



Global Energy Alliance  
for People and Planet  
GEAPP

# A Field Guide to Partnering

A resource to nurturing healthy, effective and impactful partnerships - and igniting alliancing

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 This Field Guide will be continually updated as we learn and refine our practice together. For questions, comments and feedback, please contact [felicity.tan@energyalliance.org](mailto:felicity.tan@energyalliance.org)



# Introduction



## The Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet's level of ambition is in the realm of transformative change.

To achieve the transformative potential of our carbon, access, jobs and mobilization (CAJM) goals, partners in the Alliance - including GEAPP as the driving organization behind the alliance - will need to espouse behaviors, practices and a mindset that nurtures healthy, effective and ambitious partnerships, and engenders **strategic, committed and networked action towards shared goals**, which we refer to as **alliancing**.

Alliancing is how we move from a hub-and-spoke model with GEAPP at the center, to **a powerful mesh of partners** that are driving multiple initiatives to meet and exceed our Carbon, Access, Jobs and Mobilization goals.

At the same time, the bilateral relationships that make up our mesh of partners require careful design (Prospecting) as well as care and tending (Stewardship).

This Field Guide aims to aid Alliance colleagues in practicing - and building - our unique way of partnering, so together we can change energy for good.

# Key definitions

**It is important that we have common language and understanding of the words and phrases we use. This articulation allows for shared understanding and consistency in the organization and the Alliance.**

**Partner** is an encompassing term that refers to all actors formally engaged in the Alliance through some form of agreement, be they individuals or institutions. They include:

- Organizations with which we have MOUs and other agreements (formerly known as “core alliance members”)
- Governments, ministries, and associated agencies (both in the countries where we work, and countries that align their resources, influence, and capital with the Alliance)
- Donors, grantees, and investees
- Members of the GEAPP Leadership Council (GLC)
- Other organizations – including CSOs, project developers, and companies – with whom we collaborate to deliver on our objectives
- Others who lend their influence and expertise to our shared mission
- The very people representing these institutions and individuals

**Partnership** refers to the specific set of agreements between GEAPP and a partner or partners in the Alliance. These agreements lay out:

- Specific objectives, expectations, complementarities, and roles
- Agreements of how we work together
- The specific initiatives or collaborations we are delivering together
- How we scope for, design, and instrumentalize these agreements

**Partnering** is the everyday act of coming together with partners to work collaboratively towards a common goal or to undertake a specific project; it’s typically characterized by shared risks, resources, responsibilities, and rewards.

**The Alliance** is the full breadth of partners engaged with GEAPP. GEAPP refers to the organization as a member of the alliance, playing backbone functions by supporting partnering and partnerships among partners.

In this guide, **GEAPP** refers to the driving organization behind the Alliance.

**Alliancing** is the everyday act of multiple partners (3 or more) collaborating with one another, with or without GEAPP as a central player in the collaboration, toward shared goals.

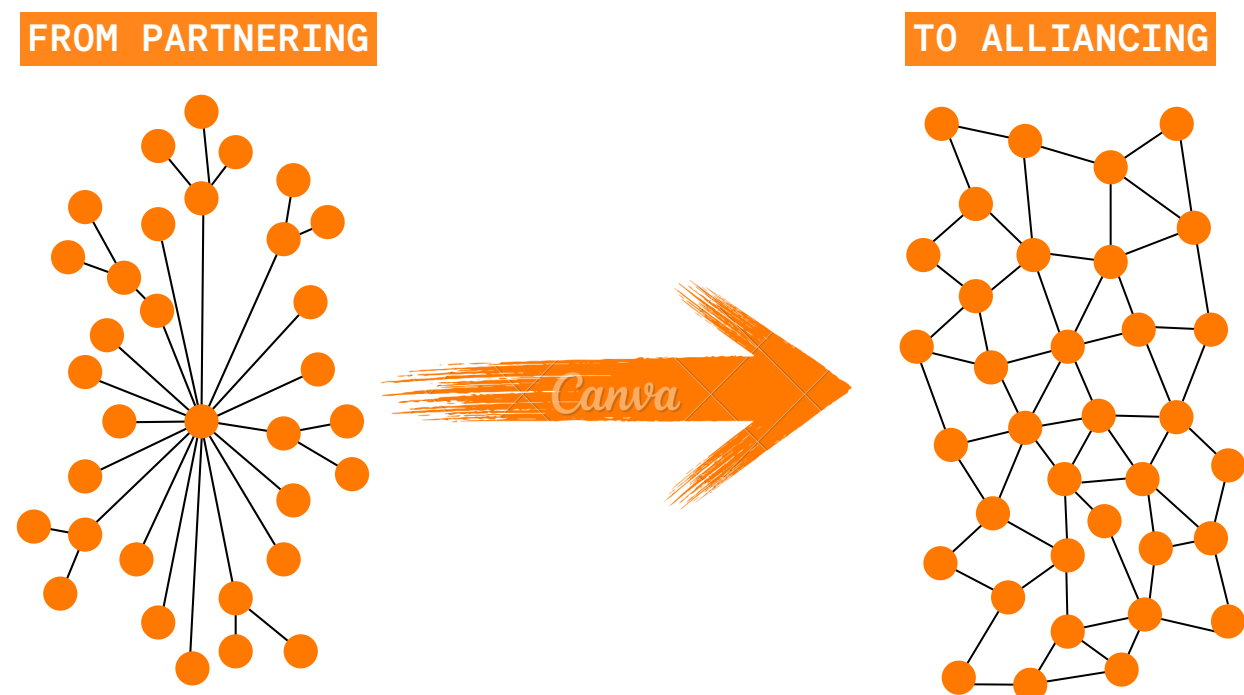
A **Collaboration** refers to a specific area of work with one or more partners are working on together. It can be a useful term when distinguishing between a *Partnership* (the relationship) and specific projects one or more partners may engage in as part of the Alliance.

