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QUDRA2

Resilience for refugees, IDPs, returnees and host communities
in response to the protracted Syrian and Iraqi crises

Managing Complex European Multi- Partner Cooperation Programmes

A PRACTICAL TOOLKIT

Implemented by



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Introduction

A toolkit for cooperation management

International development cooperation programmes increasingly require close collaboration between diverse organisations. By pooling their expertise, resources, and networks, cooperation programmes can create added value for beneficiaries, partners, and donors, resulting in improved effectiveness, efficiency, and impact.

However, creating added value through cooperation programmes can pose management challenges for programme partners. The need for strategic alignment and operational coordination can create complexity, which increases further if the programme operates across different thematic areas and locations.

To help implementing agencies manage this complexity, this toolkit provides practical guidance on designing and implementing complex cooperation programmes. It was developed as part of the Qudra 2 programme, a multi-partner action aimed at strengthening the resilience of people and communities affected by the Syrian and Iraqi crises.

The Qudra 2 programme is financed by three European donors and implemented by five European implementing agencies across three thematic areas in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Türkiye.

The toolkit is based on Qudra 2's experiences in cooperation management. In a joint reflection, the Qudra 2 partners identified 11 lessons learnt clustered across five success factors.¹

Success Factors	
I. Strategy	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Define each partner's contribution and why and how you will cooperate2. Cooperation adds complexity and must be managed accordingly
II. Steering	<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Establish an effective cooperation management architecture4. Balance "internal" and "external" cooperation and the value it creates5. Allocate sufficient resources based on a case for cooperation

¹ The success factors are based on the "Capacity WORKS" management model for managing change management programmes developed by GIZ. (GIZ, Eschborn, 2014).

III. Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Operationalise joint implementation quickly through joint planning and agility 7. Create robust shared processes and ensure accountability
IV. Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Create platforms for learning within the partnership 9. Actively manage your networks for disseminating information and knowledge
V. Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Foster a strong cooperation culture through communication 11. Conduct regular check-ins on cooperation to adjust and learn

The toolkit follows the same structure and provides tools for each success factor to improve the management of cooperation programmes. The focus is on enhancing cooperation among programme partners, i.e. the organisations directly involved in managing the cooperation programme. The roles of other stakeholders, such as donors and local implementing partners, are also considered where necessary.

The toolkit is based on the Qudra 2 experience, but it is designed to be widely applicable. It provides suggestions on how and when to use these tools. However, users should use discretion and adapt the tools to their circumstances.

The success factors are often interdependent; for example, a clear strategy helps to steer relevant processes. The tools can, therefore, be used in conjunction with one another and users may go through several iterations of applying different tools as the programme's approach to cooperation takes shape. Each tool's introduction mentions other relevant tools and suggests the programme cycle stage in which the tool is most useful. There is no "best" or specific order to apply the tools, and not every tool will be helpful for every scenario.

Big picture checklist

This “big picture” checklist helps programme partners to develop a high-level overview of cooperation in the programme. Programme partners can return to it at various junctures in the programme life cycle.

Success factor	Questions	
Strategy	Have programme partners identified the added value of cooperation?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is there a shared vision for cooperation among the programme partners?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Have programme partners reflected on and discussed each partner's capabilities, expertise, experiences, and networks?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is the programme designed to benefit from the comparative strengths of its programme partners?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Are all programme partners benefitting from cooperation?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is cooperation integrated into the logical framework of the programme?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Are specific indicators for cooperation included in the programme's monitoring and evaluation framework?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Does the cooperation strategy realistically account for the programme's complexity when determining when, where, and how (not) to cooperate?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steering	Have programme partners agreed on a cooperation management architecture that adequately reflects the programme's complexity?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Does the cooperation management architecture establish clear roles, mandates, and processes to foster shared ownership and mutual accountability?	<input type="checkbox"/>

Steering	Do all programme partners actively participate in making decisions on cooperation?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Have programme partners considered both internal and external cooperation opportunities based on the added value they create for the programme?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Have programme partners developed an approach to engage with shared external stakeholders?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Have the necessary resources (human, financial, or other) been allocated for cooperation management?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Do programme partners have a clear narrative linking cooperation management costs to the value cooperation creates for the programme?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Processes	Have partners organised joint planning activities to identify areas of cooperation?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Are the chosen forms of cooperation suitable to their objective and context?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Have cooperation activities been documented in a cooperation matrix?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Are different modalities of cooperation being tested in an agile way?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Have shared management processes been identified?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Have the shared management processes been clearly communicated to all programme partners and relevant staff members?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Are the shared management processes aligned with the internal processes of different programme partners?	<input type="checkbox"/>

Learning	Do programme partners have a shared approach to information and knowledge management that serves the programme's objectives?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Have programme partners established effective ways to exchange information and knowledge in implementation?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Does information and knowledge management receive sufficient attention and resources?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Does the programme have an accessible online platform that supports information exchange and knowledge management across programme partners?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Do programme partners actively use the broader networks of the cooperation programme to disseminate information and knowledge?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Are programme partners actively seeking to "learn to work together"?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Are check-in meetings scheduled regularly with all programme partners?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Do check-in meetings create room for corrective measures and documentation of learnings?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication	Is there a culture of cooperation among programme partners?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Does the programme take into account diverse organisational cultures of its programme partners?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Are communication channels reaching all programme partners and providing opportunities for everyone to contribute?	<input type="checkbox"/>

1. Strategy

The tools in this section are design to help programme partners develop a shared cooperation strategy. Cooperation is not the primary objective; it must “add value” to investments. From the design phase, multi-partner programmes must develop a strong, shared strategic orientation towards creating added value through cooperation.

To develop an effective cooperation strategy, the programme partners will need:

1. A thorough understanding of the programme’s overall objective and how cooperation will contribute to achieving it.
2. A shared understanding of each programme partner’s comparative strengths, weaknesses, and potential synergies.
3. A careful analysis of programme complexity and its implications for cooperation management to anticipate challenges and develop effective strategies to overcome them.
4. The time and resources to co-design cooperation during the programme’s design phase. This is critical to ensure that cooperation is well-integrated and aligned with the overall programme objectives and design.

This section covers the following lessons learnt and associated tools:

LL1: Define why and how you will cooperate and each partner’s contribution	Tool 1: Identifying cooperation potential	To identify cooperation potential based on programme partners’ strengths and weaknesses
	Tool 2: Added value of cooperation	To define the added value of cooperation
	Tool 3: Cooperation matrix	To define, develop, and document a framework for cooperation
LL2: Cooperation adds complexity and must be managed accordingly	Tool 4: Programme complexity analysis	To examine the complexity of the programme and its impact on cooperation management

Cross-cutting²

Tool 5: Co-creation workshop

To bring together key elements of the cooperation strategy

REMEMBER

- The cooperation strategy should be developed during the design phase to ensure the overall programme design enables cooperation (e.g., logical framework, management structure, resource allocation etc.). This requires substantial joint efforts in the very early phases of a programme.

² This tool is not specifically related to any particular learning. It provides a process for programme partners to bring together discussions regarding cooperation strategy.

TOOL 1: IDENTIFYING COOPERATION POTENTIAL



OBJECTIVE

This tool helps programme partners develop a shared understanding of each partner's capabilities, expertise, experiences, and networks to identify comparative advantages and synergies. This analysis will be the basis for defining the added value of cooperation.



WHEN TO USE THE TOOL

Each programme partner can use the tool to prepare for the co-creation workshop (Tool 5). It can also serve as the basis for developing Tool 3: "Cooperation matrix".



HOW TO USE THE TOOL

This tool is divided into two sections. The first is a self-assessment to help each programme partner to determine their capacity for cooperation; the second is a SWOT analysis. It builds on the analysis of each programme partner's strengths and weaknesses to identify opportunities for and threats to cooperation. It also offers the possibility to capture potential threats that may arise from cooperation for each programme partner.

Tool 2: "Defining the added value of cooperation" and Tool 3: "Cooperation matrix" could be useful in identifying potential opportunities arising from cooperation, while Tool 4: "Programme complexity analysis" may highlight potential threats to or arising from cooperation.

REMEMBER

- If possible, engage a diverse range of staff members in this discussion, including those with in-depth technical and local knowledge.
- For cooperation to be effective, you should be open about organisational weaknesses to your partners.

1 - Partner self-assessment

The table below provides guiding questions for each programme partner to identify their strengths and weaknesses in the specific context of the proposed cooperation programme. Depending on each programme's context, these guiding questions can be adapted as necessary.

