

Empowering the Futures: Social Partnerships for Child Welfare and Protection in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is a key international agreement aimed at protecting children's rights. However, in 2023, Indonesia's Child Protection Commission (KPAI) recorded 3,883 complaints of child rights violations. This underscores the critical role of NGOs in addressing these issues, including for supporting substantial funding. One of the most accessible and impactful sources of such funding is through the implementation of corporate social responsibility (CSR). The implementation of CSR represents a potential action to build multi-stakeholder approach through social partnerships. Therefore, this has led to the emergence of social partnerships, where NGOs implement more targeted interventions with the support of CSR-driven initiatives. This article aims to describe the implementation of social partnerships for child welfare and protection in Indonesia. The concept of social partnerships has gained traction alongside the rapid growth of NGOs and non-profit organizations (NPOs), both in Indonesia and globally. This article focuses on an organization actively pursuing social partnerships in developing programs concerned with child issues—Human Initiative (HI). The research employed a qualitative approach, with data collection conducted in Depok and South Tangerang, focusing on the Human Initiative headquarters. Informants were selected through purposive sampling, involving individuals with insights into the implementation of Human Initiative's social partnership model. This included both internal stakeholders and external collaborators. Data analysis was based on literature reviews, observations, and in-depth interviews. The findings revealed that the implementation of social partnerships for child welfare and protection at Human Initiative follows a strategic approach to achieving child welfare and protection in Indonesia, including partner selection, partnership design development, partnership institutionalization, and strategic alliance development. Several challenges in implementing social partnership are also discussed. Unlike traditional philanthropic models, Human Initiative actively develops collaborative partnerships focused on long-term social impact. This study contributes to Human Initiative by highlighting the importance of strengthening the organization's internal capacity, not only in human resource management but also in key program support systems such as monitoring and

evaluation, knowledge management, and inclusive, child rights-based communication strategies.

Keywords: Child Protection; Child Welfare; Corporate Social Responsibility; Social Partnerships

INTRODUCTION

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is a key international treaty adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on November 20, 1989. It affirms that children's rights are inherent, equal, and non-negotiable, and aims to ensure their protection and well-being worldwide. Despite 16 years of the Convention's ratification, challenges facing children remain severe. Around one billion children, half of the world's child population, still suffer from physical, sexual, and psychological abuse, as well as injury, disability, and even death. In 2023 alone, Indonesia's Child Protection Commission (KPAI) recorded 3,883 reports of child rights violations and protection issues. Of these cases, 1,886 involved three main categories: children who were victims of sexual abuse, victims of physical and/or psychological violence, and children in conflict with the law.

The activities and participation of NGOs undeniably require substantial funding to carry out their humanitarian missions. NGOs play a crucial role in community welfare, but they also face challenges and opportunities in sustaining development programs. Importantly, NGOs must innovate to ensure their organizational sustainability (Pramudya, Marwanti, & Sundayani, 2022; Sudiantini, Priatna, & Meutia, 2023). One of the most accessible and impactful funding sources for achieving shared goals is corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds. Former Vice President Ma'ruf Amin mentioned that the potential for CSR funds in Indonesia could reach up to Rp 80 trillion (Kompas, 2023). Therefore, CSR has the potential to foster better practices within companies while simultaneously creating and improving welfare in society. With the significant potential of CSR funds and the agility of NGOs in carrying out social missions, it is hoped that they can support the government in reducing critical gaps in the fulfillment of children's rights.

This article highlights the theory of social partnership and its implementation, using Human Initiative (HI) as a case study. HI's extensive experience and success in cross-sector collaborations to promote child welfare offer a compelling model of how NGOs can leverage CSR and social partnerships to fill gaps in child protection efforts in Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Partnership: Origins and Evolution

Initially emerging in the 1980s as Public-Private Partnerships (PPP), the concept of social partnership has broadened over time. It now includes collaborations among public, private, and nonprofit sectors to address complex societal issues like health, education, poverty, climate change, and local development (Wettenhall, 2003).

