

23 - 25 October 2026

Geneva , Switzerland

Beyond Funding: Resource Complementarity in Cross-Sector Partnerships - A Conceptual Framework

Agnieszka Perczyk*Saving Kids with Cancer Foundation, Poland*

Abstract

Cross-sector partnerships are increasingly used to address complex social challenges that exceed the capacities of individual organizations. Although financial support remains an important dimension of collaboration, partners from nonprofit, public, private, and academic sectors contribute diverse resources that cannot be adequately assessed through monetary value alone. This paper proposes a conceptual framework for understanding resource complementarity in cross-sector partnerships and explores how different forms of contribution may collectively create collaborative capacity.

The central research question is: How can partner contributions in cross-sector partnerships be conceptualized beyond financial resources? Drawing on established perspectives on resource dependence, collaborative value creation, and interorganizational collaboration, the paper develops a preliminary framework comprising six categories of partner contributions: (1) financial and material resources, (2) human resources, (3) knowledge and expertise, (4) infrastructure and operational capacity, (5) network access and social capital, and (6) legitimacy and reputation.

The proposed framework emphasizes that the value of a partnership does not necessarily depend on equal contributions from its participants. Instead, it may emerge from the complementarity and integration of different resources, supported by shared objectives, effective coordination, and collaborative relationships. A hypothetical multi-stakeholder health initiative illustrates how organizations contributing distinct resources may collectively enable outcomes that no single partner could achieve independently.

The paper offers a conceptual contribution by bringing multiple forms of partner resources into an integrated analytical framework. It also suggests practical implications for nonprofit managers and

partnership coordinators, particularly the use of resource mapping to identify gaps, assess potential partners, and design more effective collaborations. The framework is presented as a preliminary theoretical proposition requiring further refinement through structured literature analysis and subsequent empirical validation.

Keywords: Collaborative Value Creation; Interorganizational Collaboration; Nonprofit Management; Resource Integration; Social Capital