

New Models of Collaboration for the Delivering of Government Services: Preliminary Results of a Multinational Investigation



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Research Design

- **Scope:** a multi-national investigation of new models of collaboration in several Western democracies (Canada, US, Belgium, Germany, Brazil)
- **Objectives:** to enhance understanding of multi-organizational partnerships engaged in the delivery of government services to citizens & businesses; to identify transferrable lessons
- **Methodology:** 20 individual case studies; interviews and document analysis; individual case, cross-case and cross-national comparisons according to a conceptual model of collaboration



Types of collaboration studied

■ Public-public collaborations:

- Horizontal agreements between 2 agencies or departments at the same level of government
- Vertical agreements or intergovernmental alliances between different levels

■ Public-private collaborations:

- Outsourcing, subcontracting
- PPP or P3

■ Public-nonprofit collaborations



Research partners

■ International Research Centers:

- Centre Francophone d'Informatisation des Organisation (CEFRIO): Major Research Partner
- University of Bremen, Germany
- University of Sao Paulo, Brazil
- Cellule Interfacultaire de Technology Assessment, Belgium

- US Universities:

- University at Albany, Center for Technology in Government
- Indiana University, School of Environmental & Public Affairs
- University of Maryland Baltimore County, Department of Information Science



Dimensions of the conceptual model

Political, social, economic & cultural environment

Institutional, business & technical environment

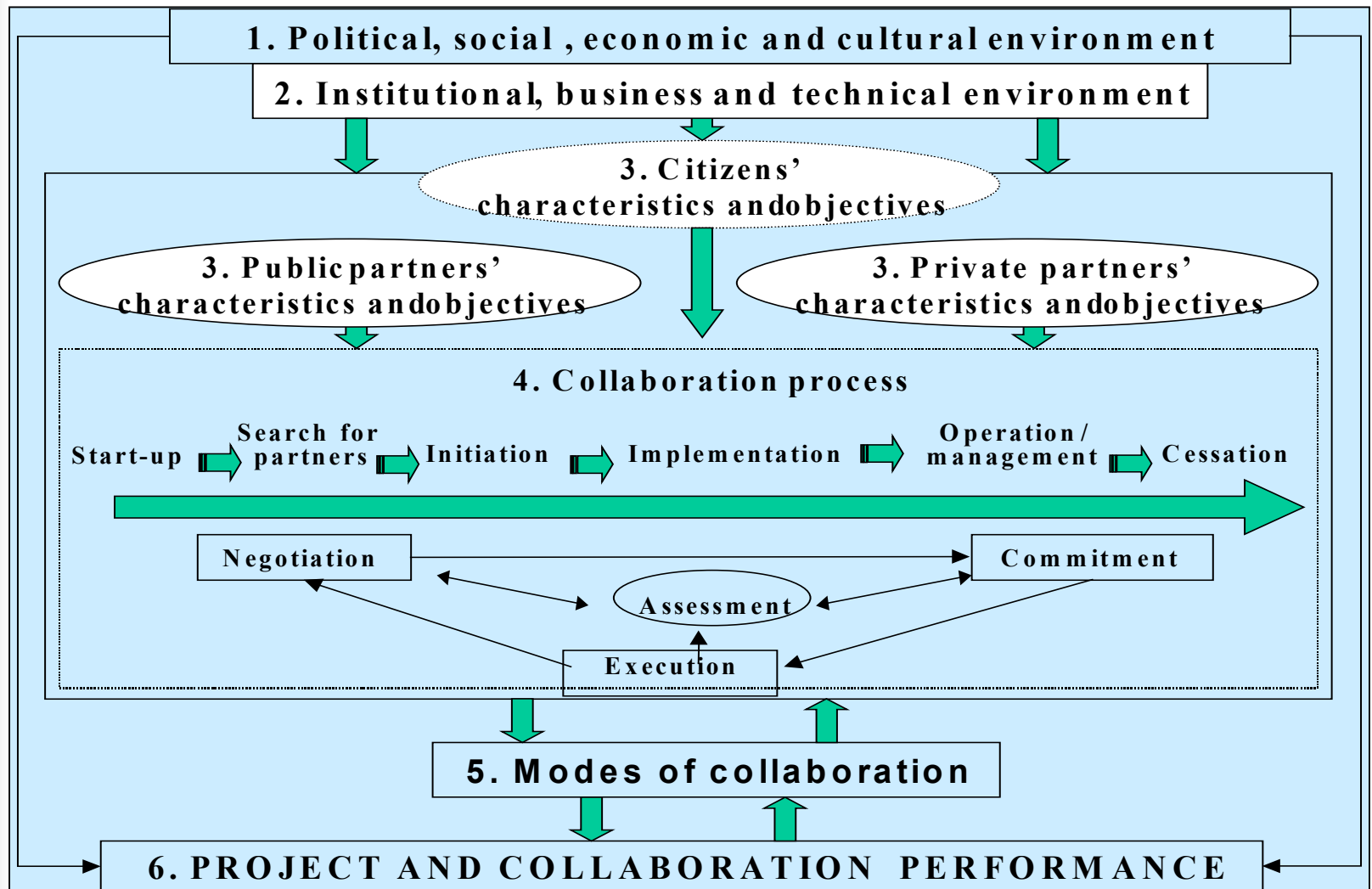
Partners characteristics and objectives

Collaboration process over time

Mode of collaboration

Collaboration and program performance

Inside the conceptual model





First case studies

■ Casdastre Quebec

- public-private effort to completely revise the systems that record property characteristics and ownership for tax purposes.

■ New York State Geographic Information System Cooperative

- public-public effort to identify, share, and improve the quality and availability of spatial data



Preliminary questions

- Is the model a good guide for data collection about all dimensions?
- Does it capture key dynamics of the collaborations?
- Is it flexible enough to account for differences in the cases and their cultural settings?



Guide to data collection

- Cultural differences -and their effects- are not captured well
- Structure of the participants is captured, but structure of the collaboration is not
- Participants' initial motives are captured, but not changes over time
- Technology is well represented
- Predicted critical success factors are captured but there are others



Dynamics of collaboration

- Predicted stages are too rigid to capture the real dynamics
- Feedback and learning over time are under-emphasized
- Links among the dimensions are more pervasive and important than expected



Accounting for cultural differences

- Culture is not just environmental, it's behavioral - and pervasive
- Language differences are more subtle and important than we thought
- Translation is not translation is not translation



Next steps

- A revised, more dynamic model
- Changes in approach to data collection
- More attention to translation pitfalls
- More aware research teams

Model v.2

