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Alliances between For-Profit and Non-Profit Organizations as an Instrument to Implement the Economy for the Common Good

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Abstract: The model of the Economy for the Common Good (ECG) has cooperation as one of its main principles. This alternative economic model proposes to prioritize cooperation over competition to favor the creation of social value. From this point of view, strategic alliances between organizations can be used as an instrument that supports implementation of the ECG model. In recent years, alliances between for-profit and non-profit entities have been strengthened as a method to facilitate actions focused on social responsibility and sustainability. Moreover, the ECG model has become an adequate management framework for corporate sustainability. This work aims to connect alliances between for-profit and non-profit organizations with the ECG model. First, this connection is manifested in a theoretical way. This paper is going to analyze how such alliances can contribute to increasing the values of the ECG model: human dignity, solidarity and social justice, environmental sustainability, and transparency and codetermination. Afterwards, this work analyzes two cases of this type of alliance—Grupo Vips-Fundación Hazlo Posible and Danone Foods-Grameen Bank—to determine the benefits that this type of cooperation can provide to society. We study their motives and the benefits that they bring to the organizations and the community. Therefore, this work assesses how these types of alliances influence the different topics included in the Common Good Matrix. Moreover, we conduct a comparative analysis between both cases. This work demonstrates that, by implementing this type of strategic alliances, the creation of social value is favored, thus contributing to implementation of the ECG model.

Keywords: economy for the common good; cooperation; strategic alliances; sustainability; shared value; non-profit organizations

1. Introduction

Cooperation between organizations is a practice for which history dates back to the beginning of economic exchanges. Nevertheless, it becomes more relevant when the environment starts to be considered a significant variable in strategic analysis during the second half of the twentieth century. The economic dynamism and the globalization of markets restrict an organization's capacity to respond individually, an aspect that forces them to establish cooperation agreements to face environmental challenges. In consequence, alliances become a critical strategic tool for business success [1]. The literature on this subject is extensive [2], and the names used to refer to it are diverse: cooperation agreements [3,4], alliances [5,6], or coalitions [7], among others. Furthermore, alliances are analyzed from multiple perspectives and approaches [8]. Most authors focus on aspects such as their motives [9], the process of formation of the agreement [10], or their management [1].

Nowadays, a more recent source of research analyzes alliances and their relationship with ethical behaviors, social responsibility, and sustainability in corporations [11,12]. These studies affirm that the success of cooperation agreements depends on the absence of opportunistic behaviors, mutual respect, and trust. These fundamental aspects for the management of alliances connect with the social values derived from social responsibility and business ethics. Therefore, alliances between for-profit and non-profit entities are being promoted in order to develop critical competencies to create social value [13–17].

Furthermore, there is another aspect which is currently generating a broader literature on the subject of corporate sustainability. Such an aspect is the relevance of social value creation and its relationship with economic value through what Porter and Kramer [18] refer to as shared value [19–24]. Dyllick and Muff [25] establish a matrix in which they explain the process through which a company can reach "true sustainability". The process allows for identification of a typology formed by four different stages: (1) business-as-usual (economic concerns), (2) business sustainability 1.0 (three-dimensional concerns), (3) business sustainability 2.0 (triple bottom line), and (4) business sustainability 3.0 (outside-in). These authors point out that the Economy for the Common Good (ECG) model is an organizational framework that focuses on business sustainability 3.0 [25] (p. 169).

The ECG model is an organizational framework created in 2010 in Europe (Austria) by economics professor and social activist Christian Felber [26]. According to this model, corporations can measure their contribution to the common good through the Balance Sheet for the Common Good. This tool uses a strategic matrix—the Matrix for the Common Good—to quantify the company contribution to the creation of social and environmental value. This contribution is related to four principal values (human dignity, solidarity, social justice, environmental sustainability, and codetermination and transparency) with five different stakeholders (suppliers, investors, employees, customers, and social environment) [27]. This model replaces profit for the common good, and it gives priority to cooperation over competition. In this sense, the ECG is an organizational model that highlights the cooperation between companies, both internally (intra-cooperation) and externally (inter-cooperation).

When analyzing the literature on strategic alliances, we can find a few works concerning the importance of strategic alliances between for-profit and non-profit organizations. From an empirical point of view, the literature is even scarcer. In this sense, the present work provides new literature on this subject. Furthermore, we intend to relate this type of cooperation agreement with sustainability models such as the ECG one to prove that such alliances can help implement this model. Once the work establishes the theoretical relationship between both, future investigations could quantify the contributions of these alliances to the ECG model by applying the Common Good Matrix.

The objective of this work is to relate the study of alliances with the ECG model to establish a theoretical connection between the two. To this end, this work analyzes empirically the contribution that alliances between for-profit and non-profit organizations can make to the ECG model.

Cooperation agreements between these two types of organizations contribute to the creation of social value, which is the principal purpose of the ECG model. Therefore, establishment of these types of alliances can contribute to implementation of the ECG model in companies. This work intends to establish the theoretical connection between both approaches and the empirical contributions that these types of alliances can make to the Common Good Matrix.

With this purpose, our work is structured as follows. After this introductory section, we introduce Section 2, which includes the literature review. We divide such segments into three different subsections: (1) "2.1. Cooperation between for-profit and non-profit organizations", (2) "2.2. The Economy for the Common Good organizational model", and (3) "2.3. Cooperation in the ECG model". Following this segment, we describe the work method in Section 3. Afterwards, Section 4 focuses on the description of case studies. This segment is divided into two different parts: (1) "4.1 Grupo Vips–Fundación Hazlo Posible" and (2) "4.2. Danone Foods–Grameen Bank". After this, Section 5 analyzes the results of the empirical study conducted previously, employing a comparative analysis between both cases. To finish, Section 6 discusses the results of this work, and Section 7 contains the conclusions.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Cooperation between For-Profit and Non-Profit Organizations

Interfirm cooperation as a field of academic study within the economy began to gain relevance in the 1970s. Since that time, numerous papers have highlighted the importance of cooperation to obtain a competitive advantage [28–30]. The first papers on this subject affirmed that cooperation was a cover-up practice that restrained competition [31–36]. However, in the 1980s, the cooperation approach experienced a change due to application of the "Transaction Costs Economics" [37,38]. Nowadays, cooperation is analyzed as a hybrid or intermediate form between the market and the company. Interfirm cooperation reduces market inefficiencies (reducing transaction costs), and it facilitates access to resources and capabilities that the entities could not obtain individually [39,40].

