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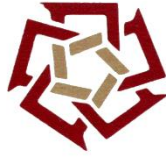
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**The American University in Cairo**

## **Understanding the Nature of CSR Partnerships in Egypt**

A Thesis Submitted to Sustainable Development Program in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Sustainable Development

By

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Under the supervision of

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**06-2021**

## **Abstract**

The field of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has seen considerable growth in Egypt over the past decade, especially in the field of sustainable development. A growing number of Egyptian private companies are actively taking responsibility for Egypt's environment and social development by investing in CSR activities. Egyptian private sector-based CSR activities are expected to further increase as corporate spending designated for CSR activities continuous to grow. The outcomes of these CSR activities are affected by the partnerships present among the main stakeholders involved. To date the nature of these partnerships, especially with regard to how they are formed, their implementation and outcomes have barely been explored.

This thesis fills this research gap by exploring the nature of CSR partnerships amongst two important stakeholders; the private sector and NPOs in Egypt. The research employs a qualitative research methodology based on semi-structured interviews. Interviews were carried out with Cairo-based companies active in financing CSR projects, non-profit organizations (Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and International Organizations) who partner with corporates to execute CSR activities, governmental entities, and CSR experts.

The findings indicate that agreement on the CSR strategy among participating stakeholders and clear identification of roles are two of the key success factors for a partnership. Another major finding of the study is that social media plays a vital role in creating partnership connections and in showcasing CSR partnership impacts. Furthermore, there is a sense amongst corporates and NPOs that the government needs to work more collaboratively with NPOs.

## **DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

First, I would like to immensely thank Dr. Charles Kaye-Essien for his constant support and guidance during my thesis writing.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude Dr. Khaled AbdelHalim for his support and guidance in this thesis since day one.

In addition, special thanks go to my readers Dr. Ghada Barsoom, and Dr. Shahjahan Bhuiyan who promptly accepted and expressed their willingness to read my thesis.

I would like to thank my mom and dad who motivated me to apply in this master program and for the endless love and support they provided me with during my thesis. I would like to thank my grandma who has always motivated me and has given me her blessings and prayers throughout my writing.

I would like to specially thank my husband Omar Allam for always believing in me and for his endless support, love, and motivation. I would like to dedicate this thesis to him and to our young loving daughter Jana who gave me all the joy, laughter and encouragement with her beautiful smile and energy during my thesis and who inspires me to keep achieving more every day.

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## List of Acronyms

NPOs	Non-Profit Organizations
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
MNC	Multinational Corporations
MOE	Ministry of Education and Technical Education

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Introduction

Corporations are powerful entities because of their size, number of people, their buying and selling power, and the impact they have on customers through their pricing strategies and the quality of products they sell. Consequently, the outcomes of these corporations affect the environmental, social, and economic situation in the communities surrounding them. As companies' stakeholders gain more power, their influence over the companies' decision-making processes grows. Similarly, the growing demands and knowledge gained by the customers on their rights have intensified competition between companies. In the 1960s, protests demanding more customer rights increased, which reflected the escalating relationship between companies and their customers. This was the time when corporate social responsibility (CSR) rose as a concept and companies had started to consider it throughout their practices (Jamali and Keshishian, 2009). The term CSR has many definitions. It is best described as the social responsibility of businesses to cover issues that go beyond a company's immediate economic, technical, and legal requirements, and focuses instead on the social and environmental benefits of the community surrounding them. CSR describes the relationship between the business and its larger society (Jamali and Keshishian, 2009).

In Egypt, the concept of CSR is derived from the concept of giving and is thought of as a devotional practice or as charity work that is practiced by public and private sector companies (Iskandar, 2007). However, the role of the private sector companies has moved away from the philanthropist role to playing a proactive role in supporting human progress and sustainable development. Research carried out by the UNDP in 2007 studying companies in the private sector to identify the

motivational reason behind incorporating CSR showed that many Multinational Corporations are influenced by “international practices driven by reporting requirements to stakeholders, brand loyalty, and image-building motives” (Iskandar, 2007, pg.56). Moreover, in the same year, the UNDP established a private sector strategy to identify the objectives and approach for working with the private sector in enhancing sustainable human development and in leveraging its goal in development. One of the main priorities of this strategy was to encourage corporate social responsibility in Support of the MDGs and inclusive Market Development. It has been demonstrated that the private sector’s proactiveness in adopting responsible business behaviors have a direct impact on the local communities and national economies. In fact, the research showed that there are numerous CSR activities done by corporations in the private sector in Egypt. Amongst the popular companies are those actuated by Vodafone Egypt, Procter and Gamble, Unilever, Cemex and Infosys, representing different industries from fast moving consumer goods, telecom, information technology and cement. Furthermore, to implement the right and successful CSR activities, “the private sector requires an enabling environment, including accurate information about the development context, to be able to meet the challenges of eradicating poverty and hunger, creating productive and decent jobs, and fostering human development” (Sherif, 2016 pg. 28).

Nevertheless, the non-profit organizations are recognized as potential partners who have valuable information and expertise in development, are found to have more experience in social issues and are more connected to community residents, hence provide major support to companies in achieving their CSR strategies (Poret, 2014). Accordingly, partnering with the NPOs allows for transfer of knowledge and experience and allows corporations to hold their NPO partners accountable, and vice versa, which is an essential element for the success of both sectors in Egypt.

The UNDP report further shows that the search for partnerships under which the private sector and NPOs can come together and collaborate for CSR projects has begun, but it did not show how those partnerships are formed, designed, implemented and evaluated. This paper focuses on partnerships dynamics among private sector companies and NPO partners who attempt to promote CSR development in a sustainable manner. It is also motivated by the lack of scholarship that examines the communication and collaboration between companies and other CSR stakeholders; the government and the NPOs, in their commitment to CSR, along with my interest in CSR as a next career step, presents an opportunity to define and design partnership models between companies and CSR stakeholders towards their commitment to socially responsible behaviors. This study also examines how platforms and processes connecting CSR stakeholders can be improved; the research project assesses the need for innovative platforms and processes, for example online platforms or CSR consultants and advisors, connecting corporates with the right CSR stakeholder and assisting with implementing the best practice CSR strategies for sustainable development.

## **1.2 Statement of Problem**

In light of the increasing practice of CSR partnerships and collaborations in Egypt for the past decade between the civil society (NPOs) and the private sector and the scarcity of available scholarly articles and limited literature to review and analyze these partnership models, this study aims to shed light on the development of CSR partnerships in Egypt between the two CSR stakeholders; the private sector companies and NPOs, the challenges faced within those partnerships and the existing governmental practices and approach to encourage those partnerships. It also aims to explore the development of CSR partnership strategies among the two stakeholders.

This study will act as an important tool and guideline for the CSR stakeholders to understand the current relationship dynamics among CSR partners, it provides a guideline for the private and NPO sectors to follow through the developed CSR partnership model and conceptual framework for this study. In the end, the study provides recommendations to improve CSR partnerships in Egypt and explores potential tools and platform to encourage more successful CSR partnerships between corporates and CSR stakeholders in Egypt for sustainable development. The study will contribute significantly to the literature and will stimulate additional research on this topic.

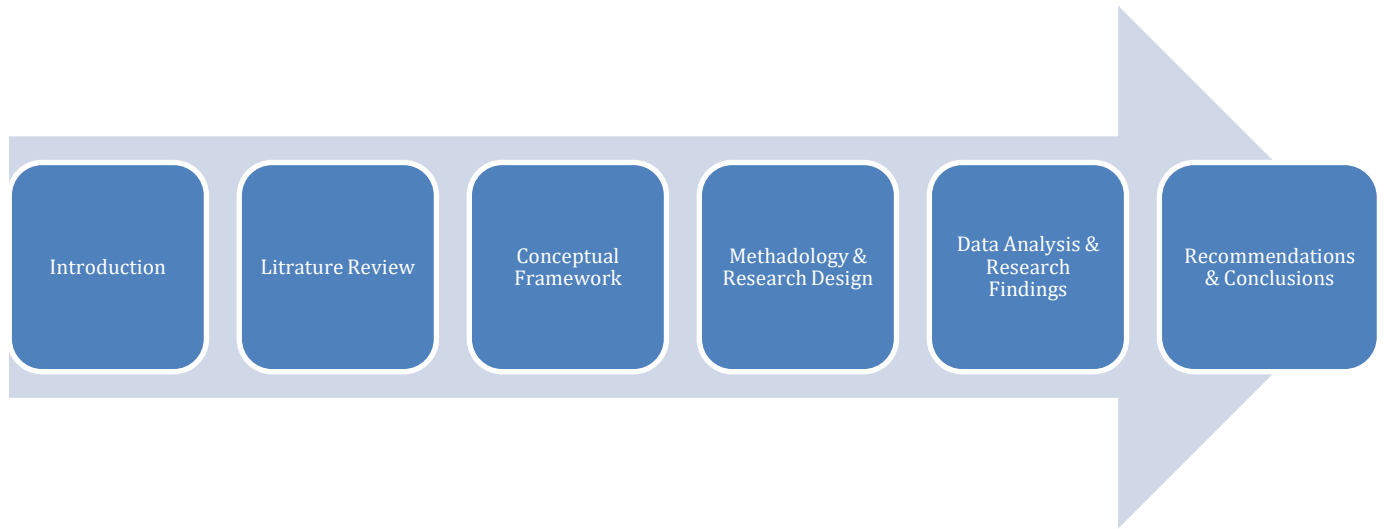
### **1.3 Research Questions**

The main objective of this study is to explore the current CSR partnership dynamics between private sector companies and NPOs in Egypt, as well as to understand the government's approach towards the development of CSR partnerships. Below is the list of research questions that will be covered in this study:

1. How do corporates develop their CSR partnership strategy?
2. How do corporate CSR departments initiate collaborative arrangements with CSR partners?
3. What government policies exist to promote CSR partnerships in Egypt?
4. How can partnerships between corporates and CSR stakeholders be improved in order to reach a successful CSR eco-system in Egypt?

#### 1.4 Thesis outline

The below outline covers the six chapters of this thesis. It starts with an introduction then will follow with the literature review, conceptual framework, methodology and research design, data analysis and research findings and finally ends with the conclusion and recommendations.



The first chapter introduces the power of corporations and their approach to corporate social responsibility and presents the research problem, research objectives and research questions for this study.

The second chapter presents the literature review on the evolution of CSR as a concept, the private sectors' adoption of CSR as a practice, and provides more depth on the rise of CSR partnerships, their structure, benefits, challenges and the government's role in promoting CSR partnerships.

The third chapter presents the conceptual framework for this study. Where the researcher adopts the five partnership stages from the literature and develops an input-output framework that

The fourth chapter covers the methodology applied representing the research design, sample selection and limitations to the study.

The fifth chapter presents and analyses data collected through qualitative interviews with a sample of nineteen CSR stakeholders in Egypt. The data analyzed is divided into four sections to address the four identified research questions set forth for this study. The researcher uses case studies whereby the developed conceptual framework and hypothesis are applied and the current partnership models between corporates and NPO partnerships are analyzed and examined against it.

Finally, the six chapter summarizes the key findings, presents the recommendations drawn from the study to improve CSR partnerships in Egypt and lastly covers the conclusion.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 The Evolution of Corporate Social Responsibility

Researchers have long been challenged theoretically and analytically to give clarity to the definition of corporate social responsibility. According to William Forster and Jill Brown, while CSR is generally defined as the responsibilities of a business to society, it has been described as a paradigm that is in a “state of emergence” (Brown & Forster, 2013). According to another article that discusses Corporate Social responsibility in developing countries, CSR assumes that businesses have obligations to their surrounding societies that goes beyond just making profits and includes social and ecological difficulties (Idemudia, 2011).

During the 1950s and 1960s, CSR came into perspective when many laws and regulations were passed as attempts to control business conduct and to protect employees and consumers rights (Lee, 2008). During that time a number of consumer protests were taking place that directly resulted to the rise of the Consumer Rights Movement. This was the time when corporations were challenged, and a spotlight was drawn on the rising relationship between American corporations and public relationships that can affect corporate’s sustainability. According to Min-Dong Paul Lee (2008), who published an article to review the evolution of CSR and its theories, corporate social responsibility was hardly incorporated by organizations or implemented during the 1950s and 1960s. In fact, many managers thought CSR would damage their organization’s financial performance and paid little attention to it. In the 1970’s, CSR was still not considered important by organizations and business communities and it was not until the late 1990s that CSR became promoted universally by governments, non-profit organizations, consumers, and corporations.

CSR was then endorsed by international organizations such as the United Nations, World Bank,



and International Labor Organization, who have hired separate staffed divisions and established guidelines specifically to research and promote CSR (Lee, 2008).

Furthermore, Carroll (1979) was among the first scholars to frame the responsibilities of the companies into a four-part pyramid. The author presented a comprehensive overview of the evolution of CSR as a concept that goes beyond shareholder value maximization, and focuses on the synergy between business and society that includes: the consumers, employees, communities and the environment (Gamal El Din, 2016). Consequently, by the end of 1990s, the importance of incorporating CSR activities in organizations had grown to having 500 firms mentioning CSR in their annual reports as an essential element and goal and many businesses around the world started to accept the importance of incorporating CSR within their organization (Lee, 2008).

## **2.2 The Business Case for CSR in the Private Sector**

In general, the main priority and goal for any corporation is to make profits and create value for their shareholders. Accordingly, if they would adopt any new behavior or strategy it has to be for the sole purpose of generating more profits to the business. The classical objection to CSR by corporates is that it is considered a ‘subversive doctrine’ that threatens the core meaning of having a free enterprise society (Lee, 2008). Wallich and McGowan (1970) published an article in the 1970s with the sole purpose of providing a compromise between the economic and social interests of corporations. They provided a ‘new rationale’ that supports CSR without compromising on the economic benefits and stakeholders’ interest. Their underlying assumption demonstrated that business corporations can lose their most critical support structure; their customers, if the surrounding society, which the corporation belongs to, deteriorates. Hence, it is

best that corporates consider the well-being of their surrounding environment and society as one of the main essential elements in sustaining their business on the long run (Lee, 2008).

