

“Latent Potential: Tapping Human and Social Capital to Promote and Support Gender Equality in Decision Making in Areas of High Social Exclusion”

CASE STUDIES

The need to ensure effective participation of women in the decision making process has been an ongoing issue within EU Gender Policy and has been recognised as a priority area in EU Community Action Programmes on Equal Opportunities (see chapter 2 section of this report). The participation of women in the decision making process and the empowerment of women is now seen as a way to ensure greater and sustainable development in all areas of life and, relatedly to this project, to area based regeneration programmes.

The need to guarantee greater co-operation within and between different key actors dealing with the issue of gender equality has become a granted aspect of such programmes. Achieving the goal of equal participation of women and men in decision-making will provide a balance that more accurately reflects the composition of society and is needed in order to strengthen democracy and promote its proper functioning. The greater the distance between decision-making processes and the people they are meant to serve, the greater the risk that such developments will fail to achieve their objectives.

Owing to women’s limited access to the traditional avenues to power, such as the decision-making bodies of political parties, employer organizations and trade unions, women have gained access to power through alternative structures, particularly in the non-governmental organization sector. Through non-governmental organizations and grass-roots organizations, women have been able to articulate their interests and concerns and have placed women's issues on the local and national agendas.

Through next pages, we present 10 different focuses and methodologies used in the participant countries of the Latent Potential project concerning the involvement of women in area based regeneration programmes and the decision making process.

The case studies have the following common structure:

- A short background and context which lays out the key issues and problems that were/are addressed by the organisation/network
- What are the objectives of the organisation?
- How were these objectives delivered? What actions were taken?
- Which were the results achieved?
- What were the obstacles/difficulties encountered

- What were the financing arrangements
- Contact details of the organisation

Case Study 1

Name of project

BALLYBEEN WOMEN'S CENTRE, BELFAST

Background and context

Ballybeen is the second largest housing estate in Northern Ireland with a population exceeding 9000. It is situated in the outskirts of East Belfast and is a sprawling estate, which covers three electoral wards within the Borough of Castlereagh. The Noble figures reflect the significant nature of problems experienced in Ballybeen. It ranks 123 out of 566 (1 representing highest deprivation) in Northern Ireland terms and is within the 15% of worst wards in relation to the health, education and child poverty domains. The area is poorly serviced in terms of statutory provision and has been affected by the polarisation that has occurred as a result of the 'troubles' and has a strong single identity protestant culture. 53% of the population is female, compared with the Northern Ireland average of 51%. 20% of lone female parents with dependant children, living in Castlereagh Borough, live in Ballybeen. In 2001 (the latest Child Health Statistics) 13% of births in Enler were to teenage mothers, this was above both the Local Health Trust and Regional Health Board averages.

Castlereagh economic partnership 'A Review of the Local Economy 1998' found that the most deprived wards in Ballybeen distinctly lacked employment opportunities in professional occupations with the majority of the employed population being in semi skilled/manual occupations. The statistics for female unemployment relate only to those women who are registered as unemployed and looking for work. The true figure for female unemployment is believed to be significantly higher as government statistics do not take account of unemployed female spouses/partners of unemployed males. Areas of high unemployment are also those where population has limited formal qualifications. Statistics show that over 80% of those unemployed and living

in Ballybeen have no formal qualifications. This is borne out by Noble “Castlereagh contains wards in the most education deprived quintile”.

Ballybeen, once a stable and desirable estate, is now experiencing decline, a view supported by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE). In a recent mapping exercise the NIHE pointed to rising levels of dependency and social deprivation in outlying estates such as Ballybeen. A situation further exacerbated by the recent closure of a major employer in the area – TKECC – resulting in the loss of 550 jobs, many of them occupied by women.

Objectives

Ballybeen Women’s Centre was established to identify and address the education, health and social needs of women in the Ballybeen Estate and surrounding area. This ‘positive action’ initiative, in recognition of the unequal provision of community facilities and services for women in the area and the social exclusion and the marginalisation of women, aims to address the education, health and social inequalities experienced by women and promote gender equality.

Ballybeen Women’s centre has been delivering quality services in an area of low and weak community infrastructure for the past 21 years. The Centre promotes social inclusion by involving the most marginalised in the area in the development and management of programmes to address their needs. Inclusion and empowerment are at the core of the organisation.

