



European Commission
DG Employment Social
Affairs and Equal
Opportunities

NOT ALONE

*A research on successful partnerships
between private companies and citizens'
organizations in Europe*

Final report

July 2006

With the support of:



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Foreword

As part of their activities on the “citizens’ side” of corporate social responsibility and on the participation of citizens’ organizations in policy making, Active Citizenship Foundation (FONDACA) and Active Citizenship Network (ACN) carried out a research project on partnerships between private companies and citizens’ organizations in 8 European Union countries. The project was supported by the European Commission, DG Employment and Social Affairs, and by Unicredit Group and Enel SpA. It was aimed, on the one hand, at filling the existing gap in knowledge on cooperation between citizens’ organizations and companies in developing corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities; and, on the other, at identifying, on the basis of existing good practices, guidelines for the development of partnerships in Europe.

The project was conducted in Austria, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Poland, Slovenia, United Kingdom between July 2005 and June 2006. It consisted in the identification of successful partnerships and in the collection of information about them, by interviewing representatives of the private and civic sides of these partnerships. 36 partnerships were identified and, hence, 72 key informants were interviewed.

The project was carried out by national-based citizens’ organizations participating in the ACN network: The World of NGOs (Austria), Cyprus Consumer Association (Cyprus), BBE Bundesnetzwerk, Bürgerschaftliches Engagement (Germany), National Association for Consumer Protection (Hungary), Ghaqd-tal-Konsumaturi (Malta), Association of Polish Consumers (Poland), Legal Information Center for NGOs (Slovenia), Rutland Citizens Advise Bureau (United Kingdom). In Italy, it was implemented by Cittadinanzattiva. At the European level, the research was lead by a team, composed of Barbara D’Alessio, Cecilia Fonseca, Antonio Gaudio, Giovanni Moro, Charlotte Roffiaen, Melody Ross (Director of the project), Monica Ruffa, Ilaria Vannini.

This report was written by Giovanni Moro and Ilaria Vannini, both of FONDACA. The Guidelines for good CSR practices (Section C.3) were drawn up by Charlotte Roffiaen, Director of Active Citizenship Network.

The report is divided into three parts. The first deals with the framework of the project, the research design and the development of the project itself. The second part presents the main results of the analysis of the questionnaires. The third part contains the conclusions, recommendations and a set of guidelines for improving partnerships in Europe.

A – THE PROJECT

1. Introduction

In the field of Corporate Social Responsibility and not only, partnerships between actors from different sectors of society are among the most important issues/topics being debated. A bibliographical research or an Internet query would easily confirm this. Partnerships are often set up to deal with a wide range of problems, ranging from the sustainability of welfare systems to the protection of the environment, from global issues to local development, from the reform of public administration to corporate citizenship. Players from the public, private, as well as the civic sectors are involved in this debate on partnerships. At the local, national, regional and global level, norms and official documents increasingly require or expect these actors to cooperate in confronting a range of common problems. Think tanks and research centers deliver policy papers and guidelines, aimed at clarifying how partnerships should be structured and work. Less material, however, is available on the real functioning of existing partnerships.

Moreover, a wide range of definitions and concepts are used when discussing about partnerships, making things, at times, even more confusing than they already are: often, the same name is used to mean different concepts, and vice versa. This can be quite a serious problem, especially because of the widespread attitude of people and institutions involved in dealing with public concerns, assume that partnerships can handle just about any kind of issue.

Bearing in mind these problems, the general aim of the project has been to contribute to a conceptual and empirical clarification and, above all, improve the knowledge of the nature, main features, operational patterns and added value of partnerships between citizens' organizations and companies, as well as their impact on CSR. To this end, *partnerships* have been defined as those situations in which *actors, coming from different sectors, share objectives, resources, responsibilities and risks*. Partnerships are, therefore, different both from *dialogue* (situations in which actors exchange inputs and feedback, such as information, claims, proposals, etc.) and from *collaboration* (situations in which actors have different but convergent objectives, reached through mutual support, or through the coordination of each others' activities).

The Governance Context

Partnerships between private companies and citizens' organizations are part of a more general phenomenon, involving several actors and fields, which can be better understood in the framework of worldwide ongoing changes in roles, responsibilities and relations of actors of the public arena, and that can be defined in terms of a shift from a government to a governance approach (Moro 2002).

According to this framework, national states and public administrations have lost their traditional monopoly in exercising government functions. This loss of power can take three different directions: *downward*, towards regional and local administrations; *upward*, towards global and supranational institutions (such as the European Union); and *outward*, towards private, civil society, non-profit, and civic organizations and networks.

This transformation is not simply a matter of differently mixing state and non-state intervention in the public arena; it is, rather, a change of the very essence of agents and of their relations; that is, it is not a difference of degree, but a difference of nature – something more like a change in paradigm. With reference to the actors, the shift in their role means that *public* actors tend to become the enabler, networker, catalyzer rather than the “rower”; *private* actors tend to become more socially responsible and responsive and engaged in public policies; *social/collective* actors are expected to exercise their own powers and responsibilities, and not only consensus, voice or exit in respect of the power of others.

As a general frame, therefore, governance can be defined as *a process of transformation in the exercise of government functions from state-centered to multi-centered policy-making*.

If one, then, shifts from a policy level approach to a constitutional one, the general meaning of this new framework is well illustrated by the concept of horizontal (or circular) subsidiarity, as expressed both in the European Union debate (ACN 2003) and in the 2001 reform of Italian Constitution, which established the following norm:

State, regions, cities, provinces and municipalities favor the autonomous initiative of citizens, as individuals and associations, in the exercise of activities of general interest, on the basis of the subsidiarity principle (art. 118.4).

In both cases, partnerships involving different actors in exercising responsibilities for the management of public issues are of great importance. According to the work of recent scholars, the principle of subsidiarity itself, rather than being a tool for the “division of labor” between the state and civil society, is a principle of mutual relation, cooperation and support among public, private and civic actors (Cotturri 2001, Arena 2006).

In practice, forms of close cooperation between actors from different sectors of society exist in a number of fields. A non-exhaustive list of these include:

- Planning and delivery of welfare services;
- Economic local development;
- Territorial planning;
- Public participation (ex. Charters of Services);
- Social dialogue and employment policies;
- Environmental policies (ex. Agenda 21 programs);
- Community-based programs;

- Corporate social responsibility.

Partnerships and Corporate Social Responsibility

With respect to the Corporate Social Responsibility debate and practice, there is a general consensus that CSR is a new phenomenon, which is different from traditional business charitable practices only when there is an interaction between companies and their stakeholders, communities and the surrounding environment. This interaction has become a necessary requirement in the companies' corporate citizenship activities.

In terms of companies' *compliance* with international and national standards and norms concerning human rights, environmental sustainability, employees' rights, etc., stakeholders have the crucial role of supporting and assessing companies' efforts in being really accountable and transparent with respect to the impact of their activities. Therefore, those businesses, which are not accountable towards their stakeholders, cannot be considered socially responsible.

With reference to *pro-activity* - meaning companies' actions aimed at promoting or supporting social, economic and environmental sustainable development - it is commonly recognized that such effort can be effectively planned and implemented only in close relationship with communities or the concerned population. The more companies' engagement in public affairs becomes a governance matter, rather than a mere charitable one, the more stakeholders' involvement is a must for companies. Again, as with compliance, CSR efforts cannot be successful without the contribution of stakeholders.

In this scenario, and strictly linked to the issue of governance framework, the existence and role of *Autonomous Citizens' Organizations* (ACOs) acquires great importance. Following the definition of the European Charter of Active Citizenship (ACN and FONDACA 2006), ACOs are *those organizations created and managed by citizens, which do not seek profit and operate in the general interest, protect citizens' rights and/or preserve common goods and act in public policy making, irrespective of their area of activity, size, juridical status, motivation or membership*.

In other words, what identifies ACOs is their engagement in public policy making, from the definition to the implementation, to the evaluation of public policies, in forms that go from advocacy to delivery of services, to the empowerment of citizens and communities. The existing differences between, for example, voluntary and consumer organizations, though significant, are considered of secondary importance in this definition.

The active role of organized citizens, engaged in policy making, is also considered on the one hand, a necessary condition for the identification of authentic CSR programs, and on the other, what makes the difference between CSR and traditional forms of "social dialogue", as stressed in the 2000 European Commission Green Paper on CSR.

Among these relations (including also dialogue and cooperation, up to inclusion in corporate governance), partnerships appear to be of great importance. Following the work of The Copenhagen Centre, we can understand partnerships as “people and organizations from some combination of public, business and civil constituencies, who engage in voluntary, mutually beneficial, innovative relationships to address common societal aims, by combining their resources and competencies” (Nelson and Zadek, 2000).

The European Union and CSR partnerships

After drawing up the Lisbon Agenda, and following the decisions taken by the European Summit in Nice, the European Union prepared, through the European Commission, a policy on CSR, which, since its beginning, has been closely associated with partnerships. This emerges from all the European Commission documents (in particular EC 2001, 2002, 2006) and is reflected in the debate of the European Multi-stakeholder Forum (EMF 2004).

The Commission states that partnerships are necessary to strengthen the social responsibility of companies. This means that, first of all, through partnerships, a new framework for promoting CSR, capable of taking into account the views of businesses and stakeholders, must be created. In this way, the EC hopes to encourage the setting up of a corporate social responsibility model, based on European values.

The Commission, in particular, considers partnership as tools to enhance CSR in the fields of company awareness building, definition of codes of conduct, management of standards, accounting, auditing and reporting, labeling, as well as of socially responsible investment.

Moreover, the Commission’s more important documents express the firm belief that partnerships can be the most appropriate strategy to confront a whole range of critical social problems, such as life-long learning, the management of restructuring operations of industries, the promotion and support of local development and community causes, the implementation of labor market strategies for employment and social inclusion, the adoption of effective social and eco labels, the implementation of socially responsible practices outside the EU.

The European Commission itself, on behalf of the whole European Union, intends to engage itself in promoting partnerships, especially multi-stakeholder ones, so to become an active facilitator of CSR practices. According to the Commission, a partnership approach is necessary, especially, to take into account the differences in contexts, as well as the different and divergent interests of stakeholders. Recently, this commitment has been translated in the initiative (EC 2006) for the establishment of a new European Alliance for CSR;

that is, an alliance “for growth and jobs” and for sustainable development. This task, in the Commission’s vision, has to be pursued through a partnership, involving all the stakeholders, including companies as well; a tool, which is capable of reinforcing such partnerships.

As one can see, therefore, partnerships are, probably, at this moment, the tool which ranks the highest in EC policymaking. This not only explains the reason why the Commission decided to support this project, but it is also an indicator of the importance of the research on this topic.

The need for a strengthened empirical base

Partnership studies, which have been increasingly conducted in recent years, have, however, focused more on public-private or tripartite partnerships, rather than on partnerships between corporations and citizens’ organizations (see, for example, Kjaer 2000). Moreover, they have been grounded on relatively few practical experiences and little empirical data.

This lack of empirical information on civic-corporate partnerships reflects a general problem of CSR, i.e. the knowledge of concrete experiences is very limited, compared to the actual number of the existing ones.

The rationale for this project, aimed at documenting and interpreting concrete partnership experiences between companies and citizens’ organizations, attempts to satisfy the need to contribute to fill this gap, as well as to share the findings with institutions, policy makers, citizens’ organizations and scholars, both at the European and national level.

2. Research design and implementation

The starting point of the research was the need to fill the information gap which exists about partnerships between Autonomous Civic Organizations¹ (ACO) and businesses and their impact on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in general. In fact, most recent studies on partnerships have focused mainly on public-private or tripartite partnerships. Therefore, the debate on partnerships, involving citizens' organizations as main actors, is based on few concrete experiences with limited empirical data.

This project, which began on July 1st 2005 and ended on June 31st 2006, was carried out by Active Citizenship Network (ACN, the European policy program of the Italian Movement Cittadinanzattiva) and FONDACA (Active Citizenship Foundation). The aim was to increase the empirical knowledge of these kinds of relationships and activities, by analyzing, in depth, 45 successful experiences of partnerships between companies and citizens' organizations implemented in 9 old and new European Union countries².

The research framework

The research conducted on CSR partnerships is part of a general research program on partnerships that FONDACA has been carrying out for the past three years. This program focuses on partnerships, which involve citizens' organizations and is concerned with both the theoretical aspects and empirical studies in a number of fields. It was also carried out in the framework of the activities of the Post-Graduate Degree Program on "Citizenship Policies and Local Welfare Systems", that FONDACA has been organizing since 2003 in cooperation with the Faculty of Statistics of La Sapienza University of Rome, and, in particular, in the course, held by Giovanni Moro, on "Governance, Partnerships and Citizenship Policies".

As part of this research and teaching activity, the pertinent literature was gathered and reviewed, after which, the Copenhagen Centre³ (CC) model was selected as the starting point for the study.

¹ The term "*Autonomous Citizens' Organization*" or "citizens organization" refers to a non-governmental organization – whatever its scope, size, legal status, objectives and membership – which is autonomously organized by citizens in order to protect rights, promote public interests and care for common goods. This definition includes voluntary organizations, advocacy movements (in the areas, for example, of human rights, consumer issues, the environment, equal opportunities), advice services, social enterprises, grassroots and community organizations, self-help groups and international cooperation NGOs. Civic organizations are non profit seeking, and act on behalf of the general interest.

² The partnership experiences were collected by the partners involved in the project, who were based in the following countries: Austria; Cyprus; Germany; Hungary; Italy; Malta; Poland; Slovenia; United Kingdom.

³ The Copenhagen Centre is an independent think tank established by the Danish Government in 1998 in response to growing international interest in new social partnerships and corporate social responsibility initiatives (www.copenhagencentre.com).

The main reasons for this choice are threefold: the CC proposal is general in scope, but also includes, in its analysis, civil society actors; it interprets partnerships, not as organizational entities, but as processes; it can be used not only to plan partnerships, but to study them as well.

The CC definition of partnership is the following (Nelson J., Zadek S. 2003):

People and organizations coming from some public, private and civic entities/bodies which are engaged in voluntary mutually beneficial and innovative relations with the aim of dealing/pursuing with social goals by putting together their own resources and competencies (skills/know-how).

According to the Copenhagen Centre, partnerships have six main features, which are explicitly or implicitly contained in the above definition:

- They should pursue general interest goals through common actions (which does not preclude partners from pursuing their own interests).
- They should be innovative, in the sense that they should promote the exploration of new approaches to existing problems and opportunities, as well as new forms of relations.
- They should involve a range of different bodies/actors, coming from at least two of the following sectors: private, civil society, public sector.
- They should be voluntary, meaning that the collaboration should arise from a voluntary choice, and not from a need to comply with laws or regulations, even if it is possible that some actors may wish to participate to avoid possible conflicts or because of external pressure.
- They should produce mutual benefits and joint investments, in which each partner contributes, with its own resources, to achieve common goals, supporting the costs and assuming the risks involved in this, and obtain benefits.
- They should have an “added-value” (alchemic) effect, in the sense that through their collaboration, the partners have to build something that is more than the sum of the parts and that none of them would have been able to accomplish on their own.

According to the Copenhagen Centre researchers, a partnership can be divided into five main dimensions (context, purpose, organization, participants, outcomes), which, in turn, can be divided further into single factors (for example, the dimension of organization can be divided in organizational and legal structures, governance and communication).

The idea was, therefore, that this model could be modified and adapted to set up a tool for the specific analysis of partnerships.

During the activities carried out in the academic years 2003-2004 and 2004-2005, this model was discussed and applied to concrete cases of partnerships between citizens’ organizations and public and private sectors, in particular, in planning and delivering welfare services at the local level. On the basis of this work, a number of changes were made and extensions added to the model, thus generating the following analytical scheme:

Table A.2.1 - Analytical scheme for the study of partnerships, based on the Copenhagen Centre model

DIMENSIONS	FACTORS
PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURE	
CONTEXT	a. Socio-economic cultural and political environment b. Drivers c. Triggers
PROJECT (OBJECT)	a. General aims b. Specific objectives c. Activities d. Level of activities and complexity e. Kind of intervention f. Kind of activity b. Expected results c. Effects of the project
COMPOSITION	a. Kind of organization b. Kind of composition
PURPOSES AND AIMS	a. Building a common agendas b. Participants' expected benefits and results
PARTICIPANTS	a. Leadership b. People and their organizations c. Resources, skills and capacities
ORGANISATION	a. Organizational and legal structure b. Governance c. Internal communication
EVALUATION	a. Measurement and evaluation b. Instruments and procedures
PARTNERSHIP DYNAMICS	
PARTNERS' RELATIONSHIP	a. Processes and ability to adapt b. Conflicts
OBSTACLES	a. Cognitive b. Operational
CHANGES IN THE PARTNERSHIP	a. In the structure and form b. In participants c. In objectives d. In activities
EFFECTS	a. Outputs b. Outcomes c. Impacts d. Participants' benefits

The scheme was tested on 15 partnerships and perfected on the basis of the results.

It became the foundation for setting up both the general design of this research, as well as the questionnaire for gathering the information on CSR partnerships⁴.

Phases of the project

The project was implemented through 4 main phases that are summarized below.

1. Research design and preparatory activities (July-November 2005).

During the first phase of the project, apart from gathering additional material on partnerships between companies and citizens' organizations and on the European Union policy on CSR, the following activities were carried out.

⁴ The whole process is described in Monica Ruffa's post-graduate degree thesis (Ruffa 2006).

The questionnaire

The analytical scheme set up by FONDACA was the starting point for setting up a questionnaire needed to conduct the analysis of the 45 successful experiences of partnerships between companies and citizens' organizations in the 9 European Union countries.

The questionnaire was divided into 3 sections, consisting of 72 questions (29 open-ended, 18 close-ended - single or multiple responses - and 26 semi open-ended):

- Section A, about interviewees and the organizations or companies involved in the partnership;
- Section B, about the project;
- Section C, about the establishment and functioning of the partnership.

During this phase, the questionnaire was tested through 4 interviews and perfected on the basis of the results.

Choice of the countries and partners

Apart from Italy, where the research was carried out by Cittadinanzattiva, other 8 EU countries were selected, with the ACN partners in each of those same countries being asked to take part in the project, by identifying and collecting information on 5 best practices of partnerships. The selected countries and partner organizations that accepted to carry out the project were the following.

Table A.2.2 – List of partners

Country	Organization
Austria	The World of NGOs
Cyprus	Cyprus Consumer Association
Germany	BBE - Bundesnetzwerk, Bürgerschaftliches Engagement
Hungary	National Association for Consumer Protection
Malta	Ghaqd-tal-Konsumaturi
Poland	Association of Polish Consumers
Slovenia	Legal Information Center for NGOs
UK	Rutland Citizens Advise Bureau

2. Selection of the partnerships (December 2005-February 2006)

Methodological note

A document, titled “Guidelines for selecting Partnerships to Study”, was conceived during this phase. It was then used to train partner organizations on the identification of the partnerships and on how to conduct the interviews with representatives of companies and ACOs. The Guidelines contained information on the theoretical framework, the criteria to use to select partnerships (composition, sectors in which the partnership is implemented, success level of the partnership, private companies, civic organizations, time of implementation of the partnership), as well as the sources to use to achieve this objective.

