



# Corporate-NGO Partnerships Barometer 2017



*Corporates and NGOs invest more in partnerships as fears  
over Brexit lessen*

## Contents

Introduction	3
Headline Findings	4
Part 1: Why corporates and NGOs partner	7
Part 2: Partnering practice – and effectiveness	9
Part 3: “Brexit” – the potential impact of the UK’s decision to leave the EU	17
Part 4: Influence of the UN Sustainable Development Goal to “revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development” on cross-sector partnerships	20
Part 5: The stars –The most admired corporate-NGO partnerships and partners	23
Part 6: Future trends, prospects and anticipated developments in corporate-NGO partnering	29
Concluding Remarks	34
About the Barometer	35
Appendices	38

## Introduction

**Welcome to the eighth edition of the C&E Corporate-NGO partnerships Barometer - our unique annual series of practitioner-led studies.**

This 2017 Barometer edition draws on the experience of 126 leading companies and NGOs who completed our confidential annual survey during June & July. As usual, the survey was supplemented by deep-dive discussions with corporate and NGO practitioners, to provide qualitative insights.

This year's Barometer reveals a number of fascinating findings from partnership practitioners about developments in the partnering landscape over the last year – and how they foresee practices in partnering evolving in the years to come.

Although the companies participating in the Barometer study are amongst the world's largest multi-national corporations, and many of the non-profits are NGOs and development agencies with global footprints, many also have a UK or European base. We therefore wanted to test sentiments about the likely effect of Brexit on cross -sector partnering. This year's Barometer found that, on the whole, sentiment on the possible effects of Brexit is more sanguine than was the case in 2016, when there was much uncertainty and trepidation on this subject, particularly amongst NGOs in the immediate aftermath of the UK Brexit vote.

Overall, there is a great deal of optimism around the cross-sector partnering agenda – perhaps more so than at any other time in the Barometer's eight-year history. Practitioners are both proud of, and optimistic about the difference the partnerships they deliver make in enhancing social, environmental and economic value. The UN Sustainable Development Goals



Manny Amadi, MVO  
CEO, C&E Advisory

(SDGs) - in particular, Goal 17 (our second focus topic this year) which emphasises the role of cross-sector partnering, is considered to be an increasingly important driver of the growth in corporate-NGO partnering.

It is great news that the Barometer's cumulative findings over its lifespan clearly indicate a growing understanding from all concerned of the increasing scale, sophistication and potential of NGO-corporate partnerships – and their ability to deliver value.

We are very grateful to all our respondents and commentators for sharing their perspectives and experiences. We hope this 2017 edition of the C&E Corporate-NGO Partnerships Barometer helps to inform and enhance their and your understanding, investment decisions and practice of corporate-NGO partnering.

As usual, we welcome your comments and suggestions via [www.candeadvisory.com/barometer](http://www.candeadvisory.com/barometer) or [admin@candeadvisory.com](mailto:admin@candeadvisory.com)

**Manny Amadi, MVO**  
**CEO, C&E Advisory**

## Headline Findings

### Why partner?

*For corporates, reputation and credibility remain the dominant reason for entering into partnerships with NGOs (cited by 92% of companies compared to 52% of NGOs), whilst (with a 93% NGO score versus 23% for corporates) access to funds remains the primary driver for NGOs. But things are changing for NGOs...*

Notably, NGOs are increasingly motivated by the need to achieve greater innovation through their partnerships (up a striking 22% year on year),

The 2017 findings also show NGOs being increasingly interested in the effectiveness and efficiencies (up 14% and 15% respectively year on year) and possibilities for human resource development (up 13% year on year) to be gained through partnering with companies.

### Partnering practice – and effectiveness

*A notable increase in the scale of resources invested in or secured from partnerships ...*

The proportion of organisations investing or securing resources of over £10million per annum in corporate-NGO partnering increased by 9% compared to 2016 (31% of companies and NGOs invest / secure resources of >£10m p.a. in partnerships versus 22% last year)

*Strategic partnering on the rise – but divergent approaches to portfolio management: corporates have a more strategic emphasis than NGOs ...*

Nearly three quarters (79%) of corporates categorise their partnerships with NGOs as “strategic”. This compares with an equivalent figure of just 32% partnerships in NGOs partnering portfolios that are deemed to be strategic in nature.

*The emphasis on deeper, problem-solving partnerships extends – as purpose and mission increasingly take centre-stage in partnerships*

42% of respondents categorise their organisations as engaging in “deeper, problem-solving partnerships designed to address core, mission-relevant or purpose-led issues in ways that create value for society, for ourselves and for our...partners”. A significant 18% uplift on the 2016 figure (24%).

### What value do partners bring to each other?

*True partners – using each other’s expertise and changing business practice for the better...*

Both corporate and NGO practitioners (with respective year on year increases of 4% and 12%) feel increasingly assured of the value that NGO partnerships have in changing the practices of businesses for the better. Cross-sector partnerships really are moving the dial for NGOs, for businesses, and for society as a whole.

## **“Brexit” – the potential impact of the UK’s decision to leave the EU**

### ***“Whatever happens after Brexit, life will go on” ...***

Corporate and NGO practitioners are more relaxed about the likely impact of Brexit on cross-sector partnering. Fewer respondents (around a third, at 34%) expect Brexit to have a negative or significantly negative impact than was the case last year (42%), and there has been a strong increase (by 10% year on year) of those that expect Brexit to have no effect on partnering (roughly two thirds - 65%).

However, the majority of international NGOs and development agencies (56%) still fear that Brexit will have a negative impact on their organisations’ partnering with corporates. Nevertheless, this is a notably lower proportion than last year when the equivalent international NGO figure for likely Brexit “negative impact” was 71%.

## **Influence of the UN Sustainable Development Goal to “revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development” on cross-sector partnerships**

### ***UN Sustainable Development Goal yet to make a big impact in the UK...***

Broadly similar to last year’s Barometer findings, figures confirm that the majority of corporates and NGOs (62%) are modestly, strongly, or very strongly influenced by the SDGs.

However, despite its resonance across a range of UK-relevant topic areas and goals (from good health & well-being, reduced inequalities, to climate action) for UK-focused NGOs, the SDGs do not yet represent a major influencing factor in terms of cross-sector partnering. The majority of UK-only NGOs (67%) state that they are “hardly” or “not at all” influenced by the SDGs - a figure which is consistent with our findings in 2016 (67%)

## **The stars – The Most Admired corporate-NGO partnerships and partners**

### ***Clarity, ambition and effective execution are key***

There was a clear overall winner again this year with GlaxoSmithKline-Save the Children taking the number one spot as Most Admired partnership for the second year in a row. The Marks & Spencer and Oxfam partnership moved up one into second place. The new kid on the “most admired” block is the Innocent-Age UK partnership in third place.



## Future prospects for corporate-NGO partnering

### *NGO-corporate partnerships seen as increasingly important.*

Over 90% of all respondents anticipate that partnerships between corporates and NGOs will become either more, or much more important over the next three years. Not a single respondent anticipates a reversal in this trend.

Leveraging partner assets, pressure on companies, and evidence of partnering success are key drivers for likely future trends.

## And what is the likely future trajectory of investments in cross-sector partnerships?

### *Positive future investment landscape*

Just over three-quarters (77%) of corporates and NGOs (consolidated) expect their investments in cross-sector partnering to increase or increase significantly over the next three years (as compared with 66% in 2016).

**89% of NGOs anticipate an increase in their organisations' investment in cross-sector partnerships - an uplift of 10% compared to the figures for 2016.** This is driven by recognition of the multiple value of corporate partnering, and a need to respond to increased competition within the sector as more and more NGOs seek bigger, strategic partnerships.

## Part 1: Why Companies and NGOs Partner

**For corporates, reputation and credibility remain dominant, whilst access to funds remains the primary driver for NGOs, but things are changing for NGOs...**

Over the course of the Barometer's eight-year life, the overall trend has demonstrated that corporates are primarily looking to improve their reputation and credibility – whilst NGOs are mainly seeking funding through partnership with each sector. These two factors remain paramount, but the picture is changing in other areas.

Notably, NGOs are increasingly motivated by the need to achieve greater innovation through their partnerships (up a striking 22% year on year), and are simultaneously interested more in long-term stability and impact – securing greater 'reach' and enhanced sustainable development impact via partnerships. As the UN SDGs acknowledge and role-model partnerships increasingly demonstrate, innovations in the social and environmental arenas increasingly thrive at the nexus of cross-sector collaboration. The Barometer demonstrates that an increasing number of NGOs are drawing insight and inspiration from the growing number of problem-solving partnerships that are increasingly evident.

Today's NGO-corporate partnerships are multi-faceted and mutually beneficial in increasingly complex and innovative ways, so the 2017 Barometer findings chime with the overall evolution of the corporate sustainability market-place.

For similar reasons, the 2017 findings also show NGOs being increasingly interested

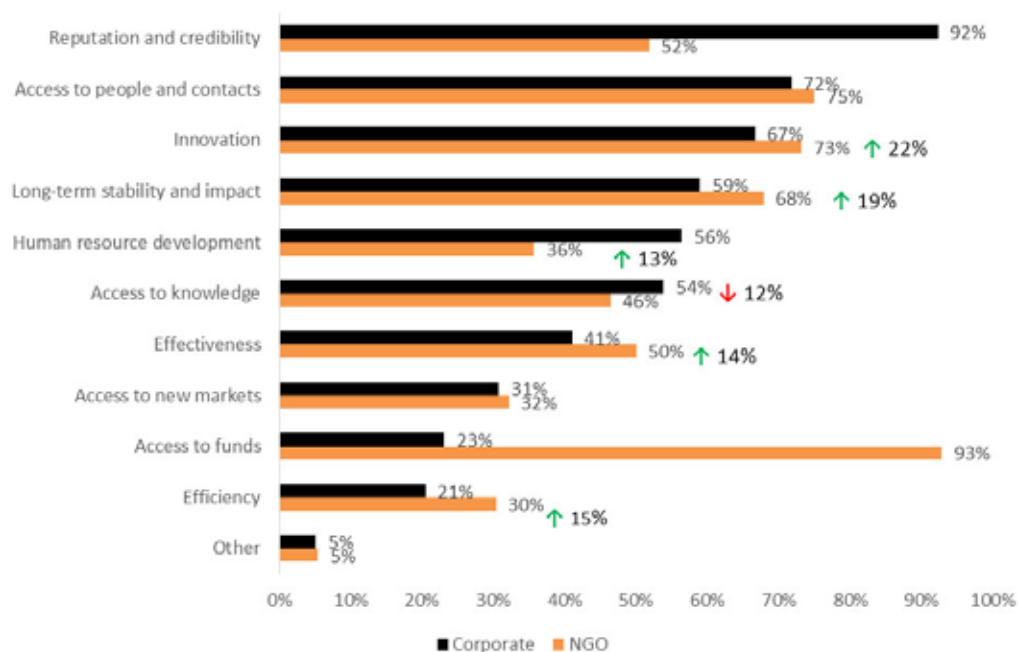
in the effectiveness and efficiencies (up 14% and 15% respectively year on year) and possibilities for human resource development (up 13% year on year) to be gained through partnering with companies. This reflects the growing pressures on NGOs to drive down operational and income-generating costs, but also seems to indicate the increased understanding NGOs have of the potential for delivering on their agendas by leveraging the expertise of relevant corporates.

Curiously, corporates seem this year to be less interested in "access to knowledge" (down 12% year on year) as a motivator for partnership with NGOs. Focus group discussions, confirmed the continuing importance to corporates of access to NGO knowledge. Corporate participants speculated that "access to knowledge" may now be so fundamental as to be "baked in" to their organisations' motivations for cross-sector partnering. In other words, given that partnerships are increasingly longer-term, and that knowledge accrues over time, it may be that some corporate survey respondents took this important factor as a given. In any case, we will examine this factor more closely in the 2018 edition of the Barometer.

As in previous years, both corporates and NGOs (72% and 75% respectively) continue to rate access to people and contacts as important motivators for partnering with each other.