Technical expertise and knowledge

Thematic area:

How experienced is the programme partner in this thematic area?

.....

Does the programme partner have in-house expertise and knowledge on the theme that can they contribute to the cooperation programme?

.....

What resources (research, manuals, technology, etc.) can the programme partner share or use to contribute to cooperation in the programme?

.....

Are there any known challenges or gaps in the programme partner's technical expertise?

.....

Familiarity with context and networks

Location:

How familiar is the programme partner with the overall political, economic, and social context in the location?

.....

How experienced is the programme partner in the relevant thematic area in the local context?

.....

Does the programme partner have access to relevant/influential actors and networks in the thematic area? Which ones?

.....

Are there any known challenges or gaps in the programme partner's familiarity with the context or networks?

.....

Operational capacity

How would the partner describe its operational capacity (e.g., assets such as official registration)?

.....

How well can the partner mobilise (local) human resources and expertise?

.....

How well can the partner access implementation areas? (Areas covered/excluded? Security measures?)

.....

Are there sufficient resources to engage in and potentially take the lead on cooperation processes in a particular thematic area or location?

.....

Are there any known challenges or gaps in the programme partner's operational capacity?

.....

2 - SWOT analysis

The SWOT analysis builds on the insights from the partner self-assessment. It can be used to consolidate each programme partner's key strengths and weaknesses. This will help to identify the opportunities for and threats to/arising from cooperation.

Strengths	<i>What are the most significant strengths of individual programme partners (technical expertise, operational capacities, networks)?</i>
Weaknesses	<i>What are the most critical weaknesses of individual programme partners (technical expertise, operational capacities, networks)?</i>
Opportunities Arising from cooperation	<i>What opportunities do individual programme partners see in cooperation?</i> <i>What individual strengths can programme partners contribute to cooperation?</i> <i>Can individual and organisational weaknesses be compensated through cooperation? How?</i>
Threats To or arising from cooperation	<i>What potential challenges might affect cooperation?</i> <i>What negative impact might cooperation have on individual programme partners?</i>
Conclusions	<i>Is there a case for cooperation?</i> <i>Do the benefits of cooperation outweigh the costs?</i> <i>Is this true at the level of the programme and each programme partner?</i> <i>Which aspects of cooperation create the most significant opportunities/threats?</i> <i>What implications does this have for the programme design and cooperation management?</i>

TOOL 2: DEFINING THE ADDED VALUE OF COOPERATION



OBJECTIVE

This tool is designed to assist programme partners in clearly defining how cooperation adds value to the programme's overall objectives. Programme partners can align on a shared framework and formulate a statement summarising their cooperation's purpose.



WHEN TO USE THE TOOL

All programme partners should work together to complete the tool during the programme's design phase, for example, during a co-creation workshop (Tool 4).



HOW TO USE THE TOOL

The tool is divided into two sections. The first section outlines a four-step process that guides programme partners in defining the added value of cooperation. It also helps to generate practical ideas for cooperation, making added value more concrete. The second section offers guiding questions to help programme partners identify added value across different dimensions aligned with the OECD DAC criteria.³

Use the results of Tool 1: "Identifying cooperation potential", and Tool 3: "Programme complexity analysis", to inform the discussion.

Box 1 provides sample questions to monitor and evaluate cooperation efforts, covering both the process of cooperation and its results.

³ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria for evaluating development assistance: oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.html

1 - Defining the added value of cooperation - A four-step process

Cooperation is a means to an end, a tool to achieve a shared goal. It is based on the premise that when programme partners work together, they can produce better results than they could individually. To identify the added value of cooperation, programme partners must start by looking at the programme's overall objective and evaluate how cooperation can contribute to achieving it more effectively, efficiently, and coherently.

STEP 1: Reflect on the programme's overall objective

- Reflect on the overall objective of the programme. Jointly review the theory of change to understand what the programme seeks to achieve and how it will pursue these goals.

STEP 2: Determine the added value

- Use the guiding questions provided in the table below to discuss and identify possible areas of cooperation and determine the added value of cooperation.
- Consider how cooperation affects quality dimensions such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, impact, and sustainability (see details in Section 2).

STEP 3: Formulate a clear cooperation statement

- Formulate a clear and concise cooperation statement that captures the purpose and objectives of cooperation in the programme.
- The statement should act as a guiding document, outlining the desired outcomes and the collective direction of the cooperation. Consider integrating it into programme documents to formalise it.

STEP 4: Collect examples and potential ideas for cooperation

- Discuss concrete examples of cooperation, such as potential activities or joint outputs. Document these ideas for further development (e.g., in Tool 3: "Cooperation matrix").

2 - Guiding questions to determine the added value of cooperation

A development programme's quality is commonly assessed using the OECD-DAC criteria. To define the added value that cooperation creates, this exercise assumes that cooperation positively impacts at least one or more criteria, thereby adding value to the programme. Programme partners use the criteria to identify where and how cooperation will add value.

Criteria	Guiding questions	Preconditions
Relevance Is the programme doing the right thing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Can cooperation help programme partners better meet the needs of beneficiaries? How? (E.g., shared needs assessments, more comprehensive services for local implementing partners and beneficiaries).</i> • <i>Can cooperation help programme partners better align with the policies and priorities of partner governments? How?</i> • <i>Can cooperation help the programme to become more adaptive to changes in context? How?</i> 	<i>What needs to be put in place to create this added value?</i>
Effectiveness Is the programme achieving its objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Can cooperation help increase the programme's effectiveness? How? (E.g., reaching its objectives through more comprehensive services).</i> 	<i>What needs to be put in place to create this added value?</i>
Efficiency How well are resources being used?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What potential challenges might affect cooperation?</i> • <i>What negative impact might cooperation have on individual programme partners?</i> 	<i>What needs to be put in place to create this added value?</i>
Coherence How well does the programme fit?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is there a case for cooperation?</i> • <i>Do the benefits of cooperation outweigh the costs? Is this true at the level of the programme and each programme partner?</i> • <i>Which aspects of cooperation create the most significant opportunities/threats? What implications does this have for the programme design and cooperation management?</i> 	<i>What needs to be put in place to create this added value?</i>

<p>Sustainability Will the benefits last?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Can cooperation increase sustainability? How? (E.g., scaling-up, anchoring results in partner systems, capacity development, increased durability of results).</i> 	<p><i>What needs to be put in place to create this added value?</i></p>
<p>Impact What difference does the intervention make?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Can cooperation increase impact? How? (E.g., reach more people, provide more comprehensive support, achieve more systemic changes).</i> 	<p><i>What needs to be put in place to create this added value?</i></p>
<p>Conclusions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Where do programme partners see the most significant potential for cooperation to add value to the programme?</i> • <i>Are there specific aspects cooperation should focus on?</i> • <i>How can programme partners summarise the added value of cooperation for donors and other stakeholders? (See also step 3)</i> 	

3 - Formulating a cooperation statement

Use the table to formulate a clear statement summarising the cooperation approach and the expected added value. A clear statement is useful to engage donors and other stakeholders in cooperation.

Criteria	Text blocks
Overall objective	<i>The overall objective of our programme is...</i>
Definition of cooperation	<i>In this programme, cooperation among programme partners is defined as...</i>
Added value of cooperation	<p><i>Cooperation among programme partners will contribute to the programme's overall objective by, for example,</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Increasing relevance through...</i> • <i>Increasing effectiveness through...</i> • <i>Increasing efficiency through...</i> • <i>Increasing coherence through...</i> • <i>Increasing sustainability through...</i> • <i>Increasing impact through...</i>
Scope of cooperation	<i>Cooperation will involve X programme partners in Y locations, focusing on Z thematic areas.</i>
Additional information	<i>E.g., assumptions and risks, priorities, resources requirements, indicators of success, implications for overall programme design, etc.</i>

Box 1:

Questions for monitoring and evaluating cooperation and its results.

If cooperation is a means to an end, programmes should seek to monitor if they are achieving this end. The table below provides questions to inform internal and external evaluation on cooperation. The questions cover both the process and results of cooperation.

MONITORING QUESTIONS

Relevance – Is the programme doing the right thing?

- Does cooperation increase the relevance of the programme?
- How well do cooperation activities align with the programme objectives and desired outcomes?
- Are cooperation activities adapted to changing contexts or emerging needs?

Effectiveness – Is the programme achieving its objectives?

- Does cooperation increase the effectiveness of the programme?
- Have results been achieved through cooperation which could not be achieved individually? (e.g., covering specific needs)
- How well do partners collaborate and coordinate their efforts in implementing cooperation activities?

