

## Results of Working Day with Municipality Leaders

Leaders of Municipality service provision institutions conducted a half day workshop. The day began with a lecture and discussion regarding Cultural Competence Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The short lecture was delivered with the purpose of targeting the concept for policy making and what and inclusive community is based on. The core concepts behind inclusion and ethos for service provision were weaved into the lecture. The aim of beginning the workshop with this lecture was to create a shared understanding of what inclusion is and what it is not in addition to hopefully inspiring leaders to utilize the concepts and actions provided in the lecture to analyze their roles in stimulating inclusion in the services they provide and as employers.

In attendance were the Directors from the Preschool, Primary School, Music School, and the Care Home for the elderly. In addition, the Municipality Mayor, the Fire Chief and the Chief Officer for Community Health and Youth services.

Attached are the documents and presentations used for the workshop. The workshop was divided into three distinct actions.

1. SWOT analysis of the three function areas leaders in the municipality are primarily responsible for
  - a. Service Provision
  - b. Public Authority
  - c. Employers
2. Generation of actions based on SWOT analysis conclusions
3. Create a shared Vision statement from all participants

Not all participants completed the workshop two left early. Leaders worked in small groups of 2-3 to stimulate discussion and hopefully to create a shared sense for what leaders are encountering in their institutions in regard to inclusion and diversity issues in addition to discourse about how they are working with stimulating inclusive environments and or services.

## Results of SWOT Analysis

I would like to note here that the workshop was conducted in Icelandic this report is translated for the English-Speaking Council. The results are not broken down in accordance with each institution to protect any privacy issues institution leaders might have for example in regard to employees or customers in service.

### Institution – Services

I only received results for this analysis from one of the groups

#### **Strengths:**

- Usually good flow of information
- Everyone has access to the institution
- Tolerance in regard to staff of foreign origin
- Flexibility
- Short channels of communication and quick responses (usually)

#### **Weaknesses:**

- Follow up is often “forgotten”
- People can become isolated

**Threats:**

- That more people will be isolated
- That people don’t see the purpose of “belonging” to a community
- People work a lot and “wear a lot of hats”

**Opportunities:**

- Increased information flows between institution leaders
- Meeting systematically with institution leaders and political leaders

Municipality as an Authority:

I received answers from all three groups for this portion of the analysis.

**Strengths:**

- Effective support from municipality
- Diversity in education and events
- Diverse staff
- Small class sizes in school (number of students in each class)
- Diverse residents
- Size of community – personal service provision
- Pretty good information flow
- We are focused on immigrant affairs
- Diverse perspectives
- Language
- Education
- Experience
- Social Capacity

**Weaknesses:**

- Language
- Education
- Communication between different groups
- Small community difficult to get professionals / specialists or people in general
- Migrant workers (come and go)
- We need more to show an interest and partake in community life

**Threats:**

- Danger of language or educational challenges
- Fast paced changes
- Formation of cliques (segregated groups) or isolation
- English very prominent in communication and environment
- Need knowledge about how to teach Icelandic as a second language
- Prejudice

- Lack of understanding
- Financing (budget)
- Language

#### **Opportunities:**

- Use English-Speaking Council to discover skills and abilities
- New technology
- Municipality Management
- Educated immigrants – use their capacity
- English-Speaking council
- Language Policy
- Create good living conditions for families so they want to reside here.
- Diverse backgrounds
- Small community

#### Municipality as Employer:

##### **Strengths:**

- Tolerance within staff as an entirety
- Understanding of political representatives
- Collaboration between school levels
- We are small institutions
- We have a desire to deal with issues
- Diverse residents
- Language abilities
- Informed people
- Desire for diversity

##### **Weaknesses:**

- Inner prejudices
- Shortage of information flow
- Lack of knowledge about culture
- Need to activate Icelandic instruction and encouragement for language learning
- Healthcare services
- Housing shortage
- We are too few
- Little time for human resource obligations
- Difficult to activate people
- People come to work a lot
- Language abilities

##### **Threats:**

- Cultural divisions
- Misunderstandings
- Migrant workers – come to work a lot give little to community and do not lean Icelandic
- Unclear vision for the future
- Don't take a stand

