

PARTNER MAPPING

The objective of this tool is to map the interests, influences and resources of potential partners through four key questions:

- **Which stakeholders might become partners?**

- **What are the risk and benefits of each partner?**

- **What is the capacity of each partner organisation?**

- **What are the potential contributions of each partner?**

Mapping and selecting partners is a complex and ongoing topic, this tool aims to guide key thinking and priorities.

Includes material with permission from the The Partnering Initiative

1 Stakeholders

Stakeholders are individuals and organizations which might affect or be affected by partnership activities. It is critical to map which stakeholders are most important in terms of their influence and interest. And to consider which stakeholders might become partners because of their expertise, influence on key decision makers, financing capability etc. Remember, stakeholder roles and positions may change over time especially as partnership activities become more concrete. Use the following table to map key stakeholder groups and potential impact, interest, influence and role.

Stakeholder group	Organisation name	Reason for inclusion / potential impact	Interest (1= low, 5= high)	Influence (1= low, 5= high)	Potential role
Business (multinational)					
Business (other)					
Government (national)					
Government (sub national)					
Civil Society Organizations					
Media					
Investors					
Donors					

2 Partners

Once the key stakeholders have been identified, think through which ones will eventually become partners. Building on the information in the stakeholder assessment (on the previous page), incentives and risks can be identified to overcome problems and help ensure partnership success. When selecting partners, go beyond the traditional community to access “unusual suspects” who can bring new and valuable contributions. It’s important to consider who are the biggest players in terms of potential barriers or enablers. It is also important to consider the right number of partners?

Potential partner									
Incentive for involvement									
Achieving social and environmental objectives									
Increased access to resources									
Better access to information and risk management									
Improved operational efficiency									
Organizational innovation									
Potential risks									
Reputational damage and credibility									
High transaction costs									
Divert resources from priority issues									
Partnership failure									
Loss of autonomy									
Conflicts of interest									

3 Capacity

The capacity of partner organizations can seriously affect its success e.g. is the partner financially viable and do they have the relevant contacts and information? Undertaking an effective due diligence can help avoid selecting the wrong partner and minimize potential damage. In some situations, partners will have been pre-selected, so you might be thinking about how to manage particular issues to best work with them. Much of the information you need should be in the public domain but you may have to draw on your own network to make a comprehensive selection. Consider the following questions before you commit to a partnership (in confidence with regards to sensitive information)?¹

Checklist	Comment
<input type="checkbox"/> Respect within their own sector?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Wide-ranging and useful contacts?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Access to relevant information / resources / experience?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Relevant skills and competencies?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sound management and governance structures?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial stability and reliability?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Professional staff team?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

1. The Partnering Initiative https://business.un.org/documents/resources/partner_assessment_form.pdf

4 Resources

Partnerships are made up of the complementary contributions from each partner so it is worth exploring what each partner can bring to the table. This will also initiate discussion about what resources might be needed for the partnership. Some generic examples are provided below but you will need to be much more specific in practice.

Sector	Competencies ²	Specifically for your partnership
NGOs	<input type="checkbox"/> Technical knowledge / capacity <input type="checkbox"/> Access to and deep knowledge of communities <input type="checkbox"/> Legitimacy / social capital <input type="checkbox"/> Passion and people-focus	
Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Regulatory framework <input type="checkbox"/> Integration with public systems / long term planning <input type="checkbox"/> Taxation policy <input type="checkbox"/> Capacity building <input type="checkbox"/> Provision of land and supporting infrastructure <input type="checkbox"/> Democratic legitimacy	
International Agencies	<input type="checkbox"/> Political access <input type="checkbox"/> Technical support <input type="checkbox"/> Legitimacy and impartiality <input type="checkbox"/> Access to a global network	
Donors	<input type="checkbox"/> Technical support <input type="checkbox"/> Funding <input type="checkbox"/> Political access	
Business	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial and in-kind contribution <input type="checkbox"/> Brands and access to customer base <input type="checkbox"/> Business planning and project management <input type="checkbox"/> Innovation / efficiency <input type="checkbox"/> Value chains <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure / logistics <input type="checkbox"/> A market-based approach	

2. The Partnering Initiative <http://www.thepartneringinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Zambia-Partnering-Toolbook-1.pdf>

For further information

The Partnering Initiative www.partnerinit.org

Partnership Resource Centre www.rsm.nl/the-partnerships-resource-centre/

UN-Business Partnership Hub www.business.un.org/en