Another rationale evolved that provided more reasons for corporates to embrace the concept of CSR within their organization's DNA is that there is a relationship between corporates' financial performance and their CSR activities. A vast amount of research has been carried out on strategic management with the aim to understand why some companies consistently perform better than others. Based on Archie B. Carroll, whom have established the CSR pyramid that shows the four levels that corporates have to fulfill, the ethical, the economic, the legal, and philanthropic, it was found that one of the applicable answers was that these sustainably profitable companies incorporated CSR activities in their businesses. Until the 1970s, the field of business and society lacked an accepted theoretic paradigm. It was Carroll (1979) was the first to introduce the three-dimensional conceptual model of Corporate Social Performance (CSP). The model added a significant contribution as treated the economic and social goals as coherent and corresponding goals and not as separate tradeoffs.

Moreover, corporate social responsibility is considered a strategic resource to improve the performance of corporates and is no longer perceived as a moral 'responsibility' of corporate managers to contribute to greater social wellbeing. In fact, contemporary environmentalists claim that corporations do better financially when they behave in a socially desirable manner (Lee, 2008, p.63). CSR activities can include society related and environmental activities such as the reduction of carbon emissions produced by corporates. Today, companies are no longer evaluated by investors based on their financial performance only, but on their stakeholder management, reputational risk and on their community contribution (Lorenzen, 2012). There are newly developed measurements for evaluating corporate performance that heavily depends on customers

satisfaction, environmental competitiveness, and quality of products. Accordingly, the role of companies has evolved from just being philanthropic to being more concerned on how the individual company constructs and positions itself in society (Lorenzen, 2012). Hence, in order to improve the over-all corporate performance, companies are required to focus on the development of CSR strategies and programs.

### **2.3 CSR Implementation through Strategic Partnerships**

To start with, a partnership is defined as any collaboration made between two or more stakeholders to achieve a common goal, “while leveraging joint resources and capitalizing on the respective competences and strengths of both partners” (Jamali, 2004, p.3). The literature shows that different forms of partnerships occur when corporates, NPOs and governmental entities come together to address CSR activities.

#### ***2.3.1. Different Combinations of Partnerships***

There can be public- private partnerships, public- NPO partnerships, private-NPO partnerships. The public-private partnerships represent those partnerships between the government and private businesses. Similarly, public-NPO partnership refers partnership between the government and civil society organizations, including international organizations and non-governmental organizations. The private-NPO partnership focuses on solving issues related to society such as: education, health, and the environment. Such partnerships give great insights to the dynamics of CSR implementation between partners (Seitanidi & Crane, 2008) and will serve as the focus of this study.

### ***2.3.2. Corporate- NPO Partnership***

In the past decade, there has been an emerging trend of business and NPO partnership, specifically between corporates and non-governmental organizations. This occurred when business leaders began to recognize the important role that non-profit sector plays in executing CSR projects. Although businesses have the capacity and efficiency to impact different stakeholders in a positive way, they are not always aligned with the needs of corporate social responsibility (CSR). Those companies who desire to be responsible do not have the means and resources to carry out the desired projects in a sustainable manner and hence the need for partnering with the non-governmental organizations for CSR projects. The non-profit organizations on the other hand have become instrumental in the developmental work yet lack the financial means to achieve their goals in the most effective and sustainable manner (Damlamian, 2006).

### ***2.3.3. Levels of Partnership***

Besides partnership types, we can also assess the levels of partnership. For instance, a partnership may exist at the philanthropic level, it may involve reciprocal exchange, entail independent value creation, or operate at the strategic level. These are explained below.

#### *1) Philanthropic partnerships*

Philanthropic partnership refers to the first stages of partnerships and the first contact between corporates and NPOs, where the relationship between the company and the NPO is limited and considered a one-way exchange of resources from the company to the NPO (Lorenzen, 2012).

Such low-level engagement of partnerships occurs when the company's CSR strategy can be defined as modest and when the size of the donations is not critical to neither of both partners.

#### 2) *Partnerships with reciprocal exchange*

“This kind of partnership refers to a cause-related marketing relation between a company and an NPO” (Lorenzen, 2012, P.18). This partnership includes a contract that both partners agree on to exchange goods or services and in exchange to the company's donations, the company can use the logo of the NGO in their marketing activities. Compared with philanthropic partnerships, the participation of the two partners is more active, and the value flow between the two partners is more reciprocal (Lorenzen, 2012).

#### 3) *Independent value creation partnerships*

This partnership entails that each partner has their own individual goal in which they are achieved by partnering together and working closely together to achieve the desired value. This partnership demands greater efforts from both partners than in previous partnerships. Companies in this partnership can provide volunteers from their employees to the NPO to support the cause and motivate the employees (Lorenzen, 2012). This practice can eventually enhance the company's image.

#### 4) *Strategic partnerships*

This type of partnership is defined as the “integrative stage” or as a “symbiotic value creation relationships” where this type of partnership is considered the most strategic, and most advanced form of corporate-NPO collaboration. This type of partnership expects the highest continuity. The exchange of ideas, efforts, and the concept of value creation of resources leads to acquiring a closer

and more dependent relationship between partners. One important characteristic of this partnership is that all CSR activities are linked to the corporate and NPO's strategies and include intensified personal interactions. The case studies investigated in this research reflect different types of partnerships; mainly the second, third and fourth types of partnerships (Lorenzen, 2012).

#### **2.4 General Motivations for engaging in CSR Partnerships**

After understanding the framework of the design and implementation of CSR partnerships, it is important to know what drives corporates to partner with non-profit organizations. Non-profit Organizations include international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). When NPOs partner with corporates for CSR projects, both stakeholders achieve results that neither would have been able to achieve on their own (Menden, Vleuten, Pirzer, Blomberg, 2019). Nevertheless, while businesses have been perceived as only caring about the financial gains and profits, the non-profit sector has been perceived as only concerned with working on environmental or social goals such as poverty reduction. This stereotyping has led both sides to have mutual suspicion and NPOs perceived themselves to be the losing party at collaborations due to their weaker bargaining power and that the corporations are the ones who benefit from the partnerships (Damlamian, 2006). These perceptions have then changed as NPOs have taken an active role in supporting micro-enterprises, gained more expertise and knowledge found in the private sector and established links and networks with producers of primary goods. The frontier between both sectors has started to break down as more links between the two sectors have developed. The author of 'NPO Partnerships for sustainable development' argues that NPOs are now managed with huge turnovers, revenue targets and marketing strategies, similar to how corporates are managed (Damlamian, 2006).

Over the years, companies and NPOs have discovered several reasons to partner. The innovations arising from both partners have led to establishing a new standard of environmental excellence where partnering with NPOs help address issues that the company might not have the expertise in. Also, NPOs provide an outside perspective, and a testing ground for the effectiveness of the proposed approach. Not only do partnerships enable companies and NPOs to leverage skills that both do not have within their organizations, but it enables them to enjoy a better public image resulted from successful partnerships, which increases their credibility (Damlamian, 2006).

From the NPO's perspective, CSR partnerships between NPOs and corporates can help NPOs increase their impact because they can improve their activities on a wider scale and on a broader market eco-system since solutions are centered on the participating company's core business with the goal of establishing financial sustainability. This enables NPOs to have a positive impact on more people, while equally benefiting the company by giving them license to operate, and the ability to build on the existing corporate structure and resources (Menden, Vleuten, Pirzer, Blomberg, 2019). In addition to the reasons corporates and NPOs are becoming equally interested in partnering for CSR projects, companies are in many times equally interested in improving the broader market ecosystem and therefore NPOs are a natural partner for such efforts due to their field of expertise in that scope (Menden, Vleuten, Pirzer, Blomberg, 2019). However, in order for NPOs to attract partnerships, NPOs should better understand the business priorities and core values to be able to sell the benefit of the partnerships and how the NPO can positively impact and add value to the corporation (Damlamian, 2006).

From the corporate perspective, the increased interest of consumers, investors, and NPOs on corporate practices and impacts whether they are positive or negative, has pushed for more responsible business practices. Corporates have also recognized the importance of brand image in

relation to company's performance and are now seeking "NPOs as partners to help them implement solutions to development problems" (Damlamian, 2006, p.7). Practicing CSR grants companies a license to operate in the market and increases their credibility. Respectively, since NPOs are seen as more trusted and reliable by the public on issues concerning social and environmental responsibilities, and a company that is associated with an NPO consequently receives more positive public image.

## **2.5 Structure of Partnerships**

A well-structured partnership not only creates lasting changes, but also leaves a legacy of innovations for others to adopt. One of the main criteria that impacts the success of a partnership is the extent to which its project is structured. According to the article published by the Environmental Defense Fund and Global Environmental Management Initiative (GEMI) in 2008, "A Guide to successful Corporate-NGO partnership", there are three crucial phases in the CSR project that aids in structuring and organizing partnerships between the corporate sector and NPO partnership. The first phase is the project design phase which includes developing the criteria for selecting partners, selecting the right partner, and structuring agreements (GEMI, 2008). Seitanidi & Crane (2008) suggested that the decision of selecting partners is influenced by the organization's strategic objectives and it is crucial to establish partnership objectives that are agreed by both partners in the first stage of partnership. The second phase includes project execution where cross sectional teams are assigned for the project, a project leader from each partner is assigned to lead the project, and partners develop a clear project plan. The third phase entails measuring and communicating results which includes measuring the benefits gained to the business and the NPO as result of the partnership, measuring the impact on the social and the environmental aspects as



result of the project, and lastly includes properly communicating the results of the successful partnerships. Communicating and announcing the results on social media platforms or press release can positively impact the public image of both partners.

Nevertheless, according to the authors Seitanidi and Crane (2008), there are six 'crucial steps' for building successful partnerships. The first step is for the NPOs and companies to identify clear objectives of the CSR project that they both want to achieve. It is very important to establish partnership objectives that are agreed upon between both partners. The second is for both to meet with senior level commitments from both organizations. This helps in creating more trust and credibility when senior leaders meet, they are aligned on the mindsets of each and learn more about the culture of each partner. The third step towards building successful partnerships is to establish clear communication framework between both partners. This refers to agreeing on the reporting methodology, channels of communication and meeting times. The fourth step imply assigning key leaders to lead the project, follow up on timelines and measure outcomes. The fifth step suggests sharing commitment of resources. This entails companies to abide by the agreed financials stated in the partnership contract and the NPO to commit to provide the resources they have (Seitanidi & Crane, 2008). The last step is to measure and evaluate the partnership outcomes. In order to measure the outcomes of the partnership it is essential to first set the objectives and the measurable criteria to which both partners can measure the progress and outcomes of the CSR project. Companies can then evaluate the partnership with a qualitative assessment to measure their reputation and consumers' purchasing decisions (GEMI, 2008).

## **2.6 Benefits of Private-Non Private Partnerships**

Damlamian (2006) suggested in his article ‘Corporate-NGO Partnerships for Sustainable Development.’ that both private and non-private stakeholders gain mutual benefits from CSR partnerships. The non-profit sector includes international non-profit organizations and non-governmental organizations, while the private sector refers to multinational corporations. The author outlines the benefits gained by the private sector and those gained by the NPO sector.

### ***2.6.1. Benefits to the Private Sector***

While it is often argued that NPOs benefit more from partnering with the private sector, there are long term benefits that the private sector can enjoy from those partnerships. There are three main benefits gained by the private sector from partnering with non-profit organizations for CSR projects.

#### *1) Image and credibility*

Generally, one of the most important criteria of success for companies is their reputation among their investors and consumers. A company’s performance has greatly become dependent on its ability to impact stakeholders and since stakeholders have become more interested in what companies do for their society and the environment, companies have been encouraged to practice more CSR. CSR partnerships can provide companies an opportunity for positive brand image and market development (Tennyson, Harrison, & Wisheart, 2008). They do that through partnering with a trusted source such as the NPOs who have gained public trust through their activities. Also, the increasing consumer education, has encouraged more companies to take an active commitment towards their society and changed their approach to raising profits through cause related marketing. Accordingly, corporates who partner with NPOs are recognized as trustworthy, more

credible in the public eye and have a sense of commitment to social responsibility (Damlamian, 2006).

### *2) Financial sustainability*

As mentioned earlier, the ultimate goal for companies to achieve is to sustain their long-term profitability. Long term profitability requires forecasting the future demands and needs of consumers. Some of the benefits of partnering with NPOs is that they have an increasing knowledge of market needs and better understanding about on ground conditions and can facilitate a company's approach to production markets and local consumption (Damlamian, 2006). Therefore, companies who aim to enter profitable markets are advised to diversify their partners and collaborate with more non-profit organizations.

### *3) Better CSR policy as part of a corporate strategy*

Many companies recognized the importance of partnering with NPOs as it is argued that they play a role in enhancing the quality of company's policies. According to Sylvaine Poret (2004), companies are not equipped with the necessary knowledge to address social related issues, such as: education, biodiversity and poverty. While NPOs are found to have more experience in environmental and social issues and are more connected to community residents, hence they can identify community needs and are able to meet those needs with their equipped professional expertise (Damlamian, 2006). Therefore, NPOs are considered to have a major role in helping companies to not only achieve their CSR strategy but in also developing their CSR strategy.

### ***2.6.2. Benefits to the Non-Profit Sector***

Likewise, there are three main benefits gained by the non-profit organizations when partnering with private corporations for CSR projects.

