activities results in better and more efficient service provision.

Local service providers and benefits of collaboration					
		Cost-saving	**Learning**	**Increased network**	**Increased impact**
Community-based collaboration	Community volunteers	Funding, and sharing responsibilities			
	Teachers	Sharing responsibilities	Updating		
	Churches	Sharing responsibilities			
	Parents	Sharing responsibilities	Updating		
Collaboration with government agencies		Services			
Collaboration in networks	Grassroots networks	Combined fundraising, material, and services	Updating		Coordination

Table 9. Local service providers and benefits of collaboration

Barriers to collaboration with other CSOs

Local service providers very rarely team up with other CSOs. The results included one instance where this happened.

One respondent recalled a project executed in collaboration with another CSO – a donor initiated this collaboration. This collaboration resulted in several forms of learning. The two CSOs both focused on empowering young people with disabilities. Part of the arrangement included *benchmarking*, and here, the CSO became aware that the other had taken additional steps to reach its goal. They exchanged similar challenges they were facing or that the other had overcome in the past. The engagement in a new, shared project and the exchange of experiences helped the CSO to open up to *new strategies* it could employ in the future:

> *"They're doing something about empowering young adults with disabilities. And we were really attracted to that because we are also having the same kind of approach or the desire. […] We found this organization […] has already taken some steps in empowering the youth and all that. And so a number of members of the community went there for learning purposes, kind of benchmarking to see what they're doing so that then we able to learn from them"* (Local service provider with two care homes and an outreach program, October 2021).

The engagement with other CSOs is limited to these occasional joint projects. The specific strategy of these CSOs does not incorporate network activities outside the community, while at the same time, these CSOs' strengths remain invisible to outsiders.

The priority of these CSOs is to maintain close contact with people in the community. This presence and visibility generate many benefits for these CSOs. Because their primary occupation with providing care, these CSOs do not budget for networking activities. Hence, they simply cannot allocate staff and funding to attend meetings in the wider region. This lack of budgeting is a broader problem among CSOs in Kenya: many CSOs first fulfil their mandate – the one which legitimizes their existence and for which they receive funding. Collaboration and networking are only secondary important when all other things have been done. One respondent with a national presence illustrates:

> *"Everyone is busy trying to implement different projects and activities in their organization. You only share on small matters like there's this money transfer that is being given and let's try, you just try. Sometime you try and you don't get. So you find we only meet when we are having these network meetings to discuss issues because everybody is busy trying to implement the projects of which they are supposed to meet their deadlines" (National mobilizer on barriers to in-country collaboration, September 2021).*

On top of that, respondents indicate that other CSOs are not enthusiastic about collaborating with CSOs that have community-based programs. On the one hand, there is a focus on programs that target a specific disability, while these CSOs typically incorporate people with diverse disabilities in their programs. On the other hand, there is a general idea that involving the community delays action. Hence, other CSOs are reluctant to collaborate. One respondent explains:

> *"In terms of the community based rehabilitation processes because many people want, many organizations would want to handle things up here but when it comes to the community level, at village level or household level, they are not many because they feel it is quite a lot of work to do community-based rehabilitation processes. Because that means you will want to bring many players on board to create an enabling environment […] And so, the difference has been that not many organizations are on the level of community based rehabilitation, but they are up here. […] But how to implement and influence those policies, they are not there. […] So you find that as a country we might have very polished policies that you know, represents or articulates the rights of the disabled persons but who to implement, […] Who is responsible for that, you know, there is a very big gap you know under that"* (Local service provider, September 2021).

The added value of personal connections

From the findings above, it becomes clear that local service providers typically invest in personal connections with key actors in the community. Worth noticing is that local service providers save costs by delegating responsibilities to community actors and that CSOs learn from the updates from these actors.

These collaborations add value to the organizations' resource base and quality of service delivery. Community volunteers are important *mobilizers* as they help organize and implement the CSOs' activities on the ground and follow up on these. Second, community volunteers, parents, and teachers are *knowledge brokers;* they collect, analyse and disseminate information from the field to the CSOs. Third, parents, teachers, churches, and institutions add value to the local service providers as *cooperative participants*. These actors are aware of the CSOs' agendas and contribute where possible. Last, the grassroots network adds value as a *coordinator*.

Concluding, collaboration allows local service providers to expand their reach and improve the quality of their work by enabling informed decision-making.

5.3. Local changemakers and local collaboration

This paragraph will discuss how local changemakers benefit from collaboration.

I will start by examining the benefits of community-based collaboration. I then proceed to consider the benefits of collaboration with government agencies, and last, we will discuss collaboration in grassroots and local advocacy networks. All these forms of collaboration have a local character but are in some instances more formal than those of local service providers. I pay attention to barriers that respondents identified that prevent them from fully obtaining value from collaboration. I conclude this paragraph by pointing out how collaboration enables local changemakers to realize their strategies.

A first look at table 10 suggests that these CSOs indicate a wider variety of benefits that flow from collaboration than local service providers. This is partly because local changemakers engage in service delivery ánd advocacy activities.

Community-based collaboration

This form of collaboration is beneficial because it is cost-saving. As we have seen in the paragraph above, CSOs hand over *responsibilities* to community actors and receive *material*. For example, local changemakers can use the church's building to organize events and address the community.

Community-based collaboration results in learning. Like local service providers, this group of CSOs receives *updates* on relevant developments.

Local changemakers differ from local service providers in collaborating with parents and disabled people's groups. Like local service providers, these CSOs actively help form grassroots groups, but these groups have more *responsibilities*. Local changemakers provide training to parents' groups so that these groups will engage in income-raising activities. CSOs economically empower these groups because parents of disabled children often face discrimination and marginalization as well.

Furthermore, CSOs educate groups of parents and groups of disabled people on their rights and provide them with skills training. They help groups register and formalize their structure because once adequately organized, they are recognized as independent entities with their own rights and can become 'advocates on the ground'. These groups now *increase the leverage* of local changemakers in their advocacy activities. For local changemakers, it is often more effective to initiate change when these groups voice their views as they speak from their own experience. One respondent explains:

> *"We empower them to go on their own because they know where the shoe pinches more. They know this slogan that says 'nothing for us without us' . So for them, me, I accompany them but they do all the talking. I'm like working behind them as they speak for themselves. [...] So they see they speak from their experiences and whoever listens actually agrees. It is not like when you are just speaking on their behalf but for themselves it has, is very powerful"* (Local mobilizer - community development with a disability program, September 2021).

Collaboration with government agencies

This form of collaboration is beneficial because it is cost-saving. Local changemakers collaborate with government agencies to access their *services* under favourable conditions.

Collaboration with government agencies can increase the impact of advocacy. Regular contact and building relationships *increase the leverage* of local changemakers because it increases the understanding of the cause these CSOs are addressing and the willingness to act. *Coordination* with government agencies further increases the impact. A respondent indicated instances where health workers helped identify and refer people with disabilities who were still invisible to the CSO. Another example is a respondent who organizes meetings for parents of children with disabilities in collaboration with the health and social services ministries. These officials trained the parents on health issues and income-generating activities.

> *"As part of our organization, we have meeting camps, we organize for the meeting camps, just like assessment centres. We organize for the meetings and the parents come with their children and we involve the ministry of health because public health is under ministry of health. So you approach an official from the ministry of health to come and do training to the parents, to that meeting"* (Local changemaker with a rehabilitation centre and community program, October 2021).

Local changemakers and benefits of collaboration					
		Cost-saving	**Learning**	**Increased network**	**Increased impact**
Community-based collaboration	Community volunteers	Sharing responsibilities	Updating		
	Teachers	Sharing responsibilities	Updating		
	Churches	Material			
	Parents	Sharing responsibilities	Updating		Increased leverage
	Disabled people's groups	Sharing responsibilities			Increased leverage
Collaboration with government agencies		Services			Increased leverage, and coordination
Collaboration in networks	Grassroots networks	Material, and services	Updating	Visibility	Coordination
	Local advocacy networks	Combined fundraising	Benchmarking, and updating	Visibility	Increased leverage

Table 10. Local changemakers and benefits of collaboration

Collaboration in networks

Local changemakers are members of two types of Kenyan networks: grassroots and local advocacy. The different nature of these networks results in different types of benefits (see Table 9).

Local changemakers are members of **grassroots networks.**

Membership is cost-saving. Local changemakers receive *material* or *services* through this network. Organizations inform each other when they have free material or services available. A respondent recalled a situation where another CSO received a large donation of wheelchairs. This surplus was shared and freely available to network members. In another situation, a hospital offered free surgeries (with the help of donor money). All CSOs in the network could apply on behalf of their beneficiaries:

> *"We formed a network because now we saw we need to stay close to each other - in constant communication - because we find one of the partners may be having an event or an activity that may be beneficial to persons in the other side. And through that network, we've managed to gain support because sometimes you might find we haven't had wheelchairs, any donation of wheelchairs in the last one or two years. And then you find that one of our partners, has quite a number of wheelchairs, then you're like, "Could you like be able to assist us with a couple?"* (Local changemaker with a rehabilitation centre and a community program, October 2021).

It exposes local changemakers to learning possibilities. They receive *updates* on relevant developments in the community.

Membership in grassroots networks can increase the network of local changemakers. The exchange in the network offers *visibility* to the CSO and its activities, which provides a CSO with new contacts through valuable referrals and recommendations. However, this visibility remains limited to the community and thus does not enable a connection with national institutions and organizations.

Local changemakers can increase the impact of their activities. The network functions as a referral system, and regular contact enables the *coordination* of activities and events.

As members of **local advocacy networks,** local changemakers join forces to improve the lives of people with disabilities.

