

Partnering for Sustainable Development

Guidelines for Multi-stakeholder Partnerships to Implement the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific



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Partnering for Sustainable Development

Guidelines for Multi-stakeholder Partnerships to Implement the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific

United Nations publication

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► Foreword

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires close collaboration among stakeholders. The scale, scope and complexity of the economic and social transformation that this Agenda requires is such that no one sector – government, business, civil society or academia – will be able to manage the transformation alone. Implementing the 2030 Agenda requires constructive and inclusive cooperation among all groups of society, and multi-stakeholder partnerships will play a key role in delivering a prosperous future for all people – one of the tenets of the 2030 Agenda.

Multi-stakeholder partnerships can unleash innovative ways of working, mobilizing expertise and difficult-to-reach resources and creating shared accountability in an increasingly complex world. A real opportunity exists to develop new approaches to partnering in order to achieve things together that could never be achieved alone. Each sector has a valuable role to play, but it is in collaboration that real transformation happens.

Building partnership models which are long lasting, scalable and transformative will be key to deliver the benefits of sustainable development to all. The world is already witnessing how traditional boundaries between sectors become blurred, with Governments, civil society, business, academia and other stakeholders acquiring a wider governance role in delivering the 2030 Agenda. In a world which is increasingly characterized by uncertainty and economic and social transformations, there are new opportunities and new roles for all stakeholders and, increasingly, a shared sense of responsibility in achieving the kind of world envisaged in the Sustainable Development Goals.

In answering the call of the 2030 Agenda and of Sustainable Development Goal 17 for revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability partnered to develop the present *Partnering for Sustainable Development: Guidelines for Multi-stakeholder Partnerships to Implement the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific*. The guidelines laid out in this publication provide practical guidance for ESCAP member States, policymakers and practitioners to build and sustain effective multi-stakeholder partnerships aimed at accelerating implementation of the 2030 Agenda and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. This work also highlights some of the challenges and the opportunities for multi-stakeholder partnerships and identifies elements that can help ensure successful partnerships.

The interdependence of the Sustainable Development Goals and the universality and indivisibility of the 2030 Agenda generate complexities in terms of institution-building and policymaking, but they also create opportunities for innovation and provide space for new collaboration. It is hoped that these guidelines will help Governments and other stakeholders in the region foster the necessary alliances to respond to these complexities.

To unlock the transformative power of multi-stakeholder partnerships, action is needed at all levels – “all hands on deck” are needed to mobilize and accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the region.

**“Let us be bold, let us be innovative, and let us work in true partnership
for the people, planet, prosperity and peace”.**

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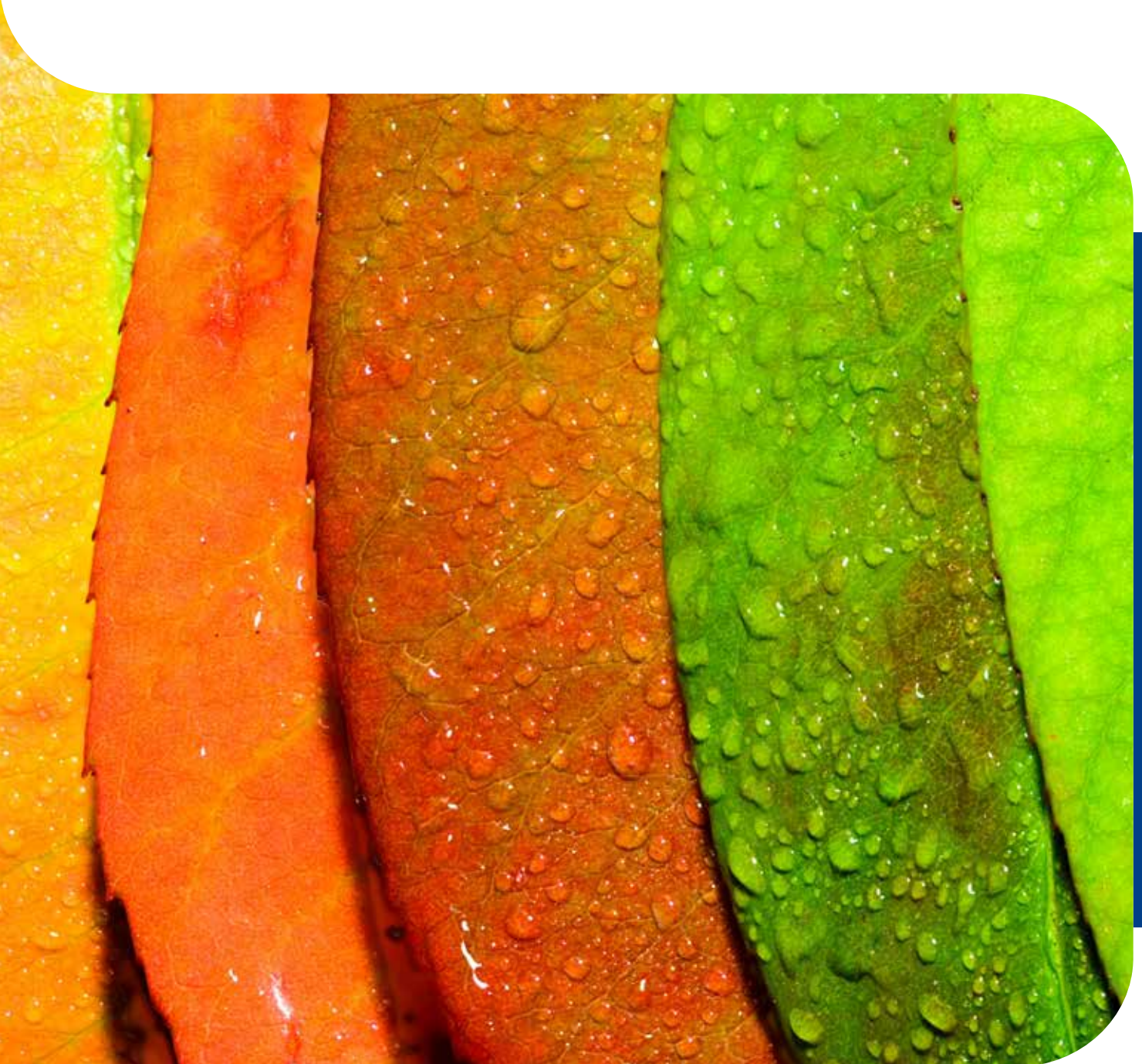
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Chapter I.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Multi-stakeholder Partnerships in the Asia-Pacific Region



► A. Multi-stakeholder partnerships in the context of the 2030 Agenda

Achieving sustainable development depends to a large extent on the ability to engage in a meaningful way with partners from all sectors of society. The preamble of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development¹ contains a call for revitalized global partnership for sustainable development based on a spirit of strengthened global solidarity. Under Sustainable Development Goal 17, multi-stakeholder partnerships are encouraged in order to mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, and to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in all countries, particularly in developing countries. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda² not only recognizes that effective and durable multi-stakeholder partnerships can play an important role in advancing sustainable development, but it also encourages the use of partnerships as effective instruments for mobilizing human and financial resources, expertise, technology and knowledge.

The 2030 Agenda goes further by introducing five critical dimensions of sustainable development: people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership, which are also known as the “5Ps of sustainable development”. By including partnerships in these five critical dimensions and making them part of the means of implementation, the 2030 Agenda provides opportunities for partnerships to be developed at all levels and particularly for Governments to engage with a wider range of stakeholders in order to harness their competitive advantages in the process of implementing the 2030 Agenda.

Experiences from the efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals³ and the objectives of the outcome document of United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the future we want⁴, have shown that successful partnerships across public and private sectors, civil society and academia ensure ownership and accountability and can bridge the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, triggering the mobilization of resources for effective implementation.⁵ While the Millennium Development Goals are somehow unconnected to each other, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Goals contained within it address a more complex, interdependent set of challenges and so require a systemic and holistic implementation response. The interconnectedness of these Goals requires not only a more integrated approach but also partnering efforts that can leverage knowledge, skills and resources to create solutions that are more innovative. Multi-stakeholder partnerships provide an important space from which to develop such solutions that explore options beyond “business as usual” and search for the transformational changes that respond to these systemic challenges.

Governments and stakeholders across all sectors are responding to the call for using partnerships as a vehicle to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals. The Partnership for Sustainable Development Goals online platform⁶ – the United Nations global registry of voluntary commitments and stakeholder partnerships – is evidence of the increasing importance attributed to partnerships. There has been exponential growth in the number of partnerships registered on that platform since 2015, when the 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals were adopted. With almost double the number of partnerships and voluntary commitments registered,⁷ the platform now provides an indication that Governments and non-State actors are increasingly building partnerships to deliver sustainable development. This growing number indicates that multi-stakeholder partnerships have become an increasingly important element of the international development architecture in advancing the 2030 Agenda.⁸

Furthermore, there is a clear interdependence between the 2030 Agenda and the international normative frameworks of human rights and other internationally agreed goals, as well as between partnerships and the legal right to participation and other public freedoms. Guaranteeing the right to participation, as well as freedom of association,

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1. General Assembly resolution 70/1.
 2. General Assembly resolution 69/313, annex.
 3. General Assembly resolution 65/1.
 4. General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.
 5. United Nations, “Multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development”, Sustainable Development, High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, Issue Briefs, No. 3, 2014. Available from https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1312HLPF_Brief_3.pdf.
 6. Details of the Platform are available from <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/partnerships/>.
 7. Ibid.
 8. Peter Hazlewood, “Global Multi-stakeholder Partnerships: Scaling up public-private collective impact for the SDGs”, International Research Forum, Background Paper, No. 4, 2015. Available from <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1738Global%20Multistakeholder.pdf>.

assembly, expression, information and related rights can further support the role multi-stakeholder partnerships have in delivering the pledge to ‘leave no one behind’ enshrined in the 2030 Agenda. The observance of these rights and public freedoms will directly support the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and are crucial means for the creation and maintenance of an enabling environment for partnerships.

► B. Defining multi-stakeholder partnerships

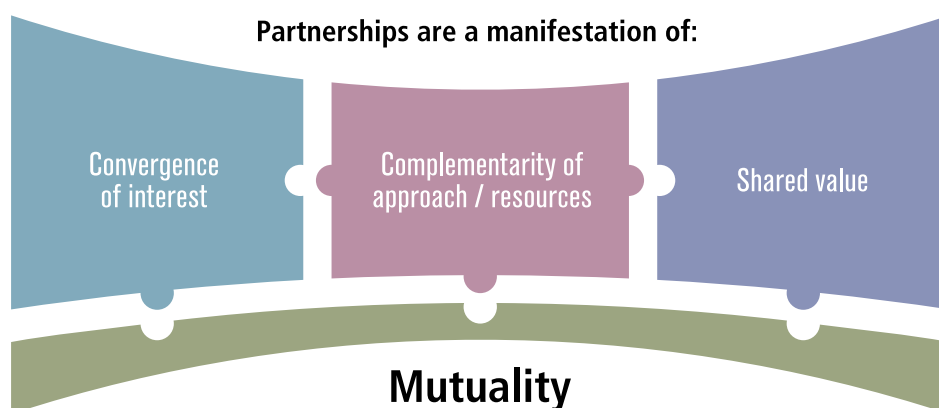
The United Nations defines partnerships as “voluntary and collaborative relationships between various parties, both State and non-State, in which all participants agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake a specific task and to share risks and responsibilities, resources and benefits”.⁹ Partnerships from the public policy point of view are defined as “a voluntary cooperative arrangement, involving public, private and/or civil society organizations that is formalized with common, non-hierarchical decision-making procedures and that addresses a public policy issue”.¹⁰

Partnerships can also be best understood as a set of principles. The Partnerships Resource Centre at Erasmus University describes partnerships as a manifestation of three principles (**figure I.1**):

- (a) *Convergence of interest* – a situational condition where partners support ideas of mutual interest and benefit that may also serve a particular cause, for instance the cause of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals;
- (b) *Complementarity of approaches and resources* – an opportunity in which two or more stakeholders share complementary approaches and various resources to improve the quality of partnerships (aimed at achieving common aims and objectives);
- (c) *Shared value* – one or more ideals, beliefs, principles or standards that are shared by partners who join together to achieve certain objectives.

These three principles are characterized by *mutuality*, relating to respect and understanding of other partners’ knowledge and expertise, common interests and goals, complementary approaches and actions, matching resources and shared ideals and perspectives.

Figure I.1: Three Core Principles of Partnership



Source: Contributed by the Partnerships Resource Centre, Erasmus University, Netherlands (<https://www.rsm.nl/prc/>).

9. General Assembly resolution 60/214.

10. Julia Steets, *Accountability in Public Policy Partnerships* (Hampshire, United Kingdom, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

In considering the complex issues raised in the 2030 Agenda and the variety of governance models in practice across the Asia-Pacific region, having the above principles enables the flexibility needed to engage with partners from different sectors with different capacity and resources. Furthermore, in the broadest sense, when referring to a stakeholder, reference is made to any individual, organization, sector or community that has a “stake” or interest in the outcome of a given decision, process or partnership.

Partnerships are also a form of collaborative governance. At the very broad level, a multi-stakeholder partnership involves various stakeholders at different stages of its design and implementation. With these multi-stakeholder representatives on board, when cooperation and collaboration are conducted through a partnership, the implication changes from a willingness to work together to a sharing of knowledge and expertise, along with sharing of risks and benefits from such collaboration.¹¹ The motivation for such an approach is to accomplish goals that cannot be achieved by working in isolation from other potential partners. Multi-stakeholder partnerships offer a number of benefits, as they:¹²

It is important to underline that in the present publication the terms partnerships and multi-stakeholder partnerships are used interchangeably.

- (a) Enhance efficiency and effectiveness through reliance on comparative advantage;
- (b) Provide multi-actor, integrated solutions required by the scope and nature of the problems being addressed;
- (c) Create value for the organizations involved and beyond;
- (d) Open decision-making processes in order to promote broader operationalization of public goods;
- (e) Maximize representation, democratic processes and responsibilities;
- (f) Function as means to ensure sustainability.

Partnering involves more than just collaborating and conducting ad hoc projects. It is about moving beyond responsibility for independent result to a relationship that involves co-creation, shared risks and responsibilities, interdependency and organizational transformation. True partnerships are about identifying shared values and leveraging the combined strengths of each partner to achieve a level of impact that could not be accomplished independently. Through the lens of shared value, all sectors can identify opportunities for addressing socioeconomic, environmental and other problems. In the context of the Sustainable Development Goals, shared value represents the coming together of all stakeholders’ potential, societal demands and policy action to create a more sustainable and inclusive path to economic growth, prosperity and well-being.

What distinguishes partnerships is the way they operate. These are based on notions of stakeholders (almost all interested or affected parties) as opposed to shareholders (principally funders). Partnerships depend far more on networks and adaptive and flexible decision-making, which are far more distributed and diluted. The need to balance the interests and perspectives of highly diverse constituencies (Governments, civil society, philanthropists, foundations and the private sector) involves a type of governance that is more complex and nuanced than that of traditional collective action organizations. In particular, the effectiveness of their governance depends much more on “soft power”, the defining characteristics of which are attraction as opposed to force, persuasion instead of regulation, convincing rather than requiring others to follow and the power of complex information systems as opposed to rules-based systems.¹³

11. Bruce Mitchell, “Participatory partnerships: engaging and empowering to enhance environmental management and quality of life?” *Social Indicators Research*, vol. 71, Nos. 1-3 (March 2005), pp. 123-144. Available from <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-004-8016-0>.

12. Jennifer M. Brinkerhoff, “Government–nonprofit partnership: a defining framework”, *Public Administration and Development*, vol. 22, No. 1 (February 2002), pp. 19-30. DOI:10.1002/pad.203.

13. Keith A. Bezanson and Paul Isenman, “Governance of new global partnerships: challenges, weaknesses, and lessons”, CGD Policy Paper, No. 014 (Washington, D.C., Center for Global Development, 2012). Available from www.cgdev.org/content/publications/detail/1426627.

