



NACIONES UNIDAS
MÉXICO



MEXICO PARTNERSHIP LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT



NACIONES UNIDAS
MÉXICO



PARTNERSHIP
ACCELERATOR
2030 AGENDA
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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DISCLAIMER

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2030 AGENDA PARTNERSHIP ACCELERATOR

The 2030 Agenda Partnership Accelerator is a collaborative initiative of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and The Partnering Initiative (TPI), in collaboration with United Nations Office for Partnerships (UNOP), UN Global Compact, and the UN Development Coordination Office. The initiative aims to significantly help accelerate effective partnerships in support of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Direct partnership training support and advisory services are offered to member States and UN Entities/Resident Coordinators/Country teams wishing to foster stronger collaboration between stakeholders and sectors and enhance their capacities in forging new multi-stakeholder partnerships and partnership platforms.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ecosystem characteristics	Lessons learned	Opportunity areas				
		General	Focus on the UNFSD 2020-2025			
<p>COVID-19: Impacted Mexico heavily. A sense of urgency surrounds the efforts towards economic recovery and progress on the 2030 Agenda. The capacity to develop effective partnerships can support both of these goals.</p> <p>Institutional framework: National Council for the 2030 Agenda and 32 local councils. Three percent of the municipalities have a budget aligned to the 2030 Agenda.</p> <p>Actors: The private sector and the academic sector are considered reliable partners by the national public sector. The main challenge for CSOs is the negative context they face when participating in public policy planning and in effective partnerships for sustainable development.</p> <p>Collaboration: Powerful networks exist in every sector, but intersectoral collaboration is still an area for improvement.</p> <p>Funding: Reduction of public funding for partnerships. New financial instruments and engagement of the financial and the private sector for new funding opportunities.</p> <p>Challenge: Setback in the conditions to foster an open, equitable and inclusive environment for the participation of civil society in the definition of public policies and strategies for sustainable development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information flows are key to the structure of partnerships. • The role of a “backbone organization” to broker and support partnerships is a success factor. This can be an internal role, or provided by an external organisation. • Diversity is the basis of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This includes origin, family and ethnic background, gender identity, sexual orientation, migration status, disability, age, professional background and training, religious or political beliefs. • Mexico has a strong profile for South-South and triangular Cooperation. There is an opportunity to scale up regional partnerships for sustainable development. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthening the recommendations on topics such as gender equality and the eradication of all forms of violence against women, clean and renewable energy, environmental protection and freedom of the press. 2. Guaranteeing the participation of different actors in discussion and deliberation forums. 3. Cross sector evaluation for the strengthening of capacities and soft skills for negotiation, leadership, dialogue etc. The capacities of public servants, civil society representatives, and private sector representatives, need to be strengthened, and this is an opportunity for the UN to create better conditions for partnerships. 4. Continue to strengthen the implementation of the UNCFSD, especially regarding the interagency coordination for work in different regions and with different sectors and actors. 	Equality and Inclusion	Gender equality and women and girl empowerment	Migrant and refugee person	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Multicultural diversity approach, to include indigenous and afro communities as partners for the 2030 Agenda. 2) Care systems for “leave no-one behind”. 3) The intergenerational approach to include youth as an effective actor in multistakeholder and multisectoral partnerships.
			Prosperity and innovation			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Multisectoral approach for Micro and SME engagement in Agenda 2030. 2) Labour creation partnerships for women and youth. 3) Industrial transformation and Industry 4.0 for sustainable development. 4) Jobs programs for migrant populations.
			Green economy and climate change			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Regional partnerships for sustainable development and environmental protection in the regions impacted by big infrastructure priority projects (Maya train, Trans-isthmian corridor). 2) Multistakeholder resilience strategy for sustainable coastal cities and communities. 3) Local partnerships for forest management and natural ecosystems regeneration.
			Peace, justice and rule of law			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Multistakeholder monitoring of effective participation for the 2030 Agenda. 2) Multistakeholder network for the protection and strengthening of environmental and community leadership. 3) Local partnerships to end violence against women.

INTRODUCTION

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development represents the greatest collective commitment in the history of humankind. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) address some of the major challenges of our time. Each society faces different challenges and thus each society creates a local narrative to progress towards the achievement of the Agenda. Mexico forms part of the global efforts to achieve the SDGs, and the United Nations System (UN) has accompanied this process.

The **UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework of Mexico 2020-2025 (UNSDCF)** is the first joint planning process in the country to be fully aligned with the 2030 Agenda, the National Development Plan and the National strategy for the 2030 Agenda. It identifies four thematic areas: 1. Equality and inclusion, 2. Prosperity and innovation, 3. Green economy and climate change, 4. Peace, justice and rule of law; and two cross-cutting areas: gender equality and women and girl's empowerment, as well as migrants and refugees.

The effective implementation of the UNSDCF requires the strengthening and scaling up of multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral partnerships. To facilitate this process, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the 2030 Agenda Partnership Accelerator and the UN Resident Coordination Office (RCO) in Mexico have led the development of the present **Mexico Partnership Landscape Assessment**.

This assessment sets out the partnership ecosystem in Mexico. It identifies the general characteristics of the different sectors and stakeholders, best practices, lessons learned and the opportunity areas for new partnerships as well as for strengthening or scaling up existing ones. Finally, the assessment identifies and reviews some of the existing key partnerships and collaborative platforms.

For the purposes of this report, partnership for the SDGs are defined as *"An ongoing collaborative relationship between or among organizations from different stakeholder types aligning their interests around a common vision, combining their complementary resources and competencies and sharing risk, to maximize value creation towards the Sustainable Development Goals and deliver benefit to each of the partners"*¹. See Annex 1: Defining Partnership.

¹ The SDG Partnership Guidebook, UNDESA and TPI, 2020

METHODOLOGY

The development of the *Landscape Assessment* included:

1

Desk research, which tracked public information, web pages, and other sources published in Mexico, or about Mexico, about partnerships, initiatives, and activities regarding the 2030 Agenda.

2

A consultation process through in-depth interviews. In February and March 2021, 21 interviews were carried out with key stakeholders. The interviewees included representatives from the public sector, at local and national level; private sector, academic sector, civil society organizations (CSOs), network accelerators, and UN representatives. Priority groups were included, such as indigenous communities and migrants, as well as organizations working on gender equality.

3

An extensive survey with representatives from all the sectors. Respondents comprised 33 development actors and 17 UN officers of agencies, funds, and programs. It focused on the identification of partnerships, topics, challenges, and opportunities.

1. PARTNERSHIP ECOSYSTEM FOR THE SDGS IN MEXICO

This section explores the partnership ecosystem in Mexico. It reviews progress towards the achievement of the SDGs and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as mapping the characteristics of the relevant sectors.

