

Patterns of collaboration

BETWEEN ACADEMIA AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

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Patterns of Collaboration between Academia and International Organizations

Context of the study

This study reaches us at a time when reflection on the relationship between International Organizations (IO) and Academia is starting to take a more systematic turn. The UN Intellectual History Project (UNIHP)¹, compiling 79 interviews with high-level UN staff, reveals this relationship has raised questions amongst scholars and IO practitioners ever since the realm of the international has been institutionalized in the early 20th century. In 2007 and again in 2010 the themes of the International Studies Association's (ISA) annual conferences dealt with questions of theory, policy, responsible scholarship and connections between scholars and practitioners. In March 2011 the International Studies Review published an issue on the aforementioned themes. These instances suggest an increased interest in questions such as: how do ideas developed in academia matter for IOs?, how do ideas "make it in" the international field of practice?, and how can IO actions, policies and ways of functioning be interesting research terrains for scholars? Less attention has been paid to the practices and material arrangements favoring the different forms of IO-Academia encounters. In contrast with the 1970s and 1980s (which were the intellectual terrain of the UNIHP exploration), the 1990s and 2000s were and are a time when influence is fought over procedures and ideas, top-

¹ United Nations Intellectual History Project, <http://www.unhistory.org/>, accessed April 2011.

down processes and grassroots activism. In this material and intellectual context IO-Academia collaboration is not just about influence and ideas, but about encouraging a combination of different perspectives in such a way as to prevent a homogenous approach to matters.

The research performed for the present study takes into account the observations and notes deriving from the different kinds of experiences codified in books and articles written on the topic. It wishes to shed light on the circumstances and arrangements favoring IO-Academia collaboration, not only in terms of influence and exchange, but also in terms of practices. This is different from the debate on how to make academic knowledge more policy relevant, or even its contribution to policy. It examines ways in which IOs and Academia can work together by enmeshing and intertwining their practices and characteristics, rather than overpowering each other.

The Swiss Network for International Studies (SNIS), whose mandate is to encourage IO-Academia collaboration by funding projects in which these two communities participate jointly, has commissioned research seeking to understand what the existing forms and patterns of interaction are and what makes up the collaboration between them. The research identifies the main vectors along which collaboration occurs, as well as the elements enhancing or hindering it. As such, it is inscribed in the wider reflection on the theme announced above, and has the specificity of looking into the details of a (dis)functioning relationship.

Hence, the primary aim of this study is to provide to the public interested - academics, IO practitioners, students of international relations and other disciplines, and other persons interested in the matter - a map of what is currently being done in the field of IO-Academia collaboration; to point out what seems to work and what does not in the various instances uncovered; to encourage academics and IO practitioners to work together.

The city of Geneva's peculiar situation, as the second largest host to international organizations after New York, is pivotal to the study. Having been a centre of international policy making for more than 100 years, Geneva is credited to be the most active multilateral negotiation hub in the world and the theatre of decisive international encounters². Geneva is a «*plaque tournante*» for international processes of policy making and implementation. Bringing together communities of national and international decision-makers, experts, researchers, and activists, has created a peculiar realm of “the international” in the city, which Swiss federal and cantonal authorities have supported by encouraging different forms of institutional and informal partnerships.

2 <http://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/fr/home/topics/intorg/un/unge/geint.html>, accessed October 2010.

This research represents a mapping of what exists in terms of interaction between Academia and IOs, based mainly on the Geneva case study, with some input from other similar centres. A previous exercise of this type was performed in October 2005 by Ms. Maud Krafft, who had been commissioned by the Geneva International Academic Network (GIAN) to explore the IO-Academia relationship in Geneva. Her findings constituted a useful starting point for this study, and shall be detailed in the literature review below. This analysis in its turn, constitutes a building block for a wider mapping and understanding of relationships between Academia and IOs in general. It is useful because it examines the existent forms of IO-Academia collaboration and it provides both the scholars and IO workers with a guide to what it takes to make it work. Furthermore, it proposes an analytical framework of collaboration focusing on practices and material arrangements.

Key findings

- There are five categories of collaboration, from the least to most intense, as follows: the provision of expert knowledge, the consultancy, teaching and training programmes, project-based collaboration, and institutional collaboration. One form of collaboration might lead to another.
- None of these forms arise naturally. Proximity and funding are necessary but not sufficient conditions for collaborations. Individual and institutional purposeful efforts are crucial in initiating and maintaining collaborations.
- Coincidence of interests and research agendas are sine qua non conditions for successful collaborations.
- Informal relationships are just as important as formal ones in advancing collaborations.

Literature review

As previously mentioned, this analysis builds on a similar inquiry commissioned by the GIAN in 2005 and lead by Ms. Maud Krafft in Geneva. Having performed a series of interviews with IO representatives, a number of observations were reached. They pointed to the fact that, although IOs as a whole felt the need to acquire and develop innovative ideas, it was also felt that academic research did not address practical concerns³. Furthermore, Geneva based IOs perceived a growing distance with respect to Geneva academic circles⁴, which lead to a situation in which the untapped personal and financial resources that existed in IOs remained hidden and little understood. On the Geneva level, Ms. Krafft identified the fact that IO-Academia collaborations were largely ad-hoc and based on personal networks of individuals⁵, a feature which also appeared in the interviews performed for this study. Taking the analysis a step further, the current research sought to map out the implications of the existent situations and suggest ways of fructifying them.

Recent books and articles, which tackle at length the question of the relationship between theory and practice in international relations, were useful in this enterprise because they indicated what are the questions asked at the international level concerning this issue. However, these productions concentrate mainly on the issue of “what kind of insights can International Relations theory and Academia bring to the policy-making world⁶?”, and therefore do not look at collaboration practices, but rather at ways for IR scholarship of “making it in”.

3 Maud Krafft, *Rapport sur les attentes et suggestions d'organisations internationales et agences onusiennes à Genève vis-à-vis d'un futur pôle académique en études internationales*, October (2005), unpublished.

4 Idem, p. 8.

5 Idem, p. 9.

6 Joseph Lepgold, *Being useful: policy relevance and international relations theory*, University of Michigan Press, (2009), p. 370.

The *International Studies Review* published an issue entirely dedicated to this question. Although the articles favor an US perspective on the IO-Academia relationship, they help understanding its obstacles. Bruce Jentleson and Ely Ratner talk about the gap between the Ivory Tower and, in US terms, the Beltway, i.e. the policy world⁷. In their view, there are three major factors underscoring the Academia-policy world gap:

- the academic profession-based incentive structure, which devalues policy relevance for academic research
- the increased role of think tanks as the research transmission belts to the policy world (think tanks as intermediaries)
- the reluctance manifested by policy makers to reach out to the academic world, partly because a lot of academic research is not policy relevant and partly because of attitudes favoring inside information and short time frames⁸.

However right they might be, these factors can be addressed, by stressing the contribution Academia can bring to the policy world: critical assessment of existing trends, problems and debates, prescriptions for further actions, and lesson drawing⁹. In addition to that, and this is where the present study fits in, it is important to emphasize what Academia can bring in terms of processes and analysis, not only in terms of elaborated results coming out of research designs and projects. This amounts to saying that the methods of research and analysis, as well as the rigor developed in academic circles can be an asset in policy design processes as well as in “getting the work done”. Conversely, the work of the IOs makes them repositories of information and insights which can be valuable for the advance of knowledge and thus academic research.

A key part of the “Third UN” (First UN - member states, Second UN - staff members), academics have been and are part of different UN structures, and have found themselves associated with UN staff and institutes, thus managing to wield influence in terms of ideas, or reports written and disseminated, as well as by actively participating in policy design. The UN intellectual history project brings ample evidence of that. To cite but a few names, former assistant-secretaries general John Ruggie, Michael Doyle and Ramesh Thakur, or Nobel Prize winners such as Amartya Sen and Joseph Stiglitz, James Meade, closely working with the World Bank¹⁰, who found themselves at the root of important ideas, such as the Human Development Report (mentioned below).

⁷ Bruce Jentleson, Ely Ratner, ‘Bridging the Beltway-Ivory Tower Gap’, *International Studies Review*, Vol.13, Issue 1, (March 2011), p.6.