# What is Alliancing?

**Alliancing is when multiple partners combine their strengths to deliver impact together, toward shared goals** – with or without GEAPP as a central player. This is an ambitious act that GEAPP was built to ignite.

Initially, GEAPP plays an essential backbone role, but we will know we are successful if in the long run, the movement snowballs such that our involvement is no longer central, or even required, to achieve and exceed our shared Carbon, Access, Jobs and Mobilization goals.

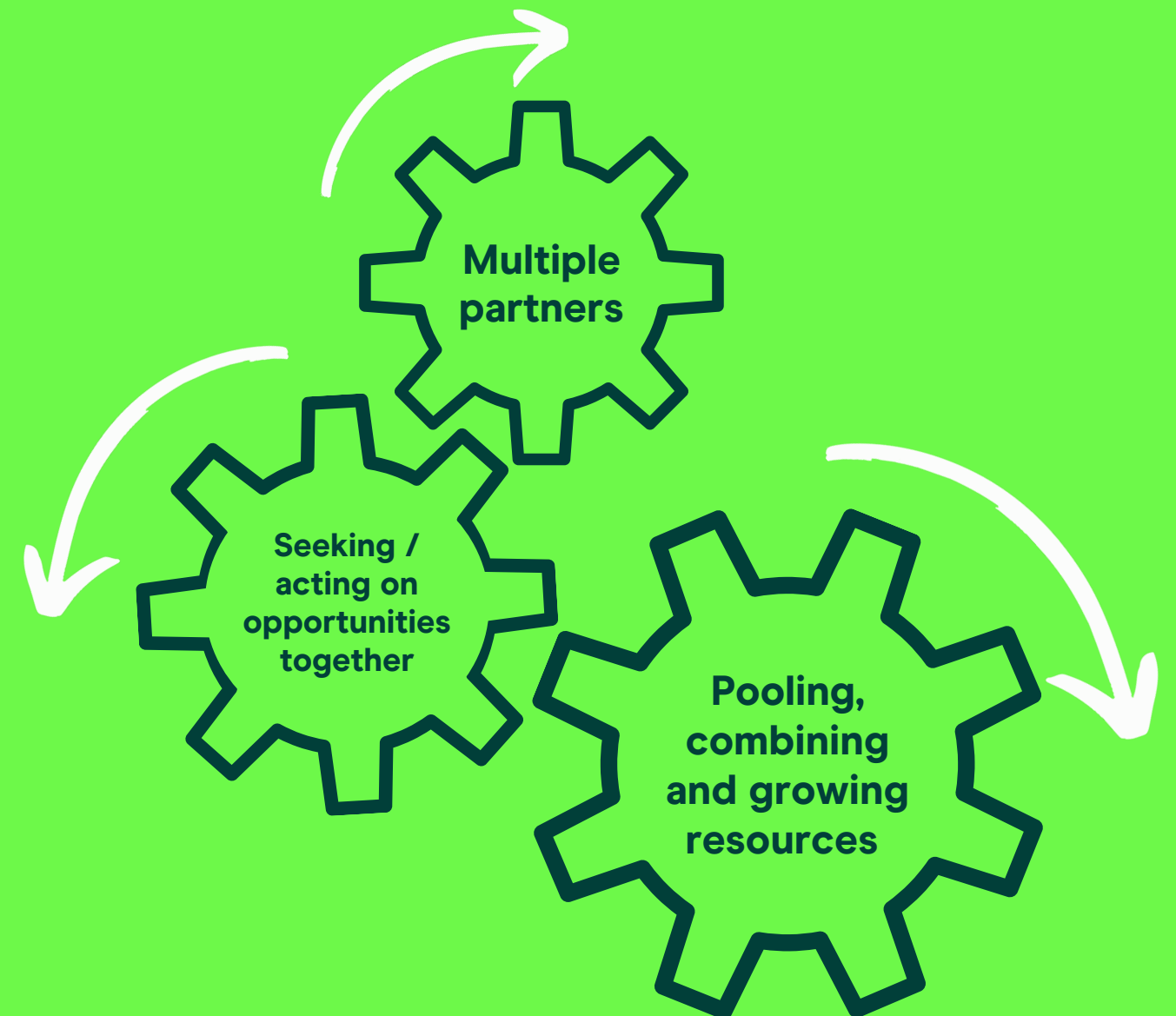
The act of Alliancing is how we move from a hub-and-spoke model with GEAPP at the center to a powerful mesh of partners that are driving multiple initiatives to meet and exceed our CAJM goals.



## What does Alliancing look like?

We know Alliancing is happening when we experience:

- partners clustering around an opportunity;
- alignment around specific, measurable goals and their contributions to make that happen in a joined-up way;
- together pooling in more partners, resources and influence to create irreversible momentum.



