



Municipal Partnership

International cooperation for mutual benefit

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Preface

Sweden has a long and strong tradition of municipal self-governance. Self-governance can be traced back to parish meetings in the Middle Ages, but as the welfare state grew Swedish municipalities were given far-reaching responsibility. Swedish local authorities have subsequently the main responsibility for a series of important citizen-oriented services: schools, child care, geriatric care, social services, water and sewerage, emergency services, and spatial public planning.

The Swedish tradition of local self-governance has resulted in an extensive pool of experience about local methods and solutions. A combination of freedom of action and responsibility has also created a strong aspiration among Swedish local authorities to constantly develop their operations.

The basic idea with Municipal Partnerships is that local authorities in Sweden and in the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency's (Sida) partnership countries together strive to develop solutions to key municipal issues and challenges. More than one quarter of Swedish local authorities currently participate in some form of Municipal Partnership. This widespread interest can be seen as a sign that cooperation between local authorities in different societies is a source of development for all parties.

This document is designed to increase knowledge and provide inspiration for successful municipal partnerships. In addition to offering an overview of the background, the approach, and financing of the partnership form, this publication should offer an image of how these partnerships are achieved in practise. The idea is to share experiences from some Swedish local authorities that are currently participating in partnerships.

Each partnership is individual, but there are a series of recurrent issues faced by many projects. The final chapter focuses on these issues by using examples from four Swedish local authorities.

We hope this document can encourage more partners around the world to become involved in Swedish municipal partnerships. We are all part of the world, but we choose ourselves which role we play in its development.

Åsa Ehinger Berling,
Managing Director SALA IDA

Elmire af Geijerstam,
Head of the international section at the Swedish Association of
Local Authorities and Regions.



Chapter 1

Municipal Partnership

Key municipal issues in project form

Swedish policies for global development

Modern aid is based on the idea that development is created by people in their own societies

The foundation for Sweden's Policy for Global Development (PGU 2003) is that development can never be achieved from external efforts. The aim for Swedish aid efforts is therefore to offer poor people the pre-conditions to fight their own poverty. By poverty, we mean a shortage of material resources and also a lack of influence, security, and freedom of choice. Developing countries are largely responsible for fighting poverty while the role of aid is to create the prerequisites to achieve development. Democracy, good governance, gender equality, sustainable development, human rights, economic growth, and social development are the essential features that should permeate Swedish development cooperation.

Democracy is one key to development

Democratic development is highly prioritised in Swedish aid

Poverty is often a result of an imbalanced distribution of power. In a democratic society, citizens are offered an opportunity to participate, to be heard and respected. This offers people an opportunity to change the structures that support this imbalance. Offering people influence over their own lives and an opportunity to participate in politics can therefore be one element in the fight against poverty.

Democratic developments at a local level also promote democracy at a national level. The threshold for participating in local politics is lower, and this offers greater opportunities for women and interest groups to influence developments. The risk of social conflict can also be reduced when people from a wide spectrum of the population take part in decision making.

In addition, decisions made closer to the population are often more inline with the real interests of the population. Decision-making closer to the problems and needs of the population, also makes social services more efficient, need-oriented, and fair. Closeness to the population offers increased transparency and opportunities to monitor that decisions are actually implemented,

which reduces the risk of corruption and unjust resource allocation.

Local self determination with local economic responsibility often results in improved economic growth through a more efficient use of the area's local resources.

Several parties carry out aid efforts

Meetings between stakeholders on a similar level pave the way for reciprocity

Development cooperation should engage the entire Swedish society. Our ambition is to have broad participation from parties at different levels. In addition to state administrations, local authorities, the business community, and associations are important stakeholders in Swedish development cooperation. The idea is that a larger number of stakeholders generate more personal meetings, which in turn creates more long-term relations. Partnership, such as between local authorities, is emphasised as a strategic working method. Through partnership knowledge and experience are exchanged between the most important parties. Meetings between stakeholders on a similar level also create new opportunities for reciprocity.

Swedish local authorities strategic stakeholders

Municipal solutions that inspire

Swedish local authorities have an important role in international development cooperation.

Our ambition is to use experiences from Sweden regarding local democracy and local self-governance and utilise this as a resource base for developing countries. Swedish local authorities use smart working methods and tested structures that can be important experiences

for countries that are facing or are undergoing a process of decentralisation.

Swedish local authorities have a broad range of operations with experience that could be valuable for local authorities in developing countries. In an international perspective Swedish local authorities have a broad spectrum of activities and freedom of action. In areas such as schools, water and sewerage, geriatric care, and urban planning there is sound knowledge and proposals for solutions that can set an example and act as a reference.

Cooperation with local authorities in developing countries also benefits Swedish local authorities. Irrespective of the degree of development, there are common municipal challenges such as increasing turnout polls and improving services for citizens. Through international partnership, both popularly elected politicians and civil servants can exchange experiences about municipal trials and solutions.

Does not compete with municipal tasks

Aid – a task financed with state funds

Participation by a Swedish local authority in development cooperation never conflicts with regular local authority operations. Municipal partnerships are financed using Swedish state aid funds. This finance covers all related local authority costs, including working hours.

According to Swedish municipal legislation, local authorities should not take part in tasks that the state, other local authority or county council is responsible for. However, a special law concerning municipal service exports and municipal international aid states that local authorities and county councils in Sweden may engage in service exports and aid irrespective of regulations set out in municipal legislation. According to the law

Swedish local authorities may offer aid in the form of equipment, advice, or training to countries that receive state aid.

Municipal Partnership – a familiar form of cooperation

Municipal cooperation began as a project for peace

Town-twinning began after the First World War with the ambition of creating peaceful relations between European countries. Swedish local authorities began using this type of cooperation to a greater extent at the end of the Second World War. This was mainly in the form of cooperation between local authorities in neighbouring Nordic countries.

Following the end of the Soviet Union and the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989, an extended Swedish town-twinning scheme was developed with the Baltic States, Poland and Russia. These extended town-twinning collaborations were aimed at supporting developments in local democracy. For the first time Sida invested funds in town-twinning. This commitment was substantial among Swedish local authorities – more than 200 of Sweden's 290 local authorities participated in the extended town-twinning scheme.

Cooperation between local authorities was a fruitful method. Over time this cooperation has become more project-based, and also includes Sida's partnership countries in other parts of the world. Since 2005 Municipal Partnership has been an established form of aid, which is both prioritised and has potential. More than one quarter of Swedish local authorities currently participate in the Municipal Partnership programme.