#### *1) Financial sustainability and funding diversification for projects*

In general, the aim of cross-sector collaboration is to create a “collaborative advantage” for the partners involved (Davidsdottir, 2016). Though NPOs are constantly under pressure to fund their projects. They struggle to find different sources of funds that are independent of the government, therefore, partnering with corporates act as one of the most critical sources of funding for NPOs. However, one of the main challenges that NPOs face is the ability to find direct contacts in the corporate sector who they can approach as a potential donor (Damlamian, 2006). Therefore, it is important for NPOs to build good personal relations and network as they act as a key role in establishing partnerships with corporate executives and in sustaining those relations for future partnerships.

#### *2) Access to free marketing*

An NPO’s reputation and legitimacy can fairly increase through cooperating with a reputable company (Poret, 2014). As corporates invest heavily in publicizing their CSR activities for social causes, NPOs enjoy free publicity to their organization and activities as well. NPOs in that matter gain access to free advertising through corporates’ marketing activities which simultaneously improves the NPO’s brand image (Damlamian, 2006).

### 3) *Management skill for improved efficiency*

Literature showed that there can be greater gains from partnerships, that go far beyond the financial gains for the NPOs. When NPOs partner with corporates, they experience the behaviors of the corporate world in terms of seeing insights of different management styles, business skills, learning new business terminologies, and risk-taking behaviors. NPOs can benefit from the corporate partnerships by enhancing their efficiency standards “inspired by corporates influences into its practice” (Damlamian, 2006, p.16). During partnerships, NPOs can enjoy some help from corporations to upgrade their strategic planning skills, financial management and information and technology skills. Similarly, through board meetings, project development and employee volunteerism, NPOs can capitalize on their skills and expertise of corporate representatives to acts as and become more businesslike.

## **2.7 Private-Non-Private Partnership Challenges**

As partnerships bring benefits to both sectors, they also come with some challenges. Out of the most common challenges faced during partnerships are project coordination and policy making between various departments. Most companies’ executives argue that although NPOs have the good expertise, information, and credible assets they need to be more assertive on their objective and goals, and need to become more structured and organized in presenting their ideas when approaching companies. In other words, they need to position themselves as more professional in communicating to and dealing with corporates to attract corporates to partner with them. On the other hand, businesses must not impose their action plans when entering partnerships with NPOs and instead should develop an agreed road map through coordinating with NPO leaders to achieve a successful CSR project and partnership. Also, business leaders should genuinely be

dedicated to achieving the agreed set of goals listed in the partnership contract and be willing to contribute in community involvement. This could be done through providing employees to volunteer and share supplies and resources to support the NPO during the execution of the CSR project (Damlamian, 2006). Furthermore, there are other challenges faced in partnerships that arises during the process of determining the right criteria for selecting the CSR partner, designing risk assessment techniques, the ability to reach to and adapt to agreements, agree on objectives, reporting mechanisms, managing crises, and balancing personal relationships to sustain ongoing organizational institutionalization (Seitanidi & Crane 2008).

Nonetheless these challenges can be minimized by having a guideline that directs corporates on how to engage in partnerships. Studies have shown that many countries such the US, Germany, India, Netherlands, and England have established CSR consultancy firms that provide strategic advice to corporates on their CSR strategies. These consultancy firms bring in consultants who hold MBA and PHD degrees to empower the corporate world with CSR strategies. Among the other services they provide are: CSR and sustainability strategies tailored to each company, reports and assessments on sustainability measurement, CSR auditing, training and workshops to provide corporate leaders with comprehensive insights into CSR and sustainability exploring how best to apply the concepts to their own organization. Reports offered can be focused on carbon usage, health and safety, human capital management or other metrics. Moreover, the CSR consultancy firms also collaborate with different industries and provide tailored CSR programs according to their needs. For example, an American consultancy firm based in San Diageo called “All4one” has collaborated with companies like: Black and Decker, Pfizer, Volvo, JPMorgan, Shell and H&M to consult them on their CSR strategies and provide trainings, workshops, and sustainability reports (Peloza & Falkenberg, 2009).

### ***2.7.1. The Challenge of Selecting the Right CSR partner***

In efforts of achieving a successful CSR partnership, NPOs and corporates must choose the right partner who compliments both of their needs. NPOs must identify the competencies of the company they want to partner with by developing a clear understanding of the company's needs (Menden, Vleuten, Pirzer, Blomberg, 2019). In the same time, companies should also take an 'outside-in' perspective to enable NPOs to better understand what they are looking for. In other words, the way in which both stakeholders position themselves in the market is what will attract the right partner; both stakeholders need to know what their core skillset are and what they can offer. By using the right language approach, NPOs need to clarify their value proposition and companies need to determine precisely what they want the company to contribute in. Having said this, the way in which NPOs present themselves with and communicate plays a crucial role in attracting companies to partner with them (Menden, Vleuten, Pirzer, Blomberg, 2019). For example, NPOs need to use some business language terms when pitching their ideas to companies. They can also organize their activities in professional presentations, flyers and even have a website to market their value proposition when presenting their work to companies. Resolving these clarifications at the initial start of the communication between the two stakeholders and using the right language makes it easier to identify the right partner and build a strong relationship throughout the partnerships (Menden, Vleuten, Pirzer, Blomberg, 2019).

## 2.8 The Role of Government in CSR Partnerships

First and foremost, good governance is necessary for an ideal vision of a world without poverty and a world of sustainable growth and development. Good governance is not only about the supply side of laws, policies, and regulations, but it also includes the mechanism, processes, and institutions in which citizens express their interests, are able to exercise legal rights and mediate their differences (Škare & Golja, 2014). The government has an important role in devising policies to support and promote CSR and in developing and enforcing regulations to promote good governance of CSR activities. In fact, some CSR development advocates suggest that governments should adopt a proactive role in linking CSR agendas with the actual development needs. Shared responsibility between the business, the state, and the civil society is suggested by this argument in order to solve significant societal and economic problems (Refaat, 2014).

In addition to the government's ways to promote and encourage more corporates to embrace CSR, governments can create various incentives that focus on the long-term sustainability of corporations and the society, while also creating a win-win situation for corporations. They can do that through providing different tax benefits to companies performing CSR as a way of recognizing and appreciating their efforts (Škare & Golja, 2014). Moreover, governments can also clarify the expectations of businesses with regard to CSR by developing a clear strategy for sustainable development that acts as a guideline for corporates to refer to. Lastly, governments should request for CSR reports when giving investment funds (Škare & Golja, 2014).

The literature shows that the governments of Western countries are more regularly and actively carrying out corporate governance on topics related to CSR. In Sweden, for example, the Government's view on a number of issues linked to CSR that are presented by the parliament include: fair working conditions, human rights, environmental considerations, anti-corruption



efforts, as well as gender equality, gender diversity, taxation and business ethics (Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, 2016). While in Malaysia, the government supports CSR by providing tax incentives and CSR awards to those corporates who embrace CSR. They lead CSR by following a guideline developed to regulate CSR activities and contributions to the society. They then recognized the need to set up public and private partnerships that would contribute in achieving more CSR goals (Hamida, Atanub, Saleh, 2014). Moreover, the Canadian government developed a CSR Strategy, called “Doing Business the Canadian Way”. The strategy promotes Corporate Social Responsibility in Canada’s extractive sector abroad and builds on experiences and best practices gained since the launch of the first CSR strategy established in Canada in 2009. Later on, this strategy was enhanced by the government to demonstrate the Canadian Government’s expectations of Canadian companies to promote Canadian values and operate with high ethical standards. It also included the Government’s initiatives to promote Canadian companies to strengthen their CSR practices (Global Affairs Canada (GAC), 2014).

## **2.9 The Evolution of CSR in Egypt**

The practice of CSR is on the rise in many countries in the Middle East. In Egypt, CSR has gained recognition in the past decade. Dr. Barsoum and Refaat (2014) have argued that CSR operates with high complexity in Egypt, where “CSR is seen as a western version of a long standing philanthropic tradition that is rooted in religion” (Barsoum and Refaat, 2015 p.12). The private sector is seen as the main driver of development and the leading force of economic growth. Scholars have argued that the religious fabric of the Egyptian society naturally advocates for caring for the less privileged and in fact, may be one of the main driving forces behind business owners’ willingness to incorporate CSR behaviors in their organizations (Refaat, 2014). Although CSR in

Egypt, specifically in the private sector has witnessed a histrionic change in the past decade, Shamseldin (2006) argues that many corporate executives still lack information on the perception of CSR from the business perspective. This includes how the business community views CSR in terms of its needs and usefulness to the business, and what are the incentives provided by the government to motivate more companies to contribute in CSR activities (Shamseldin, 2006).

Nevertheless, in the 1990s, CSR in Egypt witnessed some major changes. The law no.4 for environmental protection was issued to promote the protection of the environment and treatment of hazardous waste and in 1997 the Ministry of Environmental Affairs was established to promote the collaboration between national and international development partners who promote environmental policies (Safwat, 2012). Furthermore, in 2004, the private sector, government, and civil society announced the adoption of the UN Global Compact; a framework developed to allow firms to reaffirm their corporate social responsibility and devotion to ethical standards. The Compact requires companies to follow ten ethical standards in the areas of: human right, labor, the environment, and anti-corruption. In fact, Egypt was the first Arab country to adopt the UN Global Compact, resulting in more than 50 Egyptian companies embracing the global standards in the Global Compact (Shamseldin, 2006). In 2010, the Ministry of Finance released the Public Private Partnership Law 67/2010. The law regulates the public-private partnership in infrastructure projects, public services, and utilities. Additionally, the law provides a framework for large scale complex projects between the public and private sectors and brings new ways for private sector contracting. Through this law, the private sector is allowed to submit their proposals directly to the government without the need for submitting the projects through competitive bidding process as previously done (Ministry of Finance, 2015).

Moreover, the role of the government in promoting CSR undertaken by the civil society remains uncertain. Shamseldin (2006) argues that the government should motivate the role of the civil society by encouraging the non-profit sector to promote social responsibilities. He recommends a development of a framework that provides a set of factors to be in place in order to sustain the development and engagement of businesses in CSR activities. These factors fall under three main categories:

- a) Drivers: The government needs to provide market incentives or sanctions to drive more corporates to undertake CSR activities.
- b) Available capacity and resources: the government needs to provide financial means of support in place for corporates to seek to when implementing their CSR strategies.
- c) Access to rewards: Governments can provide CSR awards to recognize the CSR actions undertaken by companies as means to appreciate their actions towards sustainable development and to encourage more companies to do the same (Shamseldin, 2006).

Notwithstanding the lack of research on CSR partnerships in Egypt, available evidence from the media sources suggests that many companies in Egypt carry out their CSR activities through partnerships with NPOs or governmental entities. For example, Pepsico Egypt has partnered with the Ministry of Education to provide football leagues dedicated to find top talents, enhance young players' skills, and offer them opportunities to join national teams. Another fast moving consumer goods company; Unilever has partnered with Greiner Packaging, an international organization, to introduce their Knorr powder line in full recyclable packs made with recycled polypropylene plastic as they have committed to cutting down their usage of virgin plastic in efforts to support the issue of climate change (CSR Egypt, 2020). There are countless of other current partnerships

undertaken between companies and NPOs that aim at pursuing CSR activities. However, even these news media sources lack depth as they do not give a full picture of how these collaborations are established and on what basis do partners choose each other. Also, although many companies in Egypt announce their CSR activities on their websites and publish their CSR reports, many of them do not add information on how the selection of their CSR partners happen, what steps do CSR leaders consider in designing suitable CSR partnership strategies, and how the institutionalization among the involved partners occur (Lee, 2008). Other evidence from media sources and online platforms include the establishment of CSR conferences and events that host representatives from different stakeholders and entities across Egypt to discuss CSR best practices and related issues. These events and conference are hosted by CSR experts mostly coming from the private sector background as well as from the non-profit organizations sector and they aim to increase awareness among companies and institutions on their responsibility towards society and achieving sustainable development through their business. Two of the most popular and biggest events of these forms are the Egypt CSR and Fingerprint events. These events also aim to create an interactive environment where key CSR representatives from different stakeholders in Egypt are gathered and facilitates strategic level discussions, clarifies and unifies visions, facilitates partnerships, and provides solutions to the most important issues that will help in achieving Egypt Vision 2030 (CSR Forum, 2017).

In addition to the development of CSR as a concept and in practice in Egypt, in February 2016, the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development established the national agenda of Egypt Vision 2030 that announced the long-term strategic plan for achieving sustainable development objectives and principles in Egypt (Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, 2021). The agenda shows the state's contribution to serve the UN global agenda. In 2018, Egypt decided to

update the agenda with the participation of stakeholders from different sectors including experts from the private and civil society sector in efforts of keeping track with the changes happening in the local, regional, and global context. Egypt Vision 2030 agenda consists of seven comprehensive objectives that significantly address improving the standard of living of the Egyptian citizens, ensure the consolidation of just principles and social inclusion, address sustainable economic growth, improve investment in citizen's scientific knowledge and creativity, address the impacts of climate change, and focus on governing state institutions and society.

### *Chapter Summary*

To sum up, to achieve sustainable long-term partnerships, it is important that all partners involved understand the opportunities and challenges and align on key elements before agreeing on the partnership. Each partner must clearly communicate their priorities with the other partner. It is important to have clear and transparent communication on risks and on the things that are considered as nonnegotiable for each partner before agreeing on the partnership to avoid any challenges during the implementation of the CSR project (Menden, Vleuten, Pirzer, Blomberg, 2019).

