

## Case study

### “Oeiras Solidária”



#### Overview

<b>Driver</b>	Municipality of Oeiras
<b>Country</b>	Oeiras, Portugal
<b>Societal issue addressed</b>	Promote a better model for living by fighting discrimination and exclusion on the basis of gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, wherever discrimination and exclusion take place (community, household, workplace, schools, and so on)
<b>Partners</b>	Businesses, Not-for-profit organisations
<b>Status</b>	Running since 2004 and still growing
<b>Impact</b>	Since 2004 500 families, 20 not-for-profit organisations and 148 projects have benefited from businesses' support.
<b>Challenges</b>	To enhance the engagement of businesses for community.
<b>Endorsements</b>	European Enterprise Awards, National Jury, 2006, 1st Prize.

#### Executive Summary

The Programme Oeiras Solidária has been created by the Municipality of Oeiras in 2004 as an answer to overcome the mistrust existing between businesses and not-for-profit organisations, which has made it very difficult to generate positive resources to tackle social problems amongst immigrant families working in neighbouring villages.

The Municipality of Oeiras is making good use of the strong corporate presence in the Council (3 technology parks and 3 economic clusters) and has taken the responsibility to promote a better mutual understanding and acquaintance between business and not-for-profit organisations, establishing a strong partnership model and generating resources for projects that can help those in need in the community.

*“The innovation in the quoted model lies in the role the municipality has taken, being more a facilitator of strong partnerships than an active player.”*

The innovation in the quoted model lies in the role the municipality has taken, being more a facilitator of strong partnerships than an active player. This role assigns to the municipality main tasks of verifying the importance of the projects for the sustainable development of Oeiras territory before they would be presented to businesses and evaluating the outcomes and discussing them with both partners' organisations after preliminary conclusions have been drawn.

## 1. Situation and societal issue

Despite the Municipality of Oeiras (20 km from Lisbon) being considered one of the most developed councils near the Portuguese capital, there still are many societal issues to be addressed. This is in part due to the lack of knowledge of social responsibility concepts and practices as a management tool in small and medium sized businesses, reflecting a low involvement of its managers in community affairs. That reflects badly on employment/unemployment, namely in risk of social exclusion groups and poses many and several difficulties to family life. This situation creates a lack of motivation amongst disadvantaged groups, which begin regularly to search for the support of not-for-profit organisations which provide direct services to the community (food assistance, nursery, childcare). Therefore the main role of the Municipality of Oeiras was to find a way to tackle those problems engaging businesses in a partnership process that could bring them together with not-for-profit organisations and local administration around common goals.

## 2. Partners

The Municipality of Oeiras runs the programme. Their main role is to assure communication between community needs expressed through not-for-profit organisations and of the various resources available in the local business environment.

There are 62 businesses that have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with rules and roles determined. Among those businesses are: Nestlé Portugal, Microsoft, Cisco, GFI, Sanofi-Aventis, Merck Sharp and Dohme, Sumol+Compal, Mota-Engil, Zagope, Ericsson, GE Money, Cadbury, Pfizer, Amgen, Auchan, BP, and others. Their motivation stands on the continuous changes and improvements their engagement induces in neighborhood community, allowing better conditions for recruitment, less environmental problems and better image.

*“The businesses’ motivation stands on the continuous changes and improvements their engagement induces in neighborhood community, allowing better conditions for recruitment, less environmental problems and better image.”*

### a. Driver

The Municipality of Oeiras has been (and still is) the driver of the programme, promoting ways to initiate and/or to enhance corporate social responsibility among businesses and relating those ways to local social issues to be tackled.

Every year the Municipality of Oeiras gathers the projects submitted by not-for-profit organisations, matches their objectives with the overall strategic objectives for local sustainable development and after all the information has been processed a meeting with all partners takes place to discuss priorities, resources to be allocated and to decide which business (or businesses) will be involved in each project.

The programme’s staff, consisting of three staff members of the municipality, knows the partners’ roles and respects them as crucial to the success of the programme. Due to the relation of the Municipality to Portuguese Administrative Law, which gives it the authority for all public affairs (different from Portuguese Private Law that is related to businesses activities), the partners have to respect those particular rules. Social and sustainable development are global policies attached to public policies and therefore to the Municipality's duties as committed by law.