Efficiency – How well are resources being used?

- Does cooperation create efficiencies in programme implementation?
- Are the allocated resources (staff, time, financial) for cooperation management utilised efficiently?
- How well are cooperation activities planned and organised to optimise efficiency?
- How well is feedback for continuous learning and improvement integrated into cooperation management?
- How efficient is the communication and information flow among partners?

Coherence – How well does the programme fit?

- Does cooperation contribute to coherence among the programme partners?
- Does cooperation contribute to coherence with activities of other stakeholders?
- Is internal (among programme partners) and external cooperation (with other stakeholders) balanced appropriately based on expected added value?
- Are stakeholders (including political partners, beneficiaries, and relevant actors) engaged and involved in cooperation management?

Sustainability – Will the benefits last?

- Does cooperation contribute to sustainability of programme results?
- Is there a systematic process for capturing and sharing lessons learnt from cooperation?
- Does the cooperation programme have approaches to disseminate knowledge to the appropriate audience?

Impact – What difference does the intervention make?

- Does cooperation affect the impact the programme achieves?

TOOL 3: COOPERATION MATRIX



OBJECTIVE

This tool helps programme partners systematically develop a shared framework for cooperation and document cooperation activities.



WHEN TO USE THE TOOL

Programme partners should discuss the cooperation framework during the design phase. The framework should be discussed during the co-creation workshop (Tool 5).



HOW TO USE THE TOOL

This tool is divided into two sections. The first section presents a framework for thinking about cooperation, based on the experience of Qudra 2. It offers different models of cooperation depending on the degree of thematic and geographical overlap between programme partners' activities. The second section provides a template for a cooperation matrix that programme partners should populate according to their requirements.

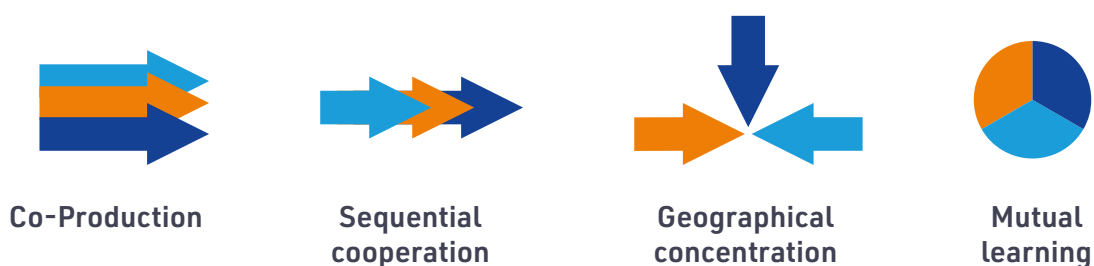
Use the cooperation framework to discuss and brainstorm the types of cooperation that best fit the programme. The models of cooperation listed here are not exhaustive, and different forms of cooperation may be suitable for different locations and thematic areas. Partners are encouraged to explore various models of cooperation that align with the programme's unique structure. Use the cooperation matrix template to collect initial ideas for cooperation activities.

Tool 9: "Operationalising cooperation" helps programme partners plan cooperation activities in more detail.

1 - A conceptual framework for cooperation

Having a mutually agreed conceptual framework and using shared terminology will make it easier for programme partners to develop, design, and communicate about their cooperation activities. The following models of cooperation were applied during the Qudra 2 programme. However, programmes should design a cooperation framework that suits their needs.

Models of cooperation	
Co-Production	Partners work together to design a particular intervention by pooling their expertise. For example, programme partners can develop a training programme together.
Sequential cooperation	Partners provide their support in a logical sequence. For example, one partner's training beneficiaries may receive start-up support from another partner.
Geographical concentration	Partners focus their complementary interventions on the same locations to maximise impact for beneficiaries.
Mutual learning	Partners draw on each other's implementation experiences to shape and adapt their interventions. For example, a partner can replicate and adapt training another partner provides, creating efficiency gains.



The table below outlines possible forms of cooperation based on the degree of thematic and geographical overlap, highlighting potential created by cooperating, but also possible risks resulting from not cooperating.

		Geographical overlap	
...and		... implementing in the same locations:	... implementing in different locations:
Thematic overlap	Partners work towards the same output	<p>Synergy can be created through in-depth cooperation in implementation.</p> <p>Cooperation can take all forms outlined above due to the considerable thematic and geographical overlap.</p> <p>If programme partners do not cooperate there is a risk of duplication of or inconsistent standards in similar activities.</p>	<p>Synergy can be created by making use of similar approaches and expertise.</p> <p>Cooperation can include the co-production of approaches (e.g., concept notes, TORs, tools), joint activities (e.g., cross-country training, study tours), and exchange of lessons learnt in implementation.</p> <p>If programme partners do not cooperate there is a risk of lack of efficiency, with multiple approaches being developed to reach the same output.</p>
	Partners work towards the same specific objective (But not necessarily under the same output)	<p>Synergy can be created by strategically linking approaches and activities to avoid duplication and achieve a more significant impact within the objective.</p> <p>Cooperation can include a joint sector and problem analysis, developing a joint result logic, co-designing activities (co-production), building interventions upon each other (sequential cooperation), and implementing activities with the same target groups (geographical concentration). Mutual learning also can take place.</p> <p>If programme partners do not cooperate there is a risk of a lack of alignment and complementarity between different activities.</p>	<p>Synergy can be created by building sectoral networks, using similar expertise, sharing approaches, analysis and successes.</p> <p>Cooperation can include network building, sharing and developing technical regional expertise at the sector level and mutual learning, including local partners.</p> <p>If programme partners do not cooperate there is no direct risk for implementation, but networking opportunities are not realised.</p>
	Partners work towards the same overall objective but different specific objectives	<p>Synergy can be created by linking different sectors for more coherent country intervention and increased visibility.</p> <p>Cooperation can include joint communication with political partners, endorsement of the programme at the country level, working on local cross-cutting topics, geographical concentration, and exchange of lessons learnt about country specificities.</p> <p>If programme partners do not cooperate there is a risk of misalignment and lack of complementarity between different specific objectives. This can impact the overall objective and lead to a lack of a unified approach towards external partners.</p>	<p>Synergy can be created by speaking with "one voice" and aligning other core project implementation processes at a regional level, independent from the content.</p> <p>Cooperation can include enhancing the core capacities of local partners, sharing technical content, sharing similar visibility channels and formats, and sharing resources (e.g., external experts, technical resources).</p> <p>If programme partners do not cooperate there is a risk of misalignment and a lack of complementarity between different specific objectives. This can impact the overall objective and lead to a lack of a unified approach towards external stakeholders.</p>

2 - Cooperation matrix: Activity brainstorming

Identify and document possible cooperation activities between programme partners using the conceptual framework from Section 1. Use Tool 9: “Operationalising cooperation” to add details at a later stage.

		Geographical overlap	
...and		... implementing in the same locations:	... implementing in different locations:
Thematic overlap	Partners work towards the same output	<p><i>Which activities can be implemented...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>... in co-production</i> <i>... through geographical concentration</i> <i>... in sequential cooperation</i> <i>... for mutual learning</i> 	<p><i>Which activities can be implemented...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>... in co-production</i> <i>... for mutual learning</i>
	Partners work towards the same specific objective (But not necessarily under the same output)	<p><i>Which activities can be implemented...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>... in co-production</i> <i>... through geographical concentration</i> <i>... in sequential cooperation</i> <i>... for mutual learning</i> 	<p><i>Which activities can be implemented...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>... in co-production</i> <i>... for mutual learning</i>
	Partners work towards the same overall objective but different specific objectives	<p><i>Which activities can be implemented...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>... through geographical concentration</i> <i>... in sequential cooperation</i> <i>... for mutual learning</i> 	<p><i>Which activities can be implemented...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>... in co-production</i> <i>... for mutual learning</i>

TOOL 4: PROGRAMME COMPLEXITY ANALYSIS



OBJECTIVE

The tool helps programme partners to understand how overall programme complexity creates opportunities and challenges for cooperation. A clear view of programme complexity will help programme partners design an appropriate cooperation management architecture.



WHEN TO USE THE TOOL

All programme partners should collaboratively fill in the tool during the programme's design phase, for example, during the co-creation workshop (Tool 5).



HOW TO USE THE TOOL

The tool facilitates a conversation between programme partners on the programme's complexity across three dimensions: stakeholders, locations, and thematic areas.