On 17 October 2005, a partners’ meeting was held in Rome to present and discuss the implementation of the project, on the basis of these Guidelines and the questionnaire.

The selection of partnerships

In this phase, each partner was requested to find and select 5 good experiences of CSR partnership involving companies and citizens’ organizations. After identifying each partnership, partners would send a brief description to the project staff to verify whether it was consistent with the methodological requirements. Following this verification, the partners would start gathering the information through the interviews.

3. Gathering of information (March-May 2006)

For each case study, one company and one citizens’ organization representative, respectively in charge of managing the partnership, were interviewed with the aim of acquiring information on both sides of the partnership.

During this phase, a number of partners had some difficulties in identifying the 5 partnership cases, primarily because of their country’s particular context.

As a result of these difficulties, 36 partnerships out of the planned 45 were collected (see table below for details):

Table A.2.3 - Partnerships identified and studied, by countries

Country	Interviews	Partnerships	%
Hungary	10	5	13.9
United	10	5	13.9

Kingdom			
Germany	10	5	13.9
Austria	10	5	13.9
Italy	10	5	13.9
Malta	10	5	13.9
Slovenia	8	4	11.1
Poland	4	2	5.6
Cyprus	-	-	-
Total	72	36	100.0

To help overcome the information gap resulting from the absence of partnership experiences, the Cypriot partner wrote a report on the Country's CSR situation (see annex 2).

The Polish and Slovenian partners, instead, prepared a brief report, in which they described in detail the reasons why it had not been possible to collect all of the partnership cases.

According to these reports, there were a number of reasons for the lower number of partnership cases:

- The questionnaire length: it was considered very time-consuming by most business and ACO representatives, who were not able to provide the necessary information in the given period of time;
- The long internal company/civic organization feedback procedures and the related difficulties in finding people responsible for filling the questionnaire;
- The willingness to participate expressed only by one of the two partners;
- The disregard of companies and civic organizations for the project partners' requests.

The partnerships that were gathered are listed in the following table.

Table A.2.4 – Partnerships studied, by nation, title, companies and civic organizations involved

Nation	Title of the partnership	Companies	ACOs
HUNGARY	Customers' household appliances	CECED-Hungary	National Association for Consumer Protection in Hungary (NAPCH)
	Customer service centers	E.ON Hungária GmbH (North-East Hungarian Electricity)	National Association for Consumer Protection in Hungary (NAPCH)
	Making a connection in Hungary	Nokia Hungary Ltd	Foundation for Democratic Youth (Demokratikus Ifjúságért Alapítvány - DIA)
	Better informed consumers	TESCO Global GmbH – Hungary	National Association for Consumer Protection in Hungary (NAPCH)
	Reviewing travel contracts	OTP Travel Ltd	National Federation of Associations for Consumer Protection in Hungary (NFACPH)
UK	Money Advice Training	Royal Bank of Scotland Group (RBS)	Citizens Advice
	2 nd Tier Money Advice	Barclays PLC	Citizens Advice
	Young Innovation	Fielden Clegg Bradley Architects LLP	Involve Partnerships for Sustainability
	Environmental Management Systems	Hobart Manufacturing UK	Involve Partnerships for Sustainability (delivering EnVision)
	Worldmade by Motivation	Kingfisher Plc	Motivation
SLOVENIA	The Shelter House	Mercator, d.d.	Slovenian Association of friends of youth (SAFY)
	Developing Center for social and labor integration	Raiffeisen Krekova Banka	OZARA (National Life Quality Association)
	Purchasing the mammography machine	Pristop d.o.o.	European Breast Cancer Coalition
	The week of the child, A wink to the sun, Sunny ŽIV ŽAV	Lek d.d.	Slovenian Association of friends of youth (SAFY)
GERMANY	Corporate Volunteering for Ford employees in Caritas' social services/facilities	Ford Europe GmbH	Diözesan-Caritasverband für das Erzbistum Koeln e.V.
	Promotion of community foundations	Bundesverband Volks- und Raiffeisenbanken (BVR)	Aktive Bürgerschaft e.V.
	Holistic health care services	Betapharm Arzneimittel GmbH	Bunter Kreis
	Civil Academy	BP Deutschland	BBE / Bundesnetzwerk, Bürgerschaftliches Engagement
	Bildungscent	Herlitz PBS AG	Bildungscent e.V
POLAND	Augustow Academy	British American Tobacco Poland	Enterprise Development Foundation in Suwalk
	Share Your Meal	Danone Poland	Federation of Polish food banks

AUSTRIA	Nivea family party	Beiersdorf GesmbH	SOS Kinderdorf Austria
	Reduction of pesticides	Rewe Group Austria, initiator of partnership was Billa AG	Global 2000
	Stop Domestic Violence	The Body Shop	Austrian Women's Shelter Network/Information Center Against Violence
	Caritas Schülerfonds (Fund for pupils)	Philips Austria	Caritas
	Mobilkom sponsorship of MSF	Mobilkom	Ärzte ohne Grenzen (Médecins sans Frontières =MSF)
ITALY	A meal for the needy	Unilever	Associazione "Opera di San Francesco per i Poveri"
	European charter of patients rights	Merck Sharp & Dohme	Cittadinanzattiva
	Obiettivo barriera (Eliminating barriers)	Fondazione J&J	Cittadinanzattiva
	Un mondo per tutti : A world for everyone	TIM Italia S.p.A.	Médecins sans Frontières
	Meters replacement campaign	Enel s.p.a.	Unione Consumatori - Cittadinanzattiva
MALTA	Coastal zone management	Bank of Valletta	GAIA Foundation
	Awareness about the environment amongst students	HSBC	Kunsill Studenti Universitarji (KSU) – University Students' Council
	Educate children through sports	Apostleship of Prayer Savings (APS)Bank.	Youth football Association
	Promote young entrepreneurship	APS Bank.	Startup Malta Foundation for Entrepreneurship
	Natural reserve for wild birds	APS Bank.	Birdlife (Malta)

4. Analysis of partnerships and final report (May-June 2006)

In the last phase of the project, the questionnaires containing information on the 36 partnerships were analyzed both from a quantitative and qualitative point of view.

The main characteristics of the participants of the partnerships resulting from the questionnaires are summarized below (see table).

Table A.2.5 - Companies and civic organizations involved in partnerships by years of activity, number of members and employees and annual turnover

Actor involved	Years of activity (median)	Number of members (median)	Number of employees (median)	Annual turnover (median)
Company	33	27.5	2,100	667 ml €
ACOs	24	180	28.5	1,23 ml €

Both companies and civic organizations involved in the best practices of partnerships, therefore, had been established for a long time.

Only 28% of the companies had members, with a median of 27.5 people, while 75% of civic organizations stated to have members, with a median of 180.

Companies were big entities, with a median number of employees of 2,100 and an annual turnover equal to 667 million €. The civic organizations were relatively smaller than companies, with 28.5 employees in median, and an annual turnover of 1,23 million €.

Differences among respondents were also reflected in the territorial focus. In fact, while companies were mainly national and international, civic organizations were primarily active at the national and local level.

The best practices of CSR partnerships that were gathered show that well-structured, stable and well-established entities were the main actors of these kinds of relationships. However, some small companies and civic organizations were also involved in the project: around 6% of the companies and 16% of civic organizations had less than 5 employees, an annual turnover of 150,000 € for companies and of 120,000 € for ACOs, and had been operating for a lesser time than the others.

At the end of the last phase of the project, the collected data were analyzed and, subsequently, this report was prepared. It is structured as follows:

- Presentation of the main findings;
- Research conclusions;
- Final guidelines on partnership building.

Value and limits of the research

Before concluding this introductory section, it is worthwhile to briefly highlight the value and limits of this research.

As for the *limits*, it can be said that the partnerships that were gathered do not represent a statistically significant sample, and, therefore, cannot provide information on all of the partnership experiences, which are currently underway in the European Union. This is not only a limit of this research, since, at the moment, neither a shared definition of partnerships, nor a complete picture of those that are in progress, exist at the European level.

Another significant point is that the selected partnerships were studied only through interviews with key persons, and not through an in depth analysis of facts and documents. Though partner organizations did select the partnerships on the basis of the relevant official documentation, neither this documentation, nor other field research activities were used to analyze the partnerships. This was due both to time and money constraints, as well as to the well-known linguistic barriers that characterize research in the EU.

The partnerships, moreover, were selected on the basis of their success. Though this choice had several advantages, it also had the negative effect of underestimating some important aspects, such as conflicts, obstacles and failure factors. All of them are very important, not only in real terms, but also in terms

of knowledge; yet the research, because of the way it was designed, could not properly take them in account.

In some cases, the partnership actors were the same for different experiences. This may have influenced some results of the research, since the answers of the same actor were counted as different ones. This is, without a doubt, a limit of the research. On the other hand, however, the number of such cases was limited, and since partnerships were a defined relational phenomenon, the answers of the same actor who was engaged in different partnerships were, in general, different, depending on the concrete situation of the partnership being examined.

Despite these limits, the research had a significant *value*, which cannot be underestimated. It contributed to describe partnerships as a phenomenon, and not as an abstract model, focusing on what actually takes place and not on what should and often does not. The Guidelines that are published in the final section of this report draw precisely on these concrete experiences; and this is an added value that should be kept in mind.

The research, moreover, focused on the cognitive dimension of partnerships, a factor of great importance, often not fully recognized, but capable of determining the success or failure of partnerships. Differences in information and interpretation between the two sides of the partnerships are nothing but relevant pieces of information that have been and should always be carefully analyzed.

In general terms, this research can increase the empirical knowledge on partnerships and thus contribute to setting up an inventory of existing experiences in the European Union.

This could then lead to the identification of a “European partnership style”, that all actors should take into account and possibly adopt when creating partnerships.

B – THE PARTNERSHIPS’ PROFILE

In this section of the report we will present the information on the partnerships which emerged from the analysis of the questionnaires completed by the company and citizens’ organization representatives involved in the partnerships selected for the study. This, then, will allow us to define a profile of these partnerships. With the concept of *profile* we mean *a description of the essential characteristics and features of the partnerships between private companies and citizens’ organizations.*

Dissonance on facts and opinions

Before presenting the information on the partnerships, it is necessary to introduce a general aspect that these partnerships have clearly revealed: the dissonance between partners in reporting the information and the evaluations. This phenomenon can be measured through the two following indexes, which have been created for this study.

The first one is called the *factual dissonance index*. It measures the differences in the partners’ answers when one would instead expect them to be the same (as for example, project duration, budget invested, presence of an external investor, existence of a moment in which priorities were established, conflicts taking place during the setting of the common agenda, distribution of responsibilities, manner in which decisions were taken and changes in participants, structure, activities and objectives). 55.6% of the partnerships obtained a low factual dissonance index score, 41.7% obtained a medium score, while the remaining part (2.7%) a high score. Considering that the discrepancy concerned the reporting of facts, the fact that 44.4% of the partnerships scored a medium or high level of dissonance should lead us to seriously reflect on the matter.

The second is the *cognitive dissonance index*. It was built by grouping the questions for which one would expect that the partners’ answers should have been the same (questions about the person facilitating the partnership and who represented the organization, partnership’s structure, distribution of rights and responsibilities, partnership’s evolution, existence of in-kind or other resources invested into the partnership, as well as presence of an external intermediary). This index aims to reveal the differences in perception, rather than those due to the lack of information or knowledge. 38.9% of the partnerships obtained a low cognitive dissonance index, 50.0% a medium one and 11.1% a high score.

In 61.1% of the partnerships, there was, therefore, a medium to high level of cognitive gap. As it will be illustrated in the following pages, the differences deriving from the phenomenon of dissonance represent a critical factor when studying partnerships.

1. *Projects carried out*

As stated above, one of the most complex methodological problems the project had to face was the difficulty in distinguishing between the partnership itself and the project the partnership was committed to carry out. In order to deal with this problem, it was decided to ask information on the project promoted by the partnership in a separate section of the questionnaire; this to avoid, as much as possible, any confusion and/or overlapping. Nevertheless, the project itself is also a source of significant information on the partnership. Therefore, the first segment of information reported pertains to the projects carried out by the good cases of partnerships being studied.

Field of intervention

The projects promoted by the partnerships cover a wide range of fields. These are listed in the table below.

Table B.1.1 – Fields of the projects promoted by the partnerships

Partnership's object	%
Welfare	30.6
Empowering young people	25.0
Environment	22.2
Consumers protection	13.9
Empowering civil society	8.3
Total	100.0

As one would expect, welfare and environmental protection are among the fields where most of the projects have been implemented. Noteworthy is also the focus placed on young people, which is a well-known specific area of intervention of CSR programs worldwide. Relatively few projects have been implemented on consumer protection – an issue where conflicts between companies and ACOs are more likely to exist.

Operational level

The projects carried out through the partnerships are mostly national in scope, sometimes regional or local, rarely international or European. This result is reported in the following table.

Table B.1.2 – Operational level of the projects carried out by the partnerships

Level	%
International	14.1
European	12.7
National	76.1
Regional	43.7
Local	47.9

However, projects are often multi-level (most people interviewed gave, on average, two answers to this question); nevertheless, the national level is the preferred one for developing partnerships (76.1%). It should be pointed out that, while one would think that it is at the local level that partnerships are more likely to be promoted, the available information on the 36 successful partnerships studied in the project does not, in fact, confirm this assumption (only 47.9% of the projects, according to the respondents, were implemented at the local level as well).

The available data, moreover, confirms a situation which had already emerged recently⁵; that is, the weakness of the European dimension as being significant for corporate social responsibility. Only 12.7% of the projects have, indeed, a European dimension. This reflects the companies' attitudes and priorities which consider global and national/local dimensions as the best ones for promoting corporate citizenship activities.

Length of projects

The average length of the projects carried out through the partnerships is 3 years. The overall situation is outlined in the following table.

Table B.1.3. - Length of the projects

Length	%
1-2 years	37.3
3-5 years	38.8
6-9 years	19.4
>10 years	4.5
Total	100.0

Almost 60% of all of the implemented projects is either medium or long-term. However, a number of the current short-term projects are likely to become medium-term ones, as 52.7% of the respondents stated, since numerous projects are still ongoing.

Project Budget

⁵ For example, in the 2005 edition of the Frascati international seminar on corporate citizenship.

The projects implemented through the partnerships seem to be either quite small or very big. This is highlighted in the following table.

Table B.1.4 – Budget of the projects

VALUE (€)	%
< 50.000	33.9
50.000 – 200.000	21.0
200.000 – 500.000	16.1
> 500.000	29.0
Total	100.0

Almost two thirds of the projects (62.9%) have indeed a value of either less than 50,000 €, or more than 500,000 €.

Actors responsible for the projects

The people who were interviewed were asked to identify the unit, office or department of the company or civic organization, which was responsible for the project. The answers reveal, among other things, a significant difference between companies and civic organizations; differences which can be clearly seen in the following table.

Table B.1.5 – Actors responsible for the project in companies and citizens' organizations

	ALL	LEADER.	MARKT., FR	MANGM.	COMM., PR	CSR UNITY	PROJ. UNITY
Companies	4.8	2.4	23.8	4.8	26.2	19.0	16.7
ACOs	25.6	9.3	2.3	11.6	14.0	7.0	30.2

The table shows that it is usually the companies' marketing (+21.5%) and public relations (+12.2%) departments, which are responsible for the projects, carried out by the partnerships. In the case of citizens' organizations, on the other hand, the whole organization (+20.8%) and the project units (+13.5%) are primarily responsible for the projects.

It should also be emphasized that, while the role of CSR units is significant in private companies, it is much less so in citizens' organizations (-12%). As we will see, citizens' organizations, though fully involved in companies' CSR programs, are rarely fully aware of, nor do they have the appropriate organizational structures to this end.

Invested resources

With reference to financial resources, companies have invested in the projects a median of 200,000 €, while citizens' organizations have spent 17,500 €; a result which should not come as a great surprise.

In terms of human resources, one can make a distinction between employees and volunteers. While the median number of involved employees is quite similar for companies (3) and citizens' organizations (2), the situation regarding volunteers being involved is much more unbalanced: the median number of volunteers is 6 for companies and 11 for citizens' organizations. This result, also, should not come as a surprise.

As for in-kind resources, they were logistical (40.5% of responses), operational (27%), marketing and PR (21.6%), goods and products (10.8%).

According to 68.1% of the respondents, other investors also supported the project. They were identified as follows:

Table B.1.6 - Other subjects investing in the project

Subjects	%
Public	45.7
Other citizens' organizations	58.7
Other companies	39.1
Individual donors	6.5

Public investors played an important role as supporters, as the answers to this question reveal. Partnerships, therefore, seem to be partly supported (more than facilitated) by public institutions.

2. Basis of partnerships

Let us now describe the main features of the 36 partnerships, which thanks to this project, we have had the opportunity to identify and analyze.

Partnerships and CSR strategy

From the answers to the questionnaires, it results that 91.7% of the companies involved in partnerships have a CSR strategy, while only 61.1% of citizens' organizations do. This data tells us something important: the explicit commitment to corporate social responsibility issues is much more significant for companies than for citizens' organizations. This means that, often, at least in terms of awareness, while companies seek partners with the intent of implementing their CSR strategy, ACOs do it for other purposes. Since partnerships have an important cognitive side, this matter should not be underestimated.

This information is confirmed by the answers to another question. It was asked if the partnership being carried out was considered part of the actor's CSR strategy. 94.4% of the company representatives and only 72.7% of ACO representatives answered "yes" to this question.

First-timers

About one fourth of the respondents stated that it was the first time that their organization participated to a partnership. However, if one examines companies and citizens' organizations separately, a different situation emerges. In fact, 30.6% of the companies and only 19.4% of the civic organizations were first timers. Civic actors, then, seem to be more accustomed to partnering than private ones. However, this does not imply, as we will see later, that deciding to start a partnership with a private company is something easy to do for citizens' organizations: it simply means that they are actually more used to building partnerships, but not necessarily with business.

Involvement of top management

35 of the 36 partnerships were evaluated at the top management level. Other information, which was collected, will confirm that for both kinds of actors, partnerships are something that is considered part of the core business. Though the concrete management of the partnership can be (and usually is, especially for companies) assigned to specific units, both the decision to set it up and its steering is considered something too important to be left to anyone but the top management.

Other actors involved

Interviewees were asked to indicate which actors had been involved in the partnership. The information on this is summarized in the following table.

Table B.2.1 – Other actors involved in the partnerships

Actors	%	Number (median)
Enterprise	97.2	1
Business network	23.2	1
Civic organization	91.7	1
Civic Umbrella Organization	30.0	1

This information highlights at least three important points. The first is that the 36 partnerships usually involved only two actors.

The second aspect refers to the weakness of second-degree bodies, whether they belonged to the private or the civic sectors. This data confirms recent research findings and views dealing with corporate citizenship and not only.

The third point is that since partnerships seem to be something that are close to the actors' identity, there is a reluctance to involve others (this can be explained also by taking into account the complexity of their establishment and management). This impression is confirmed by the fact that, according to 85.9% of the respondents, no intermediaries and external third parties intervened or played any role in establishing the partnerships.

Previous relations

50.7% of the respondents stated that the two actors had already cooperated before initiating the partnership. The median number of years of previous cooperation was equal to 5. However, something interesting can be observed in the following table.