In the present publication, **multi-stakeholder** partnerships are defined as **voluntary and collaborative relationships between stakeholders across different sectors that enable sharing of common interest and approaches, leveraging responsibilities, risks, resources and benefits towards achieving sustainable development.**

► C. About these guidelines

Aims and objectives

The guidelines contained in the present publication have been designed to accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the Asia-Pacific region by supporting the development, implementation and strengthening of partnerships for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. In doing so, the guidelines are designed to:

- (a) Help improve existing partnership processes and prepare better ones in the future;
- (b) Provide practical and step-by-step guidance to address opportunities and challenges for partnerships;
- (c) Promote inclusiveness in multi-stakeholder partnerships towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;
- (d) Support capacity-building for developing, implementing and sustaining successful multi-stakeholder partnerships.

The guidelines are intended to be used by policymakers in national, subnational and local governments in the Asia-Pacific region who desire to develop, improve or strengthen partnerships, as well as the private sector, civil society organizations, academia, development practitioners and other stakeholders that can benefit from these. Given the diversity of users, their differing capacities, available resources, experiences and the range of roles in multi-stakeholder partnerships, these guidelines provide step-by-step guidance with relevant case studies to provide a more grounded approach.

Key features of the guidelines

The following are the key features of the guidelines:

- (a) They are **aligned with the standard policy cycle** that includes: (i) setting up a policy agenda; (ii) policy formulation; (iii) decision-making; (iv) implementation; and (v) review. The guidelines were developed based on the understanding that partnerships operate around policy processes. Multi-stakeholder partnerships are influenced by the elements of a standard policy cycle, especially in the policy agenda, and thus help address sustainable development challenges and opportunities;
- (b) They are designed as a **process-based framework** that provides step-by-step guidance for the formulation and implementation of partnerships towards implementing the 2030 Agenda. The process-based framework integrates practical knowledge on partnerships with theoretical principles. It is relevant in those cases where Governments and their partners decide to begin setting up a partnership that supports achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals from the start. This is particularly true in those countries where the legal, institutional, operational or regulatory frameworks hamper the development and implementation of partnerships. As these spaces – those of legal, institutional, administrative and regulatory frameworks – open up, stakeholders will be able to use these guidelines as a tool that supports partnerships in their various phases of implementation;
- (c) They feature a **non-linear approach** for those cases where multi-stakeholder partnerships are already ongoing and stakeholders may decide to scale up or work with a different set of partners to achieve greater impact. By doing so, the guidelines are designed to enable users to enter or revisit the multi-stakeholder partnership process at different modules or steps;

- (d) They can be regarded as a **system of interrelated collaborative phases**, termed as *modules*, including: (i) initiation; (ii) formation; (iii) managing implementation; (iv) review; and (v) reinvent or sustain. These five modules influence and rely on each other, rather than act as a random set of activities with individual functions.

Preparation of the multi-stakeholder partnership guidelines

These guidelines have been prepared jointly by ESCAP and the United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability. The Partnerships Resource Centre at Erasmus University provided periodic reviews and inputs over the course of developing the guidelines. The preparation of the guidelines involved a collaborative process that included: co-organization of a regional workshop; review of scholastic and case-based literature; preparation of an online questionnaire to afford a better understanding of the challenges to and opportunities for multi-stakeholder partnerships in the region; design of the Multi-stakeholder Partnership Framework; and a validation workshop (see annex I).

Structure of the multi-stakeholder partnership guidelines

Following the introductory chapter I, the publication is divided into four parts:

- (a) Chapter II, Framing Multi-stakeholder Partnerships for the 2030 Agenda, contains an explanation of the interface of the 2030 Agenda with the standard policy cycle, and that of the Multi-stakeholder Partnership Framework with Sustainable Development Goal-informed policy cycle. Further, it presents an outline of the Multi-stakeholder Partnership Framework;
- (b) Chapter III, Making or Breaking Partnerships: Challenges and Opportunities, contains a discussion of the key success factors as well as key challenges for building successful multi-stakeholder partnerships in the Asia-Pacific region;
- (c) Chapter IV, Guidelines for Multi-stakeholder Partnerships in the Asia-Pacific Region, presents the multi-stakeholder partnership guidelines and their five modules: (i) initiation; (ii) formation; (iii) managing implementation; (iv) review; and (v) reinvent or sustain. Each module consists of a number of multi-stakeholder partnership steps and requires users to go through a corresponding set of individual tasks. For each module, the chapter briefly presents the key principles as well as supporting case examples;
- (d) A brief section containing annexes provides relevant information on the multi-stakeholder partnership guidelines, including: (i) methodology for the preparation of the guidelines for the Asia-Pacific region; and (ii) resources for building and implementing partnerships and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Chapter II.

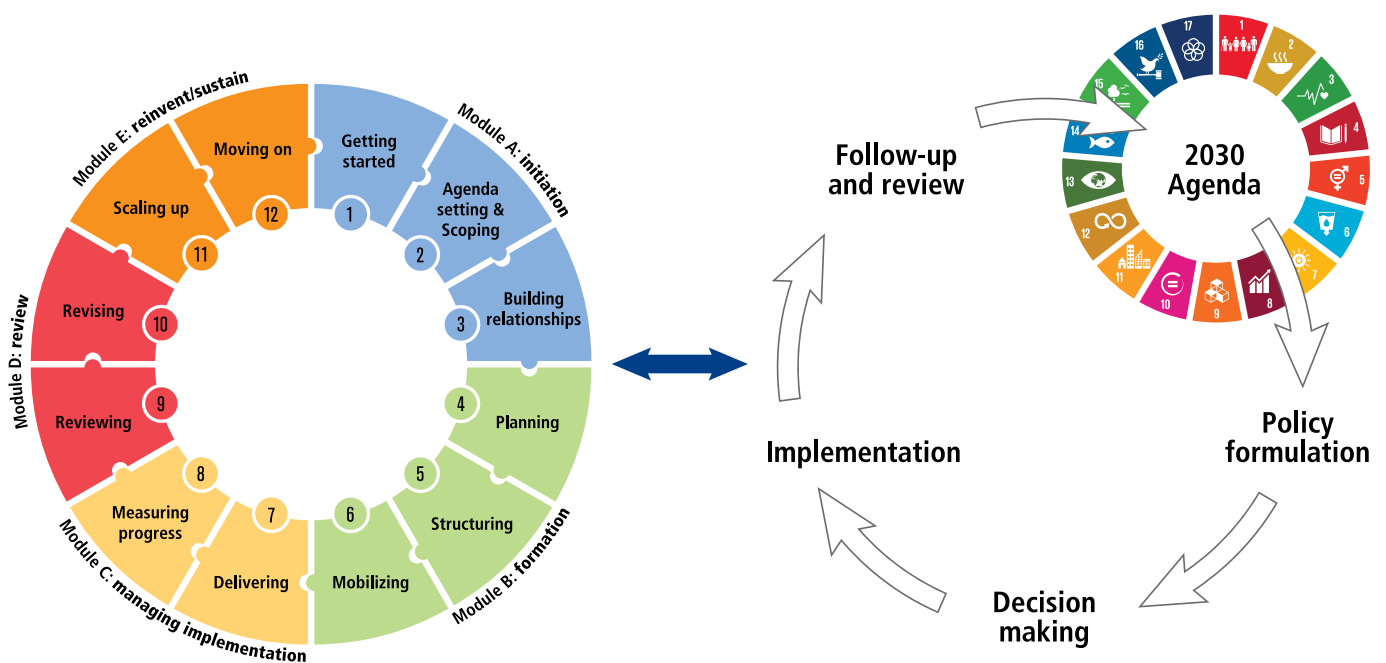
Framing Multi-stakeholder Partnerships for the 2030 Agenda



► A. The 2030 Agenda as part of the policy cycle

Implementing the 2030 Agenda requires Governments to mainstream the Sustainable Development Goals into their national policies and to bring government institutions together to develop and implement integrated policies. Formulating a policy agenda is an integral part of the standard policy cycle, and Governments of countries in the region are currently in the process of integrating the Goals into their policy cycles at the national, subnational and local levels. This process is referred to here as the “2030 Agenda policy cycle”. This cycle follows a sequential order initiated by defining problems (setting a policy agenda), developing policies (policy formulation), adoption and implementation of policies (decision-making and implementation) and finally assessing these policies against their effectiveness and efficiency (review) leading towards termination or renewal (**figure II.1**). In practice, policy elements may not always occur chronologically or strategically and require additional iterative steps along the overall cycle of policy formulation, decision-making, implementation and review. Ideally, the cycle emphasizes the feedback processes between inputs and outputs of policymaking as part of an iterative policy process.

Figure II.1: Integrating the 2030 Agenda and the policy cycle



Source: Authors, with partnership steps 1-12 having been adapted from Ros Tennyson, *The Partnering Toolbook: An Essential Guide to Cross-sector Partnering* (Oxford, Partnering Initiative; and London, International Business Leaders Forum, 2011). Available from <https://thepartneringinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Partnering-Toolbook-en-20113.pdf>.

Along this policy cycle, there are multiple entry points for partnerships to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Partnerships can for instance help to overcome challenges during the formulation phase, such as access to relevant data by partnering with research institutes, or they can help to leverage diverse funds from public and private stakeholders during the implementation phase. To understand the alignment between the 2030 Agenda, the policy cycle and the steps required to set up a partnership, a framework was developed to outline the step-by-step approach of the partnership guidelines – the Multi-stakeholder Partnership Framework.

► B. Multi-stakeholder Partnership Framework

Designed as a process-based framework, the Multi-stakeholder Partnership Framework is characterized as a system of interrelated collaborative processes aligned with the policy cycle and aimed at supporting achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. It provides systematic guidance, from setting up of a multi-stakeholder partnership and its sustainable development agenda to the mobilization of partners and their resources, delivering the planned outcomes, measuring progress, learning lessons and scaling up. Moreover, it integrates practical knowledge with theoretical foundations and principles.

The Framework uses a non-linear approach, which enables stakeholders to revisit its various steps as new information becomes available, new resources are secured, new stakeholders become involved, or other circumstances change. Furthermore, partnerships are considered as a system of collaborative processes, represented as modules that support each other. Use of the Multi-stakeholder Partnership Framework takes into consideration and in turn informs the 2030 Agenda policy cycle, shaping strategies in different stages of partnerships formation. In line with this policy cycle, these partnership guidelines include five modules aligned with the phases of the cycle (**figure II.2**):

- (a) In the *initiation phase*, specific problems are recognized, and issues are selected, with the 2030 Agenda at the centre of the process. The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals provide structural guidance, shaping the potential strategies and instruments that form the development of multi-stakeholder partnership strategies in the subsequent stages, that is, beyond initiation of the multi-stakeholder partnership. The crucial step in this phase is to move from recognizing a specific issue within the 2030 Agenda to integrating it into the formal policy agenda;
- (b) In the *formation phase*, strategies and structures are formulated, decisions are made, and resources are pooled. The 2030 Agenda serves as a catalyst for fostering exchange and transfer of strategies and solutions, and informing decision-making processes; it is at the centre of knowledge and information mobilization. The outcomes strategized during this phase should take into account the potential multiplier effects and impacts of achieving a particular Goal;
- (c) The *implementation phase* provides an opportunity to assess implementation of the 2030 Agenda and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. A successful multi-stakeholder partnership can have a transformational effect in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals, and the outcomes can further provide opportunities to generate evidence-based policy formulation to gain wider and long-term political support and, to an extent, support voluntary national reviews¹⁴ while ensuring accountability of all stakeholders;
- (d) The *review phase* is an integral part of the comprehensive, multi-layered architecture of the follow-up review of the 2030 Agenda. Inclusiveness, accountability and transparency are critical for all stakeholders involved. Partnerships as means of implementation can support measuring targets and further encourage accountability arrangements. Review and monitoring processes are critical in demonstrating, in concrete terms, how these demands are fulfilled and how partnerships contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals;
- (e) The *reinvent or sustain phase* supports the process of scaling up, and it may herald a transformation or the demise of a partnership. The outcomes depend on the successes or failures of a partnership, and how it has either failed or succeeded in its implementation. By identifying and replicating successful partnership models, the lessons learned from this phase directly feed back into the 2030 Agenda policy cycle through supplementing innovative ways to expand, adapt, sustain and scale up partnerships to achieve greater development impacts over time.

14. These are conducted to serve as the basis for regular reviews by the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. Results of the reviews are contained in a database available from <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/>.

Figure II.2: Multi-stakeholder Partnership Framework aligned with the policy cycle



Source: Authors, with partnership steps 1-12 having been adapted from Ros Tennyson, *The Partnering Toolbook: An Essential Guide to Cross-sector Partnering* (Oxford, Partnering Initiative; and London, International Business Leaders Forum, 2011). Available from <https://thepartneringinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Partnering-Toolbook-en-20113.pdf>.

Chapter III.

Making or Breaking Partnerships: Challenges and Opportunities



► A. Key success factors for building successful partnerships in Asia and the Pacific

To better understand how partnerships can help deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals in more effective ways, an analytical study was undertaken of existing literature on partnerships across a range of policy sectors. This exercise was also aimed at identifying key factors that were considered influential in building successful multi-stakeholder partnerships and those hindering their ability to deliver on the 2030 Agenda. These factors were then validated through a survey to further refine and categorize them in key success and key challenging factors relevant to Asia and the Pacific while aligning them with the corresponding module of the Multi-stakeholder Partnership Framework.

The key success and challenging factors are organized according to the modules of the Multi-stakeholder Partnership Framework. In a few instances, a key factor may act simultaneously as both an enabler and inhibitor. This situation is particularly prevalent in factors requiring complex capacity, such as monitoring, reviewing and scaling up, where both successful and unsuccessful cases are often found.

Module A. Initiation

Acknowledging the need for partnerships. A practical recognition among stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific region is that a successful partnership starts with understanding that individual stakeholders cannot achieve certain goals by themselves, especially where a convergence of interest can be built among them.

Willingness to share information. Sharing information enables stakeholders to build effective communication channels, mutuality and trust. Access to information is an added value of working through partnerships as not all stakeholders have the same level of access to information.

Shared agenda (collective goals and objectives). Across the region, commonality among a programme's goals, objectives and the target beneficiaries of stakeholders often leads to initiating a partnership. This situation fosters mutuality and shared values among the stakeholders. A practical focus builds upon the understanding of what can be achieved collectively. Setting up collective goals and objectives, despite the presence of individual interests, is a step towards inclusiveness and is essential to maintaining partnerships.

Appropriate competency mix. As differing competencies among stakeholders are often the case in the Asia-Pacific region, an appropriate competency mix provides the partnership with complementarity and contributes to allocating resources wisely. Securing an appropriate competency mix helps stakeholders develop an integrated approach to deliver partnerships more effectively.

Module B. Formation

Mutual trust. There is common understanding in the region that successful partnerships are based on consensus and require sufficient trust that enables stakeholders to work together beyond individual interests. In Asia and the Pacific, trust is a key factor that builds gradually over time through continuous communication.

Rules and strategic planning. Planning should be strategic, effective and responsive to possible risks and success. It fosters voluntary collaboration among stakeholders. Strategic planning calls for integrated procedural and institutional arrangements. It should include clear roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders and clear rules, structures and protocols acceptable to all.

Module C. Managing implementation

Monitoring mechanisms. These are critical for enhancing accountability. While the region continues to make progress in ensuring that monitoring mechanisms are part of the norm in multi-stakeholder partnerships, many of them rely on voluntary commitments in this regard. With more diverse stakeholders expected to support achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals across the region, multi-stakeholder partnerships should move beyond such voluntary monitoring mechanisms towards ex post evaluation of partnerships, which requires objective measuring of outputs and outcomes delivered under multi-stakeholder partnerships.

Module D. Review

Reviewing progress. Spurred on by policies intended to improve accountability and transparency, reviewing progress of partnerships has increased significantly across sectors and stakeholders in the region. Supported by robust and comprehensive monitoring mechanisms, reviewing progress informs stakeholders about measured outcomes and outputs of partnerships.

Lesson learned. There is a growing body of literature that is generating lessons learned from successful multi-stakeholder partnerships in the Asia-Pacific region. It is critical to incorporate lessons learned into the multi-stakeholder partnership process and enable stakeholders to integrate them into their evolving strategies.

Module E. Reinvent or sustain

Scaling up. Those partnerships in the region that successfully scale up tend to rely on innovative operational procedures, on their ability to secure funding and new stakeholders, on flexible and replicable structures and on their ability to manage work across various organizations while also managing diverse expectations.

