

Foundation for Solidarity

PARTNERSHIP DATA SHEET

1. The partnership: TOWNS TOGETHER: immigrants - new costumers for the local economy

Question 1 is designed to elicit an explanation of the nature of your partnership in concrete terms and of the factors which led you to form this partnership.

What was the starting point for the partnership?

Summary: Sweden is becoming a multicultural society, since the 1970ies. Sweden was a quite homogenous society, but that has changed rather rapidly during the last 30 years. Sweden has a population of 8.9 millions inhabitants. About 1.9 million of the population – that means about every fifth inhabitant – has a non-Swedish ethnical background. The City Districts of Biskopsgården in Gothenburg, Rinkeby in Stockholm and Rosengård in Malmö have a population of 48 000 and show a lot of similarities. The districts could all be described as deprived areas. A majority of the inhabitants are immigrants who often live in crowded conditions under run-down housing estates. The strength in these districts is a young population with an international background, which could support an economical growth. A group consisting of real-estate owners, representatives from a major bank, FöreningsSparbanken, and representatives from an NGO, SIOS, which is an umbrella organisation for 15 ethnical organisations, have met under the lead of representatives from each City District Council, for several times to discuss the strength and the weakness of these three districts. These meetings resulted in a decision to start a Development Partnership – a partnership which is not only a geographic partnership, but also a thematic Development Partnership. One of the starting points was the successful experience, which FöreningsSparbanken and the local City District Council made in Rinkeby. The bank has chosen to establish in Biskopsgården, Rosengård and Rinkeby and it has developed a new concept in order to find new groups of costumers among the inhabitants. Many of the inhabitants have a bad confidence in banks, often due to experiences from their country of origin. In Rinkeby the concept was to recruit staff that had the same ethnical background as the costumers. The recruitments also implied a professional background, which could be used in the bank. It is important to the FöreningsSparbank and other companies to reach these “new” groups of costumers. Persons with immigrant background represent a big target group of commercial interest. In Sweden there is still a lack of understanding of the commercial needs of those new target groups. “NetWorker”s were used for companies and organisations to develop new strategies to reach new /ethnical groups as costumers. NetWorkers are 6 persons – 3 in Gothenburg and 3 in Malmö. Their task is to inform and raise awareness about ethnic diversity and its positive effects on business. They work as mediators and create links between different cultures. They work with organisations that show interest in creating profits by increasing ethnic diversity in the workplace. It could be through the means of broadening the customer base, extend services, introduce new products and hire personnel.

The partners see Multicultural society, Employability, Cultural background as a key factor for economical competition. There is a need to create networks of companies, there have to be special Networkers, who are working with customer related solutions and to promote developing of "new" products.

Foundation for Solidarity

With which immigrants do you currently have contact or relations?

Towns Together have contacts with all kinds of immigrants in Rinkeby,/Stockholm, Biskopsgården/Gothenburg and Rosengård/Malmö. And not only in those local areas, but also all over the cities.

What led you to take an interest in these immigrants?

That is because we see a need for companies and organisations to develop methods to reach those new customer groups. To know of their habits, traditions and customer behaviour, in order to make the service and productions more suitable. A main reason is also to combat discrimination; not to see the immigrants only as victims, but also as customer. This a way to try to change attitudes and behaviour. Like if you want to sell to the Turkish immigrants, you maybe have to employ somebody with that background.

What is the social situation of these immigrants?

One common feature is that a majority of the inhabitants are immigrants who often live in crowded conditions in run-down housing estates. Many of these new inhabitants have difficulties entering the Swedish Labour Market. Sometimes the difficulties depend on lack of knowledge of Swedish language and society; sometimes it is due to discrimination in the labour market.

What is the legal status of these immigrants?

They have permission to stay and work in Sweden. They are not asylum seekers.

Has the historical background of the host country influenced the situation of these immigrants?

Yes.

Sweden has become a multicultural society. Until the 1970s, Sweden was a quite homogenous society, but that has changed rather rapidly during the last 30-years.

How would you define the partnership?

This is an EQUAL project. The partnership is working with several main partners which have strong knowledge in their own field of competencies, so they are real experts for very different fields of action.

Important for the success of this project are:

- Knowledge in different cultures by co-operation with immigrant organisations
- Ethnical groups-feedback for development of new products as the Afghani women group in Malmö, which work in close cooperation with Ikea.
- Employ people with different ethnical background in Banks, companies etc in order to be able to meet the needs of a new group of customers.

Who are the players in the partnership?

A group consisting of real-estate owners, representatives from a major bank, FöreningsSparbanken and representatives from an NGO, SIOS, which is an umbrella organisation for 15 ethnical organisations, led by representatives from each City District Council. Also the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise is involved in the partnership, marketing the project and getting more companies to participate with the help of its company network.

Foundation for Solidarity

When did the partnership start (date)?

In 2002, but the partnership goes back to 1999 between some of the same of the partners

When is the partnership scheduled to end?

In December 2005.

Why did you launch the partnership?