According to Seitanidi & Crane (2009), partnerships function as a strategic tool for implementing social responsibility, becoming a key component in both CSR theory and practice (Crane & Seitanidi, 2013; Kotler & Lee, 2009). Selsky & Parker (2005) observed that cross-sector social partnerships are rapidly increasing, yet academic focus in Indonesia remains limited, with much research originating from Australia and the United States.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

CSR represents a company's commitment to enhancing community welfare through ethical practices and allocation of resources. Kotler and Nancy (2005) define CSR as initiatives aimed at improving community well-being. Saidi (2004) categorizes four common CSR implementation models in Indonesia: (1) direct company-managed programs, (2) in-house foundations, (3) partnerships with external actors (e.g., NGOs, government, media), and (4) consortia for specific social causes. These models allow CSR to serve as a crucial funding source for NGOs addressing societal issues.

Child Welfare and Protection

Wiyono (2016) defines protection as state or legal mechanisms to ensure children's physical and psychological safety. Gosita (2014) emphasizes that protecting children is crucial for enabling them to exercise their rights and fulfill responsibilities. Child protection encompasses efforts that support children's growth—physically, mentally, and socially—and reflects the presence of justice and equity within a society.

Case Example: Human Initiative (HI)

Human Initiative (HI), a Social Welfare Institution (LKS) registered since 1999, exemplifies the role of social partnerships in advancing child welfare. One of HI's core programs, *Initiative for Children*, collaborates with corporate CSR, NGOs, educational institutions, and government entities to provide underprivileged children with better access to education and other rights. Approximately 70% of HI's annual programs are funded through third-party partnerships. Over the years, HI has received multiple awards, including the Platinum Award at the Indonesian CSR Awards and recognition from the MDGs Awards and the Indonesia Fundraising Award. The organization's success illustrates how social partnerships can effectively address gaps in public welfare. As noted by Gibson et al. (2014), partnerships are goal-oriented behaviors focused on leveraging interpersonal relationships to achieve shared goals, particularly across sectors.

METHOD

Design and Sample

This study used a qualitative research approach with a descriptive research design. The article aims to describe the dynamics of Business-NGO social partnerships in sustaining child welfare protection programs. Data collection for this study was conducted in Depok and South Tangerang, with a primary focus on the Human Initiative (HI) headquarters. Additionally, the research involved data from the HOME Learning Center, one of HI's child welfare and protection programs, located adjacent to the main office. The selection of informants followed a purposive sampling method. Key informants included Human Initiative management, as well as individuals with insights into HI's social partnership implementation, both from within the organization and from external stakeholders. This study also included perspectives from HI's corporate partners who are involved in relevant programs.

Instrument and Procedures

Data collection methods primarily involved semi-structured interviews, supplemented by document analysis. The document studies included the 2030 organizational plan, which outlines the sustainability of child welfare and protection programs, supporting and enriching the primary data. Qualitative observation, as described by Creswell (2017), was also employed by taking field notes on the behaviors and activities of individuals at the research site. This approach helped document the interaction dynamics between stakeholders in formulating social partnership models.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed systematically, factually, and accurately. The first step involved organizing the data by sorting and classifying information obtained from interviews, field observations, and document analysis. Relevant and essential information was selected based on the research objectives and grouped into categories aligned with the study's main topics. A coding approach was then applied, consisting of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Open coding involved breaking down the data into initial analytical categories. Axial coding refined these categories by identifying relationships and patterns. Selective coding narrowed the focus further to highlight the most relevant data supporting the core research concepts. Finally, conclusions were drawn by synthesizing the findings into a comprehensive understanding of the research outcomes. The analysis focused on the dynamics of Business-NGO social partnerships and how these collaborations sustain child welfare protection programs. Key themes identified through the coding process were linked to the study's core research questions to provide a structured and coherent presentation of the findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This article describes the implementation of social partnerships in child welfare and protection efforts and the challenges faced in this process at Human Initiative. The informants are:

Table 1. Informants

No	Informant's initial	Position
1	ASP	Human Initiative's Officer
2	AG	
3	EGP	
4	SM	
5	FS	
6	W	
7	AA	Human Initiative's Corporate Partner
8	SW	Human Initiative's Corporate Partner

The Implementation of Social Partnerships at Human Initiative

Human Initiative has demonstrated its capacity as a humanitarian organization that is not only strong in the roots of field program implementation, but also resilient in building strategic social partnerships with various parties, both the private sector, government, and communities. The social partnership pattern still prioritizes the values of the organization that have been designed.