Membership provides opportunities to be cost-saving. As a network, they organize events for which they can merge resources and *apply for funding together.*

> *"And right now we are in the process of starting a consortium where we can be able to be writing joint proposals as [a] network, we fundraise together as a network and then we are able to implement activities that are specifically for disability*" (Local changemaker with a rehabilitation centre and a community program, October 2021).

There are learning opportunities. Through the network, local changemakers are *updated* on changes in the field and can *benchmark* to discover strong and weak areas in their own programs.

> *"They learned from us about the household economic strengthening component […] and also now after learning, we took them to the field to physically see what we have been doing in matters of household economic strengthening intervention, so we visited a beneficiary"* (Local changemaker with community program, October 2021).

It can further increase the network of local changemakers. The achievements of the network as a whole, also increase the *visibility* of local changemakers by association.

Last, membership can increase the impact of activities. Respondents explain that organizing events as a network increases their *leverage.* Politicians are more inclined to respond to a joint message than an individual one. The network, therefore, increases the impact of a CSO's activities.

One respondent explains the motivation to establish a local advocacy network:

> *"We approached the government and found out that they really don't even know there are organizations that are doing a lot towards disability within the county itself, so we found that it could be easier for us to have a network for us to know what is happening and also being able to you know advice"* (Local changemaker with a rehabilitation centre and a community program, October 2021).

Barriers to collaboration with other CSOs

Typical for these local changemakers is their holistic approach in close consultation with the community. The great benefit of this strategy is that it stimulates community ownership of CSOs' activities. Unfortunately, this strategic approach does not always find resonance with other CSOs.

As we have seen with local service providers, other CSOs prefer to work with organizations that have profiled themselves around a distinct disability. Moreover, one local changemaker explained that community-based rehabilitation is not a common approach in the disability field and hence misunderstood:

> *[Our CSO] is not a one stop shop. It's not like a mall. It's not like a mall where you go inside and you'll get out being done everything that you needed to do. […] We cannot just look only at a specific component. And then we also don't work insolation. We work with various people. A child as it is, is a project, because a child will need education, a child will need health, a child will need shelter, a child will need various from psychological, economic and all that"* (Local changemaker - CSO with disability program in diocese, October 2021).

He further explains that other CSOs perceive the community aspect of the strategy as time-consuming and much work because many players are brought on board in decision-making.

In a reverse way, local changemakers are reluctant to invite other organizations on board because they want to ensure that a project does not interfere with carefully established community relations. According to another respondent, a recurring scenario was an "outsider" CSO entering the community and spending money on recruiting temporary staff. Volunteers now had paid jobs. Once the project funding was pulled out, the respondent had to put much effort into motivating these people to return to work voluntarily.

Local changemakers wish for a stronger connection between networks at different levels of society. Reid (2000) already stressed the importance of organizational routes between regional and national networks.

It could be that the views of local changemakers are underrepresented in national networks. One respondent explained that the nature of the national networks demands considerable investment in time, money, and labour. In addition, she also stressed that engagement in regional networks is considered part of an outreach strategy while engaging in national networks is not considered one of their key tasks:

> *"…because it meant us traveling to Nairobi for the frequent meetings. And, you know, it took a lot of time on what I would say we could have done other things. Of course at the end of the day we had a big event which was creating awareness about issues of people with disabilities and all that, but you know it was really big, but basically that is not part of our mandate"* (Local changemaker with care homes and community program, October 2021).

On top of that, opportunities and knowledge from national networks rarely trickle down to locally active CSOs. Another respondent highlighted this aspect:

> *"It would be easier if there was one communicated line between the networks, from the national network, to the regional, to the local and down to the [DPO] network, because there is distorted information and disconnection. So if we can have one line of communication that if I come to [small city in Kenya] I'm like, "Wow they are giving out wheelchairs, I didn't know."* (Local changemaker – DPO with strong regional ties, October 2021).

Coordinated communication between networks at different societal levels or involvement of locally embedded organizations in national networks would give local changemakers more exposure. Respondents state that this exposure could attract more funding and provide them with new insights to diversify their activities. At the same time, local CSOs could enhance other organizations' understanding of the impact of disability on a household level.

They also see that the disability field is currently quite fragmented. One CSO explains that organizations now often see each other as competitors, which results in the copying of activities and a loss of perspectives. From their experience, they state that this attitude is unjustified. A closer look at the community level reveals much diversity in the field as not one community is the same. On the contrary, there is a need for many different and tailored approaches.

The added value of local collaboration

The findings above indicate that local changemakers collaborate with those actors that influence the welfare of people with disabilities in the communities. The collaborations have a local focus but are more formal than those of local service providers. Worth noting are the increased leveraged and coordination.

Local changemakers distinguish themselves from other CSOs by collaborating with formal groups of people who know what it is to be disabled and who know the community. They encourage them to press for inclusive legislation themselves. Disabled people's groups and parents' groups act as *knowledge brokers* and *allies*. The groups provide valuable information about the impact of disability and pledge for the same cause as the CSO.

Government and health institutions add value to local changemakers by acting as *performers*. Although their priority is to realize their own agendas, they show goodwill towards the CSOs.

For local changemakers, the grassroots networks are especially relevant as *coordinators* of existing initiatives and opportunities in the region. Membership in these networks eases the strategy of service delivery for the CSOs. Local advocacy networks are *allies* for the advocacy strategy of local changemakers and allow them to amplify their voice.

Concluding, collaboration adds value because it increases the quality of services and the effectiveness of local advocacy.

5.4. National mobilizers and civic engagement

This paragraph will discuss how national mobilizers benefit from collaboration.

Table 11 shows that collaboration within civil society is most important for national mobilizers .I will discuss the benefits of bilateral collaboration with other CSOs and the benefits of membership in national advocacy networks. I conclude this paragraph by pointing out how collaboration enables national mobilizers to realize their strategies.

National mobilizers and benefits of collaboration					
		Cost-saving	**Learning**	**Increased network**	**Increased impact**
Bilateral collaboration with other CSOs		Sharing responsibilities, combined fundraising, and Expertise	Benchmarking, and new strategies	Visibility	Increased leverage, and coordination
Collaboration in networks	National advocacy networks	Sharing responsibilities, combined fundraising, and Expertise	Training, updating, and new strategies	Visibility, and access to donors	Increased leverage

Table 11. National mobilizers and benefits of collaboration

Collaboration with other CSOs: joint advocacy

National mobilizers collaborate predominantly with other CSOs. Before discussing multi-stakeholder collaboration, I will first discuss the benefits of bilateral collaboration.

Bilateral collaboration with other CSOs

National mobilizers engage in project-based collaboration with two types of Kenyan CSOs. CSOs speaking *on behalf of* people with disabilities, and DPOs – organizations *run by* people with disabilities.

As shown in Table 11, many benefits of this type of collaboration involve cost-savings. CSOs can do *combined fundraising*: When organizations with different expertise jointly apply for funding, the chances of receiving this are bigger because there is more trust that the project will be successful. Ultimately, joint projects allow for the bundling of resources and prevent duplication of activities.

Project-based collaboration allows national mobilizers to look in another organization's kitchen. This exposure is relevant as it provides learning opportunities. For example, in the form of *benchmarking* or the identification of *new strategies:* other organizations can act as a point of reference from which a national mobilizer can identify its strengths and weaknesses, and by engaging, new ideas can surface. One CSO explains the importance of benchmarking:

> *"So having this is very beneficial. No matter how much we say we are a national NGO, then it's also important for us to demonstrate that we understand what is happening nationally. […] Our activities should […] cut across the other counties and the other tribes. […] If we are having an activity for example in [town] that same activity can be scaled up in [town] which has different cultures. But the activities should be in line with them, so that they also reap out the same outcome. So we really need to understand what is happening across the country for us to be able to design our activities in line with the different communities"* (National mobilizer – DPO with membership in diverse networks, October 2021).

Last, project-based collaboration increases the impact of national mobilizers. The choice of a partner is often strategic to execute an influential lobby: joint protection of interest increases an organization's *leverage*. The collaboration also results in more *coordination*. For example, one respondent with a strong human rights focus deliberately partnered with a technical organization to gather data and lobby jointly for more digital services for people with disabilities.

Three respondents explained that collaboration with DPOs – as a specific type of CSO – has unique benefits.

On the one hand, collaboration is cost-saving. National mobilizers can access specific and valuable *expertise*. On the other hand, collaboration with DPOs provides unique learning opportunities. DPOs can provide *updates* based on first-hand experience.

Collaboration with DPOs can increase the network of national mobilizers. The specific focus of DPOs can *increase the visibility* of national mobilizers: now, they are associated with a specific type of disability. Second, collaboration with DPOs can increase the impact of national mobilizers. It can *increase their leverage* because the shared message with DPOs is often perceived to be more legitimate as it incorporates the lived experience of people with disabilities. A national mobilizer, who is a DPO, explains this reputation:

> *"So basically DPOs hold a very high place in Kenya […] So even when the government is consulting on disability issues, they always look for a disabled person's organization or the umbrella body. […]"* (National mobilizer – DPO with membership in diverse networks, October 2021).

Multi-stakeholder collaboration in national advocacy networks

Membership in national advocacy networks allows individual CSOs to be cost-saving. National mobilizers can engage in *joint fundraising* with other CSOs. It is easy to access actors with complementary *expertise*. This way, national mobilizers can divide responsibilities and organize bigger campaigns, or provide policy input.

> *"The policy document has to be completed within a certain time and then it has to go through different stages, so one of the ways that we organize ourselves is to share our responsibilities among the members. […] There are also aspects of budgeting, […] so that one requires identifying areas of responsibilities and delegating those responsibilities to different players within the team and also scheduling you know meetings to be within the timeframe for delivery of the policy as much as possible"* (National mobilizer – chairman of national advocacy network, October 2021).