► B. Key challenges in building successful partnerships in Asia and the Pacific

Module A. Initiation

Building stakeholder relationships. This step requires considerable time, effort and resources, and it can be a critical and challenging step as stakeholders would ideally aim at: (a) combining their interests; (b) complementing each other's approaches and resources; and (c) finding those common principles that can be translated into shared values. All of these actions would require considerable financial and technical assistance.

Ownership of multi-stakeholder partnerships. Across the region, ensuring ownership of multi-stakeholder partnerships requires stakeholders to build long-term productive relationships. However, internal factors, such as the varying degree of technical, institutional and administrative capacities, poor quality of leadership, limited access to decision-making or resources, or a combination of such factors, can often become barriers to enabling ownership by stakeholders involved in a multi-stakeholder partnership.

Commitment to multi-stakeholder partnerships. Successful partnerships require committed stakeholders who are willing to consummate multi-stakeholder partnerships and to work together. The region exhibits a relatively slow

15. United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and United Nations Development Programme, *The Challenges of Restoring Governance in Crisis and Post-conflict Countries*, ST/ESA/PAD/SER.E/101 (New York, 2007). Available from <https://publicadministration.un.org/publications/content/PDFs/E-Library%20Archives/2007%20The%20Challenges%20of%20Restoring%20Governance%20in%20Crisis%20and%20Post-Conflict%20Countries.pdf> (accessed 28 February 2018).

approach in securing commitment from all stakeholders to multi-stakeholder partnerships, particularly in post-conflict cases where mutual trust among potential partners is often low.¹⁵ Sufficient time is needed to build relationships prior to entering into a partnership.

Module B. Formation

Availability of legal provisions. Appropriate legal provisions are important to involving non-governmental stakeholders in collaborative efforts. This is not to say that all involvement of non-governmental stakeholders must be legislated or become overly constrained. Policy and legal frameworks may offer the basis for managing power balance and attaining legitimacy and accountability. Many partnerships fail to gain legitimacy due to unfavourable legal conditions that inhibit building partnerships with non-State actors. Independent and transparent legal and policy systems are indispensable to building enabling environments that guarantee public freedoms for all stakeholders.

Mobilizing resources. Securing sufficient financial, human and knowledge resources is one of the principal challenges across the region. Mobilizing resources is challenging and requires systematic planning and technical, institutional and administrative capacities and access to networks that enable partnerships to access private and public budgetary processes into which partnerships can tap. Complex organizational bureaucracies often create barriers to securing internal resources as a consequence of the competitive mentality that may exist among internal silos.

Structuring. Multi-stakeholder partnerships can involve implementation of complex activities and depend considerably on the capacity of stakeholders to design effective partnering relationships that feature mutuality. Multi-stakeholder partnerships require expertise, know-how and informed leadership as well as champions to help structure partnerships in such a way that they become strategic and productive collaborative efforts.

Module C. Managing implementation

Ensuring inclusive decision-making. Successful partnerships foster participation and inclusiveness among all stakeholders. Inclusive decision-making calls for a consensus where all stakeholders agree before a decision is made. The larger and more diverse is the body of stakeholders, the more difficult it is to build consensus in a relatively short period of time.

Flexibility. Many countries across the Asia-Pacific region have complex bureaucratic structures that can decelerate partnership-building processes and complicate or hinder the work of partnerships. There are considerable problems to ensure flexibility in rules, regulations, policies and operating procedures to deal with unplanned challenges during implementation. Many partnerships face difficulties in setting up feasible timelines for developing and implementing effective programmes.

Delivering outcomes in line with the 2030 Agenda. The main challenge for the region is to strengthen the capacity of Governments and stakeholders to ensure that partnerships are consistent with and contributing towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Measuring impact. Feedback from policymakers and development practitioners shows that measuring the impact of a partnership in relation to achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals is one of the most challenging factors. This situation underlines the importance of monitoring Sustainable Development Goal indicators wherever they are available,¹⁶ and developing, standardizing and monitoring such indicators where they are not available.

16. In 2016, of 154 countries worldwide 81 were implementing national statistical plans. United Nations, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, *Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific 2016: SDG Baseline Report* (Sales No. E.17.IIF.1), p. 56. Available from www.unescap.org/publications/statistical-yearbook-asia-and-pacific-2016-sdg-baseline-report (accessed 19 January 2018).

Module D. Review

Reviewing partnership process. Reviewing the process from its initiation to its final stages is key to ensure a healthy partnership. This measure not only contributes to enhancing accountability and transparency but also supports incorporating lessons learned and knowledge production for building successful partnering stories. While multi-stakeholder partnerships across the region often have mechanisms to monitor and report progress on activities and outputs, reviewing and evaluating progress, learning lessons and building new experience-based knowledge is less common and needs to be strengthened.

Module E. Reinvent or sustain

Revising and scaling up. As highlighted by UNDP,¹⁷ current efforts need to be multiplied in order to revise and expand existing multi-stakeholder partnerships from the level of pilot initiatives to long-term policies and programmes through diversifying issues (i.e. Sustainable Development Goal targets), target groups, sources of funding and participation of new stakeholders.

17. United Nations Development Programme, *Achieving Development Results in Asia and the Pacific 2013-2014* (New York, UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, 2015). E-book available from http://issuu.com/undpasiapacific/docs/asia_pacific_14012015_high.

Chapter IV.

Guidelines for Multi-stakeholder Partnerships in the Asia-Pacific Region



Guidelines for Multi-stakeholder Partnerships in the Asia-Pacific Region

The multi-stakeholder partnerships guidelines include five **modules** that correspond to the five phases of a multi-stakeholder partnership cycle: (i) initiation; (ii) formation; (iii) managing implementation; (iv) review; and (v) reinvent or sustain. Building multi-stakeholder partnerships requires policymakers and the various stakeholders to undertake the various modules that include specific **multi-stakeholder partnership steps** (see **figures IV.1 to IV.2**). In turn, each individual multi-stakeholder partnership step is focused on a set of interrelated **tasks**.

Module A – Initiation. This module supports the initiation of a multi-stakeholder partnership; helps in setting up the agenda, goals, objectives and scope of the partnership, and building relationships among the collaborating stakeholders. It features three steps: getting started, agenda setting and scoping, and building relationships;

Module B – Formation. This module helps in detailing the plan and structure that in turn will support mobilization of resources. This process requires: (i) planning the sustainable development project and its components and activities; (ii) structuring the roles and responsibilities of partnering organizations to deliver the agreed outputs in a cohesive manner; and (iii) preparing a plan to mobilize the resources required to implement the activities in order to achieve progress on the Sustainable Development Goals. This module includes three steps: planning; structuring; and mobilizing, which entails securing human, financial, technological and other resources in line with targets 17.1, 17.2 and 17.3 of Sustainable Development Goal 17;

Module C – Managing implementation. This module supports collaborating partners in delivering outputs and outcomes, and measures the related progress agreed under the partnership and in line with the 2030 Agenda. It has two steps: delivering on the Sustainable Development Goals; and measuring progress;

Module D – Review. This module assists the collaborating stakeholders to review the progress made in achieving the planned sustainable development outcomes, to follow up and revise any components and activities under the multi-stakeholder partnership and to learn relevant lessons from implementing the multi-stakeholder partnership. It includes two steps: reviewing and revising;

Module E – Reinvent or sustain. This module helps the collaborating stakeholders to scale up the activities of the multi-stakeholder partnership or to reinvent the partnership. Whether a multi-stakeholder partnership can be scaled up or reinvented depends on the way in which it has been developed and implemented. This module details various dimensions of scaling up and contains a discussion of the options for renewal and reinvention. It involves two steps: scaling up and moving on.

Figure IV.1: Multi-stakeholder partnership guidelines – key to modules and steps



Source: Authors, with partnership steps 1-12 having been adapted from Ros Tennyson, *The Partnering Toolkit: An Essential Guide to Cross-sector Partnering* (Oxford, Partnering Initiative; and London, International Business Leaders Forum, 2011). Available from <https://thepartneringinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Partnering-Toolkit-en-20113.pdf>.

At the beginning of each module, key principles to support successful multi-stakeholder partnerships are introduced as a reference. Throughout the modules, detailed recommendations for problem solving are provided. Possible constraints and troubleshooting, if any, are listed and explained. Case studies, wherever available, are presented to support the arguments and to provide practical illustrations.

Details of the five modules of the multi-stakeholder partnership guidelines are provided in the remainder of this chapter with the help of various figures (**figures IV.3 to IV.7**).

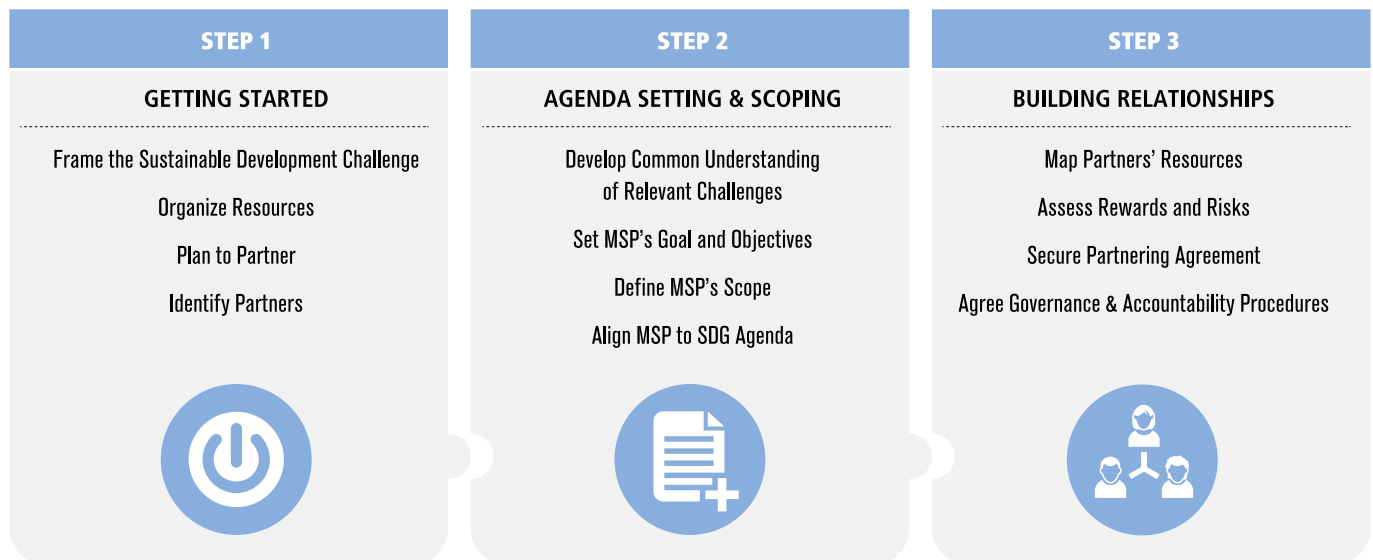
Figure IV.2: Elements of multi-stakeholder partnership guidelines





Module A: Initiation

Steps and tasks



These three steps under module A are the foundation for any partnership-building process. Many projects, which get stuck at any particular step during the course of multi-stakeholder partnership development and implementation, have to return to these foundational partnering steps.

After completing module A, policymakers and partnering stakeholders will have:

- (a) **Identified and framed the Sustainable Development Goal to be addressed through the proposed multi-stakeholder partnership;**
- (b) **Organized the internal resources required for the successful development and implementation of the proposed multi-stakeholder partnership. Ideally, proposing a partnership should be done as a collaborative effort by all stakeholders involved;**
- (c) **Identified relevant partners and their strengths and mapped partners' potential contribution to the proposed multi-stakeholder partnership;**
- (d) **Established the multi-stakeholder partnership's goals and objectives in discussion with the various partners;**
- (e) **Secured the partners' commitment to the proposed multi-stakeholder partnership.**

Figure IV.3: Module A: Initiation



Source: Authors.



Key principles for initiating a partnership

Understanding of issues and objectives

- Delivering on the Sustainable Development Goals calls for common understanding about issues at hand and the problems being addressed through multi-stakeholder partnerships. When equipped with different experiences and knowledge, stakeholders can come to the table with different understanding of the problems and objects facing multi-stakeholder partnerships. Sufficient time for discussion and debate is needed to afford time for all stakeholders to familiarize themselves with the problems at hand and streamline their mutual perspectives about problem definition.
- Understanding the challenges of implementing the 2030 Agenda calls for a clear analysis of impacts, risks, sector and geography of the target multi-stakeholder partnership population in relation to a specific Sustainable Development Goal. This analysis should also consider the specific targets being addressed and the potential of the partnership to alleviate problems related to the Goal and target in mind. In considering the principle of leaving no one behind, the specific target could include vulnerable groups as well as looking beyond population averages.

Clarity of objectives and scope of multi-stakeholder partnerships

- Clarity of objectives and scope of the partnership need to be aligned with the 2030 Agenda, and these in turn need to be aligned across all sectors and levels of government (subnational and local levels) in order to avoid trade-offs between the Sustainable Development Goals. This alignment should also respond to the needs of the target population and priorities on the ground.
- Laws, policies, strategies and programmes at all levels of government should be examined to assess a multi-stakeholder partnership's alignment with national, subnational and local priorities and with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Goal alignment

- Aligning the partnership objectives with the 2030 Agenda requires inputs from stakeholders and the organizations to which they belong. Determining impact is an important step prior to Goal alignment in order to understand any direct and indirect influence of a multi-stakeholder partnership on achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Agreeing upon collective goals in line with individual interests requires stakeholders to understand their organization's strategies, programmes and actions. Stakeholders need to identify opportunities and strategies for identifying their competitive advantage and for greater efficiency in order to implement the 2030 Agenda.

Working with power or within hierarchical systems

- Multi-stakeholder partnerships are prone to asymmetries among stakeholders based on formal authority, resources, knowledge about issues etc. Understanding and working with power at the earliest stage ensures inclusive, transparent, responsive and accountable multi-stakeholder partnerships. Stakeholders need to clearly grasp the manifestation of power, whether it is visible through observable decision-making, hidden within the political agenda or perceptible as an invisible power shaping the psychological and ideological boundaries of stakeholders.
- Ensuring the visibility of power can be achieved by: (a) managing power through multi-stakeholder partnership structures by de-concentrating functions among stakeholders or the partnership's managing body; (b) ensuring clear rules, structures and protocols; (c) empowering advocacy strategies that are focused on strengthening the organizational aspect of multi-stakeholder partnerships to build the collective power of numbers to influence the way multi-stakeholder partnership objectives are shaped; and (d) developing strong and positive relationships among stakeholders to increase the visibility and legitimacy of those with weaker power.

Trust, ownership and mutuality

- Trust, ownership and mutuality are interlinked and directly affect power and equity within multi-stakeholder partnerships. Building and sustaining trust, ownership and mutuality require efforts beyond communication and more towards understanding each other (see **box IV.1**). Understanding each other's programmes and operations can help partnering stakeholders in building mutuality and trust.



Step 1: Getting started



Task 1.1: Frame the sustainable development challenge

1. The first task is to identify and frame the sustainable development challenge that needs to be addressed. This in turn will require understanding of the development challenge, how it has been addressed in the past, what were/are the lessons learned and any other information (e.g. level of priority) that needs to be considered;
2. The sustainable development challenge should also be stated as a sustainable development objective to be achieved, particularly to which of the Sustainable Development Goals it is directly as well as indirectly related;
3. In this process, the need for a multi-stakeholder partnership to achieve the stated sustainable development objectives should be clearly stated and considered.



Task 1.2: Organize resources and secure support

1. Political awareness and support for dealing with the stated sustainable development challenge should be secured up front. The political leadership may be located within a ministry, provincial/state government,

local government or any other governmental organization;

2. Senior management, such as policymakers or decision-makers, should be fully aware and supportive of the sustainable development initiative involving a multi-stakeholder partnership;
3. Relevant staff and experts in the leading organization should be fully aware and aboard the team;
4. It should be clear at the outset who will lead the sustainable development programme (or project) as well as who will initiate the multi-stakeholder partnership;
5. It is helpful at this stage to assess the organization's capacity to develop and implement the proposed multi-stakeholder partnership to achieve the stated sustainable development objectives and build relevant capacities, as necessary.



Task 1.3: Plan to partner

Going beyond the need for a multi-stakeholder partnership to achieve the stated sustainable development objectives:

1. Justify why a multi-stakeholder partnership is necessary to achieve the sustainable development objectives;
2. Clearly document how the sustainable development programme or project will benefit from developing and implementing a multi-stakeholder partnership;
3. Clarify what kinds of partners are needed for the proposed multi-stakeholder partnership. In doing so, it is important to consider what sort of resources (financial, technological, managerial, institutional, human and other resources) are required for the successful implementation of the proposed sustainable development programme.

