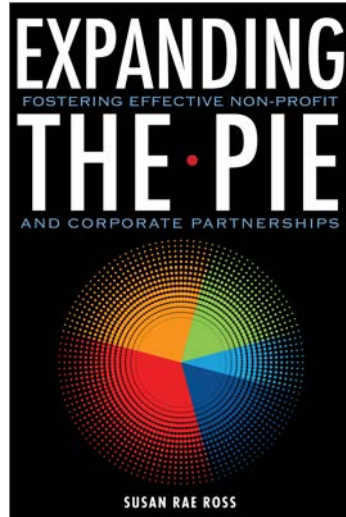


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Expanding the Pie:
Fostering Effective
Non-Profit and Corporate
Partnerships

Susan Rae Ross

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Introduction

I have been involved in partnerships since the beginning of my career. As an intensive care nurse, I developed partnerships with physicians, nurses, other hospital staff, and families to provide the best care for my patients. As I moved to designing programs, I participated in partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), governments, foundations, academia and research institutes, businesses, local leaders, and communities in over 30 countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Aiming to enhance the effectiveness of programs and relationships with the private sector, I pursued a master's degree in business administration that provided me with a framework to combine my international development experience and my business skills.

When I began doing research for this book I found it interesting that a Google search for “NGO-corporate partnerships” yielded results that were mostly under the heading of “business-NGO partnerships.” This made me wonder if there is a difference in these terms. After many interviews with NGO and business managers, I have reached the conclusion that these terms are different, which is a matter of perspective rather than who leads the partnership. Business-NGO partnerships relate to how businesses select and develop relationships with NGOs. On the other hand, NGO-corporate partnerships encompass an NGO's strategies for working with corporations. Thus, the focus of this book is on assisting managers—in the NGO, business, and government sectors—to develop effective partnerships.

We live in a rapidly changing world with an interdependent global economic system combined with dramatic technological, communication, and scientific advances. Expansion of global trade has improved economic opportunities and living standards for millions, but it has left many behind as well. It is clear that the “status quo” interventions are not working. The world is now at a critical “tipping point” to develop effective and sustainable solutions. If actions are not undertaken soon, the effects of key issues, such as climate change,

may be irreversible or severely jeopardize our children's future. New paradigms are needed to find effective solutions that maximize the strengths of all the sectors to overcome these challenges. As a result, partnerships have become all the rage. Although partnerships have many benefits, they are hard, time-consuming, messy, and often do not produce the desired results. With that said, when partnerships do work, as demonstrated by the 46 case studies presented in this book, they can produce groundbreaking approaches that result in benefits for companies, NGOs, governments, and the society at large—thus *Expanding the Pie* for everyone.

The purpose of this book is to provide a user-friendly reference that provides guidance to managers on how to know when to engage in an NGO-corporate partnership and how to create effective partnerships that add value—or *Expand the Pie*—for all parties involved. There are different terms and frameworks that relate to these partnerships that are defined in Chapter 1. Many factors in the external environment, such as globalization, advances in technology, and widening income inequalities, are changing the roles of the public, NGO, and private sectors, blurring the boundaries among the sectors (Chapter 2). In addition, there are key trends within the NGO sector (Chapter 3), such as changes in revenue streams, and the business sector (Chapter 4), such as shifts in consumer and investor priorities, that have influenced how NGOs and businesses relate to and partner with each other.

NGOs and businesses engage with each other through a variety of mechanisms, ranging from confrontational approaches to collaborative relationships. Over the last decade, the types of NGO-corporate partnership have expanded and the relationships have become more substantial, not just philanthropic efforts. Chapter 5 presents a framework that encompasses how NGOs and businesses can engage both with and without an exchange of resources.

In order to understand the factors that make a partnership successful, I used the Long-Arnold framework to analyze 46 NGO-corporate partnerships. Three types of partnerships are reviewed: (1) 25 bilateral partnerships between an NGO and corporation (Chapter 6); (2) 10 tri-party partnerships including an NGO, business, and government agency (Chapter 7); and (3) 11 multi-stakeholder initiatives (Chapter 8).

Managers need tools to assist them in making decisions about partnerships. Chapter 9 presents a comprehensive eight-step decision-making framework to systematically and strategically approach initiating, implementing, and evaluating partnerships. It also provides several tools to help managers manage

their existing partnership portfolio, assess if current partnerships are still creating value, design effective partnership agreements, and create indicators to evaluate the partnership's added value.