To use the tool, follow these steps:

- Discuss each guiding question and rate the level of attention programme partners need to pay to this aspect of complexity in managing cooperation.
- Synthesise major points and identify the areas with the highest level of complexity (due to the combination of stakeholders, locations, or thematic areas). It is advised to use a visualisation tool (e.g., spider map) to simplify the analysis.
- Finally, review critical questions/concerns raised by this tool and consider how they will affect the programme's approach to cooperation and cooperation management.

REMEMBER

- Make sure that a diverse range of team members (in terms of technical knowledge, functions, local and international experience) are involved in applying this tool to make sense of complexity and its implications for cooperation.

Complexity resulting from programme stakeholders

Topic	Guiding questions	Relevance One less relevant, five very relevant	Inputs
Programme donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many donors finance the programme? • What are each donor's attitudes and expectations regarding cooperation? • How active are donors in steering the programme? • Do donors' and programme partners' expectations towards cooperation align? 	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
Programme partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many partners are involved in the programme? • How similar are the programme partners? (E.g., mission, mandates, methods). • How well do programme partners' expectations towards cooperation align? • How experienced are programme partners in implementing cooperation programmes (consider all relevant staff categories)? • Do all programme partners have sufficient resources to invest in cooperation? 	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
Local partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the key political partners? • How much overlap is there among the political partners of different programme partners? • What are the key political partners' attitudes and expectations towards cooperation? • How many local implementing partners are involved in the programme? • How much overlap is there among local implementing partners of different programme partners? 	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How closely intertwined are partners' contributions to the programme's intervention logic? Are responsibilities differentiated? • How does the contracting modality of programme partners influence cooperation? (E.g., administrative rules, hierarchies, power dynamics). 	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	

Complexity resulting from locations

Topic	Guiding questions	Relevance One less relevant, five very relevant	Partners' input
Locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many locations (countries, regions, communities) will the programme target? • To what degree do the programme partners' implementation locations overlap? 	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How diverse are the contexts of implementation locations (socially, politically, economically)? • In what ways can diversity affect the potential for cooperation among programme partners (e.g., transferability of approaches)? 	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
Fragility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How fragile are the locations in which the programme implements? • How can fragility affect implementation in general and cooperation activities in particular (e.g., likely delays affecting sequential cooperation)? • Are there location-specific processes that need to be considered (permissions, approvals, etc.)? 	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
Presence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well-established are programme partners in the implementation locations? • Are regular face-to-face meetings possible? 	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	

Complexity resulting from thematic areas

Topic	Guiding questions	Relevance One less relevant, five very relevant	Partners' input
Number of thematic areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In how many thematic areas is the programme active? • How closely related are the thematic areas? • How integrated is the theory of change across different thematic areas? • Are all programme partners involved in all thematic areas? • Is there a cross-cutting objective or theme relevant to all programme partners? 	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	

Conclusions

Where do programme partners observe the most complex situations or phenomena?

How do different dimensions of complexity interact (e.g., the number of locations increases the number of political partners)?

What implications does complexity have for cooperation and cooperation management?

Is it possible to reduce complexity by prioritising certain cooperation opportunities over others?

TOOL 5: CO-CREATION WORKSHOP



OBJECTIVE

The co-creation workshop is designed to help programme partners combine the results of various analyses into a coherent cooperation strategy.



WHEN TO USE THE TOOL

A co-creation workshop should be organised during the programme's design phase to ensure a well-developed cooperation strategy. This is important to ensure that other design parameters (e.g., locations, budgets, specific objectives, etc.) are designed in such a way to enable or at least not hinder cooperation.



HOW TO USE THE TOOL

This tool is a process step. Use the suggested workshop agenda to bring together the results of Tools 1-4. The agenda also encourages you to reflect on how these results may be relevant for other success factors and tools.

REMEMBER

- Conduct the workshop face-to-face, if possible, though it can be done online if necessary. It is important to employ collaborative and interactive tools to enhance engagement and encourage brainstorming among programme partners.
- The amount of time you need will depend on the nature of the programme. Make sure you leave plenty of time for discussion. Time and effort invested in this early stage of cooperation will pay dividends when implementation begins.

1 - Suggested workshop agenda

Objectives	Guidelines
Session 1: Setting the scene	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a common understanding of the context and development of the cooperation programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present the cooperation programme's genesis, donors' expectations, and any framing policy documents. • Clarify the overall objective of the programme and discuss the theory of change in broad terms.
Session 2: Understanding how programme complexity shapes cooperation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify how different dimensions of complexity in programme design create opportunities and challenges for cooperation. • Discuss how to manage cooperation considering the programme's complexity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Tool 3: "Programme complexity analysis" to guide the discussion. <p>Guiding questions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do key design parameters create complexity? How will this create challenges and opportunities for cooperation and cooperation management?
Session 3: Presenting each partner's comparative advantages and identifying synergies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present each partner's expertise, experiences, familiarity with the context, networks, and operational capacity. • Discuss how to leverage each programme partner's comparative advantages to exploit opportunities and mitigate threats. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each programme partner presents their self-assessment (Tool 1, Step 1). • Discuss opportunities for collaboration based on the SWOT template and guiding questions. <p>Guiding questions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What does each partner bring to this co-operation? - What are possible synergies? How can each programme partner's expertise, experiences, and networks be leveraged to enhance the programme? - What are possible threats arising from cooperation? How can they be mitigated?

Session 4: Defining the added value of cooperation

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define how cooperation contributes to the overall objectives of the programme (“added value”). | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use Tool 2: “Added value of cooperation” (Steps 1 and 2) to guide the session. <p>Guiding questions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- How will cooperating help the programme achieve its overall objective?- Which expected benefits are most important (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, sustainability, impact)?- How can programme partners summarise the added value of cooperation for donors and other stakeholders? |
|--|--|

Session 5: Start to develop a conceptual framework for cooperation

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set an initial framework for cooperation that will be further detailed during the inception phase.• Clarify a common terminology for types of cooperation.• Discuss potential ideas for concrete interventions and cooperation activities.• Formulate a joint statement around the added value of cooperation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce Tool 3: “Cooperation matrix” as a conceptual framework to guide discussions on cooperation and start brainstorming possible cooperation activities. <p>Guiding questions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- What do we mean by “cooperation”?- What are potential areas for cooperation between different programme partners? What cooperation activities can programme partners envisage?- How can we structure our cooperation ideas in a coherent framework? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conclude the session by drafting a “cooperation statement” (Tool 2, Step 3). |
|---|--|

Closing

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that all key elements of cooperation, deliberated and set during the design phase, have been covered.• Determine the next steps, responsibilities, and deadlines. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do the workshop results mean for the other success factors, including steering, processes, learning, and communication?• What are next steps? |
|---|---|

2. Steering

The tools in this section help programme partners design a cooperation management architecture, consisting of the structures and processes necessary to manage cooperation effectively. We define managing cooperation widely to include making decisions about cooperation, implementing cooperation activities, and providing relevant support services.

All programme partners should be involved in creating the cooperation management architecture, and they should work together to establish clear rules and procedures for decision-making and implementation. During this process, programme partners should agree on:

1. Clear roles, mandates, and processes that will create shared ownership and mutual accountability.
2. An agreed strategy to actively engage with shared stakeholders within the wider cooperation environment.
3. Resources required for cooperation, based on a clear and simple case that links costs of cooperation management with its expected benefits in terms of added value.

This section covers the following lessons learnt and associated tools:

LL3: Establish an effective cooperation management architecture	Tool 5: Cooperation management architecture	To establish effective structures and processes for cooperation management
LL4: Balance “internal” and “external” cooperation by the value it creates	Tool 6: Stakeholder engagement strategy	To identify and engage shared stakeholders effectively as a collective
LL5: Allocate sufficient resources based on a case for cooperation	Tool 7: Cooperation resource planning	To bring together key elements of the cooperation strategy

TOOL 6: COOPERATION MANAGEMENT ARCHITECTURE



OBJECTIVE

This tool is designed to assist programme partners in creating a cooperation management architecture. The architecture includes the structures and processes for decision-making, implementation, and support services for cooperation activities. The design of the cooperation management architecture should promote participation, clarify roles, and establish mutual accountability. It must be tailored to the programme's complexity and level of ambition to avoid excessive or insufficient steering of cooperation.



WHEN TO USE THE TOOL

Programme partners should use this tool during the programme's inception phase.



