10 Practical Ways to Use the Principle of Partnership (PoP)

1. Make explicit reference and use of the PoP in all partnership agreements/memorandums of understanding (MoUs) with the UN, other NGOs, and the Red Cross/Red Crescent (RC/RC) Movement and evaluation how all parties to the agreement or MoU has adhered to the PoPs.

2. Report in your annual reports on how you are putting the PoP into practice.

3. Ensure the PoP are part of the terms of reference/modus operandi of all coordination meetings/clusters.

4. In developing project proposals, refer to how the PoP will be used in the project’s implementation.

5. In job postings, refer to the PoP and ask about candidates’ views on partnership.

6. Ensure that partnership skills are an essential qualification considered when recruit and appraising staff.

7. Use the PoP to advocate for improved performance from those in other humanitarian agencies and from the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC).

8. Ensure that Common Humanitarian Action Plans (CHAPs) and Consolidated Appeals Processes (CAPs) are developed in line with the PoP and potentially refer to how the PoP will form part of the coordination efforts in the country.

9. When talking to governments and local authorities, ensure that they know you will apply the PoP in your work.

10. When talking to media, refer to partnerships and how you are carrying them out with regard to the PoP.

Principles of Partnership: Success criteria and indicators

Preface
• These success criteria and indicators are aspirational in the short term and are introduced to be concrete around what the long-term goals could look like.

• For those who want to take the PoPs to a higher level of accountability for each principle, the following are some concrete measurements that may prove useful:

Success Criteria
• Robust application of the PoPs in coordination mechanisms, recalled in meetings and participants reminded of their commitment to the PoPs.
• Inclusion of PoP in handbooks, guidelines, annual programmes, annual reports, and other main documentation and communication.
• Inclusion of PoP in staff recruitment criteria, performance appraisals, briefings of new staff, trainings at HQ and in the field offices etc.

Indicators
• The PoP are a “household” standard like the Sphere standards or the Code of Conduct, PoP posters appear on humanitarian office walls.
• Most humanitarians know the 5 principles.
• PoPs are used to strengthen NGO and Red Cross and Red Crescent positions in negotiations with UN partners.
• PoPs are used as a basis for partnership discussions and agreements.
• Number of agencies that include partnerships in their institutional strategies.
Equality
Equality requires mutual respect between members of the partnership irrespective of size and power. The participants must respect each other’s mandates, obligations and independence and recognize each other’s constraints and commitments. Mutual respect must not preclude organizations from engaging in constructive dissent.

Success Criteria
• Interaction is flexible and constructive and includes main operational humanitarian partners. On country level, open mechanisms are the basis rather than closed structures, and coordination is based on facilitation, not hierarchy.
• Global humanitarian financing instruments provide plurality of funding channels and do not jeopardize the principle of independence.
• PoP-based, strategic, goal-oriented, multi-year partnership is the main model on global and country-level.
• Equitable partnerships are engaged in a process of mutually defining rights and responsibilities, in relation to each partner’s capacity, required to achieve the goal of the partnership.

Indicators
• Examples of flexible and facilitating mechanisms.
• The views and expertise of both UN, international organisations, NGOs and Red Cross and Red Cross Movement are considered and respected in the coordinated response.
• Percentage of goal-oriented, multi-year partnership agreements that express commitment to improve equality; and satisfaction with agreements.

Transparency
Transparency is achieved through dialogue (on equal footing), with an emphasis on early consultations and early sharing of information. Communications and transparency, including financial transparency, increase the level of trust among organizations.

Success Criteria
• Mechanisms for early consultations and early sharing of information exist, are well-known and accepted by main humanitarian actors.
• Common financial resource mechanisms have transparent and independent governance. Allocation criteria are well-understood and accepted by all, including national humanitarian actors.

Indicators
• Efficient consultations and information sharing take place on a timely basis and upon request. Information is easily accessible for all partners.
• Humanitarian actors are aware of common financial resource mechanisms and accept allocation criteria.

Result-oriented approach
Effective humanitarian action must be reality-based and action-oriented. This requires result-oriented coordination based on effective capabilities and concrete operational capacities.

Success Criteria
• Humanitarian organisations exchange operational information about capacities and activities, and overviews of operational mapping, overlaps, and gaps in country are provided in an effective and reliable way. Overlaps are avoided.
• Crisis-affected persons are well-informed about entitlements and services, and mechanisms for feedback and complaints exist and are safe to use.

Indicators
• Rate of implementation of commitments made in coordination meetings.
• Feedback from crisis-affected persons confirms that they are well-informed, consulted, and well-served; relevant feedback is acted upon; complaints mechanisms are known and seen as safe to use.

Responsibility

*Humanitarian organizations have an ethical obligation to each other to accomplish their tasks responsibly, with integrity and in a relevant and appropriate way. They must make sure they commit to activities only when they have the means, competencies, skills, and capacity to deliver on their commitments. Decisive and robust prevention of abuses committed by humanitarians must also be a constant effort.*

Success Criteria

• Frank exchange on malpractice, inappropriate and wasteful response etc is encouraged and improves quality of response.
• Staff in-country is well trained for their function in relation to abuse prevention, investigation and complaints mechanisms. These exist, are safe and known throughout the humanitarian community in-country. A spirit of zero tolerance is continuously promoted.

Indicators

• Positive results of frank exchange on cases of malpractice, inappropriate and wasteful response are mentioned as lessons learnt and best practice.
• Complaints and investigation mechanisms for abuse exist, are safe for crisis affected persons and staff and are known throughout the humanitarian community in-country.

Complementarity

*The diversity of the humanitarian community is an asset if we build on our comparative advantages and complement each other’s contributions. Local capacity is one of the main assets to enhance and on which to build. Whenever possible, humanitarian organizations should strive to make it an integral part in emergency response. Language and cultural barriers must be overcome.*

Success Criteria

• Coordination takes place based on independence of organisation, added value, comparative advantage, and complementarity. Humanitarian agencies do not speak in the name of other organisations, or on behalf of the humanitarian community, and mention name of organisation rather than “the NGOs” when specificity is needed.
• Coordination includes local and national capacity, which means that documentation and meetings are translated into local languages.

Indicators

• Coordination mechanisms (seek to) avoid overlaps and gaps
• Local and national partners feel confident enough to truly participate and contribute; capacity building involves all partners and agencies and is not viewed as something only needed by the local and national partners.