⁸ Idem.

⁹ Idem.

¹⁰ Anoulak Kittikhoun, Thomas G. Weiss, “The myth of scholarly irrelevance for the United Nations”, *International Studies Review*, (March 2011), online access 31 March 2011.

A useful source of information were the 79 interview transcripts of the UN Intellectual History Project, which systematically dealt with the relationship between Academia and IOs in terms of exchange and influence of ideas. Closer to the matter at hand were the accounts written for the GIAN publication “Les liaisons fructueuses”¹¹ by those academics and IO staff who had participated in joint projects, and Ms. Maud Krafft’s research¹². These materials point to the fact that international centres, such as Geneva, have unexploited resources in terms of potential cooperation between Academia and international organizations. Furthermore, in cases in which cooperation occurs, it is heavily conditioned by different bureaucratic and time framework arrangements.

In their article and subsequent book on International Organizations¹³, Michael Barnett and Martha Finnemore have touched upon the question of collaboration between Academia and IOs, albeit from the perspective of the latter. By showing the dangers and pathologies of IOs as bureaucracies, they pointed to the potential obstacles that might occur in their interaction with Academia: formatted thought, flattening of diversity, competition as sources of legitimate knowledge and expertise¹⁴. This is precisely why IOs should be encouraged to interact with a diversity of academic traditions.

Barnett and Finnemore show that IOs draw their legitimacy from their mission writ large of improving people’s lives, as well as the different mandates conferred upon them by member states, and as such have the power to define, frame, fix and enforce meanings and norms with respect to this mission¹⁵. Hence, as any other bureaucratic structure, they are able to create a world of their own, which oftentimes is met with the reproach of being isolated from others, for example the private sector, or national structures.

This study looks at what practical links exist between IOs and Academia, thus starting to fill in some of the existing gaps in this respect.

11 Randall Harbour and Edouard Dommen, *Les liaisons fructueuses*, RUIG/GIAN, (2008).

12 Maud Krafft, *Rapport sur les attentes et suggestions d’organisations internationales et agences onusiennes à Genève vis-à-vis d’un futur pôle académique en études internationales*, October (2005), unpublished.

13 Michael Barnett, Martha Finnemore, *Rules for the World: International Organizations in Global Politics*, Cornell University Press,(2004).

14 Michael Barnett, Martha Finnemore, op. cit., (1999) p. 711.

15 Idem, pp.711-713.

Instruments and strategies of analysis

Research for this study comprises ethnographic methods, including interviews with key informants and analysis of primary sources such as documents written by those involved in IO-Academia collaboration, reports or personal accounts.

25 interviews were performed with academics, IO staff, and individuals working in institutions straddling the two worlds, such as international think tanks, research projects and centres. The intention was to keep a balance between these various perspectives and identify the areas of divergence and overlap in their views on IO-Academia collaboration. The main aim of the interviews was finding out what IO-Academia collaboration meant for different individuals, and what were the practices and material arrangements through which it was manifested.

In examining IO-Academia collaboration pure categories are unproductive. Those involved in it are neither isolated in an Ivory Tower, nor eternally pushing papers in a basement office.

The interviews were semi-structured, asking each interlocutor a set number of questions, identical across the sample, and developing on particular terms or ideas that appeared in the answers given. Importantly, the interlocutors were asked to define their perspective as academic, IO based, a combination of the two, or something else altogether. This opened up the question of what defines one's perspective - the training or the place of work and pay - which revealed that generally, other factors are also important for defining perspective: interests and a sense of mission, which tend to trump both training and function. Whether a person is an academic, an IO, think-tank or NGO staff, their aims and sense of mission push them to use various tools in order to achieve them; these tools are primarily linked with their function, but do not exclude others. This led to a preliminary observation and methodological consequence that in examining IO-Academia collaboration pure categories are unproductive. Those involved in it are neither isolated in an Ivory Tower, nor eternally pushing papers in a basement office. However, those ideal types which inform much of the prejudices that the two communities have and confirm about each other provided the framework within which the study was structured.

As the experiences were profoundly different, the strategy followed was to increase the number of interlocutors until no new nuances and information appeared in the categories and ideas that were developed. This means that, based on research, a series of concepts and categories were considered as relevant for the topic at hand: collaboration, practices, resources, material arrangements, strategies, images, communities, and relationships. Interlocutors were asked questions about each of these elements in relation to IO-Academia collaboration. When no new information appeared in connection to them, no new interlocutors were solicited.

Two houses, both alike in dignity – Academia and IOs as communities

If we conceive of them as communities, the worlds of International Organizations and Academia are similar:

- they derive their legitimacy from the type of duties they perform – generating reliable knowledge and norms that can be used for the greater good – which in turn confer a certain performative power of defining, classifying and fixing meanings on different things and processes¹⁶ in the world. In the case of international organizations, the reproduction of these categories has an important impact on how particular policies are designed and implemented, such as for example development policies, security programs, and state-building strategies¹⁷.
- they are both transnational communities of practice, with particular sets of rules and norms for doing things, achieving results, and evaluating performance; as such they are not easily permeable or understandable. As shall be shown, sometimes, it is precisely the particular sets of practices that can act as a hindrance to greater collaboration between the two.

However, these similarities are not necessarily conducive to collaboration, and the fact that there are some important differences does not make the case any easier.

¹⁶ Michael Barnett, Martha Finnemore, *Rules for the World: International Organizations in Global Politics*, Cornell University

¹⁷ Connie McNeely, *Constructing the nation-state: international organization and prescriptive action*, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood press, (1995).

One important difference between the two is in the power they wield. Like IOs, Academia has the power of “reading” the world and proposing ways of classifying and categorizing it, thus suggesting frameworks of reflection in order to make it intelligible. However, IOs have the power to propagate their categories, through their tighter links with policy networks. Academia has traditionally been considered a crucial actor in a polity because it is meant to bring further knowledge and understanding to society. As Prof. Michael Barnett has pointed out, it is also meant to ask difficult and unsettling questions, challenging mainstream thinking. However, in our times, Academia is supposed to provide the kind of knowledge that is a driving factor for economic achievement. This both strengthens and weakens its stance in society. On the one hand, because Academia is gradually becoming indispensable for quality results and performance; on the other hand, this adds pressure on what is considered useful academic knowledge and education, increasingly measured by economic utility. Hence, fundamental research is shunned and considered useless, and knowledge instrumentalized¹⁸. IOs also have the power which comes through higher visibility and a louder voice.

Another important difference is the temporal framework in which Academia and IOs operate. The quality of academic research and results tends to be influenced by the length of time invested in them; although the law of marginal returns can set in and longer time spent on research does not always mean better quality, generally, in order to be exhaustive and accurate, academics need more time than an international organization decision maker (in case decision making is involved) can ever dare to dream of. This is a very real constraint, which, as shall be seen, can heavily influence the outcome of processes and projects.

The issue of the language in which messages are conveyed, which is profoundly different for Academia and IOs, also appears as an important factor to be kept in mind. Academia is frequently reproached for coating its messages in obscure and self-referential terms, not understandable by the outside world, and mostly in outlets that are inaccessible to a wide public. Almost each one of the interlocutors interviewed called for a change in this practice if successful IO-Academia collaboration is to ensue¹⁹. On the other hand, IOs have a simpler, schematic language, which can be quite reductive and impoverished. It is suggested the two can balance each other's excesses for more productive and intelligible outcomes.

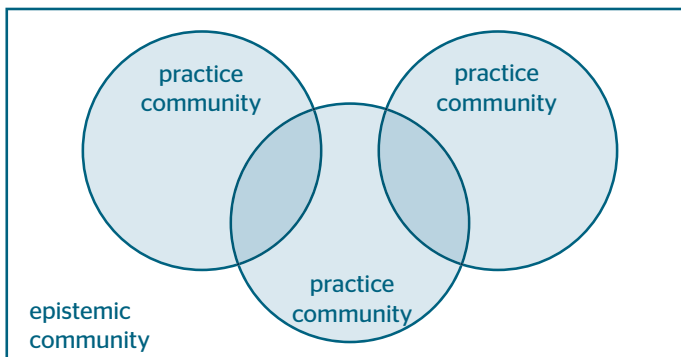
¹⁸ Drew Gilpin Faust, <http://www.ria.ie/getmedia/3c7f1744-dba7-42cf-aeb6-b64adc15a022/The-Role-of-the-University-in-a-Changing-World-Speech.pdf.aspx>

¹⁹ Interview with Prof. Keith Krause, Prof. Laurence Boisson de Chazournes, Dr. Silvia Cattaneo.