The Steps to the Future programme seeks to empower disadvantaged women by improving their levels of formal educational qualifications, skills and confidence and consequently improve their socio-economic status. The target group comprises women who have been out of the labour market for some considerable time (the majority of whom will not be on the unemployment register), who have little or no recognised qualifications and women who are currently in low paid, part time employment (defined as the ‘learning poor’ by New Labour), who are seeking to improve their employability through the acquisition of new skills and qualifications.

Actions undertaken to meet these objectives

Ballybeen Women’s Centre provides a first step back to education and training opportunities for those experiencing greatest social exclusion.

Through the Steps to the Future programme Ballybeen Women's Centre recognises and addresses the barriers women face returning to education, training and employment by taking a holistic approach and adopting an integrated service delivery model:

1. An informal and supportive learning environment for women returners.
2. High quality free crèche provision.
3. Flexible timetabling of courses which takes account of women's domestic and family responsibilities.
4. A wide-ranging high quality training and education programme which offers pre-vocational, educational and training courses, the majority of which have nationally recognised accreditation.
5. Accessible education and training in terms of cost.
6. The support of an Education and Training Officer to assist women in identifying their needs and also appropriate progression routes.
7. A basic skills facility to assist women in improving numeracy and literacy skills and an extensive resource library.

Successes

The success of the Education and Training Programme has been demonstrated through the collation of statistics relating to numbers enrolling on, numbers completing, number of qualifications gained on courses, numbers progressing on to further education/training/employment etc. Personal profiles on all participants are maintained. The past 4 years enrolment numbers illustrates this:

Year	No of Enrolments
2000-2001	206
2001-2002	220
2002-2003	218
2003-2004	238

Years	No. of Completers	No. of Qualifications Gained
1998-2000	378	356
2000-2002	406	375
2002-2004	438	412

The Centre has always supported and encouraged progression of women into further education/training and employment. Job search skills are offered through courses and on a one to one basis and the numbers gaining employment are:

1998 – 2000	2000 – 2002	2002 – 2004
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8%	7%	8%	
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Obstacles / difficulties encountered

Long term sustainability is the key issue in terms of obstacles and constraints. Ballybeen Women's Centre is a community based NGO and is reliant upon securing funding from a range of sources to sustain its work. The biggest obstacle and constraint facing Steps to the Future is securing funding to sustain the project.

Financing arrangements

Human
 1 X Education and Training Officer (programme Co-ordinator)
 1 X Outreach and Support Worker
 4 X Early Years Officers
 Admin/finance support
 Management support

Financial
 £111,000 circa per annum

Contact details

Ballybeen Women's Center
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 Belfast BT 16
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Case Study 2

Name of project

Engendered Spaces Project, Turin

Background and context

The Gate Committee is a non-profit public / private committee to support the regeneration of the Porta Palazzo region of Turin. The private partners include the Chamber of Commerce, Banks, NGO's and Trade Associations. From the Municipality Social Services, Housing, Culture, Economic Development and Urban Planning departments are involved. In addition Neighbourhood Associations have representation on the Committee.

The Committee aims to administer a series of initiatives regarding integrated and co-ordinated regeneration across 5 environments: Economic, Social, Built, Sustainable and Cultural. The methodology involves the activation of citizen's networks, the development of the community, urban transformation and accessing skill bases.

The Engendered Spaces project, which is promoted by the Gender Equality Office, Educational Department in Turin, is implemented by the Gate Committee and the Social Co-operative, Alma Terra which is an Association for Migrant and Native Women and is delivered through the methodology set down by the Gate Committee.

Objectives

The objective of the Engendered Spaces project is to create spaces for women living in Porta Palazzo based on the physical and mental needs of women in the area.

Action research has been undertaken to understand the lives of women, their interest, backgrounds and needs and to engage them in the project. The research identified issues associated with language, employment, childcare and home and family responsibilities. Further issues involve the absence of social networks and social support and the loneliness and fragmentation felt by women as a result. The aim of the project is to involve both Italian and migrant women and to create a group where the women can share their experiences and seek to become an active citizen by being involved in the social regeneration of the area.

Actions undertaken to meet these objectives

The aim of the project is to promote women's empowerment to recognise and ensure freedom of choice and a better quality of social living for women. The

participants on this project are 10 women from different countries, China, Italy, Morocco, Nigeria, Peru and Romania.