From an organizational perspective, cooperation begins to gain interest as a field of academic study when the environment starts to be considered a critical element in the competition between organizations [41]. Even though there are previous references [42], the most relevant works emerge when cooperation is studied within the resource dependency approach. Such an approach states that cooperation between entities occurs as a consequence of mutual dependence [43,44]. This fact leads to a strategic approach to cooperation, which is considered an alternative strategy to mergers and vertical integration (internalization of activities). This approach comprises two main types of reasons why companies cooperate: (1) to access new resources and capabilities that the entities do not possess [45,46] and (2) to organize certain activities of the value chain [7,47,48].

The existing literature indicates that cooperation can be implemented through different methods—functional agreements, franchising, outsourcing, joint ventures, networks, etc.—which share common characteristics that help define the concept [28]. Such attributes are as follows: (1) partners keeping their legal independence, (2) the explicit and long-term nature of the collaboration, (3) partners sharing common and compatible goals, and (4) the organizations involved sharing their resources and capabilities.

The strategic perspective of organizations focuses the study of alliances on two different aspects [7,9,47,49]: (1) their motives and causes, and (2) their consequences (benefits and results of the alliances). Moreover, this perspective includes the study of the process of negotiating and managing the cooperation agreements [50–52].

With this work, we are interested in introducing a new motive that has been little analyzed by the academic field: the use of alliances to promote the implementation of socially responsible practices, ethical behaviors, and sustainability criteria [11,53,54]. Table 1 summarizes the main contributions concerning the relationship between strategic alliances and corporate social responsibility.

Table 1. Main contributions of alliances to corporate social responsibility.

Authors	Contributions
Canzaniello et al. (2017) [30]	This paper analyzes the vertical alliances between companies and their suppliers in the supply chain under sustainability criteria.
Altamira (2000) [55]	This paper studies how ethical behaviors on alliances can avoid opportunistic behaviors and distrust between partners.
Michavilla (2011) [56]	This work states that the success of an alliance depends on mutual trust between partners.
Renart Cava (1999) [57]	The author concludes that the failure of an alliance depends on unethical behaviors and the loss of trust between partners.
Pérez López (1993) [58]	This paper states that the transcendent motivations are the ones that avoid opportunistic behaviors, thus favoring the success of alliances.
Browning et al. (1995) [59]	The authors state that the success of alliances increases when the commitment between the people involved in the agreements goes beyond the contractual obligations. These ethical bonds create a moral community.

In Table 1, we can see that different authors have focused their studies on the relationship between ethics and the success of strategic alliances between organizations. Such studies have been conducted using different approaches, such as corporate governance [60], stakeholders' theory [61], and the territorial perspective [62]. More recently, a big part of the literature on business cooperation has focused on the impact that social responsibility policies have on this type of agreements. The new studies emphasize aspects such as the formation, development, and control of the alliances [11,53,54].

To assess the impact that social responsibility measures have on cooperation agreements, Kliksberg [63] defined corporate social responsibility as a way of understanding the business world in which organizations are allies and drivers of environmental and social development. The author adds that capitalism and its individualistic ethics cannot be suitable to underpin social responsibility. Therefore, this system does not meet the needs of today's society. Ethics must be based on cooperation and mutual contribution [64].

Related to this aspect, Pulgar and Pelekais [11] identified the importance of strategic alliances as a tool to guarantee the effectiveness of social responsibility measures. By cooperating, partners in different or similar industries can unite their strengths in order to meet the needs and requirements of the society in which they operate. Additionally, Morales et al. [65] affirmed that social responsibility policies can be more effective if they are carried out through cooperation with entities that possess the key competencies for their implementation, that is, through strategic alliances with non-profit organizations. Consequently, these authors, together with Porter and Kramer [18], introduced the importance of alliances between for-profit and non-profit organizations for the creation of shared value.

The number of publications on strategic alliances between for-profit and non-profit organizations is still scarce and very recent. With regards to this subject, we can find papers that focus on diverse topics. Some of these topics are health and education [66], intersectoral alliances [67], cooperation agreements between private entities and non-profit organizations [68], intersectoral alliances that focus on corporate websites [69], alliances centered on the use of the balanced scorecard [70], cooperation agreements that focus on the implementation of marketing strategies [71], intersectoral alliances centered on reputation [72], alliances focused on strategic development [73], and alliances centered on the mediating role of altruism [74]. Table 2 summarizes the main contributions concerning the relationship between alliances between for-profit and non-profit organizations and corporate social responsibility.

Table 2. Main contributions of alliances between for-profit and non-profit organizations to corporate social responsibility.

Authors	Contributions
Muthuri et al. (2009) [75] and Porter and Kramer (2011) [18]	Hybrid corporations are those that are capable of creating shared value as the intersection between economic and social value.
García et al. (2011) [14]	The authors state that these alliances are created as a response to the new interests of the stakeholders. In this sense, the work establishes three perspectives or approaches: (1) Transaction: occasional philanthropic actions that do not create value. (2) Transition: continuous dialogue between the companies involved in the alliance but without considering the rest of the stakeholders. (3) Transformation: continuous dialogue between all of the stakeholders, thus creating shared value throughout the development of the alliance.

Table 2. *Cont.*

Authors	Contributions
Berger et al. (2004) [66]	This paper studies the holding of events to raise funds for cancer research through an alliance between American Express and Share Our Strength (a non-profit organization against hunger) in 1991.
Shumate and O'Connor (2010) [69]	This paper studies successful alliances between 11 private entities and 59 non-profit organizations based on a sample of 155 companies from the US Fortune 500 and 6965 NGOs.
Hansen et al. (2010) [70]	The authors study the positive social impacts for local communities derived from the alliance between Merck, Ltd. Thailand (a subsidiary of a German pharmaceutical multinational) and local organizations.
Arya and Salk (2006) [67], Rivera-Santos and Rufin (2010) [68], Liu and Ko (2011) [71], Im (2011) [72], Al-Tabbaa (2014) [73], and Rim et al. (2016) [74]	This work's contributions are related to the benefits obtained from alliances created to establish socially responsible practices.

With regards to cooperation between for-profit and non-profit organizations, Porter and Kramer [18] stated that, on the one hand, for-profit corporations can embrace the social and environmental aspects predominating in the non-profit entities. On the other hand, the authors affirm that non-profit organizations can ensure their economic viability to continue operating. Then, the existing boundary between for-profit and non-profit organizations blurs. By cooperating, both entities complement their deficiencies, thus guarantying their survival. Therefore, these strategic alliances lead to the creation of shared value, which is based on the idea that organizations create economic and social value through their economic activity.