All these activities will help the leading (governmental) organization to prepare for the next step on “Agenda setting and scoping”.



Task 1.4: Identify partners

The success of multi-stakeholder partnerships depends on the strength and experience of the partners involved. Therefore, in identifying partners is a crucial task in the development of multi-stakeholder partnerships, the following tasks need to be done:

1. Prepare an initial inventory of the potential partners that could join and contribute to the proposed multi-stakeholder partnership. In doing so, it is critical to:
 - (a) Identify what type of potential partners would add value to the multi-stakeholder partnership, especially in respect of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals concerned (see **box IV.1**);
 - (b) Learn and collect information on the potential partner's track record of previous contribution to sustainable development activities in the relevant sectors, Millennium Development Goals, Sustainable Development Goals, and geographical areas and their previous experience with multi-stakeholder partnerships;
 - (c) Identify relevant contact points in potential partner organizations, agencies and institutions;
 - (d) At a practical level, gather information on potential partners' previous experience in sustainable development programmes/projects, email/postal addresses, contact numbers, websites and any other relevant information that may be publicly available;

- (e) Select the most appropriate partners that would help achieve the multi-stakeholder partnership's goals and objectives. In doing so, consider what sort of resources (financial, technological, managerial, institutional, human and other resources) are required for the successful implementation of the proposed sustainable development programme;
- (f) Secure the active involvement of the selected partners in order to work towards achieving the desired sustainable development outcomes. Ensure that the correct people are involved, that is, those with the authority to make decisions.



Step 2: Agenda setting and scoping



Box IV.1

Identifying partners through a multi-stakeholder knowledge network in the banana trade

In September 2013, the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (APCTT), the Trade and Development Division of ESCAP and the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority of India brought together 27 professionals from government, the private sector, NGOs and universities across South Asia to participate in a training programme. The programme was aimed at building private and public stakeholders' capacity in electronic traceability to facilitate trade in agricultural and food products.

The programme provided opportunities for the participants to learn about each other's business operations and products, and to develop business contacts. During the programme, the Tamil Nadu Banana Growers Federation, a smallholder farmers' association in southern India, discovered that, in view of the growing demand for bananas in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the country expressed interest in increasing its imports of this commodity. Currently, India exports only 0.03 per cent of its banana production so it has room to expand that trade. Following the programme, the Federation conducted a market study on exporting bananas to the Islamic Republic of Iran and then contacted that country's Consulate General in Hyderabad to make a presentation on its production system. This led to an exploratory visit to the plantations and a meeting with farmers in India. As a result of this initiative, bananas from Tamil Nadu are now being exported to the Islamic Republic of Iran, which benefits many small banana growers in that state's Theni District.

Source: SATNET Asia (2014). For more information, see www.satnetasia.org/news/satnet-training-facilitates-banana-trade-between-india-and-islamic-republic-iran.



Task 2.1: Develop common understanding of relevant challenges

1. If a multi-stakeholder partnership is designed to help implement the 2030 Agenda, it needs to develop a common understanding of the relevant challenges that must be addressed;
2. Equipped with different experience and knowledge, stakeholders can come to the table with their unique perspectives and understanding of problems that need to be addressed;
3. Sufficient time needs to be allocated for discussion in order for all stakeholders to familiarize themselves with each other as well as with problems at hand. Such discussion among potential partners would also help in building trust and streamlining their different perspectives about problem definition (see **box IV.2**);
4. Developing common understanding of relevant challenges also calls for examining the existing problem, its impacts on society, economy and the environment, associated risks, sectoral analysis, geographical context and the like;

5. This analysis should be accompanied by examination of the specific goals and targets being addressed through multi-stakeholder partnerships, especially within the Sustainable Development Goal framework, and the potential of multi-stakeholder partnerships to alleviate problems surrounding such Goals and targets. Consideration of the benefits and risks of a multi-stakeholder partnership versus other models should be considered at this point;
6. At this juncture, stakeholders need to avoid relying on untested assumptions. While some assumptions might prove to be correct, others may prove wrong, in which case the multi-stakeholder partnership and the related sustainable development programme risk getting derailed. Such a situation would not only lead to loss of time and money in the short term but may also destroy mutual trust among partners in the long term. Therefore, to avoid a multi-stakeholder partnership being defined only by generalities, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of the various parameters that define the problem, such as the target population, problems to be addressed, available resources, baseline conditions and the like.



Box IV.2

Building and managing trust in Cambodia

A non-governmental organization (NGO) in Cambodia known as EGBOK (**E**verything's **G**onna **B**e **OK**) works with its partners to provide underserved young adults with hospitality training. The programme, complemented with life skills, social support, job placement and professional development services, utilizes the economic driver of tourism to build a qualified local workforce for the hospitality industry, thereby enabling young adults to pull both themselves and their families out of poverty. EGBOK partners with the hospitality industry in Siem Reap Province to secure internships and employment for its students. EGBOK also partners with government offices, other NGOs and communities in various localities having the same goals.

With the adverse effects of the genocide of the 1970s still apparent in Cambodia today, many families remain hesitant to send their children away from home to obtain an education. Working with local partners and local communities in the target areas is thus an important and critical step to build trust and credibility, while providing information and explaining the objectives of EGBOK, all the while scouting students for potential employment. The programme is built on a strong reputation where continuous and active communication is instrumental in building mutual interest and shared commitment with all partners.

Together with its hospitality industry partners, EGBOK organizes frequent collaborative meetings and workshops as these are necessary to ensure that common goals are aligned with the programme and that feedback is addressed and integrated into the vocational training curriculum.

Source: EGBOK (<http://EGBOKmission.org/>).



Task 2.2: Set multi-stakeholder partnership's goals and objectives

1. Starting a project without clear goals and objectives is similar to starting out on a trip with no idea of where one is or how to get to a destination. Likewise, a multi-stakeholder partnership suffers when its stakeholders try to implement a plan without clarity and forethought;
2. As stated in chapter I, there is no single or correct definition of partnership, and many organizations have different motivations and understanding of what is involved. It is important for stakeholders to agree on a shared understanding of the multi-stakeholder partnership, the nature of the collaboration or partnership before proceeding towards subsequent phases;
3. Therefore, the next important task is to set the goals and objectives for which a multi-stakeholder partnership needs to be developed and implemented. These should be shared goals and objectives as well as individual (stakeholder) goals and objectives. It is important to be clear about why each stakeholder is a part of the multi-stakeholder partnership;
4. The multi-stakeholder partnership's goals and objectives need to be linked with the overall sustainable development programme (or project) that the (governmental) organization wants to implement;

5. This task will help define the stakeholders' role and responsibilities. In turn, it will help clarify what sort of contribution – in the form of financial, technological, managerial, institutional, human and other resources – is expected now or in the future from the various partners in order to achieve the stated sustainable development objectives of the programme or project within the Sustainable Development Goal framework.



Task 2.3: Define multi-stakeholder partnership's scope

1. It is important to be as clear as possible about the scope of the proposed multi-stakeholder partnership. Clarity about the multi-stakeholder partnership's goals and objectives is helpful in determining its scope. However, this may not be a straightforward task;
2. Defining a multi-stakeholder partnership's scope involves clarifying the:
 - (a) Exact type, number and scale that need to be completed;
 - (b) Specific outputs that need to be achieved;
 - (c) Geographical focus of the multi-stakeholder partnership;
 - (d) Potential time frame for multi-stakeholder partnership development, implementation and follow-up;
 - (e) Types of resources needed, including time, financial, technological, managerial, institutional, human (skill sets) and other resources;
 - (f) Type of logistical and human resources challenges and opportunities;
 - (g) Any other issues that may be particularly relevant to specific multi-stakeholder partnerships;
3. It is also helpful at this stage to clarify what is not included in the multi-stakeholder partnership's scope. Such clarity is important to avoid unnecessary delays during the implementation stages.



Task 2.4: Align multi-stakeholder partnership with the 2030 Agenda

1. The goals and objectives of the multi-stakeholder partnership should be aligned with the relevant Sustainable Development Goals and targets. This includes clear mention of how the proposed multi-stakeholder partnership will contribute to achieving the relevant Sustainable Development Goals and targets;
2. Ideally, this should not be a difficult task, as the stated sustainable development objectives of the programme or project should have already clarified its alignment with the 2030 Agenda. However, it is critical that all stakeholders have a buy-in at the decision-making level for alignment of the proposed multi-stakeholder partnership with the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. Further, the goals and objectives of the partnership should be collectively aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and with each individual partner's objectives, which would facilitate collective implementation under the multi-stakeholder partnership. This in turn would require each stakeholder to conduct due diligence in identifying opportunities and strategies for competitive advantage and greater efficiency to deliver on its organization's commitments towards the multi-stakeholder partnership's collective goals and objectives;
3. At this stage, the proposed multi-stakeholder partnership and its activities should be checked for "policy coherence" so that they do not create unnecessary obstacles in the achievement of other Sustainable Development Goals and targets. A brief analysis of policy interlinkages could help in identifying coherent

actions. In this process, the reframing and reinterpreting of the 2030 Agenda at all levels of governance becomes critical for successful multi-stakeholder partnerships;

4. Likewise, it helpful to underline the importance of documenting the existing or baseline conditions that a multi-stakeholder partnership is proposed to improve. In other words, the baseline needs to be established – particularly with regard to the Sustainable Development Goal-related indicators or other indicators that are used to monitor and document progress on achieving the Goals – in order to measure the progress made under the proposed multi-stakeholder partnership.



Step 3: Building relationships



Task 3.1: Map partners' resources

With regard to multi-stakeholder partnership development, consideration should be given to what sort of resources would be required to achieve the stated Sustainable Development Goals and objectives of a programme/project. Quite often, financial resources are considered to be more important than other resources. However, non-cash resources (or in-kind contributions) are equally, if not more, important in the development and implementation of multi-stakeholder partnerships.

1. Map the partners' resources, both non-cash resources and financial resources, that will be committed to the proposed multi-stakeholder partnership;
2. In doing so, it may help by starting with mapping the potential non-cash resources (often known as in-kind contributions), which may include information and data inputs, human resources, building/office space, including operation and maintenance costs, and other logistical support, to name a few;
3. Once this has been done, the financial resources can be mapped that the various partners can bring to the multi-stakeholder partnership (see **box IV.3**).



Box IV.3

Planning a multi-stakeholder partnership and mapping resources in the Philippines

Angat Buhay is an anti-poverty programme that was introduced by the Office of the Vice President of the Philippines in 2016 to continue the Government's fight against poverty. It brings together local government units, development organizations and individuals to provide interventions and mobilize support in six advocacy areas, namely food security and nutrition; rural development; universal health care; women's empowerment; public education; and housing and resettlement. Within the first year of its operations, resources worth \$1.9 million (about 95 million pesos) were mobilized by that Office and Angat Buhay partners to fund projects in 149 areas across the Philippines, benefiting 79,076 families.

Before Angat Buhay had been launched, the Office invited 50 local government units to identify their key local issues. Equipped with identified local needs, the Office gathered the potential development partners to meet those units and facilitated their discussions in a "World Café" format for large group dialogue. Validation of initial commitments of the development partners followed the meeting where the Office managed to validate 300 project proposals of the 746 proposals submitted. This validation process was done in two rounds and included assessment of commitment, convergence of partners and the capacity of local government units and partners to implement projects. Once this process was finished, endorsement of the Office was given to the development partners and they were connected to corresponding local government units with different projects serving different communities.

Source: Office of the Vice President, Republic of the Philippines. More information is available from <http://angatbuhay.ovp.gov.ph/> (accessed 22 February 2018).

While some multi-stakeholder partnerships may get short-term external financial support, most of them often rely on their own resources in the long term. Therefore, all stakeholders involved in a multi-stakeholder partnership need to understand and appreciate the value of resource sharing, whatever those resources are or however small they may be, and establish clear decision-making processes around resource-sharing and allocation. Allocating sufficient own resources for the implementation of multi-stakeholder partnerships is challenging in the Asia-Pacific region, especially for least developed countries and landlocked developing countries.



Task 3.2: Assess rewards and risks

Working on multi-stakeholder partnerships aimed at the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals may involve not only rewards but also risks. Partners that commit to a multi-stakeholder partnership must assess both rewards and risks so that they can benefit from them while mitigating the risks. For a successful multi-stakeholder partnership, each stakeholder needs to understand the potential risks and rewards not only to its own organization but also to the other partnering organizations.

Common rewards: The development and implementation of a multi-stakeholder partnership is likely to benefit all partners with the following common rewards:¹⁸

- (a) Professional development of key personnel;
- (b) Better access to information and different networks;
- (c) Greater “reach”;
- (d) Improved operational efficiency;
- (e) More appropriate and effective products and services;
- (f) Greater innovation;
- (g) Enhanced credibility;
- (h) Increased access to resources.

Risk assessment and mitigation: Partnering stakeholders should be aware of the potential risks that may arise in five areas: (a) reputation impact; (b) loss of autonomy; (c) conflicts of interest; (d) drain on resources; and (e) implementation challenges (see **box IV.4**). Multi-stakeholder partnerships ought to involve the conduct of risk assessment and formulation of management strategies to mitigate potential risks as part of the formulation process in the development of the partnering agreement. The importance of risk assessment and putting into place risk management strategies should never be underestimated, especially in multi-stakeholder partnerships aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

18. Ros Tennyson, *The Partnering Toolkit: An Essential Guide to Cross-sector Partnering* (Oxford, Partnering Initiative; and London, International Business Leaders Forum, 2011), p. 12. Available from <https://thepartneringinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Partnering-Toolkit-en-20113.pdf>.



Box IV.4

Organizational risks

The organizational risks for each of the partners in a multi-stakeholder partnership may arise in any of the following areas:

1. **Reputation impact:** All organizations and institutions value their reputation and are rightly concerned about whether that reputation could be damaged either by the fact of the partnership itself or by any fallout in the future should the partnership fail;
2. **Loss of autonomy:** Working in collaboration inevitably means less independence for each organization in the areas of joint work;
3. **Conflicts of interest:** Whether at the strategic or operational levels, partnership commitments can give rise to split loyalties or to feeling pressured to settle for uncomfortable compromises;
4. **Drain on resources:** Partnerships typically require a heavy “front end” investment (especially of time) in advance of any appropriate level of “return”;
5. **Implementation challenges:** Once a partnership has been established and resources procured, there will be a fresh set of commitments and other challenges for each partner organization as the partnership moves into the stage of project implementation.

Source: Ros Tennyson, *The Partnering Toolkit: An Essential Guide to Cross-sector Partnering* (Oxford, Partnering Initiative; and London, International Business Leaders Forum, 2011), p. 12. Available from <https://thepartneringinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Partnering-Toolkit-en-201113.pdf>.

**Task 3.4: Secure partnering agreement**

After agreeing on shared and individual goals and objectives, mapping of partners’ contributions, and assessing risks and rewards, the various partners should be ready to make a tangible commitment to collaboration. Such commitment is often recorded in the form of a partnering agreement or memorandum of understanding. A good partnering agreement would usually define the problem addressed, specify the mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities, articulate the commitments which partners must observe, formalize the relationships between the partners, provide a reference point for the collaboration that is to follow, support the partnering process by ensuring that partners have correctly developed answers about all aspects of the partnership, reduce the likelihood of misunderstandings and disputes, serve as an overall framework to manage the partnership and guide decision-making, help maintain the focus on the original activities and objectives, enable partners to keep track of project performance and review progress, and allow for flexibility.¹⁹

**Task 3.5: Agree governance and accountability procedures**

Working towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda will require partnering organizations to be collectively accountable not only to the project beneficiaries but also to each other as responsible stakeholders. Thus, according to the very nature of the development activities related to the public good, appropriate governance and accountability procedures become necessary for multi-stakeholder partnerships to be successful. Further, accountability and legitimacy work hand in hand. Without strong accountability mechanisms in place, it would be difficult to attain legitimacy for any multi-stakeholder partnership outcome.

19. S. Pfisterer, N. Payandeh and S. Reid, *Designing Comprehensive Partnering Agreements: An Introduction to the Partnering Agreement Scorecard – a tool for co-creating and reviewing partnering agreements* (Rotterdam, Netherlands, Partnerships Resource Centre, Erasmus University, 2014). Available from https://thepartneringinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Designing-Comprehensive-Partnering-Agreements_booklet-2014_FINAL.pdf.