An 'Expressive Laboratory' has been established to support the development and building of the group. The aim is to learn to work together and favour knowledge, trust and exchanges between the participants.

The topics covered within the laboratory include:

- Knowing other participants through engaging with others and listening
- The body and the voice as media to communicate and express oneself
- The knowledge of themselves and their own body and voice

Successes

The first stage of the project was to carry out research with the migrant women and their profiles. This involved stakeholder interview, teachers, caseworkers, groups of women and collective interviews.

10 women from 10 countries have formed a mutual support group and have been able to understand and express rights of citizenship.

The outcome of the research has enabled a further period of financing to be secured.

The group has become more confident and sociable, where previously suspicion existed.

The group has learnt more about local structures and services, how to access them and how they may support their local communities with the knowledge that they have gained.

Obstacles / difficulties encountered

Communication, generally, has been a problem as has finding the time to commit to the group because of other commitments and the project has lost 2 participants because of work or family pressures.

This is a new approach that is being developed within the region and the project is relatively new and as such will encounter difficulties as it tries to establish itself.

Financing arrangements

The project is funded through the Gate Committee. It has committed funds initially to conduct research and further money has been committed for the next phase of the project to take forward the aims for the project.

Contact details

The Gate Committee, Porta Palazzo, Turin and www.arpnet.it/alma

Case Study 3

Name of project

Northampton Bangladeshi Association (NBA)

Background and context

There are over 250,000 people of Bangladeshi ethnicity in the UK. At national and local levels, the Bangladeshi community has been identified as suffering from high levels of social exclusion. Across a range of social and economic indicators, Bangladeshis, and particularly, Bangladeshi women, fare less well than most other ethnic groups and the population as a whole.

48% of Bangladeshi women have no educational qualifications and they are the least likely of any ethnic group in the UK to have education to a degree level. Bangladeshi women have had the highest unemployment rate of any ethnic group, 24% - six times higher than white women.

The economic inactivity rate for Bangladeshi women in the UK is 78%, with the majority taking care of family and home responsibilities. Where women are employed, 40% work within distribution, hotel and restaurant sector,

compared with 22% of all women in employment.

In Northampton, the Bangladeshi community accounts for less than 1% of the populations and is concentrated within particular areas.

Objectives

Northampton Bangladeshi Association exist to meet the social and cultural needs of the Bangladeshi community in Northamptonshire, enabling local people to play a part in the way their lives are shaped. The local Bangladeshi population has acute social and economic needs. NBA's objectives are:

- To advance education and training concerning the traditions and culture of Bangladesh
- To promote equality and good relations between persons and organisations of different racial groups
- To relieve unemployment for the public benefit, including assistance to find employment
- To provide advice and information on issues like housing, health and recreational activities to assist people to play an active role in the community

Actions undertaken to meet these objectives

In accordance with identified need, NBA works with a range of agencies (Northamptonshire County Council, Northampton Borough Council, Northampton NHS Trust, etc) to break down barriers that impeded the social and economic development of the local Bangladeshi community and gain equal access to resources and services.

Successes

NBA is the Bangladeshi community's 'one-stop-shop' providing advice, guidance and skills training. NBA's range of services include:

- Adult education
- Women's Support Services
- Welfare rights advice
- Legal / immigration advice
- Crèche facilities
- Youth Groups
- Translation services
- Volunteering scheme
- Elderly day care

Obstacles / difficulties encountered

Financing arrangements

MBA generates revenue from a variety of sources like Northamptonshire County Council, Northampton Primary Care Trust, Comic Relief and the Sunley Foundation.

The NBA is led by a Management Committee consisting of 16 elected members. Five full time staff are employed by the NBA, lead by a Principal Development Officer / Centre Manager and supported by community development workers who have multi disciplinary roles. Full time staff are complemented by a dedicated group of volunteers.

Contact details

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Case Study 4

Name of project

Foundation Cleo Patria, Rotterdam

Background and context

The first women's centre was developed because the women within Rotterdam themselves felt the need for a centre. The need arose from discussions with women who wanted a space to exchange views on issues that affected them and their families. It is aimed at participation, emancipation and to promote integration.

Foundation Cleo Patria was created to provide a safe meeting place for women in Rotterdam from different cultural backgrounds. Rotterdam is a city where more than 150 different cultures live together.

The Foundation is designed to support the self management, self governance and independence for women.