HOW TO USE THE TOOL

The tool is organised into three sections. The first section outlines possible functions of a cooperation management architecture. The second section provides guiding questions to assist programme partners in designing an architecture, while the third section provides a template to document the key elements of a cooperation management architecture.

Build on insights from Tool 4: "Programme complexity analysis" and Tool 3: "Cooperation matrix". To design structures and processes coherently, you can use the tool together with Tool 10: "Shared process mapping".

1 - Functions of cooperation management

The following tables lists core functions of a cooperation management architecture across three dimensions: decision-making, implementation, and support services. Programme partners are encouraged to review the lists critically and add or remove functions depending on their context.

I. Decision-making	
Developing the cooperation strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define cooperation objectives within the programme. • Regularly review and update cooperation strategy. • Foster a shared understanding of the programme's objectives. • Align programme partners' expectations towards cooperation.
Operationalising the cooperation strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve workstreams and plans, including deadlines. • Develop indicators to measure and document added value through cooperation. • Ensure that all programme partners mobilise the agreed resources for cooperation.
Ensure effective implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly review progress on agreed measures. • Ensure decisions are taken collaboratively and involve input from all programme partners. • Promote a culture of cooperation. • Regularly evaluate cooperation and identify areas for improvement through "check-ins". • Identify and resolve conflicts hindering effective cooperation.
Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on cooperation progress in reports and steering meetings (e.g., to donor and political partners).

II. Implementation	
Joint implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design, implement and coordinate individual cooperation activities per the agreed plans. • Monitor and evaluate cooperation activities. • Onboard local implementing partners on cooperation activities.
Exchange and learning activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to exchange and learning activities. • Participate in working group activities, such as organising meetings, provide resources or technical expertise, and facilitate knowledge sharing among group members.
III. Support	
Facilitate cooperation between programme partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare regular meetings to discuss progress, challenges, and opportunities (agenda, decision points, minutes, etc.). • Initiate regular cooperation check-in meetings (agenda, decision points, minutes, etc.). • Provide guidance and mediation support in resolving conflicts or disagreements between programme partners. • Facilitate dialogue and negotiation to find mutually acceptable solutions and promote a cooperative mindset. • Offer resources or expertise to address technical or operational challenges that affect cooperation.
Support information and knowledge management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate information and knowledge sharing, collaboration, and networking among programme partners. • Provide technical expertise and operational support for information and knowledge management, including learning activities (e.g., documentation of learnings). • Develop and implement an information and knowledge management system that includes the processes, tools, and platforms for capturing, storing, and sharing information and knowledge. • Document and disseminate key insights, presentations, and outcomes from the learning exchange activities to ensure broader access and application of the shared knowledge.
Support other management processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define, initiate and follow up on any other cooperation-related management processes (e.g., joint reporting, audits, evaluation). • Provide guidance and support to other programme partners in completing management processes.

2 - Key design questions for a cooperation management architecture

Dimension		Response (1 Low - 5 High)	Notes for discussion
Decision-making	What is the role of donors and/or political partners in cooperation management?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
	How important is cooperation relative to other priorities of the programme?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
	To what extent should decisions about cooperation be taken by the overall management team of the programme?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
	To what extent should decision-making be decentralised (e.g., by thematic area or location)?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
	Should decisions be taken unanimously?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
	How important is rapid decision-making to the success of the programme?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
	How much time can programme partners realistically dedicate to cooperation steering activities?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
	Who can decide what within each programme partner's team?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
	How important are regular physical meetings (especially in regional or global programmes)?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
	How interdependent are partners' interventions?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	

Implementation	How significant is the potential for exchange and learning among programme partners?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
	How much cooperation is planned?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
	Are there clear priorities among different cooperation activities?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
	How motivated are programme partners to take the lead in cooperation work streams?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
	To what extent do programme partners have the required capacities to implement cooperation activities within their assigned workstreams?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
	How well can programme partners distribute cooperation tasks across multiple team members (within each organisation)?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
	To what extent will cooperation activities require flexibility and agility (for instance, when operating in a fragile context)?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
	How complex are the requirements for communication and information sharing?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	

Support	Should one programme partner take the lead in facilitating cooperation?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
	Are the available resources sufficient for effective facilitation?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
	Is external expertise required to facilitate cooperation?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
	What importance should be assigned to information and knowledge documentation and its dissemination?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
	Do different IT systems and rules (including, for example, data protection) stand in the way of a user-friendly shared IT platform?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
	Are the main shared management processes clear to all programme partners?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	
	How much friction is there between shared management processes and programme partners' internal processes?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5	

Note on interpreting the ratings

- **Decision-making:** A high average rating could indicate a need for increased partner engagement, where they are expected to participate in multiple decision-making areas actively. Partners could explore more complex and participatory methods and processes essential to facilitate quick and responsive decision-making. A low average rating could suggest that programme partners will still be involved in significant decision-making, but the process will be less intricate, allowing more straightforward procedures to be employed.
- **Implementation:** A high average rating could indicate a substantial number of cooperation activities, requiring the distribution of responsibility among programme partners to lead these initiatives. In such cases, programme partners must also be able to take the lead. A low average rating could suggest fewer cooperation activities or programme partners lacking the capacity to lead. This situation may require more centralisation or capacity building to address the limitations.
- **Support:** A high average rating could indicate the need for a decentralised approach to facilitation, ensuring regular meetings and coordination among all programme partners. This approach acknowledges the complexity and interconnectedness of cooperation activities, requiring a setup that can effectively respond to such intricacy. A lower average rating could suggest adopting a more centralised approach, wherein one partner or focal point can manage facilitation due to the relatively lower complexity of the cooperation.

3 - Elements of a cooperation management architecture

Function	Structure	Key processes/ outputs	Geo-graphic scope	Thematic scope	Responsible programme partner	Meeting frequency	Resource requirements	Reports to	Relevant external stakeholders
Decision-making	Cooperation steering group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooperation strategy Approve work plans and outputs. Check-in meetings 	Whole programme	Whole programme	All	Monthly		e.g., Programme Steering Committee	
	Country steering group Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate cooperation 	Country Y	Whole programme	All	Monthly	X managers	Cooperation steering group	
Implementation	Working group 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geographic coordination of cross-sectoral interventions 	Location X in country Y	Whole programme	Programme Partner X	Bi-weekly	X technical experts Local partner representatives	Country Steering Group Y	
	Working group 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thematic lessons learnt: 1. Regional dissemination 	Regional	Thematic area X	Programme Partner Y	Monthly	X technical experts One consultant for documentation		

Support	Secretariat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall facilitation Monitoring & evaluation 	Whole programme	Whole programme	Programme Partner Z	N/A	X manager Y technical experts	Cooperation steering group	
	Working group 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harmonise financial reporting approaches 	Whole programme	Finance & administration	Programme partner Y	N/A		Cooperation steering group	

TOOL 7: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY



OBJECTIVE

A stakeholder engagement strategy enables programme partners to engage effectively with shared stakeholders in a location or thematic area.



WHEN TO USE THE TOOL

Partners should use this tool for the first time during the inception phase. However, they may wish to come back to it regularly during implementation.



HOW TO USE THE TOOL

This tool is divided into three steps: 1) identifying programme partners' shared stakeholders, 2) analysing shared stakeholders, and 3) developing an engagement strategy.

