Building sustainable partnerships
Building sustainable partnerships

VISION
• To share the responsibility for our partners’ behaviors and actions.
• To build win-win partnerships through mutual growth.

RATIONALE
The success of our Company relies considerably on our partners – from the beginning of the value chain through our contractors, to the end of the value chain through our dealers. Working side-by-side with us throughout our operations also means that our partners indirectly represent our values, namely brand, prestige, and identity, to our customers, the communities in which we operate, and our broader stakeholders. As such, we believe that it is important for us to share the responsibility for our partners’ actions and behavior.

Our partners can be broadly categorized into two groups:
• Upstream (implementation and maintenance contractors)
• Downstream (authorized dealers and retailers, content and application developers and others)

The importance of building sustainable partnerships with our contractors is heightened by the current expansion of our 3G network, which requires that they enter into new communities to build the necessary infrastructure. It is important that our partners feel safe at work, and can thus perform with quality and care. At the same time, we strive to build long-term relationships with dealers and other downstream partners to increase the level of our partners’ capabilities while also creating opportunities that ensure complete market penetration of every customer segment. Approximately 97% of all our transactions are conducted through dealers and electronic channels.

Our “ecosystem strategy” allows us to work closely and productively with our partners in all aspects, which is essential if we are to ensure the delivery of high-quality services to our customers.

The road ahead
AIS plans to continue to develop its partners and lead the way in encouraging sustainability as a shared strategy. As a first step, we will ensure our contractors’ compliance with the social and environmental responsibility guidelines and standards we are currently developing. To achieve this, the training and development offered to partners must include our values and sustainability vision, in addition to technical, social and environmental standards. We will also work on ways to leverage the customer insights received from our downstream partners, and share them with our contractors. These steps are essential to achieving win-win partnerships in the future, and will ensure our position as a leader in delivering the “best customer experience” in a way that also helps us achieve our sustainability goals.
Building Sustainable Partnerships

**Focus area:**

**Commitment:**
- To share the responsibility for our partners’ behaviors and actions.
- To build win-win partnerships through mutual growth.

**Goal:**
- Sharing responsibility for our partners’ behavior and actions
- Building win-win partnerships through mutual growth

**Initiatives:**
- Committing to responsible procurement practices and policies
- Communicating and embedding the AIS Way into our partners
- Training and development courses to raise our partners’ standards; differentiating AIS from other service providers through partnerships that give AIS a competitive advantage
Sharing responsibility for our partners’ behavior and actions

As our partners can sometimes be indistinguishable from us, and play a vital role in the success of our business, we are well aware of the interdependencies between AIS and our supply chain. We are committed to sharing responsibility with our upstream and downstream partners, through responsible practices and policies, as well as ingraining the AIS way – our characteristics and values – into our partners. Toward this end, we undertook a number of initiatives to highlight the importance of sustainability practices along the entire supply chain for all our key partners.

Committing to responsible procurement practices and policies

Upstream

AIS’ partners are carefully selected to help us provide our customers with the best quality products and services that match our values. As a first step, we have implemented a sustainable procurement policy that defines safety standards for our suppliers and contractors. AIS’ tender process follows internationally recognized procurement standards, and our partners’ workplace must meet certain safety and health regulations. We are committed to upholding health and safety standards in our suppliers’ production processes, as well as in our contractors’ implementation and maintenance standards.

By the same token, our sustainable procurement policy highlights the importance of fair practice and human rights. Our vendors must not use child or forced labor nor have a history of using child labor. In our hiring policy, we ensure that our hires meet the minimum working age.

We recently enhanced our sustainable procurement policy to incorporate environmental considerations. When selecting our partners, we now conduct a comprehensive evaluation that includes assessing our suppliers’ measures to reduce their environmental impact.

The trigger for our sustainable procurement policy was our international vendors, who have encouraged us to adopt global best practice policies. We have integrated what we learned from our international vendors with the appropriate local requirements, as well as our own sustainability goals, to form the basis of our sustainable procurement policy.

Downstream

Similarly, customized dealers, retailers, content providers and software and technology vendors must adhere to the same standards that we place upon ourselves. We are selective in partnering with those who share our values and standards. To minimize inappropriate content communicated to our customers, we set a clear standard regarding what is and what is not acceptable to AIS and our customers. We select our partners based on those standards, and continually monitor their activities to ensure that the guidelines are met.