Objectives

The Centre is built around a number of key elements. These are:

- Safety: to support women to feel safe in taking steps towards their development and empowerment.
- Demand: work is done according to demand. This involves asking women what activities they wish to have and what they want to do individually.
- Activities: these are aimed at all women and are multicultural to encourage learning and sharing of the different cultures that are present.
- Sharing skills: the centre aims to utilise the skills of the women visiting the centre and encourage them to teach others the skills that they have, for example, IT, crafts and language.

To establish a number of foundations underneath the main foundation (Foundation Cleo Patria) looking at different areas of activity and action.

Each sub foundation is responsible for its own financing and development and each report to Foundation Cleo Patria where responsibility for the performance of the sub foundations sit. Foundation Cleo Patria has a supervisory role and is the arena that is used to discuss progress, issues and future direction.

Foundation Cleo Patria is managed through a board consisting of 6 people and supported by a worker.

Actions undertaken to meet these objectives

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At each of the sub foundations every management position on the Board must be filled to support management participation and where it is necessary new members will be given appropriate training and development to support their duties as Board Members.

There are a wide range of activities that are undertaken by the women that attend the centre and these are designed to be used as a means of breaking down barriers, encouraging learning and sharing of experience, culture and history as well as encouraging women to be more confident and expressive in communicating. The activities include:

- Painting, arts and crafts
- Multi cultural cooking
- Healthy food and healthy moving
- Conversational classes
- Discovering Holland and Dutch society

Successes

Weekly approximately 300 women from across 20 cultures attend the women's centre.

The centre has attracted visitors from within Holland to learn about the work of the centre and the projects that are pursued. They have also had visits from the UK, Germany and South Africa.

Women who had been volunteers were able to be trained within the centre and take up paid roles supporting the centre's activities.

- 80 women are taking Dutch lessons
- 50 women, who cannot read or write, are taking conversational lessons
- 50 women have been given training on improving their self confidence
- A fathers group has started, at the request of the women in the centre
- A men and women's group has started, also at the request of the women in the centre.

Obstacles / difficulties encountered

The difficulties encountered by the Centre have been the isolation of women and breaking down barriers of mistrust between different communities and cultures. Furthermore, language, education and illiteracy barriers exist that need to be tackled.

Financing arrangements

The centre now has two workers that take care of the daily organisation and structure of the activities within the centre.

Contact details

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Case Study 5

Name of project

IMUMEL, Toledo

Background and context

The project arises from the accomplishment of studies to improve and understand the knowledge of the situation of women and the market of work in a region of Castilla la Mancha, where the unemployment of the women estimated at more than 50%.

In addition the studies provide results, that set out the great variety of new deposits of labour in different sectors, like:

- Primary Sector: ecological agriculture, forestry, hunting,
- Industry: Prepared and wine commercialization, ecological product packaging, agro-alimentary product transformation, manufacturing,

industrial slaughter houses

- Services to the people: recreational activities, domiciliary attendance, attendance to third age, day-care centre, meals at home, services to people with disability
- Tourism and hotel business: Activities leisure, sports and free time, tourist activities (guides, routes, crafts,), services for hotels and tourism in general.

Objectives

- To cause the total equality of opportunities between women and men in the work market.
- To generate surroundings that value and support the incorporation of women into the work market.
- To stimulate and support the dynamics of the incorporation from women to the work market (new incorporations and returns to the labour life).
- To prepare women for the performance of a job comparison with men
- To cause the incorporation of women to the world of business
- To be able to intensify the participation of women in all the facets of social, economic, cultural and local life

Actions undertaken to meet these objectives

- Information, sensitization and awareness raising
- Information systems for women
- Specific training
- Plan of new enterprising (creation of companies)
- Measures of support to the labour market
- Training to support recruitment in accordance with the needs of the company.
- Training in the company
- Training for the participation or in the creation of an enterprise project
- Direct Aids: Scholarships to women during its phase of formation or practices.
- Aids to self-employment.
- Expenses of trips and subsistence diets for the training programme

Successes

The successes of the project have been promoted within the local community and population highlighting the improvements of women in the labour market, as well as different companies that have been created, covering such areas of activity as follows:

- ecological pastry shop
- manual loom
- factories of wood toys with ecological paintings
- rural houses
- centre spa
- centre to repair shoes
- florist's shop
- Company of cultural services and leisure
- company of welfare services

Obstacles / difficulties encountered

- Elevated unemployment in the group of women (of each 10 unemployed: 7 are women).
- The women in unemployment have little experience or preparation of work or being involved within the labour market
- A major problem is that women have to maintain their family roles and responsibilities whilst attempting to train to look for employment opportunities
- There is a challenge in respect of tackling the attitudes of women in encouraging them out of their traditional roles and into work when they do not work because they do not know like finding a job.
- The average wage of a woman in a same professional category is 75% that of a man.