Table B.2.2 – Number of years of previous collaboration between the actors

Number of years	%
1-2	14.8
3-5	44.4
5-9	11.2
> 10	29.6
Total	100.0

Most of the actors had engaged in medium (44.4%) or long-term (40.7%) cooperation. This tells us that successful partnerships are something definitely non-extemporary and are usually based on the dialogue and collaboration, which already exists between the actors.

According to 90.3% of the people interviewed, no conflicts or difficulties in the relationship had taken place before the partnership. This data is, in a sense, to be expected, yet it could also mean that there is reluctance in recognizing the

existence of conflicts between partners, as further information would seem to suggest.

Reasons for partnerships

Almost all of the respondents (97.2%) stated that there were internal reasons for promoting the partnership; while just over half of them (56.5%) declared that there were external ones as well. No substantial difference between private and civic actors was registered on this point.

As for the *internal reasons*, the answers are summarized in the following table.

Table B.2.3 – Internal reasons for the partnership

Internal reasons	All %	COM %	ACO %
Solve community problems	38.8	37.2	40.4
Own CSR strategy	14.6	21.5	7.7
Funding	14.6	1.9	26.9
Reputation	11.6	19.6	3.9
Corresponding to own strategy	9.7	9.8	9.6
Requiring expertise	2.9	2.0	3.9
Other	7.8	8.0	7.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The answers of the people interviewed enable us to highlight both common and different elements.

As for the common points, two of them are quite significant:

- contribute to resolving community problems, at the first place for both, and clearly identified as an “internal” reason as part of the mission of the actor;
- implement their own strategy.

As for the differences, while the possibility to raise funds is very important for ACOs, the enhancement of reputation and the opportunity to implement their own CSR strategy are of crucial importance for companies.

On this latter point, the differences between the answers of company and citizens’ organization representatives would seem to confirm, as already mentioned, the low awareness of ACOs about their role as CSR partners.

Also for the *external reasons*, there are both common elements and differences, as reported in the following table.

Table B.2.4 – External reasons for the partnership

External reasons	All %	COM %	ACO %
Responding to public needs	25.5	18.2	32.0
Image	14.9	22.7	8.0
Dedicated/Special Year; award	14.9	18.2	12.0
Government; legislation	14.9	13.7	16.0
CSR	8.5	9.1	8.0

Request from stakeholders	8.5	4.6	12.0
Other	12.8	13.5	12.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The common reasons are: an occasion offered by an award or a special year, the opportunity to practice CSR, legislation and government regulations. With reference to the different ones, one can see that, while for citizens' organizations, responding to public needs is the main reason for setting up a partnership, for companies, it is strengthening their own image; on the other hand, stakeholders' pressure seems to be more important for ACOs than for companies.

In light of these results, one can make the following two observations: the first is the relatively minor role played by politics as enabler or facilitator of CSR activities; the second observation is that the participants on the citizens' side seem to be more focused on the concrete impact of the partnership on society, rather than on the advantages for the organizations themselves, while companies seem to take more into account the opportunity to combine coping with problems of common concern to their own growth.

Common agenda and priorities

According to 92.9% of the respondents (with no significant differences between the two groups), an agenda of common priorities was defined during the planning phase.

Moreover, there were no significant differences on how these priorities were decided.

Table B.2.5 – How priorities were decided

Kind of decisions	All %	COM %	ACO %
ACO proposal	23.4	25.8	21.2
COM proposal	3.1	3.2	3.0
Meetings; consultation; discussion; common needs identified mutually	67.2	64.5	69.7
Other	6.3	6.5	6.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Respondents agreed that, in most cases, the choice of priorities had been made in common. When this did not happen, the initiative had been taken by citizens' organizations. This result is noteworthy because, in other similar cases (that we will be examining later), the two groups tended to attribute to themselves, rather than to their partners, a leading role.

Moreover, 29.4% of the company respondents and 12.1% of the citizens' organization ones reported that *conflicts over the definition of a common*

agenda did, in fact, take place. These situations were managed, according to all of the respondents, through:

- discussions, meetings, communication;
- improvement of mutual knowledge;
- definition of agreements.

To this common list, the company representatives also added the redefinition of the partnership composition and the arrangement of internal solutions.

Expected results and benefits

The people who were interviewed were asked to identify results and benefits that were expected at the moment the partnership had been created. Their answers are summarized in the following table.

Table B.2.6 – Expected results and benefits of the partnership

Type of expected results and benefits	All %	COM %	ACO %
Meet citizens' needs	32.0	37.5	27.5
Reputation – image	16.0	19.6	13.0
Funding	9.6	-	17.4
Increase competencies	9.6	8.9	10.1
Networking	8.8	3.6	13.0
Increase CSR awareness	6.4	8.9	4.4
Long-term cooperation	4.8	3.6	5.8
Support to partner	4.8	8.9	1.5
Other	8.0	9.0	7.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The answers to this question reflect, in some manner, the reasons why the partnership was set up. For both groups the most important issue was to meet citizens' needs, enhance their own reputation and image, increase competencies (an issue that emerged as very important during the research); while the improvement of CSR awareness (another generally significant issue) was important only for companies, as funding and strengthening of networking opportunities were for citizens' organizations.

Facilitators of partnerships and actors' representatives

One of the key factors concerning the start up of partnerships is the existence of an enabling role played by one or more *facilitators*. People were asked who really had such a responsibility. The answers are summarized below.

Table B.2.7 – Who really facilitated the partnership

Facilitators of the partnership	All %	COM %	ACO %
Both	43.5	42.9	44.1
COM	21.7	37.1	5.9
ACO	20.3	8.6	32.3
External actor	8.7	5.7	11.8
No one	5.8	5.7	5.9

Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
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One can see that more than 40% of all of the respondents reported that both actors exercised this responsibility, while the rest upheld their own enabling role to the detriment of the other. While this result was somewhat expected, it highlights, in any case, the “cognitive divide” that seems to characterize partnerships.

Moreover, the minor role played in the partnerships by external actors was confirmed.

People were also asked about the role played by the facilitator person/office in case its company/organization had facilitated the partnership. The answers are as follows.

Table B.2.8 – Role of the facilitator inside the company/organization

Role of the facilitator	All %	COM %	ACO %
Senior management	32.8	33.9	31.7
Communication/PR	21.6	25.8	17.5
Project manager; specific unit	15.2	11.3	19.1
Middle management	12.8	11.3	14.3
Marketing/Fund Raising	11.2	11.3	11.1
Local officer	4.0	4.8	3.2
Other	2.4	1.6	3.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The many answers identifying senior management as facilitator for both actors, confirms the view that carrying out successful partnerships is something that necessarily requires the commitment of the top management. This seems to be supported also by the minor role played by local officers. As expected, communication and PR units play an important facilitating role, as well as the project units, in particular in citizens’ organizations.

Another aspect, which can be useful examining together with the one on facilitating roles, is the one of representation of the actors inside the partnership.

People interviewed were asked to state whom represented their organization/company inside the partnership. Their answers are interesting, both if examined on their own and in relation to the facilitating roles.

Table B.2.9 – Who represented the company/organization inside the partnership

Role of partner’s representatives	All %	COM %	ACO %
Senior management	36.6	31.0	41.2
Communication/PR	24.7	31.0	19.6
Project manager; specific unit	21.5	23.8	19.6
Middle management	11.8	9.5	13.7
Marketing/Fund Raising	4.3	4.8	3.9
Other (local office)	1.1	-	2.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

From the table, one can see that senior management is the most frequent representative in the partnership for both companies and ACOs, while communication and PR officers play a major role just for companies. The data shows that the role of senior management is also very important in the implementation phase of the partnership, in particular for ACOs.

It is interesting to look at the differences between the facilitating and representation roles in partnerships. They are highlighted below.

Table B.2.10 – Comparison of facilitation and representation roles

Role	COM			ACO		
	Facil.	Rep.	Gap	Facil.	Rep.	Gap
Senior m.	33.9	31.0	- 2.9	31.7	41.2	+ 9.5
Comm.– PR	25.8	31.0	+ 5.2	17.5	19.6	+ 2.1
Mkt. – FR	11.3	4.8	- 6.5	11.1	3.9	- 7.4
Middle m.	11.3	9.5	- 1.8	14.3	13.7	- 0.6
Project m.	11.3	23.8	+ 12.5	19.1	19.6	+ 0.5

What happens when one shifts from facilitative to representation responsibilities and from establishing partnerships to their implementation? The following elements can be extrapolated:

- In the case of companies, there is an increase of the role played by the project and communication units, while there is a significant decrease of the role by the marketing departments;
- In the case of citizens' organizations, there is an increase of the role of senior management and a decrease of that of the fund raising/marketing units;
- It seems that citizens' organizations tend to involve more their top level management in the concrete functioning of partnerships, even if senior management involvement is also very important in companies;
- A significant difference seems to be that ACOs tend to involve the entire organization, while companies tend to entrust specific units with the task of carrying out the partnership.

Resources invested in the partnership

Finally, people were asked what amount and types of resources (financial, human, and in-kind ones) had been invested in the partnership. The answers are illustrated in the following table.

Table B.2.11 – Resources invested in the partnership

Types of resources	Financial		Human		In-kind	Other
	Yes %	Median	Yes %	Median	Yes %	Yes %
COM	58.3	150,000 €	83.3	1.50	38.9	19.4
ACO	24.2	17,500 €	88.6	2.00	28.6	25.7

The most important information emerging from this table seems to be that, while there is an obvious divide between companies and ACOs with reference to financial resources, both parties have primarily invested human resources into the partnership. This means that, at least with reference to the partnerships examined for this study, the investment in human resources is more indispensable than the financial one.

It must be pointed out that a significant number of actors invested in in-kind resources (about one third of all of them) and in other resources.

As for in-kind resources, respondents listed the following:

- Logistical;
- Operational;
- Products;
- Marketing, PR and advertising.

The “other resources” invested belong to the two categories of knowledge (mentioned more) and reputation; the two being the most important immaterial resources linked to corporate citizenship. Finally, it seems that, in general, financial resources are not as important, as one would imagine, for partnerships.

3. Management

Let us now move to the organizational and governance aspects of the best practices of partnerships. In this section we will deal with: structure of the partnership, rights and responsibilities of partners, distribution of roles, accountability between partners, decision making processes, involvement of beneficiaries, leading roles in partnerships, internal and external communication tools, evaluation instruments and procedures.

Structure of the partnership

Key informants were asked what had been the structure of the partnership. Over half of the answers identified “stable relationship” as the item that better described the structure of the partnership.

Table B.3.1 – Structure of the partnership

Structure	All %	COM %	ACO %
Stable relationship	52.8	55.5	50.0
Temporary association	25.0	25.0	25.0
Forum with a mission	16.7	11.1	22.2
Convergent separate identities	4.1	5.6	2.8
Other	1.4	2.8	-
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

It must be emphasized that the partnerships are clearly perceived as something capable of overcoming the actors’ separate identities and of building more or less stable and durable relations (we have already seen, though, that they usually imply a mid or long-term engagement), but are also considered something new and additional.

As for the type of structure of the partnership, its main feature is definitely “flexibility”.

Table B.3.2 – Type of structure of the partnership

Type of structure	All %	COM %	ACO %
Informal, flexible	34.7	36.1	33.3
Informal, non flexible	1.4	2.8	-
Formal, flexible	61.1	58.3	63.9
Formal, non flexible	1.4	-	2.8
Other	1.4	2.8	-
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

It is also worthwhile to point out the prevailing formal characteristic of the partnerships, which can be considered as an indicator both of their complexity, as well as of the strategic meaning for the actors, which are involved.

Rights and responsibilities of the partners

Most of the respondents (86.1%) stated that the rights and responsibilities of the partners had been defined. As for how they had been defined, the key informants mentioned two main approaches: one based on technical and juridical tools, the other on cultural and communicational processes.

Table B.3.3 – Manner in which partners' rights and responsibilities are defined

Manner of definition of rights and responsibilities	All %	COM %	ACO %
Technical and juridical tools and strategies (contract, reporting systems, steering committees, well defined roles)	70.9	71.4	70.3
Cultural and communicational processes (trust and openness, discussion, cooperation and communication, respect of purpose and independence of partners)	29.1	28.6	29.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The prevalence of juridical and technical tools is, in some ways, to be expected; yet it can also be considered as another indicator of the soundness of the partnerships being studied. However, it must be also stated that almost one third of the answers highlighted the importance of communication and cultural processes – something that we will come across again later, as a distinguishing characteristic of the partnerships.

Equality in the distribution of roles

Respondents were asked if roles had been equally distributed among the partners. Their answers were unequivocally positive.

Table B.3.4 – Equality in distribution of roles among partners

Roles among partners are:	All %	COM %	ACO %
Equally distributed	80.0	84.4	75.8
Non equally distributed	20.0	15.6	24.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The difference in opinions of the representatives of the two parties was not as significant as it was in other cases. Moreover, it must be pointed out that, in a number of cases, even those who had answered that roles were not equally distributed explained that the greater management burden on the ACO's side was the result of its operational role in implementing the partnership's objective; it was, in other words, a matter of fact rather than the outcome of a power imbalance.

Transparency and accountability within the partnership

The issue of how transparency and accountability between partners had been guaranteed gave results that are very similar to those concerning the manner in which rights and responsibilities had been defined.

Table B.3.5 – Manner in which transparency and accountability are guaranteed within the partnership

Transparency and accountability are guaranteed with:	All %	COM %	ACO %
Formal tools (reports, contract, meetings)	61.8	66.0	57.7
Informal tools (personal contacts, discussion, trust, object planned ahead)	38.2	34.0	42.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

It must be emphasized that there was agreement on which were the three most important individual tools: reports, contracts, communication.

In general, it could be inferred that cultural and communication informal links were a structural element of the partnerships. Later in the report, we will find other information supporting this hypothesis.

Decision-making

Another important element of the partnerships' governance system is the decision making process. The key informants were asked to take notice on how decisions within the partnership were adopted. Their answers are summarized in the following table.

Table B.3.6 – How are decisions taken inside the partnership

How are decisions taken:	All %	COM %	ACO %
Discussion; Consultation; meeting	54.5	53.5	55.6
Upon agreement; important issues together	18.1	25.6	11.1
ACO decides	8.0	4.6	11.1
Other (trust, creation of specific organism)	6.9	2.3	11.1
Whoever is in charge when operational issues at stake	6.8	7.0	6.7
Company decides and prevails	5.7	7.0	4.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

According to 79.1% of the company respondents and 66.7% of ACO respondents, decisions were taken together, more or less, in a formal manner.

The difference in answers regarding those cases in which decisions were taken by one of the two partners reflects the phenomenon of cognitive divergence already discussed above.

Participation of beneficiaries

A very important point, which is related to the quality of the partnership as a way to deal with public problems, is the degree of involvement of the intended beneficiaries of the partnership projects in the decisions concerning the

partnership itself. On this point, 43.7% of the respondents (38.9% of the companies, 48.6% of the ACOs) stated that they had been involved, while the rest said that they had not been.

This information raises some concerns. Excluding the cases in which it is not easy to identify the beneficiaries of partnership activities (for example, with respect to environmental protection), the fact that more than half of the partnerships did not involve the beneficiaries in the decision-making process is clearly not positive. Moreover, it raises questions on the innovative characteristics, which partnerships should have. One explanation for this could be that the presence of a citizen-based organization might be considered by both partners as an indirect element of representation of the voice and needs of the intended beneficiaries. Whatever the reason, this is an element that may involve a risk of partnerships being self-referential; a risk which should be carefully considered.

The manner in which beneficiaries were actually involved has been summarized below.

Table B.3.7 – Manner in which beneficiaries are involved in decision making

Kind of involvement of beneficiaries	All %	COM %	ACO %
Asking about needs	33.4	30.0	35.7
Giving feedback	25.0	20.0	28.6
Involvement in project	20.8	20.0	21.4
Indirect	20.8	30.0	14.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The data reported in this table confirms the concerns raised above. Even when beneficiaries were actually involved in the decision-making, it was when they were simply asked about their needs or given some sort of feedback, and only in a number of cases, were beneficiaries directly involved in the project.

Responsibility for the success or failure of the partnership

The key informants were asked who was really responsible for the success or failure of the partnership that their organization/company carried out.

Table B.3.8 – Who is really responsible for the success or failure of the partnership

People responsible	All %	COM %	ACO %
Both	84.6	85.3	83.9
ACO	10.8	5.9	16.1
Company	3.1	5.9	-
No one	1.5	2.9	-
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The people who were interviewed clearly stated that both parties were responsible for the partnership, and even though this might have been just in principle, it should nevertheless be recorded as an important issue.

When requested to also identify the role of those in charge of this responsibility, the key informants gave the following answers:

Table B.3.9 – Role of people actually responsible for the partnership

Role of people responsible	All %	COM %	ACO %
Senior management	34.9	35.0	34.8
Communication – PR	32.6	35.0	30.4
Project management + specific unit	16.2	15.0	17.3
Middle management	9.3	10.0	8.7
Marketing, fund raising	7.0	5.0	8.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The answer to this question allows us to further emphasize the “core business” quality which successful partnerships seem to have. Apart from the communication and PR officers – something quite obvious in the context of what is a public relation between the company/organization and another actor – senior management people are indeed those who are directly responsible for the success of the partnership.

Communication

Both internal and external communication is an activity of the utmost importance for successful partnerships. Let us check what key informants reported on this issue.

The main *internal communication tools* used by partners, identified by the people interviewed, are reported in the following table.

Table B.3.10 – Internal communication tools

Internal communication tools	All %	COM %	ACO %
Phone calls	22.6	22.3	22.9
E-mail	21.9	20.4	23.5
Meetings	21.9	21.7	22.2
Written reports	15.5	15.3	15.7
Letters	10.6	12.1	9.1
Conference calls	3.3	3.2	3.3
Other	4.2	5.0	3.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The table shows a widespread use of several tools, both formal (written reports, letters, meetings) and informal (e-mail, phone calls). Only conference calls seem not to be used much.

Moreover, it can be useful to classify these tools into two categories, on the basis of the personal or inter-personal nature of the communication relations. This exercise can provide us with useful information on the importance of personal relations for the partnership’s success. The results of this operation are reported below.

Table B.3.11 –Types of communication relations between partners

Types of communication relations	All %	COM %	ACO %
Personal relations	55.1	54.8	55.6
Interpersonal relations	40.7	40.2	41.2

The answers of the two groups, which are homogeneous, highlight the prevalence of personal relations. This is important, especially if one considers what was observed above about the formal, though flexible, nature of partnerships. This aspect appears to be – other elements supporting this will be examined below – another structural characteristic of successful partnerships.

People interviewed were also asked to evaluate what had been the most useful communication tools and why. The following table reports the available data on this matter.

Table B.3.12 –Most useful communication tools and reason why they are considered so

Most useful tools	All %	COM %	ACO %
Meetings	33.0	38.2	27.4
Phone calls	20.8	20.0	21.6
e-mail	20.7	16.4	25.5
Written reports	13.2	12.7	13.7
All	8.5	7.3	9.8
Participation to partners' activities	3.8	5.4	2.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Why they are most useful			
Quick and direct communication	34.7	26.8	44.2
Clear information	14.7	9.8	20.6
More personal	13.3	19.5	5.9
Facilitate discussion	10.7	12.2	8.8
Overview situation	8.0	12.2	2.9
Facilitate evaluation	5.3	4.9	5.9
Better involvement	5.3	4.9	5.9
Feeling of concrete situation	5.3	7.3	2.9
Create mutual trust	2.7	2.4	2.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Written reports, e-mails and phone calls were considered the most useful tools, and the main reasons for their usefulness were:

- Quick and direct communication (37.4%);
- Clear information (15.5%);
- Facilitation of discussion (11.6%);
- Give an overview of the situation (11.6%).

