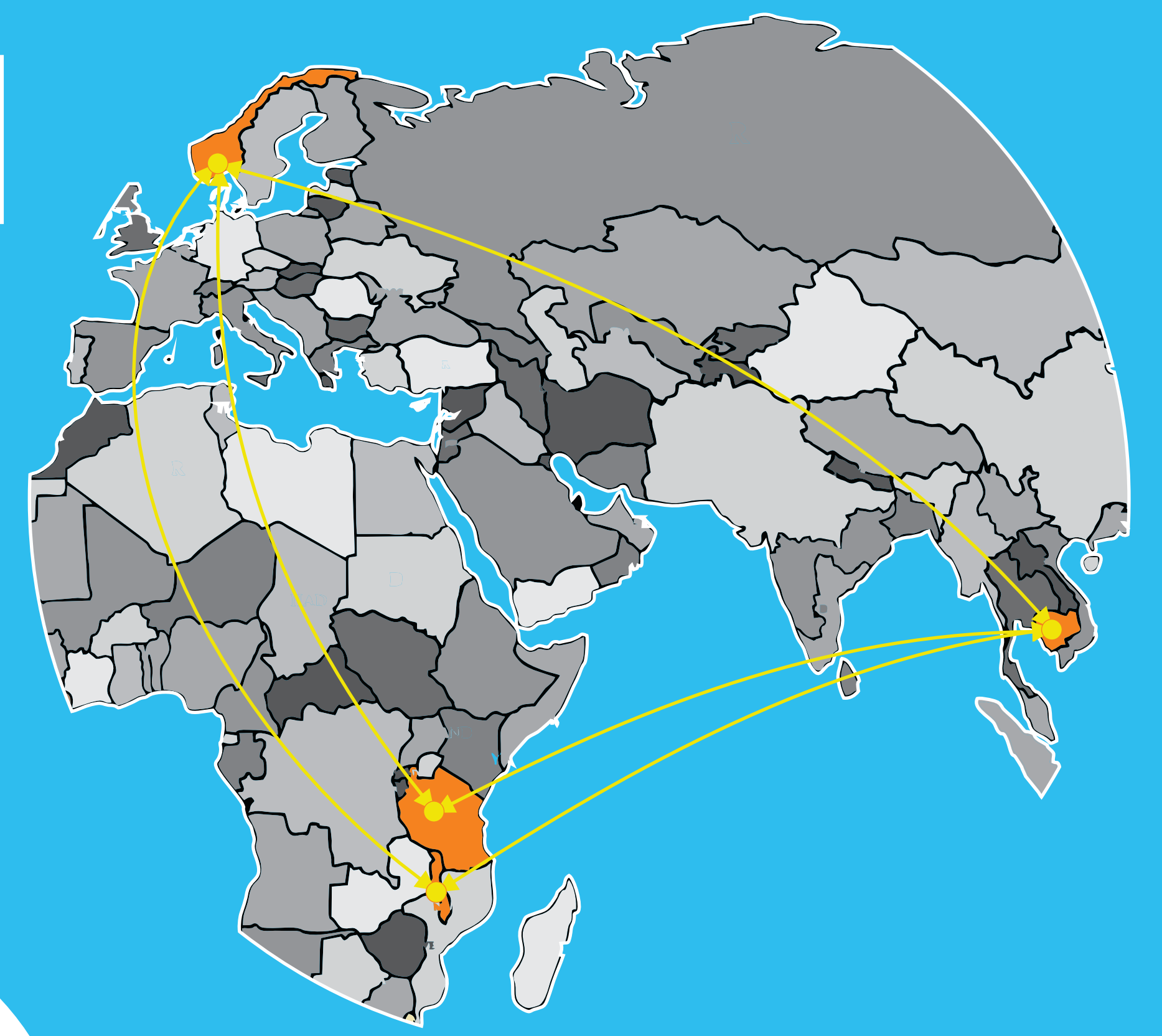


# BUILDING P&O SERVICES THROUGH INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

A CASE STUDY INVESTIGATING THE STRENGTHS OF COLLABORATION IN PROSTHETICS AND ORTHOTICS EDUCATION AND SERVICES

ANNE LILL HAAVI PETERSSON<sup>1</sup> | INGUNN FINSTAD<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rehabilitation Science Organisation (ReSciO) | <sup>2</sup> University College of Southeast Norway



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«IF YOU WANT TO GO FAST, GO ALONE - IF YOU WANT TO GO FAR, GO TOGETHER»  
AFRICAN PROVERB

## INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

The case-study presented here offers a model for how Physical Rehabilitation Centers can work together towards the UN's sustainable development goals, to create a world where everyone in need has access to high-quality affordable assistive products.