Financing arrangements

The funding for the Project comes from within the EQUAL programme (2001-2004).

Contact details

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Case Study 6

Name of project

Social Inclusion Race Empowerment Network (SIREN), Birmingham

Background and context

SIREN was developed out of an awareness of the need for a variety of groups and individuals from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities to engage in the 'race debate' but disillusioned with the 'race industry' and the lack of familiar fora to discuss their concerns and ideas. BME communities, and particularly women, are underrepresented within senior decision making positions in the statutory and voluntary sector.

The network has been active in organising a series of events with BME community contributions in Birmingham and to provide the platform for debate and opportunities to network.

For the first 2 years of its existence SIREN employed a part time co-ordinator to support the development of the network, its programme of activity and delivery of its activity. The co-ordinator was supported by members of the SIREN Steering Group who were and are all volunteers, giving their time and knowledge freely. The Steering Group has a majority of women and this has been a conscious decision to encourage BME women into decision making roles within an organisation and to be able to use this experience and learning to further their careers.

Objectives

SIREN is an independently constituted and organised network and is a network of individuals who wish to discuss, promote and further issues associated with 'race'.

The network may wish to challenge, lobby and inform institutions, to become a focus for promoting the career and professional advancement of BME professionals and to identify issues that need to be progressed as a consequence.

SIREN will be a support network for BME individuals and groups who seek to proactively contribute to the development of BME people and their communities.

Actions undertaken to meet these objectives

Since its conception the network has grown consistently and now has approximately 800 members. It has planned, developed and delivered a wide range of activities, events and information to support the development of the network, its aims and objectives.

SIREN, as a network of individuals, is connecting with people who are interested, motivated and well placed to promote the 'race debate'. We have delivered a series of events and workshops, which are always well attended.

The members of the SIREN Steering Group Committee are extremely well placed to ensure projects link with statutory authorities, education and training agencies. It can ensure maximum public awareness and the dissemination of the outcomes of this network.

Successes

Examples of the SIREN's successes include:

SIREN launch – Race Debate Questions Time (75 people attended)
Celebrating BME Success Conference (600 attended)
Le Haine, Race Hatred Film and discussion (180 attended)
Black Awareness Day, Family Unity, workshops and exhibitions (600 attended)
Black Family History Fun Day, workshop, exhibitions and tours at Aston hall (200 attended)
Minority Film Programme, Eastern Film Makers
Birmingham Black History trail, research and development
Website and newsletter produced

SIREN activities are delivered in partnership with The Drum, The MAC (Midlands Arts Centre), Black Workers Group Black Pasts Birmingham Futures Group and many others.

Obstacles / difficulties encountered

SIREN is run on a volunteer basis and as such the members of the Steering Group face difficulties in freeing up sufficient time to ensure the development and continued progress of the network.

Furthermore, accessing funding has been time consuming and has been difficult to gain a long term commitment from funding agencies to assist in the long term development of the network and its aims. The funding available is also very project orientated and as SIREN's aims are the promotion of the 'race' debate some funding streams are inaccessible as they may dilute these aims.

Financing arrangements

SIREN was funded initially through a combination of grants from the local authority and voluntary organisations, from its establishment in 2000 till 2002 during which time it employed a part time co-ordinator.

Since 2002, it has become self sustaining and independent of other organisations and pursues funding in line with its objectives.

Contact details

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Case Study 7

Name of project

Corby Women's Centre, Northamptonshire

Background and context

Corby is a town within the boundary of Northamptonshire County Council, in the East Midlands region of England. Generally, Northamptonshire experiences relatively low levels of social exclusion and deprivation with overall levels of prosperity above the national average. However, there are some serious pockets of deprivation, notably in urban areas such as Corby.

Corby has a population of approximately 53,000 people with a slightly higher number of women to men.