In multi-stakeholder partnerships aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, partnering stakeholders would invariably be accountable to different stakeholders, as follows:

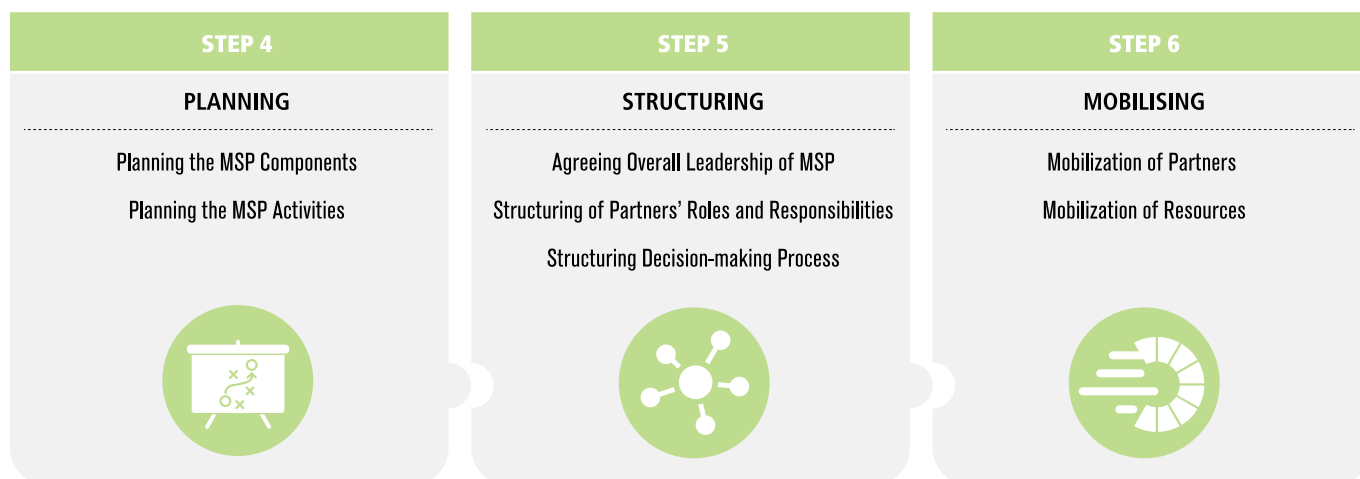
- (a) **Project beneficiaries**, whose sustainable development concerns a proposed multi-stakeholder partnership is aimed at addressing;
- (b) **Donors** who contribute financial or technical resources; they are often external partners with separate reporting requirements;
- (c) **Partnering organizations**, which generally have their own accountability and governance systems;
- (d) **Partnering stakeholders within a multi-stakeholder partnership** whose collaboration with each other is essential for the success of that partnership.

Accountability and monitoring: Establishing common ground for differing accountability standards for the various stakeholders (as mentioned above) is essential to monitor progress under multi-stakeholder partnerships and partnership processes. Pursuance of multiple monitoring mechanisms to diversify accountability is key to promote accountability, including due diligence, reporting, learning and knowledge sharing, and ex post reviewing. Multi-stakeholder partnerships also can benefit from establishing a partnership process baseline matrix and criteria to objectively measure partnership processes and to systematically understand the nature of the partnership between the stakeholders.



Module B: Formation

Steps and tasks

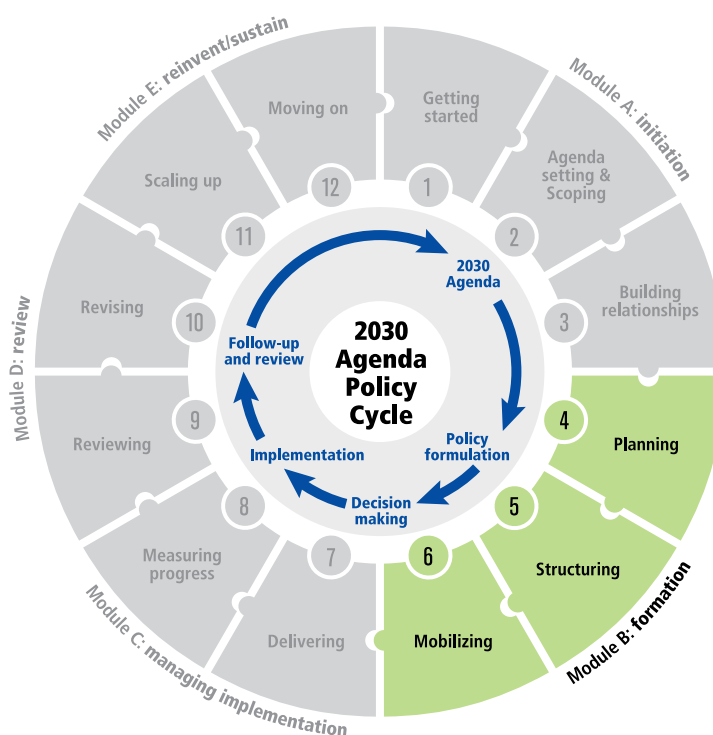


The three steps under module B support the formation of multi-stakeholder partnerships. Properly taken, these steps would help in detailing the plan and structure of such a partnership, which in turn would support the mobilization of various resources.

After completing module B, policymakers and development practitioners would have:

- (a) **Prepared a detailed plan of the components and activities to be implemented under the proposed multi-stakeholder partnership;**
- (b) **Structured the roles, responsibilities and contributions of the various partnering organizations to deliver the planned sustainable development outputs in a cohesive manner;**
- (c) **Prepared a plan to mobilize the various resources required to implement the planned activities in a coherent and successive progression in order to achieve the stated Sustainable Development Goals and objectives.**

Figure IV.4: Module B: Formation



Source: Authors.



Key principles when forming a multi-stakeholder partnership

Rules and strategic planning

- Clear ground rules with a certain degree of flexibility to deal with unforeseen challenges is critical at this stage.
- Solid strategic planning is needed to save time and resources. When all stakeholders have clear guidance, frustration can be reduced and the potential for better outcomes increased. Availability of incentives, such as access to resources and increased reputation, can provide avenues to balance power among stakeholders.

Leadership models

- The complexity expected from implementing the 2030 Agenda requires various leadership approaches:
 - (a) *Collaborative leadership* is important to achieve effective and efficient results across internal and external multi-stakeholder partnership boundaries. Leadership and stakeholders in leadership roles need to be responsive, responsible and purpose driven;
 - (b) *Leadership with impact* needs to be deliberate to ensure support and be accountable for its actions towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;
 - (c) *Champions* are important to ensure the ongoing commitment to multi-stakeholder partnerships. Therefore, sufficient time needs to be invested to build relationships, share command and control, and ensure equity, as these are beneficial to develop champions within stakeholders.

Legitimacy and inclusiveness-appropriate representation

- Inclusiveness plays a critical role in the legitimacy of partnerships. Ensuring inclusiveness and gaining legitimacy can be assisted by formalization structures that support decision-making to ensure capacity for joint action and by strengthening frameworks to manage power balance.

- Opinions and ideas of all stakeholders should be considered in the formation stage – even the opinion of those who could be considered as having a weaker voice. Multi-stakeholder partnerships should ensure active participation of weak(er) stakeholders in the decision-making process and equity in the partnership structure.
- Finding the right balance between stakeholder engagement and actual implementation also contributes to gaining legitimacy and fostering continued participation.

Availability of legal provisions

- The implementation of the 2030 Agenda requires a cross-sectoral and non-silo approach. It means more coordinated work among and with new stakeholders and the capacity to function outside conventional roles. To empower stakeholders to do so, the structure of multi-stakeholder partnerships should be equipped with legal provisions that allow them to develop necessary capacity to adapt and expand their organizations' roles and functions outside the traditional mandates.

Allocation and mobilization of resources

- Multi-stakeholder partnerships cannot function without resources, including financial, human, knowledge, technology and other in-kind contributions, such as office space, meeting rooms, network support and the like. Sharing resources increases their efficiency and preparedness for unforeseen challenges. To be better equipped to identify leverage points, stakeholders should disclose the type of resources they plan to bring to the table upon joining a partnership.



Step 4: Planning



Task 4.1: Planning the multi-stakeholder partnership components

Project components constitute the major building blocks of any sustainable development initiative. They are often aligned with project objectives. However, in complex projects, more than one component may be needed under a project objective in order to implement the required development activities. Therefore, planning of project components is an important step in the multi-stakeholder partnership process. Often one partner is responsible for one project component; however, complex projects may require one project component to be implemented by more than one partner.

1. Outline and formulate project components to ensure that they meet the stated Sustainable Development Goals and objectives of the proposed multi-stakeholder partnership;
2. Ensure that all development objectives are articulated in relevant project components so that no gaps are left in meeting the former;
3. This process requires the various partnering stakeholders to express and commit which project components they would be able to implement individually or collectively;
4. If more than one partner would be required to implement certain project components, its individual and collective responsibility ought to be outlined clearly;
5. The preparation of the project timeline (or implementation schedule) would be required in order to ensure that the planned components are implemented in an orderly manner.



Task 4.2: Planning the multi-stakeholder partnership activities

Project activities are a set of individual actions that would be required to complete the implementation of project components and in turn that of the sustainable development initiative. Implementation of a development component may bring together more than one partner to roll out its various project activities. This underlines the multi-stakeholder nature of development-orientated partnerships.

1. Plan the project activities in order to ensure that the objectives of a particular project component can be met;
2. Assign the full responsibility of a project activity to a particular partnering stakeholder. Full responsibility underlines that a partner must commit to allocate and bring in the required resources to complete the implementation of one or more project activities assigned to it, as the case may be;
3. Prepare the schedule for implementing each project activity in as much detail as possible. This information will help in preparing the implementation schedule for each project component and in turn for the entire development initiative.



Step 5: Structuring



Task 5.1: Agreeing overall leadership of the multi-stakeholder partnership

Agreeing overall leadership of a multi-stakeholder partnership is essential in order to ensure that one particular partner embraces the responsibility of bringing the development project to fruition. Leading any project, not to mention a more complex multi-stakeholder partnership, is a fairly complex exercise. Therefore, it is important to ensure that the stakeholder that leads a multi-stakeholder partnership is an able project leader.

1. In a programme or project that is aimed at achieving Sustainable Development Goals and objectives, it is often the case that the public sector partner becomes the overall leader of a proposed multi-stakeholder partnership. This is due to the fact that the public sector is usually responsible for ensuring the delivery of public goods and services;
2. When a national, subnational and/or local government assigns leadership to a public-sector entity for any sustainable development initiative, all partnering stakeholders ought to agree on the overall leadership of their multi-stakeholder partnership;
3. When a public sector entity is unwilling to assume overall leadership of a multi-stakeholder partnership, it should assign such leadership to a semi-government entity specialized in particular tasks, such as a water supply and wastewater management company, or create a “special purpose vehicle” to lead the implementation of a specific development programme or project. In such cases also, all partnering stakeholders ought to agree on the overall leadership of their multi-stakeholder partnership;
4. If a public sector entity is assigned the overall leadership of a multi-stakeholder partnership, it is important that this entity possess the required capacity to lead and manage a multi-stakeholder partnership. A capacity assessment may be necessary to understand the relevant institutional barriers; if so, relevant capacity may need to be developed in the lead organization. Absence of the required project leadership and management capacity in the lead organization may jeopardize the entire multi-stakeholder partnership and the related sustainable development initiative/project;
5. In order to develop the necessary capacity, it may be necessary to establish a smaller project first before implementing the full multi-stakeholder partnership, which is often the case in large projects where international financial institutions, such as the World Bank, invest.



Task 5.2: Structuring of partners' roles and responsibilities

Planning of project components and activities requires assigning and in turn structuring the various partners' roles and responsibilities, as follows:

1. Some project components may require only one partner to implement all its project activities. In such cases, one partner would play the lead role for the implementation of a project component. Accordingly, that partner would be wholly responsible for the coordination and implementation of all project activities assigned to it under that particular project component;
2. In other cases, more than one partner might be required to implement the various development activities included under a particular project component. In such instances, careful attention is required in assigning the leadership of an individual project component. If one partner is assigned the responsibility of implementing the majority of project activities, that partner may assume the leadership role of the respective project component. There might be other cases where the responsibility for implementing project activities may be equally split between two partners; such situations may necessitate the assignment of joint coordination and leadership of particular project components to two partners;
3. There is no clear or fixed formula to assign a sole or shared leadership role and responsibility for project components. However, project components may require assignment of a leadership role to those partners who may be responsible for making the major proposed financial allocations or undertaking to implement more complex development activities (see **box IV.5**).



Box IV.5

Assigning leadership and structuring a multi-stakeholder partnership in Nepal

The Forum for Women, Law and Development works in seven areas of special focus for the protection and promotion of women's rights, children's rights, and minority and marginalized groups' rights in Nepal. The Forum partners with a number of networks and forms alliances with various actors to ensure the participation of all the stakeholders in the process, such as the Civil Society Network on Citizenship Rights. As the alliances are formed in a loose partnership, that is, they are not registered with the Government, assigning leadership and structuring the partnerships are important factors in the success of the partnership, yet very challenging. The Forum, which often has to assume the coordinating role whereas other partners may be unwilling to assume leadership, is planning to hand over the coordinating role to another organization once trust and goodwill among partners have been developed and necessary capacity has been secured. As coordinator, the Forum also plays a monitoring role within the partnership.

Quick turnover of contact persons in partner organizations can create challenges in maintaining the structure and partners' roles and responsibilities. Intensive communication between partners throughout the process is needed to safeguard against potential fallout following changes of contact persons leading to partners' inability to fulfil their assigned roles. For the Forum, which is operationalized in an informal partnership, communication with partners is conducted through quarterly meetings and reporting by district-level offices functioning as monitoring mechanisms. To ensure transparency, all documentation is published online.

Source: Forum for Women, Law and Development. More information is available from <http://fwld.org/> (accessed 22 February 2018).



Task 5.3: Structuring the decision-making process

Stakeholders may structure decision-making with minimal organizational infrastructure, focusing on pragmatic needs, but the structure needs to be jointly agreed among stakeholders and may be formalized in the partnering agreement or memorandum of understanding.

1. Establishing mechanisms or structures for decision-making with clarity for the decisions that need to be jointly agreed and which are sovereign to each stakeholder;

2. Minutes of internal meetings may be shared in order to maintain transparency if decisions concern the partnership;
3. Establishing a contingency decision-making process for emergency situations where a decision needs to be made in a short time or when the leadership is unable to respond fast enough.



Step 6: Mobilizing



Task 6.1: Mobilization of partners

Mobilization of partners to implement the development activities assigned to and agreed by them is the next step after the planning of project components and activities, and structuring of the partners' roles and responsibilities. In particular, mobilization of partners requires them to prepare for assuming their assigned roles and responsibilities.

1. The leading partner would be required to coordinate and manage the task of mobilizing the various partners according to the schedule for project implementation;
2. For partners that are based in the location where the project is focused, mobilization may require in situ preparations for project implementation activities;
3. However, for those partners that need to physically move to the project site(s), mobilization would require a logistical operation involving travelling to and establishing office(s) at project site(s);
4. Mobilization of partners might be declared in a formal announcement by the leading partner. This would require full understanding by all partners of the starting date of project implementation.