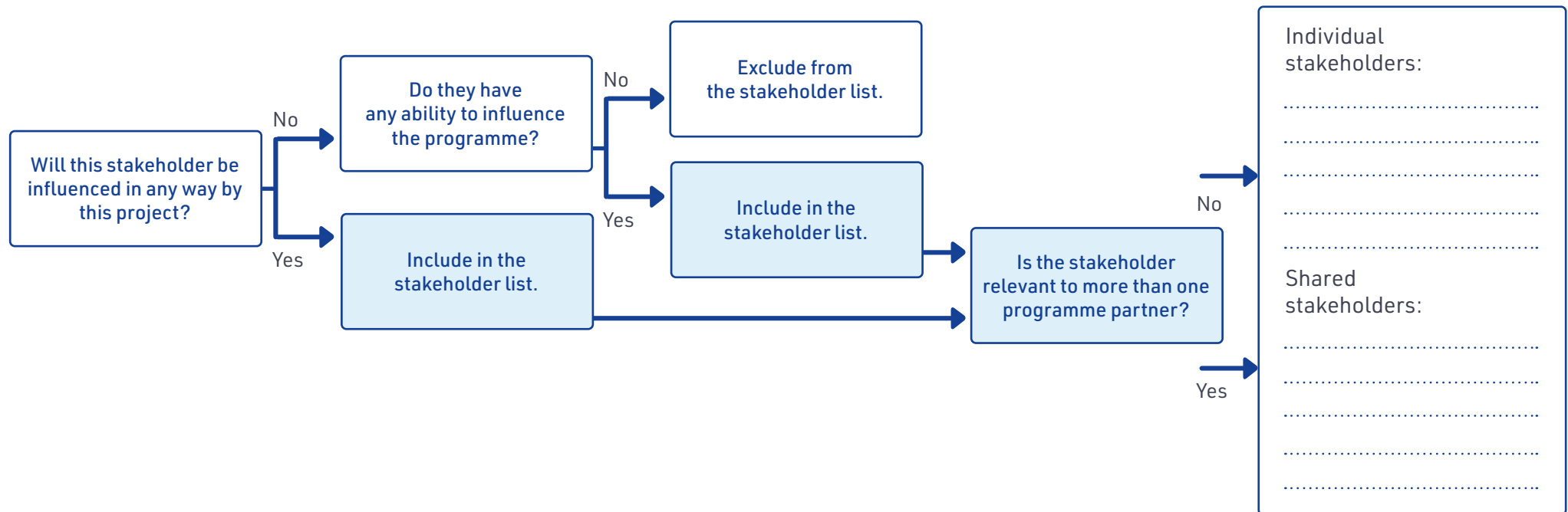
1 - Mapping shared stakeholders

Location and/or thematic area

Populate a list of all possible stakeholders (individuals, NGOs, donors, government agencies, private sector, etc.)

.....
.....
.....

Validate the need to engage the stakeholders mentioned above by using the tool below for rapid filtering.



2 - Analysing shared stakeholders

	Related programme component/output	Stakeholder's interest	Stakeholder's influence	The programme's needs and objectives towards this stakeholder
Stakeholders	For which component/output are they most relevant?	What is their primary interest in the programme?	<i>What influence do they have?</i>	What does the programme need from this stakeholder? What objective is pursued by engaging with this stakeholder?
Stakeholder <i>E.g., Municipality X</i>	<i>E.g., employment promotion</i>	<i>E.g., limiting unemployment, retaining overview of activities in jurisdiction</i>	<i>E.g., formal approval of activities in jurisdiction</i>	<i>E.g., receiving formal approvals quickly, assistance in identifying beneficiaries</i>
Stakeholder				

3 – Developing an engagement strategy

	Previous relationships, experiences and dynamics	Who engages with this stakeholder?	How will the programme engage?	Next steps
<p>Stakeholders</p>	<p>Have programme partners engaged previously with the stakeholder? What is the current nature of the relationship?</p> <p>Do any specific areas of interest or sensitive topics require caution when engaging with this stakeholder?</p>	<p>Which programme partner(s) will engage with this stakeholder?</p> <p>Is one programme partner in the lead?</p> <p>Who is the most suitable person or entity to approach this stakeholder?</p>	<p>What role does the stakeholder have in the programme (e.g., responsible, accountable, consulted, informed)?</p> <p>How frequently will the stakeholder be contacted, and through which channels?</p> <p>How can the programme partners jointly maintain a positive relationship with this stakeholder?</p>	
<p>Stakeholder <i>E.g., Municipality X</i> </p>	<p><i>E.g., partner X – more than ten years of experience, previously worked for the municipality</i></p>	<p><i>E.g., partner X and Y for formal approvals, partner X for beneficiary identification</i></p>	<p><i>E.g., monthly face-to-face meetings, quarterly report on activities.</i></p>	<p><i>E.g., Invite them to take part in an activity.</i></p> <p><i>E.g., Establish a regular feedback loop and process for regular engagement</i></p>

TOOL 8: COOPERATION RESOURCE PLANNING



OBJECTIVE

The cooperation resource planning tool assists programme partners in strategically planning and allocating sufficient resources for cooperation based on the programme's structure, cooperation management architecture, and the specific activities outlined in the cooperation matrix. Assessing the required resources is essential to determine the added value of cooperation. It is important to ensure that the benefits of cooperation outweigh the costs. To engage donors and other stakeholders, such as political partners, the programme partners should develop a clear narrative linking costs to the expected benefits of cooperation.



WHEN TO USE THE TOOL

Partners should use this tool during the inception phase of the programme, though it may be required to estimate resources in the design phase to ensure sufficient budget is allocated for cooperation.



HOW TO USE THE TOOL

Resource planning for cooperation management depends on the cooperation management architecture and the scope of cooperation activities, which can vary from one programme to another. This tool provides a systematic approach for programme partners to assess the resources required for cooperation. Tool 4: "Programme complexity analysis", Tool 6: "Cooperation management architecture", and Tool 9: "Operationalising cooperation", can help you to estimate the resource requirements for specific cooperation activities and cooperation management in general.

Resource planning	Suggested step	Consideration
Staff	1. Determine the staffing needs based on the complexity and scope of cooperation activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Evaluate the expertise and skills required to effectively manage and implement cooperation activities. ✓ Consider the diverse competencies and soft skills needed, such as project management, communication, negotiation, conflict resolution, and cultural sensitivity.
	2. Assign staff members to facilitate and coordinate cooperation activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Evaluate how cooperation management tasks can be distributed among all team members. Avoid overloading certain key positions. ✓ Identify situations where external support may be required for specific expertise or time-bound tasks.
Time planning	3. Allocate sufficient time for cooperation activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Evaluate the complexity and scope of cooperation activities when determining the time required for each task or milestone. ✓ Estimate the time requirements of staff for cooperation management activities. ✓ Evaluate the workload of staff members and allocate sufficient time for cooperation management activities in their schedules. ✓ Build in buffers or contingency time to accommodate unexpected challenges or adjustments.
	4. Develop a comprehensive timeline that outlines the sequence of activities, key milestones, deadlines, and expected outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consider the complexity, resources required, and dependencies between activities when setting realistic timelines. ✓ Schedule cooperation activities that align with the availability of staff members from each programme partner.
Financial resources	5. Evaluate the financial resources needed to support the effective management of cooperation activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Evaluate the complexity and scope of cooperation activities when determining the time required for each task or milestone. ✓ Estimate the time requirements of staff for cooperation management activities. ✓ Evaluate the workload of staff members and allocate sufficient time for cooperation management activities in their schedules. ✓ Build in buffers or contingency time to accommodate unexpected challenges or adjustments.
Review & justification	6. Conduct a cost-benefit analysis to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of resource allocation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Evaluate the costs associated with cooperation management against the expected benefits and outcomes of the cooperation activities. ✓ Determine how you will make the "case" for cooperation-related resources towards donors (and local partners), linking costs of cooperation to expected results and document it.

3. Processes

The tools in this section support programme partners to identify and design the processes needed for cooperation. Cooperation becomes concrete through joint implementation. Implementation teams must operationalise their cooperation as early as possible in the inception phase, building on the cooperation matrix developed in the design phase. Different modalities of cooperation should be tested and evaluated throughout the inception phase. This agility has to continue throughout implementation to mitigate potential risks resulting from cooperation and seize unforeseen opportunities.

In addition to joint implementation, joint programmes need shared management processes, such as financial management, reporting, and support services like M&E and communication. These interdependencies require mutual accountability. Well-functioning processes maximise added value through efficiencies in bundling processes. However, the more partners, the more fragile such processes can become, for example, due to late submissions or mutually incompatible administrative rules and procedures. It is essential to minimise deviations from the internal processes of member organisations where possible to reduce the risk of errors or redundant work. Like strategy, process management should be aligned with the complexity of the partner structure to avoid over- or under-steering.

This section covers the following lessons learnt and associated tools:

LL6: Operationalise joint implementation quickly through joint planning and agility	Tool 8: Operationalising cooperation	More detailed joint planning of cooperation activities based on the cooperation matrix (Tool 3)
LL7: Create robust shared processes and ensure accountability	Tool 9: Shared process mapping	To establish shared processes required within the structure of the programme

REMEMBER

- If possible, test and evaluate different cooperation models early in the implementation phase.
- Complex programmes may require an extended inception period to allow programme partners to become operational individually, and jointly plan their cooperation activities.

TOOL 9: OPERATIONALISING COOPERATION



OBJECTIVE

This tool is designed to help programme partners plan cooperation activities in detail. More detailed planning allows programme partners to identify the necessary resources and clearly define responsibilities. Additionally, the tool can track activities during implementation and facilitate communication with relevant stakeholders.