Epistemic and practice communities

Looking at Academia and IOs as communities, it is helpful to conceive of them in terms of epistemic and practice communities. In his classic article Peter Haas offered a definition of epistemic communities as “networks of professionals with recognized expertise and competence in a particular domain and an authoritative claim to policy-relevant knowledge within that domain or issue area²⁰”. Epistemic communities can be transversal to realms of action, institutions and countries; they can include members coming from different communities of practice, sharing similar epistemological assumptions, normative and principled beliefs, causal beliefs, notions of validity, and common policy knowledge²¹. As such, various studies have shown how they can influence state interests by framing issues for collective debate, identifying policies for national and collective adoption or by favoring institutional reform²².

Communities of practice refer not only to a particular type of knowledge, but to a set of peculiar ways of doing something, such as research, teaching, training, writing, etc. When we talk about Academia and International Organizations, we look at the intersection between epistemic communities, which can be relatively large, and communities of practice, which are more narrowly constituted. An academic and a IO agency director might share the same type of expert knowledge, but acquire and use it in different ways, placing them in different communities of practice, but the same epistemic community. The difference between an academic and a policy practitioner might come from the ways of doing research, one having a systematic and theoretical approach, even in the case of field research, and the other basing it on direct experience or confrontation with a certain situation, and, most often, from the use of its results.



20 Peter Haas, 'Introduction: epistemic communities and international policy coordination', *International Organization*, 46, 1, (Winter, 1992), p. 3.

21 Idem.

22 Drake and Nicolaïdis, Ideas, Interests and Institutionalization: 'Trade in Services and the Uruguay Round,' *International Organization*, Vol. 46, Issue 1 (Winter 1992); Emanuel Adler, The Emergence of Cooperation: National Epistemic Communities and the International Evolution of the Idea of Nuclear Arms Control', *International Organization*, Vol. 46, Issue 1 (Winter 1992).

It's the way that you do it

- Practices and material arrangements

The theoretical perspective from which collaboration between Academia and IOs is examined is one proposed by Theodore Schatzki, who advances that, in order to understand a particular social phenomenon it is important to also analyze its context, and not just the actors involved²³. In short, it is considered that social phenomena are made of context and actions in that context²⁴. A site is a type of context, defined as a nexus of practices and material arrangements²⁵.

The peculiarity of sites is that the context and the entities in context constitute each other and such practices are influenced by the format of the workshop, its aims and structure. In other words, if one wants to organize a workshop in an international organization, it is necessary to take into account the practices which are involved for its realization: working the bureaucratic chain for getting funding approval, space, participants, sending invitations, establishing themes, etc. These, in turn, determine how far in advance the event is organized, its political and bureaucratic scope etc.

Schatzki defines practice as an “organized, open-ended spatial-temporal group of actions”. In other words, a series of actions inscribed in time and space, with a particular purpose. For example, teaching practices, such as the lecture or the seminar, presentations and discussions. These actions are structured by three phenomena: understandings of how to do things, uses of things, and emotions that are acceptable or prescribed for participants in the practice²⁶.

Material arrangements are set-ups of objects in the context of which practices occur²⁷. There are four types of entities that can provide material arrangements: human beings, artefacts, other organisms and things²⁸.

	Practice	Material Arrangement
Definition	Organized, open-ended spatial-temporal group of actions	set-ups of objects in the context of which practices occur

²³ Theodore R. Schatzki, 'The sites of Organizations', *Organization Studies*, 26, (2005), p. 467.

²⁴ Idem, p. 468.

²⁵ Idem.

²⁶ Idem, p. 469

²⁷ Idem, p. 472.

²⁸ Idem, p. 472.

Practices and material arrangements are closely linked and influence each other, which is why it is interesting to look at their combination, rather than separately.

The analytical grid which was used in order to identify practices and material arrangements is as follows:

- expressions, words and constructions that mentioned “working together”, “exchange”, “meetings”, “cooperation”, “partnership”, were considered as modes of collaboration, which was considered specifically different from the issue of influence, tackled in most writings on the subject.
- practices are considered those actions which refer to what is being done, organizing human activities and actions; typically, some of the Academia related practices are research, teaching, organization and participation in conferences; in relation to IOs, there are meetings, report writing, policy design, conference organization and attendance; practices are different from material arrangements.
- material arrangements, which are given by the organization of the related material resources; in the case of Academia they go from research related-capabilities (funding, design, etc.) to communication related ones (classrooms, conference venues, profiled journals); for IOs, material capabilities are similar, including, additionally, field offices, a dense bureaucracy, report-writing teams.

By looking at the aforementioned elements and linking them with the dimensions of epistemic communities and communities of practice, it is possible to establish what kind of relationships characterize each type of collaboration, as well as the axes and coordinates which structure them. What is also examined are the implications of the vectors of ownership and knowledge in each instance of collaboration between Academia and IOs. In other words, the practices of which community tend to dominate an instance of collaboration, and with what results. These elements help organise the observations gathered from the readings and interviews performed, by highlighting what are the axes along which these experiences get structured. Thus, by observing how material arrangements and practices are exercised it was possible to deduct the power relationships that exist for each type of collaboration analysed. The next section provides details in this respect.

List of interviews performed

Prof. Michael Barnett, The Elliott School of International Affairs
Dr. Cosimo Beverelli, Secretariat, World Trade Organization (WTO)
Prof. Laurence Boisson de Chazournes, Faculty of Law, University of Geneva
Susanna Campbell, Independent consultant with IOs, and Research Fellow at the Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding (CCDP), Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies (The Graduate Institute)
Dr. Silvia Cattaneo, Director, Geneva Forum
Prof. Andrew Clapham, The Graduate Institute
Ramu Damodaran, Chief, Academic Impact Secretariat
Prof. Edouard Dommen, Former President of the Scientific Committee, GIAN
Dr. Alistair Edgar, Director, The Academic Council on the United Nations System (ACUNS)
Jocelyn Feynard, Chief of partnerships and resource mobilization, United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)
Dr. Calin Georgescu, Special Rapporteur of the United Nations Human Rights Council on the human rights obligations related to environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes
Prof. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Director, Centre of International Conflict Resolution, Columbia University
Fabienne Hara, Vice-President, Multilateral Affairs, International Crisis Group (ICG)
Dr. Oliver Jütersonke, Head of Research, CCDP, The Graduate Institute
Prof. Keith Krause, Programme Director, Small Arms Survey, The Graduate Institute
Claire Mahon, International Human Rights Lawyer and Independent Consultant
Dr. Derek Miller, Programme Coordinator, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)
Cécile Molinier, Director, Geneva Office, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
Prof. Pierre Sauvé, Deputy Managing Director, World Trade Institute (WTI)
Dr. Anki Sjoeborg, Senior Programme Officer, Geneva Call
Dr. Daniel Warner, Assistant Director for International Relations, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF)
Prof. Tom Weiss, Director, Ralph Bunche Institute for International Studies
Dr. Pierre Willa, Director, International Relations Office, University of Geneva
Prof. Jussi Hanhimaki, The Graduate Institute
Prof. Marc Hufty, The Graduate Institute

UNIHP Interviews used for the research, available on the UNIHP CD-ROM

Kofi Annan, Former Secretary-General of the United Nations

Martti Ahtisaari, Former President of Finland and UN envoy for Kosovo

Robert Cox, Adviser, International Labour Organization (ILO)

Michael Doyle, Assistant Secretary-General to Kofi Annan

John Gerard Ruggie, Assistant Secretary-General for strategic planning
to Kofi Annan

Amartya Sen, UN advisor and consultant

What the interviews tell us

This section organises in different categories the types of practices and material arrangements concerning IO-Academia collaboration that were identified in the interviews performed, as well as in the written testimonies and analyses which were consulted. A subsequent section will analyze the main axes along which these experiences occur and will offer concluding remarks and recommendations for the pursuit of these activities.