Collaboration with other CSOs provides many learning opportunities. This is especially the case when CSOs encounter each other in recurring meetings and projects. The exposure to the inner workings of other CSOs provides national mobilizers with *new strategies*: projects and methods which they can apply to their own organization. Learning also takes place as part of the process of campaigning and lobbying. Individual CSOs are seldom exposed to the specific demands that come together with nationwide efforts: participating in a network provides individual CSOs with the opportunities to learn new skills (*training*) and learn about trends and issues at play (*updating*).

"[Through the network] we know there is a lot of issues that are coming up because of Covid, mental illnesses - depression and so forth. So already leveraging with the other partners we have realized we are also learning and we are not being left behind when it comes to what, where should our focus be at this particular time" (National mobilizer – DPO with membership in diverse networks, October 2021).

Membership in a national advocacy network can further increase the network of national mobilizers. They are more *visible* to the government. It is more likely to recognize the network as a whole and to invite network members to participate in strategic planning. Respondents state that networks and consortia also ease *access to donors* (national and international). These donors are government institutions, private organizations, or Northern CSOs. Donors have a strong preference for these constructions above funding individual CSOs.

"We also do what we call joint proposal development based on the areas of expertise. And of course we have had chances where we have partnered with a number of [national advocacy network] members in accessing funding from donors, because donors would like to see consortia platforms coming together to address a certain common action in the country" (CSO with a national presence employing both service delivery and advocacy, October 2021).

Last, some benefits increase the impact of the activities. The recognition by the government provides a network with more opportunities to *leverage* important decisions and to be truly consulted in policymaking decisions rather than "just rubberstamp" what has already been decided upon (Omungo, 2011, p. 80). On some occasions, the government is really supportive of the case and actions of CSOs, and here the government can even encourage them to take up a position they cannot take themselves due to their role.

"For them as public servants, civil servants they are gagged, they cannot speak on those issues but inwardly they feel like this is an important issue that needs civil society to think about. So they give us the information then we project those sentiments out because the internal structures the internal mechanisms within government doesn't allow them to speak on those issues" (National mobilizer – chairman of national advocacy network, October 2021).

The added value of civic engagement

Collaborations with other CSOs are of primary importance for national mobilizers because they add value to the advocacy strategy.

National mobilizers collaborate with other Kenyan CSOs in joint projects. They are *knowledge brokers*: they share their experience on the ground and share their expertise. In addition, Kenyan CSOs are important *allies* to national mobilizers: these organizations share their resources and can add numbers and weight to the message. Because of the unique position of DPOs in the disability field, national mobilizers gain visibility and credibility by association.

National advocacy networks have added value as a *coordinator*: the network allows national mobilizers to align their activities with that of others, making an individual organization's efforts more effective. Second, the network as a whole is an important *knowledge broker:* the network provides access to expertise and to different learning opportunities. This enables national mobilizers to make informed strategic decisions. Last, the network is a *connector:* national mobilizers can access and address new audiences.

Collaboration adds value because it enables national mobilizers to strategically direct their activities, find an audience for their message, and strengthen their position in the national landscape.

5.5. Conclusion

This chapter has discussed what Kenyan CSOs perceive to be the added value of in-country collaboration.

To capture the added value, I have categorized the benefits identified by respondents and indicated how collaborations strengthen Kenyan CSOs' strategies.

For local service providers, the collaborative relations with individuals and agencies in the community add value as they help to bridge the gap between these two levels of society.

Local service providers benefit from community-based collaboration because they can delegate responsibilities and receive valuable updates. Collaboration with government agencies or grassroots networks allows local service providers to gain resources for free or under favourable conditions. Grassroots networks have the additional benefit of coordinating community initiatives.

Especially relevant is that local service providers find cooperative participants among individuals and institutions. These contribute to their agenda where possible.

Remarkably, local service providers have difficulty establishing collaboration with other CSOs. This difficulty can be explained by a lack of resources on the side of local service providers and obstructing attitudes among other CSOs.

Local changemakers value collaborating with those actors who influence the welfare of people with disabilities in the communities. They find allies and coordinators that increase their leverage.

A significant finding is that collaboration with parents' and disabled people's groups provides valuable updates and increases the leverage of local changemakers. In addition, local advocacy networks increase the impact of advocacy through increased leverage and coordination and provide visibility to local changemakers. This visibility can further increase their network.

The results indicate a lack of coordination between the different networks in the country. It makes it more difficult to establish collaborations with other CSOs but also hampers effective advocacy.

For national mobilizers, the collaboration with other CSOs and in national advocacy networks has value, for it provides allies and knowledge brokers that can increase the effects of advocacy.

Worth noting here is that collaboration results in the direct availability of expertise and that the exposure provides learning opportunities, for example, in adopting new strategies. Association with other CSOs or the network results in more visibility to national mobilizers, and membership in national advocacy networks eases access to donors.

To highlight, Local CSOs find value in maintaining close ties with the community. However, bilateral collaboration with other CSOs remains limited. Importantly, collaboration with other CSOs or collaboration in networks results in benefits that ease the establishment of collaboration with new CSOs. Thus, it seems vital to gain this entry to benefit from this snowballing and its other benefits. Significant barriers are local organizations' lack of resources and the lack of coordination between different network levels.

Thus, this chapter has directed attention to the added value of collaboration in Kenya and identified barriers that prevent CSOs from obtaining this value.

The next chapter focuses on the added value of collaboration with the global North.

6. The added value of collaboration with the global North

The previous chapter identified the added value of collaboration in Kenya. This chapter will discuss how Kenyan CSOs perceive collaboration with the global North. In order to stimulate local ownership in North-South partnerships, it is helpful to establish the perceived strengths and weaknesses according to Southern CSOs. These insights enable Northern CSOs to make informed decisions regarding their future roles.

In the following paragraphs, I will discuss for each type of CSO what benefits flow from collaboration and what enabling roles can be distinguished while also paying attention to the barriers that Kenyan CSOs perceive in these forms of collaboration.

I will start by providing an overview of the identified benefits and enabling roles before differentiating between types of CSOs.

6.1. Benefits and enabling roles

Chapter 4 discussed the different forms of collaboration beneficial to Kenyan CSOs that address disability issues. They encounter the Global North in three different situations: (1) charity-based collaboration, (2) project-based collaboration, (3) and international advocacy networks.

The table below provides an overview of the perceived benefits of collaboration with the Global North. The list is less extensive than the benefits of in-country collaboration (Chapter 5), as respondents engage in fewer forms of collaboration with Northern actors.

Throughout the text, I will underline references to the columns, and their corresponding sub-categories are written cursively.

Benefits of collaboration with the Global North			
Cost-saving	**Learning**	**Increased network**	**Increased impact**
Funding	Training	Contacts	Increased leverage
Expertise	Updating	Visibility	Coordination
Material		Access to donors	

Table 12. Benefits of collaboration with the Global North

In addition to the direct benefits, Northern CSOs can take on enabling roles that help Kenyan CSOs to realize their respective strategies. Table 13 provides an overview of these roles as identified by respondents. I will return to these roles in the paragraphs that follow.

Enabling roles	
Knowledge broker	Researches, analyses and disseminates knowledge to the CSO
Funder	Provides money to pay for an activity, event, or group
Connector	Links CSO to new audiences or arenas

Table 13. Enabling roles of Northern actors (based on Elbers 2020)

6.2. Local service providers and charity-based collaboration

Chapter 4 indicated that local service providers mainly engage in charity-based collaboration with Northern actors. This paragraph will first discuss the benefits of this form of collaboration. Then, I will direct attention to the barriers local service providers perceive in establishing collaboration. I will conclude by highlighting the enabling roles of collaboration.

Benefits of charity-based collaboration

Charity-based collaboration is beneficial for local service providers as it allows them to be cost-saving. Northern donors provide these CSOs with *funding* and *material*. They directly receive money to fund their projects and activities. Local service providers maintain regular contact with these donors and often send requests for additional support. One respondent illustrates:

> *"I continued the relationship with them so they have at least helped me to construct a house for a poultry project so now we have some chickens. [...] I just wrote a small note because they had once visited [us]. [..] we communicated during the Covid 19 pandemic and I shared what I'm planning to do and they sent me some money that I would buy food to be able to distribute to homes that I had not visited"* (Local service provider who runs a care home, September 2021).

Respondents explain that they regularly receive donations of food, clothing and assistive devices, which saves them costs. This looks, for example, like this:

> *"At times they bring a container to Kenya for different organizations and since I came to know them like last year they gave me two file cabinets, cabinets for the office I didn't have, you see that they did not give me in terms of money but they brought them and I collected from their container. They brought things for the girls to play with [..]"* (Local service provider who runs a care home, September 2021

Local service providers and benefits of collaboration with Northern actors				
	Cost-saving	**Learning**	**Increased network**	**Increased impact**
Charity-based collaboration	Funding, and material			

Table 14. Local service providers and benefits of collaboration with Northern actors

Perceived barriers

Charity-based collaboration has been criticized for creating an unequal donor-recipient relationship and for its primary focus on money rather than the expertise and resources associated with the recipient. The consequence would be that donors have more freedom to interfere with recipients' actions than vice versa (Hately, 1999).

As we can see from the examples above, the respondents indicate that charity-based collaboration primarily evolves around tangible assets. This characteristic is in line with the findings of Hately (1999). Respondents are the ones that have to repeatedly ask for donors' support, which could point to inequality in this relationship. However, this charity-based collaboration involves less conditionality than project-based collaboration with Northern CSOs. For one, there is almost no interference with the design and execution of activities – and thus, support is not dependent on the duration of project cycles. Moreover, local service providers do not have to meet particular managerial requirements for establishing collaboration.