Going forward, we wish to enhance the requirements that we currently set out for our partners by incorporating additional dimensions to ensure a truly sustainable supply chain. In our new tender process, we will encourage
our partners to continually improve their performance, with the aim of achieving win-win growth. Moreover, AIS wishes to develop these standards into a formal code of conduct. This may eventually require a vendor audit plan to ensure our partners’ compliance.

**Communicating and embedding the AIS way into our partners**

AIS has taken initial steps toward sustainable actions and behaviors with our partners, particularly focusing on Telewiz. Telewiz is our exclusive partner which has the rights to sell our products and services and to provide registration and payment services for GSM Advanced customers. Telewiz is one of the key channels that contribute to our business growth. We have taken various steps to strengthen our partnership with Telewiz, earning their commitment and dedication to us. **The AIS Way for Telewiz** program emphasizes the important role of service in the success of any organization and provides training on those “unexpected services” that can be requested by customers. In addition, through the training we provide to Telewiz employees on “The AIS Way”, our dealers can now successfully deliver our company’s message in a way that is responsible and meets our standards. As a result of these efforts, we are able to maintain confidence in our partners’ actions. Not only do our partners benefit from the increased technical and professional knowledge, but our customers can also take comfort in the service they receive from AIS’ partners.

Our Telewiz partners are identified and monitored using similar standards as our upstream and vendor partners. We have a strict rewards and penalty system in place to control the quality of these dealers, as well as a team that regularly visits them to ensure quality of service. Our future plan for Telewiz is to bring further improvement in service provision by investing in the people that currently work, or in the future will work, as Telewiz agents. One methodology to achieve this is to recruit personnel from AIS’ head office to work at Telewiz and foster in them the AIS way in order to ensure that our Telewiz agents truly understand and become a part of the AIS culture, sharing our endeavor to attain sustainable actions and behavior.

**Building win-win partnerships through mutual growth**

We work hard to train and develop our partners both personally and professionally, knowing that our success depends on theirs. We aim to develop new partners as well as strengthen our existing ones.
Training and development courses to raise our partners’ standards: differentiating AIS from other service providers through partnerships that give AIS a competitive advantage

Developing new partners

At AIS, we believe in building ecosystems in which to grow together with our business partners. With people’s changing demands for a digital lifestyle, we envisage a future in which our business incorporates more products and services. These products and services cannot be developed by AIS alone, but rather require the cooperation of content and application developers as well. Our “AIS the StartUp” project reflects our need to grow together with our partners.

By acting as a business incubator, we lend a helping hand to young idea-generators to develop and market their products commercially. AIS the StartUp is aimed at building and expanding a community of content developers – a key element in the telecommunications ecosystem – who will become our long-term business partners. Targeted toward young, energetic, hungry-to-succeed, entrepreneurial-spirited individuals who are eager to develop mobile digital content and applications, this program provides participants with access to business and technical consultancy, market intelligence, networking, and facilities to develop their own business ideas from concept to commercialization. It also provides access to “gurus” and well-known experts from whom they can solicit advice on various fronts essential to making a business successful. Depending on the potential of the project, participants with innovative ideas may be granted financial support from potential investors or venture capitalists. Moreover, the network that AIS has established with the private sector, technology partners, and the regional market, makes it possible for participants to expand their idea to a much larger scale, and potentially serve the needs of not only AIS’ customers, but also other international customers outside of Thailand.

Strengthening existing partners

We are committed to our partners’ success in many ways, and this is most evident at Telewiz, where a number of our initiatives aim to enhance our partners’ technical capabilities, teach lifelong problem-solving and customer service skills, and provide financial support.

- The AIS Channel Business Forum increases the capabilities of our wholesale agents across the country.
- Fundamental Knowledge Courses fully equip our nationwide distribution channels with 3G, MNP and new application readiness.
- Soft Skills Courses allow Telewiz to develop essential sales skills among its employees.
- Device-Setting Courses allow Telewiz shop employees to strengthen their device-setting skills like connecting to internet servers and setting up accounts for email and other strategic products.
- SFF Courses improve Telewiz employees’ registration skills, for example, taking orders for Application SFF.
- Internet Protocol Courses equip salespersons with fundamental knowledge of technology and internet protocol, ensuring that they are able to respond to changes in the operating environment.