	Type of collaboration		Practices	Material arrangements	Codification	
	Initiators	involved	dominated by	involved	dominated by	
					Degree of formalization/ institutionalization	
Expert knowledge	Mostly IOs	Expertise provided as part of consultations, official communications, information exchanges, provision of data	IOs	Funding (Ac), personal network, invitation to contribute by IO in the framework of conferences, meetings, informal exchanges, or existent projects	IOs	No
Consultation	IOs	Inscription in an existing project, provision of knowledge, involvement in regular consultation	IOs	Existing projects, IO funding, IO resources (field offices, data, contact, networks, etc.) personal resources	IOs	Consultancy contracts on an individual basis
Training/teaching	IOs & Academia	Courses, lectures, seminars, workshops, conferences, summer schools, degree-awarding courses, exams	Academia	Classrooms, libraries, course materials, teachers, certificates, credits, funding from individuals and institutions, etc.	Academia	Official partnerships, e.g. IO staff members of the board.
Project based	Mostly Academia	Project design, desk and field research, data analysis, consultations of partners, report and article writing, conferences, workshops, communication sessions, etc.	Depends on funding	Networks of contacts, field offices, IO agencies offices, raw data collected by both academics and IOs, local and international resources, libraries, etc.	Depends on the leader of the project. In most cases it is a joint effort.	Punctual codification, MoUs etc.
Institutional collaboration	IOs & Academia	Includes a variety of the above mentioned practices	IO & Academia	Includes a variety of the arrangements mentioned above	The characteristics specific to each type of collaboration apply	MoUs or more developed cooperation conventions

Type	Description	SNIS field of activity? (explanation)
Provision of expert knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the most often encountered and simplest form of collaboration occurring on a punctual basis • involves academic experts invited to intervene in the framework of established projects or initiatives; it is an exercise of inscription of independently acquired expertise, which can support or supplement the resources employed by the IO for a particular purpose; typically expert reports. • workshops, conferences, informal meetings, reports • it can be the basis for deeper collaboration, built over time; 	Not yet
Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a frequent form of institutionalizing IO-academia relationship • the most recognizable form of collaboration • the consultant is generally associated with a project or initiative and can be a long term arrangement • opinions are divided about the value of a consultancy as an authentic collaboration process; sometimes, it is claimed, consultants are not truly free, and act as mere legitimizers for the IO, because they wish to keep their positions and the working relationship with it • some academics find consultancies limiting as they propose very formatted missions; 	Cannot be goal of SNIS (commercial aspect)
Training/teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a more complex forms of IO-academia collaboration, since it combines the strengths and interests of the two communities • courses, training, workshops, degrees • IOs staff get training, and academia the opportunity to “extract” data and experience; 	Yes (AC debates) for now unidirectionally benefitting academia
Project based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the most complex collaboration, and, overall, relatively rare • reverses the IO-academia vector, bringing them on a more equal footing • individual driven • interplay of individual/institutional, freedom of speech/ political constraints • the collaboration form that allows for most interchange and influence between the two communities • works if there is coincidence of research agendas; 	Yes (funding of research projects)
Institutional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rare, hard to achieve due to bureaucracy, differing political agendas, time frames • certain interlocutors believe that it is not even necessary to institutionalize IO-academia collaboration, and it would be best to leave it up to individual projects and programmes; 	No

Provision of expert knowledge

The provision of expert knowledge occurs on a punctual basis, and often involves the IOs asking academic experts to intervene with their specialized knowledge in the framework of established projects or initiatives; it is an exercise of inscription of expertise in a certain program. This expertise is generally acquired independently of policy purposes, often because it is the area of interest and specialization of a particular individual. Hence, it is solicited as a support and supplement to the resources employed by the IO for its needs. This practice underlines, amongst other things, that sometimes IOs do not have enough research capacities and funding, which is why they address outside experts. A wish to have an alternative view on a certain subject can also be a reason for appealing to academic experts. As such, it is extremely important, especially bearing in mind the tendency towards splendid isolation that both IO and Academia have.

The way in which this can happen is as simple and direct as a telephone call or an email, getting in touch with the relevant expert. UNIHP interlocutors mention the provision of expert knowledge often²⁹. Their testimonies sometimes give the impression that it amounts to little else than reading an academic article on a particular subject, suggesting that most cases are about transfer of information, not about the exchange of methods or of working together in defining and addressing a question. Amongst my interlocutors, Dr. Silvia Cattaneo (director of the Geneva Forum platform) explicitly mentioned that academics are usually invited as experts for conferences, workshops, and training sessions, but not necessarily further cooperation. However, things are not as clear-cut as this. In order to be solicited, an expert must have built a certain reputation, or be known for his/her expertise by the relevant people. Publications, conference addresses, fieldwork, are elements that favor the fact of being called upon for advice and input. There are exceptional cases in which isolated academics are utmost experts in a particular field and are sought after by the IOs³⁰. This instance exhibits a rather low combination of practices and material arrangements that can be considered as IO-Academia collaboration, since there is rather a question of access and reputation. However, programmes such as the UNDP - for its reflection on human development - have systematized their need and wish for contributions from outside the agency by organizing regularly specific calls for papers and contributions³¹. These practices clearly underline who is the one directing the process, and these are the IOs, which gives them a position of superiority and power over the Academia. On the other hand, quoting Prof. Edouard Dommen, former president of the GIAN scientific committee, the usual academic approach to matters international is a zoological approach, putting a community and an issue under the magnifier lens, without getting involved in it³². Such an attitude does not encourage collaboration and it might also be the reason why it only gives rise to punctual encounters.

²⁹ Interviews with Kofi Annan, John Gerard Ruggie, Martti Ahtisaari. Available on UNIHP CD-Rom.

³⁰ As Prof. Keith Krause indicates, these are in particular country experts who are solicited by IOs.

³¹ Interview with Cécile Molinier, Director, Geneva Office, UNDP

³² Interview with Prof. Edouard Dommen, Former President of the Scientific Committee of GIAN

An attempt to change this type of dynamics can be found in the ACUNS³³ upcoming conference on Justice Reform, which will be held in India in 2012. Following a symposium on Justice and Peace building held in 2010, this conference has the explicit aim of channeling into the UN system the results of its academic workshops and communication sessions, through reports and special presentations of the arguments developed³⁴. What is interesting about this approach is that, in addition to examining international matters from an academic point of view, an effort is made to communicate it, which is not a usual stance in these circles, specifically since the conference was not commissioned or asked for by the IOs.

There is a sense that participation in IO debates relevant to the field favors the creation of networks of IO staff and academics which, together, can combine their efforts, practices and material arrangements in order to address the needs they identify.

The recent UN initiative called Academic Impact, aims to achieve much of the same thing, on a larger scale³⁵. By inviting universities from all over the world to share the research that might be useful for UN policies, this project wishes to increase the visibility and usage of academic knowledge within the UN. However, as many other projects, it really is about exchange and promotion of information, and not much else.

33 The Academic Council on UN System (ACUNS) is an organism whose main aim is to study and observe the way in which the UN operates in its various realms of action. It is not as much about cooperation with the UN, as about the "zoological approach", in which academics still keep a rather safe distance from the IOs they are studying and writing about.

34 Interview with Prof. Alistair Edgar, ACUNS Director.

35 Interview with Ramu Damodaran, Director of the UN Academic Impact .

Still, this type of initiative and collaboration can be found at the basis of deeper forms, built over time. Continuing with the Human Development example, academic reflection on the topic, lead by Dr. Amartya Sen, eventually evolved towards a new framework for thinking about development, and into the Human Development Report. Dr. Sen became part of the UN General Secretariat under the Kofi Annan leadership, thus having a say in development strategy³⁶. An example specific to the city of Geneva is the creation of the Human Rights Academy, who has amongst its founders Prof. Clapham. The latter was often called on as a human rights expert and advisor on high level specialized committees and working groups³⁷. Although in neither of these two examples it is possible to speak about a clear causal link between being invited to contribute and developing bigger projects involving IO-Academia collaboration, there is a sense that participation in IO debates relevant to the field favors the creation of networks of IO staff and academics which, together, can combine their efforts, practices and material arrangements in order to address the needs they identify. However, this combination does not arise naturally every time academics and IO staff meet. As shall be shown below, other factors influence this result, amongst which, individuals and their enthusiasm are crucial.