The two main general reasons supporting this evaluation were “efficiency and effectiveness in the management of partnerships” and “improvement of relations”.

The *external communication tools*, which were identified by respondents were the following:

Table B.3.13 – External communication tools

External communication tools	All %	COM %	ACO %
Web page	29.5	31.2	28.0
Press conference	24.4	23.7	25.0
Specific event	14.5	15.0	14.0
Social and sustainability reports	11.4	12.9	10.0
Other (newsletters, annual reports, brochures, specific events or communication campaigns, etc.)	20.2	17.2	23.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

In this case, the differences can be explained with the fact that communication activities were probably never shared, with each actor conducting its own activities. Nevertheless, it is clear that for both actors the main tools were the web page and the press conference.

It must be pointed out that social and sustainability reports were at the bottom of the ranking.

This seems to represent a warning about the real effectiveness of these tools, which are generally considered a distinguishing element of a good CSR strategy.

Another element worthwhile focusing on, is the distinction one can draw between tools that are general in scope and those that are ad hoc, specifically created for the partnership. This can prove to be useful when verifying how partnerships are managed as a “normal” activity of companies/ACOs. The data shows that with respect to the external communication on partnerships, 39.1% of the respondents used general tools and 60.9% used specific tools.

“Other” external communication tools included, for example, newsletters and mailings, annual reports, journals, catalogues, project reports, workshops, communication campaigns.

Partnership evaluation

Several questions, which were asked focused on evaluation, an issue of the utmost importance when examining how successful partnerships have been planned and managed.

First of all, it was asked if specific indicators for the evaluation of the partnership had been identified. 62% of the respondents stated that they had not. When they were identified, these indicators were:

- The success of the project carried out (62.5%);
- The quality of the partnership, the achievement of its goals and the effectiveness of partners (50.1%);
- The impact on each partner (25.0%);

- The cost-benefit relation (16.7%).

Key informants were also asked to indicate if an evaluation of the partnership had been carried out. To this question, 27.8% of the company respondents and 44.4% of ACO representatives said that no evaluation had been conducted. In a general situation of low attention towards evaluation (only one third of the respondents reported the existence of evaluation indicators), this gap between the answers of the two groups could have two different explanations. The first is that people in ACOs do not have a strong awareness of the importance of evaluations, nor are they accustomed to conducting them, and, therefore, they may not have perceived the existence of an evaluation process. The second explanation could be that companies evaluated the partnership on their own, while ACOs didn't.

Nonetheless, 63.9% of the respondents stated that an evaluation of the partnership had been implemented or at least planned for. More precisely, the situation was as follows:

- Planned, ongoing (30.6%);
- Planned, finished (16.7%);
- Planned, to be conducted (4.2%);
- Not planned, to be conducted (1.4%);
- Not planned, ongoing (1.4%);
- Not planned, finished (2.8%).

As for the type of evaluation carried out, according to the aggregate answers, it was ongoing for 81.6% and ex post for 18.4% of the respondents. Moreover, it was internal to the partnership in 44.1% of the cases, external in 20.3% and internal to each participant in 35.6% of the cases. It must be pointed out that there were very few external evaluations. This could be linked to that "centralized" aspect of the partnerships being examined, already mentioned above. As we have said, this aspect may entail a risk of closeness and self-sufficiency, in contradiction both with the spirit of the partnerships themselves and, in general, with the essence of corporate social responsibility.

4. Evolution of partnerships

The following section deals with the possible doubts about getting involved in partnerships, the obstacles faced in the beginning, the evolution and changes, as well as the conflicts occurred during the partnerships.

Preliminary worries

Two thirds of the partnerships under study were launched without doubts or worries of the involved parties, while the other third, according to the interviewees, started off with some uncertainties (see table below).

Table B.4.1 - Uncertainties that companies and civic organizations had before entering into the partnership

Types of uncertainties	% of responses		
	All %	COM %	ACO %
Right partner	32.3	23.1	38.9
Right competencies	16.1	23.1	11.1
Internal	12.9	15.4	11.1
Loss of control	12.9	7.7	16.7
Economic dependence of civic organization	9.7	7.7	11.1
Problems of trust	9.7	15.4	5.6
Different aims	6.5	7.7	16.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

In general, according to 34.7% of the interviewees who answered the question, the parties involved were afraid that the partner might not have been adequate for the project (32.2%), or that they themselves did not have the right competencies to carry it out (16.1%). Some worries were inside the companies or the organizations (12.9%) and thus were not linked to the partner, while some others concerned the possible development of the relationship between the partners, such as the fear of losing control of the partnership (12.9%) or that civic organizations would become financially dependent on companies (9.7%).

In particular, while civic organizations hesitated to go into the partnership because of their different (possibly divergent) aims from that of businesses – social aims versus economic ones – (16.7%), companies mistrusted civic organizations (15.4%).

All these worries were dealt with, first of all, by developing a more informal relationship between the partners (60% of the interviewees who answered the question), such as opportunities for dialogue, meetings, discussions between partners, communication, mutual trust, working closely together, transparency and openness; and secondly, with solutions linked to a more formal type of relationship (40% of the interviewees who answered the question), such as perfecting partnerships' rules, internal solutions, creation of a specific team, etc.

Table B.4.2 - Solutions to initial uncertainties that companies and civic organizations faced before entering to the partnerships

Types of solutions	% of responses		
	All %	COM %	ACO %
Perfecting rules (A)	22.9	11.7	33.3
Support to the partner for further funds (B)	5.7	5.9	5.6
Internal solution (C)	2.9	-	5.5
Creating specific team (D)	2.9	5.9	-
Run limited risk (E)	2.9	5.9	-
Total linked to formal relationship/management (A+B+C+D+E)	37.3	29.4	44.4
Meeting/communication (F)	34.3	41.2	27.8
Mutual trust (G)	14.3	11.7	16.7
Openness (H)	5.6	11.8	-
Working closely (I)	5.6	-	11.1
Networking (J)	2.9	5.9	-
Total linked to informal relationship (F+G+H+I+J)	62.7	70.6	55.6
Total (A+B+C+D+E+ F+G+H+I+J)	100.0	100.0	100.0

While companies seemed to be more interested in solutions linked to dialogue and informal relationships, civic organizations had a more practical and managerial approach to initial problems, as a result of the greater number of partnership relations they had been involved in.

Early problems

In the beginning of the partnerships, less than one third of the partners (29.2%) had some difficulties in understanding each other. These difficulties can be grouped in two main clusters: one linked to differences in culture, languages and focus (77,3% of the interviewees who answered the question); the other linked to divergences in methods and managerial patterns (31.8% of the interviewees who answered the question).

Table B.4.3 - Difficulties that companies and civic organizations met in the beginning of the partnership

Types of difficulties	% of responses		
	All %	COM %	ACO %
Different culture (A)	36.4	28.6	50.0
Different languages (B)	18.2	28.6	-
Different focus (C)	13.6	14.3	12.5
Poor contact (D)	9.1	7.1	12.5
Total linked to the relationship (A+B+C+D)	77.3	78.6	75.0
Technical problems (E)	9.1	14.3	-
New area of work (F)	9.1	7.1	12.5
In the organization (G)	4.5	-	12.5
Linked to internal problems (E+F+G)	22.7	21.4	25.0
Total (A+B+C+D+E+F+G)	100.0	100.0	100.0

One must point out that managing the differences was the greatest challenge that both partners had to face, when starting to work together.

Both parties dealt with all these problems by increasing dialogue, information, knowledge and respect of diversity (see table below).

Table B.4.4 - Solutions to the difficulties that companies and civic organizations had met in the beginning of the partnership

Solutions to initial difficulties	% of responses		
	All %	COM %	ACO %
Discussion/meeting	21.2	26.3	14.3
Communication/open dialogue	39.4	31.6	50.0
Pragmatic adaptation	6.1	-	14.3
Recognition of partner's merits	3.0	5.3	-
Information	15.2	21.0	7.1
Respect	3.0	5.3	-
Trying to understand	12.1	10.5	14.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The evolution of the partnerships

In general, civic organizations and businesses described the evolution of their partnerships in a positive manner: the relationships expanded and improved over the time. Only for a minority of the involved parties, did relations remained stable or got worse (see table B. 4.5).

Table B.4.5 - Evolution of the partnerships

Type of evolution	% of responses		
	All %	COM %	ACO %
Stronger-closer-strengthened (A)	22.2	10.9	13.6
Developed in positive way (B)	20.0	8.7	4.5
Developed mutual trust (C)	14.5	15.2	25.0
More involved (D)	12.2	23.9	20.5
Consolidated (E)	6.7	4.3	4.5
More transparent and sincere (F)	4.5	10.9	18.1
Dynamically evolved (G)	1.1	6.5	2.3
Total positive evolution (A+B+C+D+E+F+G)	81.2	80.4	88.5
No change (H)	3.3	4.3	2.3
Total stable evolution (H)	3.3	4.3	2.3
Started in difficulties (I)	4.5	2.2	2.3
Getting worse (J)	4.4	6.5	2.3
For informal to formal (K)	2.2	-	2.3
Some problems during (L)	2.2	2.2	-
Decrease in the involvement (M)	1.1	2.3	2.3
Relation ended (N)	1.1	2.1	-
Total negative evolution (I+J+K+L+M+N)	15.5	15.3	9.2
Total (A+B+C+D+E+F+G+H+ I+J+K+L+M+N)	100.0	100.0	100.0

Since the research examined successful cases of partnership, these results were somewhat to be expected. Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that respondents greatly emphasized the incremental aspects of the partnerships they were involved in.

Ongoing changes

According to 47.2% of interviewees the main changes took place during the activities of the partnerships: 73.5% of people who answered the question maintained that the activities had been expanded or had been adapted to changes in the context (17,6% of the respondents). A small number of interviewees who answered the question (8.8%) stated that the initial activities had been developed into new projects or that new modalities of work had been found.

According to 36.1% of the interviewees, some changes occurred in the participants too. However, they primarily concerned those actors not directly involved in the partnership or newcomers to the partnership.

18.1% of the interviewees maintained that some changes concerned partnerships' structure, while 11.1% the objectives. The smaller number of changes in the structures and objectives could mean, however, that the trend in the partnerships was aimed at their strengthening.

Obstacles during the partnership

The data presented before is confirmed when the relationship between partners is analyzed in depth. In fact, 40.3% of the interviewees stated that some obstacles had been faced during the partnership. Only a few of them were directly linked to the partnership, such as:

- partner behavior;
- different culture and languages;
- different expectations;
- lack of prompt communication.

Another series of problems concerned those aspects, which were not part of the direct relationship between partners and were linked, for example, to other partners, internal managerial gaps, limited resources and time, insufficient competencies.

Once again, partners dealt with these problems through a direct and open approach. They first strengthened the relationship with the partner (13 answers), by trying to:

- improve communication and discussion;
- explain differences to the other partner;
- develop mutual trust;
- have an open mind;
- press the partner.

In second place, they focused on internal management and competencies (14 answers). In 2 cases, the relationship ended because of problems, which had existed from the very beginning of the partnership.

While the initial difficulties were handled exclusively by focusing on the relationship with the partner, in the course of the partnership actors had a more operational and practical approach towards problems. However, all of the solutions adopted aimed at strengthening the partners' relationship.

Conflicts

The obstacles faced in the beginning and during the partnership rarely created conflicts (according to 8.3% of the interviewees), while 13.9% of the interviewees revealed that there were other conflicts inside the partnership, as well as outside; this latter type of conflict mainly concerned the public administration and other companies linked to the project.

In general, conflicts concerned:

- external or bureaucratic problems;
- disappointment in members;
- competition between partners;
- different vision;
- non respectful partner' behavior.

Conflicts were primarily resolved thanks to discussions, communication, common sense behavior between partners and an increased commitment towards the goal.

Considering that this research focused on best practices in partnership, the existence of conflicts, obstacles and problems is not of minor importance. It indeed shows that managing partnerships can be really complex and that the relationships that are created between companies and ACOs can often generate difficulties and problems, even when they turn out to be successful.

5. Effects of partnerships

The following chapter deals with the effects of the partnerships. We shall examine: attainment of initial expectations, outputs and benefits created by the partnerships, unexpected results. Subsequently, we will analyze the partners' views about the effectiveness of partnerships in tackling certain issues and in developing their CSR strategies.

Attainment of expectations

Despite a whole range of problems taking place throughout the course of the partnerships, 30.6% of the interviewees felt that their initial expectations had been attained to a greater degree than they had expected, and 62.5% that their expectations had been just attained. Only 5.6% stated that their expectations had been attained to a lesser degree than they had expected, while 1.4% stated that their expectations had not been attained.

The general consensus about the positive results of partnerships can be explained, not only by the fact that the research focused on successful cases of partnership, but also by two other factors, not necessarily one exclusive of the other:

- Actors entering the partnership had low initial expectations;
- Partnerships were able to create an added value and an unexpected impact (see below).

Results

The partnerships' results can be divided into three different clusters.

The first cluster concerns the outputs: 25.2% of the interviewees stated that most of the material (reports, press articles) and events, such as press conferences, were delivered to communicate the partnership's and the project's results, with the aim of attracting considerable media attention.

Another cluster refers to the benefits produced by the partnerships. They can be divided into two groups. The first one (40.8% of the answers) refers to the mutual benefits (development of mutual trust, enhanced reputation and credibility, improvement of relations); the second one (59.0% of the answers) concerns the internal benefits (improvement of efficiency and effectiveness of products and services, organizational innovation, increased access to resources and better access to information). 9.2% of the interviewees stated that partnerships generated other kinds of benefits, such as allowing them to carry out their mission, winning an award, acquiring knowledge, increasing public relations and benefits for employees (see table B. 5.1).

Table B.5.1 - Benefits coming from partnerships

Kinds of positive impacts	% of responses		
	All%	COM %	ACO %
Development of mutual trust (A)	15.5	15.9	15.2
Enhanced reputation and credibility (B)	14.4	19.5	9.8
Improvement in the relations among organizations (C)	10.9	9.8	12.0
Total mutual benefits (A+B+C)	40.8	45.2	37.0
Better access to information (D)	13.2	13.4	13.0
Increased access to resources (E)	10.9	8.5	13.0
Improved operational efficiency (F)	9.2	8.5	9.8
Organizational innovation (G)	8.6	7.3	9.8
More effective products and services (H)	8.1	7.3	8.7
Total internal benefits (D+E+F+G+H)	50.0	45.0	54.3
Other benefits (I)	9.2	9.8	8.7
Total (A+B+C+ D+E+F+G+H+I)	100.0	100.0	100.0

While company representatives highlighted in the same measure both the mutual and internal benefits resulting from the partnerships, civic organizations emphasized more the internal benefits (primarily better access to resources and information).

The third cluster concerns the gains in competencies, as 47.2% of the interviewees stated. This data refers to 44.4% of the civic organizations and 50% of businesses. New competencies were linked to partnerships (44.5% of the interviewees who answered the question) or were operational (55.5% of those who answered question) (see table below).

Table B.5.2 - New competencies coming from partnerships

Types of new competencies	% of responses		
	All %	COM %	ACO %
Partner's language (A)	27.8	23.5	31.6
Work in partnership (B)	13.9	11.7	15.8
Trust (C)	2.8	5.9	-
Total linked to the partnership (A+B+C)	44.5	41.1	47.4
Professional (D)	8.3	5.9	10.5
Linked to the project (E)	36.1	47.1	26.3
Operational skills (F)	11.1	5.9	15.8
Total operative (D+E+F)	55.5	58.9	52.6
Total (A+B+C+ D+E+F)	100.0	100.0	100.0

Most civic organizations stated that the ability to understand the partners' language was the more important one among the partnering needs (31.6%), while companies stressed, in particular, that partnerships increased those competencies specifically linked to the field of the project (47.1%).

It seems that companies recognized the civic organizations' capacities in the project area, and that civic organizations appreciated the greater know-how they could acquire from companies. It is possible, in other words, to speak of an exchange of competencies, which, in the end, represents a significant component of the added value of the partnerships being studied.

Moreover, it is quite clear that partnerships “teach” both companies and civic organizations how to work closely with organizations, which are different from their own.

Impacts

Successful partnerships, furthermore, generate different kinds of impacts, often producing results that are unexpected and greater than those, which the partnership had estimated. According to 72.2% of the people interviewed, these impacts were positive, while only for 8.3% of them, they were negative.

With reference to the positive impacts, 69.4% of the respondents described them in the following manner (see the table below).

Table B.5.3 - Positive impacts coming from partnerships

Kinds of positive impacts	% of responses		
	All %	COM %	ACO %
Long-term relationship	25.4	17.2	33.4
Networking	16.9	13.8	20.0
Project extension or continuation	13.6	20.7	6.6
Reputation-image	13.5	17.2	10.0
Gain for community	8.5	3.4	13.4
Know-how	6.8	3.5	10.0
Better internal climate	6.8	10.3	3.3
Capacity building	3.4	6.9	-
Other impacts (innovation, building awareness, CSR strategy)	5.1	7.0	3.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

In general, the principal unexpected impacts concerned the creation of a stable relationship between partners and the promotion of networking opportunities, which were seen as an extension or continuation of the project (linked to the stable relationship).

Companies, more than civic organizations, mentioned a positive gain in reputation, while ACOs emphasized more to the actual gains for the community resulting from partnerships, as well as the networking opportunities.

The negative effects of partnerships, which were reported were very few and can be listed below:

- Partnership didn't achieve its objectives;
- Civic organization lost credibility;
- Erosion of mutual trust;

- Lack of support.

Interviewees were asked to suggest how these kinds of negative impacts could be overcome. Their answers were:

- Honest behavior, close management and dialogue;
- No future collaboration;
- Independent measures to resolve the problem created by the other partner;
- Better selection criteria.

As mentioned above, the fact that partnerships naturally created both an added value and unexpected impacts, can be deduced, on one hand, from all the positive results mentioned by the interviewees, and, on the other, by examining their answers about the positive impacts, the improvement of competencies, as well as the perception that the results obtained were better than expected.

The value of partnerships

All the interviewees, except for one, thought that partnerships were valid tools to tackle a range of issues. In particular, 35.8%(???) declared that they generated relational advantages, contributing primarily to reach objectives that companies/civic organizations would otherwise not have been able to on their own, or operational ones, such as increasing their own effectiveness (25.0%) and resources (9.5%), as well as improving their own know-how and expertise (11.9%) (see table B 5.4).

