



# FAO+

## PARTNERSHIPS

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## FAO ORGANIZATION-WIDE STRATEGY ON PARTNERSHIPS



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*Joining forces for a  
hunger free world.*



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## VISION AND OBJECTIVES

This strategy is determined by the vision that FAO will enhance its capacity to assist its Members in achieving their Global Goals through key partnerships and strong alliances. FAO's effectiveness in achieving its goals will be enhanced by an organization-wide strategy on partnerships. The objectives of the strategy are to:

- enhance interaction with other actors and final users of FAO services in order to realize larger benefits to Members;
- build up and to maximize the use of available technical knowledge;
- strengthen FAO's capacity to select, prioritize, establish and successfully operate partnerships for supporting shared goals.

The strategy is designed to promote a more systematic use of partnerships and to provide practical guidance to FAO units and partners to facilitate the selection, prioritization, development and management of new or renewed partnerships.



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## SCOPE

### WHY DOES FAO PARTNER?

In order to be successful in performing its institutional role in the international governance of agriculture and agricultural development, including in fisheries and forestry, FAO must participate in the mobilization of the world's best knowledge and capacities in these fields. Such knowledge and capacities do not reside only in FAO and so it is necessary to link up with other relevant institutions in support of shared goals. FAO both contributes to partnerships and benefits from them. Partnerships can be of varying duration and have an instrumental and operational role in enhancing FAO's effectiveness. Decisions on entering into a partnership will be based on the specific comparative advantages of the Organization and the partners concerned.

### FAO PARTNERS TO:

- better fulfil its mandate in a rapidly evolving environment of increased complexities and a growing number of actors;
- enhance its technical performance and competence to ensure that it remains the repository of cutting-edge knowledge;
- optimize its use of resources and services to Members, particularly in situations calling for cross-sectoral and multi-disciplinary approaches and solutions, or where administrative collaboration could lead to more efficient and effective assistance;
- more efficiently and effectively reach out to final users of its services.

Partnerships and alliances will be an important factor in enabling prioritization of FAO's technical work, including resource allocations, as well as a means for ensuring priority areas of work are carried out effectively and efficiently. Partnerships generate potential for cost

savings and economies of scale, as well as for broadening the scope of technical work and expertise. This is of particular significance in the light of resource constraints and strategies for resource mobilization. Thus resources required for establishing or retaining partnerships could be seen as an investment.

### DEFINITION OF PARTNERSHIP

This strategy follows the definition of partnerships as used by the IEE and as established in 2005 by the FAO evaluation of the strategy on partnerships and alliances. The terms "partnerships" and "alliances" which are used interchangeably refer to a "cooperation and collaboration between FAO units and external parties in joint or coordinated action for a common purpose. It involves a relationship where all parties make a contribution to the output and the achievement of the objectives rather than a solely financial relationship". A partnership can be characterized by the following elements:

- A partnership is a voluntary association of partners.
- Partners are expected to share a common interest.
- Partnership entails complementary resources (technical, financial or human).
- The dynamic performance of a partnership assumes the existence of an agreement on modalities.
- Each partner is expected to pursue specific benefits which are the fundamental motivation for entering into the partnership.
- By deciding to get involved in an alliance or a partnership, partners accept the need to share risks and confront them together, based on a foundation of mutual trust.

It should be underlined that the existence of a mutual will among the partners to pursue a common goal is a necessary condition for the success of a partnership.

## A CORPORATE APPROACH TO PARTNERSHIPS

Member States have emphasised the importance of FAO not working in isolation but rather collaborating in partnerships and alliances with other entities in order to better fulfil its mandate and enhance its effectiveness in assisting its Members to achieve their Global Goals.

The Strategic Framework 2010-2019 provides for a results-based regime and defines FAO's Core Functions that are a critical means to achieve results by applying the Organization's comparative advantages. Partnerships and alliances is one of these Core Functions, aimed at providing a means for strengthening and enhancing the effectiveness of FAO's work through enhanced technical performance, horizontal collaboration in strategic and operational programming, advocacy and reaching out better to ultimate users of its services.

The Core Function of partnerships and alliances contributes to the achievement of FAO's Organizational Results and will also be an important factor in enabling prioritization of FAO's technical work. The effectiveness of FAO's new corporate approach to partnerships will be monitored and measured through a functional organizational result on "key partnerships and alliances that leverage and complement the work of FAO and partners".

The Office for Communication, Partnerships and Advocacy (OCP) is entrusted with a dedicated responsibility for FAO's overall approach towards partnerships and alliances, including the implementation of the organization-wide strategy on partnerships. OCP aims to strengthen the alignment of organizational partnerships with the pursuit of FAO's strategic objectives and priorities. OCP will inter-alia facilitate and support the Organization's engagement in partnerships, serve as a corporate repository of knowledge and lessons learned from FAO's experience in partnerships, share information and support communication on partnerships.

