

## Trust Building

### *Abbreviations*

*OiB: Odling i Balans*

*Eider example: the Weidelandschaft Eidertal project*

*Single letters H, T, J, B refer to the interviewee*

### **2.9.4 Trust and Relationships**

Trust is the “firm belief in the reliability, truth, or ability of someone or something” (Oxford Dictionaries 2013); good relationships are based on trust. Trust can be regarded from a macro-level (of organisations) or micro-level (between individuals) (Bachmann & Inkpen 2011). It is a complex topic and within the context of relationships between stakeholder groups it will be regarded as macro-level or institutional trust, and those between individuals from different stakeholder groups within projects is micro-level trust. It must be noted that micro-level trust is a far better understood phenomenon than institutional trust, and the complexities of the subject limit the possibilities of full comprehension of either within the scope of this thesis; however it is hoped that an overview has been achieved.

Institutional trust can be linked to an organisation’s good reputation.

Therefore it is logical that trust between partners was recognised as a prerequisite for successful project cooperation by the Baltic COMPASS project (Rammert 2012). Trust (both interpersonal and institutional) has been established as important for building relationships in interdisciplinary environmental research and between researchers and practitioners (Harris & Lyon 2013), in science-based stakeholder dialogues (Welp et al. 2006), in collaboration between stakeholders (along with communication) (Davies & White 2012) and in collective action (Uetake et al. 2013). Good relationships between stakeholders affect the efficiency and success of agri-environmental projects (U. Rammert, 2013, pers. comm.).



Areas of interest to be investigated were firstly the affect trust has on relationships between different stakeholder groups, and vice versa; secondly the influences of trust and relationships on the communication processes, and thirdly if the state of the communication processes has an effect on the trust and relationships between different stakeholder groups.

#### **4.4.10 Trust building**

In the introduction the importance of trust was discussed in the section entitled "Trust and Relationships". It was reclassified as the code *respect, reputation and trust* and the results of the analysis support that of the literature in the introduction; trust building is an important way in which to improve all facets of communication.

The state of *reputation, respect and trust* between stakeholder groups is important. Trust building is the process by which the state of *respect, reputation and trust* can be bettered; it can be seen as a tool to influence all themes by bettering a powerful condition code. This can be seen in the diagram *Fig. 5.* on the following page.

The code *reputation, respect and trust*, occurs under the themes *inter-stakeholder group relations problems, inter-stakeholder group language barrier, scientific cultural problems and traditional role problems.*

#### ***Trust building in Examples***

OiB has invested much time and effort into its reputation through building relationships and remaining independent, resulting in institutional trust. Much of this is down to their one full time employee networking, identifying mutual interests and contacting possible stakeholders who may have an interest in the projects occurring. Being a member of OiB is mutually beneficial. H and T acknowledge this trust, respect and reputation as very important. Pilot farms were picked based on their good reputations; this reflection of previous reputation being important in the formation of trust is supported by Harris & Lyon (2013).