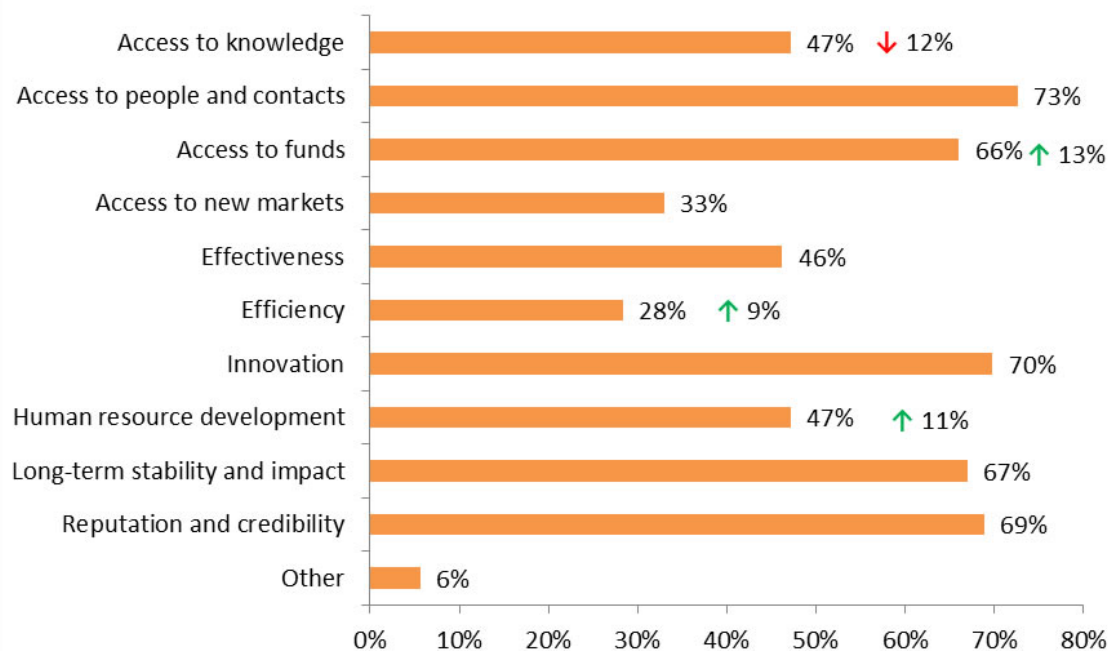
# C&E Corporate-NGO Partnerships Barometer 2017

Figure 1: Why companies and NGOs engage in partnerships with each other (broken down by sector):



Why does your organisation engage in corporate-NGO partnerships?

Figure 2: Why companies and NGOs engage in partnerships with each other (NGOs and Corporates consolidated):



Why does your organisation engage in corporate-NGO partnerships?



## Part 2: Partnering practice – and effectiveness

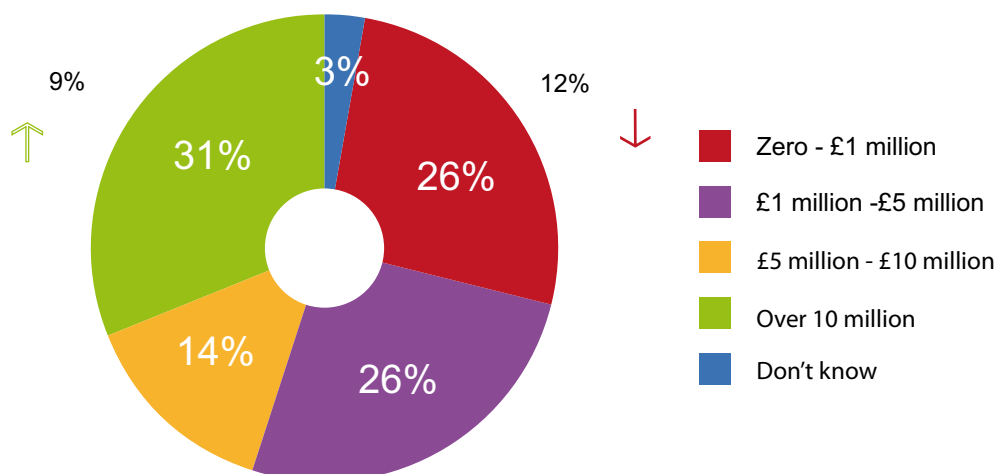
### A notable increase in the scale of resources invested in or secured from partnerships ...

This year's Barometer shows a significant decrease in the number of organisations investing in or securing resources at the lowest ends of the partnering resource scale. There was a 12% decrease in organisations at the zero - £1 million category compared to 2016. Conversely, and notably, at 31%, the proportion of organisations investing or securing resources of over £10 million in corporate-NGO partnering increased by 9% compared to 2016 (figure 3 – consolidated data).

The shift towards the higher levels of investments in and / or secured from partnerships are even more clearly demonstrated in the separate data for NGOs (figure 4) and corporates (figure 5) where this upward shift can be seen across each stakeholder group.

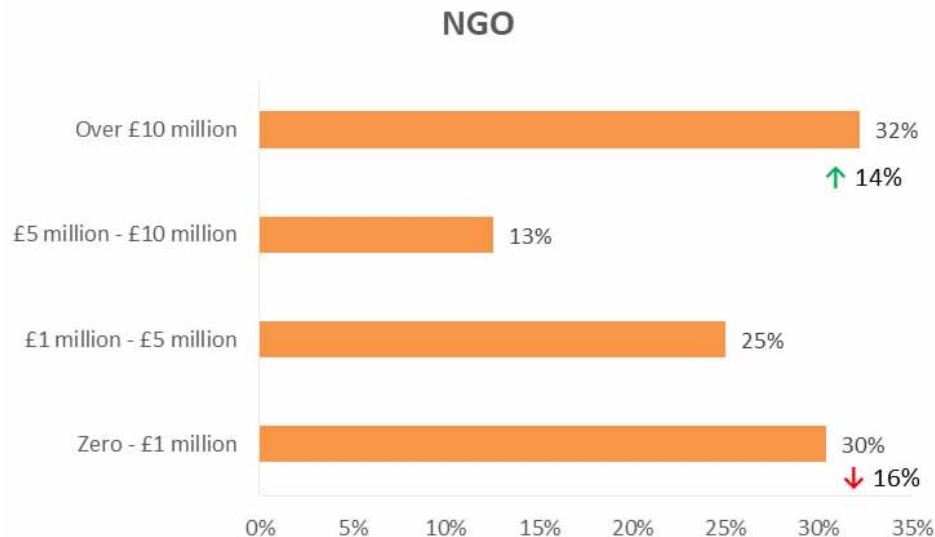
The greater levels of resources dedicated to /accruing from partnerships, is consistent with one of the longer-term findings of the Barometer series – the gradual and consistent evolution towards higher value, longer-term, more strategically-based partnerships that often assess mutual benefits in financial and non-financial ways (leveraging the technical expertise of corporates by NGOs for example, or providing valuable training and development opportunities for corporate staff, to cite another example).

**Figure 3: Estimates of how much respondents' organisations invest in – or secure from – corporate-NGO partnerships (both sectors combined):**



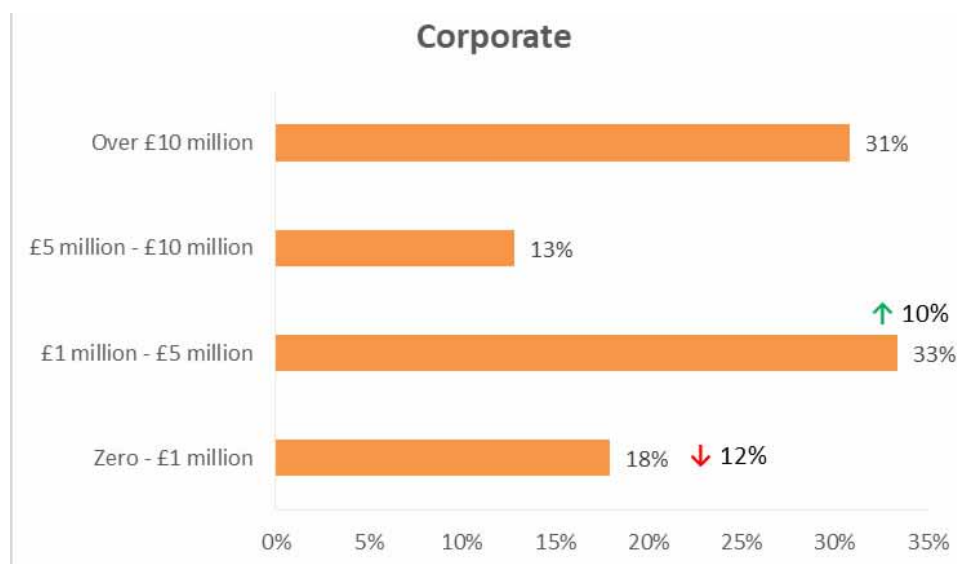
*In approximate terms, what is your estimate of how much your organisation invests in – or secures from – Corporate-NGO partnerships in the UK and elsewhere annually? Please include total estimate of financial and non-financial value.*

**Figure 4: Estimates of how much respondents' organisations invest in – or secure from – corporate-NGO partnerships (NGOs only):**



*In approximate terms, what is your estimate of how much your organisation invests in – or secures from – Corporate-NGO partnerships in the UK and elsewhere annually? Please include total estimate of financial and non-financial value.*

**Figure 5: Estimates of how much respondents' organisations invest in – or secure from – corporate-NGO partnerships (Corporates only):**

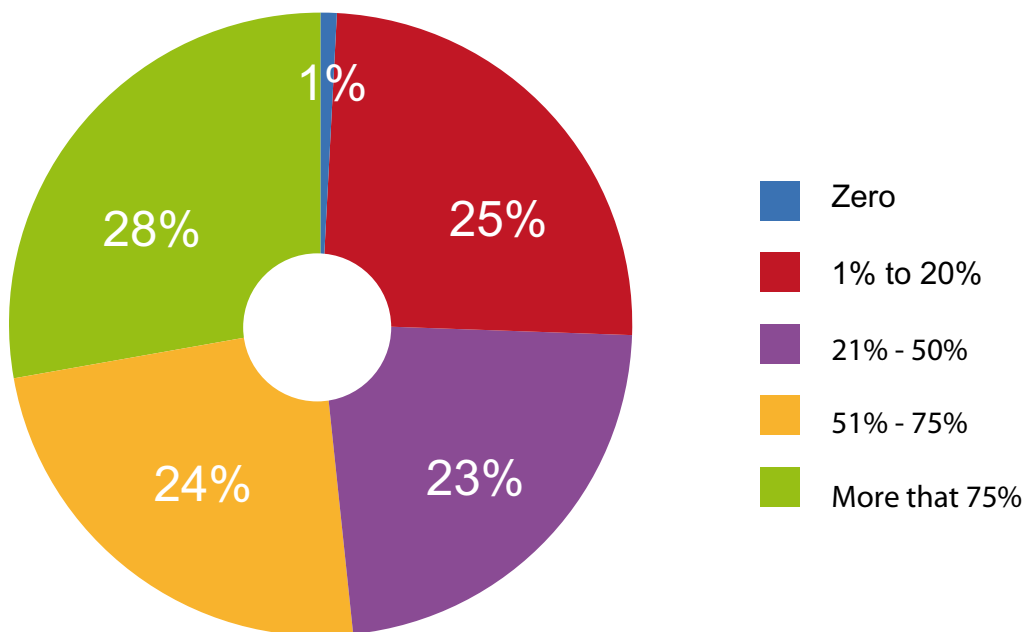


*In approximate terms, what is your estimate of how much your organisation invests in – or secures from – Corporate-NGO partnerships in the UK and elsewhere annually? Please include total estimate of financial and non-financial value.*

**Strategic partnering on the rise – but divergent approaches to portfolio management: corporates have a more strategic emphasis than NGOs ...**

The consistent, overall trend towards more a more strategic partnering approach is evident again in this year's Barometer findings. At a consolidated level, 52% of the partnering portfolios of NGOs and corporates (figure 6) are classified as strategic (consistent with the 2016 findings). Less than half of partnerships are therefore considered to be predominantly tactical.