Task 6.2: Mobilization of resources

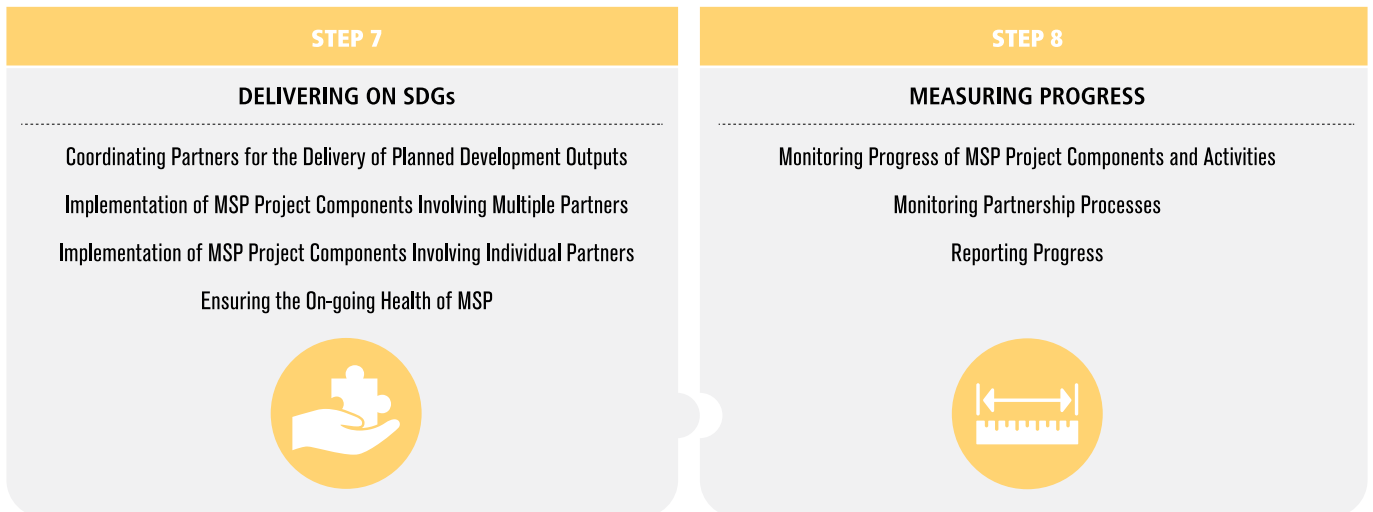
Implementation of planned project components and activities would require not only mobilization of partners but also that of the resources they have committed to the multi-stakeholder partnership. Successful completion of development activities under a multi-stakeholder partnership would be contingent upon the timely mobilization and application of the committed resources.

1. The leading partner would manage the task of coordinating the collaborating partners as the latter mobilizes the various resources committed to the multi-stakeholder partnership;
2. Each partner would be responsible for mobilizing its human, financial, physical, technological and other resources according to its commitment to the multi-stakeholder partnership;
3. If certain resources need to be imported from abroad by a partnering stakeholder, the leading partner – especially if it is a public sector entity – would facilitate the process of mobilizing such overseas resources. However, all of this needs to be planned in advance and executed according to the schedule for multi-stakeholder partnership implementation.



Module C: Managing implementation

Steps and tasks

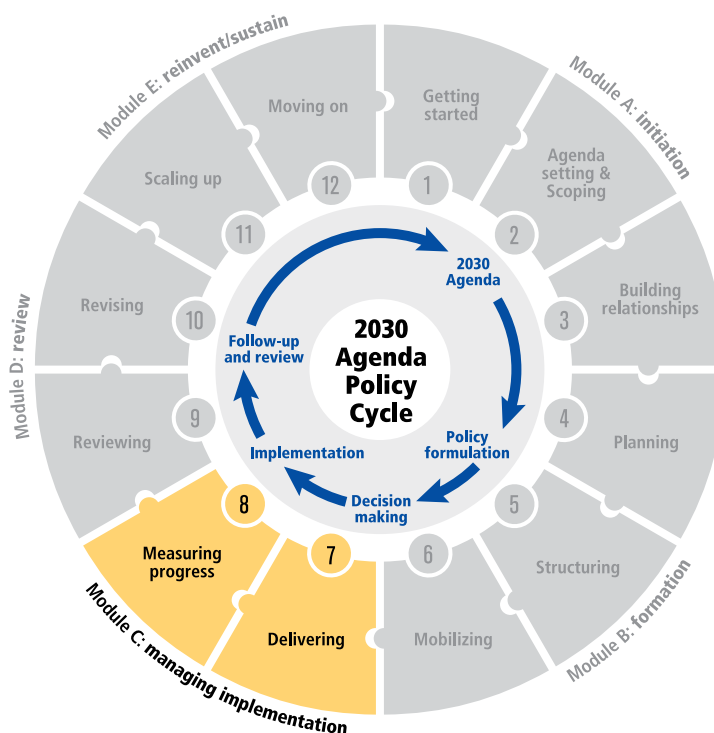


In order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, the two steps under module C support the delivery of development outputs and outcomes, and measure the related progress under multi-stakeholder partnerships. These steps would help multi-stakeholder partnerships in implementing and monitoring the project components and activities, and ideally the partnership component. In doing so, they would support the multi-stakeholder partnerships to achieve their objectives, while maintaining proper records of the progress made in implementation.

After completing module C, policymakers and the partnering stakeholders would have:

- Effectively established processes, such as relationships, governance, accountability and decision-making, for the delivery of the planned sustainable development outputs under the multi-stakeholder partnership;**
- Ensured the ongoing health of the multi-stakeholder partnership;**
- Successfully implemented the various project components and activities under the multi-stakeholder partnership;**
- Regularly monitored the progress made in implementing the various project components and activities under the multi-stakeholder partnership.**

Figure IV.5: Module C: Managing implementation



Source: Authors.



Key principles for managing the implementation of multi-stakeholder partnerships

Accountability

- Implementation of the 2030 Agenda requires strong accountability from all stakeholders. Without accountability mechanisms in place, it would be difficult to attain legitimacy. Promoting accountability can be achieved by ensuring inclusive decision-making; however, overly complex governance arrangements or decision-making structures can also reduce accountability.

Risk and conflict mitigation

- Having adaptive capacity to deal with uncertainty is crucial for a successful multi-stakeholder partnership. Having enough flexibility to respond to unplanned challenges by building contingencies to allow for changes in unplanned situations is key.
- The following actions can help mitigate risk and manage conflict: keep track of unplanned changes and have clear protocols for such aspects as communication in order to manage disagreements, discuss foreseeable issues and keep stakeholders informed when changes occur.

Manage expectations

- Understanding what can and cannot be achieved through multi-stakeholder partnerships is important in managing expectations. Key factors to manage expectations include: (a) managing gaps between stakeholders' capacity and the reality of operating a multi-stakeholder partnership to avoid inconsistency, self-serving action and confusion due to lack of common understanding of own capacity; (b) clearly established protocols; (c) co-designing of the partnership agreement during the formulation stage; and (d) ensuring reporting at determined critical points to inform intervention and decision-making.

Monitoring

- To increase insight into the multi-stakeholder partnership process and to ensure accountability for all, rigorous and participatory modalities are needed to monitor decision-making and stakeholder engagement.
- The quality of monitoring of a multi-stakeholder partnership process should include an ex post assessment and impact assessment in relation to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Ex post review should also include assessment of key success factors for replication purposes.
- Keeping the goals and targets under constant review and ensuring the sustained involvement of all stakeholders is important to maintain ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals.



Step 7: Delivering on the Sustainable Development Goals



Task 7.1: Coordinating with partners for the delivery of planned development outputs

In order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, the successful delivery of planned development outputs would require effective coordination among the collaborating stakeholders. For a multi-stakeholder partnership to be successful, coordination meetings are necessary to trouble-shoot problems and issues that might arise from time to time.

1. To achieve effective coordination, the lead organization as well as the various partners involved in the multi-stakeholder partnership would have to put into place and implement certain coordination mechanisms that not only help in the delivery of development outputs but also aid in trouble-shooting, as and when necessary;
2. Multi-stakeholder partnership leadership should put into place a schedule of regular coordination meetings among the various collaborating stakeholders. Regular coordination meetings should take place at least once a month;
3. Complex development operations under some multi-stakeholder partnerships may necessitate more frequent coordination meetings to be held twice a month or on a weekly basis;
4. The purpose of multi-stakeholder partnership coordination meetings would be to ensure that the various collaborating stakeholders are able to deliver the planned development outputs smoothly and in a timely manner;
Regular record keeping of the discussions in coordination meetings, such as the minutes of meetings, would help in periodic reviews that would be held perhaps quarterly, half-yearly and annually in order to review the progress in implementing the multi-stakeholder partnership (see module D below).



Task 7.2: Implementing multi-stakeholder partnership project components involving multiple partners

Implementation of project components involving multiple partners would require more than regular multi-stakeholder partnership coordination meetings. This would also require the relevant partners to prepare “nested action plans” that would be implemented in a coordinated manner.

1. For coordinated implementation involving multiple partners, planned components and activities would have to be broken down into monthly and quarterly implementation plans;

2. In some cases, such as complex development operations, weekly or twice monthly implementation action plans might be required;
3. In extremely complex multi-stakeholder partnerships, the partners would be required to prepare and implement “nested action plans” wherein the project output by one partner becomes the project input of one or more other partners. Some of these development operations would require real-time coordination of project implementation;
4. Mutual trust, respect and appreciation among collaborating partners would be necessary in addition to proper planning and effective coordination, if sustainable development initiatives are to succeed in their goals and objectives;
5. In some cases, especially where the preparation of action plans has resulted in some changes in the roles and responsibilities of the various partners, it may be necessary to revisit and make necessary adjustments to the partnership arrangements.



Task 7.3: Implementing multi-stakeholder partnership project components involving individual partners

Implementation of project components involving individual partners would be relatively less complex than those involving multiple partners (as discussed under task 7.2 above).

1. In such cases, individual partners would take overall responsibility for implementing the various activities planned under the respective project components;
2. In such cases, however, the importance of coordinating the project’s overall progress in implementation cannot be underestimated;
3. The lead organization would be responsible for the regular coordination of the overall implementation under the multi-stakeholder partnership.



Task 7.4: Ensuring the ongoing health of the multi-stakeholder partnership

It is essential to maintain the inclusiveness, equity, accountability and transparency of the multi-stakeholder partnership during the implementation phase as this aspect is often overlooked; implementation requires a considerable amount of stakeholders’ time and attention. It is also important to establish a mechanism for conflict management.

1. Regularly checking on the health of the multi-stakeholder partnership, covering leadership, decision-making, roles and responsibilities, relationship dynamics, resources and other project component, can be very helpful. These measure can be accomplished through informal meetings;
2. Regularly checking on the gaps between stakeholders’ capacity to implement and ongoing progress is necessary to avoid inconsistency, self-serving action and confusion;
3. Use of evidence-based assessment is needed to regularly inform intervention and decision-making and keep stakeholders informed when changes occur in implementation plans.



Step 8: Measuring progress



Task 8.1: Monitoring progress of multi-stakeholder partnership project components and activities

Monitoring progress is an essential function of project management and implementation. In multi-stakeholder partnerships, measuring progress becomes all the more important given the complex design, nested development activities and multiplicity of partners involved. It is salient not only to keep track of the progress being made in project implementation but also to document the process through which development objectives are achieved, operational problems are resolved and risks are mitigated as and when they appear (see **box IV.6**).

1. *Organizational arrangements and operational procedures*: It is important at the outset to agree and put into place the organizational arrangements and operational procedures for monitoring the implementation of multi-stakeholder partnership project components and activities;
2. *Central monitoring unit*: There should be a central monitoring unit to monitor and document the overall implementation of all the project components and activities under the multi-stakeholder partnership. Such a unit should be equipped with adequate human resources, information and technology systems, and other infrastructure required to monitor the progress of implementation under the multi-stakeholder partnership. For example, this is especially important when monitoring the implementation of nested action plans involving multiple partners;
3. *Internal monitoring by individual partners*: Individual partners may set up their own internal arrangements to monitor and measure the progress of project components and/or activities for which they are directly responsible. For instance, individual partners may like to measure the progress of their own action plans under project components and activities implemented by them.

The following are certain points to take note of when setting up the organizational arrangement and operational procedures for measuring progress under a multi-stakeholder partnership:

1. *Monitoring cycle (or periodicity of monitoring progress)*: For multi-stakeholder partnerships, it is necessary to establish a monitoring cycle that guides the process of measuring progress. While some project activities may require monitoring once every two weeks or monthly, there may be others that require day-to-day monitoring. Therefore, a monitoring schedule should be established before project implementation actually starts;
2. *Data and record keeping*: Some monitoring would include the collection, compilation and proper upkeep of raw data. This measure may be related to various resource inputs as well as to actual figures on objects and items produced under the project. Other such data could include the number of beneficiaries assisted under the project and a demographic profile of such beneficiaries for example;
3. *Tracking project implementation vis-à-vis expected progress*: The monitoring system should be equipped with information on important milestones and other such markers so that that system can be used to help track and compare the achievements in project implementation with regard to the progress expected by relevant milestones and deadlines. The monitoring system should be able to flag potential or real delays or other unanticipated problems – in advance, if possible – so that they can be addressed in time in order to avoid the derailment of project components and activities;
4. *Minutes of meetings*: These ought to be recorded and kept safely as they could be useful in order to help resolve any dispute – legal or otherwise – that might arise among collaborating partners during project implementation. Disputes may arise when collaborating partners fail to fulfil their obligations in time or to the degree of satisfaction required for a multi-stakeholder partnership to achieve the planned goals and objectives.

The monitoring of progress in implementing a multi-stakeholder partnership project and the preparation of various documents (as mentioned above) prepared under task 8.1 would be of direct use in reviewing progress under module D (see below).



Task 8.2: Monitoring partnership processes

Monitoring partnership processes is essential to ensure that the multi-stakeholder partnership remains inclusive, accountable and transparent, and is working effectively to deliver the desired outcomes and outputs. It helps guide steering and decision-making for the purpose of increasing the potential development value of the multi-stakeholder partnership.

1. Regularly conduct assessments of the partnership process against the baseline matrix and criteria agreed at the initiation phase and against the targets and indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals;
2. Regularly examine how the partnership has changed over time, including stakeholders' relationships and decision-making processes, and compare differences with the desired partnership. This may involve discussing problem areas and working out plans for improving partnership processes.



Box IV.6

Monitoring multi-stakeholder partnership progress in Cambodia

The NGO Forum on Cambodia builds cooperation and capacity of civil society organizations, supports their networks and engages them with the Government and other non-State actors in policy dialogue, projects and advocacy. The Forum consists of eight networks and five national working groups dedicated to a particular issue in the areas of development, natural resources, environment, and land and livelihoods. In carrying out secretariat functions, the Forum promotes the sharing of information through intensive communication and bimonthly meetings.

Clear mandates among the members and the secretariat are important factors throughout the multi-stakeholder partnership process, including in determining roles and mechanisms for follow up and review. A network assessment is conducted to examine the functioning and ownership of each network. The assessment mechanism is commonly agreed as common ground for differing accountability standards among the members. Adapted from the AIDS Alliance Network Assessment Framework, the assessment features six criteria: accountability and involvement; leadership; knowledge and skills; internal communication; external communication and advocacy; and management and finance. The data for the assessment are collected through a desk review of documentation, key-informant interviews, questionnaires and workshops. Working through this ex post review enables the Forum to create an adaptive plan reflected in its six-year strategic plan and three-year action plan. Advocacy is also supported by evidence-based research and information through reports made available online.

Source: NGO Forum on Cambodia. More information is available from <http://www.ngoforum.org.kh/> (accessed 22 February 2018).



Task 8.3: Reporting progress

Multi-stakeholder partnerships require sound reporting arrangements that include the hierarchy of reporting and a reporting cycle as well as their alignment with the global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals.

1. A reporting cycle needs to be established to ensure that reporting takes place at regular intervals that have been agreed prior to embarking on a multi-stakeholder partnership;
2. Every step of the reporting hierarchy should be clear about what content needs to be reported and to whom it should be reported;
3. In addition to the reporting arrangements of the multi-stakeholder partnership, individual partners may have their own internal reporting mechanisms;
4. The global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes 232 indicators on which general agreement has been reached. It is a voluntary and country-led instrument that includes the initial set of indicators to be refined annually and reviewed comprehensively.