WHEN TO USE THE TOOL

This tool should be used during the inception phase for in-depth planning and implementation of cooperation activities. The tool can also be used for monitoring reviews during implementation.



HOW TO USE THE TOOL

Use the suggested tables to develop detailed plans and an overview of their joint cooperation activities. Reflect on the information required for a specific case and adapt the tables as needed. The overview table is helpful for monitoring and reporting on cooperation.

Build on the initial cooperation activity ideas developed while developing Tool 3: "Cooperation matrix".

1 – Concept note for cooperation activities

The SWOT analysis builds on the insights from the partner self-assessment. It can be used to consolidate each programme partner’s key strengths and weaknesses. This will help to identify the opportunities for and threats to/arising from cooperation.

Title of the cooperation activity	
Brief description	
Corresponding component/output	
Intended results, including added value	<i>Describe what you aim to achieve with this activity and how cooperation will add value.</i>
Location(s)	<i>Where will the activity take place?</i>
Model(s) of cooperation	<p><i>Choose the corresponding model:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Co-production</i> • <i>Geographical concentration</i> • <i>Sequential cooperation</i> • <i>Mutual Learning</i>
Programme partners/ persons and their roles	<i>Define who will be involved and how each programme partner will contribute. Specify the role of each programme partner.</i>
Timeline and milestones	<i>Indicate a timeline and key milestones.</i>
Resource requirements	<i>Define the required resources in the form of time, expertise, and budget.</i>

2 - Overview of cooperation activities

Cooperation activity	Brief description	Programme partners	Corresponding specific objective/ output	Location(s)	Model(s) of cooperation	Expected results, including added value	Further information	Resource requirements	Status
Activity X									
Activity Y									

TOOL 10: SHARED PROCESS MAPPING



OBJECTIVE

This tool aims to assist programme partners in identifying shared processes and their requirements. It prompts programme partners to consider possible sources of friction between their internal procedures and shared management processes required for cooperation. The tool can also serve as a foundation for periodic reviews.



WHEN TO USE THE TOOL

It is advisable to use this tool early in the inception phase to provide orientation to the programme partners and identify possible challenges proactively. The tool can also be used when planning specific activities, such as entering into a cooperation with a shared local implementing partner.



HOW TO USE THE TOOL

Start mapping shared processes, then discuss how each programme partner handles these processes internally (Box 2 offers examples of common shared processes within a cooperation programme). Review your list and determine 1) which processes will remain the individual responsibility of each programme partner, 2) shared processes that require modifications/adaptation of programme partners' internal procedures, and 3) shared processes that need to be developed for the programme. It is essential to address any sources of friction early on and address emerging concerns promptly.

Consider using Tool 3: "Cooperation matrix", and Tool 6: "Cooperation management architecture" to identify relevant processes.

REMEMBER

Successful shared processes will require:

- Early planning and communication of deadlines and inputs, ideally utilising shared, online project management software.
- Clear guidance documents on required inputs, supported by "Q&A" meetings.
- Commitment to timelines and quality standards by all programme partners.

Guiding questions	Points for consideration	Input
1. What common processes will be shared among programme partners?	Identify and list all the fundamental processes all programme partners will undertake collaboratively throughout the programme. Review programme documents and contracts to identify relevant processes.	
2. How are these processes typically carried out within each programme partner organisation?	Examine existing internal processes within each partner organisation for the identified shared processes. Understand the methods, tools, and practices used by each organisation.	
3. What potential challenges might arise when implementing the shared processes?	Discuss potential challenges that could emerge during the implementation of shared processes. These may include differences in organisational cultures, communication barriers, conflicting priorities, or varying resources.	
4. How will the programme address challenges?	Develop mechanisms to address any bottlenecks or inefficiencies that could hinder the smooth execution of shared processes.	
5. How will programme partners ensure alignment and commitment to the shared processes?	Discuss how to foster alignment and commitment among all programme partners.	
6. How will programme partners ensure they clearly understand the shared processes and their respective roles in executing them?	Communicate and explain in detail what each process entails, and the specific contributions required from each programme partner.	
7. Is there a need for training or capacity-building to ensure that all team members involved in the shared processes have the required capabilities?	Evaluate if any programme partner encounters capacity gaps or lacks the knowledge to implement shared processes effectively.	

Based on the discussion, identify:

Processes falling under the responsibility of individual programme partners	
Shared processes that require modifications/adaptation of programme partners' internal procedures	
Shared processes to be developed for the cooperation programme	

Box 2: Examples of shared processes

The following table presents the most relevant shared processes during Qudra 2. This list is not comprehensive, and programme partners are encouraged to consider additional processes based on the cooperation needs.

Programme management	Programme design	Programme partners – together with donors and political partners – develop the general design of the programme (objectives, who does what where etc.). Joint scoping missions may take place.
	Allocation of funding	Programme partners must collectively decide how the available funding will be allocated across different activities or interventions within the programme.
	Negotiating programme extensions	Programme partners may need to negotiate and agree on extending the programme duration if additional time is required to achieve the desired outcomes.
Joint implementation	Identifying joint programme partners or areas of intervention	Programme partners collaborate to identify areas where their expertise and resources can be effectively combined to address programme objectives.
	Contracting local programme partners	Programme partners may have shared local implementing partners. It may be beneficial to develop joint standards (e.g., payment of per diems).
	Sequencing interventions	Programme partners plan and coordinate the timing and order of interventions to ensure that the outputs of each activity build upon and contribute to the overall programme goals.
Joint implementation	Financial reporting	Programme partners share responsibility for submitting accurate and timely financial reports detailing the programme expenditure and budget utilisation.
	Audits	Programme partners cooperate to provide the necessary documentation and information for audits to ensure financial accountability and compliance.
	Ad hoc queries on financing re-quests	Programme partners may need to respond to ad hoc enquiries or requests related to programme financing, providing additional information or justifications as needed.

Monitoring & evaluation	Joint reporting	Programme partners collaborate to produce joint progress report.
	Aggregation of data for shared outcome indicators	Programme partners contribute and collectively analyse and aggregate data to track progress on shared outcome indicators, facilitating an integrated view of programme achievements.
	Coordination of evaluation missions	Programme partners coordinate and support evaluation missions, ensuring the evaluation process aligns with agreed-upon standards.
Communication & visibility	Development of key messages	Programme partners work together to develop and align key messages accurately representing the programme's objectives, achievements, and impact.
	Development of communication products	Programme partners collaborate on creating various communication materials such as reports, brochures, presentations, or videos to convey programme-related information effectively.
	Contributions to social media campaigns	Programme partners actively participate in social media campaigns, sharing programme-related content to raise awareness and visibility.

4. Learning

The tools in this section help programme partners to promote learning within the cooperation programme and actively manage their wide networks for the dissemination of information and knowledge.

Learning takes place on two levels. Firstly, programme partners can learn from each other through implementation, for example, the most effective ways to promote community participation in local governance. Partners should map areas of shared concern early and regularly revisit these.

Secondly, programme partners must learn to work together, for example, by finding ways to promote teamwork or gain experience in collaborative management processes. To ensure that programme partners “learn to work together”, check-in meetings should be held regularly throughout a programme. These meetings create the space for programme partners to deliberate potential changes and how to address them together. Some of the cooperation challenges can be related to human resources, conflicting cultures, the distribution of tasks, or more general implementation challenges.

The scope for learning is enhanced if the partnership is seen as one node in a much more extensive network that consists of its members’ broader organisations, local partners, and other stakeholders. Actively managing the dissemination of information and knowledge and brokering relationships within this network will add value.

This section covers the following lessons learnt and associated tools:

LL8: Create platforms for learning and knowledge exchange within the partnership	Tool 11: Learning partnership checklist	To assess learning and knowledge sharing throughout the programme
LL9: Actively manage your networks for disseminating information and knowledge		
LL10: Conduct regular check-ins on cooperation to adjust and learn	Tool 12: Cooperation check-in guide	To address critical areas of potential challenges related to cooperation management

TOOL 11: LEARNING PARTNERSHIP CHECKLIST



OBJECTIVE

This tool is designed to guide programme partners to assess learning processes within the programme.



WHEN TO USE THE TOOL

The tool should be used periodically throughout the programme.



HOW TO USE THE TOOL

Teams involved in decision-making, implementation, or supporting cooperation activities can use the tool to reflect on information and knowledge management.

REMEMBER

- Information and knowledge management are crucial for cooperation programmes. It requires both “high touch” and “high tech” communication. Regular meetings and an accessible online platform are essential for accessible and rapid information exchange.

