



MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS | SDG 15

Life on land – sustainable management of natural resources



For social and economic development to thrive, natural resources such as soil and forests must be managed carefully so that biodiversity and a healthy environment are preserved in the long term. This is what Sustainable Development Goal 15 – Life on land – aims to achieve. It also includes a pledge to combat desertification and halt and reverse soil degradation. In this context, multi-stakeholder partnerships can provide key impetus.

The integrity of the natural world is the basis for society to be able to withstand crises. But the natural world is increasingly under threat due to climate change and the destruction of habitats. The only way to safeguard food security for present and future generations is to halt the loss of biodiversity. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 15 – Life on land – makes a major contribution to climate action and protecting the environment.

Rapid global population growth makes the conservation of ecosystems an urgent necessity. It is crucially important if we are to produce enough food for all. At the same time, sustainable soil management using state-of-the-art methods greatly enhances economic and social prospects for rural communities.

Multi-stakeholder partnerships

To achieve this goal it is imperative for key stakeholders – above all businesses, governments and civil society – to work together. What is needed is a change in production processes and consumer habits. To facilitate this, the relevant frameworks must be put in place.

Multi-stakeholder partnerships (MSPs) can run trials of better cultivation methods, for instance. Initiating an MSP is one of the ways in which companies, associations, academic and civil-society organisations and government institutions can set a good example. The added value is obtained from the partners pooling core competencies, experience and resources and thereby achieving greater impact.



Partnerships2030 – the MSP platform

On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Partnerships2030 project promotes multistakeholder partnerships and thus contributes to implementing the 2030 Agenda. BMZ now promotes around 80 MSPs through the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and Engagement Global – bengo. GIZ implements the Partnerships2030 project, supports MSPs and stakeholders in many different ways, creates networks to link them to partners and provides information.



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The MSP methodology

MSPs are a form of cooperation in which stakeholders from at least three sectors among civil society, the state, the private sector and academia join forces as equals in order to contribute to the common good. An MSP can generate a transformative impact through cooperation geared to the long term.

Sustainable improvement of smallholder productivity

The multi-stakeholder platform Grow Asia brings together farmers, governments, the private sector and non-governmental organisations in South-East Asia. Its aim is to reconcile efforts to increase productivity and profitability with the need for sustainable land management. This makes Grow Asia a good example of how MSPs can make valuable contributions to achieving SDG 15.

One of Grow Asia's most successful country partnerships is PISAgrO, the Partnership for Indonesia's Sustainable Agriculture, which was launched in 2011 with the objective of improving living conditions for smallholder farmers on two million farms by 2023. The partnership has since grown, now covering 85 companies, non-governmental organisations and funding institutions. The stakeholders are organised in 13 working groups, dealing with issues ranging from rice, cattle or corn to export-related areas such as coffee, rubber and palm oil and even research and development measures.

The working groups organise interventions locally along the entire value chain: At the pre-farm level, smallholders benefit from interventions such as improved seed and more effective irrigation methods, while post-harvest interventions help them with marketing their products. The various measures include training to improve productivity and promotion of the establishment of cooperatives. The partnership covers service providers in both upstream and downstream value chain segments, such as financial institutions providing better (pre-) financing, experts in certification and marketing and providers offering storage and transport services. So far, six countries have joined the Grow Asia network:



Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Viet Nam and the Philippines. National secretariats in all these countries also organise forums providing policy dialogue, learning events and networking opportunities. Issues such as digitalisation, cashless payments (mobile banking) or helping agriculture adapt to global warming and the changing climate are becoming increasingly important. Coffee farmers in the Philippines, for example, were able to increase production after undergoing training on cultivation methods and by preserving seed and fertilisers. Similarly, many smallholders and start-ups have already benefited from being informed about how to gain easier access to microloans. And digitalisation is still only in its early stages.

The MSP approach has proved effective in this context as stakeholders from different areas such as the banking sector, government, agricultural start-ups and training providers all work together. At the same time improved guidelines on cultivation methods and awareness-raising measures, such as reducing pesticide use, for example, help to advance biodiversity conservation.



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