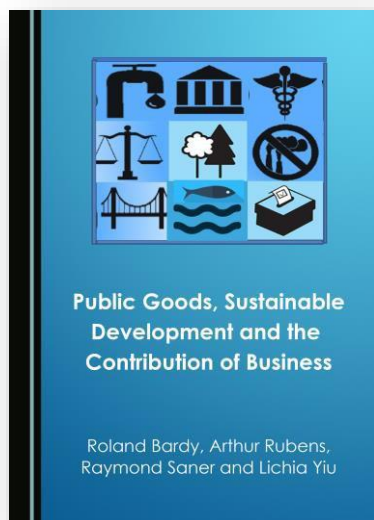


Public Goods, Sustainable Development and the Contribution of Business

By Roland Bardy, Arthur Rubens, Raymond Saner, and Lichia Yiu



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Book Description

This book provides an expansive review of the public goods theme and highlights the inherent linkage between sustainable development and corporate responsibility for improving the current and future welfare of communities both at home and abroad. The main proposition here is that sustainable development is focused on preserving and maintaining public goods. Consequently, whoever uses public goods is liable for their preservation, their maintenance, and, where they are underdeveloped, for their expansion. Successful delivery, both now and in the future, depends on a positive relationship of the public sector with the private sector. This book will serve to stimulate discussions of scholars and policy makers in the field of sustainable development with business leaders, and will close the gap between the public and the private sectors by building a common understanding and common methodologies for implementing and measuring sustainable development in the macro- and the micro-spheres.

A Word from the Authors

The mainstream discussion on sustainable development very often does not expose that securing sustainable development is equal to providing, preserving and maintaining public goods. Also, we hear repeatedly that businesses cause harm to the environment and to social structures, and that, if they act otherwise, this only comes from their self-interest. This rhetoric jeopardizes social coherence and delays progress in the economic, the ecological and the social spheres of life. The book wishes to use a different manifestation: For achieving lasting outcomes in the endeavour to promote sustainability, businesses, individuals and state actors must participate fully in communal efforts on all levels without preconditions.

While the relatively large number of titles on Public Goods which came out until 2020 shows that there is a demand for the topic, most of the authors largely focus on one perspective of the issue. Nobel-laureate Jean Tirole gives a representation of the socio-economic concept, and the book of the famous American management authority Philip Kotler, which bears the sub-title of "Strategies for Businesses, Governments and Non-profits", mainly narrates examples of well-known leaders to emphasize the need for action. Our team of authors, by contrast, approaches the topic from various angles, not least from the dimension of measuring. The idea is to offer a holistic conception that covers the macro- and the micro-economic, the political and the developmental aspects and that shows which range of action is available at different levels of decision-making and what outcomes they may provide.

When relating the topic of public goods to the sustainable development agenda, a multitude of perspectives needs to be dealt with – apart from the economic, the social and the ecological perspectives, they are the ethical, the institutional and the measurement dimension. All of these are interlinked, as are the endeavours for sustainable development by businesses, governments and international institutions. While this is not new, the formats of these linkages and interdependencies – and the consequences of such interconnectedness – have not been exhibited in a comprehensive way like the one that is offered by our book.



Critical Praise

“The book admirably serves the purpose of framing and shaping the public and commercial discourse on their use of public goods. It provides a uniquely accessible understanding of how current use and costing needs to change to strike the best approach to balancing economic vitality today while protecting future generations and preserving our planet’s resources for our descendants.”

Jerome Katz,
Brockhaus Chair of Entrepreneurship, Chaifetz School of Business, Saint Louis University

“The pandemic that washed over the globe in 2020 demonstrated that the provision of public goods is still central to civilized societies. Businesses have a share in this, and their contribution is essential to achieving sustainable development. This book provides a grounded and topical approach to understanding how business can contribute to public goods and help achieve the vision for 2030.”

Jerry Davis,
Gilbert and Ruth Whitaker Professor of Management, Professor of Sociology, Michigan Ross School of Business

“A very timely and unique perspective on how sustainability matters in the use of public goods by consumers and producers. I particularly appreciated the message that businesses have a social responsibility in the use (and abuse) of public goods.”