To conclude, the provision of expert knowledge is an important aspect of IO-Academia collaboration, because it might be a useful starting point for greater cooperation. It represents an instance when different communities of practice meet to share their knowledge and expertise. In these terms, it might be even said that the provision of knowledge is a pre-condition to the creation of epistemic communities. The power relationship clearly flows from the IO towards Academia, as it is the former, which usually chooses to open the space for such contributions.

³⁶ UNIHP interview Amartya Sen.

³⁷ Interview with Prof. Andrew Clapham.

The consultant and the consultancy

The academic consultant can be said to be a relatively frequently encountered IO-Academia form of collaboration. The UNIHP interlocutors³⁸ call it the most recognizable form of collaboration, insofar as IOs often work on a consultancy basis with outside experts. The consultant is generally associated with a project or initiative, and the practice of soliciting him/her is very similar to the request for expert knowledge. Reputation, a good network and expertise are some of the main ingredients for an efficient one. As some of the interlocutors explained in their interviews, consultancies might be just a phone call or an email away. The way in which the academic consultant works is that he/she is part of a bigger project, taking care of the fragment which is specific to them, or, have a separate mission altogether, fitting in with a wider particular mandate³⁹.

In general, the consultant is able to work his/her network of contacts and expertise and in addition may use the weight and legitimacy of the IO they work at to gain access in places where it otherwise would be difficult or impossible to get. Hence, they benefit from combined material arrangements, coming from both academic and IO set-ups. In terms of collaboration, it does happen often on the basis of the terms of reference of a mandate; as such, the consultant may have the room to change and adapt them by negotiating with the IO, and according to what is perceived as appropriate, but generally, there is a sense, particularly in academic circles that consultancies can be quite limiting, proposing formatted missions⁴⁰. Consultancies, depending on their political sensitivity, can also bring to the fore the political constraints placed upon a majority of mandates in IOs. By raising questions of messaging, and intellectual ownership, they often show the limits of IO-Academia collaboration.

In fact, the consultant has a contested status, as opinions are divided about the value of a consultancy as an authentic collaboration process; sometimes, it is claimed, consultants are not truly free, and act as mere legitimizers for the IO, because they wish to keep their positions and the working relationship with it. Hence, one of the most precious contributions (hailed unanimously by interlocutors and written pieces) - freedom of speech and perspective - that Academia can bring, finds itself potentially stunted in this circumstance.

³⁸ Interviews Kofi Annan, Robert Cox, Michael Doyle.

³⁹ Interview with Dr. Oliver Jütersonke, Head of CCDP, The Graduate Institute.

⁴⁰ Interview with Susanna Campbell, Dr. Oliver Jütersonke, Prof. Andrew Clapham.

A consultancy represents an interesting combination in terms of practice and epistemic communities. The academic consultant is literate in both worlds' practices, and to the extent they combine them, he/she enacts the collaboration within their own person.

One of the interviews⁴¹ performed for this research revealed an interesting interaction concerning the IOs' demand for consultants. Solicited by a UN agency according to what may be seen as traditional channels (phone call advised by someone familiar with the structure) the CCDP - an academic research centre based at the Graduate Institute (Geneva), employing PhD candidates and postdocs - was asked to propose its participation in a consultancy-type of activity for a particular project. This essentially meant fulfilling certain pre-established terms of reference and connecting their dots. Being interested in the subject matter of the project, but not in being a consultancy firm, which often provide brain-power in already established frameworks, the CCDP made an alternative proposal. As an entity firmly established in the academic field, with specific research and training concerns, it offered a package deal that included framing the mandate of the UN agency for that project, defining its areas of concern, the methodology to be followed and the products that would come out of it. This proposal was accepted and the CCDP team found itself as project leaders of a team including not only researchers (the initial "consultants") but local IO and academic staff, as well as IO headquarters representatives. The details of this cooperation are discussed in a different section, but the relevance of this example in this category is connected to the fact that sometimes, the usual forms of collaboration are espoused by IOs (especially) by default, often because nothing else is on offer. They are not necessarily considered the best, but it does take a certain openness to accept others. Asked about what makes for openness in an IO interlocutor, Dr. Oliver Jütersonke and Prof. Keith Krause both underlined the importance of career incentives - innovative ideas representing a risk that can pay off in terms of results and therefore professional advancement for the IO partner.

41 Interview with Dr. Oliver Jütersonke, Head of the CCDP.

On the whole, the consultancy can qualify as a limited type of IO-Academia collaboration, insofar as academics can be consultants for IOs. The case might also be that consultants (who are not academics) have a high degree of academic training, which influences the way they perform their work. In terms of practices-material arrangements combination, it is quite basic. The consultant may bring his/her resources in terms of networks and knowledge, that can be complemented by what the IO can provide in terms of access. Practice wise, the consultant needs to adapt to the IO bureaucratic structure and product needs. (i.e. producing a report rather than an academic article etc.) A consultancy represents an interesting combination in terms of practice and epistemic communities. The academic consultant is literate in both worlds' practices, and to the extent they combine them, he/she enacts the collaboration within their own person. However, with respect to the purpose oriented affective structure as mentioned by Schatzki, the goals of the academic and the academic consultant are different. The former's principal mission is to acquire knowledge and eventually impart it to future generations, and perhaps, for the greater good. The latter's, is to harness knowledge in the service of policies designed for practical purposes, in a much shorter time framework than Academia presupposes.

Training and teaching

Together with project-based collaboration (examined below) this is a more complex form of IO-Academia collaboration, since it combines to a much higher degree practices, material arrangements, strengths and interests of both worlds.

Geneva offers a few examples: partnerships of the University of Geneva (UNIGE) with the World Health Organization (WHO) in the realm of medicine, the UNIGE-IHEID Humanitarian Law Academy, which draws heavily on a close relationship with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)⁴², partnerships between the ETI (*Ecole de traduction et d'interprétation*) and the United Nations in Geneva. Bern hosts the World Trade Institute (WTI), which offers trainings for students and diplomats interested in the issue of international trade. Worldwide, a most noted training and teaching collaboration is the Oxford-UNDP partnership with respect to development and, particularly, human development.

These collaborations are deeper than the ACUNS or the Academic Impact one, because they are not just about sharing information or bringing to the attention of IOs expert knowledge, but about combining efforts and perspectives for a better understanding of particular issues. The best of the two worlds is brought together in terms of resources

⁴² As evidenced in the interview with Ms. Claire Mahon.

and practices, in order to improve the performance of those interested in the relevant matters.

The most salient feature of this type of collaboration is that on the one hand, IO staff get training, and academics the opportunity to “extract” data and experience from practitioners or from field missions. On the other hand, as the interview with Prof. Pierre Sauvé from the WTI shows, some of these projects allow practitioners to become trainers in their turn, which often brings fresh perspectives to students and trainees. Prof. Sauvé underlined an interesting feature in connection to this practice. The WTI provides courses, which are similar to the ones organized and given by the WTO to delegates preparing for becoming representatives of their countries in the organization, or for dealing with WTO issues in their national administration. However, giving such courses under an academic banner opens up the space for greater freedom of expression, and more theoretical debate, and WTO staff teaching in Bern tend to impart more politically sensitive information than in Geneva. The WTI provides a scene for a different kind of exchange that is not saddled with political constraints and the need to get 192 states to agree on a particular position for example. This works as the mirror image of an instance quoted by Prof. Clapham saying that, despite being reputed for having freedom of opinion and expression, academics cannot necessarily act on them in IO settings, as pressure or circumstances might not allow for it. Hence, material arrangements, in terms of location and context have an important impact not only on collaboration, but also on the “normal” way in which individuals act. As shall be shown below this issue can be a sensitive one in the unfolding of IO-Academia collaboration.