At first sight, it may be a remarkable finding that local service providers rarely collaborate with Northern CSOs, especially since some local service providers are part of the Liliane Foundation network. It is good to explain that the respondents did not undertake joint projects with the Liliane Foundation directly. They have contact with the SPO in Kenya, but with this Kenyan CSO, they seldom collaborate directly. Further, when explicitly asked about collaboration with Northern CSOs, respondents said they do not engage with them.

> *Interviewer: "Do you also work together with international partners? With organizations outside Kenya?" Respondent: "Outside Kenya? Outside Kenya so far as I told you I don't have partners; I don't have, but somehow there are two groups [not a CSO, but charities] that I have related with on personal grounds"* (Local service provider who runs a care home, September 2021).

Respondents state that barriers are preventing them from collaborating with Northern CSOs. Other studies have already identified these barriers (see, for example, W. J. Elbers (2012)). Respondents indicate that they do not know exactly where to apply for joint projects, and when they look for project calls, they are discouraged as they often do not meet the conditions to apply. One respondent stated as a cause that there is a preference amongst Northern CSOs to get involved with bigger organizations:

> *"You know the international organizations they only like working with big organizations in Kenya or in the local countries, because then maybe because of the impact, or maybe because of the budget"* (Local service provider who runs two care homes, October 2021).

These discussed patterns do not imply that there is no wish to collaborate with Northern CSOs.

Local service providers indicate that more involvement could increase the impact of their projects. Moreover, they feel that donors and Northern CSOs currently exclude smaller organizations' expertise. They state that community-based strategies could enrich the available ideas and strategies to remove barriers for people with disabilities.

> *"And so I want to imagine the bigger organizations can actually benefit from what we have had, what we have experienced and we can be able to share. Some of these things that we… you know, from the grassroots, from the villages, from the community, we can naturally share some of these experiences. But then I think we have not gotten these opportunities […]"* (Local service provider who runs two care homes, October 2021).

The added value of charity-based collaboration

The findings above indicate that local service providers mainly collaborate with Northern actors on the base of charity.

Northern donors have added value in their *funder* role: they provide money to pay for these CSOs' activities; their involvement is limited to this specific aspect. Northern donors do not actively interfere with CSOs' strategies and activities, which provides local service providers with a certain freedom. At the same time, Northern donors are not concerned with the capacities of local service providers. They thus do not actively inquire about the additional needs and wishes that are prevalent.

6.3. Local changemakers and project-based collaboration

Local changemakers engage in project-based collaboration with Northern CSOs. Two respondents are members of a Northern-induced network. However, this network is not fully functioning (see Chapter 4.2.), so the discussion focuses on the benefits of project-based collaboration.

I will pay special attention to the capacity-building activities of Northern CSOs and the conditionality of North-South collaboration. I will then discuss the perceived barriers and wishes among respondents before concluding with an indication of supportive roles.

Benefits of project-based collaboration

Project-based collaboration provides opportunities to be cost-saving. Northern CSOs can, for example, directly *fund* a project. Compared to Kenyan donors, the money flowing from Northern CSOs is significant. Although funding is very welcome, it is known that the scarcity of funding can lead to donor dependency and vulnerability to external control (Abrahamsen, 2004; O'Brien & Evans, 2017; Margit Van Wessel et al., 2020).

> "*And there's also the limited amount of money they [Kenyan CSOs] can be able to give each project because there's many other organizations which need to be supported. So when you have a link with an international donor, it's more consistent and well with many of our donors we have contracts, they commit themselves to support us maybe for the next one year"* (Local changemaker with a community program, September 2021).

In addition, the collaboration also enables local changemakers to receive *material* for free. Sometimes this entails donations of wheelchairs, while at other times, Northern CSOs can provide local changemakers with more technical items, for example, needed resources to fabricate prosthetics.

The second column in table 15 indicates benefits related to learning. Often project-based collaboration goes hand in hand with efforts from Northern CSOs to build the capacity of their Southern counterparts. A common method is thematic or technical *training* (see the following paragraph). In addition, two respondents indicated that collaboration exposes them to a broader context and provides them with *updates*: the latest knowledge on available techniques and approaches and valuable information on current developments in the international field.

> *"And even technologically, there are quite a number of things that, you know, have also advanced. [...] So it is always beneficial also to be at par with the changes that are there so that you offer even better services. And this will only come when you also get ideas from different parts of the world"* (Local changemaker with disability program in community, October 2021).

Respondents indicated benefits related to an increased network. Collaboration with Northern CSOs increases the *visibility* of local changemakers. Northern CSOs can invite them to participate in different arenas, as in the example below. They can also receive valuable *contacts* and introductions to other Northern CSOs. These are valuable because it is challenging to establish collaborations with Northern CSOs from scratch due to the heavy competition and the conditions that favor larger organizations..

> *"I worked with United Nations organization at the headquarters in New York. And I was making a joke that I have never worked with the United Nations in Kenya until I started working with the one in New York. So I feel you get more national recognition or visibility if you are attached to an international organization*" (Local changemaker – DPO with strong regional ties, October 2021).

Finally, collaboration with Northern CSOs can increase the impact of the activities undertaken. One respondent indicated that the collaboration with a Northern CSO *increased leverage* for its organization. This local changemaker could connect local advocacy for inclusive education with a national movement.

> *[Northern CSO] actually was one of the organizations that was championing inclusive education in Kenya, and so we did a project together, that was the time we had resources [to drum around] [...]So we had so many meetings with different government bodies drumming about inclusive education [...] we feel that somehow the intervention that we have done in partnership with [Northern CSO] it has had a tremendous positive impact in Kenya when it comes to inclusive education"* (Local changemaker with a community program, September 2021).

Local changemakers and benefits of collaboration with Northern actors				
	Cost-saving	**Learning**	**Increased network**	**Increased impact**
Project-based collaboration	Funding, and material	Training, and updating	Contacts, and visibility	Increased leverage

Table 15. Local changemakers and benefits of collaboration with Northern actors

Training and arenas

The previous paragraph indicated that local changemakers receive training from Northern CSOs as part of their collaboration. This finding correlates with a trend among Northern CSOs trying to promote Southern ownership by strengthening the organizations in the South (Ulleberg, 2009). Often Northern CSOs provide training to build the capacity of their Southern counterparts (MGJ van Wessel et al., 2018). There is no clear understanding amongst Northern CSOs of what this training should entail; hence capacity-building could mean different things (Wetterberg et al., 2015).

Amongst the respondents in this research, training was given on thematic areas of interest, for instance, training on cerebral palsy and its diagnosis. However, more often, training was technical and related to the functioning of an organization. In one instance, the focus was on the well-being of staff during the pandemic. Interestingly, in all other cases, training was aimed at teaching local changemakers how they could meet the demands of the international CSO landscape. These types of training entailed topics such as methods of reporting, bookkeeping, and writing testimonials. One respondent illustrates:

> *"And even we were introduced to the applications, online applications that come with that. On how to be able to handle, how can you be able to bring maybe you have a specific case, you can be able to take photos, or you can be able to describe it. And then you get the whole global community being able to help you on even identifying that case"* (Local changemaker with disability program in community, October 2021).

In line with the findings of Wetterberg et al. (2015), the training provided by Northern CSOs mainly makes local changemakers more capable of meeting donor requirements rather than enabling their performance in Kenya. Especially for local changemakers, who engage in both service delivery and advocacy strategies, there are currently unaddressed opportunities that could strengthen their organizations.

The results above indicate that collaboration with Northern CSOs is generally beneficial because it provides local changemakers access to other arenas and Northern CSOs.

According to respondents, linking local and international advocacy is valuable. Further, the findings indicate that collaboration with Northern CSOs allows local changemakers to increase their leverage within Kenya and access new arenas of decision-making. Bandy and Smith (2005) underline this strength of Northern CSOs. They state that Northern CSOs have more access to arenas of economic and political decision-making.

Perceived barriers

The previous paragraphs established that CSOs that are locally active (local service providers and local changemakers) find it challenging to collaborate with Northern CSOs.

There are currently mechanisms in place that favour larger organizations over smaller ones as potential partners. Northern CSOs set many conditions for their (future) partners in the South. Respondents indicate that these conditions sometimes act as a barrier to establishing collaborations with Northern CSOs. These conditions are predominantly there to ensure accountability from the side of Southern CSOs (see, for example, W. J. Elbers (2012)). The demands of reporting, impact measurement, and evaluation require a fair share of time and expertise. These are easier met by more professionalized organizations and reinforce in-country inequality regarding the benefits obtained from the collaboration with Northern CSOs.

Second, the current system is inefficient because there is no general agreement among Northern CSOs regarding the requirements that Southern CSOs have to meet. Hence, one Kenyan CSO must adapt its activities for every Northern CSO it works with, which is needless and time-consuming. One respondent illustrates:

> *"Well, there are normally differences, like for example if you are to work with, or implement any activity from the United States, you'll find that there are a number of requirements that are completely different from when you are working with the European Union, for example, organizations. And even the Scandinavian countries you'll find that sometimes even the reporting and even some of the things that they insist you have to put in place before they start working with you are normally diverse. So yes there are normally differences according to each and every country's need. […]"* (Local changemaker with disability program in community, October 2015).

Last, as we have seen in chapter 5, these conditions trickle down to existing CSO networks in Kenya and make it difficult for local organizations to participate here too.

There is a general wish among organizations currently active on a local scale to be more visible to Northern CSOs and get more recognition.