In Egypt, although there have been major improvements and development in the CSR practice from the private sector, the NPOs and the government during the past decade, there still lies very limited literature towards the current partnership models between CSR stakeholders in Egypt, as well the government's role in promoting CSR practices and partnerships in comparison with literature present for government's role in the western countries. Accordingly, this study adds significant contribution to the existing literature and will shed light on the government's role

towards CSR partnerships in Egypt, being one of the very few researches on CSR partnerships in Egypt. The study will also add significant importance for policymakers in Egypt in their attempts to refining existing partnership policies.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

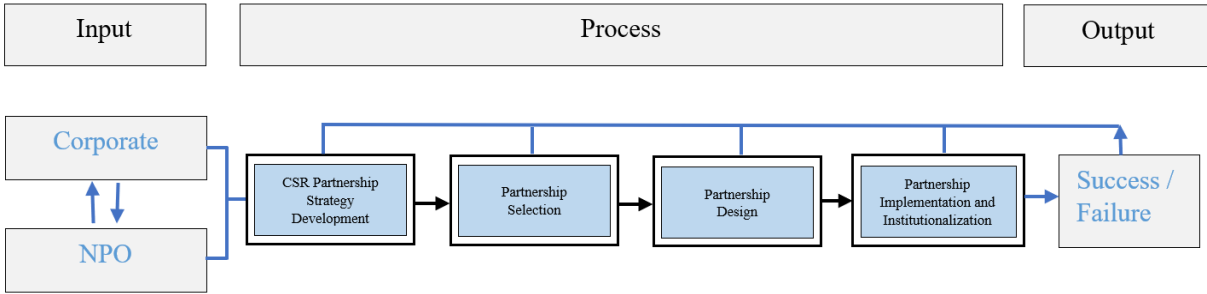
### **THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the conceptual framework developed for this study and identifies the four main stages of the CSR partnership model.

#### **3.2 The Model**

The conceptual model adopted for this study is an input-output framework that demonstrates how CSR partners develop, implement, and evaluate partnerships. The model draws on the five stages of CSR partnership developed by Seitanidi and Crane (2008) and is adopted and modified by the researcher, leading to success or failure. The two CSR stakeholders assessed in this study are: the business and the non-profit Organizations. The non-profit organizations include the non-governmental organizations and the international organizations. The business refers to business corporations in the private sector. In this model, the ultimate purpose of businesses engaging in partnerships is to implement successful CSR for sustainable development where CSR reflects the three pillars of sustainable development: the economic, the social and the environmental pillars. The model outlines CSR partnerships as a framework for sustainable development. The five stages of the partnership model are: determining an appropriate CSR Strategy for successful partnerships, determining the criteria for selecting the right partner, designing the project outline and appropriate risk assessment techniques, agreeing on the objectives and reporting mechanisms and other systems, and balancing the necessary personal relationships with needs for ongoing organizational institutionalization. The last stage of the partnership model is the evaluation and review of the impact and targets achieved.



**Figure 1.** Conceptual Framework: CSR partnership model

Source: Author's Adaptation of Seitanidi and Crane (2008)

### ***3.2.1 CSR Partnership Strategy Development***

This stage includes the extent to which each partner has established their CSR strategy that agrees with the organization's mission and values and aligns with the government's CSR strategies. This stage also implies partners to know the CSR strategy and objectives of each other to ensure they both have the same goal to reach and the same mindset. On this basis, partners start attracting each other based on common objectives. If this stage is clear it makes the partnership selection much easier.

### ***3.2.2 Partnership Selection***

This stage includes taking the decision to choose one partnership over the other. To come up with the decision the corporation needs to talk or preferably meet with various Non-Profit Organizations to determine the potential of each. Also, a number of partnership selection criteria needs to be set to enable the right decision making. These criteria include:

- Personal chemistry between the core people across the two organizations.



- Organization’s previous experience working in the field of expertise.
- Cost-effective relationship: is the money and time invested worth the expected outcome.
- The organization has a safe and secure profile.
- Both the NPO and the corporate have similar values, beliefs and concerns (Seitanidi & Crane, 2008).

### ***3.2.3 Partnership Design***

This stage involves setting on and agreeing on the partnership objectives. Partners can share a memorandum of understanding, review the expected process and approve.

Another area of partnership design is agreeing on the partnership management where both partners agree on the reporting and structure. In this phase several departments in both organizations can be involved (Seitanidi & Crane, 2008).

### ***3.2.4 Partnership Institutionalization and Implementation***

The stage of implementation refers to the extent to which the partnership becomes accepted within all the partners involved. When institutionalization occurs, it means that even if crisis occurs the relationship between both partners will not get affected and rather they will both think of ways to resolve the crisis. It refers to the partners’ ability to disagree without causing termination to the relationship (Seitanidi & Crane, 2008). This can be done when the core people of the partnership can refer to their relationship by using the personal pronoun “we” instead of “us” or “them”, enjoy asking each other for advice, encourage new ideas and “increase their contacts through the networks of their partner’s organization” (Seitanidi & Crane, 2008, pg.11).

Another important part in the partnership institutionalization stage is to accept the other organization's strengths and weakness and to accept disagreements. To master this, each partner should list the responsibilities of each during the phases of implementation and who are the stakeholders accountable for every action during the implementation phase (Seitanidi & Crane, 2008).

### ***3.2.5 Partnership Review and Evaluation***

The final stage includes evaluating the partnership's actual outcomes verses the expected. It also includes evaluating the extent to which both partners were satisfied not only from the results they have achieved together but from the whole process of dealing with each other throughout the partnership. Based on the success or failure of the partnership, decisions on partnerships renewal and continuation are evolved (Seitanidi & Crane, 2008).

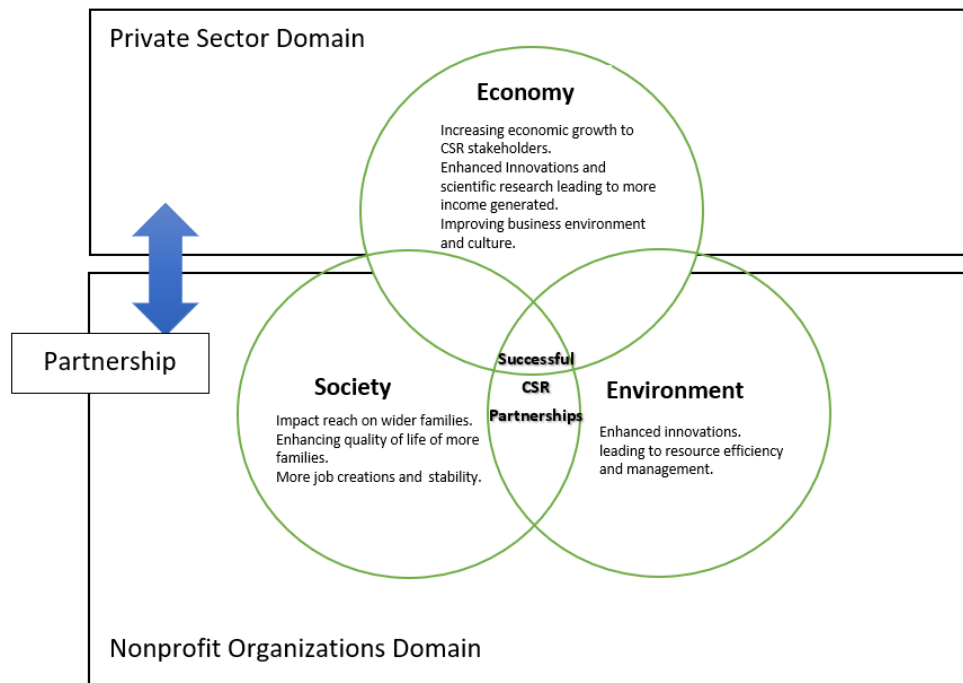
### **3.3 Hypotheses**

Based on the conceptual framework and the literature reviewed so far, I hypothesize in this study that:

- a) When there are clear CSR strategies amongst partners it leads to more successful CSR partnerships results.*
- b) When the right CSR partners cooperate in CSR projects, it can result in reaching greater economic, social, and environmental impact to the country.*

The second hypothesis is supported by the fact that successful CSR partnerships can lead to supporting a greater number of families and enhancing the quality of life and standard of living of

bigger communities in more geographical areas. Also, successful CSR partnerships can create more stability of jobs and create new job opportunities from the ongoing CSR developments and projects. From the economic perspective, the more sustainable the partnerships are, the more economic benefit gained for the two stakeholders due to higher shared value to shareholders involved. CSR partnerships can also lead to enhanced business culture and working environment due to the culture adopted towards helping others and giving back to the community. Consequently, successful CSR partnerships can also lead to creating enhanced CSR programs that promotes innovations and scientific research generating more income. Eventually, with more successful CSR projects taking place, better solutions to resource management and efficiency will be formed (see Figure 2 below).



**Figure 2.** Successful CSR partnerships in relation to sustainable development.

Source: Author's Construct.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the methodology applied in the study. The section covers the research design, sources of data, approaches to data collection and analyses. Principally, the research employed a qualitative research methodology based on semi-structured interviews. Interviews were carried out with Cairo-based businesses active in financing CSR projects for sustainable development, Non-profit organizations in Egypt who partner with corporates for CSR projects and government agencies personnel. Representatives of businesses were selected from a cross-section of different business industries engaged in consumer goods, pharmaceuticals, professional services and oil and gas sector. Selection of business representatives was restricted to private sector companies and not public companies, due to their strong financial stability, strong awareness on the importance of CSR as a concept and the availability of resources. Representatives from non-profit organizations (NPOs) included both local NGOs and international nonprofit organizations. Other interviewees include representative(s) from the governmental sector and Cairo based experts on CSR partnership best practices.

#### 4.2 Research Design

This research included a sample selection of seventeen participants from different key CSR representatives of Cairo-based companies, NPOs who invest in CSR projects aimed at advancing sustainability in Egypt, and government representative(s) and CSR experts. With respect to businesses, the research interviewed representatives of a cross-section of different business

industries who have invested in CSR projects and declared focus on sustainability initiatives. Accordingly, the researcher selected companies from various industries of Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCGs)<sup>1</sup>, telecommunication, professional services, oil and gas and pharmaceuticals. The important issues explored during the interviews concerns: the relation between the implemented CSR projects and the three pillars of sustainability: the society, the environment, and the economy, how companies' CSR strategies are developed to serve the three pillars. Other equally important issues explored included the criteria for selecting partners, their CSR partnership strategy development, the main motivation that drives companies to conduct CSR activities, the ways in which the CSR strategy is established, the challenges faced during the implementation of the CSR partnership and if there are any evaluation methods undertaken after completing the partnership to evaluate the success of the whole projects. The primary focus of these questions was to ultimately examine the need for innovative platforms and processes, for example web platforms or CSR consultancy, that aims to connect corporates with the right CSR stakeholders to assist with implementing their CSR strategies and projects. The interviews were semi-structured and four of them were conducted in the office locations of the CSR representatives of the selected companies. During the interviews, the researcher observed the number of CSR employees present in the CSR Department, how big the CSR Department is, and how CSR is incorporated within the culture of the company. The research uses three case studies to further explore and analyze the partnership stages that takes place between CSR partners in Egypt.

With respect to NPOs, the researcher focused on those that are involved in CSR partnerships in Egypt and conduct CSR programs and activities. They included International Organizations or

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<sup>1</sup> FMCG: Fast Moving Consumer Goods refer to products that are consumed quickly and bought at a relatively low cost.

local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). During the interviews, respondents were asked to define CSR, and this would enable the researcher to check if there is a difference in the way each partner defines CSR. All respondents (including respondents from the business sector) were asked to share their full experiences with CSR partnerships, including the selection process, the project implementation and the challenges faced in those partnerships. They were also asked to share their experience in relation to the role of government in CSR partnerships. Finally, all respondents were asked to express their recommendations for improving CSR partnerships in Egypt for sustainable development.

Furthermore, selection of CSR experts added valuable and rich insights to the study and data collection. One of those is Dr. Hatem Khater who is the founder of Terous Misr Foundation, a non-profit organization that aims to become the development gateway and promote optimal use of resources in Egypt. He has also chaired and founded two CSR conferences; CSR Forums and Fingerprint events two of which all respondents in the study are aware of and attended both conferences. He is the board member of John D. Gerhart Center at the American University in Cairo, and the board member of CARE Egypt, Egyptian Food Bank, Egyptian Cure Bank, Egyptian Clothing Bank and the secretary general of Ferdaws Foundation and Tebarak Developments. His insights added value to the research from a CSR consultant and expert point of view on CSR partnerships strategy development and dynamics in Egypt.

Nevertheless, respondents were reached through a snowball technique which enabled the researcher to expand the network of the research participants. It's important to note that four of the interviews were conducted before Covid-19 struck Egypt and these were held at the respondents' head offices. While the rest were then continued during Covid-19 pandemic. These

interviews were held on virtual communication platforms like Microsoft Teams and Zoom, notably with open cameras to provide more transparency, encourage more open discussions and to provide a sincere experience for the respondents. Furthermore, before the scheduled interview, the respondent received an email that included the objective of the interview, the consent form, and some of the questions that will be asked during the interview to get them prepared beforehand. The email also informed them of the duration of the interview to set their expectations and book their full time. The interview included a total of 30 questions. The researcher wrote down all the answers during the interviews on excel and Microsoft word platforms and chose not to record them as 80% of the interviews were held with very senior representatives of highly reputable corporates and NPOs, hence, recording the interview would have added sensitivity for their position and would not allow them to openly and transparently express their opinions. 70% of the interviews were held in Arabic and were then translated to English by the researcher right after the interview.

#### **4.3 Sample Selection**

The sampling frame consisted of the two main stakeholders involved in CSR partnerships for sustainable development in Egypt. Those include companies from the private sector, naming the Multinational Corporations (MNCs), and the Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs); those include the International Non-Profit Organizations (INPOs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). The sampling frame also includes CSR consultants and representative from the government sector. The selected sample of seventeen respondents comprised:

- Seven MNC Corporations: representing different industries from fast moving consuming goods, telecommunication, professional services, and pharmaceutical.

- Seven Non-Profit Organizations: those include two International Organizations and five local NGO's.
- Two CSR experts: the respondents are considered CSR experts or consultants for CSR because of their rich experience in CSR and their work experience with different stakeholders.
- Governmental sector representative: Media and Communication Executive at the Minster of Education and Technical Education.