Programme for Municipal Partnership

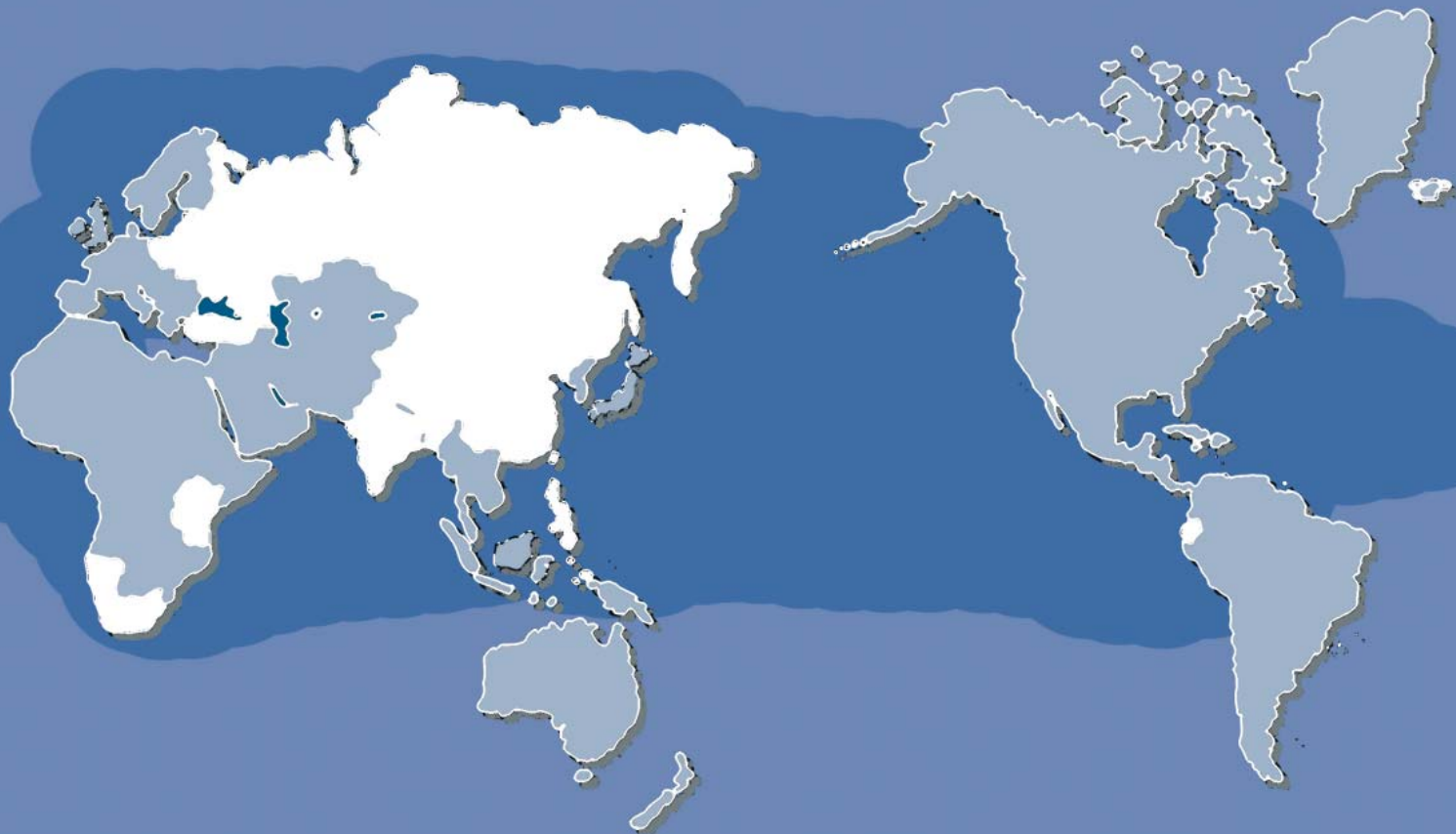
Cooperation in key municipal issues offers both parties greater energy

Municipal Partnership is an aid financed cooperative form for Swedish local authorities and their counterparts in a number of Sida's partnership countries. Compared with town-twinning, municipal partnerships create the basis for a more mutual relationship. The partnership targets results and has targets that both parties see a value in achieving. This could concern problems that both are looking to manage, such as urban planning improvements or encouraging more citizens to source-sort refuse. It could concern inspiration to dialogue about gender equality, or to stimulate the local business community.

A partnership is manifested by municipalities signing a cooperative agreement covering one or more areas with clearly defined targets. 12-month projects are then carried out within the framework of this agreement. The projects should be based on concrete activities that are clearly linked to the established goals. In addition to relations between the municipalities, there is also a focus on results. The local authorities decide themselves how long they want the partnership to continue and which projects they want jointly to run.

Partnerships are to strengthen the capacity of local authorities to find solutions to problems and to improve their services to citizens. As with all aid efforts, the overall goal of Municipal Partnerships is to counteract and reduce poverty, in terms of a shortage of resources, influence, freedom of choice and security. Democratic development, ecological sustainability, and economic and social development are examples of areas that can be strengthened through municipal partnership.

About 80 municipal partnerships are ongoing between Swedish municipalities, county councils, regional councils and districts and their counterparts in some 20 countries.



Municipal Partnerships are offered through two programmes. Municipal Partnership North-South and Municipal Partnership in Central and Eastern Europe. The programmes have the same overall targets but contain some differences in approach. Current information is available in application documents at www.salaida.se.

Areas of cooperation

Projects could deal with almost any issue that a local authority works with.

The following cooperative areas are included in the programmes:

- municipal governance and administration
- environment
- local economic development
- municipal technical services (*such as waste management, water and drainage, energy etc.*)
- culture and sports
- social issues (*such as education and health*)
- human rights
- EU adaptation (*for Municipal Partnerships in Central and Eastern Europe*)

Who can apply?

Swedish local authorities, county councils and regions can apply. In addition, *associations of county councils and local authorities* can apply. Foreign municipalities or regions cannot apply, but *an application must be made through the Swedish stakeholder*.

Which countries are included in the programmes?

Municipal Partnership North-South:

China
Ecuador
India
Kenya
Mongolia
Namibia
The Philippines
South Africa
Tanzania
Uganda

Following a decision by the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Municipal Partnerships in Ecuador, Mongolia and the Philippines are to be phased out. No new partnerships can be started in these countries.

