

# TECHNICAL GUIDANCE FOR INVOLVING NON-STATE ACTORS IN THE COUNTRY PROGRAMMING FRAMEWORK (CPF)

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Partnerships and Advocacy Branch (OCP)

## ***TECHNICAL GUIDANCE FOR INVOLVING NON-STATE ACTORS IN***

This document complements the FAO guidelines for the Country Programming Framework (CPF). Its purpose is to guide FAO staff preparing and reviewing the CPFs in involving key stakeholders at the country level. Specifically, these guidelines illustrate how to engage civil society organizations and the private sector in the CPF process.

## ***THE COUNTRY PROGRAMMING FRAMEWORK (CPF)***

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## **1. Purpose of the document**

The Country Programming Framework (CPF) is the tool used by FAO to define the medium-term response to the assistance needs of member countries in pursuit of national development objectives that are consistent with the FAO Strategic Framework and Regional Priorities, the MDGs and other Internationally Agreed Development Goals (IADGs).

The CPF is developed in close partnership with governments, taking into account national priorities on agriculture, food security and rural development. At the same time, and in order to ensure the broad ownership of the process, it is essential to ensure the meaningful engagement of a broad and diverse range of stakeholders in the design of the CPF.

The situation analysis during the formulation process detailed in the CPF guidelines<sup>1</sup> looks into the national socio-economic development issues, challenges, national priorities, and key relevant stakeholders as well as their capacities at policy, organizational and individual levels. The CPF formulation and implementation process opens the way to enhance partnerships with governments, national stakeholders, external partners and UN system agencies at the country level. Meaningful engagement of a diverse range of stakeholders in the design, formulation and implementation of the CPF is encouraged to ensure the broadest ownership of this process and allies in the fight against food security. Moreover, in April 2013 member states approved the FAO strategy for partnerships with the private sector; and the FAO strategy for partnerships with civil society organizations<sup>2</sup> (CSOs). During the consultation process to finalize and approve both strategies, member states expressed explicit interest in ensuring the CPF be used as the main instrument for implementing the newly endorsed strategies at the decentralized level.

This document provides FAO staff with indications on how to engage in the CPF process two key non-state actors: the private sector and the civil society.

The document will guide FAO staff by identifying criteria to consider when working with these two categories of stakeholders; and providing a checklist of critical steps to be followed to ensure their involvement at each stage of the CPF process.

It is structured as follows:

- i) An introduction on the role of CSOs and the private sector in the CPF process including background and rationale for engagement ;
- ii) Areas of collaboration for both CSOs and the private sector as defined in the two FAO partnership strategies;
- iii) Selection of CSOs and ensuring a balanced representation of civil society;
- iv) Issues to consider when working with the private sector;
- v) A checklist of steps to take when involving non-state actors in the CPF.

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<sup>1</sup> See Situation Analysis in page 30 of the CPF guidelines: <ftp://ftp.fao.org/TC/CPF/Guidelines/CPFGuidelines.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> FAO strategy for partnerships with the private sector: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/027/mg048e.pdf>  
FAO strategy for partnerships with the Civil Society Organizations:  
<http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/027/MF999E.pdf>

## 2. Background and rationale

Poverty, hunger and malnutrition have persisted despite numerous efforts made by countries, organizations and institutions to eradicate them. Many of the food-related crises of recent years are evidence that these problems are becoming increasingly interconnected. This means that the solution cannot simply be to intervene on isolated symptoms of a larger, more complex and multifaceted problem. It also means that efforts to tackle these issues cannot be solely of one organization or institution. This requires the decisions, perspectives, capacities, knowledge, skills and influence of multiple actors in order to achieve the common goal of a world free from hunger.

Numerous actors have been involved in areas complementary to FAO's mandate, in particular CSOs<sup>3</sup> and private sector stakeholders<sup>4</sup>.

Depending on their level of coordination and activity, civil society can range from extensive networks and platforms involving key interest groups (farmers, fishers, herders, urban consumers,...) to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based associations.