Figure 6: Strategic partnerships – corporate and NGO responses



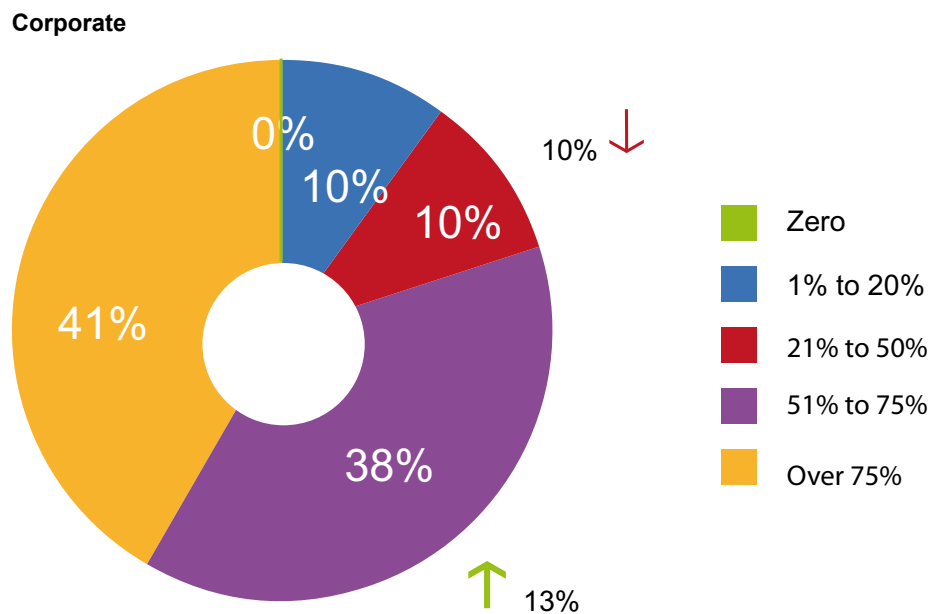
*In approximate terms, what percentage of your corporate-NGO partnerships would you describe as strategic as opposed to 'non-strategic' (transactional, tactical)? [NGO and corporate responses]*

However, significant divergences emerge between the sectors when the data for strategic partnerships is segmented by NGO and corporates. Over three quarters (79%) of corporates categorise their partnerships with NGOs as strategic (figure 7). This compares with an equivalent figure of just 32% partnerships in NGOs partnering portfolios that are deemed to be strategic in nature (figure 8).

This is a significant divergence and represents a challenge for NGOs. It suggests that corporates are more determined and

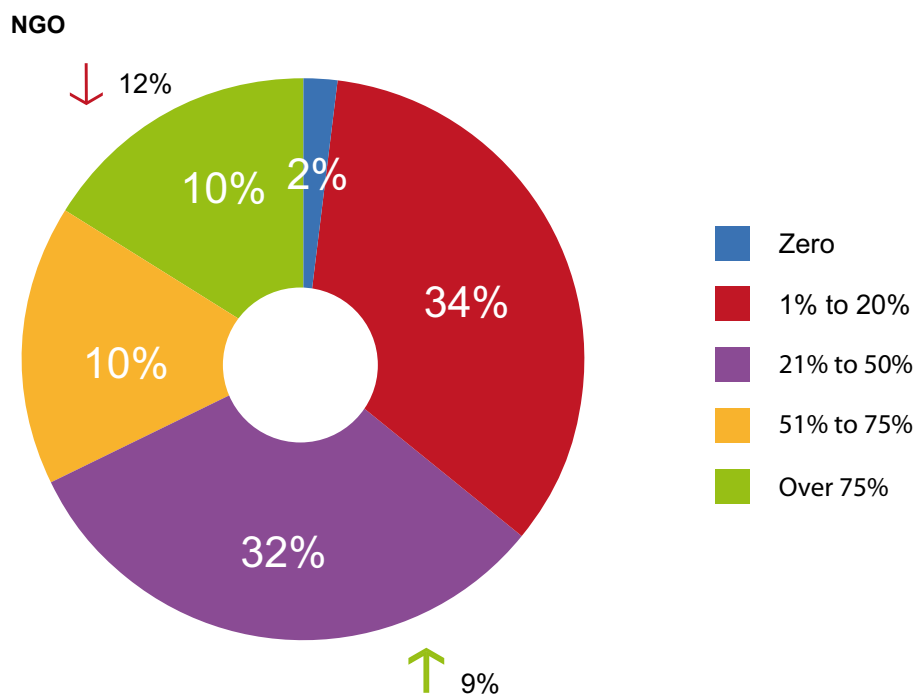
perhaps, successful in managing their partnerships approach and portfolios more efficiently, placing greater emphasis on the partnerships that are likely to yield higher value. Given the earlier finding (figure 1) that NGOs are increasingly motivated by innovation, efficiency and effectiveness as reasons for partnering with corporates, it would appear that more NGOs would benefit from analysing their partnership portfolios and making hard decisions about how to transition towards more impactful, strategic partnerships.

Figure 7: Strategic partnerships – Corporate responses only



*In approximate terms, what percentage of your corporate-NGO partnerships would you describe as strategic as opposed to 'non-strategic' (transactional, tactical)? [Corporate respondents only]*

Figure 8: Strategic partnerships – NGO responses only



*In approximate terms, what percentage of your corporate-NGO partnerships would you describe as strategic as opposed to 'non-strategic' (transactional, tactical)? [NGO respondents only]*

## Depth and reach of partnerships

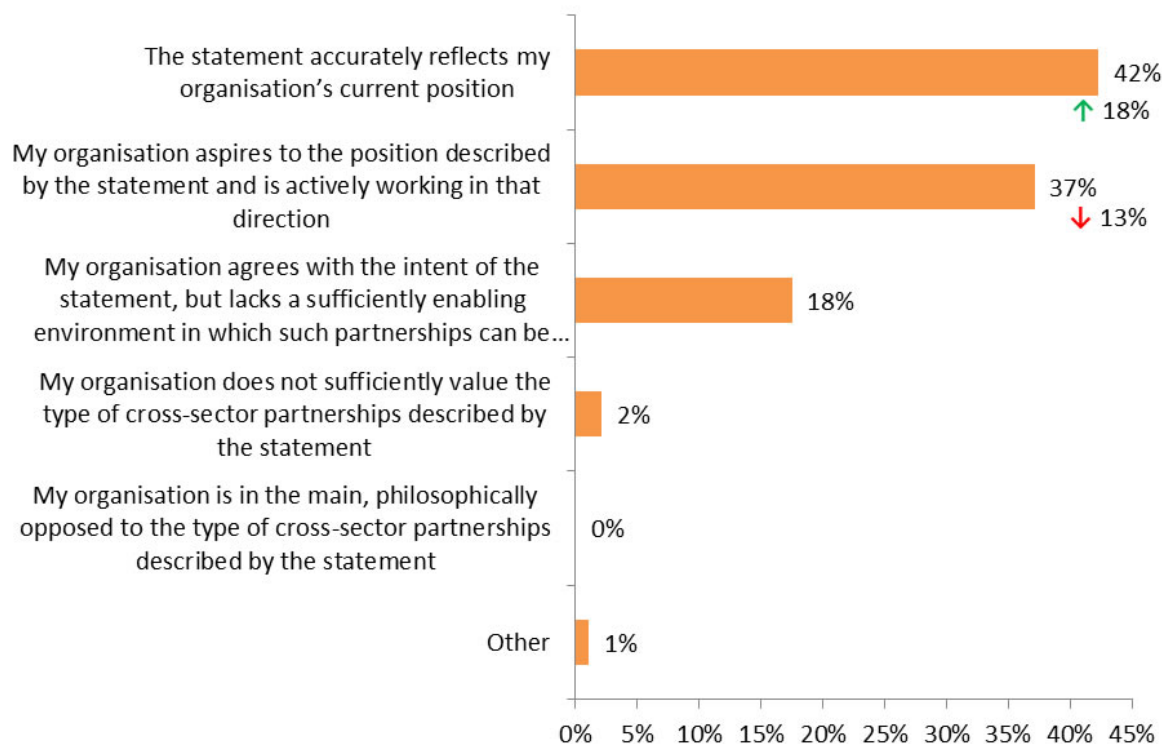
*The emphasis on deeper, problem-solving partnerships extends – as purpose and mission increasingly take centre-stage in partnerships*

For the first time in this series, the 2016 Barometer sought to explore the extent to which purpose and mission-led partnerships focused on addressing the bottle-necks faced by partnering NGOs and corporates are being practiced by the sectors. We discovered evidence of the maturing of the partnering agenda as both sectors sought to use their strategic partnering practices to address core issues. This year we again put an identical question to respondents in a bid to assess year on year changes.

We discovered highly significant movements towards a much more mature approach to partnering, with both corporates and NGOs placing mission-relevant, problem-solving issues at the heart of partnerships that are designed to secure solutions for companies, NGOs and for society. As noted in figure 9, at a consolidated level, 42% of respondents categorise their organisations as engaging in “deeper, problem-solving partnerships designed to address core, mission-relevant or purpose-led issues in ways that create value for society, for ourselves and for our...partners”. This is a significant 18% uplift on the 2016 figure (24%).

The fact that there has been a notable decrease in the organisations classifying themselves as aspiring to this ideal is also to be seen as good news – in that practitioners believe their organisations to have moved from ‘aspiration’ to practice.

Figure 9: Strategic partnerships – corporate and NGO responses

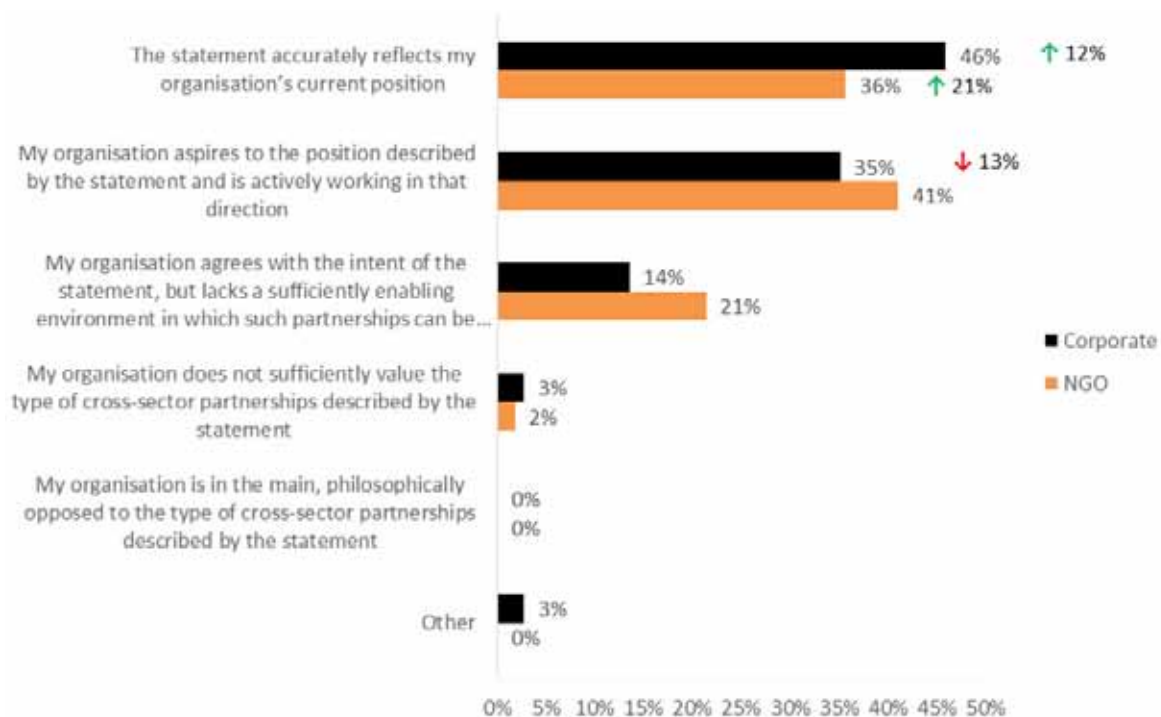


*“We are increasingly engaged in deeper, problem-solving partnerships designed to address core, mission-relevant or purpose-led issues in ways that create value for society, for ourselves and for our (corporate or NGO) partners.” In light of the preceding statement, which of the following choices most accurately reflects your organisation's current position?”*



Segmenting the data for NGOs and corporates (figure 10) provides evidence that practitioners in both sectors are on the upward move in terms of the types of partnership described. Many more corporates and NGOs (up 12% and 21% respectively) classify their organisations as engaging in the deepest levels of mission-led, problem-solving partnerships. The NGO numbers are even more striking as substantially fewer organisations from that sector (23%) classify themselves as either lacking a sufficiently enabling environment or not sufficiently valuing the type of partnership described. Whilst this represents nearly a quarter of responding NGOs, the proportion of NGOs that are hampered by mindset or lack of enabling factors is down by 13% year on year, compared to 2016 when the equivalent figure was 36%. This is a very material and encouraging change in a single year, and bodes well for the future of cross-sector partnering.