Municipal Partnership in Central and Eastern Europe:

Armenia
Azerbaijan
Belarus
Georgia
Moldova
Turkey
Ukraine

Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland can only participate in trilateral partnerships with Belarus or the Ukraine. The idea is that countries in different phases of democratic development can exchange important experiences.



Chapter 2

The Process

Municipal Partnership from start to finish

How does it begin?

It could be a historical link that has been resurrected or a personal meeting. A Municipal Partnership is a relationship that grows through different openings and circumstances.

The parties often have an initial idea of what the collaboration should deal with. It could be based on an obvious need in the partnership municipality, such as an accelerating environmental problem, or a common problem such as that both municipalities have large ports with similar conditions. Sometimes the common problem is a joint municipal challenge – such as two towns in different parts of the world that have been built around a mining industry that has begun to decline with the resulting job losses.

Relations between local authorities are developed during the project and gradually new areas and approaches are often discovered.

Pre-study

A good start builds a solid foundation and sets the tone for the cooperation. Extra effort at the inception phase of a project has been found to offer good results. This is why funds have been earmarked for a preliminary study.

This study finances visits to each country for coordinators, leading civil servants and politicians. The aim of this preliminary study is to allow the parties to get to know each other and to create good conditions for future cooperation. During the study, parties should agree on realistic expectations for the partnership. Needs and skills are also mapped as these are important points of departure for project ideas and in order to estimate mutual benefits.

When municipalities have been asked to identify success factors for a good project start, then political ownership is high on the list. Collaborating on issues that unite and that both parties need to solve also offers a good foundation, especially in creating mutual benefit.

That project participants have the correct skills is also seen as important. In terms of difficulties, these often concern the fact that it can be difficult to define who is to benefit from the project. Cultural clashes, encouraging female project participants, and slower than expected project implementation are other challenges that are mentioned. All of these issues are easier to manage if they are named at the pre-study stage.

Partnership agreement

In order to apply for project funds, participating local authorities must have signed a partnership agreement. This is usually signed during the pre-study phase. The agreement defines which overall issues the project is to cover. Local authorities confirm that they have agreed to collaborate and that the decision is supported at the highest municipal level. The partnership agreement specifies the level of commitment, coordination and follow-up of results. The agreement should be signed by the chairman, board, or statutory local committee at both local authorities.

Specific projects should not be named in the partnership agreement, these are instead regulated in a joint letter of intent that is written ahead of a project.

A partnership agreement is not a life-long contract but can be ended when the objectives have been achieved or when a collaboration is no longer fruitful.

Preparing projects and project plans

Within the framework of the collaborative areas set out in the agreement, the parties then draw up concrete projects. The projects should focus on a problem or challenge in municipal operations. Even if projects mainly concentrate on the needs of the co-operating partner country, it is important that the Swedish local authority also benefits from the partnership.

Irrespective of the field, the project should be permeated with poverty reduction, environmental aspects, and gender equality, which are inline with Swedish policies for global development and Sida's policies. One example is to ensure that both men and women participate in project planning and implementation. There should also be an analysis and description of how activities impact the environment. In terms of poverty reduction, projects

should improve opportunities for people in partnership countries to help themselves out of poverty. Poverty is seen as a lack of resources, influences, and freedom of choice.

Logical Framework Approach (LFA)

To ensure that the project really meets the needs of target groups, Sida encourages all partnership projects to use a target-oriented planning method. The method it recommends is the Logical Framework Approach (LFA). LFA acts as an aid and support when planning development projects. One basic idea with the method is not to focus on what you want to do (activities) but on what you want to achieve (objectives). The method was developed in the 1960s and is used worldwide.

LFA in brief:

- An instrument for target-oriented planning, analysis, assessment, follow-up, and evaluation of projects and programmes.
- An aid for logical analysis and structured thinking during project planning that stimulates questions about the project's relevance, feasibility, and sustainability.
- A framework, a battery of questions, which offer structure and support in dialogue between stakeholders in a project.
- A planning instrument that encompasses different elements in a process of change (problems, objectives, stakeholders, plan for implementation etc.).
- An aid to create participation, accountability, and ownership.

SALAR/SALA IDA can support partnerships that use this method.



FACTS

Nine steps in the LFA method

The LFA method contains nine steps that in combination provide a basis to help projects achieve criteria concerning relevance, feasibility, and sustainability:

1. Analysis of the project's context
2. Stakeholder analysis
3. Problem analysis
4. Objectives analysis

Using these four steps one can see if the project group is doing the right thing, if the project is solving an important problem for target groups, if the causes of the problem are being tackled. These steps show if the project idea is **RELEVANT**.

-
5. Plan of activities
 6. Resource planning
 7. Indicators – measurements of objectives

Using these steps one can see if the project group is doing things in the right way, if the project is feasible, if it has sufficient resources and capacity to implement activities and achieve the objectives. These steps show if the project idea is **FEASIBLE**.

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8. Risk analysis
 9. Analysis of the assumptions

Using these steps one can assess if the project can continue by itself, without external support, that the effects of the project will endure and are sustainable in the long-term. There should always be a plan for phasing out support. The internal resources at stakeholders should be strengthened in a sustainable way. These steps show if the project idea is **SUSTAINABLE**.

Creating functions for management and coordination

Projects in the Municipal Partnership North-South must have functions for management and coordination in each country. Earmarked funds are available as part of the project application. Management and coordination functions are necessary to bridge the geographical gap between the stakeholders. Subsidies should cover costs for meetings between coordinators to assess project developments, and annual meetings for the management committee. The idea is that the coordinator also follows-up completed projects and plans new projects.

The coordinator, who should be a municipal employee, plays a key role in the partnership. In addition to leading the partnership and being familiar with the project, the coordinator should also attempt to involve more stakeholders, such as other administrations, associations and companies. Other important tasks include informing media and the public and gaining support for the project internally.

A management committee is created when funds are approved. This acts as a steering group for the coordinator. The management committee also plays an important role in both following-up and planning new projects. The committee includes both civil servants and politicians. Both the ruling majority and opposition should be represented.

Application

Funds for Municipal Partnerships can be applied for twice per year. Application dates and relevant documents can be found on the SALA IDA website, www.salaida.se.

Funds for the three support forms, inception phase, management and coordination function, and project phase are available during both of the application periods. The application should be drawn up by both municipalities, but the Swedish stakeholder sends the application and is responsible for the budget.

Applications should contain the partnership agreement, letter of intent, project plan, budget, and – for MPNS only – CV for the coordinator in each country.