In the short term, these organizations would benefit from CSOs willing to introduce them to Northern CSOs. The findings above show that collaboration with a Northern CSO can lead to a snowball effect whereby local organizations become more visible to national and international organizations.

In the long term, local organizations would benefit from accessible platforms where Kenyan CSOs and Northern CSOs can meet. One respondent illustrates:

> *"For example if I'm working in a rural town, in the middle of nowhere, where will I hear about an international organization? […] I feel communication reaches those big who can access it. […] And another thing is having an open source communication with all [Kenyan CSOs] and international organizations. I don't know whether it can be done through a website or even through radio you know. Or just have an open source communication where instead of only telling [me] to tell others, you can tell all of us. "* (Local changemaker – DPO with strong regional ties, October 2021).

In addition, respondents wish that Northern CSOs and Kenyan CSOs alike would truly recognize the community-based approach. One respondent states:

> *"I don't understand [why there is a focus on bigger organizations], we are in a global village and it will be very interesting to maybe an outside organization maybe international would be very interested to know what happens […] at village level or at community level. What happens when it comes to inclusivity, because that is where the genesis of inclusion starts. Because inclusion actually starts with me, and you"* (Local changemaker, September 2021).

The added value of project-based collaboration

Local changemakers collaborate with Northern CSOs on a project base.

This form of collaboration has a wide variety of benefits for local changemakers. In addition to being more cost-saving, this collaboration presents learning opportunities, and as such Northern CSOs have added value as *knowledge brokers*. The knowledge derived from the different arenas that Northern CSOs have access to is valuable. On top of that, training given by Northern CSOs currently makes it easier to meet Northern conditions and establish collaboration with other Northern CSOs. However, they have the potential to be of increased value once they accommodate and strengthen the strategies of local changemakers.

Northern CSOs further enable the strategies of local changemakers by acting as a *connector*. They can introduce local changemakers to other organizations, and Northern CSOs can link local activities to (inter)national audiences and arenas.

6.4. National mobilizers and international advocacy networks

The following paragraphs will discuss the benefits of collaboration in international advocacy networks. I will then point out some missed opportunities in this form of collaboration. I will conclude by indicating the enabling roles of Northern CSOs.

Benefits of Northern CSOs' membership in international advocacy networks

The membership of Northern CSOs in international advocacy networks is <u>cost-saving.</u> For national mobilizers, the addition of Northern CSOs means additional *funding* – in such amounts that it allows national mobilizers to engage with international means to address national problems. In addition, Northern CSOs have complementary *expertise*. Their international focus can complement national expertise.

Table 16 lists several identified <u>learning</u> opportunities. Respondents mentioned *benchmarking*. Through engagement with Northern CSOs, national mobilizers can gain insight into the workings of Northern CSOs. This access provides valuable knowledge on the tools and methods used. Second, collaboration provides *updates* on relevant development in other countries where Northern CSOs are active. This knowledge allows national mobilizers to make better-informed decisions and strategically position themselves in relation to current developments. Last, national mobilizers can borrow *new strategies* from Northern CSOs, adapt them, and implement them themselves.

"We are inviting international organizations to be with us so that they can also share the international experience. The understanding is, these international organizational in other countries so they are implementing there, and they could be facing similar challenges in there, they have interventions that they have put to address those challenges so when they share those experience we also get to learn and adapt the experiences that we can contextualize" (National mobilizer who is currently chairing an international advocacy network, October 2021).

The membership of Northern CSOs in international advocacy networks can further increase the network of national mobilizers. Northern CSOs can provide valuable *contacts* because they are familiar with the work of national mobilizers. Importantly, the membership increases the *visibility* of Northern CSOs. Because of the association with one Northern CSO, other Northern CSOs and international organizations are more likely to get involved. There is thus a snowballing effect. A chairman of one such international advocacy network indicates that Northern CSOs are generally more willing to fund activities of these bigger networks as they are more formalized – they are registered as legal entities. The assumption is that these networks are more professional and more sustainable than other more loosely functioning networks – and hence pose fewer risks to Northern CSOs (Interview with national mobilizer, October 2021).

Finally, some benefits increase the impact. We have stated that multiple Northern CSOs are part of international advocacy networks (see Chapter 4.2.). This gives more *leverage* to the message of national mobilizers and enables *coordination*. National mobilizers can align their activities with those arenas that are of relevance.

National mobilizers and benefits of collaboration with Northern actors				
	Cost-saving	**Learning**	**Increased network**	**Increased impact**
International advocacy networks	Funding, and expertise	Benchmarking, updating, and new strategies	Contacts, visibility, access to donors	Increased leverage, and coordination

Table 16. National mobilizers and benefits of collaboration with Northern actors

Perceived barriers

The results above indicate that collaboration with Northern CSOs can open national mobilizers to new knowledge and arenas. However, there is currently no structured approach to connecting.

Often, national mobilizers are dependent on the willingness of Northern CSOs to share information and provide introductions. Especially when it comes to advocacy, it is of considerable importance to be ahead of time to be of relevance and to have a bigger influence. When there are windows of opportunity to leverage international action for a cause, the exchange and mode of organizing need to be quick and uncomplicated. One respondent mentioned, for example, how the COVID pandemic disproportionately affected people with disabilities in a negative way. His organization heard similar worrisome stories from his contacts across other African countries. They were confronted with a lack of structure to address this issue collectively. Today it is difficult to find potential allies across borders, and Northern CSOs do not have a structured approach to sharing relevant experiences of their partners in other countries.

Related to the above, access to and learning from the international experience takes the form of Northern CSOs providing information to Southern CSOs. However, national mobilizers (like local service providers and local changemakers) believe they also have valuable knowledge. This knowledge could benefit Kenyan CSOs and CSOs in other countries (including the Northern CSOs they collaborate with). There is a wish to strengthen this two-way traffic and to disperse knowledge to a bigger audience.

The added value of connecting experience

The membership of Northern CSOs in international advocacy networks provides different learning opportunities. Northern CSOs are of added value as *knowledge brokers* in the case where they can share knowledge of CSOs abroad that undertake similar activities or want to challenge similar injustices as national mobilizers do.

In addition, Northern CSOs have added value in their role as *a connector*. When Northern CSOs align themselves to these networks, the advocacy message has more potential to find resonance nationally and internationally. This role can be exploited more if there is a structured approach to contacting organizations worldwide and coordinating joint action and knowledge exchange.

Conclusion

This chapter paid attention to the added value of collaboration with the Global North. I have indicated the benefits and supporting roles of Northern actors while directing attention to current barriers that Kenyan CSOs perceive.

Local service providers do not collaborate with Northern CSOs but engage with *funders*.

The advantage of this relationship is that there is little interference in the activities of local service providers. The downside is that there is little attention to accommodate any additional needs.

In addition, the community-based strategies remain unnoticed by Northern CSOs. That is, the value and enriching experiences of these organizations remain hidden, as well as potential opportunities for Northern CSOs to enrich and strengthen those organizations that represent the lived experiences from the grassroots.

Local changemakers engage in project-based collaboration with Northern CSOs. They have added value as *knowledge brokers* through the training they provide and through exposing local changemakers to relevant developments. In addition, Northern CSOs add value as *connectors*. Northern CSOs themselves possess relations that would be valuable to local changemakers. They can introduce local changemakers to arenas that would otherwise be difficult to access: they can link interesting potential partners and use their leverage to open doors.

What is lacking in the current landscape is recognition of the community-based approach and mechanisms that enable small organizations to be included in (inter)national networks.

National mobilizers undertake joint action with Northern CSOs that are members of international advocacy networks. Northern CSOs add value here as *knowledge brokers* and *connectors*. Valuable are the updates and the linking of network activities to those taking place in other countries and other political arenas.

There is a need for a mechanism to ease contact with Northern and Southern actors to increase the effectiveness of advocacy. In addition, national mobilizers would benefit from a system that strengthens two-way traffic.

Thus, collaboration with Northern CSOs can result in unique benefits due to the different arenas in which they operate. Although Northern CSOs mainly try to build the respondent's capacity by providing training, they provide additional valuable contextual knowledge.

Northern CSOs could increase their perceived value as they further develop their connector role. The results in chapter 5 support this finding. Collaboration within Kenya itself barely fulfils this role (solely in the case of national advocacy networks), although respondents indicate a wish for interlinking arenas.

7. Discussion

The main question I sought to answer with this research was: **What is the added value of collaboration according to Kenyan CSOs that address disability issues?**

This research had two aims. On the one hand, there was the *academic aim*. I sought to address the Northern bias in current research on local ownership and partnership and to enrich the current debate by incorporating Southern perspectives on collaboration. On the other hand, there was the *societal aim*. I wanted to provide Northern CSOs – in our case, the Liliane Foundation – more insight on possible roles they can take on to promote local ownership.

The data show that there is a divergence in priorities for collaboration depending on the type of disability CSO. Kenyan CSOs find value in collaborative relations that strengthen their strategies and that are in line with the geographical reach of their activities. The results show instances of valuable bilateral collaboration and indicated the existence and importance of networks within Kenya: grassroots networks, local advocacy networks, and national advocacy networks.

Kenyan CSOs value Northern CSOs mainly for their role as *a connector*. Collaboration with a single Northern CSOs can increase their network, and coordination of activities across societal levels can increase the impact of Kenyan CSOs. The main barriers for Kenyan CSOs are the lack of representation of smaller CSOs and a lack of coordination of activities both within Kenya and internationally. Northern CSOs could add value by connecting existing networks systematically.

This research touched upon some themes introduced in the theoretical and conceptual frameworks.

