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Theme: *Entrepreneurial learning*
Project title: *Vacation entrepreneurs*

City: Gothenburg, Sweden, Västra Hisingen, Norra Hisingen and Lundby Districts
Target group: 14-15-year-olds

Context, issue(s) to tackle

In the Torslanda area we have a strong business tradition and a high employment level. The majority of the locals are native Swedes. On the other hand, we have Biskopsgården, a socially challenged area with large numbers of immigrants, low education rate, lower grades, lower voting rates, high unemployment and lower life expectancy. Many refugees move here and several of them come with limited or no educational background. Sweden is a country where low-skilled job opportunities are very rare and, just like the in the rest of Europe, such jobs are becoming increasingly difficult to find. This has resulted in a very high unemployment rate in this part of the city and those especially targeted are young persons with an immigrant background and women. During the project period several persons were even shot at in the area. This put a lot of restraints on the project staff and also presented us with risks that we had not prepared for.

Objectives

Initially, we started as part of the European Regional Development Fund's (ERDF) Entrepreneurial West Hisingen project, 2015 REGIO Stars finalist, and the aim with the original activity was to combat gang recruitment through offering more meaningful activities for youngsters during the summer and also to increase their entrepreneurial spirit, hence making them more likely to become entrepreneurs in the future. We also aimed to improve their entrepreneurial competencies: creativity, cooperation skills, uncertainty management skills and decision making skills. Initially, we worked with 16-19-year-olds in the project but the general sense was that young people in this age range were too old to be influenced, hence the lower age range of 14-15. (The kids are 8th or 9th graders - the 9th grade is the last year of compulsory education in Sweden.)

Date of achievement - design, development, implementation

The youngsters work with us in June and August, divided into two groups and two periods of activities. The city districts pay salaries to them. (This salary is low and they can also choose to do other work, such as garden maintenance, garbage handling, etc.)

Key steps and activities

This year, the participants - now around 150 - will focus on social innovation. Their task is to investigate their area and find things that they can do, alone or with others, to achieve societal



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gain. They are of course allowed to make money from their ideas but this cannot be their first and foremost goal. The question they will ask themselves is how can I/we create value for someone else? They have trained tutors who follow them and coach them during their journey as social vacation entrepreneurs. We use workshops, team building activities and guerrilla marketing and they are also introduced to the concept of being an entrepreneur.

Budget and its origin

Initially co-funded by the ERDF, now part of the city's ordinary budget.

Total sum (salaries for project manager, assisting project manager, two junior project managers): €40,000

Total sum (miscellaneous costs, such as phone, computer, travel, meeting costs, office material): €3,500

Results and impact

During the first year we had ten participants and the satisfaction rate that year was around 80%. We then sat down with the youngsters and developed the concept further. The second year we had 40 participants and the success rate was 100%. This year we have invited two other districts to join. We now have 150 youngsters and we focus on social entrepreneurship. The concept has been very valuable for the district. The youngsters themselves feel that they have learnt valuable skills for future exploration and life. Some of them also started sustainable businesses, such as designing head bands, importing wakeboards, offering garden maintenance services or consultancy services in youth management development. For the district this has been money well invested as the positive impact the presence of young persons in the neighbourhood with strong dreams and beliefs brings helps strengthen everything from local democracy to belief in the future and decreases the risk of early school leaving and gang recruitment.

Lessons learnt

Make sure that the vacation entrepreneurs have salaries. This is a job. Make also sure you have very good coaches and tutors, experienced in working with youngsters BUT they should also have SME background. During the second year recruit some of the former vacation entrepreneurs as assistant tutors.

Invest time in working with social media and also think through your recruitment idea.

Spend time on setting up the group.

We have not encountered any other general obstacles. Securing base funds in the budget was a problem, but after a while that also went smoothly.

Transferability tips for cities willing to implement a similar scheme

Absolutely transferable and easy.

Contact

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Social media

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Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gg_NOPP9Ew0

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fsFF8_NOEJM

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zOKSBsYI_ig

Pictures