Decision

Following the application, administrators at SALAR/SALA IDA draw up basic data that is presented to the authorising committee. Members of this committee are from the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions and SALA IDA. The committee discusses and proposes if an application should be approved, rejected, or if it requires additional information. After this, a project description is sent to the Swedish embassy in the partnership country. This is offered an opportunity to comment or call for a rejection of an approved project. Only then can SALAR/SALA IDA inform the Swedish applicant in a written decision.

Implementation

Implementation varies depending on the partnership area, conditions and objectives. This could be in the form of concrete activities such as holding workshops, implementing systems or developing methods, but also to keep in touch and work separately between meetings.

Project examples can be seen on page 23.

Reporting results and sustainability

It is important that the project does not become a single event that finishes when the project period ends. The ambition in a project is therefore to achieve results that are sustainable over time. If both stakeholders use the LFA method they can be sure not to lose their focus on results and sustainability. It is important during the project to continually analyse results and how these results can be retained. Results and sustainability are closely linked. A project that is planned well provides concrete results, which in turn lead to sustainability. It is important to report actual achievements and analyse how sustainable the results are when the project ends. In this way, experiences and knowledge gained from the project can be shared with others. Within the partnership programme, reporting takes place to SALAR/SALA IDA when the project ends.

Reporting for the partnership programme uses a reporting template at the end of a project. A final project payment is made when the project ends and when the report has been received and approved by SALAR/SALA IDA.

Evaluation

A final report on the project is made by the Swedish municipality including a presentation of the projects content, results and goal-achievement. In addition, SALAR/SALA IDA also carries out each year quality assessments on a selection of partnerships and projects.

Sida carries out its own assessments of the programme and individual projects.

Checklist

Successful Municipal Partnership projects meet requirements in the following checklist:

- support in both municipalities
- involve civil society, such as club activities, universities and the business sector
- realistic goals
- focus on a single main area
- gender equality, environment and poverty perspectives
- clearly described content
- clear budget with actual costs
- activities that lead towards the objective
- concrete and enduring results.

How did the partnerships begin?

“Through a voluntary organisation our senior school collaborated with the town Kimilili in Kenya. The local government became interested and wanted to use this collaboration and extend it to include the whole municipality.”

Erik Björklund, Coordinator Kinda Municipality, Municipal Partnership with Kimilili Municipality in Kenya.

“Our towns have a historical link – a trader from Vänersborg opened a trade station in Omaruru in the nineteenth century.”

Anders Fridén, Public Health Coordinator Vänersborg Municipality, Municipal Partnership with Omaruru Municipality in Namibia.

“When integration work began there was a lack of knowledge about social work and how to work with children with disabilities. We discovered a profound knowledge about these issues in our contacts with Östergötland.”

Biruta Dambite, Chief Specialist in Educational Issues, Pskov Oblast in Russia, Municipal Partnership with Östergötland County Council.

“A dynamic and internationally active municipal manager took the initiative to contact a local authority in Latvia.”

Ture Göransson, Planning Secretary Kinda Municipality, trilateral Municipal Partnership with Amata Municipality in Latvia and Pskov Municipality in Russia.

Greatest challenge during preparation phase?

“Different cultural backgrounds combined with language problems made communication difficult initially. It gradually became easier to understand each other. Personal contacts were one important reason for an effective partnership.”

Ingegärd Ångström, International Coordinator Nacka Municipality, Municipal Partnership with Baranovichi Municipality in Belarus.

“Initially, some of our co-workers had expectations for the municipal cooperation programme that were too high.”

Gerry Nyongesa, Coordinator Kimilili Municipality, Kenya, Municipal Partnership with Kinda Municipality.

“The region we partnered with was very large. At first it was difficult to come into contact with the right person at the right level in the organisation, as responsibility for children with disabilities is organised in a very different way in Russia.”

Eva Mertel-Högberg, Project Manager Östergötland County Council, Municipal Partnership with Pskov Oblast in Russia.

“We had different ideas about what the partnership should deal with. We solved this by including democracy issues but could still meet their wishes for study visits in tourism and healthcare.”

Lena Blixt, Municipal Lawyer Värmdö Municipality, Municipal Partnership with Batumi Municipality in Georgia.

Most successful part of the project plan?

“I am satisfied with the project planning and the concrete results, such as that we now integrate children with disabilities in normal schools.”

Biruta Dambite, Chief Specialist in Educational Issues, Pskov Oblast in Russia, Municipal Partnership with Östergötland County Council.

“Delegations now have a balanced gender representation! I am very happy that the project has offered an opportunity for women and men at different levels to participate – ministers and social workers are part of the same project.”

Lena Blixt, Municipal Lawyer, Värmdö Municipality, Municipal Partnership with Batumi Municipality in Georgia.

“We have noticed how clear goals and activities have led to results. This second year we have activities that include three different areas of local authority operations and a few voluntary organisations.”

Ingegärd Ångström, International Coordinator Nacka Municipality, Municipal Partnership with Baranovich Municipality in Belarus.

Most successful part of project plan?

“Each project is a process of learning. You make contact with more people, more ideas and improve conditions and opportunities for the future.”

Joseph Kimbowa, Local Government Officer, Entebbe Municipality in Uganda, Municipal Partnership with Kalmar Municipality.

“We have now learnt to focus on one thing, compared with last year’s project that was more spread out and difficult to keep together. We have clearer goals and a good plan for how to achieve these.”

Annika Ström, Project Coordinator Tingsryd Municipality, Municipal Partnership with Mamonovo Municipality in Russia.

“Eventually we could focus on exchanges which had a win-win concept. We have focused on the business sector and business community issues.”

Kristina Simonsson, Business Sector Secretary Katrineholm Municipality, Municipal Partnership with Cheboksary Municipality in Russia.

Some culture clashes in projects?

“We have experienced several cultural clashes over the years. The worst situation is when you have to clear these up from a distance, on the telephone or via e-mail. It is much easier to talk about cultural difference when you meet people.”

Mikael Schultz, Environmental and Health Manager Karlstad Municipality, Municipal Partnership with Emthanjeni Municipality in South Africa.

“Initially there was a tendency among project participants not to keep to the appointed time. In order to solve this, we began to use the expression “Swedish time” so that everyone was aware that this meant the exact time.”

Joseph Kimbowa, Local Government Officer, Entebbe Municipality in Uganda, Municipal Partnership with Kalmar Municipality.

“When Kenyans were on study visits to our geriatric care units they were shocked that we lock them in prisons, why do families not take care of their elders?”

Erik Björklund, Coordinator Kinda Municipality, Municipal Partnership with Kimilili Municipality in Kenya.