In the same line of thinking, Rodríguez et al. [16] focused on the impact that this type of cooperation has on both organizations. According to their studies, the positive impacts and benefits derived from strategic alliances between for-profit and non-profit organizations can be seen in three different factors: (1) for-profit organizations experience an increase in their number of partners as a consequence of improvement in their corporate image derived from the alliance; (2) employees from both entities undergo an increase in their motivation derived from a higher general and operative implication at work; and (3) these alliances promote the exchange of tangible and intangible resources and capabilities between both organizations. It is worth noting that this last aspect leads to a process of in-depth learning, which will remain with each one of the entities if the cooperation agreement ceases in the future. Moreover, the authors mention that this knowledge derived from the alliance will allow both organizations to compete in meeting the needs and requirements of every single stakeholder of the society in which the companies operate.

Concerning this topic, Carreras and Iglesias' [15] work shares some of the benefits explained above, but they added some new ones. On the one hand, with regards to the benefits experienced by capitalist organizations, they included (1) an improvement in their internal processes and the potential for innovation in their human resources policies, (2) the retention of employees due to an increase in their motivation, (3) higher visibility of the organization's value, (4) increase in the company's awareness of the reality of the society in which they operate, and (5) the implementation of social responsibility measures becoming easier thanks to the knowledge obtained from the non-profit entity. On the other hand, the positive impacts experienced by the non-profit entities are (1) access to economic and technical resources, (2) creation of new products and services as a consequence of the know-how acquired, (3) increase in their channels of distribution, (4) access to a broader number of partners due to the networks of the for-profit company, and (5) increase in their visibility.

Therefore, we can conclude that different benefits exist for both types of entities, which explain the increase in the importance of this type of alliances during recent years [76]. Nevertheless, the importance of these agreements does not reside in this aspect, since alliances between for-profit organizations also present benefits for the entities involved. Therefore, many papers focus on the impact that these agreements constitute for the community where they are developed [13]. Concerning this aspect, Abenoza et al. [17] indicated that there are three positive impacts for the community derived from this type of cooperation.

In the first place, they stated that entities can solve a social problem more efficiently due to the exchange of resources and capabilities that takes place between them.

In the second place, the authors mention that organizations are able to generate social innovation as well [17]. As a consequence of the cooperation between for-profit and non-profit entities, organizations can develop new products, services, and technologies with significant social impact. That is, these alliances lead to the creation of innovative offers aimed at solving the social problems mentioned above. On the one hand, the non-lucrative entity detects the environmental or social challenge by bringing its knowledge about this aspect, while on the other hand, the for-profit organization brings its professional experience related to product or service development.

Finally, the third community benefit that Abenoza et al. [17] indicated in relation to these types of alliances is related to the local and global changes they promote. The authors referred to these cooperation agreements as strategic alliances developed to promote ethical practices. They named these practices "global action networks", which are described as coalitions created to promote not only local changes but also global ones. These agreements are based on (1) shared learning and (2) the establishment of innovative networks emerging from the technological exchange between the organizations involved. According to the authors, these agreements are created to encourage social transformation. Such social transformation is the reason why these alliances are not restricted to the local community in which the organizations operate, but they pretend to have a positive integral impact through innovation.

In this line of thinking, Callejas and Salazar [77] indicated that the exchange of knowledge and technology that takes place between for-profit and non-profit organizations leaves a communitarian footprint globally and locally. Furthermore, the authors added that this footprint can be seen at the social and environmental levels. These types of alliances allow, through innovation, the development and implementation of new models of production and distribution of products and services designed for the common good. Moreover, these new models are environmentally friendly, and they do not need to be limited to the locality in which the organizations are established.

As a conclusion, we can state that the transcendence of the strategic alliances between for-profit and non-profit organizations resides on the impact that they have on the community. The creation of economic and social sustainable value is only possible through this model of cooperation since these strategic alliances allow social development through the economic one and vice versa [78].

2.2. The Economy for the Common Good Organizational Model

The ECG model was created in the year 2010 during the financial crisis that began in Central Europe in 2008. The model was created by Christian Felber, professor of Economics at the University of Vienna and social activist of Attac. Hence, the model has social origins, being created as an alternative perspective to the current global economic model. The underlying topic that this model suggests is that economic growth and money cannot be considered an end or an objective; these must be instruments used in order to create social welfare and to improve the quality of people's lives. From this perspective, Felber proposes the substitution of "for-profit" by "common good" and the replacement of competition by cooperation [26]. The substitution of "for-profit" by "common good" does not imply that organizations are not going to obtain benefits; this means that entities must favor the general interest through the creation of social value.

Cooperation and competition are two factors that have been analyzed together in business literature. Firstly, they were considered two opposing terms (when cooperation increases, competition decreases) [31–33]. Later, they were contemplated as two concepts directly related (cooperation favors competition) [4]. Nevertheless, it is important to mention that competition and cooperation are not incompatible concepts; they can be supplemented by what is known as co-petition [79]. This concept arises from game theory application. According to this theory, companies must follow a win-win strategy in which success in the market does not require the failure of competing companies, as there may be multiple winners [80–84]. Cooperation is used by organizations to be more competitive without the need to reduce or eliminate competence.

The ECG model was created as a proposal for a global economic model. Nevertheless, its implementation focuses on the organizational sphere. With this purpose, the model uses a tool known as the Common Good Balance Sheet (CGBS), in which its utility is to assess the impact that an organization produces on society (social impact) and the planet (environmental impact) [85]. The CGBS works as a complementary tool to the balance sheet and to the profit and loss statement, which measure the economic and financial structure of an entity. The CGBS consists of the Common Good Report, the Common Good Matrix, and the company's improvement plan.

The Common Good Matrix is a strategic matrix that relates the four fundamental values of the ECG model (human dignity, solidarity and social justice, environmental sustainability, and transparency and codetermination) with five main groups of stakeholders (suppliers, owners and financial service providers, employees, customers, and their social environment). Through the matrix, organizations can quantitatively measure their contribution to the common good. According to the score range obtained in the matrix, the company can be placed at the following rating levels: beginner (0–1), advanced (2–3), experienced (4–6), and exemplar (7–10). The highest possible score is a thousand points. Furthermore, this matrix can be applied to any organization, whether they are private (for-profit and non-profit corporations) or public. The matrix structure can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. The Common Good Matrix.