Table B.5.4 - Reason why partners consider partnerships a valid tool to tackle issues

Motivation	% of responses		
	All %	COM %	ACO %
Impossible to do on your own (A)	27.4	29.7	25.5
Mutual advantages (B)	4.8	5.4	4.3
Access to partners' thinking (C)	2.4	-	4.3
Increase motivation (D)	1.2	2.7	-
Total relational (A+B+C+D)	35.8	37.8	34.1
Effectiveness (E)	25.0	21.6	27.6
Expertise and know-how (F)	11.9	18.9	6.4
Greater resources (G)	9.5	-	17.0
Create innovation (H)	7.1	8.2	6.4
Public consensus and visibility (I)	3.5	5.4	2.1
Elimination of barriers (J)	2.4	-	4.3
Improve CSR (K)	2.4	5.4	-
Independence (L)	1.2	2.7	-
Sharing responsibility and costs (M)	1.2	-	2.1
Total operational (E+F+G+H+I+J+K+L+M)	64.2	62.2	65.9
Total (A+B+C+D+E+F+G+H+I+J+K+L+M)	100.0	100.0	100.0

Partnerships, moreover, were considered by 65.2% of the interviewees as tools that influenced or contributed to improving Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives of the actors involved. In fact, more than half of them maintained that the partnerships they engaged in contributed to or influenced their company/organization policies (16.0%) or helped them implement a CSR strategy (22.0%). Through the partnerships, furthermore, the actors learned how to practically manage these kinds of relationships and understood the potential they represented for their own CSR strategy (24.0%) (see table below).

Table B.5.5 - Reason why partnerships influenced CSR strategies

Links to CSR strategy	% of responses		
	All %	COM %	ACO %
Internal influence	32.0	29.7	34.8
Learning partnership management	24.0	18.5	30.5
Put CSR in practice	22.0	22.2	21.7
Contributed	16.0	25.9	4.3
External influence	4.0	-	8.7
Innovation	2.0	3.7	-
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

C – CONCLUSIONS AND GUIDELINES

1. Summary of results

The research

The project– implemented from July 2005 to June 2006 by Active Citizenship Network and FONDACA, with the support of 8 ACN partner organizations - was aimed at analyzing 36 successful partnerships between ACOs (Autonomous Citizens Organizations) and private companies in 9 European Union countries (Austria, Cyprus, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Poland, Slovenia, United Kingdom), with a view to improving the knowledge on this tool, of great importance for promoting CSR. The research was conducted through a questionnaire filled by one company (COM) and one autonomous citizens organization (ACO) representative for each partnership. For the purpose of this research, partnerships have been defined as “*situations in which civic organizations and companies share objectives, resources, responsibilities and risks, to achieve public interest goals*”.

Dissonance on facts and opinions

According to the factual dissonance index (which refers to differences in the partners’ answers when it is implicit that they should be the same), the fact that 44.4% of the partnerships had a medium or high level of dissonance must be seriously considered. According to the cognitive dissonance index (which refers to questions for which one would expect that the partners’ answers should be similar), it results that in 61.1% of the partnerships there was a medium or high level of cognitive gap.

The projects promoted

As for the projects and activities carried out by the partnerships, more than 50% of them concerned welfare and the environment, while one out of four addressed the empowerment of young people. Though the projects were usually multi-level, the national level was the preferred one (76.1% of the partnerships), while less than half of the partnership also involved regional and local levels. Worth mentioning was the minor involvement of the European level in partnerships (12.7%), confirming its weakness with respect to CSR. Almost 60% of all the implemented projects were medium or long-term. As for the budget, about two thirds of them had either a very small budget (< 50,000 €, 33.9%) or a very big one (> 500,000 €, 29.0%).

As for the actors responsible for the project, they were, above all, the marketing (23.8%) and communication (26.2%) units for companies, while in ACOs they were the entire organization (25.6%) and the project unit (30.2%); in companies, CSR units were involved as well (19% of the partnerships), while in

ACOs, only in 7% of the cases. As for the resources, companies invested in the projects a median of 200,000 €, while citizens' organizations spent 17,500 €; both parties invested a similar number of employees (3 is the median for companies, 2 for ACOs), but ACOs engaged a median of 11 volunteers and companies 6; invested in-kind resources were primarily logistical (40.5% of the responses), operational (27%), marketing and PR (21.6%), goods and products (10.8%). In more than two thirds of the cases, there were other investors: among them, there were other citizens' organizations (58.7%), public bodies (45.7%), other companies (39.1%) and individual donors (6.5%).

The basis of partnerships

91.7% of the companies involved in the partnerships had a CSR strategy, while only 61.1% of ACOs had one. Similarly, 94.4% of the company respondents stated that the partnership was part of their CSR strategy, while only 72.7% of ACO representatives stated this. 30.6% of the companies and only 19.4% of civic organizations were first-timers in partnering. 35 partnerships out of 36 were examined at the top management level.

As for the actors involved, they were usually only two. Civic umbrella organizations (30% of the cases) and business networks (23.2%) were mentioned as well. According to 85.9% of the respondents, no intermediaries and external third parties intervened or played any role in establishing partnerships. 50.7% of the respondents stated that the actors had cooperated before initiating the partnership. The previous cooperation was primarily medium (44.4%) or long-term (40.7%). According to 90.3% of the people interviewed, there had been no conflicts or difficult relations before the partnership.

Most of the respondents (97.2%) stated that the reasons for partnering were mainly internal, with only 56.5% saying that they were external. Both parties felt that the most important internal reason for partnering was resolving community problems as part of their mission (37.3% of the companies, 40.4% of ACOs); while funding was very important for citizens' organizations (26.9% of the respondents), implementing a CSR strategy (21.6%) and reputation (19.6%) were important for companies. The main external reasons for companies were image (22.7% of the respondents) and meeting public needs (18.2%), while for ACOs these were public needs (32%) and government regulations and legal requirements (16% for them and 13.6% for companies). For both actors the occasion of special years and awards (18.2% for companies, 12% for citizens' organizations) were quite important.

According to 92.9% of the respondents (with no difference between the two groups) an agenda of common priorities had been defined during the planning phase. Around two thirds of the respondents stated that this agenda had been jointly decided, while for 25.8% of the company respondents and 21.2% of ACO respondents it had been the result of an ACO proposal.

Conflicts over the definition of a common agenda took place according to 29.4% of the company respondents and 12.1% of citizens' organization respondents. These situations were managed through discussions, meetings, communication, improvement of mutual knowledge and definition of agreements.

As for the expected results and benefits generated by the partnerships, the most important issues, for both groups, were: meet citizens' needs (37.5% COM, 27.5% ACO), enhance reputation and image (19.6% COM, 13% ACO) and increase competencies (8.9% COM, 10.1% ACO); moreover, while the improvement of CSR awareness (8.9%) was important for companies, the strengthening of networking opportunities (13%) was for citizens' organizations.

More than 40% of all of the respondents reported that both actors facilitated the partnerships. The rest stated that each actor upheld its own enabling function to the detriment of the other; this as an element of the dissonance recurrent in partnerships. About one third of the respondents identified senior management as the facilitator for both actors. Communication and PR units played a significant facilitating role as well, with project units also playing one, especially in citizens' organizations.

Both companies (31% of the respondents) and citizens' organizations (41.2%) also recognized senior management's representative role in partnerships. PR and communication units (31% for COM, 19.6% for ACO) and project managers and specific units (23.8% for COM, 19.6% for ACO) were important as well.

In terms of resources invested by the partners, more than 80% of the actors stated that they invested human resources (a median of 1.50 for companies and 2.00 for ACOs); 58.3% of the companies and 24.2% of citizens' organizations invested financial resources (a median of 150,000 € and 17,500 € respectively), 38.9% COM and 28.6% ACO invested in-kind resources, and 19.4% of the companies and 25.7% of citizens' organizations other resources. In-kind resources were primarily logistical, operational, products, marketing, PR and advertising, while the "other" resources were knowledge and reputation.

The management of partnerships

With reference to the structure of the partnerships, the form mentioned the most by the interviewees were: stable relationship (55.6% for COM, 50% for ACO), temporary association (25% for both), forum with a mission (11.1% for COM, 22.2% for ACO) and, finally, convergent separate identities (5.6% and 2.6% respectively); thus highlighting a typology of structure which reflects the nature of partnerships as something that goes beyond the individual actors, and which is aimed at creating a stable relationship. This kind of structure is characterized by flexibility, whether it be either informal (36.1% for companies, 33.3% for citizens' organizations) or formal (58.3% and 63.9% respectively).

Most of the respondents (86.1%) stated that the rights and responsibilities of partners had been defined.

Their definition were the result of the following two approaches: one based on technical and juridical tools, such as contracts, reporting systems, steering committees (71.4% for companies, 70.3% for ACOs); the other on cultural and communicational processes, such as discussions, trust and openness, recognition of purpose and partner's independence (28.6% and 29.6% respectively).

84.4% of the company and 75.8% of citizens' organization respondents stated that there was equality in the distribution of roles. The difference between the two groups was a result of the greater management burden on citizens' organizations highlighted by ACO respondents.

Transparency and accountability within the partnership were guaranteed through formal tools, such as reports, contracts, meetings (66% of the companies, 57.7% of citizens' organizations), as well as informal tools (34% and 42.3% respectively). Both parties agreed which were the three single most important tools: reports, contracts, and communication.

According to 79.1% of the company respondents and 66.7% of ACO respondents, the decisions concerning the partnership were taken together, in a more or less formal manner.

With respect to the participation of the intended beneficiaries in the partnership decision making process, 43.7% of the respondents (38.9% of the companies, 48.6% of ACOs) stated that beneficiaries were involved, while the rest said that they were not. However, even when beneficiaries were involved in decision making, often it was simply to ask them about their needs or to give them some sort of feedback; only in a very few cases were they directly involved in the project (20% and 21.4% of company and ACO respondents stated that beneficiaries were involved).

Almost 85% of all of the respondents declared that the real responsibility for the success or failure of the partnership was shared. Senior management was directly responsible for the success of the partnership, with communication and PR officers sharing some of the responsibilities.

Questions were also posed on both internal and external communication aspects. As for internal communication, a widespread use of a number of tools, both formal (written reports, letters, meetings) and informal (e-mails, phone calls), emerged. Tools involving personal relations (54.8% for companies, 55.6% for citizens' organizations) were used more than those linked to interpersonal relations (40.2% and 41.2% respectively). According to the respondents, meetings, phone calls and emails were the most useful tools. The reasons mentioned for this were: quick and direct communication (37.4%), clear information (15.5%), facilitation of discussion (11.6%), overview of the situation (11.6%). The main external communication tools were press conferences, web

pages, specific events and social and sustainability reports, which, incidentally, were at the bottom of the ranking, despite their supposed importance for CSR. 60.9% of the mentioned tools were specific ones, and only 39.1% were general external communication tools.

As for the evaluation of partnerships, 62% of the respondents declared that no indicators had been defined. When they had, the main contents of the indicators were: success of the project carried out (62.5%); quality of the partnership, achievement of its goals and effectiveness of partners (50.1%); impact on each partner (25.0%); cost-benefit relation (16.7%). 27.8% of the company respondents and 44.4% of ACO representatives said that no evaluation had been carried out (the gap in answers is probably linked to the fact that some companies conducted the evaluation on their own). In any case, 63.9% of the respondents stated that an evaluation of the partnership had been implemented or at least planned (ongoing for 81.6% and ex-post for 18.4% of the respondents; internal to the partnership in 44.1% of the cases, external in 20.3% and internal to each participant in 35.6%).

Evolution of partnerships

Two thirds of the partnerships were started with no hesitations or worries on the part of the actors involved. The remaining one third had worried about: selecting the right partner, not having the right competencies, possible internal resistances, fear of losing control, the risk of economic dependence of civic organizations, distrust and disagreement over objectives. In particular, ACOs hesitated because of the possible divergent aims with business (social vs. economic), while businesses somewhat mistrusted civic organizations.

These worries were handled, in two thirds of the cases, through informal relationships (meetings, communication, building trust, openness, working closely together, networking) and in the remaining cases, through formal tools (improving rules, supporting the partners' fund raising, internal solutions, creating specific teams, etc.). Companies tended to prefer informal tools (70.6% vs. 55.6% of ACOs), while citizens' organizations preferred to adopt a practical approach (44.4% vs. 29.4% of companies).

In the beginning of the partnerships, almost one third of the partners had some difficulties in understanding each other. These difficulties can be grouped in two main clusters: managing differences in culture, languages and focus (77,3% of the interviewees who answered the question) and divergences in methods and managerial aspects (31.8% of the interviewees who answered the question). These difficulties were dealt with through discussions, open dialogue, pragmatic adaptation and acknowledgement of partners' identity.

Civic organizations and businesses described the evolution of partnerships in a positive manner: relationships expanded and improved over time. Only a few of them stated that relations were stable or got worse (positive: 80.4% for

companies and 88.5% for ACOs; stable: 4.3% and 2.3%; negative: 15.3% and 9.2%).

According to 47.2% of interviewees the main changes took place during the activities of the partnerships: 73.5% of people who answered the question mentioned that activities had expanded while 17.6% maintain that they had been adapted to changes in the context. Respectively 18.1% and 11.1% of the interviewees stated that some changes concerned partnerships' structure and objectives. These smaller changes in the structure and objectives could mean, however, that the partnerships were being strengthened.

As for the obstacles during the partnership, 40.3% of the interviewees stated that a number of obstacles had been faced during the partnership, but only few of them were directly linked to the partnership itself, such as partner behavior, different culture and languages, conflicting expectations, lack of prompt communication. Once again, the partners dealt with these problems through a direct and open approach, by both improving the relationship and by strengthening internal management and competencies. In 2 cases, the relationship ended because of problems, which had existed from the very beginning.

It seems that obstacles faced in the beginning and during the partnership rarely created conflicts (8.3% of the interviewees).

13.9% of the interviewees declared that there were other conflicts inside the partnership (concerning disappointment in members, competition between partners, conflicting visions, lack of respect), as well as outside (primarily with public administrations and other companies).

Partnerships' effects

30.6% of the interviewees felt that their initial expectations had been attained to a greater degree than they had expected, while 62.5% said that they had been attained. Only 5.6% stated that their expectations had been attained to a lesser degree than they had expected, while 1.4% declared that they had not been attained. The results of the partnerships can be divided in three groups:

- **Outputs:** 25.2% of the interviewees stated that materials (reports, press articles) and events (press conferences) were delivered, attracting much media attention.
- **Benefits:** according to 40.8% of the people interviewed, there were mutual benefits (development of mutual trust, enhanced reputation and credibility, improvement of relations); 59.0% stated that there were internal benefits (improvement of efficiency and effectiveness of products and services, organizational innovation, increased access to resources and better access to information), while 9.2% of the interviewees referred to other kinds of

benefits (carrying out their mission, winning an award, acquiring knowledge, increasing public relations, benefits for employees).

- Competencies: they were mentioned by 47.2% of the interviewees. New competencies were linked to partnerships (44.5% of the interviewees who answered the question) or to operational skills (55.5% of the interviewees who answered the question).

As for the impacts (unexpected and greater results), 72.2% of the people interviewed said that they were positive. These impacts were identified as: long-term relations, networking, project extension or continuation, reputation and image, gains for the community, know-how, better internal climate, capacity building. In other words, the primary unexpected impacts concerned the creation of a stable relationship between partners and networking. Moreover, companies noticed more a positive gain in reputation, while civic organizations observed more the actual gains for the community as a result of partnerships and networking. The (few) negative impacts which were mentioned were: partnerships not achieving their objectives; civic organizations losing credibility; erosion of mutual trust; lack of support.

All the interviewees, except for one, believed that partnerships were valid tools to tackle certain issues.

In particular, 82% of them declared that partnerships created relational advantages (35.8%), which in turn contributed to reaching objectives that companies/civic organizations would not be able to on their own, or produced a number of operational advantages, such as increasing their own effectiveness (25%) and resources (9.5%) or improving their own know-how and expertise (11.9). Partnerships, moreover, were considered by 65.2% of the interviewees as tools that influenced or contributed to promoting the Corporate Social Responsibility of the different actors that were involved. In particular, through partnerships, they learned how to actually manage these kinds of relationships and fully grasp their potential for their own CSR strategy (24%).

Partnerships' Profile

The projects developed through the partnerships were primarily:

- aimed at tackling welfare and environmental concerns, as well as promoting the empowerment of young people;
- developed at the national, less at the local, and not at the European level;
- medium or long term;
- managed by marketing departments or public relations offices (for companies) and by the entire organization (for ACOs);
- either of a value of less than 50,000 or more than 500,000 €
- supported by other investors.

In general, partnerships are:

- between companies that have a CSR strategy and ACOs that are more focused on promoting concrete gains for the communities, and which have the main common goal to resolving societal problems;
- stable and flexible relationships between one company and one organization, that have already engaged in previous collaborations and which have been started with neither the participation of second-degree structures, nor the support of external intermediaries;
- equal relationships, where rights and responsibilities are defined and decision making process, as well as responsibilities are shared, but where ACOs face more internal obstacles in partnering with business;
- relations guaranteed by formal technical and juridical tools and managed with a high level of personal relations;
- characterized, on the one hand, by internal communication tools which imply more personal rather than interpersonal relations and, on the other, by external tools, which are primarily specific rather than general (as social reports);
- with a minor involvement of the intended beneficiaries in the decision making process;
- more about human rather than financial resources invested by both sides;
- decided and represented by senior management;
- facilitated by both partners' communication or public relations departments;
- evaluated more by companies, often separately;
- positively evolving relationships - with no significant obstacles or conflicts - which are managed through communication and mutual recognition;
- relationships that create more internal and less mutual benefits, increase competencies (relational and operational) and generate many unexpected positive impacts, primarily linked to strengthening partners' cooperation.

2. Conclusions

The research conducted for this study allows us to put forward some general conclusive remarks. Naturally, these remarks can be applied only to the partnerships examined for this work and their reliability rests upon the value and limits of this research, as defined in the introductory part of this report.

The conclusions address the following five points: study of the partnerships, essential features of the 36 partnerships being analyzed, actors' participation in the partnerships, role of the partnerships as a corporate social responsibility "technology", elements of ambiguity and of risk which emerged from the analysis.

Study of the Partnerships

The partnerships proved to have a rich empirical content, which was hardly in correspondence with the modeling exercises that are usually carried out on this matter. An example of this is the negligible role that social and sustainability reports have had as accountability tools of partnerships. This research can, therefore, also have implications for developing further research activities on partnerships between citizens' organizations and private companies. From this work it might be possible to bring a benefit for existing models as well, making them more realistic and effective.

With reference to the starting point of the research, the partnerships that were analyzed emerged as a phenomenon, which is clearly different from other forms of relations (such as dialogue and collaboration) between ACOs and private companies. The main difference resides in the fact that partnerships entail sharing resources and risks in carrying out programs and activities together. This was clearly pointed out by most of the key informants, who stated that it was thanks to partnerships that they were able to do something that they would not have been able to do on their own. The title of this report, "Not Alone", reflects this very important result.

Moreover, the study of the 36 partnerships also revealed a number of significant difficulties and obstacles. The following two problems can be considered the most important ones.

The first problem concerned the existence of divergent perceptions and assessments of the facts between the two groups of actors, which meant that it was not easy to find out exactly what really happened.

This specific problem was handled by making it a matter for further research, highlighting the actors' divergent or convergent information and visions, and then measuring their divergences. This type of focus allowed us to enrich the body of information gathered on the partnerships, and it could also represent a

warning for practitioners and policy makers, when promoting or dealing with partnerships.