"HI's partnership strategy is based on the principles of inclusive collaboration, sustainability, and value alignment. Human Initiative does not start a partnership only from the perspective of organizational needs but also considers the suitability of the mission and social impact that they want to achieve together. In this context, partnership is not just a transactional relationship, but a transformational one where both parties learn, grow, and contribute to society." (AG, April 2025).

Partner selection is strategic, starting with a value-based mapping of potential collaborators. Prospective partners are assessed based on their commitment to social issues—particularly child welfare—their track record, sustainability orientation, and willingness to build long-term relationships. Initial engagement involves presenting potential synergies and co-designing partnership models in a flexible and participatory manner. The Human Initiative's partner selection efforts begin with partner segmentation. The potential partner segmentation referred to here is a way of dividing potential partner groups based on segments, namely Institutional and Retail partners. The institutional funding context has a more intense process. In the partnership offering process, several stages need to be carried out. The earliest stage is collecting donor data from both segments. At 25 years of age, HI certainly has a large database managed by the system.

"One of the most important stages is starting with potential donor segmentation. What type of donors. We call them institutional donors and retail donors. Retail donors are usually done massively, while institutional donors are done with limited communication. So we think that this donor classification is indeed necessary" (FS, April 2025).

Partnerships are shaped through a co-creation approach. Instead of offering fixed proposals, HI involves partners in designing the program narrative together. This fosters a sense of shared ownership and strategic involvement. In child welfare and protection programs, HI blends corporate CSR objectives with its own child rights-based approach, resulting in collaborations that are both socially relevant and aligned with the company's branding and sustainability goals. Social partnership planning certainly also needs to consider several things such as whether the partner has a tendency towards programs related to child welfare and protection efforts. In addition, HI also needs to align perceptions regarding the values of organizations that support child welfare and protection issues. With this planning, HI can measure risk mitigation in the future.

"Yes, there are some interesting experiences about the spirit of commonality of this issue, one that I can exemplify is the experience of cooperation with Multinational Companies in Indonesia. We started from an audience to talk about programs in the human initiative. They were very interested because there were common values in how HI intervened in children's programs. In the next meeting, they asked for a design and proposal for children's programs such as stunting, school innovation, school kits, and other programs related to child welfare and protection issues. In the next meeting they were interested in working together, with the note that they asked for regional interventions to be in their operational area" (AG, April 2025).

Institutionalizing partnerships is another key focus. HI has established clear documentation systems, SOPs, and evaluation mechanisms to manage partnerships effectively. Agreements are formalized through MoUs, contracts, and program TORs, while data-driven monitoring systems allow shared access to track progress. This structured approach ensures accountability and builds trust with partners. HI also equips staff at both central and branch levels with the skills to manage partnerships adaptively and respond to field dynamics.

There are interesting findings in the research process. In addition to focusing on partnerships with companies, HI also initiated cooperation with many parties. Acceleration of efforts to handle social welfare issues including child welfare and protection in it, needs to be done together. Because HI believes that work done collaboratively will have a greater and more progressive impact. Some of these efforts were initiated to gather many parties in cooperation.

"To accelerate the process, HI together with the philanthropic ecosystem encourage alternative routes such as issuing a Presidential Regulation as a temporary legal basis. In addition, we also conduct public education so that the public is aware that those affected by this regulation are not only NGOs, but also beneficiaries in the community. One interesting experience was when HI initiated a post-disaster housing development program. Our initial target was the Ministry of Housing, but this approach faced challenges because the ministry's approach was still very pragmatic (based on numbers and volume of houses). Finally, we switched to communicating with the Ministry of Social Affairs which opened up new opportunities: not only about houses, but also post-disaster community empowerment. This is in line with HI's vision where intervention does not stop at the response or charity stage but continues to the development and strengthening phase of community capacity. This moment proves that a flexible and collaborative approach opens a wider path for sustainable social impact" (EGP, April 2025)

To strengthen the alliance pattern to intervene in social welfare issues, the Human Initiative established a structure known as Humanitarian Diplomacy and Advocacy (HDA). This structure serves as the advocacy wing of the organization, focusing on policy engagement and strategic communication to promote children's rights and protection within the framework of public policy. The HDA allows the Human Initiative to have a stronger voice in national and regional discussions, ensuring that children's needs and rights are represented in key policy decisions.