# The GEAPP Ecosystem

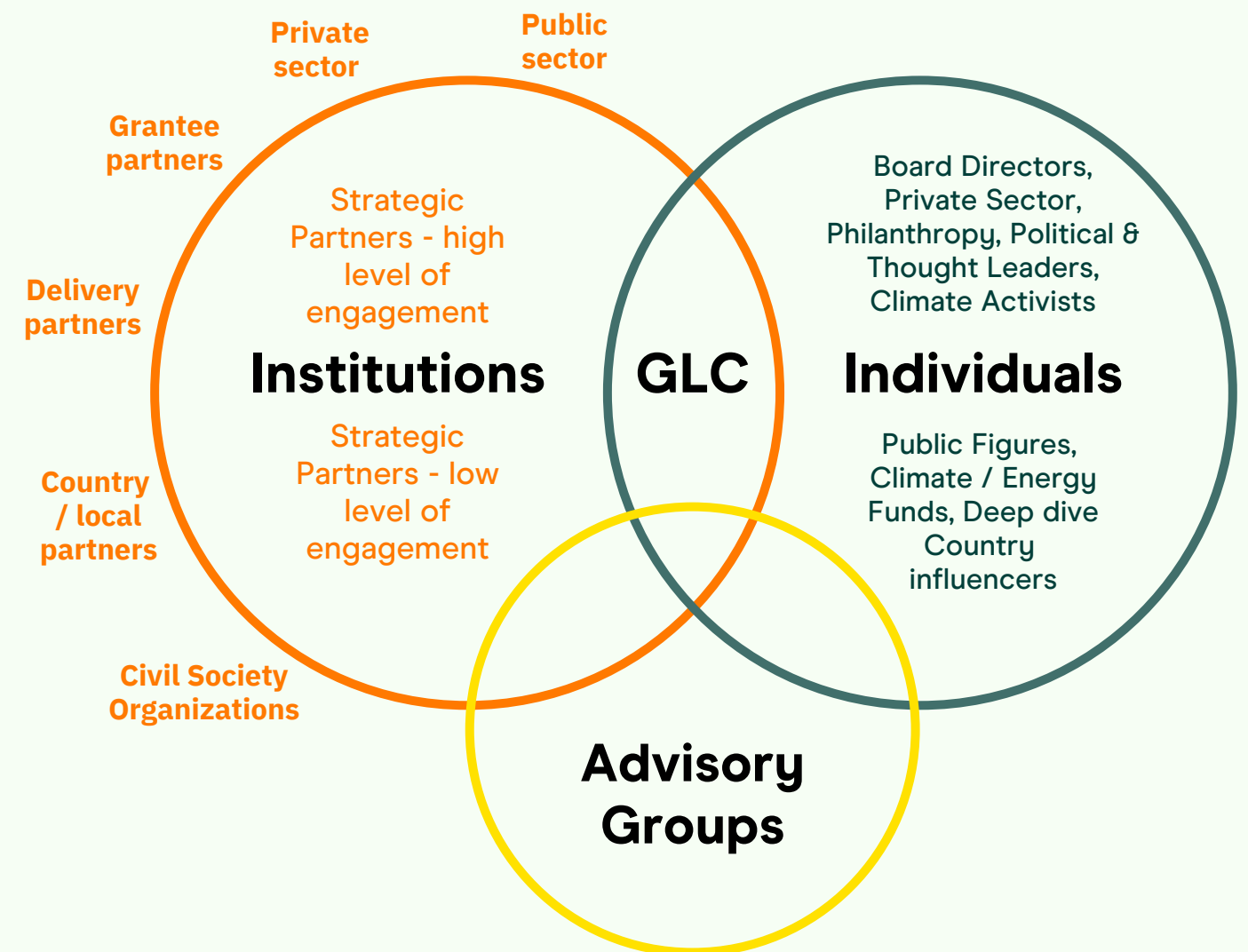
GEAPP has traditionally spoken about the Alliance as having 19+ members. However, **the Alliance is more expansive.** GEAPP is inclusive and we consider *all* our partners as part of the network.

As of August 2024, we count **50+ partners** in the Alliance.

We refer to members of the Alliance as *partners* (see key definitions page).

Our partners enable the delivery of sustained impact when we pool in funding, resources, expertise, experience, knowledge, and networks. Throughout the stages of partner engagement, we evaluate and shepherd potential and existing partners using the Partnerships Health Check outlined in this field guide.

- **Institutions** that are funding, financing, and delivering impact, as well as governments committed to collective action to achieve shared aims on CAJM.
- **Individuals** that form a web of influencers for GEAPP – these are change agents from various corners of society who have the potential to scale and accelerate the clean energy revolution.
- **Members of the GEAPP Leadership Council (GLC)** – which has representation from institutions and individuals, and are among the most valuable and highly engaged from these groupings.
- **Advisory groups** and other forms of brain trusts by region, program area or theme are now also beginning to emerge.



# GEAPP's Value Proposition to Partners

## A high value and impact-oriented Alliance of partners deploying complementary strengths in new ways to end energy poverty and avert the climate crisis

- The Alliance was assembled to **systemically address persistent gaps** that stand in the way of the green energy transition.
- With collaboration at our core, we enable our network of partners to **work together on focused strategic areas in new ways**, at new scales and at new speeds.
- **GEAPP (the organization) serves as a backbone** to deploy this network of committed partners, each offering unique and complementary sources of expertise, delivery capacity, capital, and reach.

## A trusted and independent driving organization unencumbered by common obstacles faced by more conventional institutions

- GEAPP is **trusted by governments**, operating at their invitation to act in the interest of communities most impacted by energy poverty and climate change.
- GEAPP takes a **systemic approach to deploy our rare and catalytic capital**. We operate with:
  - **Intentionality**. We are driven by a singular focus to accelerate the green energy transition
  - **Additionality**: We act at the greatest points of leverage where intervention by the Alliance can play the most catalytic and impactful role.
  - **Flexibility**. Our capital is patient, risk tolerant and can bypass institutional constraints that hold others back.

## An ability to catalyze collaborative action to unlock specific value that partners have been unable to find elsewhere

- GEAPP's network and trusted-partner status enables us to **convene diverse stakeholders to drive targeted and coordinated action** to accelerate project deployment.
- GEAPP's targeted philanthropic capital and interventions **enable our partners to unlock climate finance** flows or amplify the speed and impact of their investments.
- GEAPP **acts directly, and always alongside Partners**. We identify the greatest points of leverage to meet energy transition goals and build bespoke collaborations for joint delivery.



