

Partnerships and collaborations among ngos in south sudan

[Business](#), [Human Resources](#)



Definition of Partnership

Partnerships can be defined as inter-organizational relationships in which actors from two or more spheres of society (state, market and civil society) are involved in a collaborative process through which these actors strive for a jointly defined goal. Partnerships can be formed between businesses and NGOs, business and government, NGOs and other civil society members/communities or government and communities to address an issue common to both parties and for mutual benefits to the parties – partnerships add value to all the parties involved. Businesses may also engage directly with communities, but in practice, NGOs often broker or serve as liaisons between businesses and communities.

Benefits of Partnerships for NGO's

1. Sharing of resources, realizing economies of scale and exploiting synergies leads to greater efficiencies
2. Improved effectiveness. This is due to the sum total of experiences and broader thinking. The solutions have a wider buy-in also.
3. There is increased cross-learning and therefore capacity development among partners through cross pollination of expertise.
4. Improved collaboration resulting in organizations avoiding duplication of efforts and also re-inventing the wheel.
5. Multiple resources at the disposal of organizations.
6. Ability to deal with complex situations that require coordinated efforts from multiple organizations / communities.

7. Combining different essential resources can bring essential non-purchasable resources (e. g. social capital, access to health system) to the table.
8. Innovation: diversity of partners leads to more innovative approaches.
9. Sustainability and scale: Potential for taking viable models to scale or be mainstreamed. There is a more effective advocacy – the more you are, the louder and important/ relevant your voice becomes.

Drivers of partnerships & Collaborations among NGOs in South Sudan

a) Reduction in Funding

The funding for the humanitarian needs in South Sudan has decreased from a high of US\$2. 02 Billion in 2014 to US1. 5 Billion in 2017. For the year 2018, \$800 Million has been received as at August 2018, representing 41. 3% of the 2018 appeal funding / requirement of US\$ 1. 7 Billion. This reduction in funding has led to bilateral and multilateral donors and governments looking into ways of achieving more impact at lesser cost, and partnerships especially with local organizations has been mooted as one of the ways in which this could be achieved.

b) Grand Bargain Commitments

The Grand Bargain is a set of commitments made by fifteen of the largest donors and fifteen of the largest aid organizations at the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016. The commitments include instituting mutually reinforcing reforms aimed at better serving people in need. The key among

these commitments is giving more money directly to frontline responders and local actors, localizing humanitarian preparedness and response. This means reallocation of resources in the international aid system towards national and local NGOs and first line responders. The major donors in South Sudan have all embraced these Grand Bargain commitments as shown in their annual strategies. They are therefore pushing the national NGO's to go into partnerships with national/ local NGO's to ensure that more funding is channeled to such.

c) Subsidiarity

Subsidiarity refers to a situation where those close to a problem are better placed to solve it and in this case the need for local NGOs to support communities since they have knowledge of these communities. International NGO's face increasing access constraints to their work in South Sudan. This has affected their ability to access the vulnerable at the lowest level. The access constraints are primarily due to

- Challenging physical environment – almost 60% of the country is cut off during the rainy season. This means that road access in key locations of humanitarian response is minimal or impossible from July until December (and in some cases longer)
- Insecurity – While parts of the country have stabilized, the overall security situation in South Sudan remains volatile. Particularly in Jonglei, Unity, Upper Nile and Lakes states, humanitarian actors report

regular suspensions of humanitarian activities or the temporary withdrawal of staff due to fighting between armed groups.

- Bureaucratic impediments – There has been a significant increase in bureaucratic impediments key of which is the increase in the cost of work permit and travel visas and delays in issuance of the same to foreign humanitarian workers (from \$100 per year to the current \$4,000 per year).

The government is also demanding that certain posts be nationalized. Many state governments and their county governments have also introduced fees and taxes – from employee income tax, to tax/ fees on vehicle rental and road use, as well as price controls for items required for humanitarian purposes, such as wooden poles. These measures have sometimes been coupled with tight restrictions on UN and NGO hiring and procurement procedures, including insistence on hiring or contracting within the county or state, and participation by the authorities in recruitment. Attempts to question or resist these demands have been met with violence or expulsion. The local/ national NGO's do not face such constraints as detailed above and this makes them suitable as front line responders in most emergencies and interventions.