In addition to the HDA, the Human Initiative also created the Multi-Stakeholder Forum (MSF) to enhance cross-sector collaboration. This forum brings together various partners, including government agencies, civil society organizations, academic institutions, private companies, and the media, to work together on child welfare and protection issues. This cross-sector collaboration fosters shared understanding, promotes resource sharing, and creates joint action plans that can generate greater social impact. Through the establishment of the HDA and MSF, the Human Initiative strengthens its role as a connector and advocate in the child welfare and protection ecosystem. This structure allows the organization to not only expand its influence in public policy but also build meaningful partnerships that contribute to long-term systemic change for children across Indonesia and beyond.

Challenges in Implementing Human Initiative's Social Partnerships

Interviews with Human Initiative's management reveal that the most significant challenges in implementing social partnerships stem from limitations in human and institutional resources, evolving regulatory frameworks, and external factors that can impact long-term collaboration. Persistent gap between the scale of partnership demands and the internal capacity to meet them. Although HI is supported by a highly professional and committed team, the rapid growth in partnerships has not been fully matched by internal capacity strengthening, especially in field operations

outside the central office. Field staff are often required to take on multiple responsibilities—from coordinating programs and reporting to engaging with partners—which increases the risk of burnout, uneven workloads, and weakened communication quality with external stakeholders.

Emphasized that resource challenges also extend to technical infrastructure, such as the limited integration of digital systems for information and reporting across all departments. Although HI has begun transitioning toward data digitalization and dashboard-based reporting, the rollout has faced obstacles related to training, infrastructure availability in remote areas, and organizational culture readiness. These gaps affect both reporting efficiency and the speed of communication between teams and partners, particularly in multi-regional projects requiring intensive coordination.

On the regulatory side, HI encounters administrative complexities, particularly when programs involve foreign funding or collaboration with multinational entities. AG explained that shifting government regulations regarding international aid, program licensing, and NGO financial oversight remain inconsistent between national and local levels, complicating long-term planning with partners. Some corporate partners have even raised concerns about the bureaucratic hurdles that delay field-level implementation.

One of the critical challenges in advancing child welfare and protection efforts lies in the inconsistent levels of government support and collaboration across different regions. In some areas, the local government's priorities and mindset do not align with those of humanitarian organizations or NGOs, hindering effective implementation.

“The challenge from the government is if the government cannot be invited to collaborate and is not a primary concern in child protection. Not all areas of operation have the same support from the government. There are several areas where the government's mindset is not the same as HI or the NGO entity as a whole.” (FS, April 2025)

Pointed out the challenge of aligning values and understanding between corporate partners and the organization. In many cases, not all partners share a common vision or language around rights-based or community-centered development. Some continue to view social partnerships primarily as branding exercises rather than as collective efforts to drive sustainable social change. This disconnect often results in unrealistic expectations for fast results, overly rigid reporting demands, or commercially driven program designs that may conflict with HI's humanitarian principles. EGP (interview, April 16, 2025) illustrated this through HI's experience in initiating a post-disaster housing project, which initially targeted the Ministry of Housing but encountered constraints due to the ministry's pragmatism. By shifting to engage the Ministry of Social Affairs, HI was able to redefine the program into a more holistic approach, integrating community empowerment alongside physical

reconstruction—highlighting the critical need for strategic flexibility in multi-stakeholder engagements.

That external factors such as internal policy shifts within partner organizations, global economic trends, or socio-political crises also pose significant risks to partnership sustainability. For instance, during economic downturns, some companies reduce or suspend their humanitarian funding, including support for child welfare and protection programs. In such cases, HI must seek alternative funding while ensuring the continuity of existing program impacts. FS (interview, April 16, 2025) further noted that the initial health programs at HI, such as MHCR post-tsunami Aceh 2004, operated under a semi-autonomous structure with extensive involvement of medical professionals and decentralized clinical services, which presented coordination challenges that continue to inform present-day institutional learning.