# Partnering Behaviors

We recognize that working through the layered complexity of our work is a **team effort** - a team consisting of not just GEAPP colleagues but partners as well.

*This requires that we focus on how we are with each other, as much as what we do with each other.*

Informed by direct experiences shared by and agreed with Alliance colleagues, we have identified **three partnering behaviors** that have facilitated some of our most impactful collaborations to date and are the fundamental building blocks for partnering effectively.

We respect that each organization will have their own values and culture. Hence, we should think of these behaviors as “rules of engagement” when we enter into our partnering spaces.



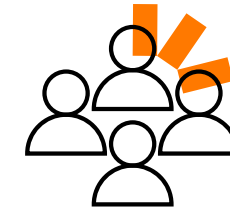
## Acting with Respect and Reciprocity

*These are behaviors that demonstrate that we...*

Appreciate the value that different perspectives and cultures bring, and the value of giving as well as receiving.

*This could look like... (illustrative)*

- Engaging with humility and mutual respect for different cultures and ways of working.
- Giving beyond contractual commitments (eg. generosity of time, brain trust, championing each other).



## Building a Collaborative Culture

Recognize it is the strength of our combinations that allows us to achieve transformational change.

- Making time and space to problem solve, co-create and explore new ideas together.
- Better articulating expectations, limitations and assumptions to develop shared understanding.
- Creating connections to enable each other to move faster and farther and reduce duplication.



## Sharing Leadership and Accountability

Understand we are equally responsible for creating conditions for success and learning through failures.

- Clearly aligning on the set of complementary skills, resources, staff, networks and ideas to bring to our collective work
- Agreeing on what we will measure our success on, and how we will stay accountable to each other and those goals





# The Partnership Journey

While the Partnership Journey at GEAPP looks different for each partner, region and program area, they share many of the same features, challenges and opportunities. It benefits us all when we are able to practice Partnering in similar ways across the Alliance, while leaving room to adapt to the context. We walk alongside partners from Prospecting to Alliancing.

## Prospecting

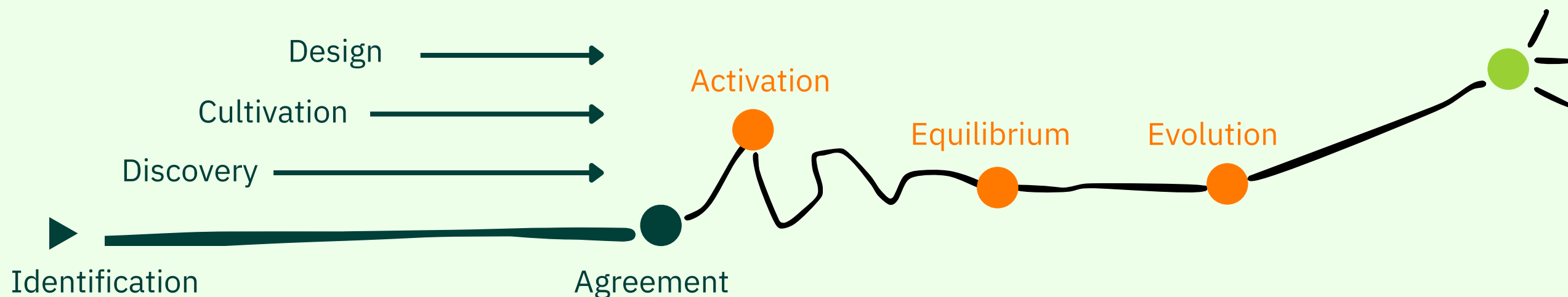
In Prospecting, we look to recruit partners (individuals and institutions) to the Alliance by *identifying, discovering, cultivating and designing* programmatic synergies with potential partners that are then agreed, setting collaborations up for success.

## Stewardship

Stewardship is where opportunities transform into active Partnerships. It is the practice of cultivating healthy, ambitious and effective relationships – including a disciplined approach to assessing impact through partnership performance, and caring for our partners. *Activation* brings a new partnership to life, *Equilibrium* is focused on collaboratively delivering impact and finding our way through trial and error, and *Evolution* focuses on identifying creating new opportunities together.

## Alliancing

This is how Partnerships come together into networked collaborations to achieve CAJM at speed and scale.



# Prospecting

## What

**Prospecting is the process of landscaping, identifying, and engaging with potential partners (“prospects”) to mutually assess complementarity, shared vision and strategic fit.**

Being selective based on values and vision alignment, strategic fit, operational feasibility is paramount.

## When

While we may think of prospecting as solely **exploring new partnerships**, it is also about exploring **new opportunities** with existing partners as well. Indeed, prospecting with existing partners is essential for growth. Prospecting can continue well into the Stewardship and Alliancing phases as new strategies and opportunities emerge.

## Who

**Everyone in the Alliance can prospect**, and can turn to the GEAPP Partnerships Team for guidance and support. The GEAPP Partnerships Team also leads the process of identifying a handful of priority prospects beneficial to the wider Alliance.

## Why do we Prospect?

- Prospecting is what brings the right actors and their contributions into our network of impact.
- Prospecting well enables GEAPP and the Alliance to design collaborations effectively, and helps reduce friction in ongoing partner relationships.
- We are always looking for opportunities to leverage our resources to unlock others’ resources, financial or non-financial, to support shared objectives and achieve CAJM.