**Table 1.** Sample Selection.

<i>Type of Stakeholder</i>	<i>Stakeholder Name, Industry and Size</i>	<i>Respondent position and title</i>	<i>Referred name throughout the research study</i>
<b>NPO</b>	Large Sized International Organization (CARE Egypt)	Former Director and Board of Trustees Member	INPO 1
	Large sized International Organization	Project Manager	INPO 2
	Middle Size NGO	Executive Manager	NGO1
	Large sized NGO (Food Bank)	Head of Public Relations and Communication	NGO 2
	Large sized NGO (Nada Foundation)	Founder and Chairman	NGO 3
	Middle Sized NGO	Chief Executive Office	NGO 4
	Large Sized NGO	Account Manager	NGO 5
<b>Corporates (MNEs)</b>	Large sized MNC (FMCG: PepsiCo Egypt)	CSR Manager	MNC 1
	Large Sized MNC (FMCG: Nestle Egypt)	Corporate Shared Value (CSV) Manager	MNC2



	Large Sized MNC (Pharmaceutical & Biochemistry: AstraZeneca)	Head of Communications and Corporate Responsibility	MNC3
	Large Sized MNC (Oil and Gas)	Head of Public and Governmental Affairs & CSR Oil & Gas Committee Chairman	MNC 4
	Large Sized MNC (Professional services)	Senior CSR Associate	MNC 5
	Large Sized MNC (Telecom)	CSR Manager	MNC 6
	Middle Sized MNC (Information Technology)	CSR Manager	MNC 7
<b>CSR Consultant(s)/ Advisor(s)</b>		Former head of CSR Forums, Head of Fingerprint events, Founder of Terous foundation, board member of CARE Egypt, Egyptian Food Bank, Egyptian Cure Bank, Egyptian Clothing Bank	Dr. Hatem Khater
	Large Sized MNC (Orange Egypt)	Former Head of Environment Sustainability	Dr. Sherif Eissa
<b>Governmental Entity</b>	Office of Ministry of Education and Technical Education	Media & Communication Executive at the Minster of Education and Technical Education	Media & Communication Executive, MOE

Note: some respondents and entity names are kept private upon the respondent's request.

## CHAPTER FIVE FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents all the collected data, analyze, and compare data gathered from all main stakeholders involved in CSR partnerships in Egypt. To start with, the data collected and findings from the interviews answer the four identified research questions set forth in this study. Accordingly, the findings and data analysis are divided into four sections to answer the four identified research questions set for this study.

The first section presents the findings on existing policies and current government's practices present to encourage CSR partnerships between corporates and NPOs. The second section analyzes data collected and findings on strategy development for CSR partnerships. The section presents the first two stages of the conceptual framework developed for this study: the CSR partnership strategy development stage and the partnership selection stage. The third section covers the CSR partnership dynamics and challenges between the corporate sector and NPOs in Egypt through analyzing three different case studies. This section reflects the partnership design and partnership institutionalization and implementation stage of the conceptual framework. The fourth section presents the key factors that lead to success or failure of CSR partnerships in Egypt.

## 5.2 Government's Approach Towards CSR Partnerships and Existing Policies

This section highlights the current policy and law that currently support CSR partnerships between the public and private sector in Egypt. It highlights the government's general approach towards CSR partnerships in Egypt. Based on the interview with the respondent from the Ministry of Education and Technical Education, whenever proposals are received from the private sector on CSR projects, the company's profile is sent to and has to be approved by the National Security Authority first. After that, a copy of the tax registry file of the company has to be also approved by the National Security Authority and copies of national IDs of the CSR directors or leaders of the company are also kept in the companies file at the ministry. Lastly, the ministry has to ensure that the potential partner has the required budget to fund the whole program.

While the administrative structures put in place by the government are commendable, it was evident that some respondents from the corporate sector consider those structures to be limiting factors when it comes to partnerships with the government in CSR programs. A respondent from a large-sized telecom company noted that:

“We mainly partner with NGOs as the government's criteria and protocol is a lot to follow” (CSR Manager, MNC 6).

Despite these seemingly obstructive government procedures, organizations still find the input of government to be useful. According to the Head of Communications and Corporate Responsibility at AstraZeneca; a multinational pharmaceutical and biotechnology company in Egypt, the Ministry of Health is actively participating in campaigns like ‘100 Million Healthy lives Campaign’ which is a campaign promoting the treatment and early dedication of Hepatitis C virus. This campaign directly supports their goal in distributing more vaccinations and reaching wider geographical

areas. The respondent truly believes that the government is supporting the private sector CSR initiatives and expressed as follows,

“The government’s approach to CSR has dramatically changed as looking at a decade back, the government would have considered partnering with the private sector as a sign of weakness. Today, the government is working on achieving Egypt 2030 Vision and thus understands that partnering with the private sector is within their own benefit of achieving these goals and making an impact in sustainable development” (Head of Communications & Corporate Responsibility, MNC3).

The agenda of Egypt 2030 is playing a major for the private sector companies and in also changing the direction of the government towards promoting the role of the private sector in their CSR activities. In addition to the government’s recognition of the importance of partnering with the private sector to promote CSR for sustainable development, the government has invited representatives from the private and civil society sector to lead the Egypt 2030 Vision committee responsible for establishing the goals for sustainable development. According to Dr. Hatem Khater<sup>2</sup>, who was one of those who were invited to lead the committee,

“The Ministry of Planning and Economic Development invited leaders from the private and civil society sector as they wanted to incorporate the mindset from those sectors onto the vision” (Dr. Khater, 2021).

The respondent stated that this is a major change in the government’s behavior towards the private and NPO sectors, and that this wasn’t the case a decade ago when ideas coming from these sectors were not heard. Moreover, according to the respondent from the Ministry of Education and Technical Education, there are many CSR partnerships that the ministry has been involved in from

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<sup>2</sup> Dr. Hatem Khater is the CEO and founder of Terous Foundation, is the board member of John D. Gerhart Center at the American University in Cairo. He is also a board member of CARE Egypt, Egyptian Food Bank, Egyptian Cure Bank, Egyptian Clothing Bank and the secretary general of Ferdaws Foundation and Tebarak Developments.

partnering with a recycling company in Egypt to employ a recycling process at public schools to partnering with PepsiCo Egypt for the “Pepsi Football School League” program that holds football tournaments among 7500 public schools nationwide to discover talented football players, find the top performer players and provide them with the opportunity to join numerous Egyptian clubs and win many champions. This program lasted for 12 years and is still running till date and has benefited 800,000 students. The Ministry of Education and Technical Education has also partnered with Nestle Egypt for the ‘Nestle for Healthier Kids’ program. The program aims to raise healthier kids and prevent child obesity through conducting numerous training and workshops to educate students and their parents on healthy eating habits. This program has been going for 5 years and have reached more than 1500 public schools in different governates around Egypt. The Ministry has also partnered with large-sized local NGOs such as Food Bank for a nationwide CSR project that aims to provide healthy schools meals at public schools that provides the nutritional value for kids and thus enables them with the energy needed to focus on their studies. Through this partnership, the Food Bank has provided 13,125,700 meals to 29,000 students in 42 schools around ten governates in Egypt: Cairo, Giza, Daqahleya, Fayoum, Bani-Sweif, El Menya, Asyut, Sohag, and Red Sea.

Furthermore, respondents from the corporate sector agreed that there are recognizable efforts from the government’s approach towards CSR. One respondent from the corporate side said,

“The government recognized that without partnering with the private sector they will never progress” (CSR Manager, MNC6).

The same responded suggested to have more CSR events and conferences that are promoted by the government to establish a link between the main stakeholders in CSR: the corporate sector and NPOs. The researcher learned that there are current CSR conferences that are conducted in Egypt

such as CSR Forums and Fingerprint conference. These conferences aim to provide a link and to create an open channel and network between the government, corporate and NPO sectors to achieve a clear direction towards CSR and sustainable development in Egypt. All respondents interviewed in this research have attended these conferences and believe that these events add value in creating more networks for CSR, and one of the respondents of the research, Dr. Hatem Khater, has chaired and founded both events. In addition to the government's efforts in endorsing CSR in Egypt, a respondent from the corporate sector expressed,

“Companies are not afraid anymore to approach the government for CSR projects like they used to be a decade ago, as we feel the government is now supporting new ideas for CSR projects” (Senior CSR Executive, MNC5).

Several respondents from the corporate sector mentioned that government requests yearly CSR reports to check that companies are taking responsibility towards their surrounding communities and are utilizing their resources by giving back to their country.

Another suggestion that was discussed throughout the interviews is that the NPO sector should be playing the role of continuing the government's projects and not replacing them. There should be an open channel of communication from the government to NPOs to direct them on the areas of needed support where they can bring their efforts into place rather than having each NPO select randomly the areas they want to develop,

“The government needs to direct NGOs on the areas of needed development and allow more NGOs to support and work with the government on more CSR projects” (CEO, NGO4).

Further discussion on this matter with respondents from the NPO sector showed that there is a lack of cooperation on CSR projects between the government and NPO sector, specifically with middle

to smaller-sized local NGOs, and that the government role is more sensed in monitoring their projects and funds, rather than working with NPOs for CSR projects.

There were many recommendations presented by the respondents of different stakeholders interviewed in this study on the government support they need. Respondents from the corporate sector recommended that there should be a published platform for communicating CSR projects and programs undertaken by the three stakeholders to increase awareness on the government's priorities and that ensures the private and non-profit sector's activities are in line with the government's priorities. They suggested that this platform should be fueled and authorized by the government to ensure sustainability and justice of resource distribution. Similarly, the CSR expert interviewed in this study also recommended to have a publicized online platform that is governed by the government and one that aims to create a CSR community, create more network and reachability between stakeholders, acts as a 'matchmaker' between the three stakeholders and provides a potential for new partnership opportunities to arise.

“This platform needs to involve proper GIS mapping and one of the most important factors of its success is to have accurate and up to date information. If the platform lacks this then it will not be of any usefulness “(Dr. Khater, 2021).

The GIS mapping is a geographic information system that integrates many types of data and is specialized in organizing and managing information. It is used as a framework for gathering and analyzing data. The respondent suggests that the platform must be always refreshed with up to date information to reflect on ground and relevant information, thus providing maximum benefit to CSR stakeholders. The respondent also suggested that this platform should be regulated by a third party, namely the government, so as to prevent data monopolization from a single organization. From the literature and throughout the research conducted, the researcher reflected that there still

remain many opportunities that anticipates the government to expand its CSR projects and partnerships with the private and NPO sectors.

### **5.3 CSR Partnership Strategy Development**

To start with, it is safe to say that when respondents were asked on how they decide on their CSR strategies, the answers differed from one stakeholder to another. From the forgoing discussions, it was evident that corporates and NPOs who have international headquarters, namely, multinational corporations and international non-profit organizations, develop their CSR strategies at their international headquarters. Their CSR strategy reflects a localized version of their international strategy that aligns with the Egyptian government's CSR strategies in Egypt 2030 vision, the needs of their surrounding communities and reflects the organization's mission and value. Responses from some businesses suggested that certain CSR strategy developments are influenced by a vision for 'creating shared value' vision. One of the respondents' company names their CSR department 'CSV'<sup>3</sup>, that is Creating Shared Value. The respondent explains the reason for that,

“We call it Creating Shared Value because of the long-term shared value that we give benefit to all stakeholders involved and to ensure sustainability of the benefit to the community around us” (CSV Manager, MNC2).

Similarly, a respondent from another large sized MNC in the FMCG industry explained their interpretation of CSR as follows:

“We define CSR as creating shared value for the society and the company” (CSR Manager, MNC1)

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<sup>3</sup> CSV: Creating Shared Value is the new way of identifying corporate social responsibility



CSR strategy development in the private sector also takes into account the government's needs as well as the needs of the company's surrounding communities and individuals. One respondent opined that,

“Our standards and criteria are governed towards the benefit of the community. Our CSV vision and strategy has to be in line with the government strategies and with country priorities” (CSV Manager, MNC2).

Another respondent even mentioned Egypt 2030 Vision and the UN sustainable development goals (UN SDGs) as a useful guideline for the government's CSR objectives that enables them to match their own CSR strategies with that of the government's one,

“While we create our CSR strategy, we refer to the UN SDGs as well as to Egypt 2030 Vision for direction and guideline” (CSR Senior, MNC5).

In addition to the importance of developing a clear CSR strategy, Dr. Khater<sup>4</sup> explained that the concept of CSR in Egypt began in the 1990's yet was not a famous concept around that time. He said,

“The fact that CSR became an established department with its own reporting lines and budgets allocated to is a huge progress that we have witnessed throughout the years. CSR as a concept should be rooted within the company's values, and companies should be acting as a good citizen as it is a part of the community and thus it should have a responsibility to give back to their community” (Dr. Khater, 2021).

The same respondent believes that there are two important factors that results in greater CSR impact, these are, having a unified strategy in which the three stakeholders can work towards, and

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<sup>4</sup> Dr. Hatem Khater is the CEO and founder of Terous Foundation, is the board member of John D. Gerhart Center at the American University in Cairo. He is also a board member of CARE Egypt, Egyptian Food Bank, Egyptian Cure Bank, Egyptian Clothing Bank and the secretary general of Ferdaws Foundation and Tebarak Developments.

having more partnerships made between the three stakeholders. Furthermore, Lee (2008) strongly supports the concept of creating share value where it is critical to sustain the surrounding communities of business corporations they are operating in as these communities act as the corporation's customers and thus, it is considered a mutual shared value for both the customers' wellbeing and the corporates' business to sustain if the company wants to sustain its profits. On the contrary, from the discussions and interviews with the NPO sector, NPO's CSR strategies are developed within their roots of founding the organization. Their strong expertise, ability to create tangible impact, reputation, strong operating power, and high belief in the concern they are tackling is what attracts partnerships from the corporate sector to happen. A respondent from a middle-sized NGO explained how their NGO's CSR strategy was developed,

“The NGO was established at first with the sole purpose of fixing water channels in Upper Egypt. We did not need to align on Egypt 2030 Vision because the whole city suffered from lack of water infrastructure and sewage systems, so the problem was already obvious to start operating on” (Executive Manager, NGO1).

