

Partnership Brokering as a Driver of Social Business

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Abstract : Extreme poverty continues to plague the world. Forty-seven million people live well-below the poverty line in Bangladesh, enduring poor quality of life, often with no access to basic human needs like shelter and healthcare. It is not surprising that poverty eradication is central to the mission of social change makers, such as Muhammad Yunus, who have demonstrated how enterprise-led development initiatives empower individuals at the grassroots, and can galvanize entire communities to emerge out of poverty. Such strategies call for system-wide change, and like a number of systems leaders, social business champions have typically challenged the status quo, and broken out of silos to catalyze vibrant multi-stakeholder partnerships across sectors. Apart from individual charisma, social change makers succeed because they garner collaborative impact through socially beneficial partnerships. So while enterprise-led social development evolves in scope and complexity, in step with the need to create and sustain partnerships, Partnership Brokering is emerging as an approach to facilitate collaborative processes. As such, it may now be possible for anyone motivated by the idea of social business to acquire the skills and sophistication necessary for building enriching partnerships that harness the power of the market to address poverty. This paper examines dimensions of partnership brokering in the context of social business, and explores the implications of this emerging approach on fostering poverty eradication.

Keywords : poverty, social business, partnership brokering, social entrepreneurship, systems change, enterprise-led development, change making

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