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## Common reasons to Prospect

- Fill capability gaps
- Streamlining to avoid duplication and overcrowding
- Long-term sustainability of the project or initiative
- Funding, co-investment and capital mobilization
- New opportunities for greater impact
- Credibility and influence



# Stewardship

**Stewardship is the action and delivery phase of the Partnership Journey - transforming agreements into action and results.**

It typically begins the moment a partnership has been established via an agreement, though stewarding activities often show up during both the Prospecting and Alliancing phases as well. By stewarding a partnership well, strong foundations are laid, preparing a partner to collaborate with GEAPP and other Alliance partners in a networked way (ie. Alliancing).

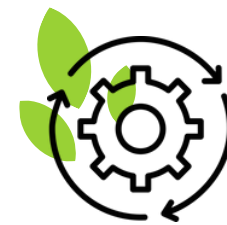
## What Stewardship is not...

- It is NOT one person's job to carry the entirety of a partnership – it is a team effort.
- It is NOT just project delivery – though successful stewardship facilitates achieving those results.
- It is NOT the same thing as grant management or project management – although a grant may be part of the partnership, and more complex partnerships may require project management

At GEAPP, stewardship is the practice of nurturing partnerships so that they are healthy, ambitious and effective. It about **cultivating strategic, operational and relational alignment** with partners to achieve our shared goals:



**Strategic:** our goals, capabilities, resources and priorities are complementary.



**Operational:** we actively seek efficiencies in how we work together across a portfolio of collaborations.



**Relational:** we gain alignment by practicing the three Partnering Behaviors when engaging with each other, rather than being led by a transactional mindset.

These alignments do not only apply to just bilateral relationships - we can also steward networked partnerships, e.g. through GLC, and the Alliance Partners Forum.



# GEAPP Relationship Management System

**A Relationship Manager (RM) is the port-of-call at GEAPP for a Partnership, and is central to stewarding a healthy, ambitious and effective relationship with the Partner.**

RMs have a holistic understanding of the big picture, but are not the only person responsible for delivery. An RM serves two critical functions:

- Acts as the primary contact point between GEAPP and the partner - including for health checks
- Shepherds all those with shared responsibility for the partnership as one team to deliver results together.

**Being a relationship manager is an important responsibility, and is a critical role in GEAPP's relationship management system.**

GEAPP RMs typically have a counterpart RM in the Partner's organization, who serves a similar function. Each RM relationship is different, usually due to the way the Partner organization is structured. *If you are an RM at GEAPP or an alliance partner and do not know who your counterpart is, please contact the GEAPP Partnerships Team.*

## RMs' Responsibilities

**LEAD: Sets the tone of the relationship, and guides the partnership toward impact**

- Clarifies roles, expectations, priorities, and accountabilities
- Ensures progress toward agreed partnership priorities
- Creates, nurtures and preserves strong relationships with partners, together with other GEAPP colleagues
- Positions the relationship to grow toward Alliancing by ensuring we deliver, influence, and scale impact together (*refer to Partnership Health Checks in the next page*)

**BRIDGE: Fosters open lines of communication among GEAPP colleagues working on the partnership, and between GEAPP and the partner:**

- Cultivates continuous understanding of each other's strategies and operating contexts
- Identifies and creates connections across teams, programmatic areas and other partners
- Serves as a responsive conduit, communicating and responding to questions and issues from both the partner and GEAPP colleagues
- Champions solutions to issues, challenges and tensions to shepherd a constructive path forward

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## Colleagues' Responsibilities to the RM

- Ensure RMs are aware of or consulted about engagement, agreements and other forms of progress in the relationship.
- Colleagues are equally responsive to, and supportive of, the RM so they can ably Lead and Bridge.



# Partnership Health Indicators

## What makes healthy, ambitious and effective partnerships?

In consultation with alliance colleagues, we have developed **Partnership Health Indicators** to assess how partnerships are performing across the Alliance using common metrics.

The intent is to improve the performance and impact of our partnerships by bringing stronger discipline around how we measure, assess, and learn from our relationships - and how they are contributing to our shared goals.

The indicators are designed to assess the health of the partnership from the perspectives of both the Partner and GEAPP.

## Level 1: How is our Partnership Working?

*Relating to the health and strength of relationships between GEAPP and the Partner.*

### 1A. Strategic Alignment

Complementarity of vision, contributions and roles in the partnership.

### 1B. Operational Alignment

Effectiveness of day-to-day collaboration (eg. effectively communication, sharing ownership of the work, ease of learning and adapting together)

### 1C. Relational Alignment

Degree to which the partners experience a shared commitment to collaborating, trust, respect and reciprocity.

## Level 2: How is the Partnership Evolving into Alliancing and Contributing to CAJM?

*Relating to progress and impact toward CAJM from collaborative relationships among partners. Can be applied to bilateral relationships and alliancing clusters.*

### 2A. Delivering Together

Coordination, co-investment/co-resourcing and learning/iterating together has helped improved ability to deliver the project or initiative.

### 2B. Influencing Together

The partnership has helped expand the ambition, influence and/or reach of each partner (e.g. new or elevated goals especially as it relates to empowering women and girls; expanding portfolio of sectors, capabilities, geographies, networks, share of voice, etc).