The second problem referred to the overlapping and confusion that existed between the projects or activities carried out by the partnerships and the partnerships themselves. In this case, as well, it was decided to make the problem visible, by gathering information both on the projects and on the partnerships, thus making it possible to conduct a separate analysis of the two elements. It must be pointed out, however, that the interviewees showed a sufficient degree of awareness of the difference, though some confusion occasionally emerged. In this case, also, the matter should be taken into account not only when studying, but also when planning and implementing partnerships.

Essentials of Partnerships

A number of significant and recurrent elements allow us to identify some characterizing (or structural) features of the 36 successful partnerships, which were examined. Let us summarize them in the following points:

- *At the core business.* Partnerships are understood and managed as something that is related to the core business of the actors' organizations and not as something marginal or of secondary importance. It means that partnerships seem to be perceived as something linked to the very identity of the actors, capable of adding or subtracting value to it. This is the reason why, in our opinion, the top management was fully involved, both in starting and in facilitating the partnership; the evaluation of the partnership was usually not assigned to external actors; there was a reluctance to expand the relationship to other actors (though this can happen).
- *Coming from previous relations.* Partnerships were borne out of a framework of mutual knowledge that preceded the decision to partnering.
- *Not yet an ordinary activity.* Partnerships were apparently not yet considered a normal and ordinary operational practice for the actors. This is indicated both by the prevailing use of ad hoc communication tools and by the incidence of internal problems.
- *Flexibility, formality and personal relations.* Flexibility seemed to be the main management approach for the partnerships. It is linked to the prevailing formal technical and juridical tools, which confirm the strategic value that partnerships have. At the same time, however, communication and cultural processes, as well as personal relations, were also very important.
- *Trend towards equality.* The partnerships were jointly designed and managed, thus guaranteeing equality between partners. ACOs had a leadership role in defining the priorities of the common activities.
- *Investment of human rather than financial resources.* Partnerships seemed to require a significant investment, primarily (and in all cases) in human, rather than in financial resources. This kind of investment is, in a sense, much more strategic both for companies and citizens' organizations.

- *Long-term, stable relationship.* The partnerships tended to evolve into stable relationships, changing in actors and in activities rather than in structure and objectives. In other words, they overcame the actors' individual identities, producing what can be defined as an "Alchemy Effect".
- *Added value and incremental character.* Most of the partnerships were recognized as capable of bringing value to the actors' activity, image and identity, as well as generating unexpected results, with reference both to the partners and their activities. It can be stated that partnerships had an incremental character and, therefore, tend to grow thanks to their own development.

Actors of the partnership

Citizens' organizations seemed to be more accustomed to partnering with companies, but were more cautious in deciding to partner with companies, than companies were with them: in other words, ACOs were more used to participating in partnerships, but not with companies. They seemed to be more satisfied by the partnering experience, probably because of their low level of expectations and initial concerns, such as loss of identity, risk of becoming dependent and divergence with company objectives.

Partners revealed different intentions and expectations, though within a framework of clear and common general aims. Companies tended to partner with the goal to put into practice their corporate social responsibility strategy and enhance their reputation, while citizens' organizations were more focused on the possibility to increase their resources and achieve concrete results in the field they were engaged in. ACOs showed also a low awareness of what were the corporate social responsibility implications of the partnership.

As for the management of the partnership, ACOs tended to involve, in addition to its top management, their entire organization, while businesses preferred to primarily utilize specific units (such as communication).

During the partnership, a mutual learning process seemed to take place. It concerned management skills for ACOs and skills linked to the project for companies. As a result, both learned about each other's differences in terms of culture, language, etc.

The research also seemed to confirm the marginal role played by second-degree structures, whether they be of companies or of citizens' organizations. Again, it can be said that partnerships emerged as something too important to "be left" to anyone else.

Finally, government and public administration appeared to play a marginal role, one of financial support rather than of facilitation or enablement.

Partnerships as CSR "technologies"

At this point it would be appropriate to identify partnerships as specific “technologies” capable of contributing to the implementation of corporate social responsibility goals of both companies and their civic stakeholders.

From this point of view, partnerships emerged as instruments capable of linking companies and stakeholders in a framework of common rights and duties, powers and responsibilities, leadership and management roles. Partnerships can be viewed as experiences capable of generating a significant impact inside companies and on their reputation, and of enriching their identity as a result of implemented social objectives, thus increasing their value.

On the stakeholders’ side, as well, partnerships seemed to be tools which allowed them to enhance the awareness of their role and their ability to interact with companies, as well as improve their general attitude towards business by overcoming prejudices and “prevailing views” and constructively challenge companies to take corporate social responsibility seriously.

Ambiguities and risks

Last but not least, very little information was gathered about the possible conflicts within the actors’ organizations, as well as between them and outside the partnership themselves. Despite the fact that the partnerships had been selected on the basis of their success, key informants may have been somewhat reluctant on this point. If the information had been directly collected, it would have been possible to find out more on this matter, and maybe acquire some interesting data.

People interviewed stated that there was full equality between the partners. Apart from some exceptions, they recognized the existence of unbalanced responsibilities and powers only when ACOs had a major role in the implementation of common activities. Further situations of unequal division of power could have been verified only by conducting a more in depth research.

The situation which raised the greatest concern was, probably, the lack of involvement of the intended beneficiaries in the decision making process of the partnerships. Apart from specific cases (for example, a program on wildlife), the fact that most of the partnerships did not involve the beneficiaries of their activity in the decision making, or did it in a very limited manner, clearly had negative implications.

This is something that could, indeed, raise serious doubts about the alleged innovative character of partnerships. An explanation of this phenomenon could be that the presence of a citizen- based organization may have been considered by both partners as an indirect element of representation of the intended beneficiaries’ voice and needs. Whatever the reason, this element could be an indicator of the risk of partnerships turning out to be too self-serving.

The risk of a prevailing sense of self-sufficiency and, therefore, of a self-referential attitude of partnerships, has to be closely evaluated. Apparently it is

risk which is intrinsic to the “core business” character of the partnerships which were examined for this study; therefore, something that cannot be avoided, but which has to be dealt with during the partnership activity.

It is, thus, something that the partnering actors, in particular, must carefully take into consideration, in order not to contradict the very reason why partnerships themselves are established and carried out.

3. Guidelines for good CSR partnerships in Europe

The objective of the present guidelines is to highlight what the actors of the partnerships consider as keys for success, on the basis of their concrete experience in partnership building and management. These guidelines are not meant to be one of the many existing handbooks on “How to create a successful partnership” but are just aimed at giving a few simple indications on the principal building blocks needed to establish effective partnerships, based on the concrete experiences of 36 private companies and 36 citizens’ organizations in 8 European countries.

They actually draw on the analysis of the answers that the company and civic organization representatives who were interviewed gave to the last question of the questionnaire: “*From your experience, taking into account the potential factors that may enhance or impede partnerships, what recommendations would you give for building future partnerships?*”. They also take into account the contributions of the over 150 participants (mainly private companies, citizens’ organizations from all the EU and candidate countries, scholars, institutions) in the VI Frascati International Seminar on CSR (June 30th -July 1st 2006), in which the project results were presented.

These guidelines are part of an ongoing process and can be modified, as well as further improved. They shall be enriched in the near future with new experiences of partnership in other EU and candidate countries, in order to enhance their European significance and develop the specifications for each of the main recommendations, which emerged from the survey.

With respect to the framework of recommendations, the guidelines deal with 4 phases of the partnership:

- the bases or pre-conditions for establishing a partnership;
- the building of the partnership;
- the management of the partnership;
- the evaluation of the partnership.

Partnership bases

In order to make a partnership work, two kinds of pre-conditions must be met: relational and operational ones.

Relational bases

The relational bases of the partnership refer to the knowledge/awareness that future partners have of themselves, of their future partner(s), as well as of their approach to a possible partnership. It emerged as one of the main concerns of both companies and civic organizations, since 56 of the 204 recommendations had to do with this aspect of the partnership, and more specifically they were:

- transparency and integrity, especially with respect to all the partner's interests and expectations (20 mentions);
- mutual trust and respect (18 mentions);
- compatibility between the partners' visions and values (9 mentions);
- enthusiasm and trust in achieving the goals (5 mentions);
- awareness of the partners regarding their own profile (2 mentions);
- not too high expectations (1 mention);
- reliability (1 mention).

One can notice, first of all, that the interviewees' mentions were concentrated on a limited number of items, indicating a strong agreement on the key pre-conditions for the success of the partnership.

Transparency and integrity appear to be the most essential relational prerequisite, especially for civic organizations, given that 15 out of the 20 mentions came from this side. It is, therefore, essential that both partners clearly state what they expect from the partnership and what their specific interests are (which may coincide only in part with the partners' common interests) before starting building the relation. In this fashion, the parties will have all the elements to decide whether their agreement is sufficiently strong and they will be able to clearly define the common objectives of the partnership. At this stage, it is quite important to avoid misunderstandings and disappointments during the development of the partnership.

Mutual trust and respect are another key principle, which was reaffirmed by all the participants in the conference.

The prejudices and stereotypes, which civic organizations and private companies often have towards each other are actually one of the main obstacles to the building of partnerships. It is interesting to highlight the fact that 13 out of the 18 mentions were made by private companies, which may suggest that, in general, businesses trust and respect less than civic organizations do.

Compatibility between the partners' visions and values is also mentioned by both categories as an important element. Several participants in the Frascati seminar also underlined the central character of this element, while others stated that partnerships allow actors with different world visions to work together on common goals.

The compatibility of the partners' values undoubtedly facilitates the definition of shared objectives, as well as the agreement on the means to reach them.

However, different values do not necessarily mean that the partnership has no future, especially if the partners pay careful attention to these differences and learn to manage them.

The *awareness of the partners regarding their own profile* is a pre-condition to evaluate the partners' compatibility.

Finally, the fact that *enthusiasm and trust in achieving the goals* also received a considerable number of mentions from the interviewees, reveals that the

attitude of individual participants represents an important driving force of the partnership.

Operational bases

Contrary to the relational bases, the operational ones seem to be quite marginal in the interviewees' opinion. They only scored 6 rather dissimilar mentions:

- fair selection and evaluation of the potential partners (3 mentions);
- tax incentives (1 mention);
- projects responding to a real societal demand (1 mention);
- partnerships should not be selective (1 mention).

In the specific phase of the partnership, the relational pre-requisites are clearly more important than the operational ones, even if the *fair selection and evaluation of partners* was mentioned as important.

Building of the partnership

The actual building of a partnership requires from the partners both relational and managerial qualities. However, the ratio between relational (16 mentions) and managerial (55 mentions) aspects is inverted, as seen in the previous section, with respect to the bases for establishing the partnership. This situation is consistent with the fact that building a partnership is an operational phase of the relationship, while the first one (the bases for establishing one) is more a cognitive one.

Relational aspects of the partnership building

The recommendations of the interviewees on the relational aspects of partnership building are as follows:

- understanding of the partners' differences and specific needs (6 mentions);
- engagement/commitment of both partners (3 mentions);
- co-operation of people with different characteristics (generation, gender, profile) (3 mentions);
- building of the relationships (2 mentions);
- compatibility of the personalities of the people in charge (1 mention);
- expectations' of the partners' employees (1 mention).

The main suggestion made by the interviewees concerned the *understanding of the partners' differences and specific needs*. According to the respondents, private companies and civic organizations have different structures, working methods, interests, aims, etc., which are often the cause of misunderstandings. Each partner should, therefore, make a special effort in trying to understand why the other one behaves in a different way; an aspect, which was interpreted by the participants in the Frascati seminar as one of the reasons why most partnerships take time to develop.

Finally, the *commitment of both partners*, be it either personal or professional, was mentioned as an important aspect by both interviewees and participants in the seminar. This item was interpreted as the need for a tangible and concrete involvement, which goes well beyond the act of contributing with financial resources. Businesses and citizens' organizations actually have different kinds of skills, which are all indispensable for the success of the partnership.

Moreover, in addition to the commitment of the main partners, other organizations, as well as other stakeholders (neither private companies, nor citizens' organizations), often need to be involved in the partnership. This remark is linked to what emerged as the major deficiency of the partnerships, which were studied: the lack of involvement of the final beneficiaries.

Managerial aspects of the partnership building

The managerial aspects of partnership building are interesting, since they present, on the one hand, few recommendations mentioned by a large number of interviewees and, on the other, many other isolated items, which are interesting, but seem to be less important to reach the objective:

- definition of clear and shared objectives from the beginning (22 mentions);
- establishment of clear rules concerning the development and management of the partnership (10 mentions);
- clear definition of shared responsibilities and workload (4 mentions);
- shared planning (3 mentions);
- time needed to build the partnership (2 mentions);
- not too much bureaucracy (2 mentions);
- balance between commercial, economic and social purposes (1 mention);
- investment in the relationship (1 mention);
- agreement on a time frame (1 mention);
- agreement on the necessary resources (1 mention);
- not only financial resources, but also competencies, skills, etc. (1 mention);
- inclusion of the partnership in the actors' agenda (1 mention);
- selection of a person in charge of the partnership (1 mention);
- identification of equal benefits (1 mention);
- identification of expertise on both sides (1 mention);
- commitment of the management department (1 mention);
- innovation (1 mention);
- development of own ideas and carry them out together (1 mention).

The *definition of clear and shared objectives from the beginning of the partnership* (22 mentions) is the main recommendation of this section. As already mentioned, the objectives are an essential element in the definition of the partnership itself and in the parties' decision to participate. Therefore, any misunderstanding at this stage can provoke the breakup of the partnership and end the activities it plans to carry out.

Once more, it was emphasized by the participants in the Frascati seminar that the definition of these objectives usually takes time, especially when partners have different visions and values.

The *establishment of clear rules concerning the development and the management of the partnership* is another item often mentioned by the interviewees (10 mentions). Some of them recommended, in particular, the drafting of a written agreement or a code of co-operation; the definition of clear guidelines and common rules regarding participation, decision-making, sanctions, etc. The aim is, again, to clarify from the beginning all the aspects of the partnership, in order to eliminate, as much as possible, the sources of conflict. This item can also be linked to the *clear definition of shared responsibilities and workload* (4 mentions), the establishment of a *shared planning* (3 mentions), the *agreement on a time frame* (1 mention), as well as the *agreement on the necessary resources* (1 mention).

This need for clear rules must be, on the other hand, balanced by the request to *avoid too much bureaucracy* (2 mentions), so that partners do not spend most of their time, resources and energy in dealing with administrative matters. The participants in Frascati seminar also mentioned how bureaucracy can be an obstacle to innovation, which is a crucial element of partnerships.

Even if the *commitment of the management department* was an item which did not receive many mentions in the questionnaires, it should be nevertheless highlighted, since it was mentioned by several speakers as a key element; in particular because it demonstrates the importance of the partnership for the whole company/organization. It was also pointed out that this commitment does not necessarily require a permanent involvement in the partnership.

Management of the partnership

Contrary to what happened for the two other phases, there is a balance between the relational (36 mentions) and the operational aspects (33 mentions) of partnership management, indicating that both these aspects are essential to the development of the partnership.

Relational aspects of partnership management

The recommendations of the interviewees on the relational aspects of partnership management were as follows:

- dialogue and communication (31 mentions);
- cooperation (2 mentions);
- empathy among the team (1 mention);
- capacity to say NO (1 mention);
- problem-solving attitude (1 mention).

The fact that most interviewees indicated *dialogue and communication* (31 mentions) as a critical factor for success reveals that it represents one of the key elements of the partnerships.

The specific indications of both businesses and organizations focused on:

- 1) the *quality* of communication, which should be straightforward, continual, open and clear, learn to listen to each other;
- 2) the *modalities* of communication, which should be guaranteed by open discussions, consultations, meetings, ad hoc structures; and
- 3) the *content* of communication, on which only the possible obstacles and problems were explicitly mentioned.

The other aspects mentioned by the interviewees remain fairly isolated cases, even if *cooperation, empathy among the team* and *problem-solving attitude* reveal how much the attitudes of individual participants are an important factor for the success of partnerships.

Operational aspects of the partnership management

The recommendations of the interviewees on the operational aspects of partnership management are clearly less focused as in the case of the relational aspects, since there are 17 different entries instead of 5:

- professional behavior/competencies to achieve the targets (6 mentions);
- long term partnerships (5 mentions);
- redefinition of rules/details during the partnership, if necessary (3 mentions);
- accountability (3 mentions);
- effective delivery of results (3 mentions);
- use examples to show the way (2 mentions);
- coherence (1 mention);
- active participation of both partners (1 mention);
- public communication on the partnership (1 mention);
- expert management (1 mention);
- celebration of achievements (1 mention);
- coordination between the partnership's management and operational levels (1 mention);
- respect of the agreement (1 mention);
- adherence to the objectives and resistance to external pressure (1 mention);
- concreteness (1 mention);
- consistency and continuity (1 mention);
- constant involvement of all partners in virtuous contaminating experiences (1 mention).

The two main recommendations were the *professional behavior and competencies of the partners* (6 mentions), as well as the importance of *long term partnerships* (5 mentions). The first one was mentioned primarily by private companies (4 out of 6), which might be an indication of their concern about the professional conduct of citizens' organizations, composed primarily of volunteers.

This aspect was also mentioned by a speaker at the Frascati seminar, who stated that it is essential to select the best possible staff for the partnership, since they will have to take on the challenge of learning the language and the culture of the other partner.

The second recommendation addresses the issue of time, which was repeatedly mentioned in the questionnaires and in Frascati, as one of the key factors in the success of partnerships. Partnerships do, in fact, take a long time both to develop and to produce the first results. In this respect, one of the participants in the seminar suggested, as a general rule, to start with a small scale partnership, identify an objective which can be reached in a reasonable period of time and produce small but satisfying results.

Partnerships have to actually grow from a basis of success. They require patience and commitment on the part of the partners and become stronger over time, which is the reason why long-term partnerships are so valuable.

The *redefinition of rules during the partnership* (3 mentions) indicates a necessary flexibility, which balances the setting of written rules at the beginning of the relationship, and neither questions the *respect of the agreements* (1 mention), nor the *adherence to the objectives* (1 mention).

Finally, *accountability* (3 mentions), together with transparency, should be extended to the relationship between the partners.

The evaluation of the partnership

While both the questionnaires and the participants' speeches in Frascati indicate it as a key factor of success, the process of evaluating the partnerships appears to be, nevertheless, quite paradoxical since very few recommendations specifically address this aspect:

- verification of the consistency of the company's conduct with its "vision" (1 mention);
- clear evaluation of the partnership (1 mention).

However, a number of recommendations can be implemented only thanks to an evaluation procedure involving, for example:

- identification of equal benefits (1 mention);
- accountability (3 mentions);
- effective delivery of results (3 mentions);
- coherence (1 mention);
- consistency and continuity (1 mention).

Moreover, the speakers at Frascati recommended the definition of clear and measurable objectives, as well as the agreement on the measurement tools from the beginning of the partnership. Furthermore, it was suggested to involve external evaluators, in addition to the partners themselves.

Conclusion

The analysis of the recommendations emerging from the questionnaires and the discussions at the Frascati seminar, allowed us to draft a first set of the key “ingredients” which should be built-in each step of the development of the partnership, from the bases to the evaluation, including the building and managing of the partnership.

As mentioned before, these guidelines will be completed in the near future. In this report, a number of key issues have only been briefly examined, like for example the evaluation of the partnership; a field for which this survey will have to conduct a more in-depth analysis.

