

Corporate Social Responsibility in Latvia: Building Partnerships on Public Support for NGOs

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This research contributes to the developing concept of Corporate Social Responsibility and civil society in Latvia. The complementary purposes of this paper are to document the public's attitude toward NGOs and to research the benefits and limitations of collaborative business partnerships. The data for this research was gathered through an online survey of 801 respondents by using the snowball network methodology. Major findings include (1) effective models of business-NGO partnerships can guide organizational leaders as they make strategic decisions about their programs, services, products and investments; (2) respondents are not as well-informed about NGOs as they would like to be, and (3) they have only a modest level of trust in NGOs. A major limitation is that the sample does not represent the general population of Latvia by age, gender or involvement with NGOs. Future research to replicate these results should be conducted using a representative, stratified, random sample of the Latvian population.

INTRODUCTION

Effective organizational leadership involves making strategic choices about how the system uses its (always) limited resources. This is as true for large multi-national corporations as it is for a local business, government agency and nonprofit organization. One of the pillars of the international civil society movement is the development of enduring non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This process is relatively new in the states of the former Soviet Union, which are now about one generation into their independence. Combined with these changes is the growing awareness among many (but certainly not all) corporations that their role in society is more than just increasing stockholder dividends. Corporate Social Responsibility programs can also be good for a business's bottom line: doing well and doing good. These do not have to be contradictory forces. An effective business can make its desired profit (doing well) as well as implement effective programs that benefit others (doing good). That is the central premise of corporate social responsibility.

This article demonstrates the importance of understanding an organization's environment in order to make effective strategic decisions. The purpose of this research is to understand what the inhabitants of Latvia think of local NGO's and how this informs developing corporate partnerships with NGOs to meet mutual needs. After reviewing two of the six documented competencies of effective leaders, emphasis

shifts to the broader topic of corporate social responsibility. Within this framework, it is critical for leaders in both nonprofit and for-profit systems to understand public attitudes toward NGOs. After conducting research in Latvia with 801 respondents through the online website [surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com), the results provide guidance for building effective partnerships.

LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

Previous research has defined six leadership competencies of effective NGO leaders and governance structures: strategic, educational, political, interpersonal, analytical and contextual competencies (Holland & Ritvo, 2008). Of these, understanding the context of an NGO will enhance effective strategic thinking and planning. These are the two competencies most directly relevant for this research.

The strategic competency stresses that effective NGO leaders are able to envision and shape the organization's directions and devise a strategic (3 - 7 years) approach to its future. “(They) cultivate and concentrate on procedures that sharpen the organization priorities; direct their attention to decisions of strategic or symbolic magnitude; anticipate and resolve potential problems and set priorities and stick to them” (p .135-136).

The contextual dimension aligns knowledge of the culture, program, norms, values, programs and services offered by an NGO with external environmental changes. This means that the top leaders must be conversant in the broader issues facing their sector in society. For example, a mental health center staff should understand how public attitudes impact their funding, programs, clients, ability to expand and even where they may locate a facility. NGOs in the broad field of cultural and performing arts must realize that many support their efforts while others think that cultural events draw resources from more important human needs (such as food, clothes, shelter, jobs). This article builds a case that NGO strategic goals can be enhanced through the contextual understanding of the public's attitudes toward their programs and services (Holland and Ritvo, 2008).

NGOs IN LATVIA

One of the three Baltic countries, Latvia has an estimated population of 2.1 million people, the majority of whom are Latvian (61%) and Russian (26%); the rest define themselves mostly as Belarusian, Ukrainian, Polish, or Lithuanian (CIA, 2014). The Republic of Latvia declared independence on November 18, 1918. Latvia is a member of the United Nations, NATO and the European Union (EU).

There are 19,255 NGOs that are registered in Latvia, although the actual number in operation at any time is much less. Of the 13,623 associations and 1044 foundations, it is estimated that about 30% are not active (NGO.lv, 2013). Most are involved in culture or leisure activities, economic development, property management, community decision-making, protecting vulnerable populations such as children, prisoners, people with disabilities, and women, encouraging open and civil society structures and processes (ngonorway.com, 2014a).

