

Municipal partnerships for a more sustainable and democratic world

A municipal partnership is an international form of cooperation between a Swedish municipality or region and an international counterpart. The ultimate aim of the partnership is to strengthen democracy at local level. The two partners share a challenge that they will tackle through cooperation, but based on their own local environment and its conditions. Swedish municipalities, regions and regional associations of municipalities can apply for a municipal partnership with one of the selected partner countries*.



Ngoza Mafunase Ndhlovu. Photo: Shannon Lövgren

Examples of partnerships

Through their partnership, **Lusaka in Zambia and the City of Malmö** have found new ways to empower young people in local environmental issues. Based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, they have developed a digital toolkit that makes it easier for other municipalities to involve young people in local environmental and climate issues.

Växjö municipality and An Giang in Vietnam have inspired each other to find new solutions through a partnership project on water issues. Their cooperation has led to the development of democratic processes on technical issues and has enabled employees to reflect on their own democratic contribution.

*For current partner countries, see icld.se/kp

How?

The partnership is coordinated by a steering group made up of politicians from the majority and opposition parties and senior officials from both sides of the partnership. The partnership initiates projects running between 1-3 years and focusing on developing the organisational capacity of municipalities and providing mutual benefit on a local issue. The partners meet at least twice a year and this is done with exchange visits to each other's municipalities.

Being part of a municipal partnership does not entail any additional costs for the Swedish partner. The ICLD supports and finances municipal partnerships via funds from Sida, The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. Expenses for cooperation as well as labour costs for participants from Swedish municipalities and regions are reimbursed. The international partner contributes with its working time.



Young people were involved throughout the project. On the photo are Malmö and Lusaka project leaders and local youth representatives during a radio workshop in Lusaka.



Networking for more effective cooperation

To improve the exchange of ideas and the support available within the municipal partnerships, ICLD has designed a new working model, so-called "Networks", for multiple partnerships receiving enhanced support from ICLD within a similar thematic area. All partnerships in the network start their work at the same time and work on their projects side by side over four years.



By starting their projects at the same time and working on similar topics in the same region of the world, the municipalities /regions have the opportunity for a broader exchange of experience with each other, as well as greater support from ICLD to achieve good results.

The network has a project coordinator from ICLD who acts as a contact person for the partnerships and a support in the planning and implementation of activities. A research advisor is connected to the network as well as a group of experts in the field as the topics of the partnerships. The municipalities are also offered support to help them with external and internal communication.

At present, there are networks for human rights, equitable health, equality and climate.

More information

Are you interested in participating in a municipal partnership or would you like to know more? Please contact us by email: partnership@icld.se
There is also more information available on our website.

 Please follow us on social media.

Municipal partnerships contribute to achieving the Global Goals

ICLD works with municipalities and regions, offering support and resources to help them achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, SDG, in practice through municipal partnerships.

For examples, ICLD introduce tools for working with the SDG's and different strategies for implementing and evaluating Agenda 2030 that can support participants to contribute to their mission as leaders.



Photo: ICLD

About the ICLD

The work of the International Centre for Local Democracy (ICLD) aims to promote local democracy development and to support democratic participation and change at the local level.

Our work builds on the experience of Swedish municipalities and regions and on the research and knowledge development that exists in an international perspective. The ICLD is a non-profit organisation with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, SALAR, as its principal. Our activities are funded by Sida. We employ some 25 people and our head office is in Visby.