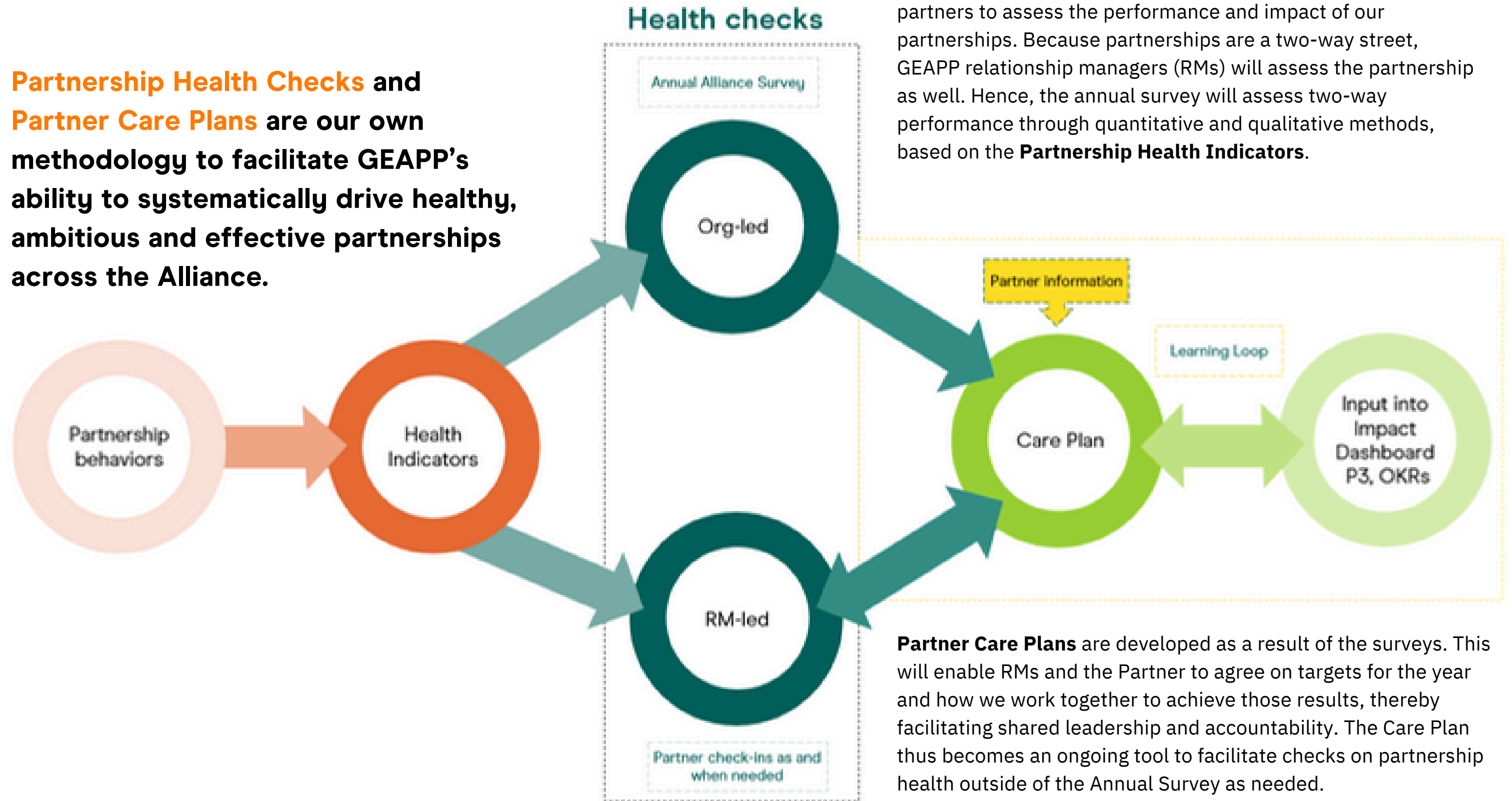
### 2C. Accelerating Impact Together

The partnership has generated wider mobilization of financial and non-financial resources in order to scale clean energy solutions in the wider ecosystem.



# Health Checks and Care Plans

**Partnership Health Checks and Partner Care Plans** are our own methodology to facilitate GEAPP's ability to systematically drive healthy, ambitious and effective partnerships across the Alliance.



Through an **Annual Partnership Health Survey**, we ask our partners to assess the performance and impact of our partnerships. Because partnerships are a two-way street, GEAPP relationship managers (RMs) will assess the partnership as well. Hence, the annual survey will assess two-way performance through quantitative and qualitative methods, based on the **Partnership Health Indicators**.

**Partner Care Plans** are developed as a result of the surveys. This will enable RMs and the Partner to agree on targets for the year and how we work together to achieve those results, thereby facilitating shared leadership and accountability. The Care Plan thus becomes an ongoing tool to facilitate checks on partnership health outside of the Annual Survey as needed.