In order to give a brief overview of the numerous indications provided by the interviewees, we have used their answers to the questionnaire to set up a list of the 7 recommendations that were mentioned the most.

The question of time has been inserted in light of the fact that it was mentioned a number of times, both in the building, as well as in the management phase of the partnership.

7 main recommendations

1. Dialogue and communication
2. Clear and shared objectives
3. Transparency and integrity
4. Mutual trust and respect
5. Clear rules
6. Compatibility between the partners’ “visions”
7. Sufficient time

ANNEXES

Annex 1- Questionnaire

Annex 2- Partnerships' summaries

Annex 3- Cyprus Report on CSR

Annex 4- References

ANNEX 1

CITIZENS AS CSR PARTNERS ***Building CSR partnerships between companies and citizens' organizations*** **(Questionnaire for Interviews with Key persons)**

A. General Information:

A.1 Information on the Company/Organisation

1. Name of the organisation/company
.....
2. How long has the organisation/company been operating?
.....
3. How many members does your organisation have?
.....
4. How many people does your organisation/company employ?
.....
5. What is the Turnover of your organisation/company? (approximation)
.....
6. In what sector/field (on what issues) does your organisation/company work in?
.....
7. In what geographical areas does your organisation/company work in? (*more than one answer*)
 (7_1) International (7_3) National (7_5) Local
 (7_2) EU (7_4) Regional

A.2 Information on the person being interviewed

8. Name of the person interviewed (optional):
.....
9. What is your role in the organisation/company?
.....
10. How long have you been working in this role in your organisation/company?
.....
11. How can we contact you?
Telephone number:
E-mail address:.....
12. Can we publish your name in our study?
 (12_1) No (12_2) Yes

B. General Information specifically on the Project/Initiative developed by the Partnership

B.1 General aims and activities

13. What are general aims and objectives of the project/initiative?
.....
14. What types of activities were developed in the project/ initiative and which of them did your organisation/company specifically carry out in this project/initiative? (advocacy, training, research, , provide information to citizens, networking, financial support, mobilisation of human resources, communication tools, social reporting, etc.)
.....
15. Were the activities carried out on at the local, regional, national, European or international level? (*more than one answer*)

- (15_1) International (15_3) National (15_5) Local
 (15_2) EU (15_4) Regional

16. How long did the project/initiative last (starting and ending date)?
.....

B.2 Resources of the project/initiative

17. What was/is the total budget of the project/initiative?
- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (17_01) < €. 50.000 | <input type="checkbox"/> (17_05) €.300.001-400.000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (17_02) €. 50.001-100.000 | <input type="checkbox"/> (17_06) €.400.001-500.000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (17_03) €. 100.001- 200.000 | <input type="checkbox"/> (17_07) > €. 500.000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (17_04) €. 200.001-300.000 | |

18. Which unit/office/department of your organisation/company was responsible for the project/initiative?
.....

19. What resources did your organisation/company invested in the project/initiative (specify amount and type) (*more than one answer*)

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (19_1) Economic | (19_1s) How much? | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (19_2) Human | (19_2s) How many (equivalent) full-time employees?..... | |
| | (19_2v) How many were volunteers? | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (19_3) In kind | (19_3s) Specify what? | |

20. Did any other body invest in the project/initiative?
- (20_1) No
- (20_2) Yes
- (20_2s) Please specify their name, category (public institution, private company, etc.) and the amount of the contribution (or its characteristics in the case of in kind contribution please specify what type)?.....

B. 3 Results of the project/initiative

21. What were the main results of the project/initiative?
.....

C. PARTNERSHIP:

Important: We are asking for information specifically on the PARTNERSHIP, itself and NOT on the PROJECT/INITIATIVE.

C.1 General

22. Does your organization/company have a specific and explicit strategy regarding Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)?
- (22_1) No (22_2) Yes
23. Is it the first time that your organization/company participated in a partnership between a civic organization(s) and a private company(ies)?
- (23_1) No (23_2) Yes
24. In general are partnerships discussed/decided at the senior management level of your organisation/company?
- (24_1) No (24_2) Yes
25. Was this partnership considered a part of the Corporate Social Responsibility programmes of your organisation/company?
- (25_1) No (25_2) Yes

C.2 Description of the partnership and context

26. How many organisations/companies participated fully and directly in this partnership? (*more than one answer*)
- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (26_1) Companies | (26_1s) How many?..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (26_2) Business networks/associations | (26_2s) How many?..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (26_3) Civic organisations | (26_3s) How many? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (26_4) Civic umbrella organisations | (26_4s) How many? |
27. Did an external intermediary play a role in forming the partnership? (for example did another organization introduce you or put you in contact that was not part of the partnership)

- (27_1) No (27_2) Yes

28. What kind of relationship did your company/organisation have with the other organization(s)/company(ies) before entering into this partnership? (*more than one answer*)

- (28_1) Never collaborated before
- (28_2) We have collaborated before (28_2s) For how long ?.....
(28_2w) With which of the organization(s)/company(ies) involved in the partnership? (answer only when in the partnership there were more than 2 participants).....
- (28_3) We have had conflicts with the organization(s)/company(ies) before this partnership.
(28_3w) With which of the organization(s)/company(ies) involved in the partnership? (answer only if in the partnership there were more than 2 participants)
-

29. What are the reasons or factors that influenced the decision of your company/ organisation to engage in this partnership? (*more than one answer*)

- (29_1) Internal reasons (ex. strong commitment to address specific issue/concern, corporate reputation/brand protection, improve investment climate)
-
- (29_2) External reasons (ex. meet govt. requirements, as a result of a particular event such as a natural disaster or a specific occasional such as the year of disability, new legislature, external pressure, a recent scandal.)
-

C.3 Aims of the partnership

30. Was there a moment in which the partners met together, with each their specific agenda, to define common priorities?

- (30_1) No (**GO TO QUESTION 33**) (30_2) Yes

31. How were the priorities decided?

.....

32. Were there any conflicts in setting this common agenda?

- (32_1) No
- (32_2) Yes (32_2s) How were they resolved?.....
-
-

33. What did your organisation/company believe would be the results and benefits of this partnership (ex. visibility/image, networking, institutional legitimacy, increase in power, acquire new abilities and knowledge, put mission into practice, business, etc.)

.....

C.4 Participants in the partnership

34. Who actually facilitated this partnership? (meaning the person(s), not just from your organisation/company but in general, that actually guaranteed the functioning of the partnership by motivating people; dealing with the organisational aspects; etc. or in other words, made sure the partnership functions end didn't just fall apart.)

Please specify company/organization.

.....

35. And what role do they play in the organisation/company (*more than one answer*)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (35_1) Senior management | <input type="checkbox"/> (35_5) Local offices |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (35_2) Communication/ public relations | <input type="checkbox"/> (35_6) Project management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (35_3) Marketing dept./fund raising | <input type="checkbox"/> (35_7) A specific unit |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> (35_7s) Specify..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (35_4) Middle management | <input type="checkbox"/> (35_8) Other |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> (35_8s) Specify..... |

36. Who represented your organisation/company in the partnership? (please specify their roles)

.....

37. What kind of resources has your organisation/company invested directly into the partnership? (Here we are talking specifically about the partnership only not the project/initiative. Ex: to organize and/or pay for the training of the people involved in the partnership, either from the organization(s) or from the company(ies), in order to improve their capacity to manage the partnership, reputational resources, networking resources,

financial resources, participate in the governing boards of the other organisation/company or participate in important events of each other)

- (37_1) Economic (37_1s) How much?
- (37_2) Human (37_2s) How many and their roles?.....
- (37_3) In kind (37_3s) Specify what?
- (37_4) Other (37_4s) Specify.....

C.5 Organisation and Governance of the partnership

- 38.** Which kind of organisational form or structure did your partnership take on?
- (38_1) *Stable permanent relationship* with informal and implicit rules
 - (38_2) *Forum* based on a specific mission statement
 - (38_3) *Temporary Association* that use written co-operation agreements or memoranda of understanding
 - (38_4) *Organisations with separate legal entities*, that have articles of association
 - (38_5) *Other*
(38_5s) Specify.....
- 39.** A partnership can be variable. It can go from an open, informal and flexible process of consensual dialogue to having a formal elected board, how would you describe your partnership?
- (39_1) Informal/flexible process
 - (39_2) Informal/inflexible process
 - (39_3) Formal/flexible process
 - (39_4) Formal/inflexible process
 - (39_5) Other (39_5s) Specify.....
- 40.** Were the rights and responsibilities of the partners ever discussed and made explicit?
- (40_1) No
 - (40_2) Yes
(40_2s) What were they?.....
- 41.** How do you consider the distribution of these rights and responsibilities across the partnership?
- (41_1) They were equally distributed
 - (41_2) They were not equally distributed
- 42.** Why?
.....
- 43.** How were the transparency and accountability between the partners guaranteed within the partnership?
.....
- 44.** How were decisions made within the partnership? (Decision making processes can be done in a variety of ways such as decisions can be discussed and made during a meeting or does one person make the decision and communicate it to the others, or is there a proposal circulated, everyone comments on it and then someone makes the final decision...)
.....
- 45.** Did the “intended beneficiaries” of the project/initiative participate in decision-making?
- (45_1) No
 - (45_2) Yes
(45_2s) How?
- 46.** Who was in fact responsible for the success or the failure of the partnership?
.....
- 47.** What kind of tools did you use to communicate within the partnership? (*more than one answer*)
- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (47_1) Written Reports | <input type="checkbox"/> (47_4) Meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> (47_7) Others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (47_2) E-mail | <input type="checkbox"/> (47_5) Phone calls | (47_7s) Specify..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (47_3) Letters | <input type="checkbox"/> (47_6) Conference calls | |
- 48.** Which of them were the most useful and why?
.....
- 49.** What kind of tools did you use to communicate this partnership to external stakeholders, beneficiaries or the public in general?
- (49_1) Social and Sustainability Report
 - (49_2) Press Conference
 - (49_3) Specific Conference or event
 - (49_4) Put on your web page
 - (49_5) Other
(49_5s) Specify.....

C.6 Evaluation of the partnership

50. Did you identify indicators to specifically evaluate the partnership, itself?
 (50_1) No
 (50_2) Yes (50_2s) What were they?
51. Has there already been (or is there now) an evaluation of the partnership?
 (51_1) No evaluation at all (**GO TO QUESTION 54**)
 (51_2) Yes, planned from the beginning
 - (51_20) Ongoing
 - (51_2c) Completed
 - (51_2f) To be done in the future (51_3) Yes, but not planned from the beginning
 - (51_30) Ongoing
 - (51_3c) Completed
52. If yes, when was it carried out? (*more than one answer*)
 (52_1) During the partnership (52_2) After
53. If yes, how was it conducted? (*more than one answer*)
 (53_1) By the participants in the partnership (internal evaluation)
 (53_2) By someone outside the partnership (external evaluation)
 (53_3) Within your organisation/company

C. 7 Partners' relationship, obstacles and conflicts

54. When did you become aware of the fact that you entered into a partnership?

55. Were there perceived risks, resistances, worries and/or hesitations going into the partnership?
 (55_1) No
 (55_2) Yes
 (55_2s1) What were they (specify)?.....
 (55_2s2) How were they dealt with?
56. How has your relation with the organisation/company developed, evolved or changed during this partnership?

57. In the beginning did the participants of the partnership have any difficulties in understanding each other regarding the general objectives, strategies, focuses, methods, organization of the work, time frame of the partnership etc.?
 (57_1) No
 (57_2) Yes
 (57_2s1) What were they (specify)?
- (57_2s2) How were they dealt with?
58. During the partnership, did your organisation/company face any obstacles or problems as part of this partnership (i.e. insufficient/inadequate competencies employed, insufficient human resources (in terms of numbers), insufficient available funds, in maintaining the interest and active participation)?
 (58_1) No
 (58_2) Yes
 (58_2s1) What were they (specify)?
- (58_2s2) How were they dealt with?
59. Did the obstacles/problems that you mentioned in the previous answers (57-58) create any conflicts?
 (59_1) No
 (59_2) Yes
 (59_2s) What were they? (looking at each answer for every obstacle specify the respective conflict)

60. Were there any other conflicts?
 (60_1) No (**GO TO QUESTION 64**) (60_2) Yes
61. If yes, were the conflicts...? (*more than one answer*)
 (61_1) Inside the partnership
 (61_2) Inside the organization/company because of the partnership
 (61_3) Between the partnership itself and any other actors outside of the partnership
 (61_4) Other
 (61_4s) Specify.....
62. Explain, what were they?

.....
63. And how were they dealt with?
.....

C. 8 Changes in the partnership

64. Over the course of the partnership were there changes in the following: (*more than one answer*)

- In the participants: (64_1) No
 (64_2) Yes
(64_2s)How?.....
- In the structure and forms (64_3) No
(see question 38) (64_4) Yes
(64_4s)How?.....
- In the activities (64_5) No
 (64_6) Yes
(64_6s)How?.....
- In the objectives (64_7) No
 (64_8) Yes
(64_8s)How?.....

C.9 Effects in the partnership

65. Do you feel that your organization/company's initial expectations on this partnership were attained (see question 33 above on expectations)

- No
- (65_2) Less than expected-anticipated
- (65_3) Yes
- (65_4) More than expected-anticipated

66. What are/were the outputs of the partnership (ex. Report, joint press conference, publication in the media, etc.)?
.....

67. What benefits for your organisation do you think have resulted from the partnership? (*more than one answer*) (number the answers in respect to level of importance for your organisation/company, number 1 being the most important)

- (67_1) None
- (67_2) Development of mutual trust
- (67_3) Improved operational efficiency
- (67_4) Organizational innovation
- (67_5) Increased access to resources
- (67_6) Better access to information
- (67_7) More effective products and services
- (67_8) Enhanced reputation and credibility
- (67_9) Improvement in the relations among the organisations
- (67_10) Other
(67_10s) Specify.....

68. Were there new competencies that were needed to meet the partnership's aims (such as new skills, attitudes and capacities)?

- (68_1) No
- (68_2) Yes
(68_2s) What were they?.....

69. Where there positive impacts -*unexpected and wider results which the partnership did not foresee*- of the partnership? (ex. collaboration in other projects; multiplier effect, such as development of new organizations and services; etc.)

- (69_1) No
- (69_2) Yes
(69_2s) What were they?

70. Were there negative impacts that resulted from the partnership? (ex. Distrust of future collaboration, straying from one's mission, loss of money, assimilation and loss of the specific roles and differences between company and organizations, etc.)

- (70_1) No
- (70_2) Yes
(70_2s1) What were they?
- (70_2s2) How do you think they could be overcome?.....

71. In general does the company/organisation think that partnerships represent a valid tool to tackle certain issues?

- (71_1) No

- (71_2) Yes
(71_2s) Why?.....
- 72.** Has this partnership influenced or contributed in some way to the strategy that your company/organisation has regarding Corporate Social Responsibility?
 - (72_1) No
 - (72_2) Yes
(72_2s) In what ways?.....
- 73.** From your experience, taking into account potential factors that may enhance or impede partnership, what recommendations would you give for future partnership?
.....

ANNEX 2

Partnerships' summaries

Nation	Title of the partnership	Summary	Company	ACO
HUNGARY	Customers' household appliances	CECED provides hints and tips on how to make a better use of customers' household appliances from an economic, safety and environmental perspective. NACPH runs a monthly magazine on a wide range of consumer issues, in which useful information is published regularly. The editorial staff of this magazine also creates comparative surveys on prices, which help consumers to decide and compare different consumer goods. CECED financially supports this activity. This good practice has been going on for a year.	CECED-Hungary	National Association for Consumer Protection in Hungary (NAPCH)
	Customer service centers	E.ON Hungária closed some customer service centers in two counties of Hungary. The customers' interests were severely affected by this action. It caused a lot of protests from consumers. A trilateral roundtable was formed last year. The local mayors were responsible for ensuring the premises for customer service centers. E.ON Hungária was responsible for covering expenses, training an employee for handling and resolving consumer complaints, as well as for equipping the offices. NACPH undertook the task of helping the employee in resolving complaints, discussing problems with the service provider, and each year conducting a research and publishing an analysis, comparing the localization of customer service centers, the expedition, methods and procedures of handling complaints, etc. in each of the counties in Hungary.	E.ON Hungária GmbH (North-East Hungarian Electricity)	National Association for Consumer Protection in Hungary (NAPCH)
	Making a connection in Hungary	The International Youth Foundation (IYF) and Nokia formed a partnership to translate their shared values into a youth program that would truly make a difference. The two partners decided on a project which would help young people around the world, by giving them opportunities to connect to their communities, their families and peers. At the national level, this program, called Make a Connection, started in 2002, when 13 training courses were provided by DIA, and 174 young people received intensive training on topics such as conflict resolution, project management, environment protection. Nokia, in turn, offers strong financial support and participates actively in program implementation. In the near future, DIA plans to scale up these training programs to involve even more local youth groups and community members.	Nokia Hungary Ltd	Foundation for Democratic Youth (Demokratikus Ifjúságért Alapítvány - DIA)
	Better informed consumers	Tesco and NACPH formed a partnership with the aim of better informing consumers through information campaigns, leaflets. The partners organize contests for consumers and CORA also supports and takes part in the education of consumers. The program is designed not only for the average consumer (who is usually well informed, alert and cautious), but also for vulnerable categories, such as children and elderly people. This partnership has been going on for three years.	TESCO Global GmbH - Hungary	National Association for Consumer Protection in Hungary (NAPCH)
	Reviewing travel contracts	NFACPH and OTP Travel Agency have a partnership which has been going on for two years, while previously they cooperated within the framework of the arbitration board. Together they formed a partnership for reviewing travel contracts and discussing the practice of imposing an extra service charge for issuing tickets on the part of airline companies and travel agencies. Following the initiative of NFACPH, positive changes are expected in the current year. As a result of the initiative, the contracts will be in line with national and EU regulations.	OTP Travel Ltd	National Federation of Associations for Consumer Protection in Hungary (NFACPH)
UK	Money Advice Training	NatWest, owned by the Royal Bank of Scotland Group (RBS), is the biggest supporter of not for profit money advice in the UK, mainly through the Money Advice Trust, with particular emphasis on money advice training. Following an earlier funding package through the Money Advice Trust, in 2004 RBS approved a further three-year, £1.84 million donation towards debt advice and a coordinated a training program for money advisers, called wiser-adviser.	Royal Bank of Scotland Group (RBS)	Citizens Advice
	2 nd Tier Money Advice	The CAB service enjoys a long standing strong multi-faceted partnership with Barclays that can be split four ways: Money Advice, Rural Regeneration, Financial Skills and Volunteering. Since 2001, the bank has provided or pledged over £1.5 million by way of funding a number of projects/initiatives to the benefit of Citizens Advice and its clients. Barclays has been supporting Money Advice second tier support (specialist advisers, advising front line money advice advisers) since 1999, and is the largest funder for this type of support. Barclays has also promoted volunteering at CAB by their staff.	Barclays PLC	Citizens Advice
	Young Innovation	Envolve's project, Young Innovation, ran from spring 2004 to summer 2005 and brought businesses and young people together. One of the most successful partnerships was between Envolve and City Academy of Bristol and FCBA. Some 200 students at Key Stage 3 (aged between 12 and 15) attended active-learning workshops on sustainability and sustainable business. The students then visited FCBA to gain first-hand experience of how they operated and to identify specific business problems. The students then worked with architects at FCBA to build a useable pavilion out of sustainable materials which they	Fielden Clegg Bradley Architects LLP	Envolve Partnerships for Sustainability