Value/ Stakeholders	Human Dignity	Solidarity and Social Justice	Environmental Sustainability	Transparency and Codetermination
A Suppliers	A1. Human dignity in the supply chain	A2. Solidarity and social justice in the supply chain	A3. Environmental sustainability in the supply chain	A4. Transparency and codetermination in the supply chain
B Owners, equity, and financial service providers	B1. Ethical position in relation to financial resources	B2. Social position in relation to financial resources	B3. Use of funds in relation to social and environmental impacts	B4. Ownership and codetermination
C Employees, including coworking employers	C1. Human dignity in the workplace and working environment	C2. Self-determined working arrangements	C3. Environmentally friendly behavior of staff	C4. Codetermination and transparency within the organization
D Customers and other companies	D1. Ethical customer relations	D2. Cooperation and solidarity with other companies	D3. Impact on the environment of the use and disposal of products/services	D4. Customer participation and product transparency
E Social environment	E1. Purpose of products/services and their effects on society	E2. Contribution to the community	E3. Reduction of environmental impact	E4. Social codetermination and transparency

Source: https://www.ecogood.org/apply-ecg/common-good-matrix/. Note: This matrix corresponds to the 5.0 version, created in 2017. The original matrix (from 2010) has been modified based on the changes that have been introduced over time. As a consequence of these changes, nowadays, there are five different versions of the matrix. The first one was implemented through 100 German and Austrian organizations in 2010.

2.3. Cooperation in the ECG Model

Cooperation appears implicitly and transversally in every single one of the 20 topics comprised within the matrix. In order to quantify these topics, the matrix uses different types of indicators. Detailed information on the matrix structure and the process through which the scores are obtained can be found on the website of the International Association for the Common Good Economy [86]. By analyzing each one of its indicators, we can identify those aspects related to cooperation which appear explicitly in the matrix. Therefore, throughout the study of the ECG Matrix, we can find references to cooperation in both ways, implicitly and explicitly. The next section Section 2.3. of the work focuses on these references.

In the first place, by studying the first interest group of the matrix (suppliers), we analyze the relationship between the organization and the suppliers across the supply chain. In this case, alliances have significant relevance, since we consider these types of relationships as vertical alliances within the supply chain. This block of the matrix introduces the concept of "sustainable supply chain". A sustainable supply chain is one in which a situation of abuse of market power between the company and its suppliers does not take place. Moreover, it includes the establishment of cooperation agreements with local suppliers, thus favoring proximity sourcing and relationships.

Furthermore, this block includes the conditions of the cooperation agreement between the company and the supplier. Sustainability criteria bring these conditions, which are specified through the four values placed horizontally in the matrix. Such values represent a sustainable supply chain management. Cooperation is reflected explicitly in the fourth value corresponding to "A.4. Transparency and codetermination in the supply chain". In this case, the ECG model suggests establishing cooperative relations with suppliers based on transparency and participation.

In the second place, by studying the second interest group of the matrix (owners and financial service providers), the company's relationship with its financial providers (primarily credit institutions) is analyzed. In this block of the matrix, horizontal alliances between the organizations and the financial entities take place. These alliances—when we apply the sustainability criteria—can be understood as coalitions with ethical and social banks. This aspect implies the establishment of cooperation agreements with financial providers, which are based on socially responsible investments. In this case, the company can participate in solidarity-based financing in order to implement projects with a positive social and environmental impact. The implementation of these projects will be conducted employing subordinated loans, microcredit, and crowdfunding or by providing financial aid directly. It is important to mention that this matrix includes a negative indicator (it implies subtracting points from the matrix): the possibility that the organization participates in a hostile takeover bid.

In the third place, by studying the third interest group of the matrix (employees), the relationships between people by using tools based on participation and co-decision are analyzed. In this case, cooperation is studied from an internal perspective known as intra-cooperation. This one uses different types of methods, such as cooperative work or collaborative decision-making. This block of the matrix shows that an organizational culture based on respect, trust, and appreciation fosters cooperation between people, thus including an open, transparent, and bottom-up communication system.

Moreover, the matrix includes indicators related to diversity—age, gender, ethnicity, and religion—and equal opportunities. Nevertheless, the aspect that focuses the most on cooperation is the one related to transparency and codetermination or internal democratic participation. In this sense, the first aspect valued is transparency or access to the company's relevant information; by accessing information, people can build their own opinion and can participate actively. A second important aspect to consider is the legitimacy of the organization's management; employees are the ones who must legitimate directors through dialogue, contribution, and participation. There is also a third aspect related to participation of employees in the decision-making process of the company; workers can give ideas, and they can take action in the entity's decision-making process. To this end, ECG theory suggests the following concrete actions: making bottom-up decisions, sharing responsibility, covering all levels of the organization, and applying direct democracy in relevant decisions.

In the fourth place, by studying the fourth interest group of the matrix (customers and other companies), the relationship of the company with its clients (favoring their participation in those decisions that directly affect them) and with other entities (enhancing inter-cooperation) is analyzed.

With respect to the customers, ECG theory proposes to maintain a transparent, honest, and horizontal relationship with them. Furthermore, the model suggests facilitating their access to the purchasing process by actively participating in decisions that affect them. According to ECG theory, such access could be promoted by creating customer groups, working committees, etc. Clients can participate in the improvement or development of existing products or services as well as in facilitating their diffusion among customers.

With regards to cooperation with other entities, collaboration should be based on an attitude of appreciation and equal and horizontal treatment. This section of the matrix is based on three aspects: (1) considering organizations in the same sector as complementary in the market, (2) working with other companies to offer joint solutions to the customers, and (3) offering disinterested support to other entities in a situation of need. These three aspects form a condition that, in the theoretical framework, was referred to as co-petition. Some of the matrix indicators related to co-petition are (1) the percentage of time and resources spent on collaborative product and service development, (2) the percentage of time aimed at enhancing cooperation with other organizations from the same or different market segments and sectors, and (3) the number of civil society projects shared with other entities. Finally, solidarity towards other organizations is implemented by promoting mutual disinterested assistance through the exchange of employees, assignments, financial resources, and technology. In this block of the matrix, hostile behavior towards other organizations, the abuse of its competitive position in the market, and seeking win-lose strategies are activities negatively assessed.

In the fifth and last position, by studying the fifth interest group of the matrix (the social environment), the relationship of the company with society is analyzed. This block focuses on the relationship between the organization and the region where it develops its economic activity. Here, we can include alliances between for-profit organizations and NGOs or other non-profit entities as well as cooperation agreements with other groups of interest such as neighborhoods, ecologist associations, etc. The theoretical aspects previously analyzed in this work with regards to alliances between for-profit and non-profit organizations can be applied to this block of the Common Good Matrix.

Moreover, this section of the model comprises different ways to collaborate with the community by means of voluntary contributions. Such contributions can be monetary or in-kind. They can also take place by using the company's network to support civil society projects. Besides, cooperation with interest groups of the community, such as local institutions and NGOs, represent another way to collaborate.

These contributions and impacts are based on transparency; they are possible because the organization provides to the external interest groups truthful and complete information with regards to the entities' actions and their direct effects on the social environment. In connection with this, direct and active participation with the community's interest groups should be encouraged by consulting them and by involving them in the decision-making process of the company, especially in those aspects that directly affect the social environment. Information manipulation and lack of transparency are valued negatively in the matrix.

