General information and guidance about Partnerships in WFP:

- WFP Partnership Tools and Guidelines Booklet 2015
- WFP Partnerships

**WHAT**

Collaborative relationships between actors that achieve better outcomes for the people we serve by (a) combining and leveraging complementary resources of all kinds; (b) working together in a transparent, equitable and mutually beneficial way; and (c) sharing risks, responsibilities and accountability to achieve objectives (both the collective partnership’s objectives and individual partner goals) that could not be achieved as efficiently, effectively or innovatively alone, and where the value created is greater than the transaction costs involved.  
*(WFP Corporate Partnership Strategy 2014-2017)*

For WFP, partnerships take three forms:
- Bilateral partnerships – WFP and one other ‘actor’.
- Multi-stakeholder and catalytic partnerships – WFP and more than one other ‘actor’ who sign Memoranda of Understanding.
- Open and networked partnerships – strategic collaborations without formalized agreements.

For WFP, there are five types of partners:
- Resource partners, which provide human, financial and technical resources.
- Knowledge partners, which contribute information, evaluation and analysis.
- Policy and governance partners, which work on WFP’s own policies and governance, as well as regional and country hunger and nutrition policies, and hunger and institutional governance.
- Advocacy partners, which support WFP’s work to advocate for food security and nutrition.
- Capability partners, which support the design and implementation of programmes and operations.

In terms of gender equality, the ‘actors’ and ‘partners’ include:
- diverse women and men
- civil society organisations (like NGOs) that represent the interests of women, of men, or of both women and men (and other groupings; such as youth)
- research and academic institutions, including those that focus on gender equality and women’s empowerment such as the Global Women’s Institute at the George Washington University or the Gender Institute at the London School of Economics
- UN entities, or Offices within UN entities, that focuses on gender equality and women’s empowerment, such as UNFPA, UN Women and the ILO
- workers’ organisations, such as the International Domestic Workers Federation
- governments that have feminist foreign policies (e.g. Sweden, Canada) or gender equality as one of their core foreign policy pillars (e.g. Australia)
- private sector entities that have explicit commitments to gender equality, like the Yuwei Designs which contributes to the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women
- philanthropic organisations with commitments to gender equality, such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Women Moving Millions
Key Features of Authentic Partnerships
- Shared vision and values, including a commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for each party.
- An ongoing, constructively critical, reciprocal dialogue about goals, models of change, strategy and outcomes.
- Working together to accomplish agreed results and accepting joint responsibility for achieving them.
- Recognition of organisational autonomy; acceptance that each organisation has the right to set the final agenda of its own work.
- Long-term engagement, based on both personal and institutional relationships.
- Willingness to learn from each other.
- Mutual accountability, respect, trust and honesty.

Reasons Why WFP Enters into Partnerships
- Increased effectiveness – achieving results through participatory, relevant and inclusive approaches.
- Efficiency – maximizing use of resources and minimizing duplication.
- Access to people skills and knowledge – drawing on a wide pool of technical expertise, experience, skills and learning.
- Innovation – creating, testing and implementing different and transformational ways of achieving common goals.
- Long-term sustainability.
- Influence and advocacy – expanding networks.
- Enhanced reputation and credibility.

Each of the general reasons why WFP partners with other development stakeholders supports WFP's commitment to mainstream gender across its programmes and operations to achieve a world of zero hunger for all women, men, girls and boys.

Through strategic and inclusive partnerships, it is possible for WFP to understand and address the particular situations, needs, interests and priorities of diverse women, men, girls and boys across its areas of work, in a way that is empowering. As important as is achieving gender equality results, is the process of working with women, men, girls and boys, and their organisations, because collaborating (rather than giving or doing for) can, and should be, empowering.

Plus, through strategic partnering for gender equality, WFP can strengthen its programming and operations through exchange of specialist knowledge, effective techniques and good practices, as well as have greater impact through collective advocacy.

Mainstreaming gender at the Country Office level involves:
- partnering with a women’s rights organization, academic / research institution, community group or other such entity.
- participating in, and contributing to, inter-agency coordination mechanisms on gender equality, such as a UN Gender Theme Group and the GBV sub-cluster.
- participating in local gender networks (where they exist).
The Regional Bureaux and Headquarters should also be engaging in such partnerships. At Headquarters there is, for example, the Rome-Based Agencies Gender Theme Group and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Gender Reference Group.