Learning partnership checklist

Learning from each other

Do programme partners have a shared view of the value of mutual learning?

Are (priority) areas for learning defined by the programme management and reviewed regularly?

Are successes and failures shared openly among programme partners?

Is a diverse range of team members contributing to learning within the programme? If not, why not?

Does the programme actively seek out external knowledge or expertise?

Is learning applied and transferred into implementation? If not, why not?

Have programme partners identified appropriate formats or methods to disseminate the learning?

Have programme partners identified a potential target audience for the programme's learnings?

Is the programme leveraging its wider networks to disseminate learnings and information?

Preconditions for successful learning and dissemination

Are there sufficient resources for learning?

Do team members possess the necessary skills to identify, document, and present learnings?

Is there a functioning digital platform where information and experiences can be easily shared among programme partners?

Other considerations:

TOOL 12: COOPERATION CHECK-IN GUIDE⁴



OBJECTIVE

This tool is designed to help programme partners assess the status of the cooperation and identify areas for discussion and improvement. Regular check-ins ensure that cooperation can be improved, and challenges addressed. It also helps to capture lessons learnt for the future.



WHEN TO USE THE TOOL

This tool should be used to prepare for formal and informal check-in meetings throughout the design, inception and implementation phase.



HOW TO USE THE TOOL

Each programme partner should review the tool before a check-in, indicating their level of agreement with each statement and the reasons for their assessment. If the meeting is formally facilitated by a programme partner or external support, they can collect the results in advance and present a summary for discussion. It is also possible to go through the list during a check-in meeting.

Box 3 provides additional information on possible formats and common challenges that can be addressed in a check-in meeting.

REMEMBER

- Check-in meetings should be a safe space for everyone share their opinions openly in a spirit of constructive feedback and continuous improvement. It may be useful to commission an external facilitator for cooperation check-ins.

⁴ Inspired by The SDG Partnership Guidebook Tool 7: Partnership Healthcheck

	1	2	3	4	5
1. General					
Cooperation generates added value and achieves outcomes that exceed what each programme partner could achieve alone.					
The cooperation is structured and operates in a way that creates value for each programme partner and ensures mutual benefits.					
Programme partners have the resources and opportunities to participate and actively contribute to the cooperation.					
2. Communication					
There is a culture of collaboration and support among programme partners.					
There is a high level of trust among the programme partners.					
Cultural differences between organisations are well-managed.					
Challenges, problems, and tensions are discussed openly and handled respectfully.					
A diverse range of programme staff is involved in cooperation.					
Communication channels are clear, effective, and used by programme staff.					
3. Cooperation management					
The cooperation management architecture is fit for purpose and effective.					
Cooperation management is inclusive of all programme partners.					
All programme partners are fulfilling their commitments and obligations to the cooperation.					
Programme partners are aware of and adapt cooperation to changing contexts.					

	1	2	3	4	5
Programme partners can actively contribute to cooperation management.					
Programme partners contribute to learning and knowledge exchange.					
Information and knowledge management is effectively implemented.					
Programme partners remain fully committed to the cooperation.					
4. Resources					
There are dedicated and sufficient resources to facilitate cooperation.					
Partners' resources, expertise, experiences, and networks are being leveraged.					
5. Broader context					
The theory of change remains relevant to the local context.					
The cooperation capitalises on similar initiatives and programmes.					
Knowledge and learning are shared with a broader network of stakeholders.					
6. Summary					
<p>Successes to be leveraged and capitalised on:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p>Challenges to be addressed and possible approaches for mitigation:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>				

7. ACTION STEPS TO BE TAKEN

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Box 3:

Check-in meetings process and formats

Possible formats of check-in meetings

Check-in meetings can have different objectives and take different forms. The meetings can be:

- Formal check-in meetings: scheduled and communicated as part of the implementation plan, and all programme partners are informed of the frequency, objective, and agenda.
- Informal check-in meetings: conducted between programme partners on a need basis to discuss specific issues and request support or assistance, etc.

Formal check-in meetings	Informal check-in meetings
✓ Structured communication	✓ Allows for more open and honest conversations.
✓ Clear objectives	✓ Flexible
✓ Accountability	✓ More regular
✓ Collective problem-solving	✓ Needs-basis
✓ Engagement of the wider team	✓ Encourages regular and continuous communication.
✓ Require time to plan and schedule	✓ Personal connections
	✓ Quick problem solving

Common challenges in complex cooperation programmes and possible mitigation measures

Challenge	Mitigation
Frequent staff turnover	Involve multiple individuals from each partner organisation in crucial steps. Establish a protocol to ensure a smooth handover as staff leave or join the cooperation programme.
One partner is not delivering	Identify the challenges using the check-in tool and identify mitigation measures.
Complex programmes create additional layers of work	Communicate all requests and their rationale. Establish alignment on processes and reporting mechanisms early in the partnership and enhance the capacity of programme partners or provide supplementary support as necessary.
Different organisational work cultures	Establish rules by finding common ground that benefits all programme partners. Be willing to compromise when needed. Ensure willingness to learn and adapt, which involves others being flexible and open to learning.
The difference in local context makes it difficult to cooperate and share knowledge across countries	Reflect whether this cooperation activity adds sufficient value in light of the costs of adaptation to the contexts of different locations.

5. Communication

This tool focuses on effective communication. Communication is the foundation for building a common culture among programme partners and stimulating teamwork in pursuit of shared goals. Overcoming barriers to communication across organisations and learning to work with different organisational cultures is vital but challenging. Programme partners must address this challenge consciously and proactively.

This section covers the following lesson learnt and associated tool:

LL9: Foster a strong cooperation culture through communication	Tool 11: Culture and people charter	To establish a shared culture and norms
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TOOL 13: CULTURE AND PEOPLE CHARTER



OBJECTIVE

The culture and people charter offers a framework to develop a common foundation of shared values, principles, and practices among programme partners to guide cooperation. This will cultivate a sense of teamwork, shared purpose, and commitment.



WHEN TO USE THE TOOL

This tool is designed to be used in partnership workshops during the inception phase to facilitate discussions on culture and people. It serves as a crucial first step in establishing a common culture, norms, and “ground rules” that reflect the shared values of the programme partners.



HOW TO USE THE TOOL

This tool presents five categories for programme partners to reflect on collectively. Each category comprises questions that generate shared or common input reflecting all programme partners’ perspectives. Draft a clear ‘statement of intent’ for each category to ensure alignment and commitment. For best results, ensure the exercise includes diverse team members (locations, offices, positions).

REMEMBER

- Create a space for open discussion and consider everyone’s opinions on each topic. Consider using an external facilitator who is independent from all programme partners and capable of facilitating a meaningful and honest conversation on culture.
- Use “we will” or “I will” statements to encourage ownership of the process.
- Update this charter regularly as the cooperation matures.

Discussion points	Inputs	Statement of intent
<p>Values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the values and principles you follow in your organisation? (In broad terms first, then try to articulate further.) • What are your “non-negotiables”? (Practices, measures, or behaviours that the organisation would not tolerate) • What are elements can contribute to a shared identity among programme partners? 		<p>We believe that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - - - <p>... will be the central values guiding our cooperation.</p>
<p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What good communication practices can you recommend to the partnership? • What communication channels and platforms work best for you? • How do you ensure that everyone is informed? • Under what circumstances would you be open to speaking about your organisation’s weaknesses? • How do you ensure that every can contribute to communication? • How do you handle disagreements or misunderstandings in communication? 		<p>We commit to</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p>Cooperation related decision-making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In your experience, what works best for collaborative decision-making? • How do you ensure that decision-making processes are inclusive and consider diverse perspectives and expertise? • How familiar are you with participatory decision-making mechanisms? To what extent are they practiced in your organisation? • How can you balance efficiency and inclusivity in decision-making processes? • When (and by who) should a final decision be made? After achieving complete consensus, majority consensus, or after everyone has provided feedback? 		<p>We commit that whenever we are making decisions, we will consider</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>

<p>Conflict resolution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would your organisation typically communicate with its partners when conflicts arise? • In your experience, what works best to resolve conflicts amicably and effectively? 		<p>We commit that whenever a conflict is foreseen or arises, we will</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p>Working style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How open and flexible are you to new forms of working in partnership? • What is essential to you when working in partnership? (An individual or an organisation) • How open are you to trusting others? 		<p>In our cooperation, we commit to working together in a manner that</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>to ensure that</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>

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