1.1 SDGs PROGRESS

Prior to the pandemic, Mexico was making moderate progress in all the SDGs². The Voluntary National Review (VNR) of 2018 showed a multistakeholder effort to identify the main challenges facing the SDGs. The report concluded that some of the challenges were:

- 1 Guaranteeing vertical and horizontal coordination towards the 2030 Agenda,
- 2 Institutionalizing effective participation and co-creation mechanisms in innovative spaces for multi-sectoral and multi-actor dialogue and action,
- 3 Strengthening or building capacities of public officials at all levels,
- 4 Having a long-term plan with intermediate goals, budgetary resources available for implementation, and robust systems for measuring and evaluating their success,
- 5 Using new technologies and big data, in combination with other sources of information that have the proper level of disaggregation to guarantee that all sectors of society are represented,
- 6 Overcoming the asymmetry in capacities between and among Federal, State and Municipal levels³.

² The measurement here will show a difference with the national public instruments as they follow a different methodology. In general, differentiated advances can be observed depending on the region and topic.

³ Mexico Federal Government. Voluntary National Review for The High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. Basis for a Long-Term Sustainable Development Vision in Mexico.
https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/20122VOLUNTARY_NATIONAL_REPORT_060718.pdf

1.2 IMPACTS OF COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has been especially hard for Mexico. By February 2021, it ranked as the third hardest hit country in terms of the number of virus-related deaths⁴. The loss of human lives is an ongoing crisis that has made the strengthening of the health system a humanitarian priority for international development cooperation. The pandemic exposed underlying health-care system inequalities, its longstanding fragmentation and a reactive rather than prepared response to the outbreak⁵. Access to health services was also hindered, due to focus of the health system on the COVID-19 response.

The pandemic has deepened pre-existing gender inequalities and is disproportionately exacerbating women's vulnerabilities in all spheres of sustainable development. UN Women registers the increasing number of calls to domestic violence hotlines⁶.

The GDP in Mexico has been one of the most affected in the Latin American region with a fall of almost 9%⁷. Disrupted value chains, lockdowns, and other economic disruptions caused the loss of 12 million jobs in 2020⁸. The impact has been heavier on women, as reported by the Mexican Institute for Competitivity: job recovery has been up to 83% for men and just 73% for women⁹.

The negative effects of the pandemic in countries of the region, especially in Central America, has also increased migration¹⁰. Interviewees highlighted the increase in violence and sexual violence on displaced and migrant women. The switch from physical to online spaces has impacted the effective participation of partnership actors and resulted in a reduction of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). The cancelation of forums and discussions spaces, from local deliberation processes through to regional and international forums, has restricted the dynamics of dialogue.

⁴World Health Organization (2021). <https://covid19.who.int/table>

⁵ The severe impacts of COVID-19 and the fragmentation of the health system were reflected on one key indicator of health and socioeconomic development, which is maternal mortality. Of the 221 maternal deaths registered at the beginning of 2021, COVID-19 has become the first cause, representing 48.4% of cases. According to the Ministry of Health, the maternal mortality rate was 31.1 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births in 2019 and for the same period in 2020, it reached 46, representing an increase of 37.7%.

⁶ OAS (2019). Violence Against Women and the Measures to Contain the Spread of COVID-1. OAS, <https://www.oas.org/es/cim/docs/COVID-19-RespuestasViolencia-EN.pdf> and ONU Mujeres COVID-19 y su impacto en la violencia contra las mujeres y niñas. https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20mexico/documentos/publicaciones/2020/abril%202020/covid19_violenciamujeresninas_generalabril2020.pdf?la=es&vs=2457

⁷ INEGI (2021). <https://www.inegi.org.mx/temas/pib/>

⁸ In addition to the dismal situation of the formal economy, one of the biggest challenges is the enormous size of the informal economy, which employs about 57% of workers and generates around 23% of the GNI. This context complicates access to social security and the strengthening of the tax system. INEGI, (2018). INEGI. Actualización de la medición de la economía informal, 2003-2017. <https://www.inegi.org.mx/contenidos/saladeprensa/boletines/2018/StmaCnNaI/MEI2017.pdf>

⁹ Report "Women in the Economy" in <http://www.IMCO.org.mx>

¹⁰ CEPAL (2021). Report The impact of COVID-19: an opportunity to reaffirm the central role of migrants' human rights in sustainable development. https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/46354/4/S2000617_en.pdf and UNICEF Appeal for Children on the move and COVID-19 in Mexico and Central America Appeal. Humanitarian Action for Children. <https://www.unicef.org/appeals/mexico-and-central-america>. The Mexican Commission for Aid for Refugees has registered that at least 318,590 displaced people from Central America could ask for refugee attention in 2021.

1.3 STAKEHOLDERS

1.3.1 Public sector - National Level

This section reviews the rule of law and the democratic environment as a necessary precondition for enabling partnerships.

Mexico enjoys free elections at national, state and local level, and recognize the rights of indigenous nations, according to ILO Convention 169.

Violence is an ongoing obstacle for the establishment of partnerships. UN Agencies and CSOs report the difficulties of working outside the major cities, and the risk level of fieldwork has increased in several areas.

The **National Council for the 2030 Agenda** was created in 2017 and relaunched in 2019, with a renewed **National Strategy for the 2030 Agenda**¹¹. Currently, 13 ministries have integrated the 2030 Agenda into their planning, and eight are implementing budgets aligned to the National Strategy.

Mexico's Voluntary National Report (VNR) of 2018, prepared for the High-Level Political Forum, highlighted the CSOs' need for participation and engagement in dialogue and negotiation processes. However, challenges remain, and the participation of civil society unfortunately has been gradually reducing. This is confirmed by the consultation process for the next VNR, as the private sector has participated intensively and the CSOs have reported a lack of involvement. The reduction of public funding to projects and actors has had a big impact on the activities of some agencies of the UN. Projects were cancelled, and funding was withdrawn as part of the Federal Government's austerity policy, or where projects did not align with Government priorities.

One of the mechanisms to respond to this challenge has been the creation of financial instruments, such as the release of the SDG Sovereign Bond, by the Ministry of Finance for an amount of 750 million Euros. The Bonds will be linked to eligible expenditures set out in the Federal Expenditure Budget, which are a combination of Green and/or Social Projects and are part of the Federal Budget.

¹¹ Gobierno de México. Estrategia Nacional para la Agenda 2030 de Desarrollo Sostenible. <https://www.gob.mx/agenda2030/documentos/estrategia-nacional-de-la-implementacion-de-la-agenda-2030-para-el-desarrollo-sostenible-en-mexico>

1.3.2 Legislative

The Legislative is promoting initiatives that could support the creation of partnerships.

In 2018, a reform of the National Planning Law was published, with modifications including: 1) the incorporation of a results approach for national planning; 2) the establishment of a framework for transparency and accountability; 3) consideration of long-term planning approaches; 4) integration of the 2030 Agenda into future National Plans (including sectoral programs.¹²⁾

In 2020, the Legislative Strategy for the 2030 Agenda¹³ identified 128 National Laws with more impact and opportunities for progress towards the SDGs.