By studying the indicators proposed and reflected in the Common Good Matrix, we can quantify the role that cooperation plays in the implementation of the ECG model.

3. Method

The present study adopts a qualitative methodological approach, more specifically, the case study method. According to Yin [87], this methodology is the most appropriate one due to the critical and peculiar character of the cases and the unique object of study that they comprise. This approach enables investigating and drawing conclusions in a way that would not be possible otherwise. Moreover, multiple case studies (research in which several cases are analyzed at the same time) enables the investigation and comparison of examples and facts so that, finally, reality can be described [87]. In the same line of thinking, authors such as Rule and John [88] state that it is possible to test and affirm theories with the case study method. Their study indicates that qualitative methodologies can test and verify theories through the study of cases employing deductions that move from the general to the specific.

This generalization is described by Yin [89] as "analytic generalization", a process that takes place when a theory can be used as the basis to compare the empiric results obtained with the case study.

Since the final objective of this work is to demonstrate the theories exposed in the theoretical framework, this work conducts an empirical study consisting of the analysis and comparison of two different cases. These cases have been selected for two main reasons: (1) visibility of the participating organizations and (2) the amount of information published with regards to the cooperation agreements between them.

The study of the two selected cases has been conducted based on the information obtained in such cases. We have chosen the cases based on the impact that they have on the community and the ease of getting sufficient and adequate information. This information has been obtained from two different types of sources: (1) from the institutional websites of the entities that are part of the alliances and (2) from different papers published on academic journals and other public documents.

In order to meet the work's purpose, the study is divided into three sections: (1) an individual study of the strategic alliance between Grupo Vips and Fundación Hazlo Posible, (2) an individual study of the strategic alliance between Danone Foods and Grameen Bank, and (3) a comparative analysis of both cases with the aim of discerning if there is a common pattern concerning the implications of these cooperation agreements for the community and their relationship with the ECG.

4. Case Study Participants Description

4.1. Grupo VIPS–Fundación Hazlo Posible Case Study

On the one hand, Grupo Vips is a family business founded in Madrid in 1969, when Plácido Arango (the founder) decided to open the first establishment under the name Vips. Although initially the organization had only one chain of restaurants, nowadays, the group is formed by six big chains and ten restaurants with more than 350 establishments and a workforce of more than 10,000 employees [90].

On the other hand, Fundación Hazlo Posible is a private non-profit organization founded by José Martín and Catalina Parra in 1999 to stimulate the involvement of society in solidarity and social causes by using information and communication technologies. With this objective, they created an online portal web under the name Canalsolidario.org [90]. This portal web was intended to work as a bridge between the activities of the NGO and the society. Today, Canalsolidario.org is a digital newspaper specialized in social information, while the foundation is focused on three action lines: awareness-raising and communication, volunteering, and knowledge management. The entity has a workforce of 17 employees and a census of 500 volunteers who support the organization guided by the values of commitment, diversity, energy, and creativity [90].

Cooperation between both organizations began when Maite Arango (vice-president of the Vips Group Council) and Elena Acín (director of *Fundación Hazlo Posible*) met at the first Internet Fair in Madrid in 1999. Acín attended the fair to present their new portal web *Canalsolidario.org* with the aim of accessing private funding, while Arango was looking for a social project to which *Grupo Vips* could commit [90]. After several meetings, both entities decided to start to collaborate on the portal web *Canalsolidario.org* in 2000. When cooperation started, the portal was renamed *Hacesfalta.org* after *Grupo Vips* made an initial investment of 106.000 €. The decision to start cooperating was taken quickly since both organizations shared the same goal. Such a goal was to increase the visibility of a new type of volunteering in Spain, that is, virtual volunteering. With this purpose, both entities unified their knowledge: *Grupo Vips* contributed with its customer service experience and *Fundación Hazlo Posible* contributed with its consulting skills. After this first contact, during the following years, in order to avoid complications related to compliance with the agreements, both entities set up formal governance mechanisms such as the signing of annual agreements and the submission of monthly reports to monitor the development of the project [90].

In 2004, *Fundación Hazlo Posible* launched a new corporate volunteering program as an extension of *Hacesfalta.org* in which different organizations were able to participate. To manage this program, *Grupo Vips* created a new corporate social responsibility department so that the relationships between the organizations become formal and informal. Nevertheless, it is important to mention that, in addition to these formal administrative procedures, two main aspects explain the long-term nature of this alliance. These aspects are (1) a strong level of engagement and interactions between the entities, and (2) trust, which has been an essential governance mechanism for the development of this cooperation agreement.

One year later, in 2005, both entities developed a project known as *Brazos Abiertos* (open arms). This new project, which was part of the corporate volunteering program, was aimed at incorporating new employees in their organizations and at integrating immigrants arriving in Spain into the Spanish society. Due to the growth of the different projects carried out, organizational changes were necessary. These adjustments caused a renewal in the management positions of both organizations, and they generated the incorporation of several new skilled employees into the workforce [90].

Over the next three years, as a consequence of the financial crisis of 2008 and due to the rapid growth of the alliance, *Fundación Hazlo Posible* detected the need to look for new sources of financing. With this purpose, in 2010, both organizations signed a three-year contract consisting of two aspects: (1) *Grupo Vips* would reduce the amount of money they invest in the non-profit organization, and (2) *Fundación Hazlo Possible* would look for other sponsorships and advertising contracts. Thus, in 2010, the strategic alliance was strengthened by opening the non-profit organization to new sources of funding [90].

Nowadays, both entities work together on the *Hacesfalta.org* project and on a new one incorporated in 2019 as part of the corporate volunteering program, named *Red Talento Que Impacta* [91]. This new project promotes strategic relationships between for-profit and non-profit organizations to foster the transfer of knowledge and learning between both types of companies. Therefore, *Red Talento Que Impacta* enhances and strengths the creation of social value in the community [92].

Concerning the impact of this alliance on the community where the organizations are established, we can find different benefits. First of all, since the creation of the first volunteering portal web, both entities have contributed to enhancing the volunteering and social responsibility culture in Spain. Since the creation of this cooperation agreement, hundreds of non-profit and for-profit organizations have actively participated in several solidarity initiatives, thus fostering the solidarity and corporate responsibility values [90]. Furthermore, this new organizational culture fosters communication between the different departments of *Grupo Vips*, thus leading to an increase in the motivation of employees, alongside a more robust leadership of its professionals [90].