Each country presents different levels of coordination and organization of their non-state actors. For example, in some countries, there is already a food security forum where UN, government, development partners and NGOs meet regularly and discuss. In this case, it is feasible to expand the involvement of NGOs to other type of Civil Society Organizations and seek a more balanced representativeness through interest groups or constituencies.

Private sector entities can be informal or formal, usually depending on the status of their registration according to government regulations. Private sector entities range in size and scope from small local businesses through to global multinational companies. Each country<sup>5</sup>, presents different levels of coordination and organization of their non-state actors. For example, in the Dominican Republic, an Inter-Institutional Committee on Food and Nutritional Security was established in 2011 where UN, government, development partners and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) meet regularly and discuss solutions to food insecurity. In this case, it is feasible to expand the involvement of NGOs to other types of civil society organizations and seek a more balanced representativeness through interest groups or constituencies.

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<sup>3</sup> The new FAO Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society identifies three types of civil society organizations: member-based organizations (MBOs); non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and social movements (SMs).

<sup>4</sup> The FAO Strategy for Partnerships with the Private Sector considers the private sector as encompassing a broad array of entities that range from farmer organizations, cooperatives, small and medium enterprises to the largest international corporations. Private sector stakeholders also include private financial institutions, industry and trade associations, and consortia that represent private sector interests.

<sup>5</sup> It is the reality on the ground that shapes the level of collaboration of the different stakeholders in the CPF.

In other cases, private sector entities may be members of chambers of commerce, industry federations, associations of producers or exporters, or other consortia which play a coordination role, particularly helpful if used for discussing policy matters.

The successful drafting and review of the different CPFs, should allow FAO to take into account the reality of the civil society and private sector and through close dialogue with the Government<sup>6</sup>, seek whenever possible their engagement in the CPF process.

### 3. Non-state actors and the Country Programming Framework Process

The CPFs define the priorities for collaboration between FAO and governments and the outcomes to be achieved in the medium-term (4-5 years, aligned to national planning cycles) in support of national agriculture, rural development and food security development objectives as expressed in national development plans.

As stated in FAO's Reviewed Strategic Framework, hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition cannot be eradicated without a strong and effective political commitment and a high degree of collaboration among all the actors concerned: *Building political commitment among stakeholders implies awareness raising and advocacy on the one hand, and the establishment and strengthening of multi-stakeholder partnerships that would inter alia ensure monitoring and accountability on the other. The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) as a multi-stakeholder global forum could serve as a model.*

While civil society and the private sector are increasingly involved in FAO's work at global and regional level, much more needs to be done at the national level. To ensure consistency with the new corporate approach on strengthening multi-stakeholder partnerships to enhance the inclusiveness and effectiveness of FAO's work at all levels, a much greater space needs to be opened for the full participation of the private sector and civil society organizations and platforms in the CPF process.



<sup>6</sup> Each country presents a different challenge. The present documents provides FAO staff with useful tips on how to involved Non State Actors (Civil Society and Private Sector ) in the CPF. However, it is the reality on the ground what ultimately shapes the level of collaboration of the different stakeholders in the CPF.

### 3.1 Areas of engagement and collaboration with non-state actors

Specific areas of engagement and collaboration with non-state actors include:

**Development and technical programmes:** to strengthen local capabilities and project outreach in a cost-effective manner, dialogue and partnership should be promoted with non-state actors to design, implement, and monitor quality and sustainable local initiatives, programmes, projects and emergency responses. Non-state actors can complement FAO's technical work and programmes it develops at the local level. They can also complement government programmes.

**Policy dialogue:** non-state actor participation in policy dialogue nurtures a sense of ownership that will enhance sustainability of policy adoption and implementation. It allows for civil society and private sector interests to be heard. FAO can play a role in encouraging and guiding dialogue in multi-stakeholder fora.

**Norms and standard setting:** FAO plays a key convenor and facilitator role in the negotiation and implementation of international codes of conduct, safety and quality standards for food and other commodities; global conventions and regulatory frameworks in areas related to FAO's mandate. The involvement of non-state actors from both civil society and the private sector in their design and implementation is critical to their success.