Underlined the communication challenges in inter-agency collaboration, particularly in reconciling divergent institutional visions, operational tempos, and respect for local wisdom. As S (interview, April 22, 2025) remarked, “harmonizing perspectives with other organizations often requires deliberate effort in appreciating differences while nurturing mutual respect and coordination”. SM drew attention to the operational difficulty of maintaining CSR program continuity in fluctuating field contexts. According to A (interview, April 15, 2025), “one of the primary challenges is the ongoing need to adapt programs to local dynamics and continuously reassess the role of rotating field partners, which impacts long-term stability”.

Another data found that internal cultural transition is a major challenge. An informant explained (interview, April 15, 2025) “that in the process of organizational transformation, a major obstacle was overcoming the silo mentality, where each unit operated independently”. Building a culture of interconnectivity among sectors required persistent effort, but the benefits—improved coordination, increased programmatic impact, and enhanced donor trust—have become increasingly evident.

From the partners’ perspective, AA explained that the selection of HI as an implementing organization in child welfare and protection initiatives is driven by its credibility, strong program delivery, and child rights-based approach. Internal documentation reveals that corporate partners value HI’s ability to design impactful, measurable interventions that go beyond philanthropy. The general perception among corporate partners is positive—HI is seen as having clear reporting systems, professional field teams, and strong flexibility in adapting to program shifts. Partners also appreciate HI’s respect for internal corporate processes, including employee involvement, brand alignment, and joint messaging. As emphasized by AA (interview, April 30, 2025), “HI was chosen as a collaborative partner because of its compatibility with the CSR pillars of the

corporation, along with its adaptive program development process that amplifies social impact through joint implementation”.

However, challenges remain. The partners face a mismatch in expectations, particularly regarding execution speed and procedural flexibility. Companies accustomed to fast-paced business environments often need to adjust to the slower, more consultative pace of social programming. HI, on its end, has worked to adapt its project management models to meet partners' needs without compromising its core participatory and inclusive values. AA (interview, April 30, 2025) said another challenge was the difference in capacity between head office and branch office employees.

Despite these multifaceted challenges, Human Initiative remains firmly committed to improving its partnership systems through internal consolidation, capacity building, stronger monitoring and evaluation, and transparent, balanced engagement with partners. Through adaptive and collaborative approaches, the organization strives to turn these challenges into opportunities for growth and to enhance governance in delivering impactful social partnerships for children and communities.

The implementation of social partnerships in child welfare and protection by Human Initiative reflects a strategic collaboration between humanitarian organizations, the private sector, and other social actors to build a sustainable child welfare and protection system. In this study, social partnerships are understood not just as pragmatic cooperation to support specific social programs, but as a deeper synergy of values, resources, and roles from each party to provide comprehensive protection for children vulnerable to various social risks.

Human Initiative, as a humanitarian organization, has developed a strategic social partnership approach focused on long-term impact. This partnership integrates corporate social responsibility (CSR) principles from the corporate sector with a rights-based approach to child welfare and protection. The collaboration goes beyond philanthropy, being systematically designed to consider the needs of target communities, partner capacities, and the program's alignment with national child welfare and protection policies. This aligns with Gray and Bebbington's (2006) view that social partnerships should ideally be built on equal roles and shared commitment to social sustainability.

In practice, human initiative carries out a measured process of selecting and developing partnerships based on a shared vision to advance children's rights and create a safe, supportive environment for their growth. The organization maps potential partners from the private sector by looking at value alignment, company CSR policies, and their track record in social initiatives. Partnership designs are developed collaboratively, involving community representatives, government officials, and strategic partners to ensure programs are contextual, inclusive, and responsive to children's needs.

Through strategically designed collaborations and programs that respond to children's needs, Human Initiative demonstrates how social partnerships can act as catalysts for social change. They prove that when CSR programs are developed within a clear child welfare and protection framework and the implementing organization has strong institutional capacity and values, these partnerships deliver not only short-term benefits but also lay the foundation for lasting social transformation. Thus, Human Initiative's approach to social partnerships serves as a best practice example of child welfare and protection-based CSR that emphasizes not just advocacy but also empowerment.