One of the most important elements this type of collaboration emphasizes is the context and arena, which can influence the way individuals express and convey ideas and debates. It suggests that Academia can not only bring freedom of opinion and expression, but can offer an opening for this to those from the outside.

The Geneva Humanitarian Academy represents a complex instance of IO-Academia collaboration, as the story of its creation suggests the development and combination of several types of collaboration. Prof. Clapham's interview indicated that provision of expert knowledge leads to a more sustained relationship and to the creation of collaborative links with the OHCHR and other international bodies. Given the development of such resources and the initiative of creating a humanitarian law and human rights law training pole, it was possible to enlist the political and material support of Swiss authorities, who thought it wise to use and boost the expertise that already existed in Geneva and in Switzerland. This allowed Swiss authorities to come with a specific proposal at an international level, capitalizing on expertise that existed on their territory, and it allowed the highly qualified team of Geneva academics to have an integrated offer, which brought together Academia and IOs. Many factors were at play: expertise, networks, political will, and, importantly, proximity. Such instances encourage the idea that a strong concentration of resources in one place might build a momentum towards collaboration. Hence, geographical proximity AND concentration of expertise are necessary and useful in building sustained collaboration. However, they are not sufficient. Individuals and a propitious political environment make a big difference in how things unfold.

Overall, the teaching and training form of collaboration is deeper than the previous two, but remains very separated insofar as there is a very clear division of labour - who does what, and under which circumstances. Some of the examples illustrated above show that occasionally it is possible to find members of one community adopting the practices of the other (e.g. IO staff teaching courses). Unlike the provision of expert knowledge and consultancies, it is a game played almost entirely on the academic terrain, using courses, classrooms, course materials, and serving policy purposes, but passing through theoretical set ups. One of the most important elements this type of collaboration emphasizes is the context and arena, which can influence the way individuals express and convey ideas and debates. It suggests that Academia can not only bring freedom of opinion and expression, but can offer an opening for this to those from the outside. Teaching and training is also a terrain on which institutional partnerships can occur (as shall be shown below), much more often than in other set-ups. Training and teaching are experiences in which the interplay between epistemic and practice communities is complex, because, for the time of a class, a workshop or a lecture the two temporarily coincide, as policy makers adopt the practices of fellow teachers and those who teach are invited to think primarily at the policy implications of their work.

Project-based collaboration

Project-based IO-Academia collaboration is the most complex and deepest form of collaboration, and, overall, relatively rare. It brings IO and Academia on a more equal footing. In terms of combination of practices and material arrangements, it is about intertwining them all along the formulation, development and conclusion of a project. Thus, academic research practices, the elaboration of methodologies for investigation, information exchange, as well as academic outputs, meet IO procedures, including having to work with a complex chain of bureaucratic responsibility and command, tight time-frames, the need to get 192 members on the same page regarding an issue, and just about as many signatures for moving things forward.

Project-based collaboration arises when several factors are at play: a coincidence of research agendas and policy needs⁴³, enthusiastic individuals on both sides⁴⁴, a funding entity encouraging such kinds of projects. The examples encountered exhibit the highest variety of roles and functions for both IOs and academics in these contexts. They can alternate between being initiators of a project, to co-opted or silent partners. This type of collaboration is interesting because it highlights the multitude of questions that characterize IO-Academia relationships: the interplay between individual and institutional factors, the question of freedom of speech and political constraints, time frames, and bureaucracy related issues.

Most of the interlocutors touching on this subject have emphasized the importance of individuals in getting things stated and keeping them going. Particularly interesting was Ms. Claire Mahon's illustration of a GIAN funded project, which dealt with housing rights in the context of cities preparing to host Olympic games. Her notes on the role of individuals in a project underline the fact that, as an academic, it is important to find on the IO side a counterpart who knows its workings and is willing to engage with it in such a way that the project does not stop when it hits an obstacle of bureaucratic nature, for example. Knowing and using informal channels and ways of getting through is crucial in advancing the work. In fact, most of the other interviews tended to suggest that in most cases, both academics and IO staff are open to the idea of collaborating. In a majority of cases it is the material arrangements, such as logistic capacity, bureaucracy and the nature of the products required that affect the potential of combining practices and using the available resources, such as data and field experience, in the most productive ways.

⁴³ As specified by Prof. Michael Barnett, in his interview.

⁴⁴ Interview with Claire Mahon, Susanna Campbell, Dr. Oliver Jütersonke, Prof. Keith Krause, Dr. Anki Sjöberg.

In addition to acting as facilitators, some of the individual actors in this type of collaboration can act as “filters”⁴⁵ of information, and especially with reference to the way in which it is presented. Typically these will be the heads of project, which also bring to the fore the issue of who is the initiator of the collaboration: the IO or Academia. This is a question of ownership and can determine what kind of practices and material arrangements prevail in the unfolding of the project. The GIAN publication illustrates very well cases in which the absence of “filters” or communication have led to one of the partners wishing to abandon or becoming “silent”⁴⁶. Constant meetings and communication is in fact one practice that can guarantee a successful collaboration, as equally underlined in the CCDP’s management of its project. It is important to regularly have around representatives of all the partners and pass the message that their needs and concerns are taken into account, both during the process and concerning the result of the collaboration. This might not be a regular practice, but it is certainly necessary. The IO-Academia meeting within a project thus highlights the issue of the public targeted, as well as the language and form in which the findings are communicated. This gives rise to the famous memo versus four thousand words essay dilemma⁴⁷, which is often resolved by producing both. Another important dynamic in this type of collaboration, underscored by Prof. Marc Hufty, is the fact that whereas IOs tend to have a high personnel turn-over, Academia is on the opposite side, with a high degree of staff stability. On the one hand, this is a good match, but on the other, this situation underlines how dependent collaboration is on individuals, and how fragile its construction is in time.

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Overall, it may be said that IOs and Academia have a basic curiosity about each other in terms of activities and ways of functioning, but it needs a scene in order to become operationalized, and projects represent a kind of scene on which it can unfold. Taking up the metaphor of the research project as a scene helps us understand that in this context epistemic and practice communities come together and part ways, depending

⁴⁵ Interview with Dr. Anki Sjoeborg, Geneva Call, Senior Programme Officer.

⁴⁶ GIAN, ‘*Les liaisons Fructueuses*’ (2008), Research Networks and Intellectual Property Rights in Developing Countries.

⁴⁷ As highlighted by Prof. Krause in his interview.

on the stages of the project and its requirements. Based on the testimonies gathered in “Liaisons fructueuses”, in a majority of cases, academics and policy makers get together throughout the different stages of a project, mostly in order to share information and coordinate activities. It is rare that a perfect coincidence of practices occurs, unless it is in the process of drafting results reports or planning presentations. However, projects are very useful contexts for learning and understanding the constraints within which each community evolves, and occasionally, adopting practices that were not previously part of one’s collection thereof.

Institutional collaboration

Institutional collaboration, meaning collaboration between universities and IOs on a constant basis and codified by MOUs and other types of contracts is hard to achieve due to bureaucracy, internal political matters, the fact that the two communities work on different time frames, and, very importantly, the fact that IOs, no matter how independent they can get to be, as underlined by Michael Barnett and Martha Finnemore (see above) are, nevertheless, composed of member states, who need to express their agreement for an officially established relationship. Besides, the issue is also easily open for question, given that IOs are supposed to be of public service and relatively neutral; rapprochement of this kind with one University over others would need serious justification, going beyond the centre of expertise argument.

Certain testimonies received by the GIAN publication underlined how difficult it was to even establish the collaboration officially with a department within an IO⁴⁸, in a context when funding for the project existed and all the parties agreed on their will to collaborate. In this case bureaucratic procedures were the main obstacle that needed to be overcome. Claire Mahon underlined the extraordinary amount of time an official partnership might take in order to get all the necessary signatures, and the issues of ownership and responsibility for the ideas expressed that come with placing the name of an institution on a publication, for example. This point was in fact also expressed by several interviewees. Susanna Campbell, on the other hand, remarked that institutional collaboration tends to work in case of evaluation projects, when academics are contracted to assess different elements.