The main priorities of the project were on the one hand the need for new customers and on the other hand the need to raise the employability of immigrants in a local area.

How did you launch the partnership?

By creating a development partnership in EQUAL and by using media channels.

Explain how the partnership operates?

The project Towns Together will develop a concept by using “NetWorker’s” for companies and organisations to develop new strategies to reach new /ethnic groups as customers. NetWorkers are 6 persons – 3 in Gothenburg and 3 in Malmö. Their task is to inform and raise awareness about ethnic diversity and its positive effects on business. They work as mediators and create links between different cultures.

They work with organisations that show interest in creating profits by increasing ethnic diversity in the workplace. It could be through the means of broadening the customer base, extend services, introduce new products and hire personnel.

List the activities you have developed within the framework of the partnership?

NetWorkers work with different kind of companies, for business development. Sometimes we also work with direct recruitment; sometimes also with focus groups. There are also study circles in private economy.

What aims are you seeking to achieve in launching the partnership?

The main priority is employability. Also for companies to be aware of the business possibilities for better products and better service.

The unemployment rate is high. Many of the inhabitants do not have upper secondary educational qualifications. The strength in these districts is a young population with an international background, which could support an economical growth.

Do you have an operating budget for the partnership?

Yes.

Have you received any public and/or private funding for the partnership?

ESF-money, but also various forms of national co-financing

How many people are working on the partnership?

In the DP there about 25 different partners, many of them are private-own companies; this means that many people are involved in the project in all the three cities.

In each city there are also local steering committees and we also have a national steering committee.

How many people are involved in the partnership?

See the answer above !

Foundation for Solidarity

Have you set up monitoring procedures to evaluate the partnership?

YES.

Is there any other important information not covered by the previous questions which you think should be mentioned? (Please answer yes / no and provide an explanation where necessary):

In Sweden a partnership between different sectors, including NGOs and the private business is not so common – yet. So the growth of new kinds of networks is an important experience for everyone.

2. Details of the initiator of the partnership project

Question 2 is designed to elicit details of the individual/organisation whose idea it was to launch the partnership and which has been the driving force behind it from the outset.

Name: FöreningsSparbanken AB

Address: S-105 34 Stockholm

Telephone: 46 70-5670711

Email: jan.calner@foreningsbanken.se

www.foringsparbanken.se

Full name of the coordinator of the project (city administration):

Rosy Rothstein, National Co-ordinator

Address: Box 48 063, S-418 22 Goteborg

Telephone: +46(0)31 36 66 019, (0)707-85 02 01

Email: rosie.rothstein@biskopsgarden.goteborg.se

3. Details of the other partners involved in the partnership

Question 3 is designed to elicit details of the individuals/organisation who accepted the initiator's invitation to join the partnership and to illustrate the basic principle which underlies this difference between the partnership project initiator on one hand and the other partners on the other.

Name: SIOS, Samarbetsorgan för etniska organisationer i Sverige

Address: Bellmansgatan 15

S-118 47 Stockholm

Telephone: +46 8 643 90 60

Email: kansli@sios.org

www.sios.org

4. Sector in which the initiator of the partnership project operates

Question 4 is designed to establish the economic and social sector in which the initiator of the partnership project operates?

Does the initiator of the partnership project operate in the primary / secondary / tertiary sector? (Please underline as appropriate and provide details):

Foundation for Solidarity

All 3 sectors are necessary for the partnership, but the initiator comes from the private business sector.

Does the initiator of the partnership project operate in the third sector. If so, in which area? No, it is a bank. The NGO networks was coming into the project to open ways to the target group.

Is there any other important information not covered by the previous question which you think should be mentioned? (Please answer yes / no and provide an explanation where necessary):

Without the help of the city as a mediating body the project would not exist. The bank could not have been developing the idea all alone.

5. Sectors in which the other partners in the partnership operate

Question 5 is designed to establish the economic and social sectors in which the other partnership project partners operate.

Do the other partners in the partnership project operate in the primary / secondary / tertiary sector? (Please underline as appropriate and provide details):

All sectors.

Do the other partners in the partnership project operate in the third sector? If so, in which areas?

NGOs from 15 organisations with ethnic background.

Is there any other important information not covered by the previous question which you think should be mentioned? (Please answer yes / no and provide an explanation where necessary):

6. Special characteristics of the initiator of the partnership project

Question 6 is designed to establish whether any factors either related or external to the launch and operation of the partnership - economic and financial situation, employment situation, geographical location - have influenced the launch and operation of the partnership project for and by the project initiator.

Do you think that the initial economic and financial situation of your organisation influenced your decision to form this partnership?

Yes, the bank was initiating it because of needs for new customers.

Have you received funding? If so, from whom?

EQUAL.

Is external funding an important factor in the operation of our organisation?

For every partner in the partnership except for the administration.

Foundation for Solidarity

Is external funding an important factor in the launch and operation of the partnership project?
YES.