As the former Soviet states became independent and international philanthropy augmented internal funding, donors “embraced the idea of civil society development as critical to democratization, and the multitude of activities and programs needed to establish a non-business, non-governmental independent sector” (Ishkanian, 2004). Despite this strong support for developing NGOs in the post-Soviet states (often funded by the Soros Foundation's Open Society Initiatives), a recent report from the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2014) noted that "After Latvia's accession to the EU, foreign support for NGOs has been significantly reduced, but needs especially in the social sector are still immense". If this continues, then NGOs will be encouraged to seek new avenues of support, which could make business partnerships a viable option.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR)

Petersons and King's (2009) 'benchmark' "survey show(ed that) understanding and CSR applications (are) at a very early stage of development." As a new member of the European Union, Latvia may be aware of the clearly developing priorities it has for developing CSR initiatives and programs. A European Commission (2011) study recommended courses of action to encourage Corporate Social Responsibility. As a strategic decision, the Commission defines CSR as "the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society" (p. 6). "The European business community should aspire to be amongst the most trusted groups in society. There is frequently a gap between citizens' expectations and what they perceive to be the reality of business behavior. This gap is caused partly by instances of irresponsible behavior by some enterprises, as well as by cases of some enterprises exaggerating their environmental or social credentials" (p. 9). This concern about expectations relates directly to this research; it gauges the public's awareness and support of NGOs in Latvia, a new member of the EU.

This is not just a European Union, Latvian or Western concern. CSR is becoming a world-wide movement. It involves 'doing well by doing good.' This perspective was recently underscored by Praful Patel, India's Minister of Union Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises: "the corporate sector cannot avoid its responsibility of improving the lives of people, since it has benefited from the overall development process" and must find mechanisms to help the society in which it functions, from which it earns its revenues (Business Standard, 2014).

Almost a decade ago, these sentiments were stated clearly by Oskars Kastens, Latvia's Special Assignments Minister for Social Integration. His priorities included the "development and strengthening of civic society. ... Mr. Kastens also noted that in the area of integration it is very important to settle the NGO issue, to support and achieve the involvement of a larger part of society into NGO activities and in decision-making processes. He emphasized that NGOs are an essential element in the strengthening of civic society" (Latvian Embassy in Denmark, 2006).

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry (2014) recently stated: "An empowered civil society is the foundation of every successful democracy here because in the end, our most enduring relationships, most consequential relationships are not with one particular government at one moment in time. It's not with those who are in power for the short run. The legacy is really shaped by the people of a country who stand on principle for the long haul. Supporting these efforts can come from grants, technical assistance, needed equipment and public support and recognition of significant accomplishments."

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study is designed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To document contemporary attitudes toward NGOs in Latvia;
2. To suggest ways how NGOs can form effective alliances and partnerships to extend their programs, services and missions;
3. To suggest how the aspirations and values of the corporate social responsibility movement can influence executive decision makers to view partnerships with NGOs as being of mutual benefit.

METHODOLOGY

The snowball technique of sample development is simple and straight-forward. An initial cohort shares the research questionnaire with family, friends, associates, colleagues or even strangers. These individuals in turn continue the pattern until either a targeted sample size is reached or a deadline closes the data collection period. From early September until early December 2014, respondents used an anonymous questionnaire in Latvian and Russian on a SurveyMonkey.com webpage. Selected interviews were conducted during this period with leaders in both large and small, newly developed and long-established NGOs in Riga, Latvia.

RESULTS

The Sample - Age

The age distribution for the respondents is detailed in Table 1 below. The median age for the Latvian population as a whole is 41.4 years; this is significantly older than the research sample for this study. The median age for all respondents is 27.8, a 13 year difference.

TABLE 1
AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Age	793 (100%)
under 20	117 (15%)
21 -30	370 (46%)
31-40	123 (16%)
41-50	78 (10%)
51-60	71 (9%)
Over 60	34 (4%)

The Sample – Gender

The sample in this study is heavily skewed toward females as demonstrated in Table 2.

TABLE 2
GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS

Gender	Number	Survey %	National Percentages
Female	532	67%	56%
Male	262	33%	44%
Totals	794	100%	100%

Thus, this study reports the results of younger, female sample rather than the population in general. There is a possible explanation for the gender differences; the majority of Latvian college students are females, and the survey began with a cohort of these students, who contacted their friends, who contacted their friends. According to Public Broadcasting of Latvia lsm.lv (2014), “55.8% of the newly-enrolled students are female.” Therefore, the over-representation of women can be partially attributed to the social networking methodology. The age disparity can also be attributed to the survey's methodology, which was conducted online. The younger generation is clearly more wired in (and tuned in) than their parents and grandparents.