**Advocacy and communication:** engaging both civil society and the private sector in FAO's advocacy and communication activities can allow the Organization to reach a wider audience, with a strengthened scope and impact across broader sections of the population. They can jointly raise public awareness and build strong support and political will in the fight against poverty and food insecurity. Campaigns such as the Eat Safely campaign launched by the regional office in Latin America benefitted greatly from partnerships with the World Community Radio Association and Latin American Education Radio Association.

**Knowledge management, sharing, dissemination and capacity development:** non-state actors can have substantial roles in contributing to FAO's work in this area. The private sector for example contributes to FAO's knowledge and research capacity by providing data and information on market trends and emerging technologies. FAO's partnership with civil society can facilitate the flow of global knowledge, making it accessible to all sectors of society. FAO can also capitalize on the detailed knowledge CSOs have from the grassroots to the regional, which complements the stock of knowledge and technical expertise that FAO promotes.

**Mobilization of resources and joint use of resources in emergency situations:** mobilization of human, financial and other resources is fundamental to the implementation of FAO's programme of work. Private sector entities may provide human, logistical, managerial and financial resources to specific activities in various ways, e.g. know-how, expert services, in-kind donations, or funds. Partnership with a range of civil society actors, from large international and national NGOs to grassroots organizations, can leverage a wide variety of contacts and resources, human and financial, which may be very effective, including in emergency situations.

#### 4. Civil Society and FAO

Civil society is made up of women, youth, farmers, herders, fishers and fish workers, indigenous peoples, forest dwellers and more, many of whom are often FAO's beneficiaries. Civil society organizations (CSOs) bring together the voices of these groups, reach the most marginalized groups of society, and bring the positions and concerns of people to policy dialogue; normative discussions and programme and project design. These organizations can play a catalytic role in improving and furthering the work of FAO, and vice versa, especially in the area of food security. For example, establishing CSO advisory groups at the national level as a sounding board to FAO's policy and programme initiatives is a mechanism other UN agencies have implemented.

CSOs have increasingly shown their capacities and potential in programme and project design, execution and implementation at regional, national and sub-national levels. In recent years these organizations have succeeded in opening up areas for dialogue with governments and other actors at regional and global level, which are now either consolidated or institutionalized into governance fora, thus contributing their capacities and expertise to higher quality policy and normative discussions. FAO acknowledges these achievements by civil society, as well as the effectiveness of new governance models to discuss and implement public policies in the fight against malnutrition. For example, in Jamaica CSOs are engaged in developing an action plan as an input to the National Food and Nutrition Security Policy.

Civil society is much more than just large NGOs<sup>7</sup>. There are multiple types of organizations across different constituencies (farmers; pastoralists and herders; fishers and fish workers; forest dwellers; consumers; landless; urban poor; NGOs; women; youth; agricultural workers; and indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities), and a balanced representation of these organizations in policy dialogue and normative discussion is essential for the empowerment, ownership, success and sustainability of any decisions made or actions executed. While at the global level different policy fora have been progressively including civil society in discussions, at the national level key policy discussions, with some exceptions, tend to be held without involving relevant CSOs. FAO is convinced that multi-stakeholder dialogues at the national level involving representatives of the most vulnerable and marginalized sectors of the population are to be encouraged and supported.

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<sup>7</sup> NGOs are considered one of the interest groups or constituencies that make up the overall civil society in any given country. In the past, working with NGOs was synonymous with working with civil society. Today, non-governmental organizations are one fraction of the civil society in a country and therefore are considered as a constituency or interest group of their own.

## 4.1. Selecting CSOs to be involved in the CPF process

Two key aspects need to be considered when selecting CSOs in the CPF process:

- 1) Technical expertise on matters related with agriculture, natural resources and food security
- 2) Representativeness

While the first can be easily assessed by FAO experts, the following section can help ensuring a balanced representation of specific sectors of the population who share common interests, with particular reference to the most vulnerable and isolated groups, whose livelihoods and food security are likely to be most directly affected by the interventions that FAO and the governments carry out in support of rural development.

