AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS

African governments bear the main responsibility for the continent's progress. While they depend on supportive global policies and agreements, it is up to them to provide the plans, frameworks and conditions for their countries' development and the realization of their peoples' potential. Similarly, when it comes to fostering partnerships and maximizing their developmental impact, it is up to African governments to create the necessary conditions and incentive structures. They can do much to improve the attractiveness, scalability and sustainability of partnerships, and to contribute constructively at all stages.

African governments can strengthen partnerships for development by...

- Clearly articulating, prioritizing and communicating development needs
- Providing an enabling environment, which includes clear policies, sufficient administrative capacities at all levels of government, and supportive legal and regulatory frameworks
- Facilitating access to financial incentives, investment-risk-mitigation instruments and other benefits to increase the attractiveness of partnerships
- Providing seed and catalytic funding to help bridge financing gaps at all stages of partnerships
- Driving regional integration to increase market size and improve scalability and sustainability of partnerships
- Coordinating local, national and regional authorities to minimize the administrative burden on potential partners
- Leveraging the skills, resources and expertise of the African Diaspora to fill capacity gaps
- Raising awareness through gathering and disseminating information, highlighting best practices and drawing attention to specific opportunities
- Ensuring full transparency of processes and accountability for results
- Improving liaison mechanisms with the private sector and civil society, including through dedicated contact persons and clear responsibilities in the office of the Head of Government and social ministries.

INTERNATIONAL DONORS

International donors have made a series of commitments to Africa, which they need to keep. They share responsibility for Africa's progress, particularly when it comes to ensuring a level playing field, correcting harmful global realities, particularly with respect to trade, climate change, the international financial system and achieving the MDGs. Given their resources, expertise, networks and influence there is much that international donors can contribute to initiating and supporting partnerships for development.

International donors can strengthen partnerships for development by...

- Leveraging their power to convene different types of stakeholders to facilitate and catalyze them around specific development challenges
- Mobilizing resources for partnerships and providing seed and catalytic funding to help bridge financing gaps at all stages of partnerships
- Providing risk mitigation and other supportive guarantees, including by assuming some of the risks
- Building the capacity of actors to engage constructively in partnership
- Helping to collate information and guidelines by supporting the study of effective partnerships and the dissemination of results
- Minimizing overlap of initiatives and ensuring maximal coordination between initiatives
- Providing forward-looking data on planned investments to facilitate partnership building around them.

PRIVATE-SECTOR ACTORS

The private sector is increasingly important in Africa's development. However, there are still too many companies not adhering to fundamental principles of corporate responsibility, such as those articulated in the UN Global Compact. While private-sector actors should at least "do no harm", there is enormous scope for businesses to add social, economic and environmental value. They can do so by modifying their business models to target the poor or integrate local communities and producers into their value chains, but also through cross-sectoral partnerships around specific development challenges. As providers of resources, innovation and expertise, private-sector actors often hold the key to the success of such partnerships.

Private-sector actors can strengthen partnerships for development by...

- Showing leadership and building in-company commitment for partnerships
- Managing expectations within companies and among partners
- Managing shareholder expectations for short- and long-term results
- Freeing human and financial resources for the identification, planning and implementation of partnerships
- Mobilizing business networks and sharing knowledge, lessons learned and expertise
- Fostering peer learning
- Using social-investment budgets to facilitate entry into new places or segments that may not otherwise meet the financial-viability threshold for core business activities
- Examining their entire business model to identify potential contribution to and opportunities for collaboration
- Contributing expertise in project design, management and implementation to the solution of large-scale challenges
- Helping shape policy through constructive input, preferably through harmonized business associations
- Improving their relations and capacity to engage with governments and civil society
- Clearly communicating support needs and requirements for engaging in partnerships.

CIVIL-SOCIETY ACTORS

Civil-society actors, including non-governmental civic and social organizations, citizen groups, trade unions, the media and faith-based organizations, play a crucial function in the system of accountability that underlies the success of all partnerships. Given the identified problems caused by lack of information and misperception of benefits and risks, there is also great scope for them to mediate and broker partnerships for development as well as draw attention to opportunities and need for such partnerships.

Civil-society actors can strengthen partnerships for development by...

- Helping to identify and communicate development needs and partnership opportunities
- Playing a crucial intermediary role between companies, governments, local entrepreneurs and communities, as well as national and international finance institutions and donors
- Collecting and sharing information on lessons learned and available supportive initiatives to help practitioners
- Providing crucial checks and balances through monitoring partnership implementation, highlighting shortcomings and reporting mismanagement
- Supporting project improvements through collecting and sharing feedback at grassroots level
- Supporting the development and utilization of accountability tools
- Helping to identify, inform and educate (potential) beneficiaries of partnerships
- Harnessing and sharing their experience in cultivating change agents at grassroots and national levels
- Identifying synergies between initiatives and formulating a common agenda
- Helping to improve coordination between initiatives to minimize unnecessary overlap and inefficiencies.