

Original Paper

Transformation of Swedish CSOs Using the Strengths of Purpose and Empathy

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Abstract

Civil society organizations in Sweden are facing new challenges and opportunities in a rapidly changing context. Demographical changes, a new political climate and a broad professionalization of the sector demand a transformational shift in business. In the project Tailwind, four leading CSOs in Sweden develop new strategies and policies to navigate the new landscape. The project explores the question of how these organizations will have to transform to be able to thrive in the future. Using positive psychology and appreciative inquiry as a method for this piece of research, key insights found include: the CSOs need to draw on the strengths of the organization when strategically developing the operations, to build their operations on empathic meetings with the target group, and to step up to claim an expert position in the public eye, sharing knowledge and insight with decision-makers about the needs of the target group.

Keywords

transformation, social work, positive psychology, appreciative inquiry, welfare systems, inclusion, inter-business, empathy, purpose, CSO, Sweden, social exclusion

1. Introduction

1.1 The Swedish Welfare System—A Short Introduction of a Complex Structure

Bo Rothstein describes the Swedish state as, “large public sectors ... big on public services, have lots of regulations, high levels of taxation and large bureaucracies which, moreover, have lots of discretion in how to apply laws and policies” (Rothstein, 2008). According to government sources, almost 10 percent of Swedes work in the public sector (Regeringen, 2016), and even though the size and efficiency of the social sector in Sweden has changed over time, it remains a built-out system that is based on a national insurance policy and is a compulsory regime. It provides minimum guaranteed

benefits and covers loss of income if a resident is sick or unable to work for any other reason. Any person who has his or her real domicile in the country is considered a resident, and therefore eligible for support. The Social Security system in Sweden is financed from taxation on earnings-based incomes from employees and self-employed alike, as well as some state budget additions to pensions (European Union, 2013). The Swedish welfare system built on the ethical and social doctrine that implies that no one should be left to the help of friends and family in times of need—but to be provided security for our most basic needs from the state that has the highest quality—to compete with the market initiatives (Zetterberg, 2004). Still, people from many walks of life have been falling through the cracks of the Swedish welfare system. Several organizations work closely with these people on the outside to ensure that their rights are being acknowledged and that they come closer to the benefits of the mainstream lifestyle. It is difficult for an individual to make her way into the system without support, especially if she is an outcast in any way. The Swedish system is in part built on a street-level bureaucracy—meaning that the people that are in contact with the social services are being investigated by the same official that decides on what kind of support each person is entitled. This process is making it difficult to govern from higher levels of the bureaucracy, but also more difficult for the individual herself to appeal against the government itself—unlike other Anglo-Saxon countries where a court handles appeals (Zetterberg, 2004). Also, new social and global problems and demographics enable new groups being left outside, as well as new problems, arise for the welfare system. The large and complex bureaucracy of the state need CSOs, or Civil Society Organizations, to support their work—and meet the needs of the people in acute situations like homelessness, abuse, and unemployment.

1.2 The CSO's in Sweden and Their Historical Context

According to the UN, the terminology “CSO” includes: “a wider variety of organizations engaged in development work. CSOs comprise the full range of formal and informal organizations within civil society: NGOs, community-based organizations (CBOs), indigenous peoples’ organizations (IPOs), academia, journalist associations, faith-based organizations, trade unions, and trade associations, for example. Civil society constitutes the third sector, existing alongside and interacting with the state and market” (UNDP, 2006).