High speed approval of legal instruments can present a huge challenge to the 2030 Agenda and Mexico's climate commitments. For example, the recent approval of the Law of Energy, which focuses on coal, oil, gas, and large hydropower projects as the core of Mexico's energy matrix.

In 2021, elections will be held to renew the federal chamber of representatives of the congress, which will represent a major adjustment to the legislative work towards the 2030 Agenda.

1.3.3 Public sector - Local level

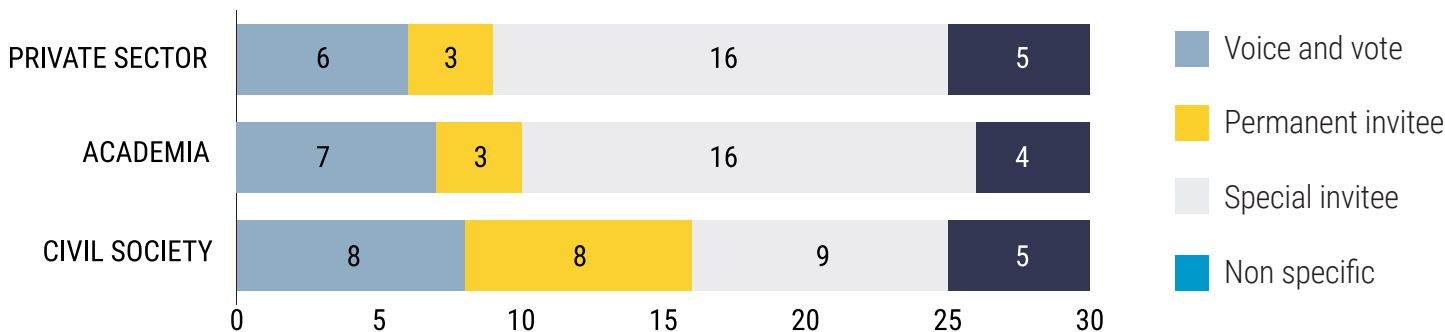
The local level is represented mainly by the 32 states and 2454 municipalities, and includes layers, such as economic regions and indigenous communities, which can include several municipalities within or across the limits of a state.

The National Conference of Governors (CONAGO) created the Executive Commission for the Compliance of the 2030 Agenda. The states set the legal basis for the creation of an Organ for Monitoring and Implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In September 2020, ten governors left the CONAGO, and it is not clear how the work behind the 2030 Agenda will be affected.

¹² Reform to the National Planning Law (DOF 16/02/2018) <https://www.gob.mx/agenda2030/documentos/reforma-a-la-ley-de-planeacion-dof-16-02-2018>

¹³ Legislative Strategy for the 2030 Agenda. https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/573730/Estrategia_Legislativa_para_la_Agenda_2030_VF_comp.pdf

The establishment of the 32 local councils (one for each state) was accompanied by around 300 municipal councils. Figure 4 shows local levels of engagement from different actors, in 30 out of the 32 local councils:



The National Institute for Federalism and Municipal Development has created a technical assistance program that helps the municipalities to engage in the 2030 Agenda and to align local planning with the SDGs. Only 3% of municipalities have developed a budget aligned to the 2030 Agenda.

The municipal level of government faces the challenge of ensuring continuity of public policies, as the political landscape tends to be volatile, with frequent major adjustments. The case of Yucatan (Figure 5) shows how partnerships, with CSOs playing a key role, can support the integration of the 2030 Agenda into public policies.



BEST PRACTICE PARTNERSHIPS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL: YUCATAN

In December 2018, the State of Yucatan established the local Council for the 2030 Agenda.

The Council has the function of monitoring and following up on the progress of the Agenda and is integrated by five multistakeholder committees that include academics, local universities, municipal representatives, and CSOs.

The first committee oversees training, communication among the components of the Council, and reporting of the activities. There are three thematic committees for each dimension of development led by a CSO and with a technical secretariat. The technical secretariat is represented by the ministry in charge of the relevant topic; thus, the environmental committee works with the Ministry of Sustainable Development, the Social with the Ministry of Well-being and the economic with the Ministry of Economic promotion. Finally, the regional committee is the link between the activities of the Council and the local level.

The main innovative aspect of the council of the state is that each committee is led by a CSO to ensure continuity in shifting political circumstances. This strategy is designed to ensure continuity in cases of changes in the government. Another key aspect was to establish a common platform to monitor the activities of each actor; thus government, private sector, academia and CSOs used the same platform to report. This has helped to build trust and commitment among the actors.

One of the main challenges for the Council has been the integration of the private sector as it depends on political actors which makes them hesitate to fully engage in the Agenda.

Source: <http://www.seplan.yucatan.gob.mx/agenda2030/consejo-estatal>



The priority given to the 2030 Agenda at the local level depends on political will, political timing, incentives from international actors, and an ecosystem that supports partnerships for the advancement of the SDGs.

1.3.4 Private sector

The private sector is an increasingly attractive partner for sustainable development. The private sector in Mexico is diverse, with three main sub-groups: Multinational Corporations (MNCs), big Mexican companies (including business associations), and Micro/small and medium enterprises (SMEs) (including cooperatives).

Some MNCs with operations in Mexico, are organized in groups such as the Executive Council of Global Enterprises. In this case, international commitments as well as the investment to improve value chains are a big incentive to participate in partnerships for the SDGs.

Following an agreement between the Mexican government, the Business Coordination Council and the Global Compact, 18 working groups were created to advance the 2030 Agenda with the participation of more than 500 actors, including big, small, and medium companies, CSOs and academic institutions. Eight of these groups are currently active, and ten are in the process of consolidation. The groups are focused on: 1) Salary gap, 2) Economic and labor participation, 3) Gender violence in the working place, 4) New normality and labor and personal equilibrium and 5) Inclusive programs.

The Alliance for Sustainability led by the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation was especially important, as the focus is on SDG 17 and especially on partnerships with the private sector. In a co-creation process, more than 60 companies identified projects and committed to continue to work towards the 2030 Agenda.

Micro and SMEs represent 98% of the Mexican economy, and their engagement towards the SDGs is a major challenge. Although 65% of the Mexican Global Compact affiliates are SMEs, for most of these the 2030 Agenda is a distant political plan instead of an opportunity to increase competitiveness through sustainability.

One important sub-sector is the cooperatives, which are key economic units, especially for rural areas, including handicrafts, agriculture, and small fishing. Cooperatives are, by definition, partnerships, based on volunteering, participation, solidarity and mutual assistance. There are more than 600 cooperatives in Mexico¹⁴, and the UN is increasingly working with rural, women and youth-led cooperatives¹⁵ as strategic drivers for SDGs implementation at the rural and local level.

Finally, a new generation of social enterprises, startups and entrepreneurs are joining the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, especially in the big cities.