## **b. Businesses**

Businesses participate in all stages of project's implementation:

- Planning – they study, discuss and decide on all the projects submitted by not-for-profit organisations that match local government's strategic goals for sustainable development.
- Action Plan – Businesses engage financial and knowledge resources in each project accordingly to their mission and core business. Often they allow their employees to carry out tasks in the project the businesses have decided to support.
- Evaluation: Regularly, all partners get together to scrutinize actions that have been taken.

As each project has its specific requirements to be successful, businesses act differently, sometimes as an investor, bearer of knowledge or innovator at the same time.

## **c. Community organisations**

Not-for-profit organisations are the main players in tackling societal issues in Portugal. They are recognised by Government and every year they receive financial support to assure some form of social protection – namely childcare, nursery, homecare, child center, community centers, food support, training programmes – though the financial support they receive from Government is split with social workers wages and maintenance costs.

That is the reason why the programme has to deal with not-for-profit organisations in order to empower them to address social problems properly.

## **d. Public administration and government**

The Municipality of Oeiras is a local council administration so the outcomes of the programme Oeiras Solidária have impact on local government's social policy.

# **3. Programme Description**

## **a. Initiation**

In September 2004, after several local businesses were moved by the social problems going around them, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Municipality of Oeiras and 15 medium sized businesses. This marked the creation of the Oeiras Solidária (Solidarity Oeiras) programme with the objective of contributing to better and more sustainable socioeconomic development, through local networking in the fields of active aging, risk behaviour prevention, integration of disadvantaged people or people in social exclusion risk and community renewal. The most relevant problems were identified through statistical surveys and questionnaires.

## **b. Process**

The programme has been initiated in September 2004, and the first activity met by partners was the purchase of a mini-bus for the transportation of disabled children in November that year.

The programme maintains its strategic approach and it has never had the necessity to change its objectives.

Many businesses are joining the programme, most of them motivated by present partners.

### c. Resources

1. Every project must use the resources that make their objectives attainable. Those resources are made available by businesses. The following data illustrate this:

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Supported projects	14	19	34	50	56
Businesses engaged	7	12	21	23	26
Businesses' investment (€)	22.000	63.000	117.000	139.000	180.000

2. The Municipality of Oeiras gives complementary support to each project, through the council's services.

The programme Oeiras Solidária has an annual budget that supports its activity of engaging new businesses and projects. The programme's staff (three staff members of the municipality) assures all organisational requests. One of these staff members is responsible for the planning, work allocation and reporting the outcomes.

### d. Activities

#### **“Casa de São Bento” Project**

Developed in Caxias Parish by a Community Center for Children at Risk assuring support to 70 children, this project counted on the involvement of GE Volunteers that have rehabilitated the inside space and bought furniture and computers, while Oeiras' Municipality rehabilitated the outside walls and green spaces and guaranteed access to broadband internet.

#### **“Espaço Cívico dos Barrinhos” Project**

Developed in Carnaxide Parish through a partnership between four immigrants' not-for-profit organisations and the construction company Ferreiras & Magalhães.

This partnership supports daily 300 low income families, composed by isolated elderly people, children at risk and unemployed people.

#### **Young Future project**

Partnership between Nestlé, Carrefour and Scout's Association that every year allows , 100 children belonging to families in social trouble to benefit from two weeks holidays on Scout Camp.

#### **Without Physical Barriers project**

Partnership between the Municipality of Oeiras and Mota-Engil construction company that rehabilitates the inside of houses where elderly and disabled people live, allowing them to move more freely and securely.

### **Beach and Green Spaces' cleaning**

Partnership between Auchan, GFI and Amgen, which allows the cleaning after summer holidays, of beach facilities and green spaces (gardens), promoting environmental responsibility among companies and citizens.

