

22 APRILE, VENERDÌ

16:00 - 19:00

SALA CONVEGNI

PALAZZO DU MESNIL

UNI-2

ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE, INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND AFRICAN SOCIETIES

Antonio Pezzano, Università di Napoli L'Orientale, CESAC; Sara De Simone, Università degli Studi di Trento

CONTRIBUTI

Gender Studies and Sustainable Development in the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) Region: Interactions, conflicts and transfer of good practices among civil society, the state and international actors

E. Francesca, S. Borrillo, M. Tarantino, Università di Napoli L'Orientale

Lessons from Evaluation on Institutional Steps to Shifting Power

C. Blaser Mapitsa, University of the Witwatersrand

The double essence of the emergency: doing fieldwork in security "red-zones"

V. Blaiotta, Università degli Studi di Catania, École des hautes études en sciences sociales

Contrastare le disuguaglianze nella produzione della conoscenza. Quale ruolo per la cooperazione universitaria? Spunti per azioni concrete

M. Montanini, E. Dansero, DCPS, Università degli Studi di Torino

UNI.COO project: a bridge by university students between the academic international cooperation and the civil society

A. Calvo, M. Mosca, E. Dansero, M. Montanini, Centro Interdipartimentale di Ricerca e Cooperazione Tecnico Scientifica con l'Africa (CISAO), Università degli Studi di Torino

Scientific Diplomacy and Challenges of the Global Development

D. Shendrikova, N. Golinucci, N. Stevanato, F. Tonini, E. Colombo, Politecnico di Milano

Nomadic landscapes, local knowledge and ethnography: operationalising One Health among pastoral communities in Northern Kenya

E. Grasso, Università degli Studi di Torino

Academic Knowledge at the grassroots level - The experience of Mani Tese in Kenya

S. Albertazzi; V. Bini; S. Tini

ABSTRACTS

GENDER STUDIES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE MENA (MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA) REGION: INTERACTIONS, CONFLICTS AND TRANSFER OF GOOD PRACTICES AMONG CIVIL SOCIETY, THE STATE AND INTERNATIONAL ACTORS

E. Francesca, S. Borrillo, M. Tarantino, Università di Napoli L'Orientale

In the last decades, gender studies have become a crucial dimension within the spectrum of sustainable development policies both on the global level as well as on the regional one, in particular in the MENA region, which according to the United Nations is composed by countries with the high state of female marginalization and discrimination in terms of illiteracy rates, political use of religion, informal work, unemployment and social and political participation. Within the MENA region, the process of building Gender and Women's Studies programs has often encountered significant challenges. In some contexts, such as Morocco, gender studies started to appear in the local academia in the '70-'80s slowly permeating also other disciplines and fields of study. Only recently, gender studies came into contact with civil society through programs of research-action promoted by NGOs and feminist associations and movements, while –with few if no exceptions– the interaction with the State has been characterized by largely contentious dynamics. The tendency was overturned as soon as the support to local governments by international actors, such as the EU, established the clause of conditionality of gender equality for the vast majority of the development programs. In such a context, the “gender” academic knowledge became an added value, alongside the one about Human Rights. Thanks to the support received by international development actors, several intellectuals and experts on gender-related issues started to cover pivotal positions within national institutions, thus giving birth to a dynamic of gender mainstreaming more useful for a sort of ‘gender washing’ tied to development support rather than a real and extensive diffusion of gender equality –both as value and operating method– within the whole society. Indeed, significant steps to fill the gap between public policies and socio-economic realities of more marginalized and grassroots sectors still need to be implemented. The same needs to be done in order to push forward the

cultural and social recognition of some sexual and reproductive rights (single mothers, childmarriages,LGBTQ issues).

In this context, while some development-aid agencies support civil society organizations in order to promote the recognition of gender rights, also through knowledge production, it is interesting to investigate what role the academic research for gender studies could have with respect to local stakeholders, in particular within those developing countries where gender equality and empowerment is a contentious issue of the political agenda. An interesting example is that of Jordan, where the State, despite institutionally recognizing the need to address some important issues such as gender equality, gender pay gap, honour crimes and gender violence increasing rates, hardly supports the effective laws implementation within its parliamentary institutions. Given the premise, the void is usually filled by grassroots movements and associations who, in partnership with research institutes and international networks, try to implement projects scattered throughout the country (for example, SIGI Jordan as part of the Women's Learning Partnership). In this sense, it would be also useful to further explore the impact of collaborative knowledge production and exchange starting from the role of researchers in building networks with the local actors, deepening in particular the role of "amplifiers" played by the formers for all those civil society experiences that usually have to shrink and adapt their contents and findings from the field due to formal limitations imposed by governments and official institutions. In this sense, aware of the colonial dynamics still inherent in the North-South Relationship, academic research may offer support for the further capacity building of local actors engaged in gender knowledge production and in its involvement in the realization of social empowerment.