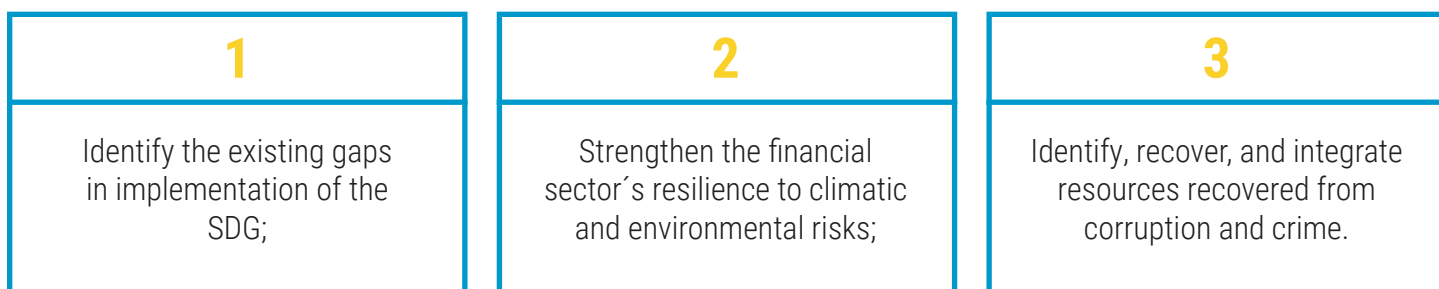
¹⁴ According to the Confederation of Cooperatives and Lending and Saving of Mexico

¹⁵ ILO, IFAD, UN Women, FAO

1.3.5 Financial sector

The Climate Finance Group for Latin America and the Caribbean has published a Sustainable Finance Index, to monitor expenditure and income for climate change and the SDGs. Mexico ranks first for Sustainable Income (external funding), but only 13th from 21 countries for Sustainable Budget (public budget).

Private/commercial banks are increasingly supporting the 2030 Agenda, for example as intermediaries of the SDG Bonds mentioned above, as well as increasing specific funds for sustainable development. One example is the initiative Strengthening the Governance of the Financial System for Sustainable Development. This initiative, under the leadership of the RCO in coordination with UN agencies and financial institutions, aims to:



International actors such as the InterAmerican Development Bank, the Development Bank of Latin America and the International Finance Cooperation also bring investment funds which incentivize collaborations, such as the Green Finance partnerships.

1.3.6 Academia

The scientific community and academia have increasingly participated in innovative international partnerships to improve south-south and triangular cooperation, and support development cooperation and the SDGs. Alongside this, they are including the 2030 Agenda in academic programs, connecting young people to economic and social development.

One relevant alliance is the Sustainable Development Solutions Network, an international initiative hosted in Mexico by the Tec de Monterrey and the National Autonomous University of Mexico, which coordinates the engagement of the scientific and the academic community in practical activities for the achievement of the SDGs. One of the most valuable projects is set out in Figure 6, on the next page.



BEST PRACTICE

ENABLING THE ECOSYSTEM FOR PARTNERSHIPS FROM THE ACADEMIC SECTOR

The SDSN initiative, led by two national universities, one public and one private, UNAM and Tec de Monterrey, recently launched the distinction ExpertODS (ExpertSDG).



ExpertODS

The distinction looks to create a platform of specialists and experts from social and natural sciences who can advise on different topics on the Agenda. The members of the group will receive support to create Research, Development, and Innovation Groups (GIDIs) that will share their work to improve a systemic and cross-disciplinary approach to tackling the complex problems of sustainability.

The platform will create a strong network that can form part of multistakeholder thematic partnerships for the SDGs.

Source: <https://sdsnmexico.mx/iniciativas/convocatoria-expertods>

Another example is the National Observatory for Gender Equality in Superior Education Institutions, which monitors progress on SDG 4. Participants include the Association of Universities and Institutions of Superior Education, UNAM, INMUJERES, the National Commission to Prevent and Eradicate Violence of Women, the National Commission of Human Rights, and UN Women.

Another network that could support the 2030 Agenda, is the Mexican Network of Researchers on Development Cooperation, whose vision is to create high quality research activities on development cooperation.

1.3.7 Civil Society

Civil society reflects the complex history of Mexico, as the concept has evolved hand in hand with the democratization process of the country¹⁶.

CSOs in Mexico are important for the effectiveness of partnerships for the SDGs. According to the National register there were 42, 269 CSOs in the country in 2020, including a variety of actors responding to local problems.

¹⁶ Martínez López, Cornelio (Coord.) (2019). El futuro de la sociedad civil en México. Memoria del Foro. Senado de la República. Instituto Belisario Domínguez.
<http://bibliodigitalibd.senado.gob.mx/bitstream/handle/123456789/4442/MEMORIA%20EL%20FUTURO%20DE%20LA%20SOCIEDAD%20CIVIL7.pdf?sequence=11&isAllowed=y>

CSOs have participated intensively in the negotiation process for the definition of the SDGs since 2015. Several Mexican CSOs have participated in global processes, on topics such as climate change, human rights, gender equality, humanitarian assistance, and the sustainable development agenda. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the General Direction for Liaison with Civil Society Organizations, has facilitated the participation of the CSO in relevant global forums, and capacity building for meaningful engagement.

However, the ecosystem for partnerships is perceived by most of the interviewees and participants in the survey as challenging. Public funding for CSOs was suspended in 2019. CSOs that used to participate in open dialogues at national and international level, report that there now exists a policy of exclusion and obstacles for their engagement in international forums, and there is a public discourse of disapproval towards CSOs, who are seen as “intermediaries” and “allies of corruption”¹⁷.

Parallel spaces of consultation and planning have appeared to counter the blocking of CSOs’ participation in public deliberations. One example is the **Articulated Space of CSOs for the monitoring of the 2030 Agenda**, a group of 20 CSOs who have produced alternative reports to the VNR and who have developed parallel processes and consultations the SDGs progress. One report with more than 100 CSOs¹⁸ indicates that very few CSOs are participating in the agenda, and this is a practical challenge to forming new partnerships.

Finally, a hybrid actor, a CSO/social enterprise, has increasingly played the role of partnership facilitator, and actors such as Ashoka, Cirklo, Sistema B, FUNDES, have accelerated successful partnerships.

1.3.8 International development cooperation

Mexico’s dual development cooperation system is both a recipient of development cooperation, and a donor - as it is observant of the Development Assistance Committee and a member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. This status has made the country a hub for development cooperation and host of important international organizations and donors, and especially attractive and strategic as a bridge for triangular and south-south cooperation.

The UN is very active, with offices in 19 states, and collaborates at local and national level through 29 agencies. The UN is a key actor for mobilizing partnerships and supports engagement with other international development actors. These donors include the Spanish Agency for Development Cooperation, the European Union, the German Development Cooperation, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency, the Norwegian Development Cooperation, the Swiss Development Cooperation, the United States Agency for International Development, and the United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. Several major international NGOs operate in Mexico, such as Article 19, Oxfam, The Hunger Project, World Vision, and the World Wildlife Fund.