However, this is not to say that institutional collaboration between the IOs and Academia does not exist. From the examples encountered it would seem that partnerships, especially for training and teaching purposes exist and are quite successful. The UNDP link with Oxford University for a course on human development, the Geneva Human Rights Academy, the UNIGE-UNEP executive summer school are but a few examples of this.

48 Bernd Balkenhol, GIAN, '*Les liaisons fructueuses*', (2008), 'Case study of a GIAN supported project: what are the benefits for project partners and policy makers?'

Nevertheless, as Dr. Pierre Willa of UNIGE has pointed out, even on the side of Academia, establishing such partnerships is not easy. Leaving aside the question of bureaucracy, there is the issue of actually getting professors and students to become interested in public issues as they are treated by IOs. So, beyond the question of how to get different practices and material arrangements to work together, there is the very basic matter of being interested in collaboration. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, former United Nations' Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and current Director of the Center for International Conflict Resolution at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs, equally remarks on the difficulty of getting Academia interested in the IOs, not as a field of study, but rather as a partner.

At the IO level, programmes such as ACUNS and the Academic Impact Initiative (mentioned above) illustrate the typical approach to institutional collaboration, which has IOs and Academia often face and stare at each other unable to articulate a closer rapprochement.

Certain interlocutors interviewed believe that it is not even necessary to institutionalize IO-Academia collaboration⁴⁹, as it would be too forced, and it would be best to leave it up to individual projects and programmes.

Institutional collaboration brings together the academic and international organisation worlds, but does not necessarily bring them closer as practice communities. Readings and interviews suggest that official partnerships, once in place, enable contact between partners, but it is up to individuals to define the form of their cooperation within this set-up. Research has not been performed to ascertain this hypothesis, but there are indications according to which an institutional partnership might simply keep communities separated and appealing to each other only for very precise tasks. This type of collaboration does not substitute the efforts necessary in keeping up authentic exchange and cooperation.

⁴⁹ Interview with Fabienne Hara, ICG Head, New York.

Concluding analysis

Looking at IO-Academia collaborations from the perspective of practices, material arrangements and epistemic and practice communities, helps identify what is the mix of ingredients in each instance. It indicates which elements can be pushed, or modified or simply addressed, in order to make collaboration happen. One important factor related to this is establishing the aim of such collaborations. The UN intellectual history project - framed by North American academic concerns regarding international organizations - indicates that what many academics are interested in is influence and the ability to frame debates, policies, largely in terms of an intellectual contribution. The interviews performed for that project show that Academia has never been far from the world of IOs, if only because middle and upper management often started a career in academia, and then combined it with IO activities or transferred completely to the latter (of 79 individuals interviewed, around 60 had high level academic training, with around 20 university professors). As Fabienne Hara (ICG) pointed out in her interview, New York based IOs, for example, do have a habit of attracting academics to their ranks, especially if they are specialists in a particularly relevant field. These elements are important in understanding that, although IO-Academia collaboration is not widespread, the academic element is relatively close to IOs, even if not always “activated”.

Another aim of collaboration from an academic point of view, encountered more in Geneva and in some individual US cases, is to actually participate in policy design, to contribute by sharing ways of thinking and practices in order to optimize results. This type of collaboration goes beyond influence, into the question of combination of resources and practices.

On the side of IOs, the motivation for collaboration seems to be related to two elements. The requirements of results lead towards looking for the best tools for achieving them. The pursuit of intellectual satisfaction is not an aim in itself, but getting results might also mean looking for innovative ideas in order to examine known issues from fresh angles⁵⁰.

⁵⁰ Interview with Jocelyn Fenard, UNITAR.

The most important elements highlighted when looking at the different types of collaboration are as follows:

- the individual or the institution as motors for collaboration;
- the publics targeted; the language of the message;
- the benefits and drawbacks which come with these two actors;
- the question of influence and working together and that of the mission to be accomplished by each one of these communities.

Looking at collaboration in terms of combination between practices and material arrangements allows us to understand the ingredients of the five types of collaboration identified and the different concentration in which they occur. There remains a blind spot, however, namely actors' motivations, which is to be found a stage before the set-up of collaboration and is probably changing throughout the entire process. It is not clear how practices and material arrangements influence these motivations and viceversa. Why people collaborate is in fact an entire field of study, which has yet to be examined in the particular context of Academia-IO collaboration. The materials analysed for this report suggest that a primary impulse for collaboration is the need to combine capacities in order to optimise results. Individual curiosity and enthusiasm are also important drivers. However, a more nuanced study of the issue would be welcome.

The individual/institutional interplay

Often, a project, a training session, even a consultancy, start with the idea of an individual, be them IO staff or an academic. The incentives are, of course, not the same on the two sides. It would seem that the main reason for an IO or an IO staff to envisage collaboration with academia is a need for expert knowledge and particular skills. In many cases the IO knows what it wants to get in terms of information and expertise, which it might not have in-house, and therefore solicits a recognised expert in the area. The pursuit of objectivity and neutral knowledge makes academic expertise a primary choice and this is how, often, the academic becomes a consultant in a particular matter⁵¹. The selection criteria are various. Reputation is important, but a previous connection or meeting are equally valuable entry points. This was recognised by academics, IO staff and the individuals straddling the two worlds. Prof. Barnett also underlined the fact that IOs have the luxury to “cherry pick” individual scholars. Some of the interlocutors also

⁵¹ The advantages and disadvantages of this type of collaboration are discussed below under the collaboration category of consultancy.

stressed the importance of geographical proximity in starting collaboration. This factor becomes more important as it intensifies, involving larger teams and research centres. If it is relatively easy to fly-in an expert, it becomes more cumbersome to do this with larger numbers of people and therefore, physical proximity becomes more important. However, the most important element to remember was coined by Prof. Barnett, who affirmed that IO-Academia collaboration is no different from collaboration between universities, which is almost always driven by personal contacts and individual research interests. An interesting example of how an individual can carry forward a project, which was the fruit of IO-academia collaboration (COHRE project), is that of Ms. Claire McMahon, who continues to address issues related to the project mission, long after its conclusion, thus keeping it further alive.

The same interview underlined the importance of informal relationships which, for example, were able to bring to the attention of a high-level IO official the purpose and results of a research; being interested and appreciative of the project, this person was able to introduce and present the project to member countries, not in an official manner, but as a useful document in a particular matter. This helped the purposes of the project and disseminated information and expertise, which to this day are being solicited worldwide.

Personal interest, and particularly the wish of making the research performed of public use, is often the motor for going up to IOs and seeking collaboration.

Institutional channels are slower and less likely to kick start collaboration. IOs and the University are generally bureaucratic “beasts” that take a lot of time in establishing channels of cooperation. More often than not such cooperation is institutionalized once a successful project has taken place or a “habit” of working together has been created. Institutional involvement, however, gives the weight of legitimacy to the joint projects that are developed, and, depending on the aim of the collaboration, can insure greater visibility to its results. The best examples of such collaborations are, in Geneva, the ones established by the UNEP with UNICEF in the field of climate change modelling, and by the WHO and UNICEF in several fields. As noted before, teaching collaboration tends to be more widespread and successful than research. These partnerships focus on combining academia’s strengths – systematic research and teaching – and IO strength – knowledge of the terrain and operational skills. Hence, the forms of the collaboration are degree-awarding courses, workshops and joint publications of research results. Yet, even this cooperation is heavily dependent on individual project leaders, and, as some UNICEF academics have pointed out “collaboration puts the university in a position that is not always simple to manage administratively and politically: faced with the enormous experience of such institutions the university learns to become a trainer. In all collaboration processes the university is a partner learning from the international realm”⁵². This type of remark indicates rather clearly that the university remains in a relatively subaltern position in its encounter with the IO.

On the whole, however, such institutionalized collaborations are valued by partners. Universities appreciate the pedagogical, networking, and symbolic value added they bring, and IOs appreciate the academic rigor and professionalism which infuse the work performed⁵³.