The literature addressing Northern dominance in current North-South relations has a specific emphasis in its conceptualization of collaboration. Here collaboration starts from the idea that entities gather together to achieve a common goal and that the relations between the entities are characterized by equality, mutuality, and reciprocity (Abdel-Malek, 2015). These ideals are captured in the ideal of 'partnerships' (e.g.Brinkerhoff, 2002; Fowler, 2000). Our results indicate that respondents do not necessarily strive for a *common goal* in collaboration: first, they are concerned with realizing their own organization's mission, and second, a collaborative effort can have multiple goals and benefits. Likewise, in practice, different collaborative relations have hierarchies. Respondent engage with this inequality and try to realize the most benefit.

In line with the above, most studies focus on collaboration between CSOs (often Northern CSOs individual collaboration with Southern CSOs or collaboration between CSOs in international advocacy networks) (e.g.Brinkerhoff, 2002; Brown & Moore, 2001; Jordan & Van Tuijl, 2000; Reith, 2010; Sanyal, 2006). Some studies on CSOs pay additional attention to collaboration with governments (e.g.Armstrong, Bello, Gilson, & Spini, 2010). The results of this thesis indicate that respondents collaborate with other CSOs, with governmental and public institutions, as well as less formal groups and individuals from the grassroots.

When Kenyan CSOs collaborate in partnership with Northern CSOs, they encounter barriers that prevent them from taking leadership. Kenyan CSOs execute additional activities to comply with the standards of Northern managerialism (e.g.Aagaard & Eberhard Trykker, 2020; W. S. Elbers, L., 2020). Second, there is inequality with regards to access to Northern CSOs due to the ambiguity regarding who represents the local (Richmond, 2012; Saxby, 2003) and the preference to engage with 'professionalized' CSOs (W. J. Elbers, 2012).

Although local participation is one of the key goals of inclusive development (Arts, 2017; Gupta et al., 2015), respondents with a community-based approach find little resonance with the practices of Northern CSOs. They have difficulty establishing relations because of their small size, and joint projects with Northern CSOs do not reflect their strategies. Although Northern conditions divert activities away from the priorities of Kenyan CSOs, these smaller organizations still engage in these partnerships as they receive significant funding from Northern CSOs. Within these partnerships, they look for room to manoeuvre (e.g. W. Elbers & Schulpen, 2013; O'Brien & Evans, 2017; Margit Van Wessel et al., 2020).

I intently incorporated a diversity of CSOs in our research and directed attention to national forms of collaboration. The results show that Kenyan CSOs engage in networks that have not gained much attention in previous studies, and therefore practitioners may be unaware of them. Second, Kenyan CSOs have very different priorities for collaboration. I have indicated a possible correlation between preferred partners and a CSOs locality and strategy. Third, this research suggests that Northern conditionality trickles down in in-country networks and forms barriers to participation within a country.

I also aimed to gain ideas for supportive roles of Northern CSOs within North-South partnerships. Currently, many Northern CSOs employ capacity-building programs. Here, it may prove effective to adjust activities to the different Southern CSOs to accommodate their needs better and strengthen their specific positions. Second, besides the role of knowledge broker, Northern CSOs could further develop their role as a connector. Here, there are many possibilities to facilitate Southern leadership, for example, by coordinating existing activities within different Kenyan networks, including the contextual knowledge of smaller CSOs in (inter)national programs and policies, or linking advocacy across borders.

Many researchers have pointed to the difficulties of operationalizing North-South partnerships in such a way as to facilitate local ownership. Including Southern perspectives could further the academic knowledge and optimize actual practices.

Of course, my contribution is a modest one. The sample has been small which nuances the generalizations made. Second, my inferences and way of structuring relevant collaborations and their added value should be tested and further developed. For example, I would have liked to triangulate the data by presenting the typology and frameworks to the respondents. However, this was not possible within the boundaries of this thesis. I suggest that strategies and localities are important indicators to priorities for collaboration. However, more factors may be likely at play. Further, the snowballing method may have resulted in a distorted sample. Last, the exploratory approach to collaboration and its benefits may have excluded some other interesting aspects of these concepts. For example, my approach did not allow for a disentangling of power relationships or for an exhaustive overview of possible configurations.

Both scholars and practitioners could benefit from further research. If Northern CSOs are to strengthen local ownership, they need an enhanced understanding of Southern CSOs and what they try to accomplish. More research is needed to capture the diversity of Southern CSOs and present it so that it does not merely have analytical value but borrows itself for practical purposes. Second, little is known of the inner-workings and contributions of local networks or networks that do not engage in advocacy. Currently, Northern practitioners want to stimulate networking, but this blind spot may result in a distorted view of what it means and hence, fail to reflect Southern priorities. Last, this research was motivated by a wish to enhance Northern understanding of Southern realities. It would be interesting to start further research on local ownership from Southern motivations and gaps of knowledge that Southern CSOs would like to see addressed.

8. Conclusion

North-South partnerships should stimulate local ownership of development programs. However, it remains ambiguous what roles Northern CSOs should take in these partnerships to accommodate the priorities of Southern CSOs. One of the reasons this remains ambiguous is because few studies depart from Southern perspectives on beneficial collaboration. I conducted a case study among Kenyan disability CSOs and asked for their views on the added value of collaboration.

The first finding is that Kenyan CSOs have different priorities regarding collaboration. This research distinguished three types of CSOs with a different focus regarding the forms of collaboration they regard as beneficial. Second, these types of CSOs gain different values from collaboration. Below, I will summarize the added value of collaboration for each type of CSO.

For local service providers, collaboration helps to provide quality services to the community.

Within Kenya, community-based collaboration and membership in grassroots networks have priority. These relations have value as knowledge brokers and coordinators. Through collaboration, local service providers can hand over responsibilities to community members and gain valuable updates from the field. The exchange in grassroots networks is beneficial because it saves costs and allows local service providers to coordinate their activities with other initiatives.

Collaboration with Northern actors is mainly charity-based. Local service providers value these actors as funders.

Local changemakers look for additional qualities in partners. These CSOs not only provide services but also advocate. They seek to collaborate with those that can change attitudes and policies.

Within Kenya, community-based collaboration is of value because, here, they find knowledge brokers and allies. Especially relevant here is the collaboration with parents' and disabled people's groups. These groups provide valuable updates, and collaboration can increase the leverage of local changemakers. Membership in local advocacy networks is valuable because they find allies and coordinate initiatives here. Network efforts are more visible and exercise more leverage than individual actions.

Local changemakers collaborate with Northern CSOs on a project base. This is valuable mainly because Northern CSOs act as connectors. Introductions or mere association ease access to other CSOs in the North and Kenya.

National mobilizers collaborate with those that can help to change national policies.

Within Kenya, project-based collaboration and membership in national advocacy networks are valuable. In these forms of collaboration, they find allies and coordinators. They receive valuable updates, and through joint action, they gain more leverage.

National mobilizers engage in project-based collaboration with Northern CSOs and collaborate with them as members of international advocacy networks. Here, they are of added value as knowledge brokers and connectors. They provide valuable updates on international developments and can link the network's efforts to new audiences.

Thus, including perspectives of Kenyan disability CSOs is helpful to gain a more detailed understanding of the differences in priorities.

The third and final finding is that barriers prevent CSOs from obtaining added value. There is a disconnect between different networks. The expertise of locally active CSOs, therefore, remains hidden. Second, there is no structured approach to link CSOs across borders, obstructing swift action.

If Northern CSOs want to stimulate Southern ownership in North-South partnerships, they should accommodate the value of current practices and address existing gaps.

This research suggests that Northern CSOs would be of increased value if they would develop their role as connectors and diversify their approach based on Southern CSOs' collaboration priorities. Only then can they be relevant to their diverse missions and ultimately stimulate Southern ownership.

9. Recommendations

In Kenya, the Liliane Foundation has a network of partner organizations. The belief is that this network can be a means to strengthen ownership of partner organizations. It can offer opportunities for the growth of individual organizations, and the network as a whole is considered more effective in realizing sustainable change.

However, these organizations seem to have little intrinsic motivation to undertake joint activities. The Liliane Foundation faces a dilemma. It wants to stimulate networking because of its supposed benefits but does not want to impose something from the outside.

It, therefore, wants to understand what Kenyan disability CSOs consider to be the added value of collaboration. These perspectives can provide insights on how to contribute to effective networks. Ultimately, the Liliane Foundation wants to know how it could position itself in such a way as to strengthen local ownership.

The Liliane Foundation network

We have found that the current network of the Liliane Foundation in Kenya incorporates two different types of CSOs: respondents were either local service providers or local changemakers (except for the SPO). Although it is not sure whether this sample is representative of all POs in the Liliane Foundation network, its insights could give some direction.

An essential finding of this research is that an organization's preference for collaboration follows an organization's deliberate choice of strategy and locality. The typology we have introduced is not a linear scale of developmental stages but reflects differences in priorities.

Our research has indicated that a possible point of departure is to accommodate existing initiatives that add value to Kenyan CSOs.

The motives of networks: knowledge broker

A significant barrier for POs to participate in the Liliane Foundation's network is that collaborating in a *national* network is not in line with their *local* missions.

- *Recommendation 1:* strengthen existing grassroots and local advocacy networks.

The Liliane Foundation has POs that are very strong in realizing local change. The primary objective of many POs is likely not to realize (inter)national change. The POs in this research specialize in community ownership to ensure that people with disabilities can access quality services and to change discriminating attitudes and policies. The strength of the POs is that they can mobilize resources and people locally for these objectives.

Hence, the Liliane Foundation's national network likely is irrelevant to POs' primary mission. When POs engage in these national side activities, they should be backed up with extra funding to free staff from the organization's principal obligations.

Instead, it may be more effective for the Liliane Foundation to depart from the unique strength of POs and facilitate local network activities.