LESSONS FROM EVALUATION ON INSTITUTIONAL STEPS TO SHIFTING POWER

C. Blaser Mapitsa, University of the Witwatersrand

Program evaluation, as a form of applied research with an explicit consideration for the institutional arrangements of commissioning and use, has had a longstanding concern for the way in which research processes are embedded in the neocolonial relationships underpinning the international development sector. Given the established roles various stakeholders have in evaluation processes, the sector brings particularly valuable lessons for other arenas of research. While relatively robust body of research exists around what decoloniality can look like in these contexts, relatively less consideration has been given to the incremental steps that can shift the current unequal dynamics of cooperation. This presentation aims to explore five components of collaboration: trust, coordination, adaptive resourcing, shared power, and common vision. Within each area, certain incremental steps will be outlined, representing experiences in evaluation collaborations that have either generated a more conducive environment for research collaboration, or limited scope for effective cooperation. It

will highlight in particular some of the institutional factors that can be influenced to build an enabling environment for equitable, shared knowledge creation.

THE DOUBLE ESSENCE OF THE EMERGENCY: DOING FIELDWORK IN SECURITY "RED-ZONES"

V. Blaiotta, Università degli Studi di Catania, École des hautes études en sciences sociales

This contribution aims to shading lights on researchers' methodological challenges experienced over the course of fieldwork in security-risk areas. By sharing my experience of both preparation as well as of navigation of the field, I emphasize real-life obstacles and possible solutions to try to overcome potential constraints and their repercussions on the research. In some cases, social sciences researchers dealing with the African continent have to cope with security challenges. In this sense the world of academia has become familiar with notions of crisis and emergency from a theoretical as well as from a practical point of view. Today scholars researching in areas of security risk, see their access to the field increasingly complex. This is due on the one hand to struggling circumstances on the ground creating evident restrictions from a field-approachability perspective. On the other, universities departments following western-governments predicaments on security seem less likely to send their scholars to so-called 'red zones'. However, the 'red-zone' determination is often fixed by inconsistent and Eurocentric parameters enforced as a result of asymmetrical relations between western and global south countries. This dynamic is driving universities to increasingly discourage field research by their own scholars, pushing for 'by-proxy' studies from secondary sources or through local researchers' involvement. Moreover, over the last two years as a result of the COVID-pandemic, the chances for fieldwork outside the European borders have been further reduced. Western-academia emergency/management approaches impacted on research from various points of view. The declining of fieldwork is questioning the contemporary value of empirical and qualitative research. Simultaneously it plays a role in producing an international division of research labor that sees researchers from the global south engaged in the work of data extraction and those from the west in the realization of the 'research product'. How do all these elements orientate the work of those doing research in security-risk countries? Which are the problems researchers deal during fieldwork preparation phase? Which are the choices researchers will be forced to make once arrived on the field? How does security imperative of self-protection emerge as an element shaping researcher's positionality (especially if we are talking about a white and western researcher) in a Global South context? My contribution aims to open a debate on the issue of fieldwork by trying to unhinge the present political "neutrality" of emergency management in the field of research. This contribution is based on the preparation and execution of my fieldwork on migration studies, carried out in Niger between April and August 2021.

