

Management response:

Independent evaluation of partnerships involving the UNCCD secretariat and/or the Global Mechanism

Overview

The evaluation outlines the characteristics of partnerships involving the secretariat and the GM, with focus on the reasoning behind partnerships, and on the way the secretariat and the GM deal with their partnerships as a process. The findings, conclusions and recommendations are formulated in a general manner, and while they may *per se* miss some of the defining features of many individual partnerships, together they paint an interesting overall picture of partnerships as an important working modality for both the secretariat and the GM.

The secretariat and the GM welcome the findings and the recommendations as valuable guidance to improving the effectiveness of their partnerships, and nearly completely accept the improvements presented in the recommendations.

The secretariat appreciates findings 5 and 6 stating the overall satisfaction of the interviewed partners and the good delivery of results through the partnerships.

Recommendations

Evaluation recommendation 1. *The UNCCD secretariat should further focus its partnerships to support its priorities, and better plan the resources needed for partnering particularly if additional resources need to be mobilized.*

Management response: Accepted. The secretariat will more systematically assess the responsiveness of planned partnerships to its priorities, and integrate partnership planning to the overall planning for results delivery. The secretariat will also refrain from committing to partnership activities for which there are no identified resources.

Evaluation recommendation 2. *The GM should be more active in finding key partners for country level activities.*

Management response: Accepted. The GM will increasingly focus its partnerships to support effective action at country level. This may not necessarily mean more GM staff engagement at country level – instead, the GM will look for partners with global or regional reach and operational abilities at national level.

Evaluation recommendation 3. *The secretariat and the GM should develop a more strategic approach to partnership building, keeping in mind that often “less is more”.*

Management response: Accepted. The secretariat and the GM will review their current partnerships with the aim to focus on those partnerships that are most productive and/or most responsive to the

UNCCD priorities. In the future, the secretariat and the GM will significantly reduce the number of partnerships that they are involved in, and focus their resources to delivering tangible results with each partnership.

Evaluation recommendation 4. *UNCCD corporate tools or internal policies should be developed to guide and inform the decisions of the secretariat and the GM on whether and why to enter, maintain or close partnerships.*

Management response: Partially accepted. Partnership building and maintenance will be more systematically guided in the future, notably to support well-based prioritization in decisions on entering into partnerships, and to ensure that all partnerships meet some critical standards, such as due planning, secured resources and regular communication. However, each decision to enter a partnership, as well as each assessment of partnership benefits, is context-bound and cannot be based only on general standards. The secretariat and the GM will continue to maintain a level of flexibility in their approach to partnership building, with the aim to be able to 'seize opportunities' when needed.

Evaluation recommendation 5. *The secretariat and the GM should monitor and evaluate their partnerships on a regular basis to ensure that the partnerships are leading to results and functioning efficiently.*

Management response: Accepted. For future partnerships, the secretariat and the GM will prepare results frameworks and work programmes that enable monitoring and review of partnership performance. These will be directly linked to the workplan objectives and indicators to ensure the partnership contribution to 'right' results. Partnership performance will be regularly monitored, and the approach to monitoring will be synchronized or integrated with the secretariat and GM's corporate monitoring process where possible.

For most partnerships the results planning and monitoring can be relatively light arrangements that will not require significant additional resources.

Independent evaluations will be commissioned for selected partnerships.

Evaluation recommendation 6. *The secretariat and the GM should develop an approach for tracking, analyzing and making public the results delivery / performance in each partnership. Information of the achievements in each partnership should be more systematically shared internally and among partners, and also made publicly available.*

Management response: Accepted. More systematic results planning and monitoring (see response to recommendation 5) will support reporting on progress and results, and on successes and challenges, for both internal and external purposes. The information collected through planning, monitoring and reporting will also assist internal coordination and serve as 'institutional memory'.

The secretariat and the GM will also publish information of partnership achievements more than earlier.

Evaluation recommendation 7. *The secretariat and the GM should invest more in servicing partnerships, particularly by planning ahead for the needed staff time for effective partnerships implementation and ensuring that the staff involvement remains at an appropriate seniority level.*

Management response: Accepted. With reference to the responses to recommendations 1 and 3, the secretariat and the GM will in the future focus on fewer, but significant partnerships, and refrain from committing to activities to which they have no resources available.

Evaluation recommendation 8. *The secretariat and the GM should improve their information-sharing and coordination on partnerships, and define more explicitly their roles and responsibilities in partnerships involving both of them.*

Management response: Accepted. The secretariat and the GM will work together on 'strategizing' the UNCCD partnership approach, and define more clearly their roles in partnerships. Information-sharing will be made more systematic, and the improved monitoring of partnerships will be helpful in this regard.

Evaluation recommendation 9. *The secretariat and the GM should develop their partnership building beyond public sector partners, particularly toward civil society organisations and the private sector.*

Management response: Accepted. The secretariat and the GM will place more attention to CSOs and the private sector in their strategic planning for partnerships, and further develop their approaches to engaging large CSOs and private companies.