Figure 10: The extent of deeper, problem-solving partnerships addressing core, mission-relevant or purpose-led issues in ways that create value for society (corporates and NGOs separated):



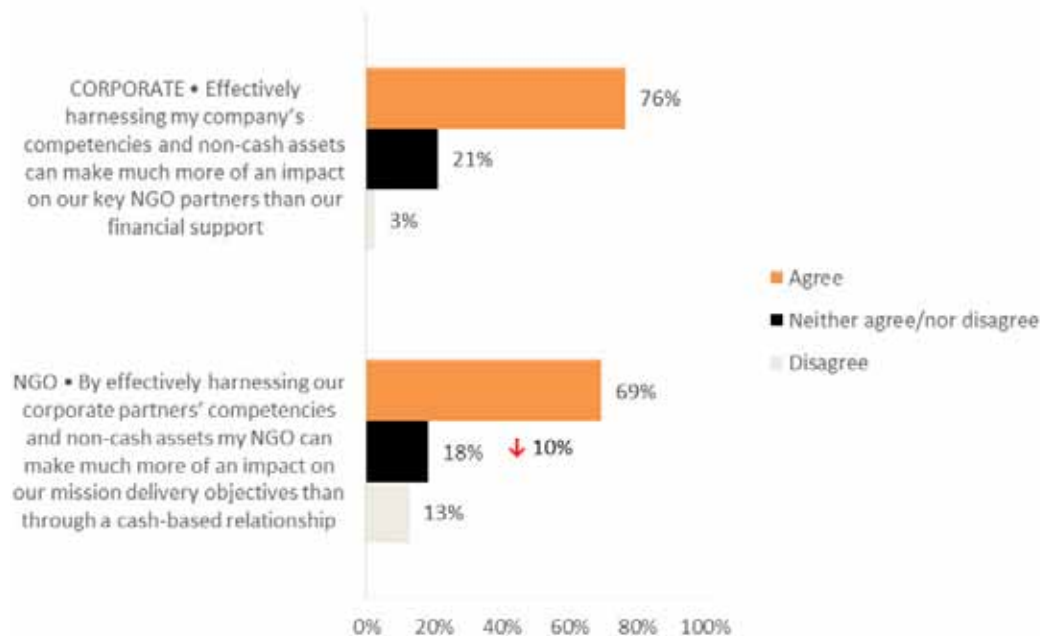
*"We are increasingly engaged in deeper, problem-solving partnerships designed to address core, mission-relevant or purpose-led issues in ways that create value for society, for ourselves and for our (corporate or NGO) partners." In light of the preceding statement, which of the following choices most accurately reflects your organisation's current position?"*

## What value do partners bring to each other?

**True partners – using each other's expertise and changing business practice for the better...**

Of course, the types of partnership described by the question in figure 10 requires an understanding that value to NGOs can be secured in ways other than the generation of cash. It is therefore encouraging to note that NGOs (and companies) again acknowledge, as shown in figure 11, that value can be secured by harnessing the know-how, reach and other assets that can be drawn from their corporate partners.

Figure 11: Harnessing competences and non-cash assets (corporates and NGOs compared)



It is clear that the practice of cross-sector partnering is maturing, deepening and increasingly focusing on issues that truly matter to companies and NGOs, drawing on each sector's competencies to solve clearly defined problems. However, if non-financial corporate inputs bring value to NGOs, to what extent do practitioners on either side assess the value that NGOs bring to their corporate partners?

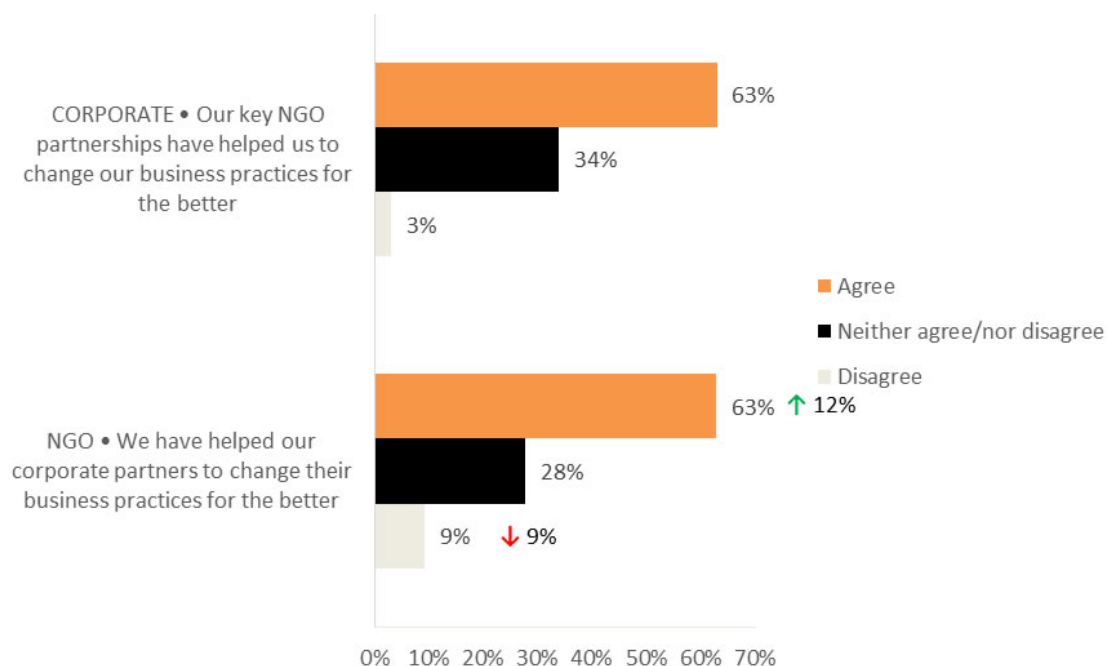
Again this year, almost all companies (and 86% of NGOs) state that partnerships with NGOs enhance corporate understanding of social and environmental issues, helping businesses to be sensitised to the contexts in which they operate (figure 12).

Figure 12: Improving understanding of societal and/or environmental issues (corporates and NGOs compared)

Finally, as figure 13 demonstrates, **more businesses and NGOs (63% respectively) state that partnerships have helped to change the practices of their business partners for the better.** This strong finding is perhaps the ultimate demonstration of the value of partnerships to society, considering that the business practices referenced cover a wide range of issues, from inclusive economic growth, sustainable market development and environmentally sustainable practices, to efforts to identify and tackle the risks of modern slavery in supply chains, or rising levels of obesity amongst consumers. It appears that both corporate and NGO practitioners (with respective year on year increases of 4% and 12%) feel increasingly assured of the value that NGO partnerships have in changing the practices of businesses for the better.

It is therefore safe to say that cross-sector partnerships really are moving the dial for NGOs, for businesses, and for society as a whole.

Figure 13: Changing business practices for the better (corporates and NGOs compared)



## Part 3: “Brexit” – the potential impact of the UK’s decision to leave the EU

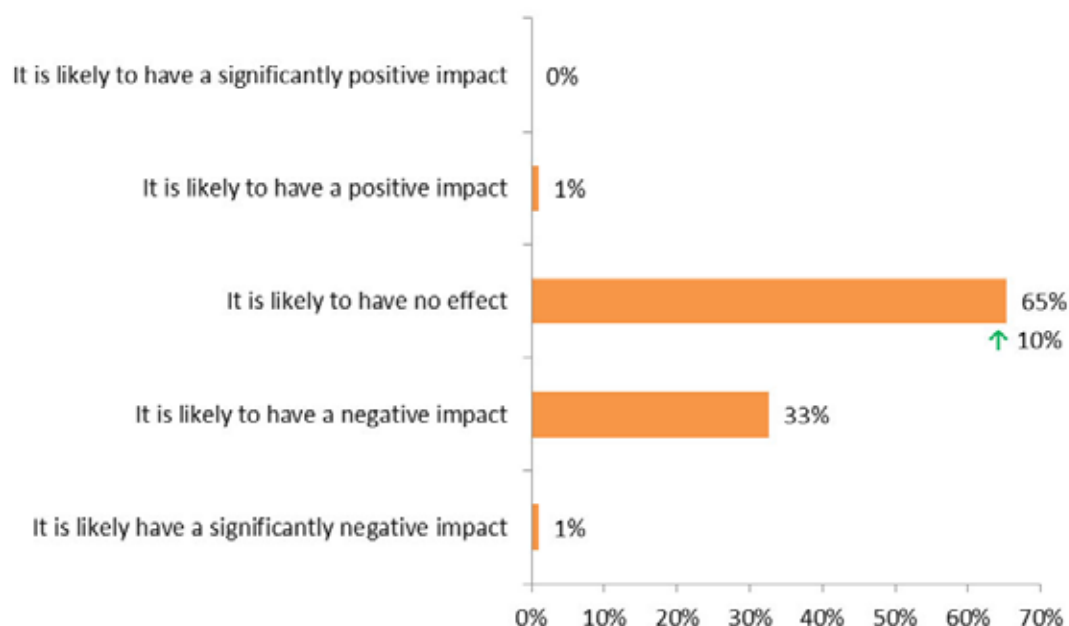
*“Whatever happens after Brexit, life will go on” ...*

In the immediate aftermath of the UK’s referendum decision to leave the EU, the 2016 Barometer assessed the likely effect on the cross-sector partnering agenda. On the whole, we found a split in views between the two sectors: the corporate sector was sanguine, anticipating little or no change to partnering resulting from the Brexit decision, whilst the NGO sector (particularly, international NGOs) was strongly pessimistic, anticipating that Brexit will likely have a negative or significantly negative impact on cross-sector partnering.

The 2017 Barometer took another look at this topic of the moment to see whether, and to what extent, sentiments have evolved in the last year on the likely impact of Brexit on partnering.

Overall, in consolidated terms (figure 14), we discovered that corporate and NGO practitioners are more relaxed about the likely impact of Brexit on cross-sector partnering. Fewer respondents (around a third at 34%) expect Brexit to have a negative or significantly negative impact than was the case last year (42%), and there has been a strong increase (by 10% year on year) of those that expect Brexit to have no effect on partnering (roughly two thirds - 65%). This is clearly encouraging for partnership practitioners at a time of uncertainty for international and UK-based corporations and NGOs.

Figure 14: The likely impact of the UK’s decision to leave the European Union on engagement in cross-sector partnering (corporates and NGOs combined):



*To what extent, if any, is the UK’s decision to leave the European Union likely to impact your organisation’s engagement in cross-sector partnering?*

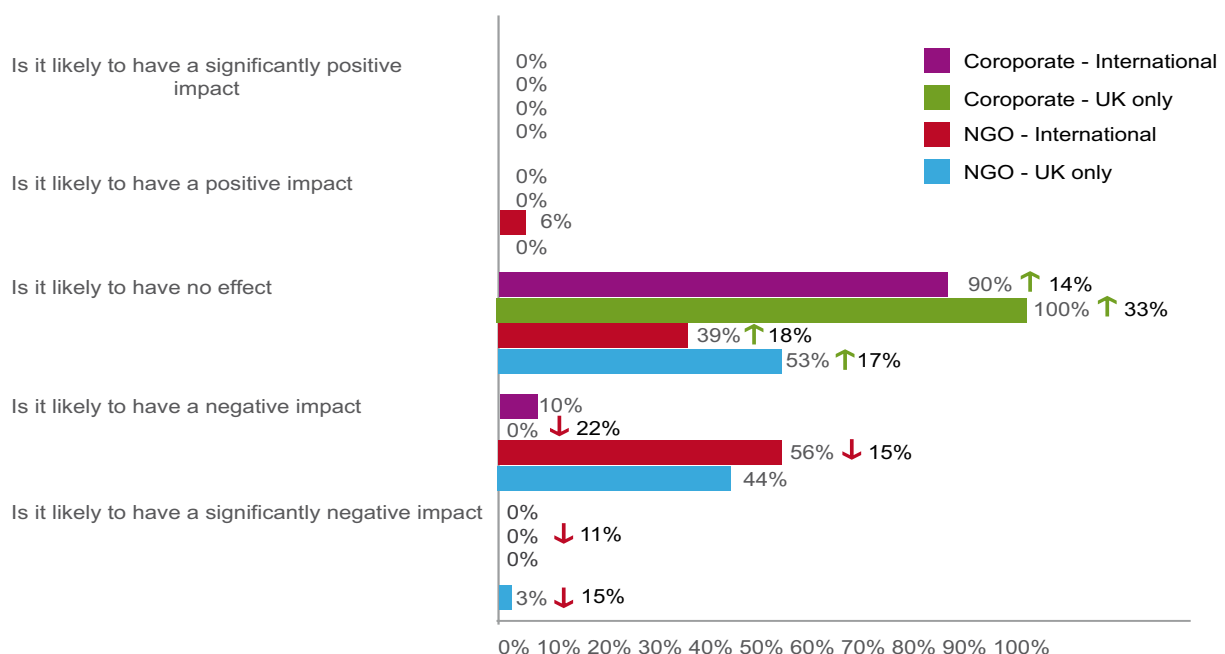
When the data is analysed by sector and sub-sector, the changes in sentiment over the last year become even more striking. It becomes clearer that the fears that existed last year have abated across the board – and most significantly within the NGO sector.

