

Organization-wide Strategy on Partnerships Strategy Note

1. Analysis of needs and FAO's comparative advantage

1. FAO partners to: (a) enhance its technical performance; (b) establish horizontal collaboration in strategic or operational programming, funding or advocacy; and (c) better reach out to final users of its services. FAO both contributes to partnerships and benefits from them, with partnerships of various durations. Partnerships are firmly embedded in FAO's way of doing business at global, regional, subregional and national levels. Partnerships include those with UN agencies, research institutions, international financing institutions (IFIs) and other inter-governmental entities. FAO also partners with Governments, civil society including both people's organizations and NGOs, and the private sector. The Organization also engages in many less formalized networking arrangements.

2. In order to be successful, FAO's leadership in the international governance of agriculture and agricultural development requires the mobilization of the world's best knowledge and capacities. Such knowledge and capacities do not reside only in FAO and need effective collaborative linking of the various relevant institutions in support of shared goals. FAO's ability to fulfil its mandate can be leveraged by partnerships that reinforce its credibility as a knowledge organization and raise its profile in global fora, adding value through combining effort. Partnerships also generate potential for cost savings and economies of scale, especially in the current changing aid climate.

3. FAO's comparative advantages and credibility in partnering lie in the following:

- (a) its nature as an integrated knowledge creator, assembler and disseminator, and its unbiased technical capacity for leadership, guidance and operations in the areas of its mandate;
- (b) its visibility, continuity and expertise as a specialized UN agency in these areas;
- (c) its role as a neutral forum for exchange and world-wide facilitator for policy dialogue;
- (d) its field programme and its implementation capability in complex situations and its access to Governments;
- (e) its ability to network globally, at different and multidisciplinary levels, and its long experience with partners of all kinds; and
- (f) legitimacy that partners can gain through their collaboration with FAO, including with respect to its advocacy role.

2. Vision and objectives

4. The effectiveness of FAO to reach its overall goals will be enhanced by an organization-wide strategy on partnerships. The strategy will promote the more systematic use of partnerships and provide practical guidance to FAO units and partners in order to facilitate the selection, prioritization, development and better management of new or renewed partnerships.

Vision

5. FAO will enhance its capacity to assist Members in achieving their Global Goals through key partnerships and strong alliances.

Objectives

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

6. In pursuing these objectives, guiding principles on partnerships will be identified and may include:
- Partnership is not an end in itself but is a means for greater effectiveness in supporting international governance of agriculture and agricultural development, pursuing the objectives and priorities of the new Strategic Framework of the Organization, with which partnership will be fully harmonized.
 - Building on ongoing collaborations, partnerships are based on the comparative advantages of the partners and aim at specific goals of FAO and shared by the partners.
 - The nature of FAO's role will vary according to the different partnerships it engages in; for example FAO may take a leadership role or act as facilitator in some, and be a participant in others.
 - The desirability of a partnership depends on the mutual value-added and benefits in achieving shared objectives expressed in terms of results, and weighed against the costs and impediments to its effectiveness for the partners.
 - FAO must at all times preserve its neutral and impartial role and act in a transparent manner. Partnerships must be avoided where conflict of interest is of concern.
 - Global partnerships should consider regional and country levels in their implementation.

3. Expected Outcomes and Outputs

7. The systematic application of *guiding principles* to selected and prioritized partnerships will seek to produce concrete outcomes and outputs that will contribute to achieving FAO's goals.

Expected outcomes	Expected outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enhanced value-added of partnerships in supporting FAO to achieve intended results, consistent with its Strategic Framework, and reflecting a clear definition of the Organization's role as either leader or facilitator. ▪ Facilitated mobilization of worldwide knowledge. ▪ Increased capacity to operate in multidisciplinary contexts. ▪ Improved ability to reach out. ▪ Effective management and operationalization of partnerships – including through a more systematic approach to partnering, adequate consideration of investment requirements and resources, timeliness, flexibility and communication needs – leading to an enhanced image of FAO as a good partner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General guidelines to identify, select, prioritize and operationalize partnerships. ▪ New and renewed priority and strategic partnerships for different categories of partners. ▪ A calendar to review partnerships (agreed with relevant FAO units). ▪ Stocktaking of partnerships highlighting mutual value added and constraints, avoiding duplication of efforts. ▪ Experience, best practices and lessons learned to inform the design and review of partnerships. ▪ Through support and training staff are better guided to engage in partnerships.

4. Implementing the strategy

8. This strategy focuses on the overarching dimensions of FAO's partnerships. It initially addresses corporate-level partnerships. Specific types of partnerships will be addressed simultaneously although separately by relevant FAO units on a selected basis. Implementation of the strategy will be pragmatic and step-by-step. Its formulation will include:
- Finalization of the guiding corporate principles on partnerships.
 - Preparation of a short-term agenda of initiatives (12 months) that will generate outcomes and outputs identified in section 3, including preparation, review or updating of selected categories of partnerships by responsible units, and preparation of a medium-term timeframe (3 years).
 - Consultation with FAO units to facilitate coherence between the *guiding principles* and specific strategies for which they are responsible, and to promote synergies and harmonization.
 - Harmonization with ongoing initiatives for organizational change, fostering positive attitudes to partnerships that will feed into the culture change process.

- (e) Formulation of an appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanism to ensure feedback and iterative revision of the strategy during its implementation.
- (f) The establishment of a mechanism or service within FAO structure to support implementation of the strategy and development of specific types of partnerships.