CONTRASTARE LE DISUGUAGLIANZE NELLA PRODUZIONE DELLA CONOSCENZA. QUALE RUOLO PER LA COOPERAZIONE UNIVERSITARIA? SPUNTI PER AZIONI CONCRETE

M. Montanini, E. Dansero, DCPS, Università degli Studi di Torino

Le riflessioni contenute in questo paper si collocano nel quadro più ampio di una ricerca che si propone di investigare le azioni e gli attori della cooperazione universitaria all'interno dell'Università di Torino al fine di porre le basi per una strategia di cooperazione coesa e condivisa. L'articolo 23 della legge 125-2014 sulla cooperazione riconosce le università come soggetti chiave della cooperazione allo sviluppo. Il Documento Triennale di Programmazione e di Indirizzo 2021-2023 della Cooperazione Italiana per lo sviluppo ribadisce che tutti gli attori della cooperazione sono chiamati a "lavorare con i paesi partner, partendo dai loro bisogni e dalle loro priorità". A partire dagli anni novanta, e in continuità con riflessioni che datano almeno dal periodo post indipendenza, fra le priorità individuate dalle università, dai ricercatori e dagli intellettuali africani vi è sicuramente quella di fare fronte alle asimmetrie di potere (e alle distorsioni teoriche e pratiche che ne conseguono) legate alla produzione della conoscenza scientifica. Questa preoccupazione non riguarda esclusivamente l'ambito accademico, poiché la costruzione del sapere condiziona il modo in cui le società nelle loro diverse componenti inquadrano e affrontano i problemi che incontrano nei loro contesti specifici. In ultima istanza, la costruzione del sapere contribuisce a definire l'interesse pubblico a progettare il futuro collettivo. Il tema della produzione della conoscenza scientifica nel continente africano ha trovato nuovo vigore a partire dalle proteste raccolte sotto lo slogan di Rhodes Must Fall in Sudafrica (2015). Le istanze espresse dal movimento sudafricano si sono imposte su scala globale, portando alla costituzione, all'emersione e alla mediatizzazione di numerosi movimenti che si battono per la decolonizzazione della conoscenza scientifica e la giustizia epistemica, in diverse parti del mondo. In realtà, la nozione generica di decolonizzazione del sapere raccoglie numerosi temi interconnessi, come la divisione del lavoro della ricerca a livello internazionale (le asimmetrie legate ai processi di raccolta e di interpretazione dei dati), la costruzione dei curricula universitari in Africa e nel resto del mondo, le opportunità di formazione offerte agli studenti e ai ricercatori all'inizio della loro carriera, gli ostacoli legati all'accesso, alla pubblicazione e alla divulgazione delle ricerche scientifiche da parte dei ricercatori africani, la mobilità dei ricercatori, la partecipazione alle conferenze internazionali, le condizioni di erogazione dei finanziamenti alla ricerca, il multilinguismo nella ricerca. Nonostante la forza e la persistenza con cui i problemi relativi alla decolonizzazione del sapere scientifico vengono sollevati, e l'eco globale e mediatico che incontrano, le asimmetrie di potere legate alla produzione del sapere finiscono spesso per essere derubricate come problemi sistemici e di complessa risoluzione, di cui dovrebbe occuparsi la politica nazionale ed internazionale, o come problemi strutturali, che possono essere ricondotti all'economia internazionale, e che quindi non riguardano direttamente la cooperazione

universitaria. Al di là di iniziative singole, seppur meritevoli, anche a livello europeo è raro imbattersi in strategie di più ampio respiro e che oltrepassino la soglia del progetto pilota. Indubbiamente, la risoluzione dei problemi legati alla costruzione del sapere è da attuarsi contemporaneamente sul piano simbolico ed epistemico, sul piano materiale, politico e delle pratiche quotidiane. Certamente, la messa in atto di iniziative concrete richiede un' accettazione del rischio contraria alla logica manageriale, orientata sull'eccellenza, l'efficienza economica, e l'immediatezza, ma senz'altro non in contraddizione con alcuni principi e obiettivi promossi da tutte le università europee, come l'innovazione, o la scienza aperta, equa e inclusiva. Al di là di iniziative puntuali, come l'erogazione di borse a studenti meritevoli provenienti dal continente africano, le iniziative concrete di cui le università italiane possono farsi carico comprendono il ripensamento degli scopi e delle modalità di sostegno alla mobilità sud-nord; un'interrogazione radicale sulla divisione del lavoro di ricerca; l'orientamento verso strategie di pubblicazione che sostengono i progetti di open science e oltrepassano l'ossessione per il ranking, con un'attenzione di riguardo ad una diversificazione geografica delle pubblicazioni; l'apertura e l'affermazione del multilinguismo; la creazione di percorsi di formazione alla cooperazione internazionale aperte ai diversi e plurali sistemi di conoscenza, basati su interazioni autentiche e reciprocità con i partner africani; la ricerca di un dialogo stretto e costante con le università africane, che superi la logica stringente dei progetti.