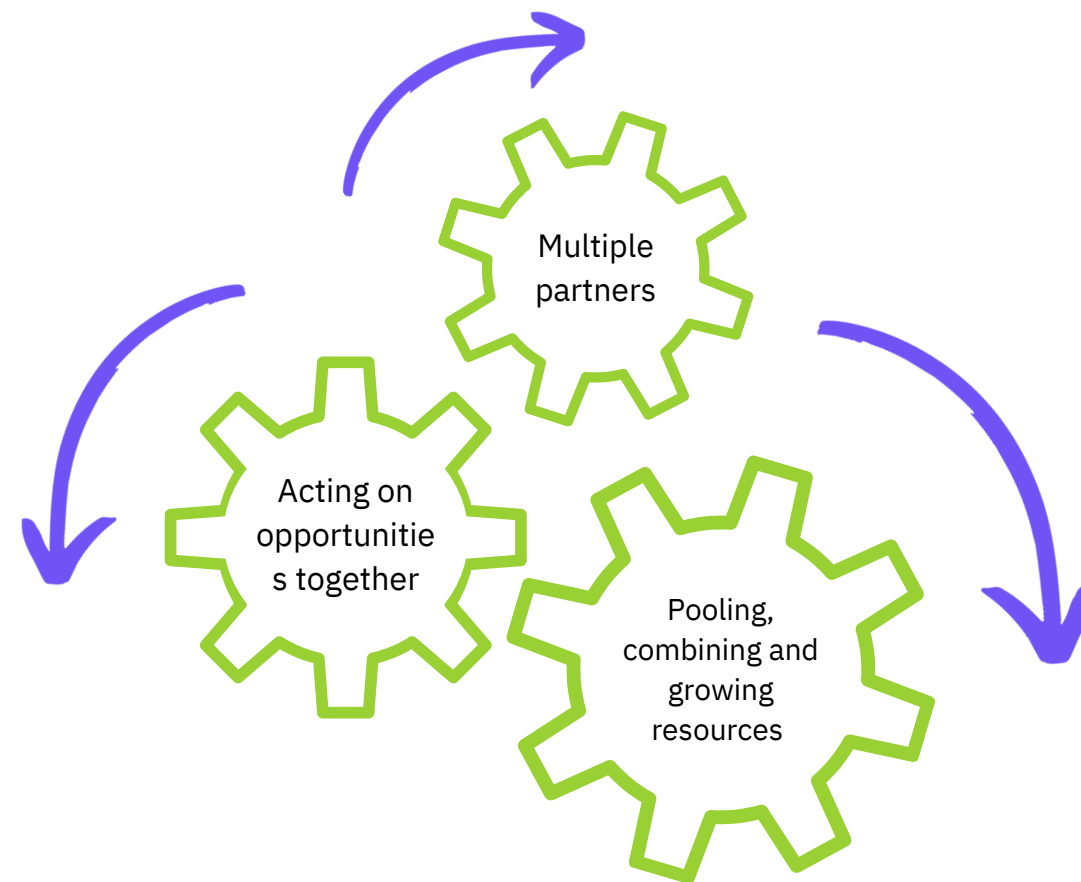


# Alliancing

**Alliancing is when multiple partners combine their strengths to deliver impact together, toward shared goals.**

Through multiple nodes of alliancing, we create a powerful mesh of partners that are driving multiple initiatives to meet and exceed our CAJM goals.

This way of working is the vision for this alliance, and what makes us unique.



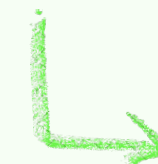
## Layers of Alliancing at GEAPP

### GEAPP LEADERSHIP COUNCIL (GLC)

The GLC is a grouping of pre-eminent heads of institutions and individuals who leverage their global and institutional influence to drive program acceleration in a networked way. GEAPP is the secretariat for this alliancing forum, to stitch together and drive coordinated, measurable action toward clear targets and large scale solutions that leverages the breadth of our network's income, influence and impact.

### ALLIANCE PARTNERS FORUM (APF)

The APF is an all-encompassing community of practice comprised of our most committed alliance partners from the 50+ organizations in the network. Through the APF we convene partners to advance shared objectives through exploration of the work, sharing learnings, refining alliance-wide priorities and honing ways of collaborating across the network.



### COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

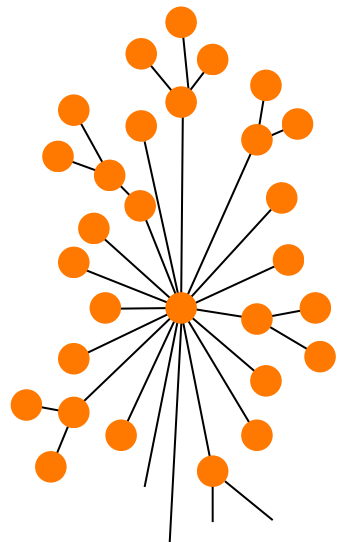
CoPs are an emergent clustering of alliance partners energized around specific areas - whether it is functional (eg. MEL, comms or investments), thematic (eg. gender inclusivity, coal phase out), or regional/country-based (eg. Vietnam and DRC) - where focused discussion and action takes place. These discussions are led by GEAPP or partner colleagues, and happen throughout the year.



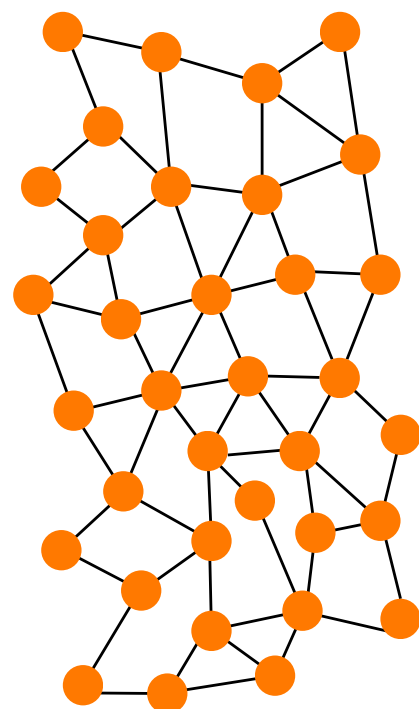
# Alliancing Roles

Our ambition is to move from the hub and spoke model of partnering-as-usual, to a networked model of “alliancing.” represented by this fishnet.

FROM PARTNERING



TO ALLIANCING



Alliancing can take many shapes and forms, but it is helpful to understand when we are likely alliancing and when we are not. We have identified a range of ways alliancing happens in the Alliance context. Any Alliance partner can be a Catalyst, Convenor or Contributor:

## Catalyst

Stakeholders are not well-coordinated but are open to/interested in coordinating and collaborating. A partner typically **ignites an entirely new collective effort**. They play a major alliancing role to:

- Coordinate relevant partners and other actors around a specific solution or focus area
- Bring a focused but catalytic element that serves as an enabler
- Provide secretariat or engine room support to the collective

examples of GEAPP as a Catalyst: **BESS Consortium, DRC Metro-grids**

## Convenor

Stakeholders are generally coordinating well and cooperating in productive ways. A partner is well-positioned to play a **leadership role in convening them and others to take collective impact to the next level**. They play a moderate alliancing role to:

- Convene partners
- Align their ambition, commitments, and initiatives
- Provide leadership to enable coordinating and collaborating together

examples of GEAPP as a Convenor: **GeCCO, DREAM, Leading on an investment**

## Contributor

Stakeholders are coordinating well. A partner plays a **light alliancing role by contributing specific investments or activities** that are additional to the existing collaboration’s goals.

