v.1.0

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Cross-cultural partnership (CCP)

Short presentation

“In Sweden we focus on the information in the communication between people, in my country in Africa we focus on the relation.”

Testimony from Liberia

“Someone can be learnt but not educated, and someone can be educated but not learnt.”

Testimony from Uganda

“In Sweden we trust each other but we do not pay attention, which is different from what I have seen in many countries in Africa.”

Testimony from Sweden

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# The need

It is not always easy to understand another culture, especially if we never visited the other country. Even though it is not possible to make general statements of populations, as each population contain all factors, the CCP coaches have come to reflect over general difference in cultures. It is acknowledged that the differences are not between continents but between countries or rather between ethnical groups. It is obvious to the CCP coaches that each child is born the same. It is the living conditions that put a mark on a population and that creates differences between people. There is never a reason or even the right for anyone to be judgmental towards other people or cultures, as we never walked in the other person’s shoes. Not being judgmental is different from not being aware about differences though.

Each culture and each Institution has its own values and ways of doing things, and for any successful partnership the awareness and the management of the differences are key. Thus, before we, as an international partners start working with our new collaborators, we have to understand what they want from the partnership, so that whatever happens will not be strange to us.; whether we for example put effort in designing a project, investing money, start working in the country, or start a new business. Some people have experience and deep understanding of more than one culture and these people can share their knowledge with those who have less experience. The CCP is a platform for such sharing. We offer workshops and coaching.

The aim with the Cross-cultural partnership (CCP) awareness raising is to increase knowledge and understanding, meet needs, impose empowerment and respect, and thus providing awareness and avoid misunderstanding. The strategy of the programme is to capture the good and quality values from each partner and let them strengthen the collaboration and even the lives of the collaborators, their families and possibly their countries. Thus transparency, accountability, togetherness, smiling, laughing, care, connection between people, honesty, trust, long-term planning, clear and firm structures are values collected from different cultures. We, the CCP coaches, believe that the CCP can make people become bolder and less shy. The CCP programme is a very strong stepping-stone and it is a powerful bridge. It can be noted that the CCP programmes does not go deep into religion or family relations as the founders consider that these topics to be too strong for this tool to handle.

# Tools

The work is arranged as workshops, where different scenarios are discussed, and contacts are established, or as coaching of actual partnerships. The workshops and coaching are structures around: framing a partnership, awareness of different conditions and learning from testimonies.

## Framing a partnership

### Types of partnership

Our workshops address:
scientific research collaboration, social enterprising, livelihood improvement programmes and integration.

### Stages in a partnership

It is proposed by the CCP coaches that International collaboration can be structured into five different phases; the foundation, the formulation, the sustainment, the conclusion and the follow-up. These phases are affected by a variety of factors, which will be reflected on.

### Roles and responsibilities

According to the CCP coaches, successful international collaboration is achieved when each partner contributes with her best capacity, skill and knowledge to the programme.

### Core values and expectations

We have to make the necessary effort to be clear about what we expect from the partnership as well as our core values. In the Foundation stage of a new partnership as well as during the annual (or bi-annual if the progress is extensive) evaluation planning, the partners may want to take time and review their views on, and experiences of, core values and expectations.

One exercise offered is when both sides scores (1-5) how far according to their own subjective view, their own culture reaches a set of core values as well as according to their own subjective view, they think that the partner’s culture reaches. The material is then compared; both per partner where the expected own scoring is compared with the expected partners values as well as comparing between the partners their own and the expected partners.

### Structure and ethics

The powerful tools for success are for example truth, trust, harmony, equity, knowledge sharing, long-term planning, consequence analysis and firm structures, and it is the powerful tools of success, that we have to target and to focus on. The truth is, and HR&S and GPS is very firm on this, successful programmes, businesses, careers or lifestyles, are not about money. Money is a tool only, but it is s necessary tool. It is a fragile tool even, that has to be handled with caution.

## Awareness of Conditions

Living and working conditions are compared and reflected on, including:

Social security systems, social attention, ethics, leadership styles and master suppression techniques.

## Testimonies, experiences and opinions

In an effort to deepen the understanding between cultures the CCP programmes compiles testimonies from individuals with experience from cross-cultural partnership. The testimonies are structured by country, so that persons form one country share what they have experiences when working with other countries in general. The contributors have kindly agreed to share from their experiences related to cross-cultural partnership, in a wide perspective. The statements have been compiled and sorted by country, without stating the name of the person contributing. We have chosen not to mention names, to avoid testimonies to be linked with anyone, and any related possible confusion.