Corby Women's Centre was established in 1985 against a local backdrop of economic decline and the rise of associated social problems such as family breakdown, increasing numbers of single parent families, poor health amongst the population, poor educational attainment and high level of teenage pregnancy. The Centre was established due to the increasing need among local women for the provision of counselling, advice and information.

It was run on a voluntary basis until 2000 when the organisation received a grant from the National Lottery and it became a registered charity. It is the only women's centre in Northamptonshire.

Objectives

Mission Statement: Corby Women's Centre exists as a space to enable women to meet and define their needs through self-help and mutual empowerment to take steps to meet those needs whether social, health, educational or cultural.

Aims and Objectives: Corby Women's Centre aims to provide a space for women to meet together and define for themselves areas of need and gaps in existing provision for women in Corby.

In doing this, women will work together to meet these needs and present their findings to the relevant bodies responsible for public provision. The centre also aims to encourage women to take a full and responsible role in the community and workforce as well as in the home.

This is done by providing activities designed by women themselves. These activities will take full account of women's special needs, childcare provision, financial constraints and family responsibilities. The programmes are intended to support women in improving their self confidence, becoming empowered to realise their full potential.

Actions undertaken to meet these objectives

The Management Committee of the Centre consists of 7 women supported by an advisory panel. There is a membership scheme and this is open to women who are interested in furthering the work of the association and who have paid a one off subscription. Membership is also available to 'women only' incorporated or unincorporated associations that are interested in furthering the work of the centre and had paid an annual subscription. Membership is also open to men and other organisations.

The core services that the centre offers are:

- Pregnancy testing
- Information on contraception, sexual health advice and free condoms
- Emergency contraception
- Emotional support
- Free counselling
- Advice on health and welfare

Successes

Corby Women's Centre offers drop in time four days a week with emotional support, pregnancy testing, health information, baby changing facilities and children's play area available. Counselling appointments are available throughout the week with up to 25 sessions per week provided at the busiest times.

The Centre has some employed staff looking after various elements of the activities and services provided. These include a Centre Co-ordinator, and Emotional Support Co-ordinator and a Fundraising and Publicity Officer. Furthermore, 2 paid Counsellors (previously volunteer counsellors) provide support to women within the centre and they are supported by a Volunteer Counsellor. The Centre aims to recruit volunteers and provide them with support, training and development to be able to make a positive contribution to the work of the Centre and to empower the individuals themselves.

The Counselling Service operates through a screening process that enables quality counselling service to be provided taking into account the complex and varied needs of women seeking support.

There are currently two user groups within the centre. The Older Wiser Ladies (OWLS) group and a Craft group. The centre also offers free courses,

career and guidance advice and training workshops in conjunction with other agencies. It averages over 2000 visits per year with 90% of these being women.

Obstacles / difficulties encountered

Within Corby, some of the problems being faced include the high percentage of people with no qualifications, almost 40% and high unemployment rates amongst the under 35's. There are low rates of self-employment and high teenage pregnancy rates. The Centre faces difficulties in sometimes meeting demand for the services required, as it is only open on certain days and certain times.

Financing arrangements

As well as a grant from the National Lottery, the centre also receives a grant from Northamptonshire County Council and from the Health Improvement Programme (HIMP) which is linked to the National Health Service.

A co-ordinators post exists to support the Centre with the post holder working for 20 hours per week. Funding has been secured for general running costs and for training a budget is available to support the various training and development requirements identified within the Centre. Further income has been accessed through fundraising events and donations.

Contact details

www.corbywomenscentre.org.uk

Case Study 8

Name of project

Association FRATIA, Turin

Background and context

Turin's Porta Palazzo neighbourhood is an historic site, close to the heart of the City and home to one of Europe largest markets, with some 1000 stalls and 40,000 visitors a day. Residents from all over the City and from different backgrounds visit it regularly.

The area has taken on its own 'melting pot' culture with the influx of many other arrivals from other countries. This has created, in the older residents, feelings of uncertainty, safety and a sense of loss over their environment.

To combat this a local non-profit Committee, made up of public and private partners has been established to support the regeneration of the area and the communities that live within it.

Fratia Association was born in July 2003 with the aim to be a reference point for Romanians living with Turin without any kind of support.

Romanians are a growing community with Turin and statistic from 2002 show an almost 50/50 split between men and women however, 23% of the total population were one-parent families. Romanian women were more likely to be alone in their migration.