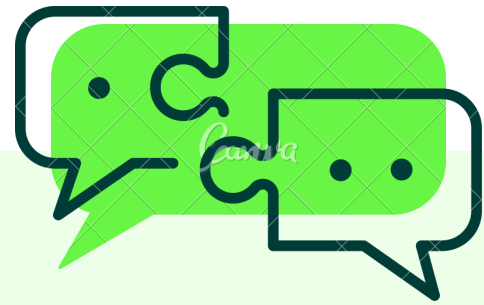
examples of GEAPP as a contributor: **South Africa Just Working Group, APRA, Unlocking an investment**





# Practices for Alliancing well (1/2)

Learning from the experiences of alliance colleagues and GEAPP relationship managers, the GEAPP Partnerships Team has identified a set of elements we are learning are helpful towards effective alliancing in the Alliance context. The invitation is to think big and challenge each other to act in ways that live up to the Alliance's promise.



## Engage in generative dialogue

Generative dialogue helps us continuously develop a shared understanding of differences given ever-evolving dynamics, and to do so while suspending judgement.

We do this by prioritizing collective needs, and creating “safe spaces” (dialing down power dynamics, building in sufficient in-person time and engaging in psycho-socially healthy discussions) that enables constant connection and creative solutioning.

When engaging in generative dialogue, we are open to hearing, considering and grappling with different perspectives to co-create solutions, even when it is unexpected. Lean into the Partnering Behaviors as your guide.



## Leverage the power of convenings

The collaborative nature of the Alliance necessitates convening stakeholders to encourage meaningful dialogue to generate focused solutions.

Convenings are effective and powerful when they represent a full spectrum of diversity, encourage new thinking, challenge key assumptions and groupthink, are objectives-focused, and create safe spaces for generative dialogue.

Effective convening is best practiced as a series of moments, touchpoints and activities before, during and after the convening itself.



## Invest in organizational capacity

We need the organizational capacity to match our ambition. Lessons from our early Alliancing efforts have shown that a significant amount of capacity is required to not only nurture relationships, but to also make connections, drive project activities and sustain momentum. Bottlenecks in the system from too few people responsible for advancing too many things happens far too often.

Those advancing alliances should create operational clarity with colleagues and partners: raise resource needs internally early enough, create role clarity and communicate operational changes to Partners quickly. We have found partners are willing to step in and help when asked.



# Practices for Alliancing well (2/2)

Thanks to the experiences shared by GEAPP RMs, the Partnerships Team has identified a set of elements we are learning are helpful towards effective alliancing in the GEAPP context. The invitation is to think big and challenge our partners and ourselves to think in ways that live up to the Alliance's promise.



## Activate leaders and champions

Leadership buy-in enables the fullest co-ownership of ideas and solutions, helping ensure organizational traction and sustained momentum needed to succeed.

Ideal-state alliancing is geared toward enabling Partners to champion projects even in the absence of GEAPP. The goal of the GLC, for example, is to galvanize excitement about solutions partners could mobilize around, and facilitate converting that energy into concrete, collective impact. Here, while GEAPP plays a critical backbone role, it is the GLC as a collective that is championing progress towards GEAPP-aligned solutions.



## Embed learning intentionally

Alliancing necessitates a learning culture. This means:

- creating an environment where feedback is welcomed, respected and appreciated, and where everyone feels comfortable to give and receive feedback; and
- those learnings are used to adjust and improve objectives, processes, and delivery to reinforce continuous improvement.

We should be actively facilitating feedback loops, actively listening, and applying learnings to implement changes in practices, systems and behaviors where applicable.



## Alliancing Resources

The following resources are short guides that can help Alliance colleagues to practice alliancing to do so well. These and other resources will soon be made available on the Alliance resource hub.

- Principles for effective convening
- The Four Ways of Talking & Listening
- Iceberg Model
- The Radical Climate Collaboration Framework
- Alliancing Case Studies





**Global Energy Alliance  
for People and Planet**  
GEAPP

## Acknowledgements

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This Field Guide was developed in collaboration with Reos Partners and with many thanks to the engagement and wisdom of key stakeholders across the Alliance ecosystem:

- GEAPP Relationship Managers (RMs) who are at the frontline engaging with our partners;
- Our partners, without whom we cannot achieve our mission;
- Our colleagues from the MEL, Investments, Legal and Communications teams who guide and enable our work

We engaged with different audiences, at different levels through:

- A series of workshops with GEAPP RMs to develop and co-create the Partnership Approach;
- Bilateral interviews with Partners to understand their perspectives on how to enable better partnering and alliancing;
- Collaboration with GEAPP's MEL team and consultations with Partners to develop our partnership impact framework; and
- Collaborations with GEAPP's Comms teams to help us translate what we are trying achieve to a wider audience.

Continued conversations with partners, GEAPP teams and relevant stakeholders are an integral part of co-owning our Partnership Approach. The door is always open for feedback, contributions and learnings so we can continue to strengthen the practice of partnering the 'alliance way' — together.

**For questions, comments and feedback, please contact [felicity.tan@energyalliance.org](mailto:felicity.tan@energyalliance.org)**