Trust in NGOs

Trust results from credibility and accountability. It is a major component of the relationships between people and organizations. Many NGOs are independent, self-supporting organizations which rely in part on client revenues, grants, donations, volunteers and general good will.

All organizations exist in part because they have earned the trust of their stakeholders. Inese Danga (2014), a project manager of the charity NGO ziedot.lv, has noted “People learn to trust when they see results.” Trust is the cement that holds the system together with its customers, clients, donors, staff and communities.

One of the questions in the survey explored this issue of trust. As seen in the table below, there is a modest level of trust in NGOs.

TABLE 3
LEVELS OF TRUST IN NGOs

Level of Trust	N = 783	%
No Trust	18	2
A Little Trust	67	9
Partial Trust	301	38
General Trust	341	44
Complete Trust	56	7

The mean score for this trust index (1 = No Trust, 5 = Complete Trust) is 3.45, a modest point between Partial Trust and General Trust. When viewed through the lens of age, the trust perceptions show no real difference. While 48% (230 out of 484) respondents under the age of 30 noted General/Complete Trust in NGOs, 54% (55 out of 102) of those over the age of 50 shared these views. There does not appear to be a generational difference between those born just before or since Independence and their parents' and grandparents' generations. There was also only a minor difference when the trust index was analyzed by gender; the women had a slightly higher trust score (3.53) than the men (3.27).

An example of this questioning of trustworthiness comes from the head of a local neighborhood association in Riga. A long-time resident in a mixed residential and commercial area with 14,000 people, Alija Turlaja (2014) noted the concerns that her friends and neighbors had when she started the NGO in 2011. People asked, "What political party do you represent?" or "What religion, cult or sect are you from?" and even "Are you part of the city government?" These comments illustrate the modest responses to questions about trust and support of NGOs.

The survey instrument included an open-ended question about respondents' general thoughts about NGOs. The second most frequent set of responses fell into the category of dissatisfaction. Some people do not believe in the mission of many NGOs, considering them "big talkers, but small doers." Some were not confident that the donated funds were used for the assigned purposes of the charity. These views relate directly to trust.

Respondents' Involvement with NGOs

One of the leading indicators in this research is to understand what contact, if any, respondents have had with NGOs. As can be expected, the percentage of the 323 respondents who reported that they "have never taken part" in a program or service offered by an NGO generally decreases with age as shown in the table below.

TABLE 4
PARTICIPATION WITH NGOs

	% of Age cohort which has never taken part in NGO activities
Under 20	51%
20-30	48%
30-40	35%
40-50	22%
50-60	25%
Over 60	11%

Respondents were asked about different levels of participation or contact with NGOs. Results show that 30% (n = 240/793) have worked as volunteers for an NGO, and 24% (n = 194/793) have donated money to one of the organizations for charity. In addition, almost 16% (n = 123/793) have been supported by an NGO, and 20% (n = 157/793) have been involved with organizing several kinds of activities or events for an NGO. (It is possible that some people did more than one of these activities.) On the other hand, 40% (n = 322/793) of the respondents reported that they had never taken part in any kind of activity associated with an NGO. The table below shows the different types of engagement the respondents reported having with NGOs by age category.

TABLE 5
RESPONDENTS' ENGAGEMENT IN NGO ACTIVITIES BY AGE COHORT

N = 476	Volunteer	Donating Funds	Sponsor	Organizing events	Recipient of goods, programs or services	Employed by NGO	Other
Under 20	37	13	1	17	27	4	0
20 - 30	119	71	0	56	60	33	6
30 - 40	34	42	13	27	14	31	4
40 - 50	26	37	6	21	12	27	6
50 -60	16	21	10	22	9	28	2
60 and older	10	11	3	17	2	13	5
TOTAL	242	195	33	160	124	136	23
% of engagement	51%	41%	7%	34%	26%	29%	

Note: respondents may have engaged in more than one type of activity.

Note: The question asked if the respondents had ever engaged, so this may not be a reflection of the current levels or types of involvement.