UNI.COO PROJECT: A BRIDGE BY UNIVERSITY STUDENTS BETWEEN THE ACADEMIC INTERNATIONAL AND CIVIL SOCIETY

A. Calvo, M. Mosca, E. Dansero, M. Montanini, Centro Interdipartimentale di Ricerca e Cooperazione Tecnico Scientifica con l'Africa (CISAO), Università degli Studi di Torino

Since 2012 The University of Turin has been promoting a mobility program to stimulate university students in international cooperation projects carried out by the civil society and the Italian NGOs in an interdisciplinary and inclusive perspective. This program, named UNI.COO (UNito for International COOperation) started in 2012 and continued until 2019: in 2020 the project suffered a setback, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The project granted more than two hundred mobility scholarships to different countries, especially African and Latin America, thanks to the University of Turin and bank mobility grants aimed at applied field researches in development cooperation projects. Students with a different background and coming from various academic courses (sociology, anthropology, psychology, agronomy, chemistry, ...) spent around three months in different countries of the South of the world, thanks also to the financial contribution of the University of Turin and to the involvement of many development cooperation actors:

- NGOs and local and regional authorities (of the Piedmont region);
- Universities and local and national governments of the Global South;
- international organizations;

- NGOs of the addressed countries by the UNI.COO projects.

Researchers and professors of the University of Torino always joined the previous listed actors, from the theoretical interdisciplinary approach, to the guidelines of the field interventions and to the ex-post audit and final elaboration.

The UNI.COO project started in 2012, but it has a remarkable background. Since 1998, in fact, the decentralized cooperation programs of the Piedmont Region granted more than one hundred university student stages in different African countries (until 2004). Thanks to the collaboration with the Piedmont Region (that actively participated also to the definition of the stages), the university students had the opportunity to work within development projects implemented by the University of Turin in partnership with regional NGOs. These regional control projects were the first real interaction between three actors: the Piedmont decentralized cooperation, the Academy and the NGOs. This relationship grew in time, from the mere participation of the University to already built NGOs projects (granted by the Piedmont Region) to the active involvement of all the three actors in construction and presentation of new development projects foreseeing the student mobility as an important component of the projects themselves. For these reasons, the UNI.COO program is really unique, and its main goal is now a global citizenship education, so different from the general notion of the European university mobility (with the recognition of academic credits at foreign universities) and also quite other than the internationalisation (that mainly includes: visiting professors, multiple academic degree, academic courses provided in foreign languages-especially English-, academic teaching English, visiting scientists, welcome services to incoming students). The main peculiarity of the UNI.COO project is a new North-South-North relationship, very different from the North-South transfer of skill and competency, but enriched by a cross-cultural interdisciplinary networking, made it possible by the involvement of multiple actors in a 'peer to peer' relationship and actives at different levels (methodological, technical, cultural, relational, organisational, ...). The effort to work together with a different background and approach, combined with the complexity of other languages, is not always easy, but this is the background of a new development project, where the word 'development' is to be understood especially as development of the person. A good part of the students appreciated these aspects, especially the opportunity to adapt themselves to different cultural and personal contexts. One last important aspect worth mentioning is the link between the UNI.COO program and action-research. This program offers students the chance to put theory learned at university into practice and apply it within international cooperation projects guided step by step by a tutor. This means having the opportunity to experience action-research, the use of quantitative and qualitative methodologies and in particular the use of participatory research, which represent a significant part of the contribution that academic knowledge can give in development interventions in a perspective of cooperation with local expertise, consultation, negotiation, knowledge sharing and community involvement. The bet win by the UNI.COO program is the completion and integration of the academic knowledge with intercultural and relational competencies. Thanks to the UNI.COO experience, the development cooperation is not perceived as a rigid academic research or a work theme, but it is a multi-component dynamic system,

composed by several systems interacting with each other: in other words, it becomes a complex system. UNI.COOP must now deal with the urgent themes of a world dominated by complex systems (climate changes, migrations, food security).