Objectives

The objectives for FRATIA are to support Romanian women to tackle problems that they face as a result of their migration status and to promote their social inclusion. These include:

- Employment
- Housing and shelter
- Legality of their status within the country
- Loneliness due to fact that they were alone in their migration
- Health, mental health and well being
- Separated children and families
- Trafficking of women

Actions undertaken to meet these objectives

FRATIA aims to promote the social inclusion of women by:

- Providing a guide to women of routes into employment

- Supporting access to vocational and administrative practice
- Providing a safe environment for women to seek support and to provide psychological support
- Engage in prevention type activities to stop the potential exploitation of women

Successes

The Association is very new but provides a source of much needed support to vulnerable women who are facing difficulties and potential hostility as a result of the immigration status.

The association has only been in existence a short period of time but its headquarters are to be re-located as it has outgrown its current location.

Many of the women supported by the programme have acquired new skills, such as language and work related skills.

The association has developed links with the Gate project and as such has links to the broader gender equality / social inclusion strategy that is being developed as part of the regeneration of the area.

Obstacles / difficulties encountered

The significant difficulties encountered by the project are a lack of resources needed to tackle the scale of the problems being encountered and the suspicion and mistrust about voluntary organisations and volunteering.

Issues of culture clashes, within and between communities, presents a difficulty as does dealing with parental and peer pressure.

The overall need and culture of associations presents an obstacle as they have no or low political priority.

Financing arrangements

The resources available to the association are generated through self-financing such as membership fees and from accessing project funding streams.

It relies on volunteers to do much of the work to support the existence and development of the association.

Contact details

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Case Study 9

Name of project

Soberbia Project, Toledo

Background and context

The project arises from studies on the situation from the textile sector in

Castilla la Mancha.

Over the last few years numerous jobs are had lost because of the disappearance of companies in the textile sector that are the source of significant employment of women.

They are companies that have their commercial capacity limited as they do not even control all the processes that are included in the preparation of the products that they produce. This causes a situation of weakness of the company and as a consequence affects the workforce and the numbers within the workforce. It particularly affects women as they represent a high number of the workforce employed within the sector.

This situation impact upon the quality of life of women and the feminine deprivation that they suffer in terms of rank, privileges and loss of capital.

Objectives

The purpose of the Soberbia project was to undertake studies on the textile market, the tendencies of the fashion industry and trade with a view to introduce into the market place designs of products that would be commercial viable and would complete in a competitive environment.

This approach would see the creation and implantation in the market of a clothes brand that reflected the local region and raised the profile of the area as a centre for textiles. As a consequence it would also seek to reverse the unemployment trends of women in the textile sector workforce and utilise the skills and experience of local women to promote a locally designed clothes brand.

Actions undertaken to meet these objectives

A study, setting out the issues and tendencies within the fashion industry has been made. Using the results of this research, a cabinet of experts in design has been created to determine the character of the preparation companies.

A sample book of accomplishment, setting out locally designed and produced creations has been carried out and it has been introduced into the market

through attendance at commercial fairs and other points of commercialization where the promotion of the project and the local brand can be exploited.

Successes

The brand image has been created and consolidated through initiatives since they have been the attendance to commercial fairs, the advertising introduction and of promotion through different channels.

Introduction of the brand in the market through own points of sale.

Local enterprises have been established or sustained, thereby supporting the local economy and the employment of women within the sector.

Case Study Example

Name of project

Shankhill Sure Start, Belfast

Background and context

Northern Ireland has a total population of 1.7 million and is made up of 566 Wards. The Greater Shankill Area covers 6 of these Wards: Ballysillan; Highfield; Glencairn; Crumlin; Shankill; Woodvale

The Greater Shankill Area has a population of 28,110 and of these 1,662 are children in the 0-4 age group. Based on the Noble indicators of deprivation all 6 Wards in the Greater Shankill Area are within the worst 15% of all wards in Northern Ireland (Crumlin Ward is actually ranked as the worst ward in the whole of Northern Ireland).

67% of the population have a gross income of less than £10,400, within the Shankill Ward only 16% have income of more than £10,400. 53% of children within Shankill Ward receive free school meals. Within the Greater Shankill area 65% of the population hold no formal qualifications, within the Crumlin Ward alone this rises to 75%, and only 0.9% of heads of household are educated to degree level. All 6 wards are in the worst 10% across Northern Ireland.