		built in their school grounds.		
	Environmental Management Systems	Envolve has been working with Hobart Manufacturing Ltd to help them get their Environmental Management Systems (EMS) together and in place. This helps them conform to UK and European environmental standards and to control their utility costs. Envolve gains a subsidized amount for providing the support (from European Funds), as well as invaluable experience by working with large businesses.	Hobart Manufacturing UK	Envolve Patnerships for Sustainability (delivering EnVision)
	Worldmade by Motivation	In 2004 Kingfisher helped Motivation to launch the 'Worldmade' wheelchair, which is specifically designed for use in rural areas of developing countries. Kingfisher and B & Q, support the charity, not only through funding for product development and production, but also through advice on many aspects of the project, from product design to production, logistics and marketing. The Worldmade project is part of Kingfisher's CSR program, supporting the long-term sustainability of its partners and projects, taking into account the needs of local and global communities.	Kingfisher Plc	Motivation
SLOVENIA	The Shelter House	After successfully cooperating in the past, Mercator and SAFY established the shelter house in November 2004. It's a house (new home) for children who, because of physical and psychological domestic violence, can no longer live at home. Children can eat and sleep there, where experts (social workers, pedagogues, etc.) help them regain their trust and self-esteem through the organization of different groups and activities. SAFY and Center for social work offer expert advice and guidance.	Mercator, d.d.	Slovenian Association of friends of youth (SAFY)
	Developing Center for social and labor integration	OZARA started to develop the Center for Social and labor integration which offers training and possibilities for long-term employment of the disabled. There are many different workshops in the center (sewing, cleaning, gardening, joinery, etc.). Raiffeisen Krekova Banka helps the center with financial support, promotion and buying the products.	Raiffeisen Krekova Banka	OZARA (National Life Quality Association)
	Purchasing the mammography machine	In 2004 Europa Donna Slovenia started a huge fundraising campaign for the new mammography machine. Many companies and individuals contributed, but its relationship with PRISTOP goes further. The partnership started to developed more than three years ago. PRISTOP provides communication support (PR activities: media coverage, advertisement, etc.) to Europa Donna for its programs and projects.	Pristop d.o.o.	European Breast Cancer Coalition
	The week of the child, A wink to the sun, Sunny ŽIV ŽAV	SAFY and LEK have been cooperating for many of years. LEK helped to organize the 41 st Week of the child (the theme for 2005 was every child has a right to non-discrimination). The week of the child is the special SAFY program dedicated to the World Child's day, which was instituted by the UN in 1956. SAFY started this program in 1961. The event takes place every first week of October. The activity "A wink to the Sun" helps children with less opportunities to go to the seaside and enjoy a vacation. LEK also helps to organize Sunny ŽIV ŽAV, which is a special event, where children gather together to have fun, play games and receive gifts provided by LEK, etc.	Lek d.d.	Slovenian Association of friends of youth (SAFY)
GERMANY	Corporate Volunteering for Ford employees in Caritas' social services/facilities	Ford and Caritas are partners in implementing a corporate volunteering program for Ford. Caritas provides volunteering opportunities for Ford employees in their local member organizations' facilities, ensures certain quality standards for the voluntary services, as well as a reliable risk management and legal/insurance framework for the volunteers. Ford brings the volunteers on a 16 hours paid-time-off per year basis, and provides their know-how, their networks and their management skills.	Ford Europe GmbH	Diözesan-Caritasverband für das Erzbistum Koeln e.V.
	Promotion of community foundations	BVR and Aktive Bürgerschaft are close partners. One of their major fields of collaboration is the promotion of community foundations in Germany. The BVR member banks are committed to engage in their communities, by initiating community foundations. Aktive Bürgerschaft provides training, tools, know-how, etc. and assigns an annual award for the best community foundations.	Bundesverband Volks- und Raiffeisenbanken (BVR)	Aktive Bürgerschaft e.V.
	Holistic health care services	Long standing partnership dedicated to improving the health care of children. Among the partnership's initiatives, the cooperation of Betapharm's research institute and Bunter Kreis in developing training courses suitable for chronically ill children and teenagers, aimed at providing them with information about their condition and enabling them to cope as well as possible with it on a day-to-day basis. Training courses have already been introduced for children with diabetes, asthma, adiposities and neurodermatitis.	Betapharm Arzneimittel GmbH	Bunter Kreis
	Civil Academy	The Civil Academy offers support to young people developing and implementing their particular ideas of civic engagement. Training courses provide them with skills useful in civil society organizations and/or in business and which will enable them to design and implement sustainable projects. Training activities are designed and organized jointly by both partners, thus combining civil society and business skills, as well as ways of thinking and establishing responsibilities, studying in depth cross-sectoral understanding between civil society and business.	BP Deutschland	BBE / Bundesnetzwerk, Bürgerschaftliches Engagement
	Bildungscnt	Bildungscnt's mission is to enable children to learn, by supporting schools in modernizing their organization and agenda, as part of an effort aimed at promoting structural reforms and sustainable impact. They do the fundraising, develop and offer training programs for schools, give a yearly award, etc. Herlitz was the founding member of this initiative and is now the leader of several corporate members, contributing money, people and know-how.	Herlitz PBS AG	Bildungscnt e.V
POLAND	Augustow Academy	The Augustowska Academy aims at increasing job opportunities for the youth and unemployed in the Podlasie region. This initiative, supported by BAT Poland, is being implemented by the Enterprise Development Foundation in cooperation with	British American Tobacco Poland	Enterprise Development

		initiative, supported by BAT Poland, is being implemented by the Enterprise Development Foundation in cooperation with local authorities, schools and entrepreneurs. The program has four thematic segments: a) Academy of Entrepreneurship – addressed to secondary school students; b) Academy of Skills – addressed to unemployed young people; c) Academy of Knowledge – addressed to students; d) Academy of Work, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development – addressed to local entrepreneurs and employers. The tasks carried out within the program include organization of training activities, stages in companies, competitions and grant programs.	Tobacco Poland	Development Foundation in Suwalk
	Share Your Meal	The aim of the program is to fight the problem of malnutrition among children. The initiative, supported by Danone, was launched in 2003 and has been going on ever since. The following activities are being promoted within the program: 1) consumers are supporting the program by buying Danone products with the “Share your meal” logo. Part of the money from the sale of these products is being donated for meals for children; 2) Danone is financing a program of grants for projects aimed at reducing the problem of malnutrition; 3) Thousands of volunteers take part in the collection of food (flour, sugar, juices, jams, cornflakes, etc.) - this campaign is coordinated by the Federation of Polish Food Banks; 4) Charity events, for example a friendly football match between TV Polsat celebrities and Polish artists. The proceeds from the tickets sale was also donated to the program.	Danone poland	Federation of polish food banks
AUSTRIA	Nivea family party	Every year, since 1997, in the months of July and August, the pharmaceutical company Beiersdorf organizes the “NIVEA family party” to support the orphans of the SOS Kinderdorf. Beiersdorf has taken over the entire organization of the initiative and staff members have been included in the organizational work and in the party, and not only in financing the initiative, which has provided great joy for everyone and become an integral part of the company’s work.	Beiersdorf GesmbH	SOS Kinderdorf Austria
	Reduction of pesticides	The Austrian food company Billa decided to work together with a hostile NGO and develop a pesticide reduction program, when in 2002, the fruits and vegetables being sold in the stores of Billa were found containing excessive amounts of pesticides. This brought a big blow to the company’s credibility and business, as Billa supplied 40 % of the fruit in Austria. Global 2000, who had conducted the tests and publicized the results, offered to cooperate with a reduction program and a control system. In August 2003, the program was presented for the first time. The program’s real novelty consisted in promoting the indirect education of farmers at the production level. Neither one of the two partners would have been able to reach such a comprehensive result (at the producers’ level and in public) on their own.	Rewe Group Austria, initiator of partnership was Billa AG	Global 2000
	Stop Domestic Violence	For more than a year, the international cosmetic company The Body Shop has been conducting the worldwide campaign "Stop domestic violence!" in 30 countries. In Austria, this cooperation is being conducted with the NGO "Platform against domestic violence". In June 2005 The Body Shop and the Platform created an additional "Alliance of Austrian companies against domestic violence", and got the Social Minister Ursula Haubner on board. This alliance is aimed at proving that domestic violence has human and economic consequences at the work place and has to be stopped.	The Body Shop	Austrian Women’s Shelter Network/Information Center Against Violence
	Caritas Schülerfonds (Fund for pupils)	Philips Austria provides financial support to low-income families for the school fees of their children. CARITAS is executing the fund, using its social and family counseling system around Austria. Poor children receive school materials, clothes and learning aids, as well as a special voucher, which provides support when the child has left elementary school (apprenticeship training places, work placements or help with a diploma thesis).	Philips Austria	Caritas
	Mobilkom sponsorship of MSF	The partnership was launched to help MSF increase its funds and obtain public recognition. Mobilkom committed itself to help MSF, by making advertising campaigns and taking decisions together about the matter and by promoting MSF goals and projects to its employees. Mobilkom uses client database to promote fundraising for MSF via SMS and provides satellite phones to MSF.	Mobilkom	Ärzte ohne Grenzen (Médecins sans Frontières =MSF)
ITALY	A meal for the needy	The partnership aimed at supporting the refectories for the needy in Milan (Opera di San Francesco) and Rome (Comunità di Sant’Egidio), as well as at the national level. The partnership between Unilever and Opera di San Francesco developed as follows: 1) a cause related marketing program and brand charity to donate free meals to 20 NGOs, covering all the Country’s regions; 2) a basic needs research was conducted in order to better understand the needs for free meals around Italy and the actual needs of individual NGOs committed to the cause; 3) an informal NGO network was created and every year the funds which have been raised are donated to the network; 4) a communication plan with advertising + special initiatives were carried out every year in order to involve users and non users of Svelto brand and to raise citizens’ awareness on the social problem.	Unilever	Association “Opera di San Francesco per i Poveri”
	European charter of patients rights	ACN and Merck cooperated to promote and uphold patient’s rights in Europe, by drafting a European Charter of Patients’ Rights and by disseminating it and promoting the implementation of these rights at the European and national level. The activities carried out were: drafting of the Charter in collaboration with other citizens’ organizations; disseminating the Charter through participation in conferences, ACN website, meetings with government and EU institution representatives, etc.; creating a methodology to monitor the implementation of the rights by citizens and training of the partner organizations; monitoring the rights’ implementation in the old 15 EU countries; reporting on the monitoring results and presenting these results in a European conference.	Merck Sharp & Dohme	Cittadinanzattiva

	Obiettivo barriere (Eliminating barriers)	The partnership between J&J Foundation and Cittadinanzattiva aimed at awakening the activism of citizens, especially the disabled, to fight against those barriers denying access to physically challenged persons (2003 was in fact the year of disability) and eliminate more than 100 of these barriers. The project, launched in March 2003, consisted in: a communication campaign; the collection of "bad and best practices"; the assessment of architectural barriers (in partnership with local civic and physically challenged civic organizations; the initiative " I eliminate a barrier"; educational activities in schools; a camper tour through 24 cities to raise awareness about the projects and involve local public administrations; the IV week of active citizenship.	Fondazione J&J	Cittadinanzattiva
	Un mondo per tutti (A world for everyone)	The project is one of the first programs conducted by Medecins Sans Frontiers (MSF) in Italy. It was carried out to address the critical living and health conditions of illegal immigrants in Southern Italy, in particular in the Region of Campania, with the aim of also promoting their integration. The project included the setting up of medical centers in local public health offices (ASL), as well as increasing awareness of TIM employees.	TIM Italia S.p.A.	Medecins Sans Frontieres
	Meters replacement campaign	As part of its information campaign to replace old meters, Enel selected two consumers associations, Cittadinanzattiva and UNC (Unione Nazionale Consumatori), as its partner, to guarantee a much more effective and capillary customer's action and support. Several activities were carried out: customer's information and support; advocacy about communication tools; central call center for the customers; 2 national Focus groups (in Milan and Rome); 10 local workshops; information and cooperation among local authorities; involvement of the Authority for the Energy.	Enel s.p.a.	Cittadinanzattiva-onlus
MALTA	Coastal zone management	Gaia Foundation, the NGO responsible for conducting the integrated coastal management at Ramla l-Hamra, a bay in Gozo, asked the support of Bank of Valletta for a 3 year project. During the first year the following activities have been carried out: financial support, research, management reports of the work to be undertaken, preparation and research to ensure that the environment is well preserved by understanding the ecological balance and finding volunteers to help undertake the work needed for the entire project	Bank of Valletta	GAIA Foundation
	Awareness about the environment amongst students	KSU organizes a big fair on the University campus over three large areas. The theme is decided according to which NGOs participate. In collaboration with KSU, HSBC plc. promoted an acquisition campaign to attract students to open student accounts. In return, the Bank launched a scheme which rewards students with a life-long gift – a tree for every student who opened an account.	HSBC	Kunsill Studenti Universitarji (KSU) – University Students' Council
	Educate children through sports	The partnership between APS and Youth Football association aimed at educating children through sports. The activities developed were: training of youth by school nurseries, organization of football tournaments among nurseries on professional grounds.	Apostleship of Prayer Savings (APS)Bank.	Youth football Association
	Promote young entrepreneurship	The general aim of the project involving APS Bank and Startup was to instill a spirit of entrepreneurship among the Maltese population, in particular students and youth. The partners created a closer cooperation between academia and business, focusing primarily on equipping students with the necessary skills for effective participation in and contribution to the country's commercial activities.	APS Bank.	Startup Malta Foundation for Entrepreneurship
	Natural reserve for wild birds	APS Bank and Birdlife started a partnership to set up a natural reserve for wild birds at Is-Simar. This collaboration was subsequently extended to other educational programs.	APS Bank.	Birdlife (Malta)

ANNEX 3

Cyprus Report on CSR Corporate Social Responsibility and the NGO sector: The Case of Cyprus⁶

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is becoming increasingly important for the competitiveness and sustainable success in every branch and every size of European enterprises (one need only refer to the European Community "Green Paper 2001"⁷ to understand the magnitude and the importance given to the CSR concept at the EU level). They are becoming increasingly aware that above average social and environmentally friendly business practices result in direct economic value and play an active role in shaping social, economic and ecological change. The same argument however cannot be said for Cyprus where the notion/development of CSR is at best at an embryonic stage.

The local private business sector's contribution in Cyprus in CSR projects/initiatives tends, more often than not, to be very limited, because of the scattering of funds over many organizations and the emphasis on one-off activities rather than on strengthening the organizations that offer them. We have yet to see any real strategic cross-sector collaborations initiated by big companies (i.e., viewing partnerships as initiatives that if properly constructed, will provide a return on their investment). While some important work on Corporate Social Responsibility has been done by the major private financial institutions, specifically banks, almost all has originated from the banks by setting up their own non-profit foundations and by encouraging and supporting their employees in volunteering to help these entities to pursue their social activities.

For example, while the Bank of Cyprus Oncology Centre regularly cooperates with Europa Donna, the Pancyprian Association of Cancer Patients and Friends (PASYKAF) and the Make a Wish Foundation, a more careful examination of their cooperation will show that it mainly concerns one-off events rather than a more permanent alliance/coalition.

As second example is that of the Cyprus Popular Bank which sponsors as well as organizes events, which address the needs of various social groups. During the

⁶ This short report aims to fill the gap created by the inability of identifying any true and reliable Corporate Social Responsibility partnerships between NGOs and private businesses in Cyprus that would fit the criteria of the study/research initiated in the framework of the project *CITIZENS AS CSR PARTNERS: Building CSR partnerships between companies and citizens' organizations*.

⁷ CSR is defined as a concept that serves as a basis for enterprises in voluntarily integrating social issues and environmental responsibilities into their company activities and in the interaction with their stakeholders (e.g. employees, shareholders, investors, consumers, public authorities, non-governmental organizations, etc.). Being socially responsible means not only meeting legal requirements, but going one step further and investing in human capital, the environment, and in relationships with other stakeholders.

past few years, special attention was paid to activities that contribute to children's welfare, particularly the welfare of children with special needs. The most important event is the RADIOMARATHON which it jointly organized with the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation. Radiomarathon which is by far the biggest charity event in Cyprus has raised about CYP 14.000.000 during the past 14 years, for the benefit of needy children every year through a series of fund-raising events that begin a month prior to the two - day celebrations.

Another example has to do with our research conducted in many websites of big companies. While many companies had a separate section on Corporate Social Responsibility on their websites, there was hardly any information presented there regarding CSR nor was there any evidence of any CSR partnerships or projects implemented in cooperation with groupings of Civil Society.

Notwithstanding the slow introduction/development of the notion of Corporate Social Responsibility in the private business sector there is also the absence of a legal structure that offers incentives for individuals or corporations to support non-profit and charitable organizations⁸. Except for a few large, well-established organizations, NGOs tend to be small, fragile, and dependent on volunteers and in-kind donations from members.

As a result, while the NGO⁹ sector appears to be flourishing in Cyprus, it has never gained the level of visibility and focus it deserves and is not sustainable without significant foreign funding. It has also inhibited the development of CSR since only lately Cypriot NGOs begin to understand that their goals and those of the private business sector need not be perceived as diametrically opposite on a spectrum of values and motivation. However, much time, education (capacity building¹⁰) and money is still needed for Cypriot NGOs to understand that their unique qualities of creativity, commitment, and

⁸ This has also resulted to an absence of a social dialogue/debate on CSR. Although very specific in nature, lately, there has been an initiative by British American Tobacco (BAT) - Cyprus to institutionalize a debate on CSR with a couple of meetings taking place between the company, local stakeholders, a few NGOs and governmental agencies (i.e., Ministry of Health etc). Although, BAT Cyprus suspended its operations in Cyprus since 2005 it aims to continue the CSR dialogue in the future.

⁹ It is important to stress the absence of a legal framework for the recognition of the legal personality of Non-Governmental Organizations in Cyprus. Currently, all NGOs, private companies, and even football and athletic clubs alike can be registered, with much bureaucratic difficulties at times, under a very general law (i.e., The Law on Charity and Foundation Organizations).

¹⁰ The lack of NGO Resource centers in Cyprus has largely inhibited any attempts to build and develop and a strong non-profit sector in Cyprus in this context important issues such as management training, access to information on funding from foundations and corporations, building a positive legal and fiscal environment of the sector, promoting of self-awareness of the sector, assisting with the professional development of staff and volunteers, developing efficient information flow mechanisms, building local infrastructure to service local non-profit organizations, providing information on possibilities of participating in the activities of NGOs networks, facilitating the learning process and exchange of know-how between similar organizations operating in Europe and by this way benefiting from the expertise already existing in the region relies heavily, and at a great cost, to the efforts of the local NGOs alone!

enthusiasm can work easily well in delivering sustainable development solutions in a variety of local settings and cultures. It is important to note that in the framework of the rather extensive and detailed CIVICUS: Civil Society Index Report for Cyprus for 2005 there was no mention of Corporate Social Responsibility as a strategic priority/orientation for Cyprus NGOs.

ANNEX 4

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