There is a vast group of Swedish organizations that conduct international work to protect the rights of people and the planet everywhere. The Swedes are engaged, and according to Statistics Sweden approximately 920 000 people were members of a humanitarian relief organization, peace organization or a similar international agency—and about 200 000 of these were active members (SCB, 2011). Sweden is known to have been somewhat of a superpower in the humanitarian aid- field—during 2016 the Swedish International Development Authority gave 41.6 billion SEK to international development projects (SIDA, 2018). This lands Sweden the runner-up place of countries worldwide on the Center for Global Development list—Commitment for Development Index (CfD, 2018). Also, as Sweden is a nation with a stable welfare state and a good reputation on the country’s work on equality and rights

both locally and globally—the need for civil society organizations working with social exclusion in Sweden would seem low. On the contrary, civil society organization in the Nordic region as a whole has historically stood out as very extensive and well-organized. They have had a high degree of association and a high democratic organization. However, in recent years, these factors have decreased in civil society organizations in Sweden—together with membership rates and activity in most associations. This trend could be explained by the increased media supply, the public sector's expansion and takeover, and a general trend of individualization in Sweden, as well as structures in the organizations themselves. Activities are increasingly taken care of by paid staff rather than volunteers, and members are seen as consumers more so than co-creators (Amnå et al., 2003). The CSO sphere is a broad one in Sweden as well as everywhere else—ranging from smaller associations interested in discussing a specific topic to huge ones supporting hundreds of people fulfill their basic needs—daily, providing food, shelter or support. Still, the negative trend of engagement on different levels is affecting all categories of organizations. The professionalization of the CSO sphere in Sweden seems to be both a significant need to turn a declining trend of engagement, but also a problem in itself. This implies needs to re-define professionalization—and look at the strengths that define the sector to create momentum around them—rather than to adapt the organizations to market logic.

1.3 Changing Pre-dispositions for Social Work in Sweden

Sweden, as well as many other European countries, are finding themselves in a changing landscape of social problems. The demographics of the groups who are being left outside of society are turning out different than previous experiences—which has a direct impact on the CSOs and government working to support them. The experience and assumptions about Swedish society and its workings are being questioned by this new development—for example:

- Women with children are a group on the rise in the Swedish homelessness statistics, and 20 percent of the homeless don't have any other needs other than to maintain a residence. Traditionally homelessness has been connected to substance abuse, which is not true for this new group shown in the statistics—reflecting the problems on the Swedish housing market (Socialstyrelsen, 2017).
- As unemployment statistics are declining in Sweden and sums at 6.7 percent, there is a clear difference between the opportunities of native Swedes versus immigrants on the job market. The unemployment statistics for 2017 show a 4.4 percent unemployment rate for the first category and 15.3 percent for the latter—reflecting the integration challenges (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2018).
- The development of Swedish households' economic standards has been positive, and since 2005, the real economic standard has increased by 35 percent. However, at the same time, income differentials have gradually increased during the period. The Gini coefficient (a measurement to highlight differences in income) was 0.271 in 2005, 0.297 in 2010 and 0.320 in 2016, which is the highest record since the measurements started (SCB, 2018). This places Sweden as the country in the OECD region with the fastest-growing differences in income—which has increased one third between 1985 and the early 2010s (OECD, 2015).

This new context demands new ways of working from both the public sector and civil society organizations alike. At the same time, many of the CSOs working directly with the target group that is exposed to the social problems in Sweden are facing a generational shift—and therefore also a pressing need to find new ways forward.