The current capacity-building activities in the Liliane Foundation network, or trainings in general, could be more effective if they accommodate current practices.

- *Recommendation 2:* diversify capacity-building activities to strengthen POs' current network position.

The Liliane Foundation can further develop its role a knowledge broker with a targeted approach. The Liliane Foundation has an extensive knowledge base that it can use more effectively when adjusted to the priorities of POs. Currently, the Liliane Foundation organizes trainings and facilitates benchmarking in the Liliane Foundation network to stimulate its partners' organizational growth. The grassroots and local advocacy networks form a logical point of departure to strengthen POs' current position.

Organizations are members of grassroots networks because it adds value as a coordinator of existing initiatives and optimizes service delivery. Grassroots networks are most efficient when all key players are convinced of the necessity to exchange resources and coordinate activities. The Liliane Foundation can share evidence on the necessity and efficacy of a multi-stakeholder approach. Local advocacy networks add value as connectors. Members seek to combine and present information in such a way as to influence government decisions. The Liliane Foundation can share best practices in local advocacy and provide evidence on the harmful effects of discriminatory policies and procedures. POs, in turn, can use the association with the Liliane Foundation and the evidence as a strategic means to increase their leverage within the networks.

The barriers of networks: connector

In the examples above, we started from a position where the Liliane Foundation is a knowledge broker. Although this is a good first step, it still holds all the power to act with the Liliane Foundation. To truly stimulate local ownership, there is an additional role as a connector.

There is a wish among POs to collaborate with CSOs that strengthen the work in the community. However, because POs are relatively small organizations, they miss opportunities to collaborate with other CSOs both in Kenya and the North.

- *Recommendation 3*: introduce POs to organizations that strengthen their community-based approach.

The Liliane Foundation could be a connector of organizations with similar strategies. According to respondents, Northern CSOs are of added value because of their extensive network and because their positive reputation eases initiating contacts with new CSOs.

POs are looking to collaborate with organizations that strengthen their community-based approach. As an expert on disability, the Liliane Foundation is likely to have interesting contacts for the POs. These could be other Southern CSOs trying to accomplish similar things with complementary expertise or Northern CSOs interested in strengthening this community-based strategy.

There is an unexploited opportunity to strengthen POs' position in Kenya. Within Kenya, the POs have difficulty connecting with other CSOs and other networks because they are relatively small organizations. There is a wish to collaborate more and be more visible.

- *Recommendation 4:* connect existing networks in a country.

This research in Kenya seems to show a disconnection between networks at various societal levels. It is logical that networks have their distinct functions and thus a differing membership. However, this disconnection is partly due to in-country inequality: local organizations lack the resources to participate in national meetings. CSOs in national networks have good motives to exclude smaller CSOs (donor conditions). The current lack of communication between networks results in missed opportunities. Local organizations' views are underrepresented in (inter)national advocacy, and national networks have difficulty staying in touch with everyday realities.

The SPO can use its country expertise to take on additional responsibilities, and advice the Liliane Foundation. By collaborating with diverse types of CSOs in a country, it can 'eavesdrop' on relevant issues and activities at different societal levels. (1) It can connect POs to others who try to address similar issues. (2) The Liliane Foundation can use its connections and leverage to motivate key network players to consider including smaller organizations. (3) In the long term, it can provide a platform to those actors that are convinced of the necessity to coordinate networks without further interference from the Liliane Foundation.

To wrap up

The POs have specific strategies and localities that the LF should consider to strengthen POs' positions. The Liliane Foundation can improve its role as a knowledge broker by enhancing POs' position in current networks. It can take on an additional role as a connector. It can link POs to potentially interesting organizations and connect the local networks to other interesting networks in Kenya.

This recognition of PO is beneficial to the individual organizations and would increase the impact of *all* CSOs that address disability issues in Kenya.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Information sheet research

My name is Maria Baarslag and I am a student of the Master International Development Studies at Wageningen University & Research in the Netherlands.

As a researcher I am part of Breaking down Barriers 2.0. This research project has been set up by the African Studies Centre in Leiden and the Liliane Foundation. The aim of this project is to produce academic knowledge that will promote disability inclusive development.

In order to broaden our knowledge of the practices that promote a disability inclusive society, I am interested in studying the practices of organizations in Kenya. I am particularly interested in what types of collaboration organizations engage in and what are important motivations for collaboration.

Including the perspectives of organizations as yours will provide valuable lessons for the promotion of disability inclusive development. The lessons derived from this research will be published in the form of an academic thesis and will be published on the platforms of Breaking down Barriers 2.0 to inform future policies.

Due to the current pandemic, it is unfortunately not possible for me to visit you in Kenya. Therefore, I would be very grateful if you can participate in online interviews.

- I am inviting you to participate in **two interviews;** this will give us the time to gain a thorough understanding of what you come across as an organization.
- These online interviews take **about an hour** and we will use a medium of your preference (e.g. Zoom, Teams or Skype).
- I am inviting you for **one-on-one interviews.** It is possible to change persons between interview sessions (e.g. to conduct an interview with person A in session 1, and with person B in session 2).
- During these interviews I will ask you about your experiences as an organization working in the field of disability inclusion.

As a student, I work independently from organizations such as the Liliane Foundation. With your permission, I will record the interview for my own use. The answers will be processed in such a way as to safeguard your anonymity.

Interview consent form

MSc thesis: "Partners for a disability inclusive society: Kenyan perspectives on the added value of collaboration"

Interviewer: Maria Baarslag, Wageningen University & Research

1. I agree to be interviewed for the purposes of the research named above.
2. The purpose and nature of the interview has been explained to me, and I have read the information sheet as provided by the student.
3. My participation in this project is voluntary. I understand that I will not be paid for my participation. I may withdraw and discontinue participation at any time.
4. I agree that the interview will be electronically recorded and that the researcher takes notes during the interview.
5. I understand that the researcher will not identify me by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview, and that my confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure.
6. I agree that the data will be archived and processed for purposes of the research.

Name: ………………………

Date: ………………………

Signature: ……………………

Appendix B

Interview guide

Introduction

- Thank you for your time
- First interview – one hour
- If the connection is bad – I am here waiting
- I am interested in your perspectives on added value collaboration for disability inclusion. What is important and what qualities are there – today interested in gaining a picture of experiences with collaborations – next interview more about exploring possibilities and wishes
- Position as researcher and confidentiality.
- Turn on recording? – Verbal consent

RECORDING ON: do you agree with being recorded for purposes of my research?

Familiarization

- **What is your role/function in the organization?**
  Invite to talk about current activities which are on the agenda, clarify the position from which a person views the organization

1. Experiences with collaboration

I would like to learn more about your collaborative practices and how they are helpful. Therefore, I will invite you to share 3-4 experiences and I will ask more about details.

- **Can you describe an occasion where you have collaborated with others?**
  How did you meet/ how was it formed? What was the common goal, what did you share or do together, who was engaged in what, how long?
- **What did the collaboration bring you?**
  - What did the other bring you? In terms of input: information, resources, activities and capabilities
  - What did your organization gain? In terms of output: : efficiency improvements or cost reductions; additionality of competencies; positioning

- **Can you describe a situation of collaboration which worked differently/ which brought a different experience?**
  How did you meet? What was the common goal, what did you share or do together, who was engaged in what, how long, what made it different?
- **What did the collaboration bring you?**
  In terms of input: information, resources, activities and capabilities
  In terms of output: : efficiency improvements or cost reductions; additionality of competencies; positioning

- **Can you tell me about a collaborative experience in a different area?**

- **What works well when collaborating with others?**
  What were successful collaborations, what makes the experiences pleasant or successful in terms of goals and relations, how often is a collaboration successful?

2. Span of collaboration
    - **What are other types of partners you typically collaborate with?**
      Encourage to include a multitude of stakeholders
      What are priorities when collaborating / how do you choose?
    - **What are your considerations for collaborating with Northern CSOs?**
      What expectations do you have? What could it bring you, what do you want to do or share together?
      With whom, how long, how was it initiated? Can you describe what you did together? What did it bring you?

3. Barriers and wishes
    - **Can you describe occasions where you wanted to collaborate but where it did not work?**
        - What happened, who was involved, what difficulties did you encounter, what did you wish for?
    - **What are considerations for you not to collaborate with others?**

    - **If anything would be possible, what would you wish to change?**
      Can be anything, e.g. broadening the scope, changing conditions for collaboration, or different activities or outcomes

Is there anything I have not asked or anything you like to elaborate upon?

RECORDING OFF

- How did you experience the interview?
- Explain snowballing – possible to contact organizations?
- Possible to contact for additional information?
- Affirm appointments

Appendix C

Memorandum of Understanding between ms. Maria Baarslag and Transcriber, Kenya

1. Herewith 'Breaking down Barriers 2.0', part of the Liliane Foundation, the Netherlands, represented by undersigned, declares to have contracted as a transcriber, *FULL NAME* born on *DATE OF BIRTH* for the transcription of interviews conducted by ms. Maria Baarslag.

2. The transcriber will transcribe an estimate of 15 interviews related to collaboration for disability inclusion. For each hour of interview transcribed, the transcriber will receive a sum of 15 euros or the equivalent in Ksh. This amount includes expenses, taxes and social insurances, to be paid by the contracted transcriber.

3. Payments will only be made when the quality of the work delivered by the transcriber is adjudged satisfactory by ms. Maria Baarslag. After having completed the first transcription, a decision will be made whether the transcriber can go ahead with the remaining interviews.

4. The transcriber will provide an invoice for payment in two trenches. The first invoice will be submitted after seven interviews have been transcribed. The second invoice will be submitted after the remaining interviews have been transcribed. When finished and the work was judged satisfactory, the transcriber will get a bonus of 50 euros.