Module D: Review

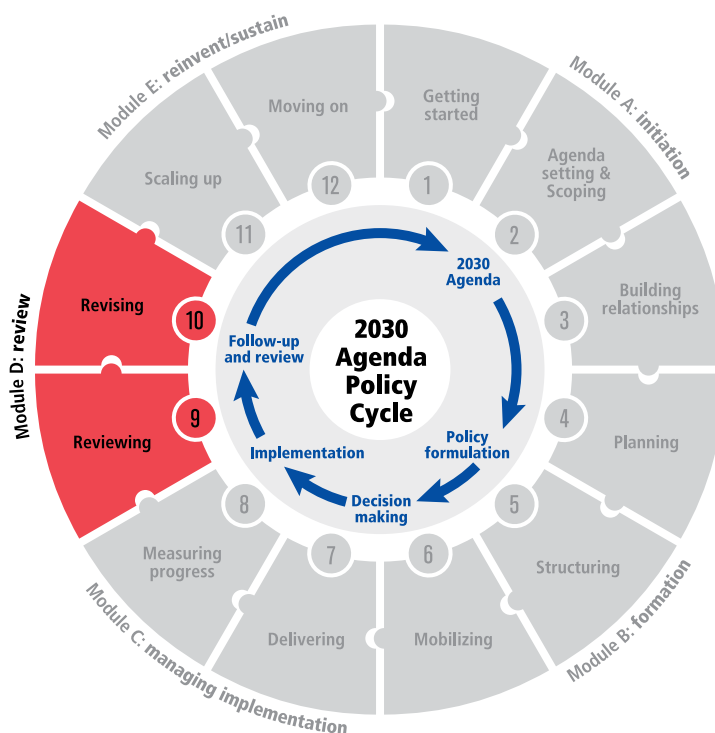
Steps and tasks



After completing module D, policymakers and partnering stakeholders would have:

- (a) **Conducted periodic and other reviews of the progress made in project implementation with regard to the multi-stakeholder partnership's stated goals and objectives;**
- (b) **Conducted periodic reviews of the partnership's process to ensure efficiency, accountability and transparency;**
- (c) **Revised the multi-stakeholder partnership's relevant components or activities, as necessary, in case project implementation suffered from any managerial, technical or logistical glitches, scheduling issues, coordination-related difficulties or other unforeseen problems;**
- (d) **Been able to resolve all problems and bring back on track the multi-stakeholder partnership project to meet its stated goals and objectives.**

Figure IV.6: Module D: Review



Source: Authors.



Key principles for reviewing multi-stakeholder partnerships

Measuring impact

- The outcome of a multi-stakeholder partnership should be measured against the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (see **box IV.7**). This can be done by: (a) evaluating Sustainable Development Goal indicators combined with qualitative analysis; (b) investing in innovative measures with the intent to scale, such as through ex post review, with indicators and criteria to ascertain the effectiveness multi-stakeholder partnerships; and (c) developing reporting throughout the multi-stakeholder partnership process at determined critical points in order to provide actionable information for interventions and inform decision-making.

Learning and embedding lessons learned into strategy

- Sustaining multi-stakeholder partnerships requires a robust learning process. It is important at the beginning of multi-stakeholder partnerships to develop and articulate a process that embeds or integrates lessons learned throughout the partnership process alongside the ex post review. Lessons learned should directly feed into the strategy planning of partnerships in order to ensure its enhanced effectiveness, accountability and transparency.



Box IV.7

Measuring impact across the Sustainable Development Goals and sectors in India

The National Institution for Transforming India, which is perhaps best known as NITI Aayog, is the country's premier think tank and coordinates national action to implement the 2030 Agenda. Its tasks include not only mapping achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets and periodically collecting data but also maintaining high standards of quality and ensuring that all initiatives being implemented contribute beneficially to humanity and the planet.

As the 2030 Agenda is an integrated agenda with its interlinked Sustainable Development Goals and targets, measuring their impacts plays an important role in the integrated assessment of the Goals prepared at all levels of government. For NITI Aayog, this means identifying the interconnectedness of initiatives against each Goal and target through priority indicators and determining how they play out across different sectors – for example how does gender equality figure in if the primary focus of the action is employment? NITI Aayog looks at trade-offs as well as synergy among the economic, environmental and social dimensions of sustainable development. The assessment, currently at the initial phase, identifies ministerial and State roles and responsibilities against different targets under the Sustainable Development Goals. Centrally sponsored schemes and related interventions are carried out to determine where coordinated actions across institutions could be more effective than isolated actions. The end target is to transform existing programmes, schemes, interventions, activities and outlook in order to achieve coherence among policies targeted at different objectives and to minimize adverse impacts.

Source: NITI Aayog. More information is available from <http://niti.gov.in/> (accessed 22 February 2018).

**Step 9: Reviewing****Task 9.1: Reviewing progress and measuring impact**

All successful multi-stakeholder partnerships feature sound arrangements for reviewing the progress of project implementation. Monitoring and reporting processes feed directly into the task of reviewing the progress being made.

1. While reviewing progress is a mandatory step in any project, it becomes particularly important given the complex nature of multi-stakeholder partnerships and the Sustainable Development Goals;
2. To ensure the contribution of a multi-stakeholder partnership to achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, progress should be reviewed by assessing the partnership's objectives against the indicators that are directly related to targeted Sustainable Development Goals at the beginning of the partnership;
3. At the outset, it is important to establish a "review panel" at the multi-stakeholder partnership level, which should include representatives of all collaborating partners. This would ensure that all positive and negative developments are reported to the highest level;
4. A reviewing cycle should be put into place in order to ensure that the progress in project implementation is regularly reviewed. Depending on the complexity of operations, the "review panel" may meet monthly, quarterly or biannually (see **box IV.8**);
5. In addition, it is often helpful to conduct a midterm review of multi-stakeholder partnership implementation in order to assess the progress made and make necessary adjustments (see task 10.1 below);
6. In some rare cases, it might be necessary to review specific aspects of multi-stakeholder partnership implementation that are particularly complex or problematic.



Box IV.8 Reviewing progress in provincial capacity-building in Papua New Guinea

Reviewing progress and learning lessons are important components needed for successful expansion of projects and programmes.

The Provincial Capacity-building and Enhancement Programme of Papua New Guinea, which was launched initially in six provinces between 2008 and 2012, is a cost-sharing partnership involving the Government, United Nations Development Programme and AusAID. It is aimed at developing capacity in the area of public financial management. Provincial and district governments are involved in the implementation of the Programme.

The Programme has resulted in demonstrably improved levels of accountability and transparency in the management of public funds and delivery of enhanced services to local populations. Thereafter, it was scaled up to include four more provinces and adapted also to address additional governance issues. The partnership has created robust monitoring and reviewing processes in the form of monthly, quarterly and midterm reporting, an annual workplan and exit strategy report, and management and audit reports. Under the Programme, independent reviews have been organized to inform subsequent national strategies. These reviews assess the relevance of the Programme's objectives, expectations of stakeholders and linkages with other initiatives to identify emerging needs, impacts and efficiency, and consideration of any extension of the Programme. A structured evaluation and validation process, involving document study, standard survey, site visits, peer group presentation and seminar, has been adopted for these reviews.

Source: Provincial Capacity-building Programme II of Papua New Guinea. More information is available from www.pcabii.org/ (accessed 22 February 2018).



Task 9.2: Reviewing partnership processes

Successful multi-stakeholder partnerships are supported by efficient, accountable and transparent partnership processes. Periodic monitoring of the partnership process helps stakeholders to review the health of the multi-stakeholder partnership process.

1. Stakeholders need to periodically review and discuss the partnership process and the multi-stakeholder partnership outputs to ensure that the existing processes are working efficiently, and are accountable and transparent;
2. If it is found that partnership processes, such as stakeholder relationships and decision-making, have changed over time, it is important to ensure that the rules, structure and protocols are flexible enough to accommodate such changes; if necessary, relevant adjustments should be made;
3. It is important that all partnering stakeholders feel involved in reviewing the various partnership processes; otherwise there is a risk of them becoming disengaged.



Step 10: Revising



Task 10.1: Following up and revising

Proper review of progress of the multi-stakeholder partnership's implementation will require necessary follow up and revision.

1. A review panel of the multi-stakeholder partnership should be in charge of following up and making any revision in the partnership or implementation arrangements;

2. Project implementation often requires detecting problems and addressing them as soon as they emerge. Depending on the nature of the problems, which may be minor or major, multi-stakeholder partnerships would require making corresponding adjustments in order to improve implementation procedures and ensure delivery;
3. In some cases, following up and revising might be necessary in view of new requirements or priorities that may be mandated by the collaborating partners;
4. In other cases, the partnering stakeholders might decide to aim for higher outputs, for example expanding the geographical coverage or increasing the size of the target group population. Such an occurrence would also necessitate following up and making necessary revision to the overall multi-stakeholder partnership.



Task 10.2: Learning lessons

All successful multi-stakeholder partnerships feature a learning dimension. With a view to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, learning lessons from a multi-stakeholder partnership is important for a number of reasons:

1. To understand how to ensure the quality of development impact;
2. To avoid mistakes inadvertently made in a multi-stakeholder partnership;
3. To replicate the success achieved in a multi-stakeholder partnership in other geographical locations or communities;
4. To scale up the success accomplished in a multi-stakeholder partnership in larger administrative and geographical areas;
5. To build and consolidate knowledge on how multi-stakeholder partnerships work, how emergent problems are resolved and issues are addressed, and how to establish better and more successful multi-stakeholder partnerships.

Therefore, in order to learn lessons:

1. It is important to allocate both human and financial resources during the planning stage to document lessons learned from the multi-stakeholder partnership and its implementation process;
2. A culture of learning needs to be established within a multi-stakeholder partnership, wherein what works well or not is properly documented. Mistakes are seen as opportunities to learn how to resolve problems and generate better development impact;
3. Depending on the nature of success achieved under a multi-stakeholder partnership, the collaborating partners may keep the lessons learned for their future internal use or may decide to publicize them for their wider circulation and potential adaptation in other multi-stakeholder partnerships. These measures would be helpful in deciding whether or not a multi-stakeholder partnership can be scaled up (see module E).



Module E: Reinvent or sustain

Steps and tasks



Step 11 of module E, if the conditions are suitable, supports the process of scaling up a successful multi-stakeholder partnership. Step 12, as conditions may be, may herald a transformation of a multi-stakeholder partnership, or its total demise. The outcomes will depend on the success or failure of the multi-stakeholder partnership and how the partnership has failed in its implementation.

After completing module E, policymakers and partnering stakeholders would have:

- (a) Consolidated lessons learned, explored the scaling up of a healthy and successful multi-stakeholder partnership and put into place necessary arrangements for it, if they so decide;
- (b) Sorted out the necessary conditions for the transformation of a multi-stakeholder partnership to be led and managed by one or more partnering stakeholders, if the multi-stakeholder partnership has been healthy and successful and the partners are willing to sustain it;
- (c) Terminated the multi-stakeholder partnership if it has not been successful or if one or more partners are unwilling to continue with it, especially if there are no other partners to replace them. In some cases, partnering stakeholders may decide to terminate a multi-stakeholder partnership, even if it has been healthy and successful in respect of having achieved the sustainable development objectives, and there is no need to scale up the partnership.

Figure IV.7: Module E: Reinvent or sustain



Source: Authors.



Key principles of reinventing or sustaining multi-stakeholder partnerships

Scaling up

- Scaling up multi-stakeholder partnerships for implementing the 2030 Agenda should be linked with the need to adapt the original objectives and reinterpret them within the context of the Sustainable Development Goals in line with different characteristics of the target population and contextual needs. Doing this requires the ability to create and recreate multi-stakeholder partnership structures and procedures, which need to be flexible and easy to adapt (see **box IV.9**).
- Where a decision is made to scale up a multi-stakeholder partnership and the stakeholders' roles change, there is risk of losing momentum and changing the dynamics of the partnership, disrupting established trust and power dynamics, reducing flexibility and increasing the need for rules and protocols. To avoid these, a multi-stakeholder partnership and its stakeholders need to have the capacity to adapt and expand their roles and functions outside initial mandates. Preventive actions can be pursued through: (a) ex post review to include analysis on necessary space for growth in terms of fiscal, organizational and learning processes; (b) ex ante assessment of potential partners and funding of their fitness to attain multi-stakeholder partnership objectives and the principles of the 2030 Agenda; and (c) supportive legal provisions.



Box IV.9 Scaling up

Scaling up is about ensuring the quality of a development impact, reaching out to those “left behind” and ensuring the sustainability and adaptability of results. It is not about just replicating successes to cover larger groups or populations. Thus, a scaled up intervention or investment can deliver multiplier effects at a larger scale, including spurring policy and institutional reforms. It can also serve as an entry point for the development and scaling up of a multidimensional approach. Scaling up entails the following dimensions: social (social inclusiveness); physical (replication); political (policy and budgetary commitments); and conceptual (changing mind sets and power relations – a deep transformation of power and administrative structures).

Ultimately, scaling up should entail: (a) strengthening joint/multipractice support at the local level to deliver greater development impact, including addressing inequalities across regions and populations, where joint/multipractice support entails a combination of the comparative strengths of UNDP governance, poverty reduction and environmental sustainability programmes with the expertise of other United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations providing service delivery support; (b) addressing the knowledge gaps and weaknesses in business processes and institutional arrangements required to move beyond “pilots”; and (c) supporting advocacy and activism at the local level and not relying only on the top-down approach to “trickle down” benefits to communities.

The main lessons emerging from scaling up efforts point to the necessity of strong leadership/political backing; putting financial and natural resources into the hands of communities and local governments; developing well-designed projects and programmes (already accounting for scaling up challenges from the outset); and promoting transparent and accountable organizations that can institutionalize the successful results achieved through pilot projects. It needs to be acknowledged that scaling up is a long-term process (often taking more than 5-10 years), and that for longer-term sustainability an effective decentralization or de-concentration agenda needs to be pursued.

Source: United Nations Development Programme, “Guidance note: scaling up development programmes” (New York, UNDP, 2013), p. 7. Available from www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/poverty-reduction/participatory_localdevelopment/guidance-note--scaling-up-development-programmes.html (accessed 19 January 2018).



Step 11: Scaling up



Task 11.1: Going to scale

Given the size and scale of the sustainable development challenges facing the Asia-Pacific region, the achievement of the various Sustainable Development Goals will require scaling up of healthy and successful multi-stakeholder partnerships. Therefore, scaling up could be seen as a crucial step in the multi-stakeholder partnership process, especially if a multi-stakeholder partnership has been healthy and successful. “Scaling up is about ensuring the quality of a development impact, reaching out to those ‘left behind’ and ensuring the sustainability and adaptability of results”.²⁰

1. Based on the lessons learned and documented (task 10.2) – especially if a multi-stakeholder partnership has been healthy and successful in generating the desired development impact, partnering stakeholders may decide to scale up the multi-stakeholder partnership. If the decision to scale up should be made, it may entail one or more of the four dimensions below:
 - (a) *Social dimension* is aimed at social inclusiveness, or inclusion of social groups that might not have been covered – by design or default – under the multi-stakeholder partnership;
 - (b) *Physical dimension* entails the replication of a multi-stakeholder partnership, its components and activities in other geographical or administrative areas;

20. United Nations Development Programme, “Guidance note: scaling up development programmes” (New York, UNDP, 2013). Available from www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/poverty-reduction/participatory_localdevelopment/guidance-note--scaling-up-development-programmes.html (accessed 19 January 2018).

- (c) *Political dimension* requires policy and budgetary commitments which may include revision of relevant policies or expansion of budgetary commitments;
 - (d) *Conceptual dimension* entails changing mind sets and power relations. Scaling up may require “changing of mind sets” with regard to the way things are “normally” done currently in view of the lessons learned from implementation of the multi-stakeholder partnership with regard to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals. In some cases – if not all – this may also have implications for power relations within or between organizations, as the ways of working on sustainable development change in view of the lessons learned within a multi-stakeholder partnership. All of this may lead to a “deep transformation of power and administrative structures” (see **box IV.10**);
2. The scaling up of a multi-stakeholder partnership or its replication requires understanding the various dimensions, and which ones apply in particular contexts. Thus, the lessons learned with regard to these dimensions need to be taken into account in the design of a new multi-stakeholder partnership aimed at scaling up or replicating the initial one.



Step 12: Moving on



Task 12.1: Moving on

The activities under this task depend on the conditions that emerge towards the end of the multi-stakeholder partnership implementation process. Some multi-stakeholder partnerships may succeed while others may fail.



Box IV.10

Scaling up through diversity of issues, funding and partners in Viet Nam

Environment and Development Action in Viet Nam (ENDA Vietnam) between 2002 and 2006 initiated a number of projects involving waste sorting at the source, supporting independent waste collectors and scavengers, and waste management in Ho Chi Minh City and Quy Nhon City. This non-governmental organization receives support from the European Union and Cordaid, among other donors.