¹⁷ In January of 2021, 200 CSOs from all over the country published an open letter with reference to the declarations of the President, which have generated an environment of discredit and distrust towards civil society and have even generated a context of risk towards human rights defenders and other activists, especially on topics such as environment and gender-based violence.

¹⁸ This follows a long-term tradition from civil society, especially working in topics of human rights and gender equality, that have built networks and coalitions to jointly produce shadow reports. Progress report of the 2030 Agenda in Mexico. July 2019. Equipo Pueblo/Alianza de OSC para la eficacia del Desarrollo. América Latina y el Caribe.



BEST PRACTICE

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION RECOGNIZING DIVERSITY IN THE PROCESS OF CREATING EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS FOR SDGs

The work of the GIZ's initiative Agenda 2030 in the state of Oaxaca involved work with different indigenous nations and achieved the translation of the SDGs including an effective diversity approach as an effort to reflect the content in seven indigenous languages.

UNESCO and INALI also recognized the potential of actions of this kind, and translated the SDGs into Nahuatl (the main indigenous language). There still exists a need to translate to other indigenous languages and to develop more material.

Source: Information from interview. The Nahuatl version of the Agenda can be found in <https://www.onu.org.mx/publicaciones/tekitekantli-ma-motetonis-chamanalistli/>



© Photo: Elliot Leon

¹⁹ According to the latest population census, 6.14% of the national population speak an indigenous language, and 2.04% consider themselves as afro Mexican. Oaxaca, Chiapas, Guerrero and the peninsula of Yucatan concentrate the majority of these populations. The challenges are major, as conflict situations still exist in several regions. In the state of Chiapas, for example, the autonomous Zapatists municipalities have no dialogue with the public sector, but they maintain cooperation with international civil society organizations, academics and multiple cooperatives. INEGI (2021). Censo de Población y Vivienda 2020. <https://www.inegi.org.mx/programas/ccpv/2020/#Publicaciones>

2. ADVANCING PARTNERSHIPS IN MEXICO

This section includes a MAPS (Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support) analysis of the partnership ecosystem, as well as identifying lessons learned and opportunity areas aligned with the UNSDCF, based on the interviews and the survey results. In general, the public policy and socioeconomic context presents challenges for all the development actors.

2.1 MAPS

Mainstreaming

- The 2030 Agenda has been integrated into Mexico's legal framework, at Federal and state levels, but implementation still presents some challenges.
- The national and local councils set up for the SDGs vary in effectiveness, and their field-level work needs further support.
- Awareness-raising is needed in the general population regarding the 2030 Agenda, and Mexico's commitments.

Acceleration

- Local initiatives may be impacted by the 2021 elections, with likely changes at state, municipal and federal level.
- Guidelines for the integration of SDGs into local budgets or legislative activities, can facilitate decision-making and monitoring. Partnerships bringing together the public sector, academia, and international development organizations have developed such instruments. Similar tools for SMEs or the financial sector could encourage effective dialogue and coordination between actors and sectors.
- Engagement of CSOs is challenging, but CSOs are seeking new collaborations that strengthen their capacity to support the 2030 Agenda.

Policy support

- The expertise of the UNS is available to address field-level challenges in regions where violence limits participation.
- There is an immediate risk of legislative setbacks on the energy transition and greenhouse emissions reduction, gender equality, access and right to information, at national and local level.
- The UNSDCF has set the principles for effective coordination to increase the impact of the UN's work.
- The government's austerity policy limits public funding. Private sector participation is highly strategic, especially the new trends of funding for sustainability.

2.2 LESSONS LEARNED

The interviews and survey results suggest ways to strengthen the enabling environment for sustainable development partnerships.

The Academic sector and CSOs have identified that partnerships and different funding schemes can be useful when government funds are scarce.

Information flows are key to the structure of partnerships, including data, tools, guidelines etc.

The process of mapping relevant initiatives, collaborations and projects demonstrates the value of a central repository which lists partnerships and their characteristics. This could create synergies and avoid duplication of effort.

Internal capacity-building or external support with the roles of mediator, coordinator, monitor, mobilizer etc is a success factor in almost all the existing partnerships for the 2030 Agenda.

Diversity is key to the 2030 Agenda, and a principle of the UNSDCF. This includes the recognition of diversity of all kinds, the inclusion of under-represented groups, and capacity strengthening to enable partnerships.

UN recommendations on gender equality, human rights and environmental protection are important to maintain inter-ministerial dialogue and work with local actors.

Mexico has a strong profile in South-South and triangular cooperation. Development cooperation programs that include the private sector, working in Central America (a priority region for Mexican development cooperation) is an opportunity to scale up regional partnerships for sustainable development.

The private sector must continue to improve its role regarding sustainable development:

- to transform practices that impact the environment, such as the overuse of natural resources;

- improving corporate social responsibility, eg in line with the guiding principles of the Global Compact;

- as a source of innovation for the development of technologies and knowledge sharing;

- as a source of financial resources to accelerate partnerships, through instruments such as impact investment and sustainable value chains.

A group of CSO's are participating permanently in dialogues for the 2030 Agenda, bringing a range of expertise. However, there are hundreds of grass roots and community organizations facing diverse challenges, who also seek to join these dialogues.

2.3 OPPORTUNITY AREAS FOR NEW PARTNERSHIPS

Opportunity areas to support partnerships for the SDGs have been identified on two levels. The first is the role of the UNS as a custodian of the 2030 Agenda, strengthening the SDG partnering ecosystem. The second identifies specific topics aligned with the UNSDCF.

The **activities of the UNS**, supporting interagency coordination and the mobilization of partnerships, shows the importance of a systemic perspective.