### WHO

**WFP partners with:**
- governments
- Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) – international, regional, national and local
- private sector entities, the “for-profit” corporations, businesses, foundations and trusts
- other UN entities, particularly the FAO and IFAD
- standby partners

In determining with whom to partner, WFP applies strategic, precautionary and prescriptive principles.

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<th>Strategic Principles</th>
<th><strong>All WFP partnerships should:</strong></th>
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<td>• contribute to the achievement of WFP’s Strategic Objectives</td>
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<td>• be cost-effective</td>
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<td>• reflect international priorities in food security and nutrition</td>
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<td>• confirm and enhance WFP’s standing as an ethical operator</td>
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<td>• be properly resourced from all parties and ensuring all resource commitments are kept</td>
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Partners who have gender equality commitments and capacities could contribute to achieving WFP’s strategic objectives; support cost-effectiveness (through informed targeting and participation); reflect international priorities in food security and nutrition; and enhance WFP’s standing.

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<th>Precautionary Principles</th>
<th><strong>WFP does not enter into a partnership where:</strong></th>
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<td>• there is an absence of shared goals that are aligned to WFP’s mandate</td>
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<td>• non-compliance with key principles established by the United Nations in relation to engagement with the private sector</td>
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<td>• the potential partner lacks the capacity to deliver against the objectives</td>
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<td>• there is a serious risk of negative impact on the reputation of WFP</td>
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Many organisations with which WFP could (and does) partner share the goal of gender equality; adhere to the [United Nations Global Compact Women’s Empowerment Principles](https://www.unglobalcompact.org/womensempowerment/); possess gender equality capacities or have the potential to develop them.

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<th>Prescriptive Principles</th>
<th><strong>Equality:</strong> Demonstrated through mutual respect and constructive dissent</th>
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<td><strong>Transparency:</strong> Demonstrated through dialogue and early sharing of information</td>
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<td><strong>Result-oriented approach:</strong> Demonstrated through coordinated actions, based on evidence and undertaken for clear purposes</td>
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<td><strong>Responsibility:</strong> Demonstrated through committing to activities for which the partner has sufficient means, competencies, skills and capacity to deliver results</td>
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<td><strong>Complementarity:</strong> Demonstrated through utilising comparative advantages and complement each other’s contributions</td>
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In partnering for gender equality and women’s empowerment outcomes, or to strengthen the mainstreaming of gender in a programme, women’s organisations are not the only entities with which WFP can or should partner. Not all women’s organisations are gender competent or can meet WFP’s principles or reasons for partnering. Broad alliances with organisations that share the goal of gender equality and women’s empowerment can be effective means of advancing gender equality for a world of zero hunger.
WFP’s Partnering Cycle: WFP identifies 12 stages in a forming, managing and exiting from a partnership.

1. Purpose

The first step when considering partnership is identifying the reason for working with other development stakeholders: Why do you want to partner?

Then there is a second (gender-specific) question: Would a partnership contribute to mainstreaming gender equality in your programme or operation – in implementation and in results? For example, would a partnership increase access to, and involvement of, women and men in the programme or operation, thereby improving targeting, ownership and sustainability of results? Would a partnership expand the gender competencies of the individuals implementing the programme? Would a partnership provide WFP with the opportunity to strengthen the gender capacities of other actors working on food security and nutrition?

2. Partner Mapping & Assessment

With a clear reason for partnering, the next step is to identify the potential partners – stakeholder mapping.

Preliminary discussions with a potential new partner are useful in determining whether a full partner assessment should be undertaken. In a preliminary discussion, focus on the organisation’s vision, values, ways of working and capacities to manage a programme or initiative.

Discussion should also explore the organisation’s gender equality commitment and competence.
Questions to consider when assessing an organisation’s gender equality commitment and competence

- Does the organisation have a gender policy?
- What is the organisation's view on gender equality and women's empowerment? Is gender equality an issue? Why/why not?
- What gender inequalities does the organisation identify as being particularly relevant to its work? Why?
- What is the organisation’s experience (positive or negative) in addressing gender in its work?
- To what extent has gender been mainstreamed within the organisation?
- Do the organisation’s budgets include lines for gender equality and women’s empowerment-related expenditures?
- What gender knowledge and skills does the organisation have?
- How aware is the organisation of broader social and political commitments to gender equality? (e.g., government policies)

If the preliminary assessment is positive, then a far more detailed discussion should take place, using the partner assessment questionnaire. In using the partner assessment questionnaire, you can obtain a detailed understanding of an organisation, from which informed decisions can be made. The partner assessment questionnaire includes questions about an organisation’s gender equality commitments, (existing and potential) capacities and track record.