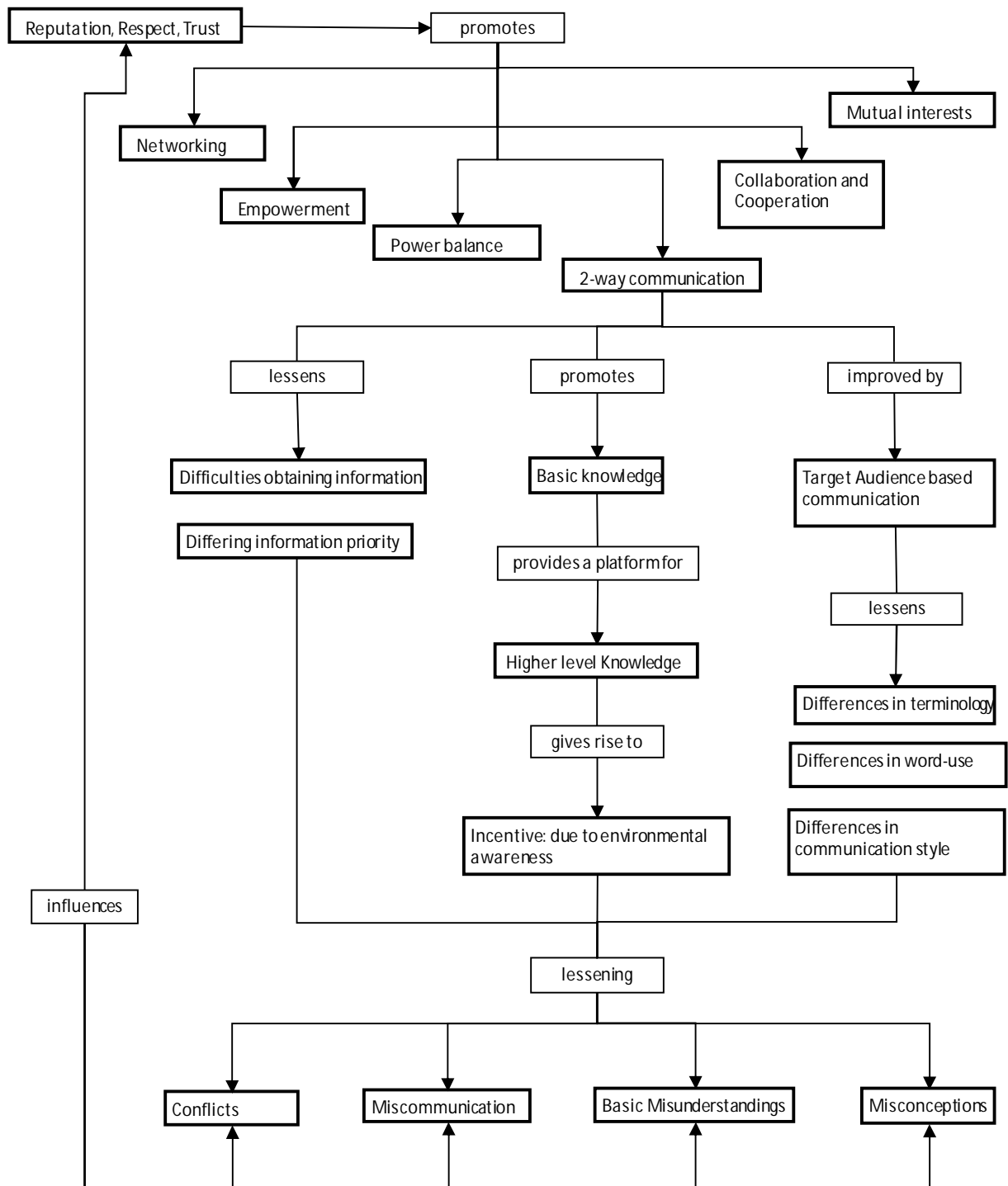
Within the Latvian example it is hard to quantify and identify trust; there is certainly individual based trust (micro-trust) between J and Zanda Kruklite and Maira Dzelzkaleja, who are part of



the Latvian Farmers' Parliament, with whom he has a working relationship. However, from the statements about the scientific community and policy-makers and administrators, there does not seem to be institutional trust between J and these stakeholder groups; there may not even be micro-trust between individuals within these stakeholder groups and J, as this was not mentioned either.

B gained trust as an individual from the stakeholders with whom she worked, followed by gaining the trust of the stakeholder groups as a whole. This resulted in institutional trust in the State Agency. This was highly dependent on and influenced by B's diverse background, which enabled her to understand the backgrounds of and sympathise with all the different stakeholders with whom she worked. This use of a "boundary spanner" experienced working with, or in, more than one professional background is known to be crucial for the quick development of trust (Harris & Lyon 2013). The relationship and trust building did take time. B's colleague underwent similar *trust building* with those stakeholders with whom she worked. Also of importance is that the representative of the WBV was a well trusted member of the community, and although he worked for WBV, he was a farmer himself and therefore also had their trust and could relate to them.





**Fig. 1.** Conceptual diagram outlining the complex interactions of the code respect, reputation and trust on other suggestion codes and negative codes seen within all themes, illustrating the positive feedback loop that occurs when the state of the code is bettered. Reputation, respect and trust have the potential to greatly reduce all problems (represented by themes) in communication, especially in the context of inter-stakeholder interactions.

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Author: Sara Jones