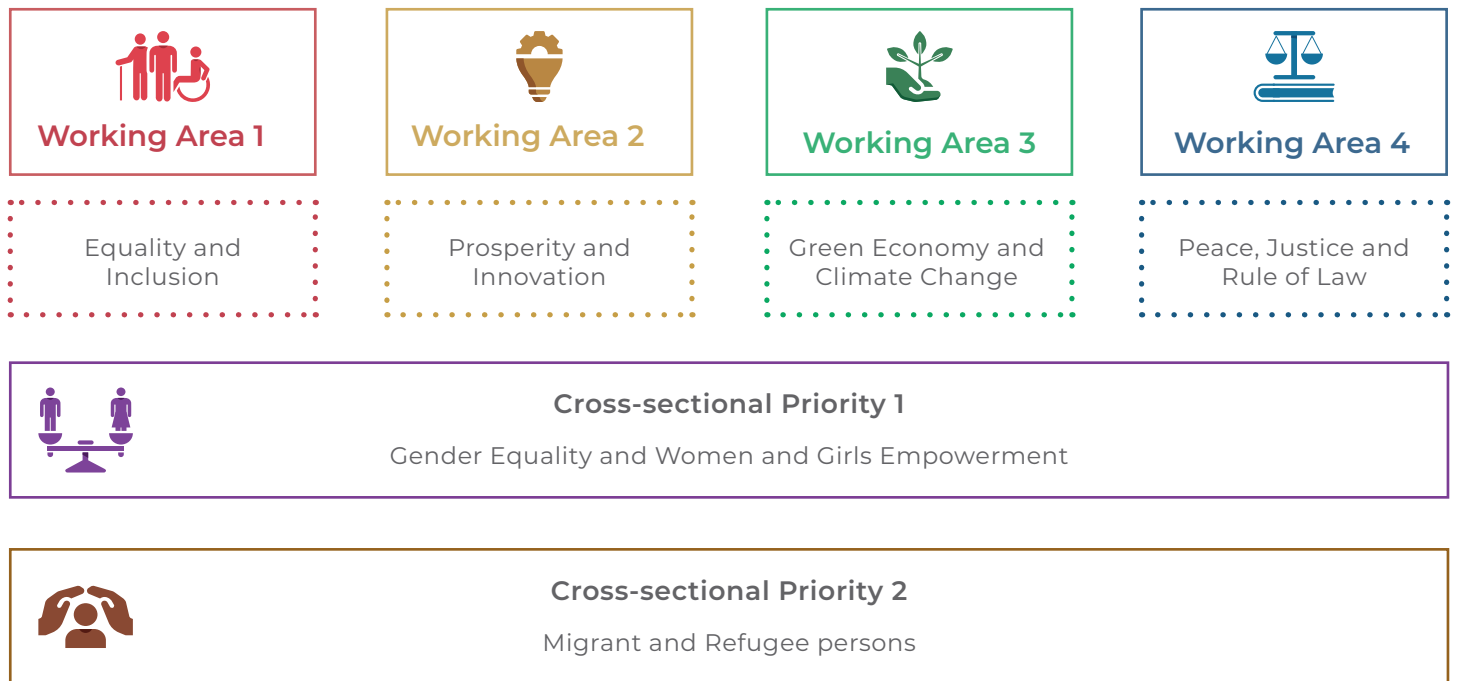
The opportunity areas identified are:

- 1 | Strengthening the recommendations on topics such as gender equality and the eradication of gender-based violence, clean and renewable energy, environmental protection, and press freedom
- 2 | Guaranteeing the participation of different actors in discussion forums.
- 3 | Cross-sectoral evaluation of the strengthening of capacities and soft skills for negotiation, leadership, dialogue, and others. Capacities of public servants, civil society representatives, and private sector representatives need to be strengthened, and this is an opportunity for the UN to create better conditions for partnerships.
- 4 | Strengthening implementation of the UNCFSD, especially interagency coordination for the work in different regions and with different sectors and actors.

The UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for the Sustainable Development of Mexico 2020-2025 (UNSDCF) identifies four thematic areas and two cross-cutting themes (Fig.8), representing areas for collaboration within the UNS. Specific recommendations and thematic priorities are suggested below, outlining the opportunity, potential participants, and the roles they can play within the partnership.

²⁰ Considering the sense of urgency, the existence of reliable partners and the potential to scale up already existing efforts, and the strategic information provided by the strategic actors who participated in the assessment

Figure 8- Working areas UNCFSD:



Source: United Nations Cooperation Framework for the Sustainable Development of Mexico 2020-2025

2.3.1 EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

Objective: a society with wellbeing and equality for the effective exercise of economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights and with opportunities for social mobility, leaving no one behind.

Priorities:





POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIP INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES' ENGAGEMENT WITH THE 2030 AGENDA

The indigenous regions face challenging conditions which cause the loss of young people who decide to migrate; these dynamics aggravate gender inequalities and impact the social model and the economic, cultural and environmental health of the population.

This partnership can support prosperity and innovation jointly with the indigenous communities, becoming a learning opportunity for the strengthening of its strategies for protection of the territory through local markets and production as a strategy for climate change.

The thematic demand to apply a gender perspective, human rights-based approach and territorial approach based on self-determination over territory and natural resources, which requires peace, justice and the rule of law.

The UN already works in initiatives such as the work with cooperatives formed by indigenous women, through FAO, UNDP and ONU Women. This can play an accelerator role to escalate to systemic transformation in line with the SDGs.

Objective: Design and implement joint gender sensitive and inclusive agendas to engage indigenous and afro communities in Mexico in the 2030 Agenda as effective partners rather than beneficiaries.

PARTNERS		ROLES
Public sector (national)	National Council for Sustainable Development; INMUJERES; INPI	Coordinator
Public sector (local)	State councils for 2030 Agenda in the State that concentrates the indigenous population and afro communities: Oaxaca, Chiapas, Guerrero, Yucatan, Sonora, Chihuahua, San Luis Potosí, Edomex, Morelos, Michoacán, and Mexico City; State Women's institutions.	Implementer, providing human and logistic resources. Key for an effective territorial approach
CSO	Multiple CSOs working with and from indigenous communities. Some examples are: Indigenous National Council (CNI); Melel Xojobal A.C.; Mexican Center for Environmental Law; Instituto de Liderazgo Simon de Beavoir, Alianza de Mujeres Indígenas de Centroamérica y México; Red-DESC.	Implementer, influencer and knowledge provider.
Academia and scientific community	National Institute of Anthropology and History; Centre for Research and Higher Learning in Social Anthropology; ECOSUR; UNAM; Iberoamerican University	Knowledge provider, systematization of the experience, creation of material for dissemination.
International Organizations	GIZ (experience of work with Oaxaca state); Save the Children; The Hunger Project	Technical expertise, production of methodologies and working frameworks. Potentially human and financial resources.
Private sector	Micro and small companies and cooperatives in and from indigenous communities; Toks	Implementer.
Network accelerator	Nuup	Contractor, backbone organization.
Existing partnerships that can be incorporated	Alliance for Sustainability AxS; Valor al Campesino	Technical expertise, knowledge provider. Potentially financial resources or capacity to scale up activities.
Financial sector	IFAD; IDB	Funding
UNS	UNICEF; UNESCO; FAO; UNFPA; UNDP; UNEP; UN Women; UNHCHR	Political dialogue, technical expertise, dialogue coordination.

2.3.2 PROSPERITY AND INNOVATION

Objectives: to ensure an economic growth that is prosperous, sustainable, inclusive, and with better distribution of wellness and decent work.

Priorities: The national **economy recovering in a sustainable and innovative way and with a focus on SMEs**. The work of partnerships can create innovative knowledge of start-ups, incubation, and seed finance for entrepreneurship. Activities could include multistakeholder regional dialogues to define a National Strategy for investment in economic innovation.

Opportunities identified:





POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIP

MSME IN TRANSITION. PRODUCTIVE TRANSFORMATION STRATEGIES FOR THE 2030 AGENDA

The area of work with MSMEs is highly relevant for a holistic approach to the 2030 Agenda and the UNCFSD in Mexico. MSMEs (including cooperatives) represent 98% of the economy of the country, and effective work with them can impact multiple SDGs and integrate multi sectorial and value chain approaches.

The gender approach is especially important for the business community.