To achieve this goal, we need to attract and retain people to the P&O profession, we need high quality education, more Physical Rehabilitation Centers and we need to share resources, and spread the P&Os knowledge and competence. All of this we believe can be achieved through working in international partnerships.

The study is based on a strategic alliance between four partner organizations; Sophies Minde Ortopedi AS (Norway), Kamuzu Central Hospital (Malawi), Tanzanian Training Centre for Orthopaedic Technologists | TATCOT (Tanzania) and The Cambodian School of Prosthetics and Orthotics | CSPO (Cambodia). The objective for their collaboration has been to learn from each other to improve their P&O services. This has been done through several mutual one year exchanges of staff, mainly P&Os.

The study investigates how individual learning in a development aid partnership translates into organizational effectiveness through the concept of dynamic capabilities, defined as a learned and stable pattern of collective activity through which the organization systematically generates and modifies its operating routines in pursuit of improved effectiveness.

- Zollo & Winter, 2002, p.340



THE COMPLETE CASE STUDY CAN BE FOUND AT  
[HTTPS://BRAGE.BIBSYS.NO/XMLUI/HANDLE/11250/2405068](https://brage.bibsys.no/xmlui/handle/11250/2405068)



## RESEARCH QUESTION

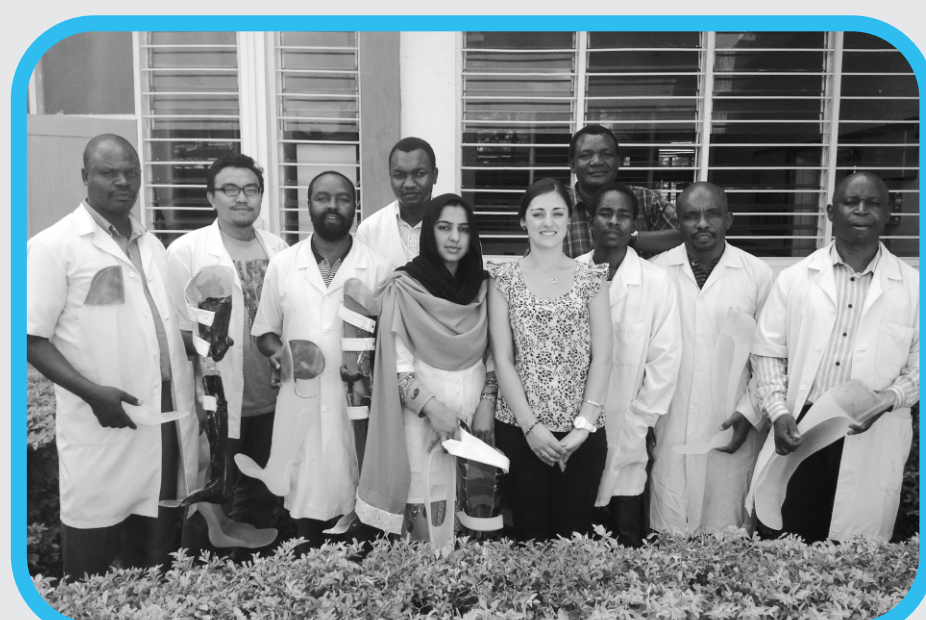
In what way does learning and knowledge sharing in a development aid partnership contribute to build dynamic capabilities?

Sub-questions:

- 1) What and how do the P&Os learn during their exchange?
- 2) How has the individual knowledge and skills been shared with the home organization?

The method, or the procedure undertaken for carrying out the study, is qualitative. In total, we interviewed 49 participants from the exchange program. The interviews took place in Cambodia, Tanzania, Malawi and Norway.

Our results are based on 32 of those interviews.



## RESULTS

The partnership has raised the professionalism, breadth of experience and aspirations of the staff. Related to Sub question 1, the informants gained a lot of knowledge and skills relevant to the different areas of the P&O profession. In short, the P&Os reported that they gained professional experience that they would not get in their home organization.

Regarding sub question number 2, the participants reported that their new acquired competence has been transferred to the home organization through practical-clinical seminars/workshops and through "learning by doing", where what has been transferred is determined by the challenges, or the needs for learning that arises on a day-to-day basis.

## CONCLUSION

The partnership contributes to the organizations effectiveness, and build dynamic capabilities, by fostering a learned and stable pattern of collective activity through which the organization systematically generates and modifies its operating routines in pursuit of improved effectiveness.

The differences between the four partners foster a certain form of behavior and attitude; the P&Os gain new perspectives, knowledge and competence, which in turn help them to see their own organization in a different light and provide them with ideas how to improve their own organization.

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