The city that this respondent referred to is located in Upper Egypt. Also, another respondent from a middle-sized NGO highlighted that their partnership strategies may sometimes lack clarity with regards to who to partner with, when and how. In such situations, the NGO has to take the steps that satisfy their best interest. This may include partnering with the private sectors as they have huge budgets for CSR projects that would enable the NGO to eventually achieve its own targets, whether it is covering a total number of households with shelter and ceilings or to connect a whole governorate with water sewage systems. This justifies the NGOs' continuous efforts in attracting partners from the corporate sector to partner with them.

Another important insight that was reflected from the interviews on developing CSR strategies for partnerships is that, corporates' CSR strategies are developed to match the company's product

portfolio and what they can offer through their area of expertise. For example, Mr. Sherif Eissa, former Head of the Environmental Sustainability department at Orange Egypt mentioned their CSR project ‘Mobile Agriculture’ where Orange Egypt had partnered with Rise AUC to develop a tool whereby regular phone messages were sent to farmers to increase their awareness on important tips for better agriculture. This project was in relation to the fact Orange Egypt is a telecom service provider and thus can send messages to the farmers through their mobile phones using Orange network. Likewise, Pepsico Egypt’s CSR manager heavily emphasized on the importance of relating their CSR strategy to the products and services that the company provides. For example, one of the main CSR programs that Pepsico Egypt has partnered with an NPO and the governmental sector is the “She Feeds the World” program which aims to increase crop yields in Egypt and to build more sustainable potato supply chains. As Pepsico Egypt is well known for selling chips naming “Chipsy”, their CSR strategies are developed in line with the products that they offer and targets to find innovative ways to improve productivity for farmers and increase crop yields for potatoes through sustainable developments.

Further probing questions focused on how businesses select the right CSR partner who is the ‘best fit’ to collaborate with and execute their CSR strategy. One important reflection from the interviews is that both respondents from the corporate and NPOs sectors revealed that the choice of partner depends on the size of the project they want to undertake.

“If the desired outcome of the CSR strategy is to create a nationwide scale impact, then this would lead to more partnerships with different sectors including the government sector to achieve this goal” (CSV Manager, MNC 2).

Correspondingly, the CSV Manager of MNC2 believes that when CSR strategies are clear among each partner, it helps every stakeholder to take the next best decision in their CSR partnership and

can lead to more successful CSR partnerships. The researcher combined all the important criteria for selecting the right partner for CSR that were stated by the respondents from the corporate and NPO sector during the interviews in the below table to compare the insights from both sectors. The respondents' insights heavily supported the second stage of the conceptual model; the partnership selection stage and showed that the partnership selection phase is actively practiced by both stakeholders in Egypt.

**Table 2.** Partnership selection criteria as Expressed by Corporates and NPOs

Corporate Partnership Selection criteria	NPO Partnership Selection criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The reputation of the desired NPO must be of high standard. This includes the reputation of the NPO's owners and that of the organization's team member and includes the NPO's word of mouth reputation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The industry's reputation of CSR budget expenditure. For example, industries like the banking, medical and FMCG sectors are well known for their CSR spending, while industries like automotive are not known for their participation in CSR. Accordingly, corporates who are not usually engaged in CSR should be approached by NPOs with innovative ideas for relevant CSR projects.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NPO's expertise and specialization must match the company's CSR strategy and focus area to develop. This includes their expertise in the field of CSR development, their geographical presence in the governorates of interest to develop, and their previous history of partners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The company is preferred to have a true belief of the CSR cause. Having mutual interest and belief on the CSR project is key.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The size of the impact the NPO is able to achieve. This means that if the company wants to create a great impact, it is most likely to partner with a bigger sized NPO.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NPOs select companies based on their connections and network. This makes it easier for NPOs to approach companies and in building trustworthy relationships, as the company would already know the contact person approaching from the NPO.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NPOs must have a safe profiling platform, the below two factors are key to secure a safe profile: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporates carry risk assessment checks on the NPO's owners and board of directors to ensure security</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

clearance on their profiles and no previous relation with money laundry or fraud.

- NPO's owner must not be a member of a competitor's company board of directors as this would lead to conflict of interest in the partnership

The study also revealed that the use of contact database and personal networks for finding appropriate corporate partners is also widely practiced amongst in the partnership selection stage. A respondent from a large-sized NGO explained that this includes the personal network that team members within the NGO have, the personal contacts that the owners of the NGO have and the contacts saved from previous partnerships with corporates that are hand overed to team members across the years. Another respondent from a large sized NGO believes that there is a direct relation between the ability of establishing more partnerships with the private sector and the reputation and profile of the founder of the NGO.

“Credibility is what makes one NGO different than the other. Credibility of the shareholders and the CEO as well as their reputation are very important for the image of the NGO in the eyes of the private sector” (Project manager, NGO5).

The respondent explained that if the founder is a successful public figure, this directly impacts the success of the NGO in a positive way and makes partnerships with the corporate sector much easier. Furthermore, based on a respondent from a middle-sized NGO, social media platforms also play an important role in the partnership selection stage. Social platforms such as Facebook and Instagram play a huge role in showcasing the NGO's projects through the posting of videos and pictures. This enables corporate and governmental sectors to view the NGO's work and see their impact,

“These videos make a huge introduction to our work for clients before they meet with us and help them understand the kind of impact we are able to create” (Executive Manager, NGO1).

The respondent added that when the NGO started to post more videos and photos on social media platforms, more companies started to contact them for partnerships,

“Because the founder of the organization is a religious public figure, whenever he posts a video that shows the NGO’s work and projects, we receive an immense viewership and followers that further leads to establishing new partnerships” (Executive Manager, NGO1).

Another respondent from a large-sized NGO stated that when she got hired in her role in the organization, she was the one approaching the corporate sector for CSR partnerships, however, when she started posting videos of the NGO’s work on Facebook and Instagram, she started receiving phone calls from the corporate sector to schedule an introduction meeting,

“Social media presence makes a huge difference with companies from the private sector. The way you display your work can attract more companies to partner with you” (Account Manager, NGO5).

This was a very interesting finding that shows how social media platforms contribute to CSR partnerships between the three stakeholders. In addition to creating new ways for attracting corporates to partner with NPOs, one surprising finding concerns the way NPOs enhance their internal systems to cater for the private sector. Some NPOs have established relatively small departments specifically tailored to focus on the CSR communication and relations with the private sector. This department focuses on expanding the NPOs connections and networks, attracting potential partners, utilizes social media platforms to provide more information on the NPO’s projects and areas of expertise and communicates in the right ‘corporate language’ with their clients from the corporate sector. A respondent from a middle-sized NGO further explained

that when the NGO establish a communication with a potential partner from the corporate sector, they then schedule a meeting where members of those departments go and present their profile and work on professional platforms such as PowerPoint presentations to the companies. Those members remain responsible for the ongoing communication with the selected partner throughout the CSR project and are responsible to maintain a good relationship with them. Additional questions probed on what drives corporates and NPOs to partner with the government for CSR projects, the researcher found out that there are three main factors that influence them to partner with the government sector. These are: the desired size of the impact they want to achieve from their CSR project; the support provided by the government in providing access to the selected areas of development in Egypt and finally, as stated by most respondents from the corporate and NPO sectors and also supported by literature, and lastly the license for both sectors to keep operating.

#### **5.4 CSR Partnerships Dynamics between Corporates and CSR stakeholders in Egypt**

##### ***Partnership Design and Partnership Implementation stages***

This section analyses three different partnership case studies to answer the research questions. Each case study reflects different partnership dynamics and challenges between the three CSR stakeholders involved in this study. The researcher assesses how those partnerships were formed, analyses the design of the partnerships, and lastly evaluates the challenges and limitations of the partnerships. The researcher also assesses how the partnerships reflect the three pillars of sustainable development: the economic, social, and environmental pillars. The case studies present the partnership design and partnership implementation and institutionalization stages of the conceptual framework.

### 5.4.1 Case Study 1: Partnership between Government, Corporate and INPO

#### Partnership Formation

Case one is a partnership between the government sector, namely the Ministry of Social Solidarity, a large sized multinational corporation in FMCG<sup>5</sup> that specializes in food and beverage: Company A, and an international non-profit organization: INPO A, that is actively involved in developing programs in Upper Egypt that are specifically focused on women's rights, education, governance, civic engagement, resource management and agriculture. The partnership program in question is a program that aims to increase income and promote crop yields in rural governorates in Egypt namely: Behaira, Giza, Minya, and Beni Suef; through providing resources and good practices training to female farmers with a total investment of \$3.7m (Ministry of Social Solidarity, 2019). According to the CSR Manager at Company A, the company initially wanted to develop a CSR program that is related to the company's product portfolio and since one of the best-selling products the company sells is chips, the CSR department wanted to support the communities involved in producing the chips as well as to promote crop yields in a sustainable manner. Company A reached out to INPO A because of its history of partnering with large sized MNCs and its rich experience in the area of Company A's CSR interest: women agriculture and women rights,

“We approach partners based on their reputation, power to create impact, and expertise” (CSR Manager, MNC1).

In addition to the reasons why both partners agreed to collaborate together for this CSR program, during the interview with the board of trustees member of INPO A, the organization has partnered with many reputable stakeholders from the corporate sector, the non-profit international

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<sup>5</sup> FMCG: Fast Moving Consumer Goods companies



organizations sector and government entities, some of these are Mondelez, UNWomen, Danone, HSBC, Microsoft, Barclays, and many more. The respondent further explained the rationale behind selecting the right CSR partner,

“To agree on a partnership, we go through a process of mapping potential partners, analyze their CSR approach and initiate relationships. The company’s approach must align with our value system and talk in the same ‘CSR language’” (Board of Trustees Member and Former Director, NPO1).

Moreover, according to the CSR Manager at Company A, the company knew about the INPO from the reputation of their work and that of the board of the directors of the INPO. After meeting with board of directors of INPO A, both partners established a project leader from each partner to lead the whole project and be responsible of the communication. Company A also conducted field visits with INPO A to observe their previous CSR work and impact. After that, they agreed on the roles of each partner in the CSR program.

### Partnership Analysis

In this partnership, each partner had a specific and clear role to play that was agreed upon before starting the CSR program. Based on the interviews with both partners, Company A provided the funding for the whole program whilst INPO A applied an integrated approach to remove the barriers and challenges that female farmers face in agriculture. It did this through the provision of tools, inputs, agricultural training and financial services and markets to help beneficiaries sell their products (Ministry of Social Solidarity, 2019). Based on the respondents from Company A and INPO A, the roles were agreed upon through several meetings with the board of directors and CSR manager and head of department from Company A. Moreover, the respondent from Company A

added that the success of the CSR program greatly impacts the decision of the partnership continuity. They measure that through,

“The number of beneficiaries, media coverage and press release, and focus groups measure the success of the CSR program. The partnership must feed your reputation” (CSR Manager, MNC1).

While for both partners, the success of the CSR partnership is measured by the level of agreement on the CSR strategy, the strategic alignment of missions, and the agreement on the shared and added value to the society. The respondent from company A added that the level of engagement and responsiveness of the NPO is crucial sustaining the partnership relationship. In this case study, the Ministry of Social Solidarity supported the CSR partnership by providing the database of the 30 million citizens from which INPO A and Company A can access information related on the female farmers and their families. Moreover, this partnership structure followed the strategic partnership type that was modeled by Damlamian (2006) as it includes strategic value creation relationship between both partners. Both partners in this case study are powerful organizations with high level of expertise and credibility where both have exchanged high level of resources and ideas.

This program reflected the three pillars of sustainable development: economic, environmental, and social pillars and is in line with Egypt’s 2030 vision to achieve gender equality, especially in the agricultural sector which contributes heavily to Egypt’s national GDP. From the social perspective, the program aims to not only improve the nutritional wellbeing of 10,000 small scale households with women of elder age and children who are under the age of two, but also helps promotes women empowerment through engaging both women and men in addressing challenges of women’s entry in agricultural supply chains (Ministry of Social Solidarity, 2019). From the environmental perspective, the program aims to provide sustainable practices related to water

usage in agriculture while also improves water replenishment and provides access to reproductive resources. From the economic perspective, the program helps increase crop yields and thus increase incomes in the mentioned governates (Ministry of Social Solidarity, 2019).

### Partnership Evaluation and Limitations

This partnership is different from the other two because the government was not the strongest partner. The government did not play the role of initiating the partnership but provided the support needed to promote the CSR program. From the interviews and discussions with both partners, the researcher reflected that a key success factor in establishing this partnership was trust in the reputation of both organizations, strategic alignment on missions, and the share in contribution of knowledge and resources from each partner. Agreeably the literature suggested that when the right partners work together for CSR programs and projects, they can achieve results that neither of them would have achieved on their own (Menden, Vleuten, Pirzer, Blomberg, 2019).

The only limitation the researcher have reflected from such partnerships and throughout other interviews conducted within the NPOs sector is that there are many smaller-sized NPOs in the market who tackle the area of women agriculture but because they do not have the financial capacity and connections to be visible nor have a platform to showcase their activities, have limited opportunities to partner with such large-sized multinational corporations . They struggle to sustain their funding, and in many cases as described by the project manager at the Food Bank NGO,

“Many smaller sized NGOs are self-funding to maintain their NGO up and running in the market and the large sized ones are monopolizing the market” (Project Manager, NGO2).