## 4.2. Ensuring a balanced representation of Civil Society

Four main criteria need to be considered when seeking the balanced representativeness of civil society. These are: constituencies, geography, gender/age and type of organization.

**Constituencies:** Selection of civil society participants must meet the requirements needed for a balanced representation. Twelve different constituencies have been identified as the main groups of FAO beneficiaries. These 12 constituencies ensure that the different interests, voices and concerns of society are included. These are: small farmers, landless, agricultural workers, fishers and fish workers, pastoralists and herders, forest dwellers, ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples, urban poor, consumers, NGOs, women and youth. To ensure that this component is duly taken into account, at least 75% of the above mentioned constituencies should be represented by at least one organization in CPF activities and processes.

**Geography:** Equal participation must be ensured from each of the regions, provinces and/or districts of the country, as appropriate. Balanced geographical representation of organizations must be ensured if the process is to be labeled as “COUNTRY Programming Framework”. As in the case of constituencies, 75% of geographical areas should be represented by at least one civil society organization.

**Type of organization:** A balance of all three types of civil society organizations (NGOs, social movements and member-based organizations) should be considered.

**Gender and Age:** A gender and age balance is of particular importance, ideally 50% of the representatives from civil society should be women, and at least 1/3 youth.

**FAO funding:** Priority in funding must be given to producer organizations, peoples’ organizations, social movements and civil society networks and member-based organizations, especially those representing small-scale farmers, fishers, artisans, pastoralists, indigenous peoples, landless, rural workers, consumers, women and youth. INGOs and strong national NGOs tend to have enough resources to be



able to support their own expenses. Funding from FAO should be limited to one participant per organization<sup>8</sup>.

## **5. The Private Sector and FAO**

In recent decades, food and agriculture systems have been transformed by new technological, knowledge-based, financial and managerial resources and innovation, as well as by consolidation and globalization of supply chains. The private sector has been instrumental in driving these transformations. Private sector entities play important roles in virtually every dimension of FAO's mission and mandate at global, regional and country levels.



For FAO to engage effectively with the private sector in the fight against food insecurity, much collaboration will start at the grassroots level in a bottom-up approach that builds on well-established local relationships. Regional and decentralized offices play a great role in building partnerships with the private sector.

In fact, agricultural development and production are core private enterprise activities. The private sector can thus potentially contribute to lifting large numbers of people in developing countries out of poverty and hunger through responsible and productive investment, innovation, enhanced efficiency and employment creation.

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<sup>8</sup> If multiple representatives from the same organization want to participate, they must find alternative sources of funding. More than one participant from the same organization may attend a meeting or process, provided there is enough space and under the condition that only one of their representatives may speak per discussion point.

One of the roles of governments is to create enabling environments for the private sector to optimize their role in rural development. FAO is well positioned to facilitate dialogue and collaboration between the public and the private sector.

Examples of collaboration with the private sector in the CPF may be the setting up of national steering committees with participation of concerned government departments, ministries, FAO, and relevant private sector stakeholders. Further, CPFs may be fostered through private sector voluntary contributions to FAO projects aimed at supporting mutually agreed technical activities in the country. FAO could also engage in strategic dialogue with national industry associations and federations through joint organization of multi-stakeholder forums on specific topics (forestry, agriculture, fisheries) related to policy work done by FAO. Other ways of involving the private sector in the CPFs can include direct involvement of business representatives in FAO normative work at the national level to debate and develop responsible and transparent trade and market access rules (e.g. certification requirements and standards), for example in the case of fisheries. Private sector contributions may also include organization of training workshops, publication of technical manuals to improve knowledge and disseminate best practices in food and agriculture, for instance in area of land and property rights related issues. FAO may also seek private sector assistance in establishing school feeding programmes in consultation with national governments wishing to develop such initiatives.

Closer collaboration with the private sector in the CPF will therefore result in increased investment and innovation in agriculture; strengthened local agribusiness and enhanced efficiency in the supply chain; access to topical information, management and dissemination of knowledge, extension services (particularly technology transfer), data and scientific innovation.

### 5. 1. Considerations when involving Private Sector in the CPF

Selecting private sector representatives (companies, federations, associations, or member organizations) that are able to bring added value to FAO's work is crucial.