TABLE 6
PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES IN EACH CATEGORY

Question	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Do you agree that NGOs are important for Latvia's future growth, development and stability? (n=792)	1%	2%	14%	57%	26%
Do you agree that NGOs are important in helping people in Latvia live in a free country (for example, voting, press, television, individual rights)? (n=791)	1%	5%	19%	53%	22%
Do you agree that NGOs are important in helping people in Latvia enjoy culture (for example, theater, museums, film)? (n=793)	1 %	6 %	23 %	48 %	22 %
Do you agree that NGOs are important in helping people in Latvia with basic needs (for example, food, housing, health services, and clothes)? (n=797)	1 %	13 %	24 %	43 %	19 %

Economic Missions

Another question asked the respondents to state the extent to which they agreed that NGOs are important for Latvia's future growth, development and stability. The answers clearly indicate that the majority of respondents consider NGOs important for developing the country and maintaining stability: 57% replied "agree" and 26% "strongly agree." Clearly, this sample, which has a majority of younger women, sees the connection between NGOs and the development of the country. As an example, the Foreign Investors' Council in Latvia (FICIL, 2014), "is a non-governmental organization that brings together the largest companies from various countries and sectors that have made significant investments in Latvia." Its goals are to create an on-going "dialogue with the Latvian Government to support improvement in the business environment and investment climate in Latvia." Other examples include the American Chamber of Commerce in Latvia (2014) whose mission is "to foster trade, investment, partnership and friendship between the United States and Latvia and advocate for a better business and investment environment in Latvia".

Human Rights Missions

In the broad field of 'human rights', NGOs can engage in a wide range of activities: "educating on human rights issues, monitoring the human rights situation, gathering and disseminating the information about human rights abuses, lobbying for effective enforcement, advocating, providing the direct assistance to victims of human rights abuses and raising awareness by naming and shaming" (Marcinkute, 2011, p. 63). While not all NGOs engage in all of these activities, the Latvian men (72%) and women (76%) in this study agree or strongly agree that "NGOS are important to helping people in Latvia live in a free country" (question 5). Moreover, this result crosses generations. Just as 72% (n = 348/482) of the respondents under the age of 30 "agree" or "strongly agree" about the important role NGOs have in this

sphere, 73% (78 out of 107) of those over age 50 concur. For the most part, the under-30-year-olds are the first generation born in a free post-Soviet Latvia, while their parents and grandparents may recall the role that local and international NGOs might have played in the events leading to independence. Such wide support has major implications for NGO leaders, policy makers and organizations who may consider supporting NGOs in this field.

One example of an NGO in this field is the Liepaja Society of the Blind, which has become a positive role model for other NGOs in the field of good governance and transparency by motivating other NGOs dealing with handicapped people to actively defend and represent interests of their target group” (NGONorway.org, 2014b). Another example is Transparency International Latvia (2014), the local affiliate of a well-known international system which envisions “a world in which government, business, civil society and the daily lives of people are free of corruption”.

Cultural Missions

Did respondents consider NGOs as important players in helping people in Latvia enjoy and benefit from cultural activities (for example, theater, museums, film)? An example of an NGO with a cultural mission is the Teterev Family Foundation (2014), which supports “culture, education, as well as community development organizations in cities and rural areas”.

The survey indicated positive attitudes. Almost 70% (n = 552/794) of the responses showed Support/Strong Support for these NGOs. Age may have some role to play in understanding what these findings mean. 76% of the respondents under the age of 30 (n = 370/486) “Agreed” or “Strongly Agreed” that NGOs are important, while only 52% of those over 50 (n = 56/106) held these views. Further, 73% of women (n = 387/528) “Agree/Strongly Agree” on the importance of culturally-focused NGOs compared to 61% of the male respondents (n = 160/259). While these figures show the majority support, the variation should be considered in planning programs and services.

An open-ended question inquired about what NGOs of any type can do for them; a plurality of respondents (23%) mentioned organizing cultural events, providing more information about such programs, and educating them on what these NGOs can do. This was the single most specified need or set of programs and services that were mentioned, exceeding education, food, housing and economic development.

Basic Human Needs Missions

Respondents were asked if NGOs were important in helping people in Latvia with basic needs (for example, food, housing, education, health services, and clothes). An open-ended question solicited the following response: “NGOs helped my family in very hard times, when the family was big (with 8 children). This support was very useful and meaningful.” There were also some who complained that the government did not support NGOs enough.

