



# Advancing Collaboration with World Neighbors

## Approach to Collaboration

Collaboration is an integral part of the way World Neighbors (WN) operates. The organization has local partners in the countries where it works. In 2017, WN worked with 40 local partners. In some cases, its partner organizations already existed. While in other instances, WN helped create the organizations.

WN is not looking to become very big but accepts the organic organizational growth that it is experiencing through great support and partnerships.

## An Example of Collaboration

In Guatemala, WN received a grant from the Starbucks Foundation to work with coffee growing communities. One main objective was to ensure that these communities were growing coffee and other crops to obtain a permanent stream of revenue throughout the year.

After project completion, the Starbucks Foundation asked WN to work with additional communities. Farmers impacted by the initial grant awarded are now assisting as trainers. They are hired to teach and pass along knowledge they gained to other farmers who will be benefactors of the new grant provided by the Starbucks Foundation.

This kind of collaboration with local community members reflects the way WN approaches collaboration and how it works with partners.



**Dr. Kate Schecter**  
President and CEO, World Neighbors

World Neighbors “inspires people and strengthens communities to find lasting solutions to hunger, poverty and disease and to promote a healthy environment.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.wn.org/who-we-are/>

## Application of the 9 Considerations for Collaboration

### Build Trust

To build trust, WN employs staff that speak the language of the countries where it works. WN also creates Memoranda of Understanding with local and national governments, to ensure that WN is in alignment with the government's policies. Also, trust is built through the development of relationships with and listening to the communities and government officials WN seeks to assist.

### Have a Vision

WN has a clear vision of self-sustainability and growth that they seek to reflect in all their work with local communities. WN's five-stage development model creates a sustainable development process that leads to complete independence and sustainability over an 8-10-year period. The stages are: initiation, growth, expansion, consolidation, and maturity. Through this process we ensure an exit strategy and avoid dependency.

### Seek to Assure the Success of Collaborators

WN wants communities to be successful. It helps communities achieve diversified livelihoods, basic financial literacy and create a leadership structure so work can continue even after WN's departure.

### Take Stock

When WN is faced with a challenge or something that is out of its scope of work, it looks for local partners with expertise.

### Start Small

This is a crucial component of the founder's vision. WN prioritizes sustainable growth.

### Take a Portfolio Approach

WN is a member of a virtual network of small-scale, organic farmers. This model gives WN access to innovations and potential partners from all over the world. Consequently, WN has many collaborations going at any time.

### Consider Non-traditional Partners

Generally, WN allies with non-traditional partners. Partners are diverse in spoken languages and cultures and are small organizations in the field.

### Keep Your Donors Apprised of Your Collaborations

WN frequently and regularly communicates with its donors through various channels. WN provides donors information about what is happening in the field and how donor dollars are used.

### Future Collaborations

The challenge for WN is scaling up. The team would be happy to have more collaborators to address the different areas covered by their work.

### Interested in reading more about other collaboration stories?

Visit [Give.org](https://www.give.org) to discover how other charities are using the nine considerations framework to drive collaboration within their organizations.

**Disclaimer:** All participants were interviewed about past collaborations through the framework of the 9 Considerations for Collaboration. Naturally in some organizations, not every one of the considerations are applicable to their circumstances.