The main focus of the organization-wide strategy is on the overarching dimensions of FAO's partnerships. Implementation of the strategy will facilitate a re-assessment of current partnerships, as well as the identification of promising areas for new partnerships. It should not only enhance the performance of the Organization but also contribute to the gradual realisation of a "culture" of partnership as a major element of the approach to be taken by the Organization in its work. Specific strategies will also be implemented, in particular on collaboration with the UN system, the UN agencies based in Rome, civil society, and the private sector.

### WHO ARE FAO'S PARTNERS?

Partnerships are firmly embedded in FAO's way of doing business at global, regional, sub-regional and national levels. FAO collaborates with a large number of different entities to enhance its strategic and operational programming, funding and advocacy roles. Partnerships can be of a horizontal nature where the Organization and its partners are looking for complementarities, for example on inter-disciplinary issues, or of a vertical nature where the partners share responsibilities for upstream (research) and downstream (outreach) activities.

Given its nature as an inter-governmental organization, FAO has always maintained a special relationship with member governments which are responsible for the governance and funding of the Organization. At a regional level growing emphasis is given to the collaboration with Regional Economic Integration Organizations (REIOs). More recently the Organization has entered into partnership networking arrangements between locally-elected authorities such as regions and municipalities in developed and developing countries as currently pursued under the FAO Decentralized Cooperation Programme (DCP), which offer promising opportunities for enhancing FAO's outreach at a national level.

FAO partners with other agencies of the United Nations system at headquarters, regional and country levels, including through participation in the UN Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) and its subsidiary bodies and in the context

of the "delivering as one" pilot exercises. FAO also collaborates with international financing institutions (IFIs), such as the World Bank as well as other inter-governmental entities. FAO has a particularly dynamic and strong collaboration with the other Rome-based UN agencies, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP). The nature of this collaboration is both substantive in terms of field operations, as well as collaboration in all the administrative support areas (including finance, HR, procurement, IT, investment services, and facility management).

FAO collaborates with a number of bilateral donor agencies and regional or sub-regional institutions, including regional development banks. The Organization maintains multiple linkages at different levels with the International Agricultural Research Centres (IARCs) of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and collaborates with other research and academic institutions.

FAO partners with civil society, including people's organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), the private sector and foundations. FAO engages further in a variety of formal institutionalized partnerships and less formalized networking arrangements. Moreover FAO provides an opportunity for other organizations, individuals, governments, civil society, academia and celebrities to be involved in the global fight against hunger through advocacy initiatives.





## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The organization-wide strategy on partnerships is underpinned by the following guiding principles that should be applied whenever the Organization is reviewing existing partnerships or is considering entering into a new partnership or alliance. The set of guiding principles should be understood as a “living document” which will remain subject to revision in the light of experience gained.

- A partnership should lead to a clear and mutual added value in terms of results relevant to shared goals and objectives, weighed against savings, costs and impediments.
- A partnership should serve as a means for greater effectiveness in supporting international governance of agriculture and agricultural development, including through results-based monitoring and incorporating lessons learned, in line with FAO’s global goals and strategic objectives.
- Building on ongoing collaboration, new partnerships should be based on the comparative advantages of each partner.
- The nature of the role of FAO in a partnership, which could be that of a leader, facilitator or participant, should be determined by the nature and relevance of inputs and services to be provided.
- FAO must at all times preserve its neutral and impartial role in partnerships and act in a transparent manner while at the same time avoiding any conflict of interest.
- The implementation of global partnerships should take into account conditions and requirements at regional and country levels.

The set of guiding principles is more fully explained in the Annex to this strategy.

## AGENDA FOR ACTION

### STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION

This group of actions includes: the dissemination of information on the partnership support functions of OCP, the establishment or identification of a suitable mechanism(s) for dialogue, the preparation of a work programme for the partnership support by OCP and the harmonization of the strategy with organizational changes.

### DISSEMINATION OF GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON PARTNERSHIPS

This group of actions includes: dissemination of the guiding principles and ensuring their integration in FAO processes, preparation of information material, including a suitable communication plan.

### ASSESSING PARTNERSHIPS

This group of actions includes: the identification of partnership goals, assessing the costs and benefits of partnerships, and assessing the institutional aspects of partnerships. It will also cover risk management and monitoring and evaluation of partnerships, including of the organization-wide strategy on partnerships, in line with the results-based management framework of the Organization.

### LAUNCHING OF NEW OR RENEWED PARTNERSHIPS

This group of actions includes: the periodic identification of key partnerships, establishing timeline(s) to review and develop partnerships, and technical support and advice on partnering.

### TRAINING ON PARTNERSHIPS

This group of actions includes: the development of a suitable training module and the organization of training activities on partnership management.