### **Growing Equal project**

Developed in Carnaxide Parish by a Community Center for Children at Risk assuring support to 14 disabled children. This project counted on the involvement of Kellogs and GlaxoSmithKline who rehabilitated the inside space, bought furniture and computers and assured the purchase of food during a year, while the Municipality rehabilitated the outside walls and green spaces, and has guaranteed access to broadband internet.

### **NetSenior project**

A partnership between the Municipality of Oeiras, Ericsson and Microsoft has allowed the implementation of a project to teach and assure access to broadband internet to people aged 60 years and over who attend to Community Centers on a daily basis.

### **Immigrant Entrepreneurship**

This project counts on the financial guidance and support of British Petroleum and ISS Facility Services and has legal support from the Immigration Office. Entrepreneurship classes have taken place to help immigrant people to understand what is at stake and how they can overcome barriers and enhance their projects. A network for all immigrant entrepreneurs will be set up before businesses begin to operate.

### **TeleAssistance Home Alert**

Through the involvement of Redislogar a teleassistance home alert has been set to help elderly and disabled people to be secure at their homes. The central system is placed at the council's fire department and operates 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Social Security assures the purchase of home sets to people with low incomes.

## **4. Programme Evaluation**

Programme evaluation has an outcome focus and the Municipality of Oeiras is mainly responsible for this. Outcomes are usually in terms of enhanced learning (knowledge, perceptions/attitudes or skills) or conditions (increased literacy, self-reliance). The general steps include:

1. Identify the major outcomes that partners want to examine or verify for the program under evaluation
2. Choose the outcomes that partners want to examine, prioritize the outcomes picking the top two to four most important outcomes to examine
3. For each outcome, the municipality specifies observable measures or indicators
4. Identify what information is needed to show these indicators
5. Use questionnaires for business partners and not-for-profit organisations
6. Analyze and report the findings

## **5. Impact**

Answers to questions on programme evaluation asked to business partners (51 respondents) and not-for-profit organisations (30 respondents) about the importance of partnership and the

outcomes for their own organisations, staff and people supported provided the following statements:

**a. Benefits to the local/ regional community**

1. Better access to basic social support
2. Knowing different people besides social workers
3. More chances to get a job
4. Opportunity to get more skills through business training
5. Motivation to participate in community life and to set their own goals

**b. Benefits to the community organisations**

1. An increased influence in the community and greater participation on issues of local significance that are relevant
2. New skills and experiences that empower the organisation
3. More chances to attract grants or support from local council and Government
4. Publicity through projects' coverage in the local media
5. Increased membership through volunteers or providers among business partner's staff

**c. Benefits to the companies**

1. Local residents will link the business' name to the partnership and the outcomes that are being achieved
2. Leadership position in the local community and an example for other businesses
3. Publicity through projects' coverage in the local media
4. Wider demonstration of business values, commitment to the local community and care for that community
5. Better recruitment from community due to better skills that business was able to give through training to people of the community
6. Happier and more productive staff and less staff turnover, due to involvement in empowering community activities

**d. Further impact**

The programme is still growing and its action has gone outside the geographical boundaries of the Municipality of Oeiras. Very often not-for-profit organisations from nearby councils ask for support for their own projects and are able to get it.

## **6. Challenges**

Initial difficulties were originated by a mutual lack of trust between businesses and not-for-profit organisations.

For businesses the main concerns regarded the fact that until the beginning of the programme they received a huge number of requests, usually for cash, despite being relatively unknown to not-for-profit organisations. How could this be overcome, if they were to be better known to those organisations?

For not-for-profit organisations the case was: Why get a business partner when their requests for support were not heard? Would that partnership be an opportunity for businesses to interfere and use not-for-profit organisations for their own commercial purposes?

The solution adopted relied on the capacity of the Municipality of Oeiras to become a facilitator rather than a player, so the Municipality would be able to assume responsibilities for receiving the projects, gathering information about them, matching them with strategic goals and the programme's objectives, promoting mutual acquaintance of the staff managers and evaluating the annual outcomes.

As a consequence of the partnership model created the mutual suspicions were overcome and trust was allowed to become the first principle to be respected.

Nevertheless an important question still remains to be answered: how to develop further mutual commitment between businesses and not-for-profit organisations?