The researcher reflected that large-sized NPOs can engage smaller-sized NPOs to implement CSR projects thus providing more opportunities for smaller-sized NPOs to play a role in CSR development and have higher visibility from the eyes of the private sector. One respondent from the corporate sector further explained the reason why corporates prefer to partner with large-sized NPOs,

“It is much easier to get the approval for partnership with well-established large-sized NPOs than with small sized ones because we can guarantee the expected outcome and impact and are sure that the NPO have all the legal rights to activate their projects on ground” (Senior CSR Executive, MNC5).

The respondent clarified that this approach helps the company to avoid facing unnecessarily and costly challenges from the CSR partnerships. The CSR consultant interviewed in this study also shared his experience in tackling this limitation. Through founding a large-sized local NGO called “Terous Foundation” that was established in 2012, the NGO aimed to improve the CSR concept and current partnerships in Egypt through sustainable developments. Their mission is to develop and provide new solutions to achieve impactful and value-added partnership. It does this through organizing CSR conferences with the government and private and civil society sector to improve CSR partnerships, providing clarity on current CSR strategies and through enhancing current networks and connections between both sectors. The respondent explained,

“The foundation increasingly focuses on what we call the ‘matchmaking’ process, where the NGO acts as a match maker connecting those who have common CSR objectives and beliefs from the NGO sector with the private sector and coordinates projects between both sectors” (Dr. Khater, 2021).

Moreover, the ‘match-making’ process was an interesting reflection by the researcher that supports the researcher hypothesis that successful CSR partnerships result when CSR strategies among partners are clear. Moreover, Terous Foundation aims to increase awareness and change the

mindset of the three stakeholders to adopt the idea of working together as one team to reach one common goal. They consider themselves as a credible house for expertise in coordinating partnerships for sustainable developments in Egypt and aim to become the development gateway and promote optimal use of resources in Egypt. Before agreeing on the partnership, the foundation sends to each partner a survey to fill in order to understand their expected outcomes from the partnership and what resources can the partner offer in the partnership. This helps allocate responsibilities and duties of each partner in the right place during the partnership. The researcher reflected that such approach is very similar to the job of the CSR consultants reviewed in the western literature. In the end, the researcher suggests that large sized NPOs can also involve smaller sized NPOs to implement their CSR projects, thus leaving a wider opportunity for smaller sized NPOs to work in CSR and interact with the private sector.

#### *5.4.2 Case Study 2: CSR partnership between multiple companies, the multiple ministries and the NGO.*

##### Partnership Formation

This case study presents a unique partnership between the NGO sector, governmental and private sector, where, for the first time, all companies who are competing within the same industry; oil and gas, unite for one common good cause. In September 2020, the Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources and the oil and gas CSR committee that includes nineteen companies in the oil and gas industry united to partner with the Ministry of Health and a large-sized local NGO; NGO B to provide support needed to combat the global pandemic Covid-19. Through working with MOP and the CSR oil and gas committee, contributions reached 4.5 million towards purchasing the required medical supplies from medical gowns, goggles, surgical masks, and other medical

supplies. The respondent who is working in a large-sized MNC in the oil and gas sector and leading the CSR oil and gas committee explained the initiative,

“The initiative was named ‘One Hand’ representing the unique collaboration and union of all the companies in the oil and gas sector uniting for the first time to achieve one common goal” (Head of Public and Governmental Affairs, MNC4).

From the response of the respondent, all oil and gas companies have formed a CSR Committee under the supervision of the Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, where they meet on a regular basis to discuss initiatives and programs to promote CSR in Egypt. The projects are then supported by the Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources. Through this CSR committee, during the Covid-19 pandemic all companies in the oil and gas sector collaborated and signed a protocol with the Ministry of Health and Population and partnered with NGO B to support the medical sector in Egypt. Moreover, NGO B was responsible for getting the medical supplies from suppliers. The Oil and Gas CSR Committee worked directly with the Ministry of Health to receive information on the hospitals that lacked medical supplies and tools to help them fight Covid-19 pandemic, funded the supplies that were brought by NGO B and delivered the supplies to the Ministry of Health and Population which was the one responsible for distributing the supplies to hospitals.

#### Partnership Analysis

This partnership is unique because of two main reasons. The first is that the government plays a strong role in promoting the establishment of the CSR oil and gas committee that combines leaders from different companies in the oil and gas sector to talk about CSR solutions and sustainable developments for surrounding communities. Secondly, it is unique in combining companies from the same field to partner together for CSR. The respondent from the oil and gas MNC interviewed

in this study has chaired the CSR oil and gas committee for three consecutive years. The respondent explained that the formation of the CSR oil and gas committee developed from the several meetings and conferences that were organized by the Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources. The respondent stated that,

“The Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources is very active and promotes CSR projects within the oil and gas companies that they have promoted the rise of the Oil and Gas CSR Committee “ (Head of Public and Governmental Affairs, MNC4).

Nevertheless, the respondent from MNC4<sup>6</sup> added that the reason for the success of this partnership is the clear division of roles that each stakeholder had, and the spirit derived from working together as one team for the same goal. Before agreeing with NGO B for the partnership, the committee agreed on the role division of every stakeholder involved in the CSR partnership. This insight reflected on the partnership design stage of the conceptual framework. The respondent then conducted field visits to observe the actual work and projects of the potential NGO even if they had not yet finalized their selection in their project. This is part of the pre-assessment conducted to make sure they are heading towards the right NGO for their project. The respondent explained,

“I want to see how genuine the NGO is, how far has their impact can reach and are they putting the budget in the right place or not” (Head of Public and Governmental Affairs, MNC4).

Another respondent from the corporate sector, specifically in the telecom industry, also agreed on the importance of meeting with NGO’s leaders before establishing the partnership,

“We first like to meet with the NGO’s committee members and president of the organization to observe their culture, mindset, and values before agreeing on the contract. This saves time and cost of entering an unsuccessful partnership” (CSR Manager, MNC6).

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<sup>6</sup> MNC4: Oil and Gas Multinational Corporation

Another respondent from a large-sized local NGO also agreed that if the client is too tensed, they invite the client for a field visit to let them see their work and impact on ground to make them more relaxed with the project they are financing. Nevertheless, the respondent from MNC4 also added that the size of the company's name and logo on the project banner is not of matter as much as ensuring the budgets allocated for the CSR project are spent in the right place and where they are most needed. The same respondent also stated that during the partnership with NGOs, they like to transfer the corporate culture onto that of the NGO as some NGOs need to be more structured in dealing with the corporate sector and more challenged in what they are capable of achieving. The respondent added,

“When NGOs are more educated on the culture of the company, this creates better results of the CSR partnership and achieve greater impact from the CSR project” (Head of Public and Governmental Affairs, MNC4).

According to the respondent, one of the key success factors of the success of the partnership in this case study is the fact that NGO B comprehended the corporate culture due to its previous experience with large-sized multinational corporations. The respondent stated that NGO B knew that CSR oil and gas committee wanted to work in fast speed and that deadlines mattered to the committee. Therefore, they put that factor into high consideration during the partnership. Similarly, a respondent from a middle-sized local NGO stated that they prefer to partner with only those companies who truly believe in the cause and not just partner for the sake of raising funds.

The respondent expressed,

“We capitalize on the private sector partnerships because they have the strongest belief for CSR and we only partner with those who belief in the cause” (Founder and Chairman, NGO3).

The partnership structure in this case study reflected the independent value creation partnership type supported by Damlamian (2006), where each partner had their own task and mission to



complete and by partnering together, they achieved a common desired outcome. Moreover, this partnership reflected the social and economic pillar of sustainable development through supporting the medical sector in Egypt and providing the required supplies to promptly support covid-19 patients and consequently decrease the number of deaths. This CSR project also saved financial costs to hospitals through funding the supplies delivered and promoted the economic cycle for suppliers of the medical supplies.

### Partnership Limitation and Evaluation

One limitation that the researcher observed in this case study is the lack of structured evaluation process of the partnership. According to the respondent from MNC4, the closure of the partnership happened when all supplies were delivered to the hospitals in need. On the contrary, a respondent from the NPO side stated that during partnerships the corporate sector asks for regular reports as part of monitoring and evaluating the CSR progress,

“Although sometimes the requests are considerably high and load the team, the team has to deliver all reports on time and within the requested standards of the client. We need their funds in the end of the day” (Head of Public Relations and Communications, NGO2).

Additionally, another respondent from a pharmaceutical large-sized MNC explained that they have an evaluation survey that is distributed among all participants by the end of the CSR program to measure its success. However, the respondent mentioned that it is very challenging to receive back the survey completed,

“Monitoring the outcomes of CSR project is not the easiest at all as participants become very resistant to answer surveys” (Head of Communications and Corporate Responsibility, MNC3).

The respondent also added that the challenge of collecting back the feedback surveys became even more challenging during the Covid-19 pandemic as there were more restrictions added to visiting

the participants in person. Another partnership challenge that was raised during the interview with the respondent from this case study is the resistance of NPOs to adhere to challenging requests by corporates. The respondent explained that this is a common challenge when dealing with NPOs and referred to an example with another NGO partnership for developing school's infrastructure. The school's admin and teachers were resistant to attend the awareness session conducted by the MNC and the NGO, so the NGO requested the MNC to change the school and to work on another school where the admin would be more acceptable and cooperative with the CSR program. However, the respondent took this as an opportunity to enhance the mindset of both the NGO to be more persistent, and the teachers and admin in the public school to become more flexible in accepting new ideas. The respondent explained,

“We challenge the NGO to be persistent and to have other ways of making things happen” (Head of Public and Governmental Affairs, MNC4).

The respondent described that any challenges faced during the partnership is taken as an opportunity to improve the mindset of both the NGO and the public school's admin and teachers.

#### *5.4.3 Case Study 3: CSR Partnership between the government, multiple corporations, and local NGO*

##### Partnership Formation

This case study presents more than three partners cooperating in one partnership for CSR. In 2018, The Ministry of Education and Technical Education partnered with a large-sized telecom MNC: Company C, a large-sized local bank: Company D, a large-sized local NGO: NGO C, to create a competition that aims to encourage the Egyptian youth to come up with new ideas and innovations and present them to the Ministry of Education and Technical Education along with the three other partners. The partnership was initially founded by Company C who approached

Company D and NGO C to partner together for this CSR program. After the three partners agreed on the partnership. Company C approached the Ministry of Education with the CSR project proposal. According to the respondent from the Ministry of Education and Technical Education, a filtration process is conducted to the proposal to check whether the ministry can agree to collaborate in the partnership or not. The ministry needed to check the three stakeholder's tax registry files and get the approval of the stakeholders' profile clearance by the office of National Security. Moreover, the four partners held several meetings to divide and clarify the roles of each partner, with Company C in lead due to its strongest financial contribution. Company C and D sponsored the whole program from a financial standpoint and were responsible for publicizing the competition on social media platforms to invite students from different governorates to apply. Local NGO C was responsible for executing the program from a logistic standpoint. NGO C organized the training workshops, provided students with necessary supplies, and closely followed up with students on their submissions and deadlines. The Ministry of Education and Technical Education supported this CSR partnership by creating student IDs on the Egyptian Knowledge Bank; the world's largest digital library that grants unlimited resources exclusively for Egyptians (The Egyptian Knowledge Bank, 2021). The student ID creation confirms the official joining of the competition and allowed students to have free access to the Egyptian Knowledge Bank. Through the Egyptian Knowledge Bank, students utilized the unlimited resources and scholarly information provided to support them with their innovations and ideas. The winners of this competition eventually received presidential recognition during the World Youth Forum event held at Sharm el Sheikh and the CSR program received an immense media publicity.

## Partnership Analysis

This partnership is unique in combining more than three partners to collaborate for CSR program. In this partnership, According to the respondent from the Ministry of Education and Technical Education, Company C provided support not only through financial means but also through letting the company's employees volunteer in the project by giving training workshops to the students at the public schools selected for this project. Lorenzen (2012) supported this act by expressing how great the impact becomes for employees who volunteer as generally employees are more motivated working in a company that supports its communities.

Furthermore, this CSR partnership provided key benefits to the society and the economy. From a social perspective, the workshops and training invested for the students increased their level of expertise and knowledge and provided access to unlimited information and hence increases the scientific knowledge of students. From an economical perspective, the student's innovations can eventually turn into real business plans and models generating more income and respectively contribute positively to the country's economy. Lastly, some of the innovations and ideas created by students presented better resource management and targeted issues concerning climate change.

This partnership structure represented the partnership with reciprocal exchange outlined by Damlamian (2006) as partners collaborated for a cause-related marketing relation that supports the mission and values of each partner.

## Partnership Limitation and Evaluation

The respondent from the Ministry of Education and Technical Education mentioned that some of the challenges faced in this partnership came into place when the banner for the program was created and each partner had to pick the size of their name and logo. The respondent expressed:

“Partners would challenge each other on whose name would come before whom depending on their financial contribution” (Media & Communication Executive, MOE).

The researched reflected from this insight that company’s image and reputation remains as one of the key motivation factors for corporates to carry out CSR projects. Also, another challenge faced was in the role division in some of the minor tasks of the project when it was not clear where the responsibility of the task lies. For example, during the program implementation, it was not clear on who would cover the finances of transporting students from their homes to the training workshops. The Ministry of Education and Technical Education office needed to contact NGO C and Company C and D to check who will cover those costs before proceeding with the task. The respondent mentioned that this would result in some delay in conducting the workshops. This showed that although there was role division taken place in this partnership as mentioned by the respondent during the interview, some details of role division were missed out or lacked clarity. In fact, according to the CSR consultant, one of the main challenges of CSR partnerships between the three stakeholders occur when there is lack of working in a ‘scientific manner’, meaning that there is still lack of the team spirit and transparency in sharing information between all three stakeholders involved in the partnership. The respondent said,

“Some partnerships in Egypt still lack the concept of working as one team. Partners should know that collective power is much stronger than single power” (Dr. Khater, 2021).