SCIENTIFIC DIPLOMACY AND CHALLENGES OF THE GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

D. Shendrikova, N. Golinucci, N. Stevanato, F. Tonini, E. Colombo, Politecnico di Milano

Recently, scientists started to emphasize the necessity to go beyond the somewhat outdated and divisive North-South paradigm and to move towards a more inclusive concept of global development (Horner, 2019). There is a general consensus that the current societal call for a sustainable and inclusive growth to achieve global development represents a big challenge, which cannot be overcome without the role of academia played at different levels. The energy sector is not an exception and universities as well as other higher education institutions are increasingly recognized to be key players, since innovation and knowledge, capabilities and skills are needed to deal with today's global challenges. One of the key challenges where universities involvement is crucial is science diplomacy, aiming to pursue the goal to consolidate and increase partnerships with the international framework of institutions and actors (NGOs, private firms, public institutions, agencies, foundations). At the Department of Energy of Politecnico di Milano, which can boast a recent renewal of UNESCO Chair in Energy for Sustainable Development, we develop relations especially with the institutions involved in creating and implementing strategies for access to energy, energy transition and sustainable energy solutions within the global frame of sustainable development. According to the latest (2021) report "Stories of Cooperation at PoliMI 2017-2021", around 70% of PoliMI's Cooperation activities are directed to Africa, thus making Africa our major strategic partner for international cooperation and science diplomacy. Among the numerous initiatives academic knowledge transfer and access within the international cooperation framework in which our Department and, in particular, our research group is directly involved we would like to introduce and give some details on three ongoing cooperation and knowledge sharing initiatives:

1. Partnership within H2020 projects – The unique experience of LEAP-RE

LEAP-RE is a Long-Term Joint Research and Innovation Partnership on Renewable Energy between the European Union and the African Union (2020-2025). The program aligns with and responds to the AU-EU high-level policies and specific objectives of the HLPD-CCSE Roadmap. It seeks to create a long-term partnership on Renewable Energy between African and European stakeholders in a quadruple helix approach: government (program owners and funding agencies), research bodies and academia, private sector, and civil society. The aim is to reduce fragmentation by aligning existing bilateral and multilateral frameworks. LEAP-RE opted for a large-scale, inclusive consortium of 96

partners from 34 countries and 2 international organizations, to ensure a broad thematic, geographical and stakeholder coverage, and to demonstrate the feasibility of the collaboration and build trust in view of a long-term partnership addressing the post-2025 period. The program draws on the experience and partnership developed in PRE-LEAP-RE, which conceptualized and developed a framework for long-term, bi-regional cooperation in research, innovation, and capacity building in renewable energies. Within the partnership, we are actively engaged in the scientific coordination efforts and we expect lots of multiplier effect, among them: realization of a growing number of MSc theses in cooperation with other universities in field activities will be favoured, as well as the establishment of programmes for visiting scholars, visiting researchers (also PhD students) and professors for joint research activities and projects.

2. Energy Data and Modelling Capacity Building Activities in Sub-Saharan Africa

Within the knowledge sharing initiative of the IEA, our research group designed ad hoc energy modelling module, which main goal is to deepen the understanding about the current global energy situation and the relative implications on the socio-economic-environmental dimensions, which are crucial for a long term sustainable and equitable development. Alongside with it the main tools available to energy planners and decision makers are presented during the modules in form of both frontal and hands-on sessions. All the lectures are available open access on YouTube.

3. Specialized training (Master "Sustainable Management of Resources and Cultural Heritage for Local Development: Empowering Higher Education in Africa")

The Master is conceived by Africa Foundation, established in 2020 by six Italian Universities: Università Di Bologna, Università di Firenze, Politecnico di Milano, Università di Napoli Federico II, Università di Padova, Università di Roma La Sapienza. Its goal is to promote the internationalization of Italian universities in Africa and contribute, in terms of cooperation, to local development. It is the first Italian pilot experience in transnational education with the ultimate goal of promoting the awarding of bachelor's and master's degrees on the African continent, with particular attention to the Horn of Africa. In addition to the ongoing virtual mobility programs, the master's degree program "Sustainable management of resources and cultural heritage for local development" will train qualified young faculty members from African universities. Politecnico di Milano is responsible for the module entitled "Energy Resources, Power Technologies, Energy Scenarios and Planning" within Master's program. The main goals of the module is to widen the knowledge of the energy sector deepening energy systems analysis at different scales. The main challenges in the energy sector for future decades are also highlighted thus giving constraints and opportunities for energy technology development.