The need for Sure Start is that it has been shown that children growing up in poverty do less well across a range of indicators – health, education, employment, involvement in crime – than their better-off peers. The role of parents, particularly mothers, is paramount to ensuring the success of these programmes as they need to feel engaged for the length of the programme.

Objectives

Sure Start is a national programme targeted at preschool children and their families and focusing in areas of greatest need. It is designed to improve the social and emotional development and health and well-being of children. The programme aims to improve the ability to learn as well as strengthen families and communities of parents and their children.

Sure Start aims to provide better access to services and information (Health, Education and Family Support) and improve existing services for young children which have been of mixed quality and patchy in provision. Integrated support in the very early years can make a lasting difference to child outcomes.

- To increase the awareness of the importance of positive child/parent relationship for the child throughout their entire life.
- To enable parents to play a positive role in developing their children emotionally and socially.
- To increase all aspects of health for the children and parents of the Greater Shankill area.
- To maximise children's life opportunities by increasing their aptitude and motivation to continue learning when they progress to the formal education system.
- To work in partnership with statutory, private, voluntary and community sectors in a way that effectively achieves best usage of expertise and resources thus offering comprehensive family support services.

Actions undertaken to meet these objectives

- The project works out of three Family Centres. Each Centre has a team of three Family Support Workers and a Centre Administrator. We also have the service of a Health Visitor on a part-time basis, support

from Mencap (5 hours/week) and NICMA (10 hours/week). The Project is headed by a Project Coordinator and has a total staff of 18.

- Service users come from the Greater Shankill area. Referrals come from a variety of sources – families identified as requiring extra support by Social Workers, GP's, Health Visitors, self-referrals and through word-of-mouth.
- The project is managed by a Management Committee made up of stakeholder agencies, local community organisations and parents.
- Partners include: NSPCC, BELB, BRO, N&WBHSS Trust, NICMA, Life Pregnancy Care Service, GSP and Mencap.

Successes

The number of families registered with project has increased from 197 – 371 between April 2003 and June 2004 with the number of home visits being 510 per quarter and the number of base visits being 152 per quarter.

• Number of users:	Adults	Children
• Alessie Centre:	535	387
• Hannah Centre:	825	671
• Martin Centre:	451	412

Regional Evaluation of 23 Sure Start projects just completed August 2004. All programmes delivered by Shankill Sure Start are evaluated in-house – quantitatively and qualitatively and content and delivery of subsequent programmes are informed by these. Anecdotal evidence suggests that children coming through Sure Start programmes are more advanced in terms of social skills, speech and language acquisition.

Obstacles / difficulties encountered

The following initiatives have been developed to overcome some of the difficulties and obstacles that have been encountered. These have been developed following needs analysis.

- Post Natal Depression Support Group
- Disability Support Group
- Anxiety Workshops

- Speech and Language Development programme
- 'Handling Children's Behaviour' programme

Sure Start has also taken account of lessons learnt and reflected on the importance of those early years in a child's development and the difference early interventions can make. Involving parents and listening to what parents are saying, providing services parents want and being flexible are important to preventing obstacles and difficulties arising. Setting a realistic budget, taking time and getting the figures right. Furthermore, the importance of working in partnership with very different organisations, building positive relationships is crucial and vital to the success of the Project.

Financing arrangements

Shankill Sure Start is currently funded until March 2006 and costs approximately £374,000/annum.

Contact details

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Obstacles / difficulties encountered

The formation in enterprise management of the companies needs to be improved.

The preparation factories have very high a professional qualification, but very little diversity. They specialize in certain tasks of production, what it limits the ability to monopolize different products to them and this in turn impacts upon the loss of the autonomy in its strategies.

The appearance in the product market coming from the outside, that it has supposed a decrease of the opportunity of business of the companies which also causes a lack of financing and not investment in the same ones and the fact that this requires a continuous adaptation of the positioning in the market.

The loss of business for the companies supposes less autonomy and the reasons why they have more problems to confront a change in its enterprise strategies.

Financing arrangements

With own funds, in the great majority of cases.

Contact details

Juan Gualda Navas. President of INDIC
Remedios Cerdeño Moreno. Coordinator of the project.
Marta Manzano Díaz : Responsible person for marketing and publicity.
Luisa Argudo Belloso: Responsible person for design

Latent Potential Project

Case Study Example

Name of project

Al-Nisa Association, Northern Ireland