- Movement of people
- Language
- Housing
- People involved in too many other things (additional work or owning a business)
- Distance from other municipalities

#### **Opportunities:**

- Use people's talents (skills) better
- Improve healthcare services
- Support in services within the municipality
- Opportunity to utilize employee capacity and knowledge better
- Increase population
- Economic growth
- Opportunity to educate

#### **Direct Actions**

Participants were given time to create direct actions they could support in and take ownership of implementing in collaboration with the English-Speaking council. I received three actions from the entirety of the group. At this point discussion in the workshop turned towards Icelandic language learning and support. Near 40 minutes of time was spent discussing current events and discourse within Vík and in Iceland in general regarding the role of Icelandic in relation to immigrant affairs and in part related to inclusion and how to promote active participation between native speakers and second language learners (e.g. immigrants). I believe this affected and turned the meeting from holistic inclusion and responsibilities of institution leaders in regard to responsibilities other than Icelandic as the actions that were written all focused-on Icelandic in one way or another.

Following are the three actions from leaders. The format for action creation was for participants to utilize their ideas in the SWOT analysis to create an action with a determined goal in mind, allowing us to measure progress, and use the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to help determine what we should do better, do more often, stop doing, do less of or begin doing in order to ensure the action has lasting effects.

1. Action for Municipality as Authority and Service: Icelandic lessons in general conversation at skill level (B1) for adults and children
  - a. Goal: To get families with children and others to attend lessons after work and receive instruction for parents to learn while children are also learning with Icelandic teachers. Then both groups become educated individuals.
  - b. Stop doing: Having courses that are not suitable times for families with children and courses that are visible yet unattainable.
  - c. Continue to: Encourage and celebrate our diverse community where everyone is welcome.
  - d. Do more of: Create spaces that can be accessible for instruction (Icelandic) and information
  - e. Start doing: Get financing and a space to set up a course with measurable outcomes (B1 B2 level Icelandic) and turn in a report to advertise and ensure continued funding.

2. Action undefined as to role Municipality: Icelandic instruction in written language for adults and children (b2)
  - a. Goal: same idea as above action thinking of this as continuance of action 1.
3. Action undefined as to role of Municipality: Turn around development regarding migrant workers that incurs here in Vík.
  - a. Goal: Contribute to permanent residence and participation for the majority of residents in the community.
  - b. Continue to: Contribute to increased Icelandic skills
  - c. Do more of: Empower immigrants, use their knowledge and capacity.

### Vision Statement:

For the final action of the workshop participants were responsible for working together to create a vision statement for the English-Speaking Council. The idea behind having them create a vision statement for this council to continue to work with, at the minimum reflect upon, was that this would be the vision of what their roles as community leaders and responsible parties for delivering services and information to residents of all backgrounds. If community leaders believe the community of Vík in 2032 will be like this vision statement defines, then they had a part in making it happen.

***“Mýrdaslhreppur is a safe and reliable harbor for everyone, where culture, diverse services, and work opportunities along with strong infrastructure blossom”.***

### Conclusions:

The results of this workshop with leaders provides the English-Speaking council with further data and ideas regarding the important views of community leaders responsible for stimulating inclusion. These are the heads of institutions that will be responsible for implementing the inclusion plan we devise. While there are a number of very insightful ideas and testimonials there are also in my opinion a great number of issues that are lacking. For example, there are no testimonials regarding dissemination of information regarding services, no direct call to action regarding adjustments to services to accommodate the needs of diverse students and families beyond Icelandic, no mention of needs of employees for example diversity and cultural competence training which will strengthen staff abilities in delivering inclusive services and approaching issues with equity and fairness where diversity is involved. Concerns about Icelandic were mentioned but not in the sense of municipality as an employer, more community-based projects which a municipality can support, encourage and create a type of grant for but cannot essentially be responsible for teaching an entire community Icelandic. There was also little mention of additional resources needed to meet challenges. I encourage the members of this council to reflect upon what is defined in the SWOT analysis, take together any questions or concerns or ideas that come to you. We can work further with this data to create meaningful actions and goals based on what we have learned here.

### Attachments:

- Documents and instructions used for SWOT Analysis, Action Creation, and Collaborative Vision Statement.
- Original documents in Icelandic filled out by participants
- Slides explaining workshop process.