Highlights as a coordinator?

“When I meet people that have been helped by the AA¹ group that was started through our project. That’s when you realise that partnerships can change lives – that’s when you get a warm feeling in your whole body.”

Annika Ström, Project Coordinator Tingsryd Municipality, Municipal Partnership with Mamonovo Municipality in Russia.

“When both of our local councils met in Kimilili. It was exciting to see how the meeting opened doors in different parts of society.”

Erik Björklund, Coordinator Kinda Municipality, Municipal Partnership with Kimilili in Kenya.

“When we received the Stockholm Partnership Award 2002 for one of the best partnership projects in the world.”

Mikael Schultz, Environmental and Health Manager Karlstad Municipality, Municipal Partnership with Emthanjeni Municipality in South Africa.

¹ Alcoholics Anonymous

MUNICIPAL PARTNERSHIP:

City of Göteborg and Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality, South Africa

PROJECT:

Partnership on air quality

Background and approach:

The City of Göteborg and Nelson Mandela Metropolitan want to approach a local and global problem through a joint effort to find ways to improve air quality. Using a knowledge and experience exchange between the two cities they hope to improve their local solutions. The project is the first phase of three in a longer-term collaboration. The first phase is to build a database of emissions in Nelson Mandela Metropolitan and to create a monitoring system that will enable dispersion estimates.

Activities:

- Develop a form for collecting emission data.
- Build the emissions database.
- Introduce a monitoring system for air pollution.
- Carry out dispersion estimates.
- Carry out passive measurements of air pollution.

Implementation:

A week-long study visit to Nelson Mandela Metropolitan for a delegation comprising two people from

the City of Göteborg's environmental administration. Phone calls between the project managers on Thursday mornings every second week, and continual contact via e-mail.

Examples of activities during the visit to Nelson Mandela Metropolitan:

- Study visit to Algorax Carbon Black and a cement factory (pollution and noise).
- Meetings with local politicians.
- Study visit to a tannery (odour pollution).
- Demonstration of the Swedish monitoring system for air pollution.
- Study visit to Coega IDZ, a major port that is under construction in the area.
- Field studies, inspection of light-weight trucks.
- Study visit to a shanty-town with energy efficient houses and earth closets (Buffalo City, north-east of Port Elizabeth).
- Survey of domestic car firms and their forecast for catalytic converter use.

MUNICIPAL PARTNERSHIP:

The Association of Local Authorities in Örebro Municipality and Novgorod Oblast, Russia

PROJECT:

Knowledge exchange in the field of drug prevention

Background and approach:

Örebro and Novgorod are collaborating to develop their preventive efforts against drug and alcohol addiction. The project is based on a desire from representatives from Novgorod to learn more about a preventative model used in Örebro. The model ensures that each town area takes an overall grasp of youth work.

Activities:

The preliminary step in the project concerns learning each other's requirements and to study points of departure for prevention efforts. This has been achieved through seminars, study visits and discussions in small groups with various specialists. About 300 people have participated during the visits.

Implementation:

Two visits to Novgorod and two visits to Örebro. About 20 people in each group.

Examples of activities during the visits to Örebro:

- Study visit to the licensing unit in Örebro.
- Seminars about work with children to addicts.
- Study visit to a treatment ward at the University Hospital in Örebro.

- First orientation in different programmes, including Charlie (Chemical Abuse Resolution Lies In Education), Sputnik and Jupiter.
- Meeting with the organisations Criminals' Return Into Society (CRIS) and Parents Against Drugs.

Examples of activities during the visits to Novgorod:

- Seminars with representatives for social administrations, youth care, healthcare and the police.
- Talks about preventive and rehabilitation efforts in schools.
- Seminars about the Sputnik and Jupiter programmes.
- Discussions about drug prevention efforts in the area of local politics.

MUNICIPAL PARTNERSHIP:

Botkyrka Municipality and Bulacan Province in the Philippines.

PROJECT:

Sustainable development in schools

Background and approach:

Botkyrka and Bulacan wanted together to find a way for schools to prepare pupils for a global world where issues of the environment, economy, democracy and culture are complex. Despite great differences in conditions one can see a common challenge by using the school as a base to create teaching for sustainable development.

Activities:

- Establish eight system schools for experience exchange.
- Implement teaching for sustainable development in the curriculum.
- Method handbook for certifying and teaching from a pedagogical perspective.
- Develop a collaboration concerning outdoor environment, with an emphasis on organic growing and where school grounds should be an educational outdoor space. Teaching about growing from various environmental and climate perspectives.
- IT development in schools.

Implementation:

A study journey for ten days to each country. Eight and nine people respectively in each delegation. Continuous correspondence between participants and sister schools.

Examples of activities during the visit to Bulacan:

- Workshops for two days at each sister school.
- Study visits to three open pre-schools.
- Meeting with representatives from IBM in Manila about the possibility of donating Kid Smart computers to schools.
- Meeting with school governors in Bulacan to study opportunities to connect sister schools to the internet.

Examples of activities during the visit to Botkyrka:

- Study visit to SRV Recycling.
- Seminar about democracy issues and a study visit to Parliament.
- Seminar about education for sustainable development in lower age-groups.
- Study visit and seminar about conditions for small children at the Alby Family Central.
- Visit to open pre-school, pre-natal clinic and child care centres.
- Meeting with the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise, with a discussion about business sector organisation, structure and future outlook.
- Study visit to the Bro glassworks, where old computer screens are recycled as raw material.



Chapter 3

Collection of examples

Municipal experiences

Recurring challenges

Municipal partnerships build relations, and this is probably the main reason why no two partnerships are similar. However, when people with experience of international work in local authorities meet then it becomes clear that there are recurring themes. These are issues that most people face and develop different ways to manage.

This chapter illustrates some of these themes by showing how they have appeared in four partnership examples. The examples are primarily shown from a Swedish perspective. Their solutions and tactics are not the only way to progress. These can be seen as points of departure and references for their own actions. The themes discussed are how to succeed in mutual benefit, internal support, involving the business sector, and involving civil society.

THEME: Mutual benefit

EXAMPLE: Kalmar Municipality – Entebbe Municipality, Uganda

Mutual benefit begins with common problems

The result of municipal partnership is better when both stakeholders have something to gain. This is shown in evaluations by Sida of this type of programme. But how does one create a mutual relationship when only one party is managing the budget? And what happens to mutual benefit when the differences in conditions and needs are so large? Kalmar has discovered ways to enrich itself through its collaboration with Entebbe in Uganda.