Objective: Implement regional partnerships and agendas in support of Agenda 2030 in Cooperatives, MSME

	PARTNERS	ROLES
Public sector (national)	National Council for Sustainable Development; Ministry of Economy; Ministry of Finance; CONACYT; STPS; INMUJERES	Strategic definition for systemic planning.
Public sector (local)	State councils for 2030 Agenda; AMSDE	Implementer, human and financial resources. Logistic support.
Private sector	Working groups of Global Compact; Workers organizations; Executive Council of Global Enterprises; COPARMEX; CANACINTRA; CONCAMIN; ANTAD; CCE; CONCAMEX; IDIC	The value chains, supply chains and the business environment are part of a systemic discussion that is required for these partnerships.
Academia and scientific community	Business hubs at regional levels; Tec de Monterrey; EGADE; CONALEP; IPN	Knowledge provider, innovators and incubators for regional and local partnerships.
International Organizations	BID; CAF	Financial resources.
Workers organizations	Confederation of Mexican Workers; Confederation of Workers and Peasants; Regional Confederation of Mexican Workers; Workers National Union	Implementer.
Partnerships	P4G; CCE Agenda 2030 committee; ANTAD BIZ; Alliance for Integrity; AxS	Technical expertise, financial resources, best practices and spaces to escalate and disseminate results.
Partnership accelerator	Ashoka; Sistema B	Contractor, Backbone organization.
UNS	UNICEF; UNESCO; FAO; UNFPA; UNDP; UNEP; UN Women; UNHCHR	Political dialogue, technical expertise, dialogue coordination.

2.3.3 GREEN ECONOMY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Objectives: The working group explores a low greenhouse emissions development model, based on the sustainable, inclusive, and efficient management of natural resources, with high resilience to climate change and natural disasters.

Opportunities identified:





POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIP PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN THE YUCATAN PENINSULA

One of the main recommendations for fostering dialogue that includes the public sector was to align with some of the priority areas and programs of the federal government. One of the main projects relates to the Maya Train, a big infrastructure project that will impact the present and future generations in the Yucatan peninsula. A key aim is to increase the number of tourists and develop new tourism destinations besides the “Mayan riviera”. Without a strategy for the mitigation of effects, it risks damaging the natural environment, and the social cohesion and development of local communities.

The UN’s work with the Maya Train has involved the High Commissioner for Human Rights, ensuring the human rights along the construction of the train, and the effective inclusion of communities; UN Habitat with urban territorial planning, public services, and local development; UNESCO, with education, natural sciences, social sciences, culture and communication, and UNOPS, giving support to studies, conceptual design, public purchases, business model of the initiative.

An opportunity exists for multistakeholder partnerships focusing on tourism for sustainable development, led by the working group of green economy and climate change, strengthening UN collaboration.

Objective: Design and co-create a partnership to support sustainable tourism in the Yucatan peninsula. Decreasing the environmental impact and ensuring sustainable development based on principles of human rights and gender equality.

PARTNERS		ROLES
Public sector (national)	Ministry of Environment; National Institute of Indigenous Languages; Ministry of Education; Ministry of culture; Ministry of Wellbeing; National Institute of Archeology and History; INMUJERES	Inter-Ministerial coordination for impact assessment in the different areas of the projects.
Public sector (local)	State councils for the 2030 Agenda of the states of Yucatan, Campeche and Quintana Roo	Implementer, providing human and logistic resources. Key for an effective territorial approach
International Organizations	World Wildlife Fund; International Union for Conservation of Nature	Knowledge provider.
CSO	CEMDA; PODER; Local CSOs and collectives working in the area of environment, gender equality, social development and economic development in the region; Environmental and human rights defenders.	Knowledge provider. Implementer. Territorial coordination and knowledge provider.
Academia and scientific community	ECOSUR	Systematization and dissemination of experiences. Dialogue coordination.
Private sector	Cooperatives, Micro and small and medium companies of the region; Mexican Chamber for the Construction Industry (CMIC); CANACO-Tourism; ICA	Implementer.
Network accelerator	PNUMA; UNDP; FAO; UNIDO; OIM; UNICEF; UNESCO; ILO; UNHCHR; UN-Habitat; ACNUR	Political dialogue, technical expertise, dialogue coordination.

2.3.4 PEACE, JUSTICE AND THE RULE OF LAW

Objectives: a rule of law that can guarantee peace, equality, inclusion, legality, justice and human rights.

Throughout the landscape assessment the context of violence has been noted as an issue, and criminality affects the exercise of basic human rights. Mexico continues to be a dangerous country for a free press, to defend and protect the environment, and even to be a woman. Some of these problems require the meaningful participation of civil society which in recent years has diminished.

Opportunities identified:





POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIP CSOS FOR MEANINGFUL AND EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT IN THE 2030 AGENDA

CSOs in Mexico have reported the closing of spaces for effective participation in 2030 Agenda deliberation processes.

All actors can benefit from the effective participation of CSOs in partnerships for sustainable development. Civil society must be included in development initiatives at territory level.

Objective: A multistakeholder partnership to create material and tools for different stakeholders to ensure meaningful and effective participation of CSOs.

PARTNERS		ROLES
Public sector (national)	National Council for the 2030 Agenda	Ministerial coordination
Public sector (local)	State councils for the 2030 Agenda	Implementer, Financial resources, Logistics facilitator.
CSO	Equipo Pueblo A.C.; Others that have been engaged in deliberation processes for the 2030 Agenda; Human Rights Defenders; Human Rights and Gender equality Organizations; Journalists; Youth organizations; SDSN Youth	Monitoring, Coordination, Influencer, Multiplier
Private sector	Working groups of Global Compact	Monitoring, Dialogue
UNS	UNS interagency coordination	Monitoring, Dialogue, Coordination
Academia	SDSN; REMECID	Knowledge provider, Systemization and dissemination of experience

CONCLUSIONS

The ecosystem for effective partnerships in Mexico presents a mixed picture. A framework has been created at national and local level, with the National Council for the 2030 Agenda and the creation of the 32 local councils. However, there has been a setback for the participation of civil society in developing public policies and strategies for sustainable development.

An enabling environment for partnerships requires coordination across diverse levels, sectors and actors. Support is urgently needed for effective participation of all actors, particularly CSOs, who have the strongest engagement in social problems and at local level.

Public funds available for partnerships have been reduced, except for those which support implementation of the government's priority projects. However, there are diverse new opportunities for resourcing partnerships, such as the SDG Sovereign Bond or the Gender Bond and increasing private sector participation through impact investment mechanisms.

Engagement with the private sector offers huge opportunities. At one end of the spectrum, the multinational corporations that operate in Mexico and their capacity to impact on large value chains. At the other end, micro, small and medium companies, including cooperatives, as a major contributor to Mexico's economy. Engagement of big national companies, especially through the activities of the Global Compact and the CCE, is vital.

The academic and scientific community can help to solve systemic challenges faced by the thematic partnerships.

Multi-sector collaboration requires coordination, monitoring and support, either from specialist organisations, or through internal capacity building.

