

## Module 3b: Partnerships and consortia Frequently asked questions



Red Cross partnering with the Africa Climate Change Resilience Alliance: training new games facilitators for climate risk management game play. Photo: Climate Centre

Frequently asked questions

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. Why are partnerships important?

Working on climate change adaptation (CCA) or climate-smart disaster risk reduction (DRR) requires new information and expertise. Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies can work on DRR and disaster preparedness with vulnerable communities, but to make such activities “climate smart” would require them to engage with providers of climate information and with others with experience in the field of CCA and DRR policy and practice.

For example, dialogue on *policy* is crucial to complement and enhance community activities. Working closely with local, regional and national authorities and experts is crucial for ensuring impact is sustained and replicable.

In vulnerable areas, underlying risk factors like land degradation, bad water management, illegal logging and mining and other related issues are severely impacting on lives and livelihoods. Holding a dialogue with local authorities and other relevant actors on which local policies are missing will strengthen activities within communities. Working in partnership helps make this possible.

### 2. How do I ensure collaboration with the meteorological office moves from dialogue to action?

Strengthening collaboration between meteorological offices and Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies faces challenges. While National Societies are aware of the need for closer collaboration, they often need guidance on what weather data to ask for and how to interpret and apply it in project design and development.

Collaboration needs to go beyond dialogue, and it could be helpful in many cases to formalize this in writing to ensure the sustainability of joint project interventions. As much as possible, National Societies should engage with groups working on DRR and CCA in order to strengthen the collaboration with a variety of actors.

In Module the relevant reading section of this module – you can find guidance on how to partner with HydroMet offices to improve *early warning early action*.

### **3. How do I engage on climate issues with government Ministries and knowledge centres?**

In addition to the meteorology departments, useful contacts on climate change might be environment ministries and other government agencies responsible for climate policy.

It's also important to collaborate with government departments dealing with sectors potentially affected by climate change, such as water resources, agriculture, forestry, coastal management, environment and health. These contacts should not be limited to the national level, but should also take place at regional and municipal level.

To help understand the climate context of actual project sites, collaboration with universities and research centres with specific climate expertise should be sought, and these knowledge centres can be closely involved in project development.

### **4. Why is working in consortia with diverse partners important?**

When working in Climate Change Adaptation and DRR, we often face complex challenges that require diverse expert knowledge. Many funding opportunities for adaptation and DRR are now inviting proposals from multi-stakeholder consortia. The hope is that these diverse partners can co-produce sustainable solutions drawing on their respective areas of expertise while collaborating with others.

Managing these partnerships as productive working relationship becomes important to ensure that synergistic learning can take place and new robust adaptation solutions can be developed.

Working with diverse partners requires strong relationships of trust – and thus it is advisable to maintain good working relationships with diverse stakeholders to potentially engage in the future on a joint project or programme as partners in a consortium.

### **5. How can I best engage with new partners from other sectors?**

Depending on the adaptation challenge that you are wanting to address, it might require to think out of the box and explore inviting some new partners into a partnership or consortium. This can potentially strengthen the approach and ensure that sustainable solutions can be envisaged. In the PowerPoint in this Module on networks and partnerships you will find ample examples of 'out of the box' collaborations, such as with artists, game makers, etc.

When engaging in new partnerships, it is important to be clear about how you envisage collaborating with the new partner, be realistic about expectations on both sides, and communicate frequently and effectively to avoid misunderstandings.

A powerful partner can also be found in the private sector. It is important to look into options to empower SMEs for instance, to invest in business preparedness, as the resilience of a society depends a lot on how resilient SMEs are and how quickly they are back on their feet after a disaster. We have included separate resources in this Module on engaging with the private sector.