The Municipality of Oeiras is now developing a web tool which will bring even more transparency and proficiency to the process, allowing the mainstreaming of the programme.

## 7. Endorsements

The programme Oeiras Solidária has been selected in 2006 as an example of Corporate Citizenship, and it has received an award from the National Jury of the European Enterprise Awards (IAPMEI Portugal – National Agency for Micro, Small and Medium-sized companies).

## 8. Contact & Further Information

José Tomás Almeida

[jose.almeida@cm-oeiras.pt](mailto:jose.almeida@cm-oeiras.pt)

phone: 351 21 441 22 35 / 351 21 096 25 20

mobile: 351 92 219 63 06

[www.cm-oeiras.pt/amunicipal/OeirasEnvolve/AssSociais/ResponsabilidadeSocial/Paginas/ResponsabilidadeSocial.aspx](http://www.cm-oeiras.pt/amunicipal/OeirasEnvolve/AssSociais/ResponsabilidadeSocial/Paginas/ResponsabilidadeSocial.aspx)

[www.csrvaderegiotoolkit.net](http://www.csrvaderegiotoolkit.net)

[www.centrodecontacto.com/index](http://www.centrodecontacto.com/index)

[www.guiadacidade.pt/v3\\_index/dossiers](http://www.guiadacidade.pt/v3_index/dossiers)

## INCLUDE – Pathways to Community Investment

The European project INCLUDE provides local intermediaries like civil society organisations, economic development agencies, chambers of commerce and public authorities with support that will help them to engage businesses in innovative cross-sectoral partnerships. INCLUDE identifies on a worldwide scale good examples of collaborative business initiatives as well as business engagement in cross-sectoral partnerships, which contribute towards skills development and employability of disadvantaged groups, towards social inclusion and innovation in addressing societal challenges and communicates them.

INCLUDE builds upon the results of the CSR-Laboratory “Skills for Employability enhanced through Employee Engagement” which was carried out as part of the European Alliance for CSR and is run jointly by UPJ and the ENGAGE initiative coordinated by Business in the Community (BITC). Partners of the project are the German Federal Department of Labour and Social Affairs, Citi-Group, Asociata pentru Relatii Comunitare (Romania), Önkéntes Központ Alapítvány (Hungary), SMartKolektiv (Serbia), Pontis Foundation (Slovakia) and Özel Sektör Gönüllüler Derneği (Turkey).

The project is supported by the European Commission (Directorate-General for Employment, social affairs and equal opportunities).

Further information about the project is available at [www.bitc.org.uk/global/include.html](http://www.bitc.org.uk/global/include.html) (in English) [www.upj.de/include](http://www.upj.de/include) (in German)

### UPJ

UPJ is the German national network of engaged businesses and local non-profit intermediary organizations. Its projects and programmes create new connections between businesses, civil society organizations and public authorities thus contributing to solve societal challenges and to shape sustainable communities. UPJ, a registered charity under German law, provides organizations from the business, community and public sectors with information and consultancy to improve their Corporate Citizenship and Corporate Social Responsibility activities. [www.upj.de](http://www.upj.de)



### ENGAGE

ENGAGE is an international programme that brings together businesses and community organisations around the globe to increase the quality and amount of employee community engagement in their local communities. Its mission is twofold: To inspire, mobilise and support companies to develop sustainable community investment programmes, and to provide community organisations with a network, tools and support that will help them work more effectively with business partners. [www.engageyouremployees.org](http://www.engageyouremployees.org)



### Contact

#### **Dorothee Albrecht**

Project Manager  
UPJ  
Brunnenstr. 181  
10119 Berlin, Germany

Tel: +49 30 2787 406-0

EEmail: [dorothee.albrecht@upj.de](mailto:dorothee.albrecht@upj.de)

#### **Tom Halley**

Communications Officer BITC International  
Business in the Community  
137 Shepherdess Walk  
London N1 7RQ, United Kingdom

Tel: +44 20 7566 8663

EEmail: [tom.halley@bitc.org.uk](mailto:tom.halley@bitc.org.uk)

INCLUDE is co-financed by  
the European Commission