Figure 15 illustrates:

- Significant shifts in the proportion of international companies now anticipating that Brexit will have no effect on their cross-sector partnering (90% in 2017, versus 76% in 2016)
- All (100%) UK-only companies expect Brexit to have no effect on their cross-sector partnering (a significant 33% uplift on last year's figure of 67%)
- More UK-only focused NGOs (53%) now expect Brexit to have no effect on their organisation's corporate partnering than expect a negative or significantly negative effect (47%). This is a reversal on 2016 when 59% of UK-only NGOs expected a negative or significantly negative effect from Brexit
- The majority of international NGOs and development agencies (56%) still fear that Brexit will have a negative impact on their organisations' partnering with corporates. However, this is notably lower proportion than last year when the equivalent figure for "negative impact" was 71%. We see that a growing minority in this NGO segment (39%) now expect Brexit to have no effect on their partnering than was the case last year (21% in 2016).

So, whilst the majority of international NGOs remain pessimistic about the likely impact of Brexit on cross-sector partnering, they are the only sub-group to hold net negative sentiments about the Brexit effect. And even amongst this group, sentiments about the Brexit effect on partnering appear to be becoming more sanguine.

**Figure 15: Likely movements in corporate-NGO partnership investments over the next three years (combined):**



*To what extent, if any, is the UK's decision to leave the European Union likely to impact your organisation's engagement in cross-sector partnering?*



When asked to state why the Brexit decision is likely to have the impact selected, the following typify the type of comments received:

From NGOs not expecting significant impact:

- *"We act globally to support children in need so Brexit will have no effects on our activities"*
- *"As a global organisation, we will continue to work with corporates both based in the UK and throughout the world, regardless of where they may be headquartered"*
- *"We are an international NGO with a presence in other EU countries, so programmatic corporate partnerships are unlikely to be adversely affected"*

From NGOs seeing a negative impact:

- *"The impact is unclear for partnerships specifically but the organisational impact is significantly negative so partnerships will inevitably become increasingly challenging"*
- *"Weak Sterling impacts very negatively on our ability to deliver overseas projects"*
- *"We already engage on European stages and would expect to do more - but Brexit will make this more difficult in the UK"*

From corporates not expecting significant impact:

- *"We are a global company exposed to complex issues and risks in many different geographies; the exit of the UK from the EU won't materially affect our exposure or our appetite for partnerships to address them"*
- *"We are a global company in our outlook, customer base and employee profile; our budgets and community investment programme focus is unlikely to be affected"*
- *"We are not headquartered in Britain, so Brexit will not impact global decisions on partnering"*
- *"As a global organisation, it's likely that we will continue to invest in all the markets where we operate - irrespective of Brexit"*

From international corporates anticipating a negative impact:

- *"Uncertainty causes business to hold off from making any major decisions. As businesses pull out of the UK, this will make for fewer partners – particularly at a global HQ level"*
- *"We work with a number of NGOs in Europe, but the UK's decision to move out of Europe will impact significantly on our work there"*
- *"Companies will be less likely to invest heavily in the UK, moving headquarters elsewhere, and will wish to create new partnerships in their new host country"*

On the whole, sentiments towards the likely effect of Brexit would appear to be best summarised by this quote from a respondent: ***"Whatever happens after Brexit, life will go on"***.

## Part 4: Influence of the UN Sustainable Development Goal to “revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development” on cross-sector partnerships

### *UN Sustainable Development Goal still to make a big impact in the UK...*

This year’s Barometer report again considered whether and to what extent Goal 17 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - which calls on organisations to partner for sustainable development – is having an influence on corporate-NGO partnering.

Specifically, the UN has this to say about Goal 17:

**A successful sustainable development agenda requires partnerships between governments, the private sector and civil society. These inclusive partnerships built upon principles and values, a shared vision, and shared goals that place people and the planet at the centre, are needed at the global, regional, national and local level.**

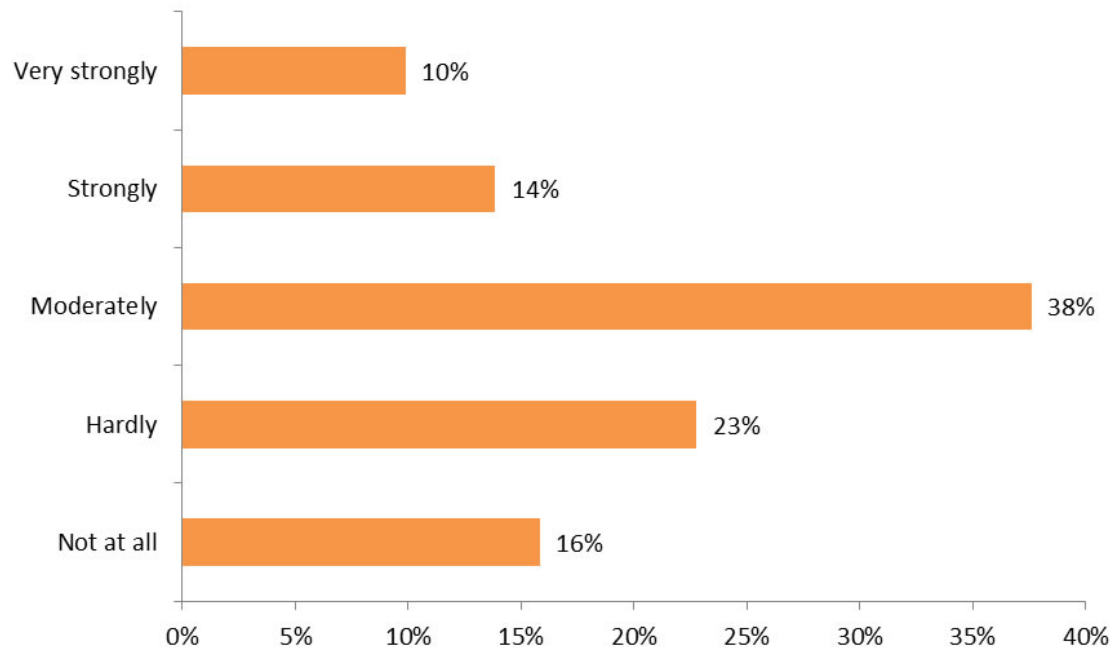
**Urgent action is needed to mobilize, redirect and unlock the transformative power of trillions of dollars of private resources to deliver on sustainable development objectives. Long-term investments, including foreign direct investment, are needed in critical sectors, especially in developing countries...**

Two years after its adoption, are the SDGs effecting a greater or lesser influence on the cross-sector partnering agenda?

Overall (figure 16), nearly a quarter of respondents (24%, compared to 20% last year) cited this Goal as having a material impact on engagement in cross-sector partnerships – whilst 38% state that it is having a moderate influence (down from 44% in 2016).

These findings are broadly similar to last year’s Barometer findings, and confirm that the majority of corporates and NGOs (62%) are modestly, strongly, or very strongly influenced by the SDGs.

Figure 16: The impact of Sustainable Development Goal 17 on cross-sector partnerships (combined):



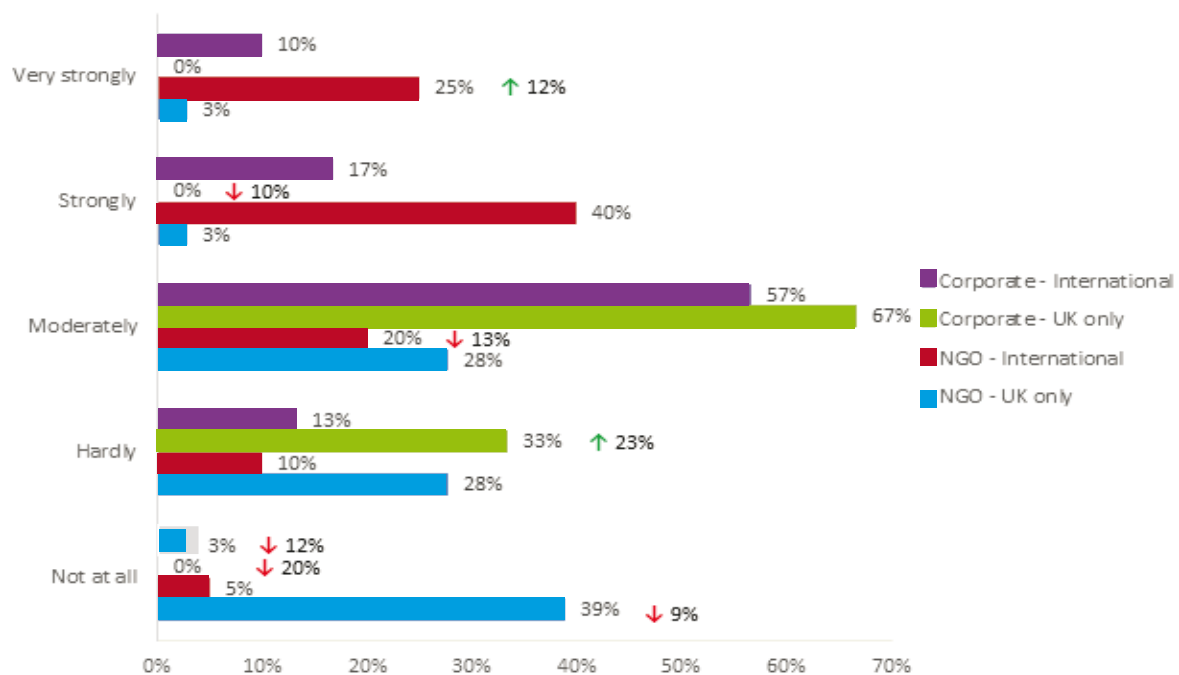
*To what extent does the SDG influence your organisation's engagement in cross-sector partnerships?*

However, yet again segmented analysis between UK and international corporates and NGOs show some nuanced differences. Figure 17 illustrates that:

- 84% of international company respondents are moderately, strongly or very strongly influenced by the SDGs in the planning for, and practices of cross-sector partnering (an increase of 10% on 2016). There has also been a (12%) fall in the proportion of international companies for whom the SDGs are “not at all” an influencing factor
- Two-thirds (67%) of UK-only companies are moderately influenced by the SDGs, with the remaining third (33%) “hardly” influenced by the framework. No company in this segment state that they are “not at all” influenced by the SDGs (compared to an equivalent figure of 20% in 2016)
- Like their corporate counterparts, international NGOs are substantively influenced by the SDGs, with 85% of this segment stating that their partnership agendas are moderately, strongly, or very strongly influenced. This represents an increase of 6% on 2017
- The majority of UK-only NGOs (67%) are hardly or not at all influenced by the SDGs, a figure which is consistent with our findings in 2016 (67%)

Overall therefore, the SDGs continue to influence the cross-sector partnering agenda for international companies, UK companies, and international NGOs to a moderate or strong degree. However, despite its resonance across a range of UK-relevant topic areas and goals (from good health & well-being, reduced inequalities, to climate action) for UK-focused NGOs, the SDGs do not yet represent a major influencing factor in terms of cross-sector partnering.

Figure 17: The impact of Sustainable Development Goal 17 on cross-sector partnerships (NGOs / corporates, international / UK):



## **Part 5: The stars –The most admired corporate-NGO partnerships and partners**

*Clarity, ambition and effective execution are key*

Which corporate-NGO partnerships are the most admired by practitioners in the sector and why is that? This unprompted voting exercise asks all respondents to state which partnerships they most admired – and to explain their reasons for selection.