This aligns closely with social partnership theory, which emphasizes mutuality, trust, and co-creation among stakeholders in addressing complex social issues. Human Initiative's model reflects a synergistic stage of partnership, where the value generated exceeds the sum of individual contributions. Rather than acting as a service provider to corporate agendas, the organization engages in joint problem-solving and shared value creation, fostering deep interdependence between actors. Successful partnerships are built on shared goals, complementary strengths, and adaptive governance structures. Ultimately, Human Initiative's experience illustrates how strategic social partnerships can evolve into transformative alliances that institutionalize child welfare and protection, strengthen civic responsibility, and embed social justice into the fabric of corporate and community life.

One of the key milestones is the establishment of the Humanitarian Diplomacy and Advocacy (HDA) unit. Through HDA, Human Initiative can position itself more strongly in public policy discussions, especially in areas that directly affect the rights and protection of children. In addition to HDA, Human Initiative also initiated the creation of a Multi-Stakeholder Forum (MSF), which serves as a platform for collaboration among actors from various sectors. The MSF reflects Human Initiative's commitment to cross-sectoral synergy, recognizing that child welfare and protection is not the responsibility of one actor alone but requires a collective response.

Within this tripartite partnership model, each sector plays a unique and complementary role. The public sector, mainly represented by government bodies, acts as a regulator, policy facilitator, and provider of key infrastructure and public services. The private sector contributes resources, technological innovation, and efficiency, helping to scale up and sustain initiatives. Meanwhile, nonprofit organizations, including NGOs and civil society groups, offer deep community engagement, advocate for vulnerable populations, and provide social oversight. This model of collaboration is not entirely new, but it marks an important evolution in the theory of social partnerships, as discussed by Brinkerhoff & Brinkerhoff (2011). By adopting this approach, Human Initiative acknowledges the value of building inclusive partnerships where each actor contributes according to their strengths. This structure not only strengthens the overall ecosystem for child welfare and protection but also ensures that interventions are more sustainable, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of the most vulnerable children.

In implementing social partnerships focused on child welfare and protection, Human Initiative faces complex and multidimensional challenges. These challenges arise not only from internal organizational factors but also from external dynamics involving corporate partners, government regulations, and public perceptions. With over two decades of experience collaborating across sectors, Human Initiative has developed practical insights into navigating various obstacles in social partnerships centered on child welfare and protection.

One key challenge is the limitation of resources, both in terms of personnel numbers, technical capacity, and logistical support. Child welfare and protection requires a comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach, demanding human resources who not only understand children's rights in theory but can also respond effectively to real-world situations. This resource gap is further complicated by the ongoing need for training, robust monitoring systems, and active community involvement.

Limited resources pose a critical challenge for Human Initiative in implementing social partnerships, especially in the context of child welfare and protection. This issue goes beyond having a limited number of personnel; it also reflects gaps in technical capacity, supporting infrastructure, and effective management systems. Child welfare and protection programs require more than just administrative efforts—they demand a responsive approach that can navigate complex social dynamics. This calls for human resources with a deep understanding of children's rights and the ability to respond adaptively and contextually to field situations, given that child welfare and protection cases often involve social, cultural, and psychological factors.