In the second place, the strategic alliance has also contributed to technological development. As a result of the cooperation agreement, the portal web *Canaldolidario.org* and other following projects were created and intensively developed, initiatives that had a strong social repercussion. Therefore, we can state that, through this type of cooperation agreement, entities can develop new innovative products and services aimed at solving social problems [17]. Moreover, this technological development had also a positive impact on the organizations involved in the cooperation agreement [90]. This pioneering technological development has contributed to strengthening the reputation and corporate image of *Grupo Vips*. As stated by Rodríguez et al. [16], an improvement in the corporate image derived from the alliance enables the recruitment of new partners, alongside an increase in the reputation of the company. Therefore, we can conclude that both entities have benefited to a great extent since the cooperation agreement was established.

On the one hand, as a result of an increase in its visibility and a significant rise in its economic resources, *Fundación Hazlo Posible* has experienced a considerable growth of its partners: nowadays, the non-profit entity has 53 allies, and it is part of ten social networks [93]. On the other hand, *Grupo Vips* has undergone a clear improvement in its corporate image. Currently, the group is considered one of the most well-known businesses within its sector as a consequence of its social activity [94]. Since the establishment of the alliance, the for-profit organization has been awarded several distinctions provided by institutions such as MERCO (Spanish Corporate Reputation Monitor) or the organization *Fundación Empresa* [94]. Moreover, *Grupo Vips* is invited to academic forums to talk about the key to its success. Besides, the entity is cited in different publications and academic journals related to this subject. These recognitions have fostered the company's growth: before the alliance, the group had a workforce of 2800 employees, while nowadays, it has 9300 workers distributed among the 400 establishments and six chains that the business currently has [94].

Therefore, we can observe that, through cooperation between for-profit entities and non-profit organizations, companies bring benefits to society and the cooperating businesses as well. Thanks to the collation, *Fundación Hazlo Posible* and *Grupo Vips* constitute a culture based on diversity, innovation, teamwork, and efficiency, a culture that benefits every single group of interest of the agreement [90]. Through the strategic alliance, both organizations share resources and capabilities, thus allowing the for-profit organization access to those it did not possess before the alliance. Such resources enable the transfer of knowledge that makes the development of the portal web possible, which brings benefits for both entities and the community.

Throughout their repeated joint activities based on trust, both organizations created a unique synergy that brought them a sustainable competitive advantage, which allowed the alliance activity and its benefits to last over time. Porter and Kramer [18] stated that this sustainable competitive advantage is based on the shared value creation: through cooperation between for-profit and non-profit organizations, entities create social value benefiting the economic activity of the partners involved and extending the positive impact they have on society. Thereafter, we can observe that cooperation between *Grupo Vips* and *Fundación Hazlo Posible* assists in the creation of social value and the common good, thus fostering implementation of the ECG model.

Table 4 summarizes the main contributions of the case study on implementation of the ECG model from a cooperation perspective.

Table 4. Contributions of the strategic alliance *Grupo VIPS–Fundación Hazlo Posible* to the Economy for the Common Good (ECG) model.

Value/ Stakeholders	Human Dignity	Solidarity and Social Justice	Environmental Sustainability	Transparency and Codetermination
A Suppliers				
B Owners, equity and financial service providers		Financing of social projects	Financing of environmental projects	
C Employees, including coworking employers	Diversity in employment	Voluntary work	Lower impact due to the ICT use	Employee motivation and participatory culture
D Customers and other companies				
E Social environment	Culture of volunteerism	Community aid and support	Lower impact due to the ICT use	Environmental participation

4.2. Danone Foods–Grameen Bank Case Study

On one side, *Danone Foods* is a food business founded by Isaac Carasso in 1919 to improve people's health through progress in the process of fermentation. Although the first factory of the group was established in Barcelona in 1929, the company moved to France, where they inaugurated the first factory for the production of yogurts. Nowadays, the corporation has four different business lines: dairy products, water, infant nutrition, and medical nutrition. Moreover, the group operates in more than 130 countries spread over the world [95].

On the other hand, *Grameen Bank* is an entity created by Muhammad Yunus in Bangladesh in 1940 to offer microcredits to the most impoverished population of the region without the need for guarantees. Yunus idea was to provide funding capacities to the poorest people with terms and conditions they could afford. With this action, Yunus intended to carry out small activities that could contribute to the development of the community. Currently, *Grameen Bank* has 2568 branch offices with a workforce made up of 21,751 employees. Moreover, the organization has a base of nine million borrowers in more than 80,000 villages. Besides, the methods employed by *Grameen* are applied to projects in more than 58 countries such as The United States, Canada, France, Norway, and The Netherlands, among others [96].

The strategic alliance between the two organizations dates back to 2005 when, while visiting the city of Paris, Yunus received an invitation from Franck Riboud (CEO of *Danone Group*) to meet. During the meeting, the founder of *Grameen* suggested to Riboud the creation of a cooperation agreement between the two entities to jointly address the child malnutrition in Bangladesh, particularly in rural areas of the country. To this end, in 2006, the joint venture *Grameen Danone Foods* was created as a social enterprise [97]. This business model focused on the resolution of social and environmental issues. For that reason, the benefits obtained from the social enterprise activities were reinvested in the organization, so that a feedback loop that generates growth while contributing to development was created. Even though this social enterprise was based on the improvement of a social problem, the entity must be cost-effective. The enterprise must generate profit that can be reinvested into the organization to assist in a continuous process of progress and progress [98].

Hence, the social joint venture *Grameen Danone Foods* started to produce a new yogurt under the name of *Shoktidoi* ("strong yogurt"). The enterprise manufactured this product with essential nutrients, as it is specifically designed to fill the nutritional deficiencies of children in Bangladesh. The product had a selling price of eight cents, being affordable for the most impoverished population since it is intended for children in need [99].

In 2006, they established the first production plant in the city of Bogra, a factory 50 times smaller than the standard plants of *Danone Group*, which supplied a rural population spread over a 30 km perimeter around the *Shoktidoi* factory [100]. Since the establishment of this plant, the joint venture has invested around 700 thousand dollars in the region. Besides, more than seven million people have benefited from access to health, hygiene, nutrition, and employment [101].

With regards to the impact that the strategic alliance *Grameen-Danone Foods* has brought to different groups of the community in which the enterprise is located, it is worth noting that this cooperation agreement shows benefits in the environmental, economic, and social spheres.

Firstly, to reduce the environmental footprint of the social enterprise, the plant located in the city of Bogra works with solar energy employed to heat the water and to clean the facilities [97]. This aspect proves that, by using this renewable energy source, the social entity contributes to putting into practice the ECG model. In this case, by reducing the environmental effects of its activity, they focused on the ecological solidarity and sustainability aspects [27].

