Step 1: Identify and set up internal processes
Identifying your potential partner organisations can be done through:

- Desk research and knowledge of a topic/field and the key actors
- Through team members and existing partner networks

When wanting to launch a new campaign or project in a particular country or region, the scoping process requires *meeting as many relevant organisations as possible* to ensure organisations know of your presence, there is local buy-in from different relevant organisations, and to not miss opportunities to develop partnerships previously not considered.

At the point when an organisation is under serious consideration for partnership, the process to move forward on the partnership can be prepared. This process includes potentially *assigning a partnership manager.* For complex partnerships, you can consider setting up an entire team to manage partnerships. Different partnerships may imply setting different teams, depending on the type of organisation being targeted for partnership and the purpose of the partnership. The partnership manager will typically be the team leader for the team guiding a particular partnership development process.

Step 2: Assess and document

To start the assessment and due diligence process, you can first perform an initial assessment, to ensure the organisation identified would add value to your work, and to identify any red flags. If you decide to proceed, you can do a Due Diligence assessment.

Initial (or Preliminary) Assessment
Once decided that a partnership is worth pursuing, you can do the Initial Assessment to gather information to determine the thematic match, geographical match, organisational capacity, track record, core values, and accountability to stakeholders.

The Initial Assessment can address questions such as:

- What kind of expertise does your campaign/organisation need?
- Do you need the potential partner to share your values?
- Is there a geographical match with the potential partner?
- Does the potential partner produce strong, tangible results?

Due Diligence Assessment
If a potential partner passes through the previous phase, then you can perform a Due Diligence Assessment. In this process, you assess organisational risks such as: budgetary or financial mismanagement; impact on reputation; lack of capacity or resources to implement; track record with donors; potential conflicts arising from different values. The Due Diligence Assessment applies to all potential partners. It can be important for your future relationship to communicate in writing to the potential partners that you will not share the information they have provided with others.

The process involves reading annual reports, statutes, or conducting an interview with a senior employee of the organisation. The Due Diligence Assessment can include questions such about:

- Ethical and legal considerations (e.g. about potential risks, fraud, corruption, human rights abuses, Code of Conduct)
- Staffing (# of full time staff, part-time staff and unpaid volunteers)
- Financial and legal information (e.g. annual income, major donors, audited financial statements, record of financial stability)
- Programme information (e.g. track records in focus areas, demonstration to work on certain subjects that can be sensitive)

Step 3: Decide
Based on the outcomes of the due diligence process, the team facilitating the partnership development provides a formal recommendation to the relevant management team member for a decision to move forward on the partnership.

Similarly, if the due diligence process has raised light concerns the decision to evaluate the risk of the potential partnership can be discussed by management, who can discuss the concerns and decide the level of risk posed. Note, major concerns emerging from the due diligence process would disqualify a partnership and bar the partnership from being considered.

Step 4: Formalise Partnership
Once there is a decision to move ahead to work with a partner, a partnership agreement, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or contract should be drawn up. The type of partnership, nature of the relationship, or the requirements of a donor will determine whether an agreement, contract or MoU is utilised.

Regardless as to the form chosen, the agreement or contract should at minimum include at least the following:

- Governance structure
- Roles, responsibilities and duties of all parties
- Contributions and resources each party is giving to the collaboration (financial, knowledge, technical, physical, etc.)
- Decision making processes and moments.

It is important to formalise a partnership as early as possible to ensure that roles and responsibilities are agreed upon and decision making processes are clear. When negotiating an agreement, the interests of all parties need to be 'on the table'. Formalising a partnership usually happens when funding for a project has been secured.

6. **Ending a partnership**
The completion or ending of a partnership can happen for a number of reasons. The ideal situation is when the partnership has done what it set out to do, the project is complete and goals have been attained. Some partnerships move into new partnerships when funding is

renewed or new project funding is secured. The relationship with a partner organisation before completion of the partnership can be concluded, for example when:

- The partner organisation is unable to account for its expenditures properly or to meet reporting requirements.
- The results are not in accordance to what was agreed, and the partner is unable to deliver.
- There is a change of focus or strategy by the partner organisation or by your campaign.