Has the employment profile of your organisation - number of staff, nationality, age range, gender, employee status - influenced the launch and operation of the partnership project?
Yes, as ethnic background of staff members in the bank played a vital role.

Outline the profile of your organisation in terms of number of staff, nationality, age range, gender and employee status.
Different banks and NGOs.

Do you think that the geographical location of your organisation - urban/rural location, area of high/low population density, high/low immigrant density - has influenced the launch and operation of the partnership project?
Yes, it has a local area understanding.

Outline the geographical profile of your organisation indicating whether it is located in an urban/rural location or in an area of high/low population density or high/low immigrant density.

The districts are deprived urban areas.

7. The socio-political environment of the initiator of the partnership project

Question 7 is designed to establish whether any aspects of the socio-economic situation of the initiator of the partnership project favour or promote the development of the partnership project in terms of the integration of immigrant populations and the fight against negative discrimination. Question 7 is broad and general in its scope.

Do you believe that there are conditions which control access to the employment market? If so, what are they?
Qualifications, understanding of the culture.

Have these conditions which control access to the employment market affected the partnership project?
Yes, it has been worked on the issues by so called networkers with ethnic background.

Is there a national, regional or local framework which shapes the fight against negative discrimination?
Anti discrimination law.

Have you had recourse to this legal framework which shapes the fight against negative discrimination in launching and funding the partnership project?
--

Is there a regional or local framework which promotes the integration of immigrant populations?
The partnership creates new frames of practical collaboration, laws are there.

Foundation for Solidarity

Have you had recourse to this legal framework which promotes the integration of immigrant populations in launching and funding the partnership project?

Are there any political, social, cultural or media factors which led you to launch this partnership project?

Political reasons to develop integration further by increasing the employability of immigrant population.

Have you developed a social responsibility policy?

The group has developed own structures and understanding, the banks use own company policies.

What do you understand by a social responsibility policy?

To be social responsible as well to economic aims.

Have you developed a social label, a code of good practice, social audits, a gender equality policy, etc.?

The banks have their own policies.

Do you take part in social and economic benefit programmes at European, national, regional or local level?

Yes, as EQUAL is an EU-project.

Do the other partners in the partnership project inhabit a different socio-political environment to yours?

Have your partners in the partnership project developed a social responsibility policy?

Have your partners in the partnership project developed a social label, a code of good practice, social audits, a gender equality policy, etc.?

The banks.

Do your partners in the partnership project take part in social and economic benefit programmes at European, national, regional or local level?

EQUAL.

8. Benchmarking

Question 8 is designed to measure social, economic and environmental performance in terms of the integration of immigrant populations and the fight against negative discrimination.

Do you think that this partnership project for the integration of immigrant populations and the fight against negative discrimination has changed your social and economic environment?

It has raised awareness and enabled immigrant population to take part in new training programs.

Do you think that this partnership project for the integration of immigrant populations and the fight against negative discrimination has changed the social and economic environments of your partners in the partnership?

Foundation for Solidarity

Hopefully yes.

Have you introduced or changed your social responsibility policy as a result of the launch of this partnership project?

No.

Have your partners in the project introduced or changed their social responsibility policy as a result of the launch of this partnership project?

No. But the banks can be a model.

Has this partnership project raised awareness of the issues involved in public authorities at European, national, regional or local level?

At the local level evry strong, also in the others.

9. Social responsibility in business

Question 9 is designed to establish, where applicable, the extent to which economic entities actually support the principle of “social responsibility in business”. This question is addressed primarily to organisations, irrespective of whether they are businesses, unions or NGOs and whether they operate in the private or the third sector, who have elected to embrace this new political trend – social responsibility in business – which does not simply equate to the notion of work in the social sector, particularly in the field of the integration of immigrant populations and ethnic minorities and the fight against negative discrimination. If this is not the case, the project initiator should simply answer the first two questions.

Are you familiar with the principle of “social responsibility in business”?

The term is not often used.

Have you already started to integrate this principle into the management of your business or organisation?

Is social responsibility in business one of the strategic aims of your business or organisation? If so, why?

Have you undertaken to carry out a social and environmental audit of your business or organisation dealing, or example, with issues such as working conditions, gender equality, anti-discrimination policy, the integration of immigrant populations, continuing training and development, energy consumption, water consumption, etc.?

Have you defined a set of social responsibility in business policies and set targets for improving the social and environmental conditions in your business or organisation? If so, what are they?

Have you broadened the scope of your social responsibility in business policies to include your employees, suppliers, clients, shareholders, NGOs, local residents, etc.? If so, how have you done this?

Yes, the partnership is a new model and good for the future.

Are you sensitive to the notion of “fair trading”?

Foundation for Solidarity

Some.

Do you think that initiatives designed to promote the integration of immigrant populations and to fight negative discrimination are important elements of social responsibility in business?

Yes. To understand the ethnical background of customers lead to a new aproach of other companies as well.

How do you see your initiative with respect to these two areas (integration of immigrant populations and to fight negative discrimination)?

Innovative aproach.