

PRIVATE SECTOR PEER LEARNING: PARTNERSHIP PROFILES

Swedish Leadership for Sustainable Development

Description: [Swedish Leadership for Sustainable Development](#) (Swedish Leadership) is a network of over 20 Swedish or Swedish-rooted companies, select expert organisations and a development finance institution that work together to demonstrate leadership for sustainable global development. The network was initiated and is co-ordinated by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, but is driven by participating parties' leadership and commitments. It was born in a context of increasing recognition that profound transformations required for sustainable development to become a reality could not be accomplished without the private sector's engagement, especially since private companies account for most of the investments in low- and middle-income countries, and that a dedicated private sector which takes long-term responsibility is crucial for the achievement of development goals.

Development Assistance Committee member: Sweden

Budget: Not available

Duration: Ongoing since 2013

Location: Global

Sector: Open

Activities: Various

Beneficiaries: Various

Objective: Swedish Leadership seeks to collaborate around leadership to integrate sustainable development into business models and core business practices, contribute to poverty reduction and find long-term solutions to development challenges. The network focuses on the creation of decent jobs, reduction of negative impacts on the environment, promotion of the efficient use of resources, and fighting corruption and unethical behaviour. Network members consider the promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities for all fundamental to achieving sustainable development. The use of information technology, innovation and new forms of financing are seen as key tools in achieving desired outcomes. By strengthening inclusive business practices and encouraging innovative partnerships in development co-operation, Swedish Leadership wants to serve as a catalyst to promote positive changes.

Swedish Leadership aims to spread its form of cross-sectoral collaboration and inspire other global actors to build similar partnerships, advance their positions on sustainability and contribute in practice to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. In a 2013 joint statement, network members recognised the increasing needs for the public and private sectors and civil society to work together to find solutions and concrete action on global challenges. They also stated their availability to work, when relevant, with the government of Sweden and within global initiatives, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

Partners: Network members include Atlas Copco AB, Axel Johnson AB, Boliden AB, Elekta AB, Ericsson AB, H&M Hennes & Mauritz AB, ICA Gruppen AB, IKEA, Indiska Magasinet AB, Löfbergs Lila AB, Ratos AB, Sabro Företagarna AB, Sandvik AB, Scania AB, Skandinaviska Enskilda Banken AB, SPP Liv Fondförsäkring AB, Stockholm Environment Institute, Stockholm Resilience Centre, Stockholm International Water Institute, Swedfund, Systembolaget AB, Tele2 AB, Tetra Laval Group, Unilever and Volvo Group. A requirement for joining is that a company's business model must include the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency's target groups (as clients, suppliers, sub-contractors, etc.).

Key activities: Within the network, members share knowledge and best practices, work on joint actions, and develop and carry out new projects and initiatives. Companies commit additional resources to tackle development challenges in countries where Swedish development co-operation is active. They are generally represented by their heads of sustainability in working sessions.

Results: Swedish Leadership has become a valuable forum for knowledge sharing as well as a platform for the formation of new partnerships and collaborative models for poverty reduction and sustainable development. Examples of the network's projects and initiatives include: a letter in which Swedish Leadership formally proposed the inclusion of an anti-corruption goal among the Sustainable Development Goals; a joint commitment following the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals explaining how members will contribute to their achievement, particularly Sustainable Development Goals 8, 12 and 16; the establishment of the Sweden Textile Water Initiative on reducing water and chemical use in the

textile industry; the introduction of the Volvo Group vocational training initiative for vehicle mechanics in several African countries; and H&M's co-operation with the International Labour Organization and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency on the International Labour Organization's Decent Work Agenda, specifically the promotion of stronger social dialogue between parties in the labour market.

Monitoring and evaluation: Chief executive officers of participating companies meet annually to assess the work done and set the framework and guidelines for the next fiscal year. No monitoring and evaluation documents on the network's global achievements were found. However, each project and initiative will be evaluated on its own.

Insights: A number of factors have contributed to the network's success. Swedish Leadership is based on common goals and has seen positive outcomes from collective action. Leadership at the highest levels within companies has also been critical. Leadership from the top demonstrates clear commitments and ensures ownership of the network by all parties. Finally, working sessions are closed-door, which creates a conducive space for knowledge sharing and building trust between parties.

SOURCES:

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Sida (n.d.), "Swedish Leadership for Sustainable Development" (fact sheet), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Stockholm, www.sida.se/contentassets/57e9eabd2c6740be920c9d2094bda68e/20160318_swedish-leadership-faktablad.pdf (accessed 1 July 2016).

Swedish Leadership (2013), "Swedish Leadership for Sustainable Development" (joint statement), www.sida.se/globalassets/global/nyheter/statement_on_swedish_leadership_for_sustainable_development_13_may_2013.pdf.