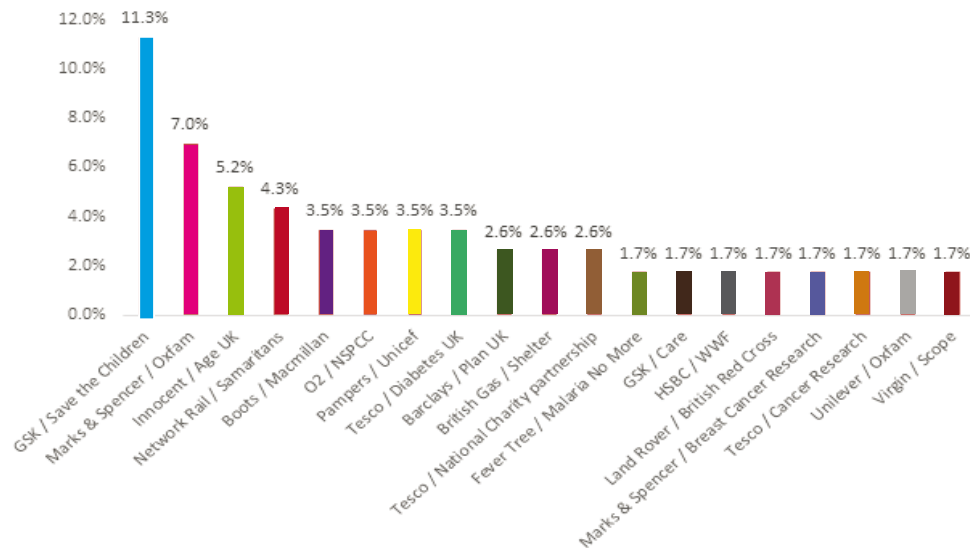
There was a clear overall winner again this year with GlaxoSmithKline-Save the Children taking the number one spot as Most Admired partnership for the second year in a row – though a little more strongly so this year.

Previous sector leader Boots-Macmillan slipped out of the top spots for the first time in a number of years, whilst the Marks & Spencer and Oxfam partnership moved up one into second place. The new kid on the “most admired” block is the Innocent-Age UK partnership in third place.

Further details on each of the three most admired partnerships are given below – along with comments from respondents which typify why these three are the sector’s Most Admired Partnerships.



Figure 18: Most Admired Corporate-NGO Partnerships



*Which other Corporate-NGO partnerships do you admire and why? [Respondents could list up to three starting with their most admired]*

Figure 19: Most Admired Partners, Corporates

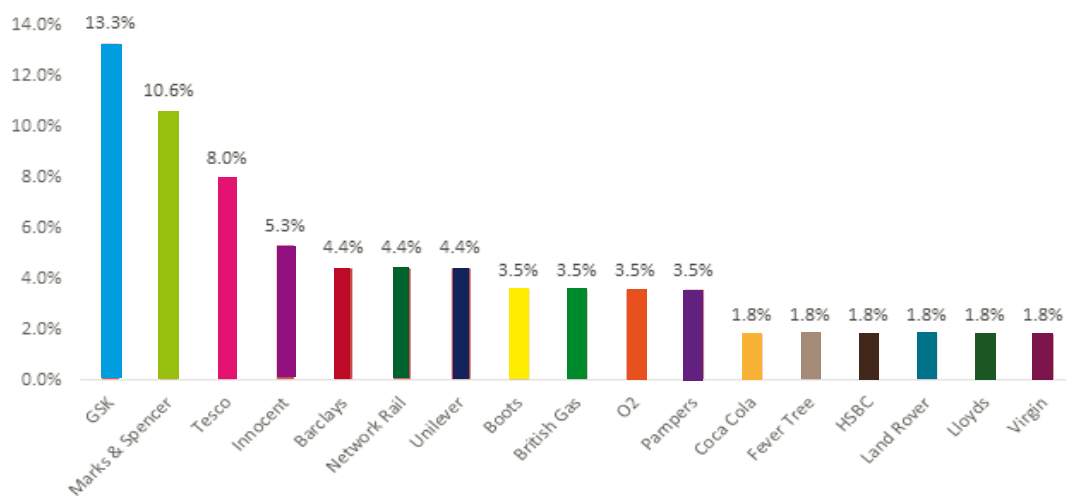
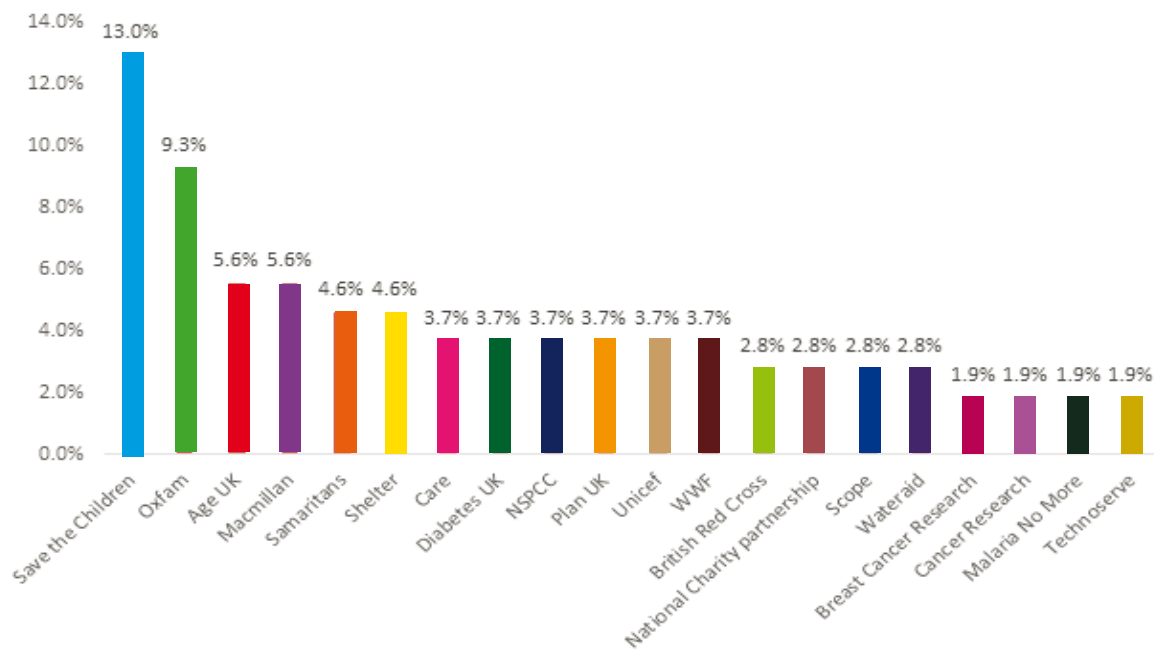


Figure 20: Most Admired Partners, NGOs



## GlaxoSmithKline-Save the Children

The GSK-Save the Children partnership began in 2013 with the aim of sharing expertise and resources to save one million children's lives. The two organisations combine their capabilities in R&D, supply chain, procurement and vaccines to work with the world's most vulnerable children. The partnership focuses on:

improving access to basic healthcare – prevention and treatment – where the need is greatest

- training and equipping health workers in the poorest communities
- developing child-friendly medicines
- working at local and global levels to call for stronger child health policies

The partnership combines GSK's scientific expertise and resources with Save the Children's on-the-ground knowledge to change the lives of children living in some of the world's poorest countries.

Since the partnership launched, it has reached 3.6 million people including 1.3 million children, more than 23,500 under-five year olds have been fully immunised, over 125,000 children have been treated for diarrhoea, malaria or pneumonia, and over one million children have been screened for malnutrition.

The partnership is admired both for its ambition to create real and measurable change, the clear focus on drawing on each partner's core assets and its emphasis on identifying and delivering long-term solutions. Typical of the kind of comments made were:

A model of best practice as partners use their key strengths to deliver real long-term impact

Long term, strategic, exemplary...

The partnership has real impact and real strategic alignment

A truly shared value approach; medical innovation is literally life-changing.

## M&S-Oxfam

The M&S-Oxfam partnership involves sharing knowledge and working together to drive sustainable production and consumption.

The partnership includes the “Shwopping” campaign, through which the partners hope to achieve a dramatic reduction in the number of clothes sent to landfill in the UK. M&S customers are encouraged to return their old or unused clothes and other items to M&S and Oxfam stores. These are then either sold or recycled by the charity.

The partnership is delivered as part of M & S’s “Plan A”; *“...our way to help build a sustainable future by being a business that enables our customers to have a positive impact on wellbeing, communities and the planet through all that we do.”*

Since the partnership began in 2008 over 24 million garments have been donated in M&S and Oxfam shops, worth an estimated £16 million for Oxfam.

The partnership is admired because it is logical, innovative, long-lasting and has objectives that consumers can relate to.

Comments included:

Simple messages delivered clearly in retail stores, aligns well to their business & delivers results for Oxfam

Multi-channel engagement strategy clearly advancing corporate responsibility and communicating that logically to customers

A clear link to the core business and customer engagement with the role companies can play in addressing societal concerns

## innocent-Age UK

Drinks-maker innocent has partnered with Age UK for the last 10 years on a cause-related marketing campaign called “The Big Knit”.

The project initially started with older people from Age Concern groups around the UK, innocent consumers and Sainsbury’s staff knitting little woolly hats to place on the top of innocent smoothie bottles.

The be-hatted smoothies are sold nationwide and for every one sold innocent donates 25p to Age UK. Last year innocent smoothies with hats on were sold in Sainsbury’s, Boots, Waitrose, Tesco, WH Smith and Asda as well as stores such as Planet Organic.

Since the Big Knit started, it has raised over £1.75million for Age UK.

The campaign is admired by practitioners for its simplicity, creativity and longevity. Typical of the kind of comments made were:

Great fun with a serious message – and it works

Long-lasting, unexpected and memorable

Clear brand alignment for both partners, clarity of message; a great exemplar of a clear corporate-NGO partnership delivering real results



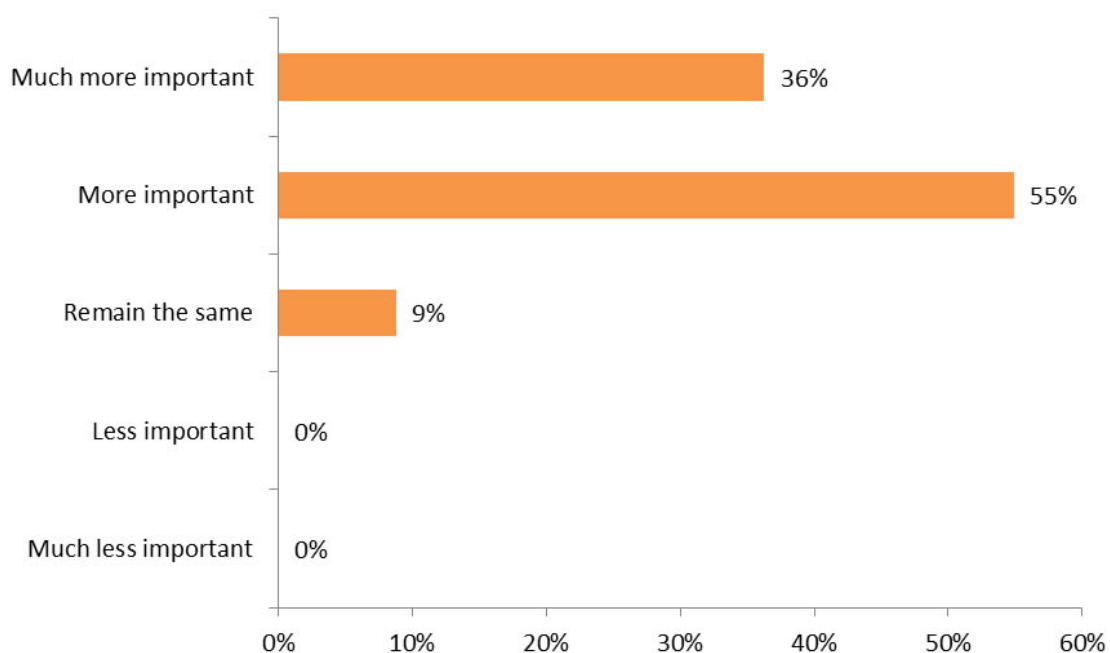
## Part 6: Future trends, prospects and anticipated developments in corporate-NGO partnering

### *NGO-corporate partnerships seen as increasingly important.*

One of the most stand-out statistical trends over the life of the Barometer since its inception in 2010 has been the ever-increasing importance of NGO-corporate partnerships over the next three years – and this year's Barometer again demonstrates a continuation of that trend.