## 5.5 Success and Failure of CSR Partnerships

From the interviews and discussions, the researcher noted that there are key factors that affect the success or failure of CSR partnerships in Egypt. According to CSR consultant interviewed in this study, there are two important factors that influence the success of CSR partnerships in Egypt, these are; having a unified strategy among the three stakeholders set for the partnership and to encourage the three stakeholders to have more partnerships made between them.

A respondent from the pharmaceutical industry agreed on the same suggestion and said,

“Imagine if there are 10 partners on the table, can you imagine how the impact will look like” (Head of Communications and Corporate Responsibility, MNC3).

In addition to having a unified strategy among the partners involved in a CSR program to achieve more successful partnerships, communication is a crucial factor that corporates evaluate the success of the partnership upon. Ease of communication and having clear communicated responsibilities and defined roles among involved team members in partnerships are important factors that the private sector looks at in the evaluation process of the partnership. As another respondent described,

“It is very important to have clear and established roles and to appoint a project leader from each partner who can follow up on the project and provide progress updates” (CSR Manager, MNC6).

Moreover, another interesting reflection the researcher noted during interviews is that many NPOs have taken considerable actions to enhance their internal systems to cater for the private sector. One of the respondents who work in a middle-sized NGO explained that their NGO has taken considerable actions to enhance their internal systems to cater for the private sector. The NGO has established a relatively small department that is specifically tailored to focus on the CSR communication and relations with partners from the private sector. This department focuses on

expanding the NGO's connections and networks, attracting potential partners, utilizes social media platforms to provide more information on the NGO's projects and their areas of expertise, and communicates in the right 'corporate language' with clients from the corporate sector. The researcher reflected that this insight was agreed upon by respondents from the corporate sector when they mentioned the importance of adopting the corporate culture in the NPO and how this removes communication barriers during partnerships. Furthermore, one important insight that the researcher learned throughout the interview with the Head of Communications and Corporate Responsibility at Astrazeneca, a pharmaceutical and biochemistry multinational corporation, is that corporates usually prefer to continue partnering with NPOs that delivered successful CSR projects before with them. She explained,

“It's within my own benefit to continue with those who gave us a good experience as they already know our mindset and the kind of impact we like to achieve” (Head of Communications and Corporate Responsibility, MNC 3).

The researcher reflected that trust and compatibility are important in sustaining CSR partnerships among the private and NPO sector. Other respondents from NPO sector mentioned the importance of building a relationship with their clients during the partnerships as this is an important factor in sustaining partnerships. Lastly, an insightful way of thinking about how CSR partnership should behave in Egypt to result in establishing more successful and sustainable partnerships for CSR developments was brought to attention by the CSR consultant interviewed in this study. The respondent explained the importance of adapting a CSR ecosystem in which every sector is dependent on the other to sustain its own existence in the market. While the private sector's main objective is to maximize shareholder value; this should not overcome the public sector's goals. Moreover, the NPOs' success criteria are based on the social impact they are able to make while gaining revenues to cover their costs, NPOs need to create impact to win their credibility in the

eyes of the public and private sector to enable them to win more partnerships. Therefore, working on a common strategy along with having good project coordination are key elements in sustaining partnerships among all CSR stakeholders as each stakeholder relies on the other to sustain their operation in the market. In the end, the respondent believes that in general, CSR in Egypt is taking the right direction, he said,

“CSR changes does not happen in one night; it takes years to see a real and tangible change in the mindset of the three stakeholders and especially the government. CSR as a concept and practice has changed dramatically in the past decade and is going in a positive direction. We are definitely in a very good stage” (Dr. Khater, 2021).

According to the same respondent, some of the factors that leads to discontinuity of private – NPO partnerships for CSR is the fact that some of the NPOs and corporates look for quick wins rather than achieving consistent and sustainable impact. Some corporates and NPOs, specifically local NGOs, still partner together based on a random selection process rather than a planned and constructive one, which eventually leads to facing more challenges and limitations as both partners enter the implementation stage. Another challenge reflected by another respondent that supports the importance of selecting the right partner and going through the right process of partnership selection before agreeing on the partnership, is that if the partnered NPO is not abiding by the government’s regulation and does not have the approved access to implement the CSR project this puts the corporate in great trouble. The responded added, “this is why the name of the NGO matters” (Head of Communications and Corporate Responsibility, MNC3). Seitanidi & Crane (2008) support this reflection in the partnership selection stage of the conceptual partnership model by heavily emphasizing on the importance of checking the organization’s previous history and experience in working in the field of expertise before agreeing on the partnership to avoid major challenges from occurring.



## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

This section summarizes the key findings of the study. Based on the findings and the suggestions proposed by respondents of this study, the final chapter presents the recommendations to improve CSR partnerships between corporates and NPOs in order to reach a successful CSR eco-system and sustainable development in Egypt. The chapter then ends with the conclusion.

#### **6.2 Key Findings**

In summary, there were many unique reflections and key findings that this research revealed that represents the current CSR partnership model and structure between CSR stakeholders in Egypt. This study focused on understanding the nature of partnerships among Egypt and explores the potential of the development and growth of these partnerships. One of the major findings the researcher has reflected from this study and that is supported by the literature is that the CSR strategy development and partnership selection stages are highly practiced among CSR stakeholders in Egypt. Clear CSR strategies among partners lead to selecting the right partner which eventually results in better CSR partnerships results. Moreover, not only do corporates seek partnerships with different CSR stakeholders to implement their CSR strategies and create a bigger impact but to also give them a license to operate, enhance their public image, and increase their credibility and beneficiaries. Corporates in Egypt have recognized the value addition of partnering with NPOs because of their expertise in implementing CSR strategies. Through sharing resources and knowledge, cross-sector partnerships between the corporates, NPOs and the government provide a joint value creation to each partner involved. The study also shows that trust and

compatibility are very important to be established in the partnership and especially during the first stages of partnerships when both partners align their expected outcomes from the partnerships. Many corporates are now conducting field visits to observe the NPO's work before they agree on the partnership, and many undergo introduction meeting and profile clearance check of the board members of the potential NPO to decrease any risks that would harm the company's image from occurring. Additionally, personal network and connections are factors that contribute in having trust in the selected partner. Another interesting endorsement of the study is that the strong link between the core activities of companies and the partnerships they are involved in as the example seen in case study one. Another major finding that the study revealed is the power of social media in attracting and securing partnerships in Egypt. Social media has become a powerful tool in establishing networking and connections between partners, in reaching a wider audience and in showcasing CSR impact and results that would attract potential partners to collaborate.

Another interesting finding of this research is the NPOs' recognition of acquiring a higher level of professionalism when partnering with corporates. Corporates expect a professional way of dealing with and communicating to them the progress on CSR projects and NPO's have realized the importance of dealing with professionalism in order to sustain the relationship. Furthermore, although some corporates and NPOs recognize the government's support in CSR partnerships, many suggested that the government should work more collaboratively with NPOs and rather than treating them as a separate entity, they should be acting as a complementary partner in their CSR developments. This adds to the existing limitations to smaller sized local NGOs who do not have access to the same level of partnership opportunities as that of the large-sized NGOs and INPOs whom are monopolizing the CSR market with their high level of funding and NPO's owner recognition by corporates . Also, the study showed an increasing interest by respondents in having

more regulated CSR conferences by the government and a publicized online platform that is regulated by the government to connect CSR stakeholders in Egypt and unify CSR visions. Nevertheless, based on the recommendations shared during the study and respondents' from the corporate sector's feedback on the need for CSR consultants or consultancy offices in Egypt, there is an agreement among corporate and NPO respondents that although corporates enjoy a consultant's view on CSR partnerships, they still need to see a higher added reward value from CSR consultants to provide them with access to their information, accept their guidance on their CSR strategies and pay for such service. The researcher reasons that professional service providers for supporting CSR partnerships and projects are much needed, those who can play a similar role to that of Terous<sup>7</sup> foundation that indirectly acts as a CSR consultant to all CSR stakeholders involved in a partnership and provides guidance in the partnership selection and design stages, while also follows up on the whole CSR project implementation and ensure outcomes of the project are achieved by each partner.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

The first recommendation is to have a publicized online platform that is regulated and governed by professional service providers who promote the development of CSR partnerships. This platform would have stakeholders from the public, private and NPO sectors to register and create their own profile where other stakeholders can view each other's' work in CSR, review feedback and add ratings on projects conducted, have access to contact information of existing NPOs, corporates' CSR departments, and representatives from the governmental sector. This will not only

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<sup>7</sup> Terous Foundation: a large-sized local NGO established in 2012 with the aim to improve the CSR concept and partnerships in Egypt through sustainable developments.

shed light on small-sized local NGOs who have high level of expertise yet have limited connections that limits their opportunities to develop partnerships but will also prevent the large sized NGOs and INPOs from monopolizing the market. Moreover, the online platform will promote more CSR partnerships among CSR stakeholders and promote having more than three stakeholders involved in one partnership. The online platform can also connect stakeholders to each other's profile on social media platforms.

The second recommendation is that each stakeholder should activate their social media platforms where they can display their CSR programs and partnerships on. This will act as an indirect introduction to the stakeholder's credibility, and standard of work and hence can make the partnership selection stage much easier for CSR stakeholders. To enable more clarity in partnership selection, the profile should include contact information of stakeholders, their mission and values, their area of expertise and history of partnerships. This would lead us to the third recommendation which encourages the development of more CSR partnerships through widening the pool of CSR stakeholders, whereby NPOs are recommended to approach corporates who are not usually engaged in CSR with innovative and new ideas for relevant CSR projects. To avoid large sized NPOs from monopolizing CSR partnerships with the private sector, large-sized NPOs are also recommended to act as an umbrella and implement CSR projects through smaller-sized NPOs, where they would have an opportunity to connect with the private sector and to contribute in the CSR development and projects.

Furthermore, the fourth and crucial recommendation is for the government to build on the existing policies and CSR framework. The researcher recommends establishing a National Council for CSR, one that focuses on CSR partnership models in Egypt through regulating the framework for CSR partnerships and providing improvement plans for partnerships between the private and civil

society sectors. It would also encourage more CSR policies such as providing tax incentives to companies and NPOs who invest in CSR projects, regulating the online platform for CSR in Egypt, reviews and monitors CSR reports from stakeholders, organizes CSR conferences and encourages more innovations and tools to improve CSR partnerships in Egypt. The council would also collaborate with NPOs on their current and planned CSR strategies and programs. Eventually, NPOs should be perceived as collaboratively working with the government and support the government's projects rather than perceived as a separate entity for CSR development. These recommendations can lead to encouraging more corporates and NPOs to take a role in CSR developments in Egypt.

#### **6.4 Conclusion**

The data analyzed and insightful findings added a deeper understanding to the current practices of CSR partnership model in Egypt and provided useful recommendations to improve those partnerships in Egypt for sustainable development. The analysis and findings showed that there is a huge gap between the existing literature supporting CSR partnerships in Egypt and the reality of CSR partnership practices and challenges between the three CSR stakeholders.

Being one of the very few researchers studying current CSR partnership models and dynamics between different stakeholders in Egypt, this study and findings contributes significantly to the current limited literature and acts as a foundation for future research in this topic. Lastly, the study provides valuable insights on current partnership practices, develops a conceptual framework for the four stages of partnership, observes the current partnership stages that CSR stakeholders go through to execute their CSR strategies, sheds light on the current challenges and limitations for

CSR partnerships, and finally provides recommendations to stakeholders involved in CSR partnerships and CSR practitioners in Egypt.

As recommended by important members of the CSR community in Egypt, the research can be also presented in CSR conferences and events to shed light on current partnership models and dynamics between the three stakeholders in Egypt. CSR stakeholders need to be informed with and updated on the current situation of CSR practice and CSR partnerships in Egypt, observe CSR partnership model in Egypt from a holistic view, learn how each stakeholder can improve their CSR partnership strategies and practices and eventually take the recommendations into real practice during their next CSR partnerships.

Additional interesting research areas were detected during the progress of creating this paper. One of them is that this study focused on analyzing CSR partnerships between private sector companies the state, and NPOs, while partnership practices among companies in the public sector may uncover interesting differences or similarities in approach.

### **6.3 Limitation of the study**

Since interviewed participants, including CSR companies and NPOs are based on a snowballing technique, whereas companies in which their CSR projects are not adequately publicized loses the opportunity of recognition and inclusion in the pool of interviewed companies and NPOs. Also, generalization of concepts can be that of challenge as the number of participants is not enough to generalize concepts and also because most of the respondents interviewed for this study are considered “high performers” within the CSR field.

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## **Documentation of Informed Consent for Participation in Research Study**

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**Project Title:** The cooperation between corporate companies and CSR stakeholders in relation to CSR and sustainable development in Egypt.

**Principal Investigator:** Menna El Nенаei

\*You are being asked to participate in a research study. The purpose of the research is to understand the existing collaboration methods/partnerships between CSR service providers or Non-Governmental Organizations with corporate companies in Egypt. The findings of this study will be submitted to and published by The American University in Cairo in partial fulfillment of a Master's Degree in Sustainable Development. The results of the study will be presented at the university. The expected duration of your participation in this interview is about 1 hour.

This research project uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods including interviews with representatives of companies and service providers in Cairo, as well as with consultants. I will also be assessing company reports and statistics.

\*There will be no risks or discomforts associated with this research.

\*There will not be benefits to you from this research. However, I will be sharing a summary of my research with you at the end of my project.

\*The information you provide for purposes of this research is confidential. Your name will not be included anywhere in the presentation of the research results.

*Questions about the research, my rights, or research-related injuries should be directed to Menna El Nенаei at +2 01005266519 and my advisor's name is Dr. Charles Kaye-Essien (charles.kaye-essien@aucegypt.edu)*

\*Participation in this study is voluntary. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or the loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