The respondents showed less support for NGOs in this sector compared to the others in the study (but it is still a majority). While 13% found NGOs irrelevant to helping inhabitants with these basic needs, the majority (62%) strongly agreed (20%) and agreed (42%) that NGOs have a substantial role with helping society in such matters. For instance, adapting the model from other countries, Ronald McDonald House Charities (2014) uses a mobile van instead of a residential facility to extend health services throughout Latvia. Also, the Vitols Fund (2014) was established by a successful entrepreneur Vilis Vitols and his wife Marta to fund college expenses for poor, rural first-generation students. Over 1,000 young adults have benefited from this philanthropist's vision and programs.

When analyzed by gender, the results demonstrate differences in attitudes.

It is noteworthy that 68% of the women who responded (n = 361/530) agree or strongly agree that NGOs are important in meeting basic needs, while only 49% of the men (n = 126/261) concurred. On the other hand, only 9% of the women who responded Disagree/Strongly Disagree that NGOs have an important role in helping to meet basic needs for those members of society who need them, while almost one-quarter (24%) of the male respondents hold that negative view. Women live with these issues as part of their role by gender, by culture, by economics.

TABLE 7
SUPPORT FOR NGOs WITH MISSIONS TO HELP MEET BASIC HUMAN NEEDS

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
Females (n =530)	0%	9%	23%	45%	23%
Males (n =261)	3%	21%	27%	37%	12%

IMPLICATIONS

Will corporate social responsibility in Latvia lead to more cross-sector partnerships? The answer seems to be strongly affirmative. “83% of companies and 97% of NGOs expect partnerships to become either more or much more important in the next 3 years” according to the C&E Business and Society consultancy *Corporate-NGO Partnership Barometer* (2014). As NGO and corporate leaders scan their environments (contextual competency) to gather information for future directions (strategic competency), partnerships and pilot programs across sectors can be a win-win-win process - benefiting NGOs, businesses, the larger community and society.

Implications for NGOs

The major implication of these results for NGOs is that there is strong public support for their work. This may or may not be a surprise to some NGOs. Based on interviews and literature, there has been a general caution to expand cooperative agreements with corporations. There has been a growth of business-NGO partnerships; Bobenrieth and Stibbe’s (2010) report stressed that "Companies are becoming increasingly strategic in their NGO engagement" (p.4). Affirming that there will be partnerships, corporations are looking for selected NGOs to enhance their mission, generate positive good will and/or generate a new customer base. Following this, they also noted that "Companies increasingly seek global engagement with local action" (p. 6).

These findings assume critical importance in implementing corporate-NGO partnerships. In addition to support from top leadership, the research stresses that "Employee engagement is increasingly a key driver for collaboration" (p. 8). It is the individual employees who make (or break) the aspirations of their leaders. Finally, partnerships are a two-way street; it is not just about receiving business largess. "NGOs need dedicated resources for the partnership; otherwise the partnerships won’t work" (p. 3). This may not be as easy as it sounds. A 2012 report on corporate-NGO partnerships submitted to the Partnering Initiative noted that "NGOs seem to be quite cautious about broadcasting their partnerships with business. “Our research leads us to conclude that NGOs are still somewhat ambivalent about their corporate partnerships" (p. 8).

Based on some of the responses to the open-ended questions in this survey, there could be several reasons for this. First, NGOs may not have the requisite experience in developing and implementing corporate partnerships. By definition such collaborations require compromise, energy, monitoring and periodic renewal (like all relationships!). Second, clients, staff, donors and other stakeholders may worry the corporation’s ability to guarantee and maintain confidentiality. This is especially possible when working with larger international corporations, which, on one hand, have so much power and yet are subject to the laws, regulations and oversight of other countries. Finally, executives may be concerned that stakeholders will react negatively if they understood that a local NGO had a collaborative relationship with a specific company. For example, BP and Maxima have both earned well-documented scorn for their willingness to put profits over protecting lives during the Gulf of Mexico oil spill and a

major building whose collapsed roof killed dozens in 2013. Despite these obstacles and concerns, overall the climate seems generally supportive for such partnerships when strategically planned.