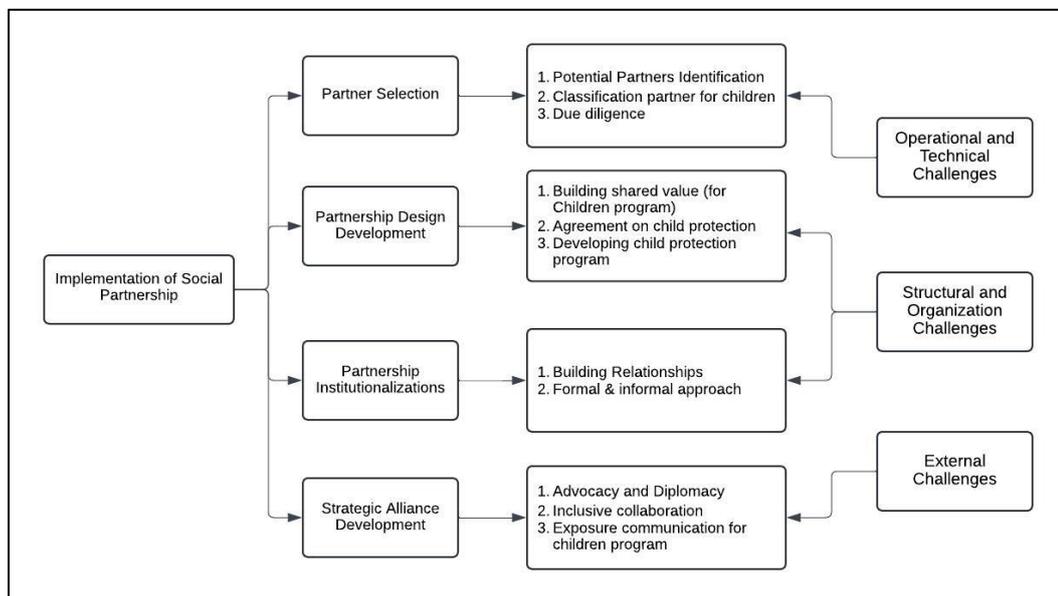
The challenge becomes even more pronounced as the need for ongoing training isn't always matched by the organization's budget or access to skilled facilitators. Strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems also faces obstacles due to limited technology, inadequate measurement tools, and data analysis capacity. Community involvement, which should be a key strength in community-based child welfare and protection, requires consistent and sustained social mobilization strategies. Without sufficient resources, community initiatives tend to weaken and struggle to be sustainable.

Besides resource limitations, regulatory challenges also significantly affect Human Initiative's flexibility in forming and managing partnerships. For example, Indonesia's CSR regulation, outlined in Law No. 40 of 2007 on Limited Liability Companies, is often narrowly interpreted by corporations as merely an administrative obligation rather than a strategic social responsibility. As a result, partnerships with humanitarian organizations like Human Initiative are sometimes dominated by short-term philanthropic approaches, lacking integration with sustainable business strategies. Carroll and Shabana (2010) describe this shift from "altruistic CSR" to "strategic CSR," where the latter requires more mature program

design, evaluation systems, and long-term relationship sustainability between partners.

Implementing strategic CSR demands that companies design programs based on data, social performance evaluation, and strong monitoring systems, so that partnerships not only create social impact but also generate shared value. In this context, Human Initiative faces the challenge of engaging in strategic dialogue with corporate partners to embed child welfare and protection values within programs that align closely with the company’s vision. This includes aligning success indicators, program timelines, and mutually supportive reporting mechanisms. However, without stronger regulatory incentives or government support, the transition to strategic partnerships often moves slowly. Therefore, synergy among the private sector, civil society organizations, and government is essential to create a partnership ecosystem based not only on legal compliance but also focused on sustainable social change.

In practice, Human Initiative also faces challenges in aligning perceptions with partners regarding the concept of child welfare and protection. Some corporate partners still view child programs as charity rather than as a form of long-term social investment. This difference in understanding can create discord in the design and implementation of programs. Below is the interplay of implementation and challenges of social partnership in HI.



Picture 1. The Interplay Between Implementation and Challenges of Social Partnerships in Human Initiative

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Human Initiative's approach to social partnerships in child welfare and protection has shifted from traditional philanthropy to a more strategic, child rights-based model. By co-developing programs with partners and embedding child protection narratives into agreements, the organization positions itself as a key factor in long-term social development. However, challenges persist. Internally, limited resources affect program management, monitoring, and consistency. Externally, unclear CSR regulations and differing partner perceptions—viewing children as aid recipients rather than rights holders—hinder alignment and long-term impact.

To strengthen its role, Human Initiative must enhance internal capacity in human resources, evaluation systems, and strategic communication. Establishing a center of excellence could further support cross-sector collaboration and innovation. Corporate partners should adopt a more strategic view of CSR, treating child welfare as a shared-value investment rather than a short-term project. Early collaboration and use of impact-based, rights-focused evaluation are key. Policymakers should also improve CSR governance by offering clearer regulations, incentives for strategic partnerships, and stronger support for civil society engagement. Future research should examine long-term social impacts, internalization of child rights within organizations, and the power dynamics shaping partnership practices.

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