NOMADIC LANDSCAPES, LOCAL KNOWLEDGE AND ETHNOGRAPHY:
OPERATIONALISING ONE HEALTH AMONG PASTORAL COMMUNITIES IN
NORTHERN KENYA

E. Grasso, Università degli Studi di Torino

This presentation grounds on “Multidisciplinary approach to promote the health and resilience of pastoralist communities in North Kenya” project, implemented in North Horr Sub-County (Marsabit County, Kenya), by a consortium of NGOs (Comitato Collaborazione Medica and Veterinaires SansFrontieres-Germany), private actors (Translate into Meaning) and academic institutions (University of Turin). It aims to show how anthropological knowledge and scientific research methods integrated all phases of the project. In particular, the involvement of researchers and the production of anthropological knowledge facilitated strategies and practices for the involvement and empowerment of local actors and beneficiaries. The project relied on One Health (OH) that, recognising the interconnection between humans, animals and the environment, proposes a multidisciplinary approach to address the health threats at the human-animal-environment interface. It aimed to contribute to the debate on climate change effects on local communities. It was implemented among Gabra semi-nomadic pastoralists who inhabit Northern Kenya where a profound change in climate patterns deeply affects availability of resources. The Research conducted by an anthropologist integrated the monitoring practices of animal and human diseases, resources status and maintenance and rainfall and temperature data. An ongoing dialogue among technical experts, local staff and pastoral communities shapes fieldwork activities; whereas the ethnographic methods help involving the local communities and promoting a process to support decisions, based on the integration of indigenous knowledge with scientific data that were collected at community level using traditional and modern tools. The ethnographic research carried out in the project area among the communities involved has contributed to the involvement of local communities and to the integration of traditional knowledge with scientific data collected at local level using both traditional and technological tools. In particular, it contributed to the recognition of the close connection between humans and the environment and of the traditional knowledge that informs it and is essential to human survival. The project involved in-depth multidisciplinary work that made it possible, not only to put the voices of the pastoral communities at the centre, but also to integrate the data collection and scientific processing with a bottom-up perception of both the challenges posed by climate change and possible responses to overcome them. Anthropological approach was crucial improving the knowledge on gabra culture and social organization, in reaching and engaging project beneficiaries and identifying inclusive strategies for disseminating results and planned outreach activities. Furthermore, it improved project partners and local staff awareness of the importance of giving voice to local communities highlighting gabra peculiar sociality, environment, and change. To achieve all these aims and complementing project activities and experts’ findings and practices, the anthropologists applied the ethnographic method. Involved the awareness of regional and local environment from different points of view (social, political, ethnic, etc.) and facilitated a direct dialogue with pastoral communities trying to identify and to highlight their point of view and their feelings regarding OH topics and project's aims and activities. The missions conducted on the field and the ongoing collaboration with project partners and local staff offered the opportunity to

identify strategies and practices able to connect and integrate as much as possible local knowledge and scientific approach and expertise. Indeed, the process required a strong collaboration among international organizations, academic community, private sector, local institutions and communities to develop common strategies that reduce vulnerability. This Transdisciplinary approach revealed to be key in building synergies in skills, innovative interventions and responses, in order to improve capacity to cope with the ordinary challenges and extraordinary crises within a sceptic ecological and social environment.

ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE AT THE GRASSROOTS LEVEL - THE EXPERIENCE OF MANI TESE IN KENYA

S. Albertazzi; V. Bini; S. Tini

The relationship with the university and Mani Tese in Kenya is a decade long. Which are the results? Several peer-reviewed articles were published. The collaboration also helped prepare 1 Ph.D. thesis and several Masters' dissertations with local and Italian universities. The objective of Mani Tese is to put at the disposal of the communities groundbreaking research to improve their practices, scale-up productivity, and deploy new technology to scale up. Therefore, the contributions will shed light on the multiple experiences realized in the last eight years in Kenya, providing real-life examples and success stories on how to foster the relationship with NGOs and the benefits for the actors involved. Methodologically it is a practical case study with powerful and actionable insights for practitioners and academic institutions. From the solid positive feedback from the beneficiaries and the actors involved, we conclude that it is a mutually enriching relationship that needs to be encouraged and strengthened for local communities.