Secondly, concerning the economic impact of the strategic alliance in Bangladesh, it is important to mention that the social enterprise has become a significant source of income creation for the Bogra region and its surrounding areas. On the one hand, 475 farmers located in the area around the plant provide the milk used for the production of the yogurts. Moreover, these yogurts are manufactured by 30 local employees, and they are distributed by 250 micro-entrepreneurial women from the area who sell the products door-to-door. In total, *Grameen Danone Foods* employs 1600 employees from the area in which the plant is located [97].

Hence, we can observe that different agents of the community are involved in the manufacturing and distribution processes of the nutritious yogurts. Consequently, the joint venture improves the nutrition of children at the same time that it creates a business fabric that offers opportunities for employment and, therefore, for progress to different sectors of the community.

As with the environmental sphere, through its activity, *Grameen Danone Foods* also contributes to implementing the EBC model in the economic sphere. In this case, the joint venture focuses on social justice and human dignity values. Such values are observed in the extensive contribution to the community and social impact that the social enterprise represents [27].

Thirdly, concerning the social impact of the cooperation agreement in the community, we can find the following benefits. On the one hand, the plant situated in Bogra produces 100,000 units of yogurt daily, which means that 100,000 children from the area receive nourishment that covers 30% of their daily needs for vitamin A, iron, iodine, and zinc [99]. Thus, the strategic alliance achieves one of their main objectives: the improvement of nutritional conditions of children in Bangladesh, especially those in rural areas.

On the other hand, the coalition has helped to eradicate the exclusion of the poorest groups of the community by creating a large number of local jobs, as was mentioned above. This job creation has favored access of people from rural areas to goods and services they could not afford previously, such as access to finance, drinking water systems, or electricity. These aspects have led to a significant reduction in inequality of the rural population with respect to more developed areas. Therefore, the joint venture also contributes to the ECG model with the values of justice, human dignity, and solidarity [85], thus actively promoting development of the community.

Thereafter, thanks to the strategic alliance, *Grameen Bank* and *Danone Foods* created shared value, value based on the idea that, through its economic activity (in this case, the manufacture of yogurts), the organizations involved in the agreement create both economic and social value [18]. Furthermore, with the creation of a social enterprise, both firms diluted the historical definition of each type of entity. They created a hybrid organization in which the for-profit company covers the social and environmental aspects predominating in the non-profit organization, and this, in turn, ensures the economic viability necessary to continue operating [18].

Finally, it is worth noting that both organizations have also benefited from the strategic alliance. On the one hand, since the social enterprise was established, *Danone* has experienced an increase in its number of partners. Moreover, nowadays, the for-profit entity can implement social responsibility policies quickly as a consequence of the transfer of knowledge derived from the alliance, thus strengthening its corporate image [95]. The creation of the social enterprise *Grameen Danone Foods* became the foundational project of *Danone Communities*, a social business network aimed at assisting local entrepreneurs with funding and formation [99]. Currently, *Danone Communities* consists of 11 social businesses which include several for-profit organizations [99]. This network has significantly improved the group's brand positioning. According to the *Reptrak index* (an indicator of corporate reputation issued by the Reputation Institute) [102], during the period 2010–2014, *Danone Group* was positioned first in the ranking. The corporation was recognized in 2015 as the company with the best reputation in the food and beverage sector [100].

On the other hand, since the establishment of the strategic alliance in 2006, *Grameen Bank* has founded seven social enterprises [103], thus accessing a vast number of people in need.

Therefore, we can conclude that, through this cooperation model in which organizations shared their different resources and capabilities, the social enterprises derived from the alliances can solve a social issue more efficiently than operating separately [17]. The social enterprise *Grameen Danone Foods*, by producing and locally distributing affordable yogurts to the population, enabled an improvement in the nourishment of the children. Moreover, it generated an ecosystem in which different sectors of the community participated. This factor increases the economic capacity of the rural people from the area so that it generates social and economic development there. Thus, we can observe that the joint venture *Grameen Danone Foods* contributes to the implementation of the ECG model through its cooperative activity in which capital is not the goal but an instrument for social transformation [26].

Table 5 summarizes the main contributions of the case study to implementation of the ECG model from a cooperation perspective.

Table 5. Contributions of the strategic alliance *Danone Foods–Grameen Bank* to the ECG model.

Value/ Stakeholders	Human Dignity	Solidarity and Social Justice	Environmental Sustainability	Transparency and Codetermination
A Suppliers	Support to local suppliers	Fair prices to local suppliers	Working with sustainable suppliers	Collaboration with local suppliers
B Owners, equity and financial service providers	Financing of social projects	Ethical banking promotion		Collaboration with ethical finances criteria
C Employees, including coworking employers	Equality and decent employment	Combating social and labor exclusion		Local employment creation
D Customers and other companies	Products at affordable prices	Local entrepreneurship support		Collaboration with the community
E Social environment	Child nutrition	Poverty eradication	Solar energy use	

5. Results

After analyzing the cooperation agreements, we can state that there is a common pattern between both cases concerning the benefits provided to the community. The strategic alliances studied solve a social issue by sharing their different resources and capabilities.

On the one hand, *Grupo Vips* (by providing funding and contacts) and *Fundación Hazlo Posible* (by contributing with its social responsibility knowledge) expand a portal web aimed at the insertion of organizations and different sectors of the society in volunteering aspects. Hence, we can observe that *Grupo Vips–Fundación Hazlo Posible* solve a community problem through social innovation [17]. In this case, the organizations involved contribute to technological development through their portal web, a technology that has a significant impact and social benefit.

On the other hand, *Danone Foods* (by contributing with its food processing knowledge) and *Grameen Bank* (by providing its social enterprise and Bangladesh market knowledge) improve the nourishment of the children in the area. Moreover, the joint venture assists in the economic progress of Bogra by creating employment.

Furthermore, the entities involved in the cooperation agreements experience benefits for themselves. *Grupo Vips*, *Fundación Hazlo Posible*, *Grameen Bank*, and *Danone Foods* have benefited from a significant increase in their number of partners. Moreover, their networks have been expanded as a consequence of their greater visibility in the community. Likewise, since the establishment of the alliance, *Grupo Vips* and *Danone Foods* are considered some of the most reputable companies within their sectors [94,95].

Finally, it is worth noting that these cooperation agreements lead to the "Creating Shared Value" approach referred to by Porter and Kramer [18]. Both strategic alliances—*Grupo Vips–Fundación Hazlo Possible* through social innovation and *Grameen Bank–Danone Foods* through economic progress—generate social benefits which allow the creation of economic benefits. As a result of their work together, the organizations involved in the strategic alliances can redefine the for-profit and non-profit entity concepts. Thus, the cooperating enterprises become a hybrid organization that ensures its economic viability and survival by advancing business competitiveness while fostering their economic and social environment [18].