All FAO collaborations and partnerships with the private sector must comply with the following principles:

- a) Alignment with UN guidelines and international agreements:** Compliance and alignment with common UN guidelines is a prerequisite for a mutual beneficial partnership;
- b) Conformity with FAO's mission, mandate, objectives and work programme.** Partnership activities must be consistent with FAO's mandate and should enhance the effectiveness of its work programme.
- c) Common objectives and mutual benefits:** A prerequisite of a partnership is alignment in mission and mandate, as well as long-term objectives;

**d) Non-exclusivity with no preferential treatment, unfair advantage or endorsement:** No contribution may be construed as an FAO endorsement of any product or service, nor will FAO enter into any agreement that excludes the right to negotiate similar arrangements with other partners.

**e) Neutrality and integrity:** Partnerships must ensure that the neutrality of the Organization is maintained and the integrity, independence and reputation of FAO are not put at risk.

**f) Accountability of all parties with clear and agreed responsibilities:** Partnership activities will be designed and implemented in a manner that ensures clear and agreed responsibilities and accountability by all partners;

**g) Transparency:** Joint FAO/private sector initiatives will be fully transparent. Information on agreed activities will be publicly available and may be reported in documents to FAO's governing bodies.

**h) Sustainability:** Partnership activities should be planned to promote economic, environmental and social sustainability and to make optimum use of a partner's resources. A mutually agreed process for the monitoring and evaluation of partnership projects should be built into the project design;

**i) Respect for intellectual property in delivery of public goods:** There will be consultation and prior agreement between FAO and private sector partners regarding specific activities that could generate material subject to copyright, patent or other intellectual property jurisdiction;

**j) Scientific credibility and innovation:** Partnership activities should be defensible in terms of objective scientific judgment. FAO will further develop this principle to ensure that scientific credibility is protected.

## **6. Checklist for involving non-state actors in CPF process**

The table below provides details on how a meaningful participation of non-state actors can be reached throughout the range of activities in the CPF formulation process, outlined in greater detail in the *Guide to the formulation of the CPF*.

## Involvement of non-state actors in all stages of the CPF process

### PHASE 1: Starting phase

#### 1. Government and FAO agree to start the CFS process

- 1.1. Identify relevant civil society organizations and private sector entities that should be included in the process.

*The Partnerships and Advocacy Branch (OPCP) of the Office for Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development (OPC), as well as its focal points at regional and subregional level, can provide guidance on how to identify relevant key entities, associations and platforms to be involved, and/or facilitate the contact between them and FAO.*

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Tool 1 [\*"Stakeholder Analysis"\*](#) could be used as well.

- 1.2. Contact the relevant stakeholders identified and inform them about the launch of the CPF process and their expected involvement.

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- 1.3. Receive and collect feedback from the stakeholders contacted.

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#### 2. Mobilization of financial resources for CPF formulation

- 2.1. Include budget lines for the realization of the consultative processes needed to allow a meaningful participation of different stakeholders during the CPF process.

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#### 3. Establishment of a CPF Country Core Team lead by the FAORep and the Steering Committee led by the government

- 3.1. Identify and integrate relevant national civil society and private sector representatives in the Core Team, paying particular attention to small food producers. This is in line with current global governance models being championed by FAO at global and regional levels.

*The Partnerships and Advocacy Branch (OPCP) of the Office for Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development (OPC), as well as its focal points at regional and subregional level, can provide guidance on how to identify relevant key entities, associations and platforms to be involved, and/or facilitate the contact between them and FAO.*

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- 3.2. Encourage the establishment of a Steering Committee including a wider representation of relevant civil society and private sector representatives to oversee the formulation process, enhancing effectiveness and accountability.

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#### 4. Preparation of a concept note

- 4.1. Include in the concept note the list of the stakeholders that have been consulted and that are involved in the CPF process.
- 4.2. Describe which consultative processes will take place to ensure the participation of stakeholders in the CPF process.
- 4.3. Describe how these consultative processes will take place.
- 4.4. Describe what the expected results of these consultative processes are.
- 4.5. Describe how these results will be integrated in the CPF process.

