



CASE STUDY

# Civil society organisations in Hungary learnt that collaboration with the companies could be much more than asking for donations and sending a thank you letter

This case study was developed by Glopolis and it captures the story of the most significant change that happened to the civil society organisations (CSOs) network thanks to the Stronger Roots Program. The network was awarded EUR 20,000 under the project and was provided with 45 hours of capacity development support.

## Network

Self-Regulatory Board of Fundraising Organizations

## Country

Hungary

## Period when the change was observed

September 2020 – December 2021

# How the project contributed to the change

During the course of the project the Network developed **an online matching platform** and **2 methodologies**: a product/program development methodology and a relationship evaluation methodology. The methodologies together with the platform helped to create an environment where the CSOs and the corporate sector are able to find a good match. The online **platform links CSOs with private companies**, while the relationships are built by interested CSOs and companies, depending



*“Just asking for a donation is not working anymore.”*

*Balász Cseh, Charity Compass Foundation*

## The most significant change that the network achieved

CSOs – members of the CSR Platform changed the way of thinking on how they can be related with the corporate sector. They moved from a simple asking for a donation type of relationship to a **stronger, more strategic relationship** – trying to develop fresh ideas for the cooperation and what concrete steps to take. This change brought more connections with the companies by offering **55 different cooperation programs**.

on the supply and demand. Portal serves as a simple catalogue in which companies can find a reliable **list of 26 organisations for partnership**.

Cooperation opportunities are quite various, ranging from employee team building through charity cooking with Hungarian Food Bank to training on how to combat gender-based discrimination in the workplace led by experienced gender equality CSO expert.

According to a company which purchased the gifts for its team and clients at the platform portal, they can “see **a much bigger set of opportunities, products and services offered by CSOs at one place** and it is also a big help that all the CSOs offering on the portal have been reviewed/audited by the network so this is **increasing the level of trust** even in cases when we don’t know the organisation personally.”



Corporate volunteer helping at the Hungarian Food Bank  
Photo by the Charity Compass Foundation

Take the example of the Hungarian Food Bank which decided to broaden their portfolio of products which might be appealing to companies. They organised an internal series of workshops and the team involving both internal and external participants came up with 130 different ideas for new programs or products that could be offered to the companies. Next steps will be team voting on which are the best ones and bringing them to life.

Once the relationship between the company and the CSO has been established, from **the relationship evaluation questionnaire** the CSO can see what the company would like to do with them and why. After being filled by the HR or PR manager of the company, the CSO can tell that it is perfect what they do because it fully fits. Or, if there is a mismatch, the CSO can consider changing the program they will do together. It often happens that there is a starting relationship but then it stops - probably because the company was expecting something else than they received. And instead of speaking about it, they simply stopped the relationship. The questionnaire helps to carry on with the program together and keep the relationship working.



**45**  
new cooperations



**175**  
interactions between the CSOs  
and companies



**73**  
people participating  
in methodology trainings



**5400**  
visitors on the portal



# Why is the change important

**Deeper connections with the private sector is the way how CSOs can become sustainable in the long term.**

Just asking for a donation is not working any more. In Hungary, only a small share of institutional funding comes from government sources. Individuals and corporations are the main sources of financial support for CSOs.

More and more CSOs learn how to cope and work with individuals - they learn how to build databases, communicate and involve volunteers and other supporters.) Yet, building relationships with the corporate sector seems to be more difficult for them. It is therefore necessary for the CSOs to **learn how to connect with the companies** and seize the opportunity of their growing demand for the volunteering programs for the employees and other CSOs products or programs.



*Volunteer participating in a Christmas Charity cooking program  
Photo by the Charity Compass Foundation*

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**The Stronger Roots** Program is jointly implemented by a consortium created by Open Society Fund Prague (CZ), Open Society Foundation Bratislava (SK), Glopolis (CZ) and the NIOK Foundation (HU). The Program aims to increase the resilience of civil society organizations and their networks in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, strengthen their social capital and embed them in the communities and societies in which they operate. Within the Program, the concept of transversal collaboration was developed and tested on 9 networks of civil society organizations.

**Glopolis** is an analytical and networking center with an 18-years long outstanding think-tank experience in research, policy monitoring, advocacy and campaigning, relationship development, resource mobilization and facilitating collaboration at the Czech, CEE and EU-wide levels. Glopolis mission is to support transversal collaboration beyond the non-profit sector towards resilient civil society and sustainable democracy. Therefore, it seeks out and expands the field of shared aspirations of the CSOs, governmental and business representatives and engages them in solving common, societal challenges.