

# Swedish Leadership for Sustainable Development

Swedish Leadership for Sustainable Development is a network consisting of over 20 Swedish or Swedish rooted companies, selected expert organisations, a Development Finance Institution and a Development Cooperation Agency. Together they work to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals and demonstrate leadership for sustainable global development by integrating social, environmental and economic sustainability into their business models and core operations.

## **WHAT IS SWEDISH LEADERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

On May 13 2013, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) initiated a meeting together with Swedish business leaders, with the purpose of identifying challenges and opportunities related to sustainable development, poverty reduction and corporate responsibility. The meeting resulted in the forming of a network, Swedish Leadership for Sustainable Development, to ensure a continued channel for dialogue, a forum for knowledge exchange and a platform for concrete collaborative projects and initiatives.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), adopted by the UN in September 2015, emphasize the need for such joint action and collaboration between different actors and highlight the importance of private sector involvement in the development agenda. As a response to this, the members of Swedish Leadership for Sustainable Development signed a Joint Commitment, explaining how they plan to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs by making sustainable development an integral part of their core operations and business models.

The network focuses on the following selected areas;

- Systematically reducing environmental impact and increasing efficient resource use.
- Creating decent jobs and development opportunities, along the supply chain.
- Fighting corruption and unethical business practices in the countries of operation.

The promotion of gender equality in all operations is considered a key aspect in achieving desired positive impacts, as is information and communication technologies and innovative financial solutions.

Realizing that the areas mentioned above affect the business sector as well as development cooperation, opens up a window of opportunity for joint solutions and collaboration. By strengthening inclusive business practices, leading by example and encouraging innovative partnerships, locally and internationally, Swedish Leadership for Sustainable Development wants to be a catalytic driving force to promote positive change.

## **WHY SWEDISH LEADERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

The importance of private sector engagement for sustainable global development has become widely recognized, in Sweden as well as globally. Companies have great potential to address major challenges such as human rights abuse, unemployment, corruption, child labour, gender inequality and negative effects on

the environment. Effective cross-sectorial partnerships targeting these challenges are therefore needed. Sida is working actively to promote this through different models for collaboration with the private sector with a strong belief that advocacy and global dialogue are essential factors for successful outcomes.

## WHO IS PARTICIPATING

Companies participating in Swedish Leadership for Sustainable Development represent a broad spectrum of the business sector, including actors in telecom, transport, textile, food and health. Some have production in, or sourcing from developing countries while others are dependent on low- and middle income country markets for their investments and growth. What they all share however, is the understanding that the world is changing rapidly, causing a range of new and complex challenges to tackle as well as opportunities to grasp.

### Members of Swedish Leadership for Sustainable Development

Atlas Copco AB, Axel Johnson AB, Elekta AB, Ericsson AB, Företagarna AB, H&M Hennes & Mauritz AB, ICA Gruppen AB, IKEA, Indiska Magasinet AB, Lindex AB, Löfbergs Lila AB, Ratos AB, Sandvik AB, Scania AB, Skandinaviska Enskilda Banken AB, SPP Liv Fondförsäkring AB, Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), Stockholm Resilience Center (SRC), Sida, Swedfund AB, Systembolaget AB, Tele2 AB, Tetra Laval Group, Unilever, Volvo Group

## HOW WILL SWEDISH LEADERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ACHIEVE ITS OBJECTIVES

Swedish Leadership for Sustainable Development will achieve its objectives by establishing and maintaining a platform for collaboration between business and development cooperation. The project has led to concrete action within the focus areas listed above. Through the network, Swedish industry commits additional resources to tackle a number of development challenges in countries where Swedish development cooperation is active. Additionally, the initiative systematizes and focuses the collaboration between Sida and Swedish business, turning important dialogue into practical examples, demonstrating Sida as a relevant partner to the business community, and vice versa.

Sida's existing models for collaboration with the private sector, such as Public Private Development Partnerships and models for innovative financing are key instruments in these efforts. Swedish Leadership for Sustainable Development encourages new ideas and ways of partnering, based on the different capabilities and expertise of the network participants. While incorporating technical solutions and innovation in core business practices and securing the engagement of top-management, the participating companies strive to develop quality products and services, not only of commercial value, but with significant positive impact on societies and people throughout their value chains.

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information, please visit [www.sida.se/swedishleadership](http://www.sida.se/swedishleadership).

For questions regarding Swedish Leadership for Sustainable Development, please contact us at [sleaders@sida.se](mailto:sleaders@sida.se)