



# Choosing and Working with Partners

## Why Partnerships?

Partnerships are critical to development success, especially in agricultural research and extension.

## Choosing your partners

1. **Project driver.** Identify someone locally to assume a leadership role – Select someone who will (and can)
  1. Fully “buy in” to and promote the project,
  2. Coordinate activities, and
  3. Make sure that outputs are delivered on time and as desired.
2. **Work with "leaders".** Work with self-motivated, influential people - be they farmer collaborators, extension partners, etc.. They will provide independent drive to help achieve success.
3. **Common Commitment.** Partners must have common goals and have financial, personnel, institutional and organizational stability and support. Activities need "buy-in" from the top, the middle and the implementing levels. Individual self-interest or egos can override any institutional commitment to partnerships – so be ready to manage these factors.



Mutual respect – key to good partnerships

## Working with your partners

1. **Trust & Respect:** Trust and respect are critical for people to work together well. Building such trust and establishing confidence requires time, openness, shared goals and commitment.
2. **Collaborate.** Engage key partners (including potential critics) to jointly develop and set goals.
3. **Build Capacity.** Work jointly to develop knowledge and skills to better understand, test and implement activities.
4. **Meet Real Needs.** Make sure activities meet both the real and the perceived needs of your target audience.
5. **Simplify.** Keep proposed actions simple and clear, but ensure all critical components are considered.
6. **Resources & Contribution.** Good programs and partnerships need commitment and the financial resources to succeed. While resources can help create good will, all participants, even farmer collaborators, should contribute some of their own resources. Such commitment contributes to sustainability of effort.
7. **Transaction costs.** Establishing and maintaining partnerships requires time and effort.
8. **Accept Differences and be Open.** Organizations have different mandates, goals and motivations. For successful collaboration, each institute (and individual) has to see benefit for its participation. Seek “win-win” situations.
9. **Flexibility.** Change can lead to resistance due to many reasons such as: opposition to change per se, disagreement with the approach, or misunderstandings etc.. Modify your approach to understand people’s motivation and thinking and so respond in appropriate ways.

**Keys to Good partnerships:** Respect, Share common goals, Engage, Be Clear, Share Decision Making, Invest Time, Share Credit, Be Positive .....

For more information visit: <http://ip.ucdavis.edu>

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