This year over 90% of all respondents (figure 21) anticipate that partnerships between corporates and NGOs will become either more or much more important over the next three years. Not a single respondent anticipates a reversal in this trend.

Figure 21: Likely importance of corporate-NGO partnerships over the next 3 years (corporates & NGOs combined)



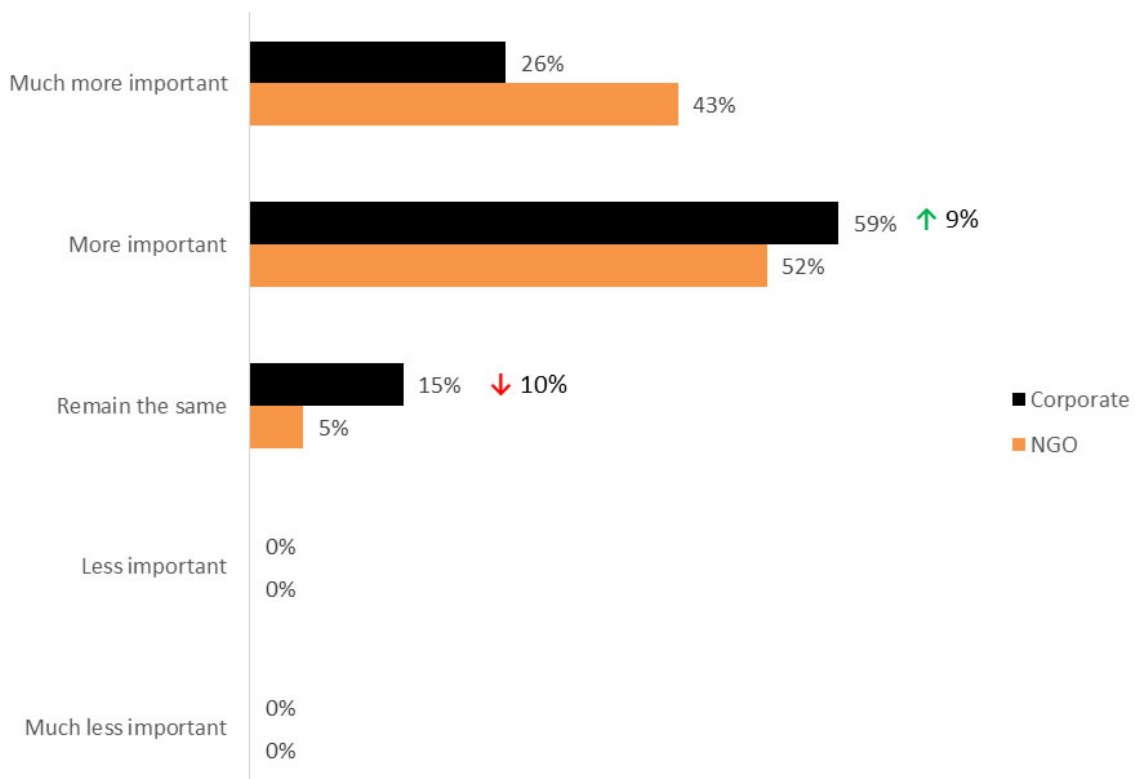
*What is your expectation of the role that partnerships will play in the corporate or NGO agenda over the next 3 years? Would you say they are likely to become.....?*

There are small differences in the proportions of corporates and NGOs anticipating changes in the importance of cross-sector partnering (figure 22). 95% of NGO respondents anticipate the agenda becoming more important in the three years to come, compared to 85% of corporate respondents holding similar views. However, this latter figure is up by

10% compared to 2016 when 75% of corporate respondents anticipated partnerships becoming more or much more important in the three years to follow.

The overall picture here remains that both sectors overwhelmingly expect partnerships to increase in importance in the years to come.

Figure 22: Likely importance of corporate-NGO partnerships over the next 3 years (showing corporates & NGOs separately):



What is your expectation of the role that partnerships will play in the corporate or NGO agenda over the next 3 years? Would you say they are likely to become?

## Why...? What factors will play a role?

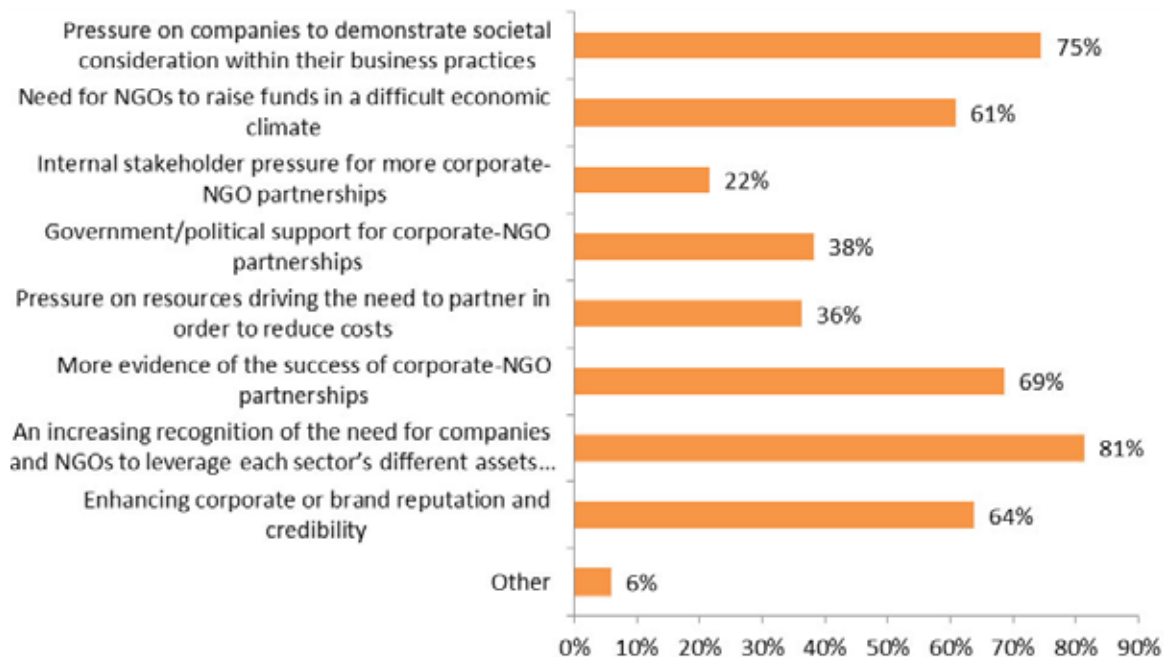
*Leveraging partner assets, assets, pressure on companies, and evidence of partnering success are key drivers for likely future trends...*

In identifying the factors most likely to make corporate-NGO partnerships more important over the next three years, over 80% of respondents (figure 23) cited the need to leverage each other's assets. This is, again, a continuing trend from the Barometer series and illustrates the increased and deeper value that exemplary partnering can yield.

Meanwhile, three-quarters of all respondents cited pressure on companies to demonstrate societal considerations within their business practices as one of the most important factors – whilst in a mutually reinforcing narrative, the increasing evidence of successful cross-sector partnerships are deemed likely to drive future growth in the importance of partnerships.

# C&E Corporate-NGO Partnerships Barometer 2017

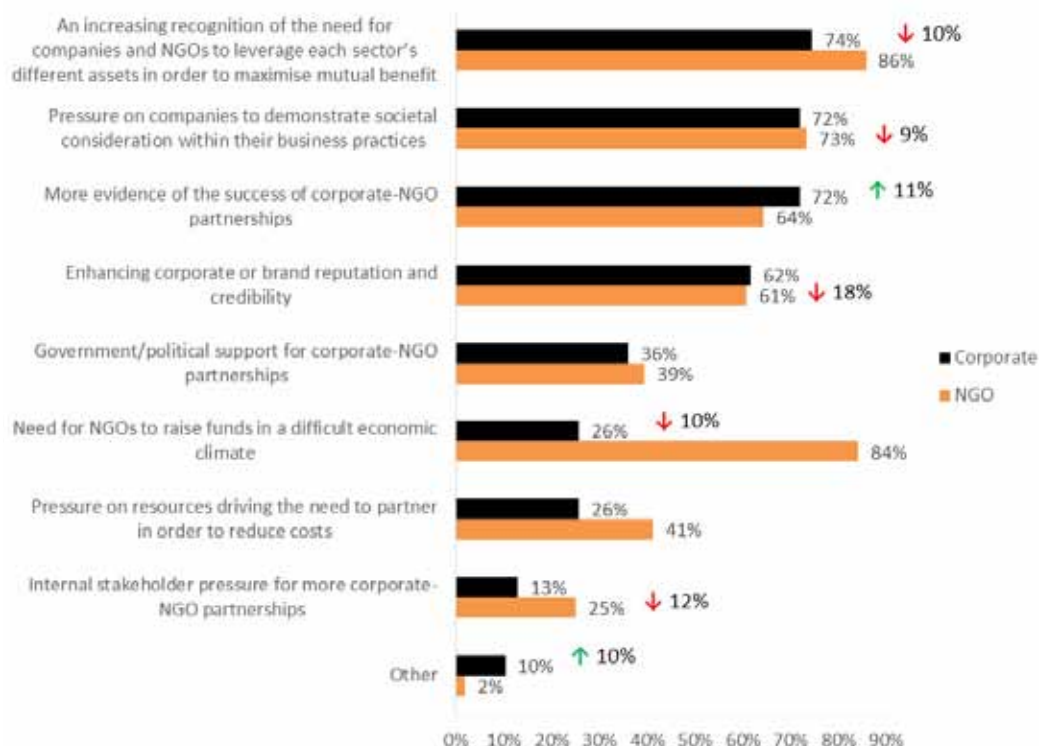
Figure 23: Factors influencing the importance of Corporate-NGO partnerships over the next three years (Corporates and NGOs combined):



*In your view, what factors are likely to make corporate-NGO partnerships more important in the next 3 years?*  
TICK ALL THAT APPLY

Figure 24 shows strong alignment between NGOs and corporates regarding the likely drivers for the anticipated increasing importance of cross-sector partnering. The greatest drive factor on which NGOs and corporates differ in their opinions is, perhaps understandably, the need for NGOs to raise funds in a difficult economic climate. As may be expected, NGOs see this as a more important factor than do their corporate counterparts.

Figure 24: Factors influencing the importance of Corporate-NGO partnerships over the next three years (showing corporates and NGOs separately):



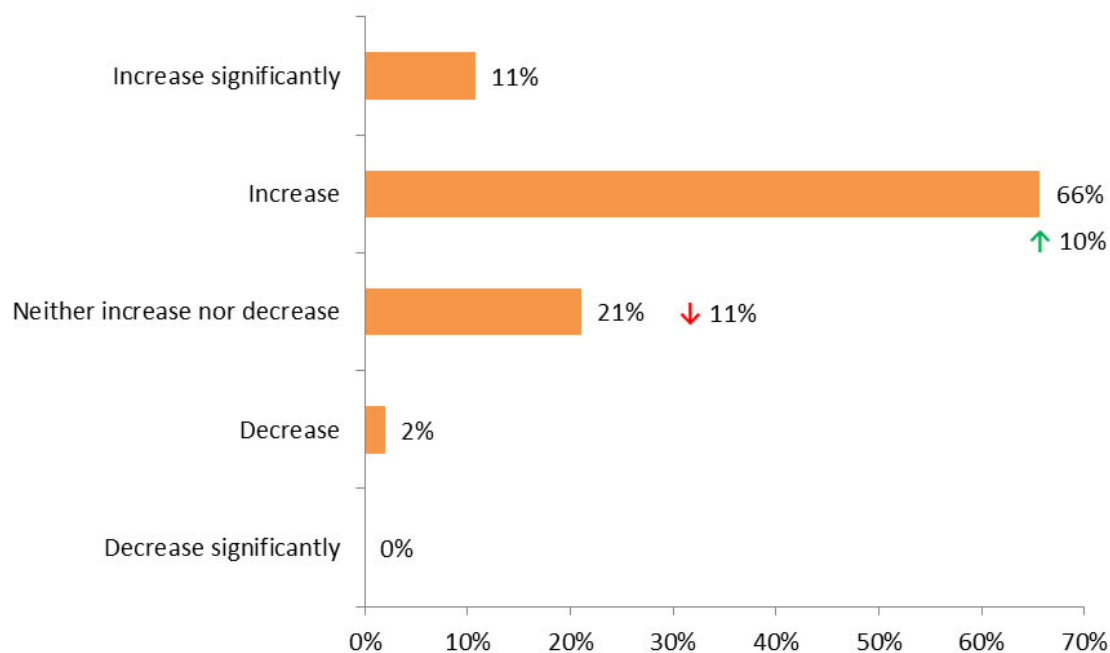
*In your view, what factors are likely to make corporate-NGO partnerships more important in the next 3 years?*  
TICK ALL THAT APPLY

## And what is the likely future trajectory of investments in cross-sector partnerships?

### Positive future investment landscape

Once again, as with previous Barometer findings, respondents anticipate their overall investment in commitment, time and resources in corporate-NGO partnerships as likely to increase over the next three years – and this factor itself has increased significantly over the 2016 Barometer. At a consolidated level, just over three-quarters (77%) of corporates and NGOs expect their investments in cross-sector partnering to increase or increase significantly over the next three years (as compared with 66% in 2016).