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#### 5. Validation of the concept note

- 5.1. Consult the Partnerships and Advocacy Branch (OPCP) of the Office for Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development (OPC), and its focal points at regional and subregional level with respect to the involvement of non-state actors in the process of CPF formulation.
- 5.2. Integrate the comments suggested by OPC regarding the participation of non-state actors in the CPF process.

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*Tool 7 "Quality Assurance Review Procedure" could be used, as well as contacting OCPP, and the regional partnerships Focal points in each FAO regional office.*

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### PHASE 2: Setting Priorities

#### 6. Situation Analysis

- 6.1. Include age, ethnicity (and/or caste), and sex-disaggregated data in the analysis.
- 6.2. Include consideration of assessments, by different stakeholders, of the socio-economic development issues and challenges and national priorities, as well as of the existing capacities at policy, organizational and individual levels to address those challenges.
- 6.3. Consult OCPP Regional Focal point, as well as OCPP, Focal points and SRO.

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## **7. Assessing Comparative Advantages**

- 7.1. Consider FAO's comparative advantage in providing an impartial and neutral setting where different stakeholders can meet and discuss. ☐
- 7.2. Consider the comparative advantage of CSOs in improving and furthering the work of FAO, reaching the most marginalized groups of society, bringing to the table perspectives from the realities in the field, and increasing the ownership, accountability and sustainability of CPF processes.
- 7.3. Consider the comparative advantage of private sector stakeholders, including federations and associations in generating responsible and productive investment and innovation in agriculture; strengthened local agribusiness; enhanced efficiency in the supply chain; creation of decent rural employment; access to topical information and expertise; management and dissemination of knowledge and lessons learned; enhanced extension services (particularly technology transfer); data and scientific innovation and advances; increased entrepreneurship at country level resulting in job creation; implementation of sustainable business practices embodied in corporate social responsibility (CSR). ☐
- 7.4. Assess the existing capacity within the FAO Representation to work in synergy with a variety of national stakeholders. ☐
- 7.5. Build and develop capacity within the FAO Representation to work in synergy with a variety of national stakeholders. ☐

## **8. Prioritizing FAO's work: the Priority Matrix**

- 8.1. Consider properly in the matrix FAO's core functions of "facilitate, promote and support better governance and policy dialogue for development of effectiveness at global, regional and country levels" and "facilitate partnerships for food and nutrition security, agriculture and rural development between governments, development partners, civil society and the private sector". ☐
- 8.2. Involve civil society and private sector representatives in a dialogue from which prioritization criteria will emerge. ☐
- 8.3. Reflect the needs, priorities and constraints emerged from the dialogue with civil society and private sector representatives in the priority matrix as appropriate. ☐

## **9. Validation of CPF Strategic Priority Areas**

- 9.1. Ensure that civil society and private sector representatives play an active role in the validation and endorsement of the priority areas identified.

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### PHASE 3: Programming for Results

#### 1. Building the CPF Results Matrix

- 1.1. Ensure that outcomes and outputs of the CPF results matrix take into due consideration the views of relevant stakeholders and reflect their needs, priorities and constraints.

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#### 2. M&E and Implementation Arrangements

- 2.1. Reflect in the M&E Plan that national stakeholders are fully involved at all stages of the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the CPF.
- 2.2. Include in the M&E Plan the roles, responsibilities and the type and level of engagement of the stakeholders involved.
- 2.3. Include in the M&E Plan, as well as in CPF reviews and reports, a detailed description of the processes of consultation with national stakeholders during the implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages of the CPF.

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#### 3. Validation and endorsement of the CPF

- 3.1. Involve OCPP and its focal points at regional and subregional level in the validation process of the CPF document.

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**For more information:** Please check the partnerships web page: <http://www.fao.org/partnerships/en/>  
Contact [Rodrigo.castaneda@fao.org](mailto:Rodrigo.castaneda@fao.org) , Chief OCPP for matters related to the involvement of private sector and Civil Society Organizations in the work of FAO.