The UN can play a strategic role in strengthening the partnership ecosystem. The prevalence of violence in some regions is an urgent call to action to guarantee human rights, gender equality, peace, and rule of law as a precondition to developing effective partnerships for the SDGs. The interagency coordination represented by the UNSDCF can support this. The working groups must increase the level of engagement and improve coordination of external communication, identification of strategic agendas, and political engagement with the public sector.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted all the sectors in Mexico and a sense of urgency supports efforts for economic recovery, for progress on the 2030 Agenda, and for solving the urgent problems of Mexican society. Effective partnerships can support recovery for the three pillars of sustainable development: society, environment, and economy.

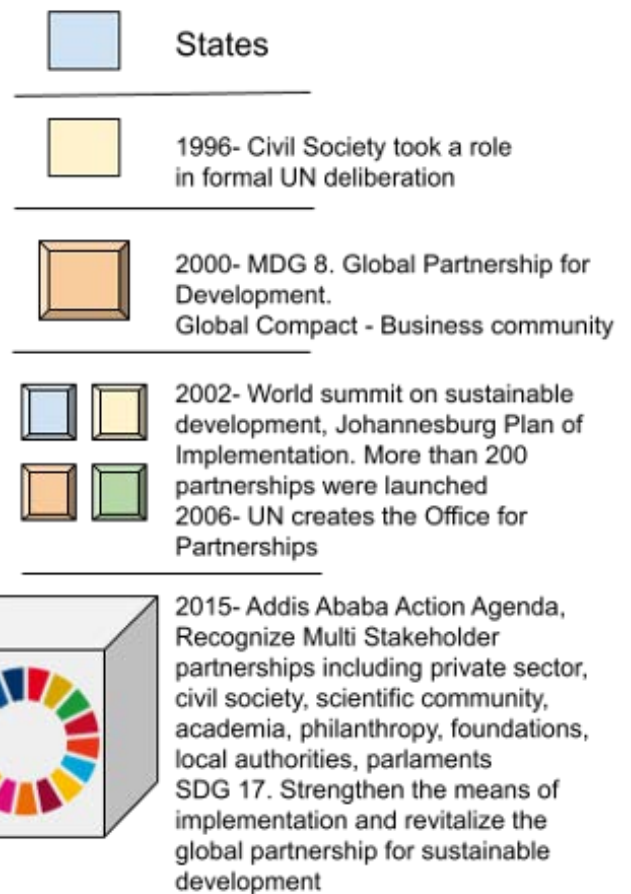
No single country or system has the perfect formula for effective partnership; it is a living process built through daily practice. Open, equitable, and inclusive dialogue is the basis from which this can be constructed.

ANNEX 1: DEFINING PARTNERSHIP

The concept of partnership within the UN has been dynamic and can be considered a living concept that adapts and is enriched by the diversity of the societies. Within the UN, the discussion has been extensive, and includes resolutions, forums and conferences that have strengthened not only the definition but also the operationality of the partnerships. The diagram shows four of these spaces and milestones.

Sustainable Development Goal 17 - *“Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development”* - recognizes multi-stakeholder partnerships as important vehicles for mobilizing and sharing knowledge, expertise, technologies, and financial resources to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, particularly developing countries.

Partnerships for SDGs: *“An ongoing collaborative relationship between or among organizations from different stakeholder types aligning their interests around a common vision, combining their complementary resources and competencies and sharing risk, to maximize value creation towards the Sustainable Development Goals and deliver benefit to each of the partners”*. **SDG Partnership Guidebook**



Elaborated with information from: UN. Partnerships for Sustainable Development Goals: A legacy review towards realizing the 2030 Agenda. Available in <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2257Partnerships%20for%20SDGs%20-%20a%20review%20web.pdf>

ANNEX 2: ABBREVIATIONS

A2030- Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development

AMEXCID- Mexican Agency for Development Cooperation. Agencia Mexicana para la Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo

ANP- Natural Protected Areas. Áreas Naturales Protegidas

ANTAD- National Association of Departmental and Retail Stores. Asociación Nacional de Tiendas de Autoservicio

ANUIES- National Association of Universities and Higher Education Institutions. Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Instituciones de Educación Superior

BANXICO- Bank of Mexico

IDB- InterAmerican Development Bank

CAF- Development Bank of Latin America.

CCE- Business Coordination Council. Consejo Coordinador Empresarial

CIESAS-
Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social

CMIC- National Chamber of the Construction Industry. Cámara Nacional de la Industria de la Construcción

CONACYT- National Council of Technology and Science. Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología

CONAGO- National Conference of Governors. Conferencia Nacional de Gobernadores

CONAPO- National Population Council. Consejo Nacional de Población

CONCAMEX- Confederation of Cooperatives and

Lending and Saving of Mexico. Confederación de Cooperativas de Ahorro y Préstamo de México

CONEVAL- National Council for Evaluate Social Development Public Policy. Consejo Nacional de la Evaluación de la Política de Desarrollo Social

CSO- Civil Society Organization

CTEODS- Technical Committee on the Sustainable Development Goals

DAC- Development Assistance Committee

DGVOSC- General Direction for Liaison with Civil Society Organizations. Dirección General de Vinculación con Organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil

EU- European Union

GIZ- German Development Cooperation for Sustainability Development. Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit

IFC- International Finance Cooperation

ILO- International Labour Organization

INAFED- National Institute for the Federalism and the Municipal Development. Instituto Nacional para el Federalismo y el Desarrollo Municipal

INAH- National Institute of Anthropology and History. Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia

INALI- National Institute of Indigenous Languages. Instituto Nacional de Lenguas Indígenas.

INECC- National Institute of Ecology and Climate Change. Instituto Nacional de Ecología y Cambio Climático

INEGI- National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Information. Instituto Nacional de Estadística,

Geografía e Informática

INMUJERES- National Institute of the Women. Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres.

JICA- Japanese International Cooperation Agency

MIKTA- Partnership Mexico Indonesia Korea, Turkey and Australia

NDC- National Determined Contribution

OECD- Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

SDG- Sustainable Development Goal

SDSN- Sustainable Development Solutions Network

SE- Ministry of Economy. Secretaría de Economía

SECTUR- Ministry of Tourism. Secretaría de Turismo

SEMARNAT- Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources. Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales

SENER- Ministry of Energy. Secretaría de Energía

SINACC- National Climate Change System. Sistema Nacional de Cambio Climático

SME- Small and Medium Enterprises

SNS- National Health System. Sistema Nacional de Salud

SRE- Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores

STEM- Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

STPS- Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social

UKDFID- United Kingdom Department for International Development

UN- United Nations

UNSDCF- United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework of Mexico 2020-2025

UNDESA- United Nations Department Economic and Social Affairs

UNDP- United Nations Development Programme

UNEP-United Nations Environment Programme

UNESCO-United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organisation

UNFCCC- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

UNS- United Nations System

USA- United States of America

USAID- United States Agency for International Development

ANNEX 3: SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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