Returning to the question of incentives for starting a collaboration, and focusing on the academic side, it is important to note that personal interest, and particularly the wish of making the research performed of public use, is often the motor for going up to IOs and seeking collaboration. Of course, data extraction⁵⁴ is also a primary motivator in many cases, and for Academia, the kind of access IOs have in certain areas is a golden opportunity. However, another issue is also at stake, as Prof. Pierre Sauvé underlined in his interview. In an era when funding, public or private, has been substantially reduced for education, or when, as Drew Gilpin Faust noted, it comes attached with efficiency and immediate application strings, Academia is called to redefine its role in the City⁵⁵.

52 *Revue médicale Suisse* (Mai 2009), ‘Ethique de la recherche et santé publique internationale : des études de cas au développement de matériel de formation global’, p. s22.

53 *Idem*, p. s10

54 A feature mentioned and developed in the interview with Susanna Campbell.

55 City in this case is used as the Greek idea of Polis, a place where each institution has an importance and role in society.

The memo versus the academic article

The language issue comprises two main elements: the question of how things are expressed and the question of the format in which they are expressed. Unfortunately, as Bruce Jentleson pointed out, academics, and particularly international relations academics, are in the habit of writing in a self-referential style, aimed principally at peer-reviewed disciplinary journals that do not value very highly policy relevance⁵⁶. This is not a problem in itself. It becomes one when such practices give the impression that academics cannot communicate otherwise, suggesting also that they cannot think in more practical terms. That is why the possibility of transposing knowledge into simpler language and shorter forms of documents, characterized by brevity, conciseness, precision and lack of footnotes (an actual repeated requirement) appears as a necessary condition for getting one's message across and to making IOs interested in what Academia can bring. The challenge lies in doing this without losing rigor, which constitutes one of the main academic assets for IOs.

⁵⁶ Bruce Jentleson, *op. cit.*

What place for Academia in the City?

Answering this question about finding out whether one's role is just the pursuit of pure knowledge and teaching, or if the practices and skills of inquiry and research can have a wider application in terms of public use. All of the interlocutors agree on a wider role of Academia in the City, which is what enthruses and gives them energy to pursue it despite the obstacles that arise on the way. As Prof. Keith Krause explained, the wish to be and become relevant for a wider public and to make a contribution to improving people's lives inspires one to look for like-minded people, for those who are open to new ideas, be them from an IO, a government, a think-tank or an NGO. Hence, any opportunity is useful for making connections and potentially setting up collaborations. Conversely, IOs and IO staff who recognise a tendency for isolation and separation from other actors, come to appreciate what Academia can bring in terms of rigor, depth and perspective⁵⁷. In the words of Jocelyn Feynard (UNITAR), the IOs are in need of innovative ideas, and one place to find them are universities. As Prof. Michael Barnett aptly underlines, Academia also needs to ask difficult questions, to question situations, which have grown complacent, or in which opinions seem to be mainstreamed and generalized⁵⁸. In order to achieve this, and make an academic intervention acceptable and intelligible it is necessary to overcome the barriers of language and what some call "packaging" of the messages, so that they become receivable outside an academic context⁵⁹.

IOs and IO staff who recognize a tendency for isolation and separation from other actors, come to appreciate what Academia can bring in terms of rigor, depth and perspective.

57 Interviews with Jocelyn Feynard, Dr. Alistair Edgar, Dr. Silvia Cattaneo, Dr. Oliver Jütersonke, Ramu Damodaran, GIAN testimonies.

58 Prof. Barnett's project aims to work with Southern NGOs in order to tap into the wealth of information and experience they have on human rights, in order to redress the balance of knowledge and experience which is currently tilted towards major Western NGOs.

59 Although it must be specified that IOs can and often do develop a type of "wooden" policy language that is just as criticised as the academic one.

Another issue related to the role of Academia in the City is the question of relating to the “outside world”. As many of the interlocutors pointed out, Academia can be a quite self-contained and self-referential universe, where there are many “kings of the place”, accountable to no one else but peers, and even in that case, a particular set of them. This situation changes when Academia wants to participate in processes addressing humanity’s greater good, especially because it becomes a participant in a market of actors, whose proposals may or may not be taken into account. At that point a certain independence disappears, and in order to become relevant, Academia needs to reach out and keep communications up by investing efforts not just into its research, but also its messages and the practicality of its discoveries.

Given the fact that, by their function, IOs enjoy the legitimacy which comes from serving the wider public, and hence often become identified with this mission as guarantors of what is good and useful, there is the risk of Academia espousing in relation to them a subaltern, employee-like role that does not sit well with the image it has of itself, as independent and accountable to no one other than intellectual authority. However, as some of the interlocutors have pointed out (Campbell, Krause), it is not about the competition, but about achieving a goal of improving people’s lives, and doing that which is necessary to reach it.

Funding and ownership issues

Most of the interlocutors who have been involved in IO-Academia project based collaborations have felt the weight of funding and ownership bearing on their choices and freedom of action. While in consultancies and provision of expert knowledge the above issues are relatively straightforward, projects bring forward the tensions that exist between the fact that academics in general expect to be free in their movements and opinions, and are quite ready to sign their name on the research they perform and results they obtain, and the fact that IOs, politically accountable for their affirmations and results, are much more reluctant to give their stamp of approval. In most cases, although they finance and co-finance projects, IOs prefer to leave academics take the responsibility of opinions expressed and recommendations made.

This gives academics the responsibility of hearing out and including IO views and concerns, and of consulting with donors regarding their expectations and aims. This is not a usual position for academics, who are not trained moderators or negotiators. As some interlocutors underline, getting a project ahead when IOs are donors is a constant fine tuning process, in which informal elements must balance formal ones for a productive result. In many cases, the final products tend to be of two types: one

corresponding to IO needs, the other one to academic ones.

Conversely, when funding arrives from sources connected to Academia (such as in the cases of GIAN and SNIS), concerns tend to go towards methods of inquiry and the validity of results, and attention is diverted from immediate policy uses. In these cases, it is up to the IO partner to insist and make sure that the ownership of resources does not obscure the aims of collaboration.

Conclusion

The characteristics of the various types of collaboration identified in this study are summed up in a table (cf. page 18).

One of the main things this table shows is that, as Academia and IOs move towards more complex projects and types of collaboration, the question of who dominates the relationship, and whose practices and material resources are more important fades away, leaving them to work on an equal footing.

The main message of this study are that Academia-IO collaboration is not natural, even if the condition of geographical proximity is fulfilled. This is a finding mentioned in Ms. Krafft's 2005 study, and equally confirmed by each of the interviews performed in 2011 for this analysis. Using a humorous remark, Prof. Michael Barnett drew a parallel between marriage⁶⁰ and IO-Academia collaboration: if marriage needs constant care and attention, why would this type of association not need it too?

At least two other conditions need to be fulfilled in order for it to work: coincidence of research agendas interests, and personal individual investment in terms of enthusiasm, leadership and ingeniousness needed, to overcome potential obstacles. As has been shown above, the role of individuals in such collaborations cannot be underestimated. This is a precious indication for structures such as SNIS, who need to take them into consideration with respect to what type of projects are supported and how they are supervised. Furthermore, this means there needs to be training that prepares both academics and IO staff, in order to spread the possibility of collaboration beyond the enthusiasm of the few.

⁶⁰ This is a metaphor that the GIAN team used with respect to many of the projects they fostered.

Examining collaboration by observing the practices and material arrangements helps identify the blend of factors which have an impact on it, as well as the relationships of influence flowing from one community to another in each specific case. The table inscribed in the methodology section outlines what the most frequently encountered types of rapports are, and shows that in some of them IOs take the lead, and in others Academia. This seems to depend on which communities' practices are mostly engaged. Generally, funding is also a factor determining who has the ownership and leadership of a collaboration. However, there are exceptions in which donors choose to let leadership to "the other side", and as long as communication channels are kept open, this works. (See the CCDP example).

It is important to remember that the IO-Academia relationship occurs on the frontier line between the two communities, as both have to move away from their core practices in order to make it work, and is characterised by a to and fro between them as communities of practice.

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