Its projects are aimed at reducing budgets for city waste management and at securing land for the treatment of waste. Starting in 2005, its projects were expanded through a programme called “Pro-poor and sustainable solid waste management in secondary cities and small towns”, with support from ESCAP; the programme was focused on waste separation, collection, recycling, reduction of compost and transportation costs as well as the overloading of land fills. In 2011, the waste management programme started to be focused on the social protection aspects of waste management, including providing capacity-building and direct support for improving working conditions and access to public services for independent waste collectors. The ENDA Vietnam projects are carried out in collaboration with the Government through the Department of Natural Resources and Environment; the Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs; the Cooperative Alliance; and Ho Chi Minh City Social Insurance Agency. Demonstration projects that are focused on the economic aspects of waste collection are in progress.

Significant observed scaling up of projects by Enda Vietnam involved successfully securing different sources of funding through the diversity of issues it addresses and its many partners. Understanding of the issues surrounding waste management and the needs of waste collectors enables ENDA Vietnam to expand, refocus and give more depth to issues, moving from technical projects to organizational and from social to economic programmes. In some cases, the scaling up of projects is started by adding pilot projects featuring micro impacts before they get replicated on a larger scale. Active communication and knowledge exchange among partners throughout the process are needed to maintain trust and create added value for the partnership.

Source: ENDA Vietnam. More information is available from <http://endavn.org.vn/> (accessed 22 February 2018).

Renewal of a multi-stakeholder partnership

If a multi-stakeholder partnership is fully successful in its implementation, one of the following two situations may potentially emerge:

- (a) *Renewal of a multi-stakeholder partnership without a change in the partners:* At the completion of all sustainable development activities under a multi-stakeholder partnership, the partners may decide to renew the partnership and continue their activities towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals. Such renewal of a multi-stakeholder partnership may be done either (i) without any changes made in its design, goals, objectives and project components and activities, or (ii) with some changes made in its design, goals, objectives and project components and activities. In either of these cases, the multi-stakeholder partnership is continued with the initial/current set of partners;
- (b) *Renewal of a multi-stakeholder partnership with a change in the partners:* In some cases, at the end of the multi-stakeholder partnership process, one or more partners may leave the partnership. Some other new partners may replace initial partners that have left the multi-stakeholder partnership. On one hand, the new partners will need to learn the lessons that have emerged from the completed multi-stakeholder partnership. On the other, the new partners may revamp the renewed partnership by bringing one or more of the following:
 - (i) New and creative ideas;
 - (ii) New work ethics (e.g. more efficient ways of doing things);
 - (iii) Expanded financial resources;
 - (iv) More highly skilled human resources;
 - (v) Technological resources;
 - (vi) Any other resources.

Transfer of a multi-stakeholder partnership to a new institutional set-up

In some cases, the multi-stakeholder partnership may give way to new institutional forms (see **box IV.11**), which may lead to the disbanding of the initial multi-stakeholder partnership. This may happen in at least two possible ways:²¹

- (a) *One organization takes over a multi-stakeholder partnership:* In some cases, one strong partner may emerge that takes over the leadership, management and operations of a multi-stakeholder partnership. If this happens, the multi-stakeholder partnership is disbanded, and the remaining partners leave the partnership;
- (b) *New institution replaces the multi-stakeholder partnership:* In some cases, a new institution is established to take over the multi-stakeholder partnership, its leadership, management and operations. If this happens, the stakeholders of the original partnership may take on trustee or advisory roles until the handover to the new institution takes place.

21. Ros Tennyson, *The Partnering Toolbook: An Essential Guide to Cross-sector Partnering* (Oxford, Partnering Initiative; and London, International Business Leaders Forum, 2011), p. 29. Available from <https://thepartneringinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Partnering-Toolbook-en-20113.pdf>.



Box IV.11

Scaling up success through institutional transformation in Mongolia

Following the 1997/98 Asian financial crisis, the United Nations Development Programme along with the United States Agency for International Development, Mercy Corps and other development organizations initiated a partnership to promote the financial sector in Mongolia.

Called MicroStart, the pilot project was initiated in 1998 and institutionalized in October 1999 as six participating Mongolian non-governmental organizations (NGOs), consolidated under MicroStart, created the country's first non-bank financial institution. These NGOs became grant investors that assisted in the establishment of the so-called Xac (Golden Fund for Development) Bank. In 2006, XacBank became the country's first commercial bank.

The key enablers that drove the scaling up of XacBank and the comparative success of its partnership were its innovative operational procedures and management working with different organizations and managing their demands while enabling XacBank to create a sustainable and profitable business with continued social mandate. The bank's success demonstrates that building strong collaboration and support with various stakeholders, including national and international NGOs, can help transform a non-bank financial institution into a commercial bank, leveraging its capacity to provide Mongolian citizens with innovative and socially responsible services.

Source: United Nations Development Programme in partnership with the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation, "Poverty reduction: scaling up local innovations for transformational change – institutional transformation, story of XacBank of Mongolia" (New York, UNDP, 2011). Available from www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Poverty%20Reduction/Participatory%20Local%20Development/Mongolia_XacBank_web.pdf (accessed 22 February 2018); *UNDP Poverty Practice of the Bureau for Development Policy (2011)*

Termination of a multi-stakeholder partnership

In some rare cases, a multi-stakeholder partnership is terminated. This might be due to the following factors:

- (a) In some cases, if the sustainable development objectives of a multi-stakeholder partnership have been achieved, and there is no need to scale it up, the partnering stakeholders may decide to terminate the partnership;
- (b) In other cases, partnering stakeholders may decide to terminate a multi-stakeholder partnership for a variety of reasons, including: (i) faulty design; (ii) lack of commitment and/or fulfilment of obligations by the collaborating stakeholders; (iii) lack of sufficient resources; (iv) unmitigated risks; or (v) other unforeseen circumstances. In any case, there are lessons to be learned also from unsuccessful partnerships.



Box IV.12

Pulse Polio Immunization Programme in India: multi-stakeholder partnership in health sector

Historically, India has been the largest endemic reservoir of polio in the world, with 50,000 to 100,000 paralytic polio cases having occurred each year between 1978 and 1995. However, on 27 March 2014, the World Health Organization (WHO) was able to declare India a polio-free country.

India's incredible achievement of becoming polio free is a result of the strong partnership with and commitment of the Government of India, state and local governments, and the core partners in the Programme – WHO, United Nations Children's Fund, Rotary International, United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CORE and such donors as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, United States Agency for International Development and the Government of Japan.



Initiation

- The focus of the Programme was on the underserved in order to identify populations and areas with little access to basic health services or high levels of community refusals.
- It was made a people's programme through leadership and commitment at the national, state and local government levels, with trust being built among local religious leaders, community influencers, NGOs and the media.



Formation

- Clarity about roles was maintained among core partners to avoid duplication and maximize synergies (specifically, the Gates Foundation was focused on finances; the Government, on implementation and monitoring; and NGOs, on implementation and community mobilization).
- Strategic planning involved using data to identify and map continually missed groups and communities, and ensure that microplans reached every household and every child.
- Social mobilization capitalized on the polio network to address resistance through interpersonal communication and obtain the support of religious and other key community influencers in high risk areas and communities.



Managing implementation

- Evidence-based planning using real time monitoring data was aimed at developing and updating house-level microplans for tracking the immunization progress of every single child in polio endemic areas.
- Maximum use was made of educational material to ensure effective communication microplans.
- An integrated monitoring structure was employed through government-led district/block task force meetings, daily feedback sessions, finger and house marking, and tally sheet analysis.
- The Programme ensured that all team members were involved in decision-making.



Review

- High performance was ensured by making corrections on the spot and through supportive supervision.
- Strategies were continually adapted based on evidence gathered through intensive monitoring.
- Legacy documentation was carried out in other health and sanitation areas of India and for global learning.



Reinvent or sustain

- Transition strategy by integrating the Programme into national systems, management, funding and broadening the scope of work to include routine immunization, as well as reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent immunization.



Box IV.13

**Small Island Developing States Partnership Framework:
A framework to support multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development**

Small island developing States face a set of unique challenges when it comes to sustainable development. These include their small size, geographic isolation and high vulnerability to environmental impacts. Multi-stakeholder partnerships can play a critical role in the sustainable development of small island developing States.

One of the lessons learned in the process of sustainable development is that focusing on a task at hand can frequently shift in today's complex and dynamic world. To ensure that development work targeted at small island developing States stays at the top of the international agenda, and as a direct follow-up to the the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, the United Nations decided in 2015 to establish the Small Island Developing States Partnership Framework.¹ The framework is aimed at monitoring and ensuring the full implementation of pledges and commitments made through partnerships for small island developing States and at encouraging partnerships² for the sustainable development of small island developing States.

The Small Island Developing States Partnerships Framework consists of a steering committee, membership in which is open to all States Members of the United Nations and its specialized agencies, to support the follow-up and review of existing partnerships and encourage new ones; the annual action-oriented, results-focused Global Multi-stakeholder Small Island Developing States Partnership Dialogue to provide opportunities for reviewing progress made by existing partnerships, including reviewing progress as a result of regional and national dialogues; and to be a place for sharing information on good practices, lessons learned and challenges and solutions involving small island developing States partnerships. Finally, the Small Island Developing States Partnership Framework also includes the development of a standardized partnership-reporting template and a process for encouraging small island developing States partnerships – again, the first of its kind in the United Nations system.

Efforts have been made to promote the engagement of a wide range of stakeholders, including the private sector. The United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, in partnership with the Government of Samoa and the Samoa Chamber of Commerce, convened the Private Sector Partnerships Forum prior to the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, which was held in Apia in September 2014.

In September 2019, Member States will convene to review progress made in addressing the priorities of small island developing States through the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway. The preparatory process related to the high-level review of the SAMOA Pathway will also provide an opportunity for increasing the capacity of all stakeholders in forging multi-stakeholder partnerships that advance implementation on the ground and strengthen the monitoring and review process of partnerships in small island developing States.

Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

1. General Assembly resolution 70/202.
2. The resolution refers to encouraging "new, genuine and durable partnerships for the sustainable development of small island developing States"; however, these concepts have not been explored in detail in the present guidelines.

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Annex I

Methodology for the preparation of multi-stakeholder partnership guidelines for the Asia-Pacific region

An initiative of the United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

The idea of preparing the *Partnering for Sustainable Development: Guidelines for Multi-stakeholder Partnerships to Implement the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific* was first discussed at the fourth session of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, held in Bangkok in March 2017. For that meeting, representatives of ESCAP and the United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS) co-organized a workshop on multi-stakeholder partnerships for attaining the Sustainable Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific.^a The workshop was aimed at: (a) exploring and identifying the characteristics of successful multi-stakeholder partnerships for small and medium-sized countries in the region; and (b) discussing how countries could take full advantage of such partnerships and share respective knowledge throughout the region. A key outcome of the workshop was a decision by ESCAP and UNU-IAS to jointly prepare the previously mentioned guidelines.

Understanding challenges to and opportunities for multi-stakeholder partnerships in the Asia-Pacific region

A literature review and desk-based research were conducted to gain an understanding of the key factors for designing and sustaining multi-stakeholder partnerships. Publications produced by the United Nations and other organizations that contained discussions on partnerships were reviewed if they offered pointers towards the topics to be covered in preparing the guidelines.

To make available a more pragmatic approach, it was also necessary to understand the challenges and opportunities for multi-stakeholder partnerships in the region. UNU-IAS and ESCAP developed an online survey which was used to solicit feedback from policymakers and other stakeholders in the region.

Design of the framework and development of the guidelines

The design of the multi-stakeholder partnership framework was informed by the literature review and by taking stock of the results of the survey; it was also aligned with the 2030 Agenda policy cycle (see **chapter II**). An initial draft of the guidelines was validated through a two-day regional workshop co-organized by ESCAP and UNU-IAS^b during the ESCAP SDG Week^c in November 2017. The objectives of the validation workshop were to: (a) introduce the guidelines for multi-stakeholder partnerships for attaining the Sustainable Development Goals that were being developed jointly by ESCAP and UNU-IAS; and (b) validate and complement issues identified in the guidelines, such as needs, challenges, bottlenecks, good practices and other elements related to the process of establishing a successful multi-stakeholder partnership in the Asia-Pacific region.

a. For details, see www.unescap.org/events/workshop-multi-stakeholder-partnerships-sdgs-implementation-asia-and-pacific.

b. For details, see www.unescap.org/events/workshop-validating-guidelines-multi-stakeholder-partnerships-sdg-implementation-0.

c. For details, see www.unescap.org/events/sdgweek2017.

Annex II

Resources for building and implementing partnerships and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

The following is a non-exhaustive list of resources related to building and implementing partnerships, including partnership guidelines and facilitating tools on attaining the Sustainable Development Goals.

- The Promoting Effective Partnering (PEP) provides the most recent summary of tools and resources regarding partnering for the Sustainable Development Goals. The platform offers an accessible entry point to the partnering community and ongoing work in various contexts, including through facilitated meetings and workshops, and alignment with other complementary online and offline initiatives. Available from <http://www.effectivepartnering.org/>
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2006). *Successful Partnerships: A Guide* contains lessons from a number of experts working at different levels, and combines input from more theoretical academic knowledge with actual results from different policy approaches. Available from www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/36279186.pdf.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2011). *Scaling-up Integrated Local Development Innovations: Supporting Transformational Change: Country Case Studies* offers a repository of successful cases that uncover the enabling environment and drivers for scaling up development programmes, showcasing different development challenges and responses. Available from www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/poverty-reduction/scaling_up_localdevelopmentinnovations.html.
- Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) (2008). *Guidebook on Promoting Good Governance in Public-Private Partnerships* offers training modules for policymakers, government officials and the private sector in the hope that all the parties to such partnerships would benefit by examining closely the good governance principles contained in the guidebook and ensuring their implementation. Available from www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/ceci/publications/ppp.pdf.
- United Nations Global Compact, United Nations Development Programme and Bertelsmann Stiftung (2011). *Partners in Development: How Donors Can Better Engage the Private Sector for Development* in LDCs targets explicitly bilateral international donors and their respective development agencies in order to leverage their potential with respect to engaging companies in the development of least developed countries. Available from www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/issues_doc/development/Partners_in_Development.pdf.
- United Nations Global Compact (2013). *UN-Business Partnerships: A Handbook* provides practical information in the form of risk and benefit analyses for each building block and outlines the most common United Nations-business partnership models. Available from www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/issues_doc/un_business_partnerships/UNBusinessPartnershipHandbook.pdf.
- UN-Business Action Hub. *Navigating the New World of Partnership*. Available from <https://business.un.org/en/info/resources#roles>.
- World Bank Institute (2013). *Designing a Multi-stakeholder Results Framework: A Toolkit to Guide Participatory Diagnostics and Planning for Stronger Results and Effectiveness* provides practical tools and processes. The toolkit guides collaborative steps, such as setting goals, diagnosing institutional problems and monitoring outcomes, all to produce a multi-stakeholder, outcome-based results framework to prepare a development strategy or plan and to implement it with a strong results focus. Available from <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/17582>.
- The *Sustainable Development Goals Help Desk* is a one-stop gateway to useful knowledge products and practical tools, methodologies and best practices for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and attaining the Sustainable Development Goals. It is designed to serve as the primary modality for coordinating

ESCAP technical advisory services delivered to member States in specific priority areas, such as integration of the Sustainable Development Goals in national planning, stakeholder engagement, effective follow-up and review, and building partnerships for attaining the Sustainable Development Goals. The documentation previously presented through the Asia-Pacific Knowledge Platform for Sustainable Development are now be part of the Sustainable Development Goals Help Desk, offering knowledge products, access to e-learning courses, capacity development support, best practices, advisory services, access to data portals, toolboxes and more. Available from <https://sdghelpdesk.unescap.org>.

- *The Urban Sustainable Development Goal Knowledge Platform* is aimed at supporting local action for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The platform hosts a repository of policies, initiatives and good practices at the city level by municipal governments and other stakeholders. It is facilitating North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation by linking cities that have developed specific policies, initiatives and good practices with other cities interested in replicating them.
- *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform* hosts a repository of 19 years of normative and analytical work of the Commission on Sustainable Development. The platform is the go-to-place for 2030 Agenda follow-up and includes information on such topics as the high-level political forum, Sustainable Development Goals, voluntary commitments, the green economy and other thematic areas. Available from <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/>.
- *UNU Sustainable Development Explorer* is a repository platform of research projects to better address the complex, multifaceted challenges posed in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals across 15 research and training institutes and programmes under the United Nations University. Available from <https://unu.edu/explore>.

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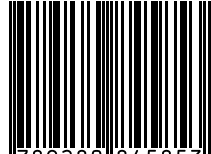
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