How and when the assessment is done should be decided by the WFP staff member(s) responsible for conducting the assessment in consultation with the partner. Generally, an assessment is conducted in a face-to-face meeting with senior representatives of the potential partner organisation.

Base partner selection on open and transparent processes, which ensure compatible and accountable working relationships. Commitment to gender equality and women’s empowerment is one of the minimum measures of compatibility.

One of the benchmarks for good practice in mainstreaming gender is direct collaboration with a women’s rights organisation, academic/research institution, community group or other entity whose primary focus is gender equality.

3. Making Partnerships Official

Not all partnerships require written agreements. It is often the case, however, that written agreements are needed for partnerships that involve implementation of programmes, funding, and/or the exchange of technical or human resources, for example.

The five common types of agreements that WFP enters into are:
- Field Level Agreement
- Tripartite Agreement
- Technical Agreement
- Exchange of Letters
- Memorandum of Understanding

Partnership Legal Agreements, Guidelines and Templates provides detailed information about the entering into different types of agreements.


The Field Level Agreement includes specific references to gender equality. Annex 2 “Plan of Operations” and Annex 3, “Project Proposal” should also contain references to gender equality (and sex-disaggregated data), including in the introductory context overview, objectives, strategy, participants/beneficiaries, monitoring, reporting, accountability mechanisms and risks. Annex 6 “Gender Equality, Protection and Accountability to Affected Populations” should be attached to all FLAs. (The FLA template will be revised to align with the Integrated Road Map.)
The inclusion of gender equality in the Field-Level Agreement templates accords with one of the benchmarks for good practice in mainstreaming gender at the Country Office level; that partnership agreements include gender equality clauses addressing minimum standards, activities, performance indicators, monitoring, reporting or other applicable measure/s (such as budget lines for gender capacity strengthening). Where a partner was assessed as having a commitment to gender equality but lacking sufficient gender capacities, it is important to include explicit reference to strengthening the partner’s gender competence in the Field-Level Agreement.

Field Level Agreement budgets should include specific lines for gender equality and women’s empowerment-related costs.

### 4. Managing a Partnership

Partnerships are dynamic and vary in duration. WFP’s partnership principles guide the management of a partnership, which should also evidence mutual accountability, respect, trust and honesty.

Whether WFP maintains, deepens or withdraws from a particular partnership depends on a range of factors, such as performance, changes in strategy and policy, changes in context, changes in organisational capacity, responses to capacity development needs and budgetary constraints.

A partner’s support requirements may change over time, depending on, for example, the type of work undertaken, staff turnover and changes in local context. One area of support that requires constant attention is capacity strengthening.

**Strengthening Partner Capacity:** One of the benchmarks for good gender equality programming is for WFP to invest in assessing and strengthening the gender capacities of its partners. The partner assessment form can be used to prepare a capacity building plan for the partner.

**Tools for building the gender capacities of partners:**
- Technical advice and mentoring
- e-learning platforms
- In-person trainings
- Participation in gender networks
- Provision of gender data / information

**For effective gender training:**
- Obtain the support of management
- Base the training content on the partner capacity assessment
- Adapt the training methodology to the participant group
- Use a participatory approach
- Use documents, case studies, examples that are meaningful for the training participants
- Ensure gender-balance in the training team and pair gender and sector specialists
- Train women and men from across the partner organisation
- Combine gender-specific training with the integration of gender in other training programmes
- Follow-up to support application of the new learning and skills (and provide more advanced training)

The opportunity should also be taken to explore the partner’s strengths to ascertain what capacity building the partner could offer WFP, including in gender equality and women’s empowerment.

### 5. Reviewing a Partnership

Signing an agreement with an organisation is only one stage in a partnership. Review of partnerships should be an ongoing process.
Two frameworks for reviewing partnerships are (a) the initial partner assessment, and (b) where it exists, the written contract, such as a Field-Level Agreement. Assuming that the templates for the partner assessment and written agreements were used, then there will be prompts for determining the nature and extent by which (a) gender is being integrated into implementation of the agreed initiative, and (b) gender equality included in the results of the partnership.

Where a partner fails to deliver on agreed standards, ways of working and results, consideration should be given to (a) addressing the gaps, and/or (b) terminating the partnership. Genuine commitment to gender equality and gender competencies (whether existing or developing) are key considerations in continuing or concluding a partnership.