Implications for Corporations

As effective corporate leaders ponder future directions, strategic consideration with selected NGOs should be an option. Public opinion, as measured in this research, seems to support the general missions, programs and services of NGOs in a broad range of sectors. Yet this might be more difficult than some imagine. Petersons and King's (2009) research concluded that "Young business graduates were strongly oriented to follow the traditional dicta of business - that their first responsibility to society is to do well within the market. The Western business values most accepted included knowledge and skills, organizational efficiency and high productivity. There was, however, remarkably little interest (bottom of 66 managerial values) in compassion and concern for others, and, implicitly, a social responsibility." This finding crossed age boundaries in a mailed survey with 987 respondents plus interviews: "Both, the older and the younger practitioners found no clear understanding of the nature and functions of CSR. Some associated that with mere propaganda to gain public support others were looking for economic ways to gain more benefits for themselves and to the society." Other impediments to these efforts include cost factors, no/low return on the investment, no visible results of previous efforts, concern for current or future government policies, stockholder concerns and employee resistance.

Additional support for CSR efforts comes from recent research which found that "the variety of CSR programs were consistent with business goals and functions, outlined in contemporary literature (Kotler and Lee, 2005; Lewis, et al., 2001; Maessen, et al., 2007) and surveys by *The Economist* (January 19, 2008)." CSR initiatives help maintain and improve employee satisfaction, protect the environment, increased client loyalty, increased visibility, manage employee safety issues and integrate corporate and stakeholder perspectives.

PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Based on this survey, interviews and literature on the topic, there is an emerging consensus about the 'best practices' for successful partnerships between NGOs and corporations. While not every system is ready for such collaborations, the following principles can guide effective planning, implementation and evaluation.

Principle 1: Find partners with shared goals. Mutual interests can frame discussions and decisions.

Principle 2: Develop specific and measurable objectives. It is not enough just to say "Let's work together." Inter-organizational relationships can be enhanced with agreed upon objectives for a 1-3 year period.

Principle 3: Structured Communications are essential. Meetings planned in advance with agendas will help make the best use of people's time and contribute to the sense of involvement.

Principle 4: Top-level commitment should be complemented by wide-spread involvement in both systems. When CEOs or top executives agree to a project and plan, most often these responsibilities are delegated. This is where and when the work gets done. The more people are involved, the more likely it is that the collaboration will succeed (up to a point!).

Principle 5: Develop a clear budget so that each organization knows and can plan how to meet its commitments. Ad hoc financing cannot be relied upon. A possible goal would be for each partner to contribute up to 1% of its non-personnel budget. It does not have to be an equal split on funds since other resources are also important (indirect costs, public relations, transportation, and printing).

Principle 6: Start with small, manageable and focused efforts. Building on successes creates a stronger foundation than a large effort that is only partially complete.

Principle 7: Jointly Assess, Review, Modify and Celebrate the program. Too often, NGOs do not publicize their efforts, while corporations often over-state results. When evaluating against pre-determined criteria, the process can be managed throughout rather than just upon conclusion. This can also help meet the emerging pressures for greater transparency.

The role of top leadership is critical to the success of any planned collaborative effort. A consultant at the HR firm SIA Eiro Personals, Guna Saliete (2014) succinctly stated, "Be the kind of leader you would like to follow."

LIMITATIONS

There are always limitations in every research process. One major concern is that the sample started with university students, faculty, staff and graduates and spread from there. Thus, it may not reflect the general educational level of Latvia's population. Secondly, the sample is skewed toward females. A third concern which limits generalizing from these findings is that the respondents were much younger than the general population. Compounding this, some of the questions were vague and could create issues in interpretation. For example, asking if a respondent has "ever" been involved with an NGO places no time boundaries; a 55 year-old today may have volunteered with an NGO at the age of 35 and responded affirmatively. A fourth caution is the we suspect that the percentage of respondents who report ever being employed in an NGO is higher than the general population, leading to a concern that the respondents were perhaps positively pre-disposed to complete the survey and agree/strongly agree with statements about the roles of NGOs in society.

CONCLUDING THOUGHT

Corporate-NGO partnerships will continue to develop as their leaders remain committed to finding new structures to create a civil society that benefits everyone. As John Winston Lennon (of the Beatles) wrote: "Imagine all the people ... sharing all the world."

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