

# WORKSTREAM 8: PUBLIC - PRIVATE - CIVIL SOCIETY PARTNERSHIPS

Lead Organizations:



## ➤➤➤ A LOOK BACK AT THE PAST 10 YEARS

The value and importance of Public – Private – Civil Society Partnerships (PPCSPs) for development and climate resilience is widely recognized and the need to strengthen them is reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, and the Paris Agreement. In the context of drought, PPCSPs have proven to be very effective for establishing, scaling up and sustaining measures to increase drought resilience. PPCSPs in this sense can refer to Public – Private Partnerships (PPP), Public-Civil Society Partnerships or partnerships that include all three domains. PPCSPs have a large potential to contribute to the much-needed action to scale up prospective Integrated Drought Management (IDM) around the world, which the public sector alone will not be able to tackle. The magnitude of the challenge is exacerbated by, inter alia, the increase in drought frequency and intensity under climate change, the increasing vulnerability of many societies and sectors to droughts, and the increasing exposure of growing populations and economies to hydro-climatic risks. These partnerships can provide answers to specific problems, opportunities, or goals, which might (or not) be addressed by only one of the actors, but can be addressed more efficiently, effectively, sustainably and/or resiliently in partnerships. During the last 10 years, new business models like crop micro insurance, new technologies like mobile devices to crowdsource field data, scientific progress like satellite products for agriculture have opened the opportunities for a new levels of PPCSP.

Even more than these pull factors, the growing budget constraints of the public sector in most countries of the world make it necessary for the private sector and civil society to take up more responsibility and partner with the public sector to jointly manage the ever-increasing drought risk around the globe. In other words, building drought resilience moving forward is a “whole-of-society” mission.

These PPCSPs for drought can range from informal talks and discussions over exchange of knowledge, to innovative governance and institutional arrangements, to full-fledged partnerships entailing funding. In recent years, the importance of civil society in partnerships with the public sector alone or in conjunction with the private sector have become more evident. The democratization of data, for example, allows civil society to access and use data and information of the public sector and in a best-case scenario also of the private sector (e.g., for small-hold farmers to take better informed decisions to improve their agricultural productivity and at the same time, feed data back to the public sector to improve the data availability). Other examples of PPCSPs in the drought resilience context that can and should be considered for scale-up and replication include:

- Investments of private companies in healthy watersheds and Nature Based Solutions
- Insurance for agricultural products
- Forecast-based financing partnerships
- Crowdsourcing of data
- Design-build-operate PPPs
- Risk retention financial mechanisms
- University/think-tank partnerships with government

## ➤➤➤ MAIN CHALLENGES

As indicated in the first section, PPCSPs have been proven to be powerful tools to establish and strengthen IDM in manifold ways. As these become increasingly necessary for building drought resilience, why are these partnerships not replicated more often or scaled up at the pace needed in the face of globally accelerating drought risk?

Several challenges have been identified that hinder the establishment of PPCSPs. Traditionally, tasks to increase drought resilience like providing weather information/drought warnings to farmers, sustain healthy watersheds or provide access to water are traditionally seen as responsibility of the public sector. Therefore, an engagement in these sectors of a private entity or civil society organization is often initially regarded with skepticism since for example a company has different interests than the group of stakeholders, whose interests would typically form the mandate of the public sector.

These competing interests and mandates need to be brought in line through an agreement between the different entities within a PPCSP. For that, an enabling environment and institutional/regulatory frameworks are needed as a basis for a partnership. However, even if such an environment and frameworks exist, a lack of mutual understanding and also a lack of trust can hinder a partnership. In many regions of the world, there is significant skepticism of the public sector and civil society towards private companies/sectors, and it can be a taboo to work with them.

In addition, such partnerships may need some resources as seed funding, and many additional challenges exist, such as aversion and/or inability to take on the risk of failure.

## ➤➤➤ HOW TO GO FURTHER TOGETHER TO SCALE UP PROSPECTIVE IDM

There is no single solution to the challenges mentioned, and the answers to these problems may look different for different regions, countries and cultural contexts. However, there are approaches that support setting up an enabling environment for PPCSPs, which do not only hold for the drought context. From an administrative, organizational, and legal point of view, countries should provide the necessary institutional frameworks and the openness to allow for such partnerships. The openness is of course also required from private sector actors, who might also be challenged to accept responsibilities beyond their usual business, for example companies that depend on water use for a healthy watershed.

In general, an openness to consider new approaches and innovations is required from all potential partners. This includes adapting the level of risk aversion and giving new ideas a chance. This specific aspect can also be supported by national or international partners, which can be used as seed-funding to spark more discussion and action between the sectors and offer risk transfer instruments to help facilitate partnership building.

The Drought Resilience +10 Conference will be an opportunity to discuss the needs to address the identified challenges as well as exchange ideas and share information on PPCSPs that have effectively overcome these challenges or are expected to overcome these challenges. Therefore, we are asking with this paper for positive PPCSP models and experiences related to drought.

Please share your model/case study/idea on the IDMP Community of Practice website or via email.

