

TYPE OF STRUCTURE

ADVANTAGES

DISADVANTAGES

INFORMAL

WORKING GROUP

A small number of people who agree to explore a partnership initiative on behalf of a wider group

- Greater freedom to explore ideas / intentions and to build new relationships

- Not being taken seriously enough by external agencies or other key players

FOCUS GROUP

A small number of people who agree to take forward one specific aspect of a partnership's development

- Cheaper - the major resource demand is time rather than cash

- Too easily neglected when those involved are diverted by their other priorities

TASK GROUP

Mandated by a larger group to complete a specific task (e.g., procure resources; manage a registration process)

- Non-bureaucratic

- Not structured enough for the co-ordination and management of resources

MORE FORMAL

NETWORK

A communications arrangement linking people who are engaged in similar activities

- Developing a greater profile

- Needs greater co-ordination

FORUM

A meeting place for open debate and new ideas

- Providing an 'umbrella' for a wide range of loosely linked activities

- Requires more agreement on policies and operational principles

SOCIETY

A membership organisation with a dedicated focus of activity

- Building commitment from a wider constituency

- More complex decision-making processes

FORMAL

ASSOCIATION

A more formal, registered version of a society

- Increased authority and capacity to exert influence

- Subject to legislative restrictions on action

FOUNDATION

An association that mobilises and disseminates resources

- More focused activities and greater likelihood of sustainability

- Tendency to become over-bureaucratic and impersonal

AGENCY

An independent organisation established to act on behalf of others

- Enhanced ability to mobilise and manage large-scale resources

- Increasingly high administrative (as opposed to project) costs