Table 6 summarizes the similarities between the two case studies analyzed. As we can observe, both cases have a positive impact on the social environment. Such impacts can be seen in three different aspects: (1) the interaction of the organizations with the social agents, (2) the reduction of their environmental footprint, and (2) their support to the community. Furthermore, by promoting decent working conditions, socio-occupational integration, and the culture of participation, the entities have a positive impact on the employees as well. Finally, both agreements favor the funding of social projects, thus contributing to the values of solidarity and social justice.

Table 6. Similarities between the two cases according to the ECG Matrix.

Value/ Stakeholders	Human Dignity	Solidarity and Social Justice	Environmental Sustainability	Transparency and Codetermination
A Suppliers				
B Owners, equity and financial service providers		Financing of social projects		
C Employees, including coworking employers	Decent employment	Socio-occupational integration		Culture of participation
D Customers and other companies				
E Social environment		Community support	Reduced environmental impact	Interaction with the environment

Therefore, we can observe that both cooperation agreements contribute to implementation of the ECG model. On the one hand, both cases place cooperation ahead of competition (basic principle of the ECG model) [27]. On the other hand, the strategic alliances operate meeting the values considered as contributors to the common good: human dignity, solidarity, sustainability, social justice, and participation [26]. *Grupo Vips–Fundación Hazlo Posible* and *Grameen Bank–Danone Foods* generate social value and shared value, thus contributing to implementation of the ECG model.

6. Discussion

From the present study, we can conclude that cooperation is a crucial instrument when implementing sustainability-based management models. Such sustainable models require the dominance of its three dimensions (economic, social, and environmental), dimensions that not all companies possess.

To this end, strategic alliances enable organizations to access the resources and capabilities needed to develop the three dimensions of sustainability that they cannot attain individually. From this perspective, alliances between private for-profit organizations and non-profit entities become a particularly suitable tool for the implementation of corporate sustainability. Thus, for-profit organizations possess the resources needed to ensure economic sustainability while NGOs provide adequate resources and capabilities for social and ecological sustainability. Hence, as stated by Porter and Kramer [18] within their "Creating Shared Value" approach, both types of entities can create shared value in which economic, social, and environmental value reinforce each other. Furthermore, from the authors' approach, we can conclude that those entities with a higher probability of survival are the ones referred to as hybrid organizations since such organizations are capable of creating economic and social value cooperatively.

As cited in the theoretical framework, during the last years, papers related to this approach to cooperation are being published. While there are not many publications that study this aspect, there are already some papers that analyze this perspective with interesting results and conclusions. In this regard, this work is a clear contribution to this line of investigation. On the one hand, this work analyzes strategic alliances between for-profit and non-profit organizations, thus reinforcing the literature in this field. On the other hand, the study connects alliances with corporate sustainability models, thus providing a clear innovation in this field of study. In particular, these contributions are driven by studying the impact that cooperation has when implementing the Economy for the Common Good model [27,85,104].

From the empirical study conducted throughout this work, we can state that there is a direct and positive relationship between cooperation and the implementation of the Economy for the Common Good model. By analyzing the case studies, we can affirm that strategic alliances favor the creation of social and environmental value for the different stakeholders of the organization. By using the Common Good Matrix, we have identified the actions of the alliance that create social value. We observe that the positive impacts derived from the cooperation agreements concentrate on some stakeholders such as the social environment, the employees, and the funders. In both case studies, organizations create social value by means of financing social projects, generating a participative corporate culture, and supporting the community. Furthermore, the matrix includes aspects such as the eradication of poverty and the socio-occupational integration of some groups, which are essential priorities of these types of alliances.

With these elements, several values of the ECG model are promoted. Such values are human dignity, solidarity and social justice, environmental sustainability, and transparency and codetermination. Likewise, one of the cooperation agreements studied also creates social value for suppliers, customers, and other companies. Moreover, it is important to highlight how alliances foster local suppliers and social entrepreneurship in communities where the cooperation agreements are developed.

It is worth noting that the literature on strategic alliances between for-profit and non-profit organizations is not developed in-depth yet. On the one hand, according to the classification carried out by García et al. [14] regarding the three different approaches that this type of alliances can adopt, we can conclude that most of these cooperation agreements are still in the first stages. Thus, the majority of these alliances focus on the transition approach, which is based on occasional philanthropic actions. Therefore, such alliances neither create shared value nor common good value.

On the other hand, the most progressive alliances are based on a transitional approach in which continuous dialogue between the for-profit and the non-profit organization takes place. Nevertheless, this perspective does not consider the rest of the stakeholders, thus creating shared value but not contributing to the creation of value for the common good. To reach the common good, alliances must include the transformation approach mentioned by García et al. [14], since this one is based on direct and active participation between all of the stakeholders that are affected by the alliance. From this point of view, the ECG model can help to strengthen this type of cooperation agreement. Consequently, not only the ECG model can benefit from the alliance but also, at the same time, these types of alliances can be enhanced through the ECG model. Therefore, there is a direct and reciprocal relationship between both.

7. Conclusions

The first purpose of this work was to establish a theoretical relationship between strategic alliances between for-profit and non-profit organizations and the ECG model. In this sense, the present work contributes to the literature on both topics. On the one hand, this work provides a new perspective on the study of this type of alliances. Firstly, we analyze the motives why organizations establish this type of cooperation agreement while connecting them with ethics and corporate social responsibility. Secondly, we analyze the impacts and benefits that these alliances create for the cooperating entities and for the community in which they operate.

On the other hand, this work provides a new perspective to the study of the ECG model, since this paper analyzes cooperation as one of the primary keys of the model. Although this model suggests interfirm cooperation as a determining factor for business success, there is no literature on this subject. Therefore, this work is the first theoretical study that provides this ECG model approach.

The second objective of this work was to establish a practical application of the theoretical relationship between strategic alliances between for-profit and non-profit organizations and the ECG model. To this end, an empirical study based on the analysis of two case studies has been conducted. In this sense, our contribution is innovative and original, as there are no published empirical studies on this subject.

Finally, although the present work provides multiple case studies, it may be of interest to develop future researches concerning alliances between for-profit and non-profit organizations so that the taxonomy described can be expanded. Besides, it might be relevant to carry out an empirical study based on a quantitative analysis in which relationships between the different types of alliances and their social and environmental impacts can be analyzed.

A new paper on this topic could consist of application of the Common Good Matrix to a specific alliance between for-profit and non-profit organizations. Thus, the matrix indicators will be applied to quantitatively measure the contributions of these alliances to the common good.

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