Kalmar and Entebbe in Uganda have collaborated since 2003 in urban planning and local democratic development. The towns are as different as night and day, and Anders Engström has reflected on the ambition to create projects that are fruitful for both parties. He believes the most important way to benefit both sides is to focus on a common problem. A feeling of solidarity is created by being joint problem-owners, that can form a stronger bond than national identities. “If co-workers that work with violence against women in Kalmar and Entebbe meet, then the problem unites them more than their different conditions separate them. Discussions can be very interesting – we have a common problem but different conditions and this means we try to solve the problem using different methods”, says Anders Engström and continues: “This type of climate for exchanging experiences generates by far the best projects.”

The point of departure for a partnership should therefore be a common problem. In this way it is natural for participants to maintain focus on mutual benefit during the entire project, and at the same time gain unan-

ticipated benefits in unexpected areas. Anders Engström believes role definition often takes place too early, which can make people blind to unexpected gains. Perhaps there is a much better child-perspective in Ugandan urban planning? Participants must be prepared to listen actively to pick up unexpected ideas.

As a project manager, one should make demands on participants to convey their impressions and offer feedback. This means all contributors are aware that they must go home with something and make an effort to analyse and question their own working methods in the light of what they see.

Anders Engström emphasises that mutual benefits also increase if participants have a level of awareness before the project starts. All Swedes that travelled to Entebbe received information about Uganda, conditions in the Entebbe Municipality and its areas of responsibility. “If you are unprepared when you travel, then you are easily blinded by the differences and concentrate on understanding basics. If you are prepared then you can ask interesting questions from the outset, at the first study visit.”

“It is not constructive to close your door and only work with local solutions”

Anders Engström, International Coordinator in Kalmar Municipality

Even if attitudes to international work at municipal level have become more positive, Anders Engström sometimes meets scepticism about what Kalmar can learn from poverty and war ridden Uganda. “One common misconception is that economic security is a sign of maturity. Often it is developing countries that dare to test new methods. One example is in Uganda, where a quota system has been in place for disabled persons and women. Our politicians were genuinely interested in the results of this quota system. This type of system is something that is increasingly discussed in Sweden.”

Anders Engström’s experience of Ugandans is that they often react to things that Swedes are aware of as sore points but do not openly discuss. One example is political anonymity in Kalmar. A group of Ugandan politicians visited Kalmar ahead of the autumn 2006 election. They were surprised at the long list of names on voting slips.

“Does everyone know you here in Kalmar?” the Ugandan delegation asked its Swedish counterparts.

“In Entebbe we have a photo and presentation on our voting papers.”

“We had never analysed voting papers from a communication perspective,” says Anders Engström.

“However, we were very aware of how little Kalmar residents knew about their politicians.”

Other benefits are more difficult to measure but equally valuable. The change in perspective and new experiences gained by participants from Kalmar develops skills that can be used in other areas than those initially planned. Environment and integration are two examples of problems that are linked internationally. Seeing how these are handled by another local authority that is somewhere else in the global chain can offer an important insight. “It is not constructive to close your door and only work with local solutions,” according to Anders Engström. “Many of our major problems are fundamentally global.”

THEME: Internal support

EXAMPLE: Nacka Municipality

The policy offers a backbone to our international efforts

No local authority is an isolated island. This is the point of departure for Nacka's international strategy. The world outside the municipal boundary influences many aspects of life and the municipality is convinced that its operations can become stronger with an international perspective. A policy and a regular newsletter have established this high level of ambition.

“Municipal operations need new understanding and influences if they are to develop,” says Ingegärd Ångström who is International Coordinator in Nacka Municipality. “The policy makes the local authority’s attitude to international work completely clear – and that it is much stranger not to participate in international cooperation, than it is to take part.”

Nacka was one of the first in Sweden to create a strategy for the municipality’s international work. “Today it is obvious that the outside world has an impact, globality is part of everyday life for both politicians and people. This was not the case in 1995, when we were something of a pioneer,” says Ingegärd Ångström.

The policy has been revised since then, and is a living and important document.

The policy overcomes one of the largest obstacles in international work – gaining internal support. According to Ingegärd Ångström, communication is another important success factor. International efforts must be visible so co-workers in the field also understand that this could concern them. They must be offered a clear picture of what an international partnership entails so that they have a chance to link this with needs

and desires in their own work. A newsletter is published four times per year by Ingegärd Ångström, including information on ongoing projects, financing opportunities and conferences.

Ingegärd Ångström’s method for gaining internal support has led to clear results. She often receives calls from companies, citizens, associations, and organisations with ideas for potential projects and partners. She has consciously chosen not to create a formal organisation, with representatives from all operations, but instead uses interested contact persons. “I have chosen to focus on enthusiasts, I spend my time supporting people that really want to achieve something and have ideas,” says Ingegärd Ångström and believes these people are better at gaining support for ideas among co-workers who were initially sceptical. “My task has been to refine ideas that we receive, to offer them support by being enthusiastic and providing concrete help, not least through giving suggestions for potential financing.”

Part of gaining internal support is also to motivate costs. “It is important to highlight the fact that international work influences the entire community in Nacka.”

“Today it is obvious that the outside world has an impact, globality is part of everyday life for both politicians and people. This was not the case in 1995, when we were something of a pioneer.”

Ingegärd Ångström, International Coordinator in Nacka Municipality

Finding new ways to evaluate and communicate results is something that Ingegärd Ångström believes would further improve internal support. She hopes in the longer term to create instruments for systematic evaluation and follow-up. This could be a simple reporting system with key figures and concrete reports of activities and the effects these have had on municipal operations and in the Nacka community.

“This would require greater administrative effort, but it would also offer us an overall picture,” says Ingegärd Ångström. “Using this you could really show how international efforts are a source of development in Nacka.”

Excerpts from Nacka’s international policy:

- Committees and activities should follow international development in their areas and work to develop and integrate these issues in everyday operations.
- International efforts at Nacka Municipality are to contribute to increased understanding and contact between people from different cultures in accordance with UN goals.

- The municipality is to work to increase understanding among its citizens of how the local authority and local people are affected by the surrounding world.
- International work is to contribute to developing various operations in Nacka and to contribute to skill-development among co-workers.
- The local authority should be aware of and effectively use financing opportunities for international cooperation offered by the EU, Sida etc.
- Possibilities for international cooperation should be tested in all operations.

International work in Nacka:

Nacka cooperates with local authorities in Turkey, Latvia, Finland, Estonia, Poland, Belarus, the US, the UK, Nicaragua and Armenia. In addition, it cooperates in the Edge City Network, which is a network of suburbs in European capitals.