5. A full transcription entails a **literal** transcription of all that is being said – **hesitation sounds can be neglected**. The transcribing should be literal. In no case should the transcriber offer interpretations of what was said. When possible, different persons speaking on tape will be referred to as "Person A:", "Person B:", "Person C:", etcetera. If possible, the transcriber should indicate the position of the person who is speaking (e.g. Interviewer, Manager). Roughly every 5 minutes the transcript should include a time stamp [5 minutes] [10 minutes] etc.

6. The conducted interviews will be delivered to the transcriber. As of today, a first set of 6 interviews are ready for transcription. Once received, these conducted interviews should be transcribed **as soon as possible,** but no later than November 1, 2021. A second set of interviews will be delivered in the coming weeks. Once received, these conducted interviews should be transcribed **as soon as possible,** but no later than one week after receipt. The transcripts will be in the Word-format and will be e-mailed to the following e-mail addresses: maria.baarslag@wur.nl and maria.baarslag@gmail.com.

7. By accepting this job, the contracted transcriber commits himself/herself to treating both the recordings and the transcriptions with complete confidentiality. Nothing of the material, of both the recordings and the transcriptions, shall be replicated, shared with others, made public or used for demonstrational purposes.

8. From this memorandum of understanding no further rights or obligations can be deduced.

As such made up in Wageningen, October 19, 2021.

Ms. Maria Baarslag	*FULL NAME*
MSc student	Contracted Transcriber

Appendix D

Individual codes			Clusters of codes			
Code	Grounded		Community actors	Government agencies	Collaboration in networks	Collaboration with the Global
○ Universities	1		Community volunteers	Social services	Grassroots network	Charity-based collaboration
○ Media	1		Teachers	Hospitals	Local advocacy network	Project-based collaboration
○ Private sector	1		Churches		National advocacy network	
○ Church	4		Parents		International advocacy network	
○ Consortium	10		Disabled people's groups			
○ Health institutions	13					
○ Grassroots	13					
○ Schools and teachers	18					
○ Coalition	19					
○ Northern partners	20					
○ Kenyan organizations	22					
○ NGOs	24					
○ Parents	30					
○ Northern donors	36					
○ DPOs	46					
○ Government	47					
○ Northern CSOs	57					
○ Network	74					
	* Specifiek naar gevraagd, dus komt vaak terug.					

Table 17. Codes for actors

Appendix E

	CODE	MEANING	EXAMPLE
Intensified impact			
	Increased leverage	Better able to influence situations and people, mainly by means of Joint protection of interests / Amplified voice	So bringing them all together in one basket. So it makes it quite easy for us to lobby for issues around disability and also looking at issues which are crossing cutting within the different disabilities. So you find maybe the common issue is education which affects children with learning stability, children who are autistic and so forth. So if we talk about maybe education in one basket, then it's easier to advocate for that and for inclusion of that in our policies and so forth.
	Coordination of complementing levels	Harmonizing efforts at different geographic places or levels in society	So you find this one is doing at this level another one doing at the other level and the other one at the higher level, so you find we complement one another and work becomes easier.
Learning			
	Benchmarking	Learning from past experiences, best practices and mistakes of others and identifying ways to improve own organization	We call them exchange programs whereby we have a foundation in [...] and another one is in [...] we exchange visits where this organization goes and sees what works and this has worked very well especially with the economic empowerment programs whereby when someone has a business for example can I say like maybe they sell groceries in [...] and they are doing really well, and this person in [...] is selling the same groceries but not doing so well, so we organize those exchange visits so looking at which organizations has a component that we have that is weak and to them it's strong and doing and identify how we can go and visit and also be like a bench marking for best practice visit like basically just harvesting ideas from them. Yeah.
	Training	Learning new skills that improve the functioning of the organization	they start a journey of strengthening their capacities, either technical capacity or you know policy and you know operational capacity so to say
	Updating	Gaining knowledge of the current situation in the work field	we update one another how is the progress, how are children living with disability surviving during this time of Covid, how are we surviving, how are we ensuring that these children are taken care of. So we share a lot. What is Kenya doing towards this, what is Ethiopia doing towards this, what is Uganda doing?
	New strategies	Gaining ideas of other ways to achieve the organization's goal	but now working as a team we realize we can actually focus on the ones with learning disabilities not only with the ones with visible disabilities; so working in collaborations with organizations in Kenya has helped us realize that also knowing what opportunities are lying somewhere

Increased network			
	Access to donors	Having the necesarry links and meeting the requirements to access funding from Northern CSOs	because there is a trend that is now coming in with donors, whereby they are not comfortable giving one organization a grant, they prefer to give a consortium or a coalition and one it's because of accountability, the second thing is about reducing duplication of activities and the third one is basically creating sustainability in the project when the grant runs out. So it's basically it is something that is also a donor requirement which we are abiding to.
	Contacting	Making use of another's network to contact relevant people	The other thing apart from the learning could be sharing of networks, maybe. For instance, from this from these organizations, you're able to know who they're working with, how they are relating and then you are able to learn and share the contacts. We got know about some people who are normally donating wheelchairs through some of these engagements. So we know that there are people who maybe are fundraising for wheelchairs and when we have need, we're able to share these things with them.
	Visibility	Attracting attention or being recognized	This is the umbrella unit or organ that brought us together and in working with the government the ministry of education actually they recognize us better when we have formed a team of actors, as a team of organizations
Cost effective			
	Funding	Receiving money directly from the other	They give us the funds to run our activities
	Combined fundraising	Writing joint proposals to access funding instead of competing for the same funds	
	Complementing expertise	Tapping from the expert knowledge of others	if we need an expert in the proposal writing we don't have to go to hire a consultant from outside, we just go to the coalition and identify a person within that coalition who is able to do that and they will come and do it. If we need a training on child safeguarding and vulnerable adults, we just go to the coalition pick someone and they come and do it. And more often than not it is pro bono we don't even have to pay them because they are part of the coalition.
	Sharing responsibilities	The other takes up the responsibility to undertake some actions that benefit the organization's goal	one wing is reserved for our girls and there is a day the church has set aside, every 3rd Sunday of the month our girls animate mass, they become the choir they do the singing of course they can't do the reading but the other Christians including the choir stay aside and allow themselves to be led by our girls .
	Material	Receiving physical objects/devices directly from the other	And through that network, we've managed to gain support because sometimes you might find we haven't had wheelchairs, any donation of wheelchairs in the last one or two years. And then you find that one of our partners, has quite a number of wheelchairs, then you're like, "Could you like be able to assist us with a couple?" And through that network they able to share information that maybe we have quite a number of wheelchairs, any partners needing these devices get in touch.
	Services	Easier / Free access to services or at a reduced rate	and they were also doing registration of persons with disabilities so that they can get the disability cards

Table 18. Codes for benefits

Appendix F

In the table below, one can find a division of respondents' organizations. Three groups can be distinguished:

- **Brown:** these organizations are active locally and committed to service delivery. Organizations 6 and 7 concentrate their activities in the town where they are located; organization 4 is active in two counties.
- **Red**: these organizations are active locally and employ service delivery and advocacy strategies. Organizations 2 and 13 concentrate their activities in the town where they are located; organizations 3 and 5 are active in multiple settlements within their county.
- **Pink**: these organizations have a national presence and are focused on advocacy strategies.

Organization number	Target area	Strategic activities	Strategic role
1	National	Strengthening smaller organizations and policy influencing	**Capacity building** (coordinating initatives and formalizing organizations); **advocacy** (awareness raising and lobbying)
2	Small town	Hospital; inclusive education; community awareness and mobilization	**Service delivery** (rehabilitation and referrals); **capacity building** (formalizing local groups) and **advocacy** (awareness raising and lobbying)
3	County	Rehabilitation centre; community awareness and mobilization	**Service delivery** (rehabiliation and referrals); **capacity building** (formalizing local groups) and **advocacy** (awareness raising and lobbying)
4	Two counties	Rehabilitation centre and inclusive education	**Service delivery** (rehabiliation and referrals)
5	County	Rehabilitation centre and inclusive education; community awareness and advocacy	**Service delivery** (rehabilitation and referrals); **capacity building** (formalizing local groups) and **advocacy** (awareness raising and lobbying)
6	Small town	Care home	**Service delivery** (rehabiliation)
7	Small town	Two care homes and outreach program	**Service delivery** (rehabiliation) and **advocacy** (awareness raising)
8	National	Medical clinics, provision of assitive devices; lobby and advocacy	**Service delivery** (medical care); **capacity building** (formalizing organizations and coordinating initiatives) and **advocacy** (awareness raising and lobbying)
9	National	Strengthen DPOs; training stakeholders; consultation and advocacy	**Capacity building** (formalizing local groups and coordinating initiatives) and **advocacy** (awareness raising and lobbying)
10	Multiple counties	Advocacy child rights	**Capacity building** (formalizing organizations and coordinating initiatives) and **advocacy** (awareness raising and lobbying)

11	National	Advocacy children and youth with disabilities	**Capacity building** (formalizing local groups and coordinating initiatives) and **advocacy** (awareness raising and lobbying)
12	10 counties	Training and (self) advocacy	**Capacity building** (formalizing local groups) and **advocacy** (awareness raising and lobbying)
13	Small town	Early intervention, support systems, awareness and advocacy	**Service delivery** (rehabilitation) and **advocacy** (awareness raising and lobbying)
14	National	Strengthen DPOs; advocacy	**Capacity building** (formalizing organizations) and **advocacy** (awareness raising and lobbying)

Table 19. Characteristics of respondents