Jagdish N. Sheth,
Charles H. Kellstadt Professor of Business, Goizueta Business School, Emory University

“At last! A book that makes business a critical element of the conversation about sustainable development in a multi-institutional environment.”

R. Edward Freeman,
Professor, The Darden School, University of Virginia

“The themes of the book are all key contributors to attaining the Sustainable Development Goals. This book is timely and provides a holistic view on the link between public goods, sustainable development and the crucial contribution of business, as well as providing clear guidance on a way forward in addressing global challenges.”

Victor van Vuuren,
Director, Enterprises Department, International Labour Organisation

“There is an enormous gap between the macro-ambition of creating public goods and the micro-translation of this ambition in relevant business strategies. This book clearly serves the purpose of that translation, not in the least by showing how the SDG agenda of the United Nations creates a platform for this endeavor. We need to step up the pace.”

Rob van Tulder,
Professor of International Business-Society Management at Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University

About the Authors

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Public Goods, Sustainable Development and the Contribution of Business is available now in Hardback from the Cambridge Scholars [website](#). Ebook version available via [Google Play](#).



Why is Our Book So Important NOW?

The world is facing unprecedented challenges: Global warming, shortages of essential resources, global pandemics, accelerations in technology and globalization, etc., which will require a multi-disciplinary approach to address these world conditions.

The biggest problems today and in the future are not local or national problems, but “global problems” which will require “global solutions” e.g., climate, trade, technology, migration, contagion, etc.

Most recently the world has been engulfed in a “global pandemic” and countries that have proven to be successful at flattening the curve and reducing the prevalence of the CoVid-19 virus are those countries that formed strong alliances between the public and governmental sectors and the private business sector.

The many crises facing the world today and, in the future, will require a new definition of the “Common Good” which will require collaborations between ALL sectors of society and throughout ALL parts of the world.

The “Public Goods” or the provision of what enables ‘collective wellbeing’ and ‘social/economic progress’ will increasingly become “central” to countries political discussions regarding their nation’s future and their role in the world.

For the world to sustain itself and grow in the future, each country (government and individual citizens) and each business must become ‘open’ to the manifold flows of innovations and be able to quickly respond to the varied crisis that they and others will be confronted with – this will require the creation of large coalitions of public and private sectors.

Health, education, the internet, job opportunities, justice, peace, and more are all public goods on which survival of mankind depends. The present and future generations only will survive if our communities, our towns, our factories, our schools, and our countries work collaboratively together.

There is a NEW COVENANT between the public and the private sectors which is based on mutual respect between governments, civil society organizations and businesses, who ALL share a responsibility to each other. As part of this new covenant, businesses are moving from a shareholder model to a stakeholder model where businesses are engaged in business practices that benefit all stakeholders within and outside the organization.

The goal of sustainable development which is, according to the Gro Brundtland definition “meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability to future generations to meet their needs”, can only be achieved if no one is left behind and if all sectors of society are included in collaborating for this goal.

Who is the Book For?

Academics, government officials (local and national), policy makers, international organizations, non-profit agencies, local and national business leaders, and any individual who is concerned with the future of the world.

What Does the Book Do?

The Book explains the interconnectedness of social, economic, and political phenomena and how they collectively relate to “public goods”. The book further explains who and why business firms exert a critical influence on sustainable development, as well as the various definitions and classifications of the public goods concept.

Who Should Our Book be Used?

Our book can be used as primary teaching tool or as a supplemental list of readings for university classes, seminars, and workshops given by both public and private entities. The book provides material on:

- How to conceptualize the public goods construct from a sociological, political and economic perspective and enumerates classical and contemporary examples.
- How to relate corporate responsibility to the sustainable development goals and gives practical cases on how businesses and public authorities commonly provide public goods.
- The value system on which to base preferences/dimensions in public goods decisions.
- How public goods can be measured in public statistics and business reporting.
- The multiple capital paradigm inherent in corporate performance on a triple bottom line that includes the cost of public goods usage.



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