Examples of activities:

- Exchange between development assistance assessors in geriatric care in Nacka and their counterparts in Surrey, England.
- Environmental cooperation around the Baltic Sea.
- Teachers and students in natural science carried out water measurements in the Bosphorus together with colleagues from the Princes Islands, Adalar in Turkey.
- Trilateral partnership between Nacka, Baranovichi in Belarus and Jelgava in Latvia to support socially vulnerable families with children. Among other things, parent walkers from Älta have helped to build a night walking organisation in Jelgava, Latvia.
- EU project about lifestyle and health between schools within the framework for the Edge Cities Network.
- Nacka disabled sports organisation cooperation with organisations in St. Petersburg.



THEME: Involving the business community

EXAMPLE: Södertälje – Wuxi, China

Prosperous business sector in Chinese

Promoting local business is high on the municipal agenda. What potential and methods can a local authority use to help business prosper? Södertälje was offered unexpected help when it was contacted by the Chinese city Wuxi, which suggested a partnership in business sector development.

“The Chinese see partnership as a way to optimise their growth,” says Inger Wickbom International Coordinator in Södertälje. “They targeted an issue that we have discussed at length – how to improve the business climate in Södertälje.”

Part of the assignment for Chinese local authorities is actively to work to set up businesses. In Wuxi alone more than 30 people work with foreign affairs. The consulate in Shanghai recommended Wuxi to contact Södertälje as it has several companies that are active in China. The largest employer in Södertälje is Astra Zeneca, which also has a facility in Wuxi.

Initially, politicians in Södertälje were sceptical. Anders Lago, chairman of the municipal executive board says: “The question we had to ask was if this was good for Södertälje’s development, and if its residents would benefit. After careful consideration – we had talks with Astra Zeneca, Scania, the Swedish Chamber of Commerce and Företagarna – the answer was yes. It became apparent that there was a potential for concrete trade exchange”. China was interesting in several ways – in part as a producer, and in part as a market

for Swedish products. In addition, Wuxi Municipality is experienced in driving business sector development. Together, Wuxi and Södertälje could develop municipal methods to stimulate the local business community. “This partnership highlights the issue of what opportunities a local authority has to stimulate local business. A local authority can influence business conditions, through infrastructure, urban planning and education, among other things. The business community and employment offered by businesses are in turn crucial for tax revenue and as a result the quality of municipal services,” says Inger Wickbom.

Following a preliminary phase of discussions and visits the municipalities signed a partnership agreement in February 2006. The first project was to stimulate cooperation between local companies in Södertälje and Wuxi. This will include information evenings for the 5 000 small businesses located in Södertälje.

Both Inger Wickbom and Anders Lago emphasise that the partnership with Wuxi is more pragmatic than earlier international work. The partnership will continue as long as both stakeholders benefit from it. “The model

“Now there’s a scramble for educated Chinese.”

Inger Wickbom, International Coordinator in Södertälje Municipality

of a lifelong town twinning scheme feels a little dated in a world that is changing more and more rapidly,” says Anders Lago. At the same time he believes the cooperation with Wuxi is invaluable as it offers an insight into rapid globalisation.

The business perspective has during the project opened for other dimensions in the exchange with Wuxi.

Inger Wickbom believes that as a foreign player one has an opportunity to influence changes. “I believe setting up Swedish business can have a positive impact on the democratic process, in terms of working environment, gender equality and environmental thinking. Scania is one Swedish company that provides a good example. It makes the same demands on gender equality, employee influence, and environment on both its Chinese and Swedish suppliers. In this way it influences many people in quite a profound way.”

The partnership between Södertälje and Wuxi is also beginning to cover education, which is a topical issue in China. “Now there’s a scramble for educated Chinese. Astra Zeneca has to pay double wages during holidays to ensure that employees return,” says Inger Wickbom.

Wuxi is trying to prepare the younger generation for the international cooperation resulting from business sector developments and wants to offer their citizens a glimpse of the West. The local authority is actively teaching more people to speak English and to raise the educational level among young people. Young people, who will have a completely different contact with the rest of the world compared with their parents’ generation. “This is a good illustration of how quickly things are developing, not long ago large parts of China attempted to stop young people from experiencing the West,” says Inger Wickbom.

THEME: Involving civil society

EXAMPLE: Gävle – Buffalo City, South Africa

Civil players make the relationship durable

Involving civil society is perhaps the most creative challenge facing municipal partnerships. As coordinator, one needs a talent to capture unexpected stakeholders. In Gävle and Buffalo City, ornithologist clubs, pineapple growers, senior citizen groups and golf club entrepreneurs have taken a liking to each other.

The idea of involving civil society in the partnership is basically to create more durable relations. It is hoped that, say, contacts between two non-profit organisations will continue even after project funds have run out. The new municipal partnerships include an expressed ambition to link a wide range of society groups in both countries.

