Partnerships in Global Research
What is Partnership?

• Do we know what it is?? Am I kidding asking this basic question that has an obvious answer???

• Not really! Especially if you are from Southern institutions......after all partnership is about “building” my capacity!!

• Re-defining the concept is the first step which still largely bears post WWII connotation of “transfer of skills, technology and systems from developed to developing countries”.

Practicalities of today’s partnerships

• We can engage in participatory and inclusive process of generating global knowledge and solutions to problems
• We can bring in delicate “balance” between universalism and particularism
• ICT can help strong partnerships (e.g. real time data collection in any part of the world)
• But institutions vary in their rules, structure and culture (DU story of inclusion and seniority at the departmental level)
• Some institutions can learn and cope better and others struggle in following due diligence
Practicalities of today’s partnerships

• Added complexities in partnership
  – Multi-disciplinary research project;
  – Multi-institutions’ research project
  – Combination of “research” and “action components
  – Ensuring value for money and impacts (too much to do by the people who are mainly good at academic arena)

• These complexities take a toll on the potential results of the research projects as well as on the team leader who becomes a “manager” (either micro or hands off)
Positive Experience

• ESRC funded “Food Rights and Food Riots” project
  – Four countries each country team included a UK based and a country-based Co-investigators both having equal responsibilities
  – PI playing the role of an excellent coordinator, not a hierarchical team leader who knows best
  – Inception and final workshops together as a whole team (even the venues were well thought of and decided in a participatory manner considering practical issues)
  – 100% transparent financial allocations and budgets
  – Salaries and fees decided based on CVs and competence, not on citizenships