**Figure 25:** Likely movements in corporate-NGO partnership investments over the next three years (Corporates and NGOs combined):

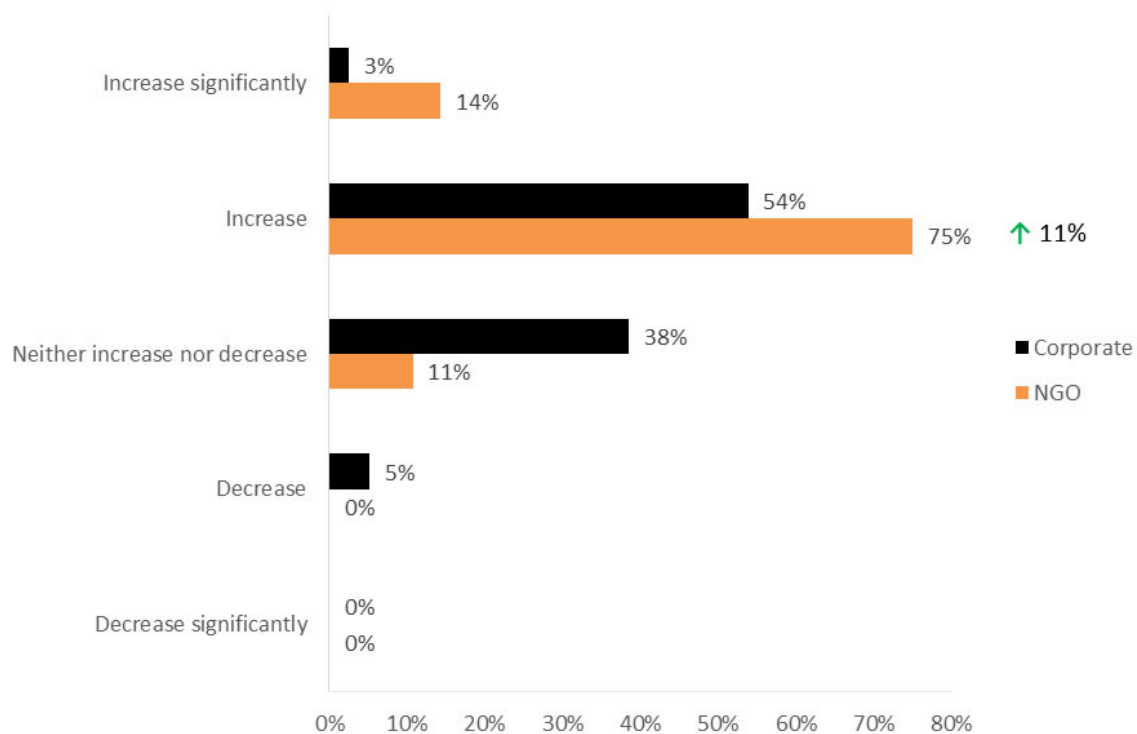


*Is your investment (commitment, time, resources, etc.) in corporate-NGO partnerships likely to increase or decrease over the next 3 years? [NGO and corporate responses combined]*

It is interesting to note from figure 26 that more NGOs (89%) anticipate an increase or significant increase in their organisations' investments in partnering than do corporates (57%), though of course the latter remains a clear majority of corporates (and only a very small minority – 5% - of corporates anticipate a decrease in their investment levels).

It is also interesting to note that the 89% of **NGOs anticipating an increase in their organisations' investment in cross-sector partnerships represents an uplift of 10% compared to the figures for 2016**. NGOs attribute this expected increased investment in partnerships to both a growing sector recognition of the multiple benefits of corporate partnering, and a need to respond to increased competition within the sector as more and more NGOs seek bigger, strategic partnerships.

**Figure 26:** Likely movements in corporate-NGO partnership investments over the next three years (showing corporates & NGOs separately):



*Is your investment (commitment, time, resources, etc.) in corporate-NGO partnerships likely to increase or decrease over the next 3 years?*

## Concluding remarks

From helping ambitious companies to evolve towards placing societal consideration at the heart of their shareholder value-creation strategies and practices, to addressing the great challenges of our times – health & well-being, climate change, poverty, and so on – partnerships between NGOs and companies (often drawing on inputs from the public sector) have a major role to play in society.

This report has found much to cheer practitioners of corporate-NGO partnerships, as well as those more generally interested in seeing the UN SDG 17 call to “revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development” made reality:

- There is growing emphasis on deeper, problem-solving partnerships as purpose and mission increasingly take centre-stage in an increasingly sophisticated partnering landscape (42% of respondents now categorise their organisations as engaging in such partnerships, compared to 2016 - an 18% uplift on the 2016 figure (24%))
- Both corporate and NGO practitioners (with respective year on year increases of 4% and 12%) feel increasingly assured of the value that NGO partnerships have in changing the practices of businesses for the better
- Corporate and NGO practitioners are more relaxed about the likely impact of Brexit on cross-sector partnering than was the case in 2016, and
- Driven by growing corporate-NGO desire to leverage each other’s assets, pressure on companies to put societal consideration at the heart of their policies and practices, and increasing evidence of the significant value inherent in cross-sector partnering, this Barometer indicates that cross-sector partnering will become even more important in the medium term, and that investments in such partnerships are set to rise.

There has been a further development over the last year to highlight here. In our concluding remarks for the Barometer 2016, we observed a worrying disparity between the proportion of NGOs (over a third, at 36%) and corporates (16%) whose organisations were deemed to be lacking a sufficiently enabling environment to sustain deep, problem-solving partnerships, or did not value such partnerships. Lacking an enabling environment indicates the absence of strong leadership support, lack of clear incentives for internal collaboration, lack of appropriate measurement and valuation mechanisms and other conditions, processes and systems to drive success. We therefore expressed concern that the high proportion of NGOs affected by such disabling conditions for strategic partnering may represent something of a bottle-neck to the partnering agenda.

It has been pleasing therefore to note in this 2017 Barometer that substantially fewer NGOs (23%) classify themselves as either lacking a sufficiently enabling environment or not sufficiently valuing the type of partnership described. Whilst this represents nearly a quarter of responding NGOs, the proportion of NGOs that are hampered by mindset or lack of enabling factors is down by 13% year on year compared to 2016. This is a very material and encouraging change in a single year, and bodes well for the future of cross-sector partnering.

There is indeed therefore, much to cheer about the 2017 Barometer findings. However, corporate-NGO partnering occurs in a dynamic environment and much will again change across the next year. We look forward to exploring these developments in our 2018 report.

## About the Barometer

### Methodology

The C&E Corporate-NGO Partnerships Barometer 2017 was compiled using responses to a confidential online survey of 126 leading UK-based companies and NGOs engaged in corporate-NGO partnerships. The survey was supplemented by interviews with partnering practitioners from NGOs and companies.

The number of respondents reflects an ever-growing interest in the corporate-NGO partnering agenda. Practitioners on both sides of corporate-NGO partnerships clearly have a keen interest in the Barometer because it allows them to have a sector-wide perspective on the evolution of the cross-sector partnering landscape.

This year's survey included a mixture of new and previously asked questions. Thanks to this combination of questions we have been able to identify new challenges and opportunities in partnering, whilst simultaneously enabling accurate and effective comparison of data against Barometer readings from previous years.

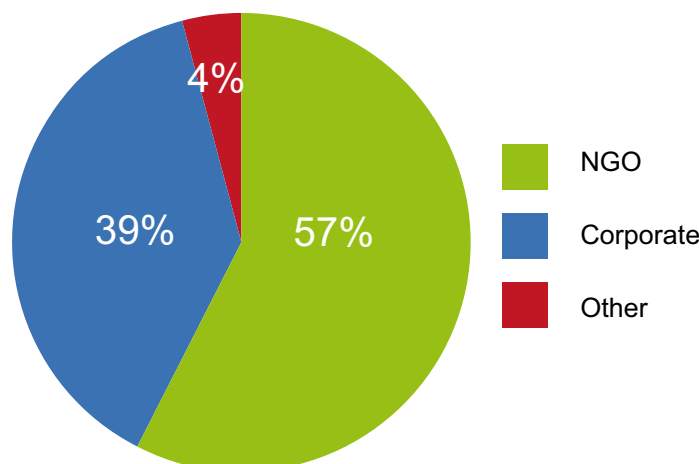
The online survey and practitioner evaluation took place during June-July 2017.

### The Sample

The online survey was undertaken by 126 respondents all of whom were involved in cross sector partnerships. Of these, corporate sector respondents were drawn mainly from the FTSE100, Interbrand's Best Global Brands Ranking, and Business in the Community's Corporate Responsibility Index. NGO respondents were drawn mainly from the leading UK based charities and international development agencies – by brand and revenue ranking. Our sincere thanks to all who took part.

The distribution of 43% corporate (including corporate foundations) and 57% NGOs (figure 1) was again well balanced.

**Figure 27: Sector representation**



*Are you completing this survey on behalf of a "not for profit" organisation (NGO) or a Corporate?*



Figure 28: Respondents' roles



### About C&E Advisory

C&E is a leading specialist ‘business and society’ consultancy. We work with some of the world’s foremost businesses, NGOs, foundations, and High Net-Worth Individuals, helping them secure sustainable value – shareholder, social and environmental. Our practice areas cover strategy, programme design, oversight and reviews, performance measurement and reporting, high performance team development and leadership coaching.

And because today’s challenges and opportunities require new ways of thinking, C&E is particularly adept at inspiring and enabling sometimes surprising cross-sector collaborations. We have advised – and continue to advise – on some of the world’s leading and best known corporate-NGO partnerships. C&E also advises on all aspects of the shared value agenda.

[www.candeadvisory.com](http://www.candeadvisory.com)

## Appendix: Survey respondents (excluding organisations wishing to remain anonymous)

### Corporates

- Anglo American
- A.P. Moller - Maersk
- Aviva
- BP Plc
- BT
- Citi
- Diageo
- Emirates Foundation
- HSBC
- GE
- The Innocent Foundation
- Jaguar Land Rover
- Kingfisher plc
- Lloyds Bank Foundation for England and Wales
- Old Mutual
- RBS
- Ricoh UK Limited
- Rolls-Royce plc
- Syngenta Telefonica UK (O2)
- Tesco National Charity Partnership
- Twinings
- UBS
- Unilever
- Walgreens Boots Alliance
- Warner Bros

## Appendix: Survey respondents (excluding organisations wishing to remain anonymous)

### NGOs & International Agencies

- Action on Hearing Loss
- Age UK
- Barnardo's
- Blue Cross
- The British Film Institute
- British Heart Foundation
- Brake
- British Red Cross
- Business in the Community
- Cancer Research UK
- CARE International
- The Children's Society
- Christian Aid
- Comic Relief
- Concern Worldwide (UK)
- Crisis
- CRUK
- Cystic Fibrosis Trust
- Diabetes UK
- FareShare
- Great Ormond Street Hospital Charity
- I CAN
- Institute of Imagination
- International Rescue Committee
- The King's Fund
- NSPCC
- Oxfam
- Rainbow Trust Children's Charity
- Raleigh International
- RSPB
- RSPCA
- Save the Children
- ShareGift
- Shelter
- SOS Children's Villages (Italy office)
- Stroke Association
- Teenage Cancer Trust
- Unicef UK
- Woodland Trust
- WWF UK
- ZSL (Zoological Society of London)