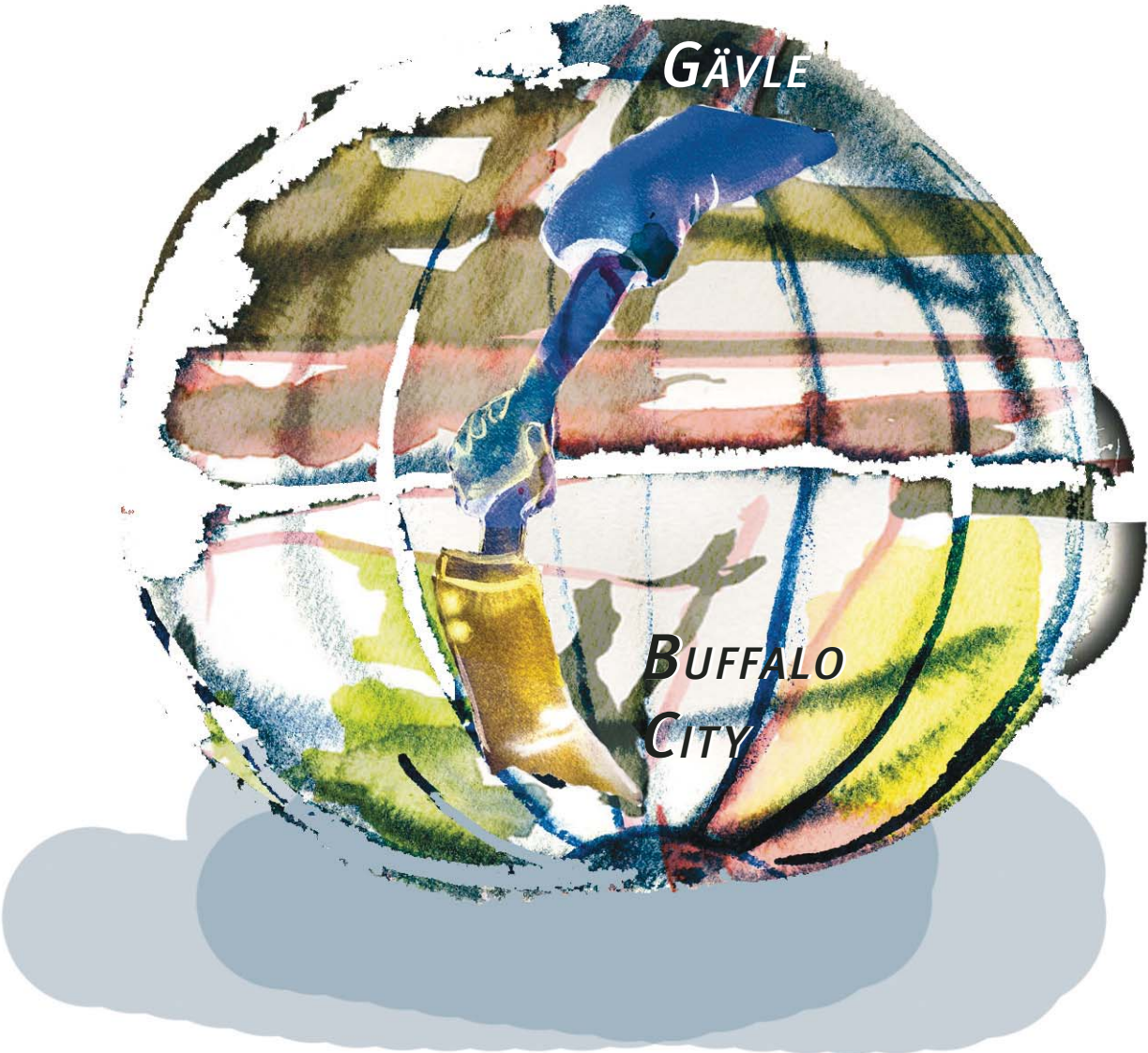
Gävle and Buffalo City have collaborated since 2002 in issues such as tourism, management development and crisis preparedness. Civil society plays an important role in projects, which have in several cases resulted in spin-off projects between purely civil players.

Darby Gounden is coordinator in Buffalo City. She believes there is a significant interest in civil society to participate in the partnership with Gävle. She is happy, not least as she believes the interest is a reflection that the projects deal with issues that are important to citizens. Involving civil players in projects is also a way to ensure that the partnership really benefits citizens. “It is often civil players that come up with the best ideas for improving projects,” says Darby Gounden.

Laila Nordfors is international secretary and project coordinator in Gävle. She says it is often civil players

themselves that suggest how they want to get involved. Mainly small companies and associations contact her. “They have heard that we are doing something with South Africa and have an idea. Often, they are very enthusiastic but have few resources so it is important that we can offer concrete support,” says Laila Nordfors. Among other things she has started study circles for civil players. Together with Darby Gounden she guides participants through contacts and bureaucratic applications.

Per Aspenberg from Gävle ornithologist club has taken part in one of Laila Nordfors’ study circles. When he heard of the partnership he had an idea to follow swallows, that migrate between Sweden and South Africa. He searched on the Internet and contacted an ornithologist club in Buffalo City. “First they were probably a bit surprised about my contact from the other side of the globe. But it gradually became obvious that we had a lot in common,” says Per Aspenberg. The clubs are now planning to cooperate in bird protection and marking. In the longer term they also want to arrange trips to Buffalo City for Swedish ornithologists.



“It is often civil players that come up with the best ideas for improving projects.”

Darby Gounden, Coordinator in Buffalo City, South Africa

In order for civil players to present this type of idea then citizens must be aware that the partnership programme is being run. Gävle has worked systematically to inform and remind its residents about the partnership. One way has been to highlight visits from Buffalo City. “When South Africans are here on study visits and we have taken them to ice hockey or football matches, then we make sure that there is an announcement at the stadium that a delegation is present from our partnership town Buffalo City,” says Laila Nordfors. Local media is also informed ahead of each activity. About every other month something about the partnership has appeared in the local newspaper. “I think almost everyone in Gävle is aware of our relationship with Buffalo City. It is fantastic, but we have worked hard to achieve this,” says Laila Nordfors.

As a smaller association or individual player one can benefit from the fact that the partnership is so established. “Civil players are offered easier and more reliable contacts through us,” says Laila Nordfors, and continues: “As the partnership is already in place they avoid quite a lot of administration and hierarchical decision making.”

One person that has used the established partnership to realise a wild idea is nurse Viktoria Hillman. She had met representatives for Buffalo City’s ambulance services when they made a study visit to the Gävle Hospital. When she specialised as an ambulance nurse at the Karolinska Institute and was to start her practical training she began to dream of obtaining some experience in Buffalo City. “I knew they were way ahead of us in trauma care. They have more accidents and violent crime and are therefore much more experienced in knifings, road accidents and burn injuries,” says Viktoria Hillman.

The Karolinska Institute is normally very restrictive when it comes to allowing students to gain practical experience abroad. They believe it is difficult to monitor quality and require a number of certificates from several different bodies. But through her contacts, Darby Gounden could help Viktoria Hillman to receive a formal invitation. She also received financial support from Sida. “It was not very much money but it helped to pay for my ticket,” says Viktoria Hillman.

Viktoria Hillman followed an ambulance team in Buffalo City for two weeks.

“I could take part surprisingly well in the actual work. But there were at the same time comprehensive differences. They have different ambulance companies depending on which sickness insurance the patient has.”

Two years have passed since her practical weeks and Viktoria Hillman has kept in touch with her colleagues in Buffalo City. “I have gained a valuable perspective in my work and also friends for life. Sometime, in some way, I will return to South Africa, I’m sure,” says Viktoria Hillman.

The Swedish tradition of local self-governance has resulted in an extensive pool of experience about municipal methods and solutions. Municipal Partnerships mean local authorities in Sweden and in Sida's partnership countries together strive to find solutions to municipal issues and challenges.

This document is designed to increase knowledge and provide inspiration for successful municipal partnerships.

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The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions is a professional and employer related organization for Sweden's 290 local municipalities, 18 county councils and 2 regions.

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