1.4 The Project: Tailwind

Stenbeck's Stiftelse, a family foundation in Sweden, started the project Tailwind together with Inter Business Initiative as a way to develop traditional social work organizations in Sweden for a new generation of impact. In a rapidly changing world, where the market and context for social work are changing, there is a gap widening for the traditional social work organizations in Sweden. They are facing a generational shift—an aging staff pool, mainstream digitization processes, new target groups with a changing demographic and stricter demands on communication, impact reporting and time-consuming applications from all stakeholders. Their organizations are experts at working directly with the target group—providing food, shelter and a social meeting, but they lack the capabilities needed to build a professional organization geared for the future. Furthermore, to be able to thrive in the new setting the organizations need support to transform themselves, find new ways of financing, communicating and measure their impact on their stakeholders. At the same time, these traditional social work organizations have first-hand knowledge of the life situation and challenge facing a group in Swedish society, which most people know only as statistics. This knowledge, together with the trust built by continuous support for this group, and the practical development of interventions are values that will be lost to society if the CSOs are not able to transform to meet the future. Stenbeck's Stiftelse and Inter Business Initiative started the project Tailwind in response to this need in 2017. Four organizations were chosen to participate. They are spread across Sweden and have different profiles but are all working with the people farthest from society – the homeless, EU-migrants, people in substance abuse, and young people in the NEET category (Neither Employment, Education or Training). The organizations are well established in their respective local society, the youngest organization being twenty years old. Through the project, the organizations received funding (a sum ranging between 40 000 € per year to 90 000 € per year depending on the different organizational needs), strategic support and an organized network within the group. Most organizations used the funds to hire new staff responsible for the transformational journey they needed to embark upon. Inter Business Initiative is a knowledge lab working with a holistic approach to sustainable business development—where purpose, empathy, systems approach and transformation are key competencies when developing sustainable structures (Hallin et al., 2016). Inter Business Initiative coordinated the program and these competencies have been at the core of the support that the organizations have received—especially in terms of the strategic support and network. The ultimate goal of the project is to enable a strategic transformation of these organizations. Their contribution to society is massive, and their in-depth knowledge about the target group, the Swedish welfare system and possible solutions for inclusion and democracy is essential to carry on to the next generation. The organizations that participated were:

- **Convictus**, an organization working at several locations in Stockholm with shelters and daily activities for the homeless, drug-addicted and the Roma community. They also host a health center for the people that have left life on the streets and are re acclimatizing back into society.
- **Musktörerna In Rågsved**, an organization that works in the suburb Rågsved, Stockholm, to guide and lead people outside of society in their contacts with the complex Swedish welfare systems. As Musktörerna has seen a change in demographics in their area, they are now supporting young immigrant persons to join society as well as the traditional group of homeless people and drug-dependent target group.
- **Räddningsmissionen**, an old organization working in Gothenburg with the homeless and addicted. They have worked extensively with the Roma group in Sweden and are providing an extensive range of support structures for the group. In Tailwind, their work with the Roma group is the department receiving funding and strategic support.
- **Öppen Gemenskap** is an organization working in Umeå based on a Christian foundation they are hosting a women's shelter, a daily activity center for the homeless and lonely, and are running a night shelter for people in acute homelessness as well.

2. Method

2.1 Research Goal

Our purpose with the research that we have conducted together within the project is to shine a light on the changing context for the traditional social work organizations in Sweden and gather learnings on how they can transform to navigate a new reality in the coming years. This information is imperative as their work presents an essential part of the social security net in Sweden, with many people the farthest outskirts of society depending on them for their basic needs. We want to find and present general learnings from our group—and see how these could be understood and embraced by other organizations as well. To achieve this, we have chosen a structure that enabled a discussion that drives towards opportunity, development and future needs—which is our focus in this piece of research.

2.2 Positive Psychology

Positive psychology is the study of character strengths inherent in human nature, designed by Martin Seligman because of his notion that psychology had been neglecting the majority of people in society who are thriving and self-fulfilling individuals (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Seligman writes that the field of psychology has during the previous decades been narrowing in on the matter of prevention of pathology in mind. However, according to Seligman, it is sounder to have a strength-based approach and to look at the structures and traits that enable well-being in humans or organizations (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). By harnessing specific strengths such as creativity, curiosity, love, and perseverance to name a few, one can minimize the risk of developing a mental illness or undesirable behavior. In the 55th issue of the American Psychologist journal, the authors of each chapter in the issue write about their perspective on what constitutes positive psychology

(Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). As Seligman noted during his TED-talk (Ted Talk, 2004), positive psychology should not be seen as “happyology” but rather as a valid and efficient way of offering treatment to people in need of psychological help. Measurements have been designed to look at the various strengths, of which the VIA character strength test, crafted by Seligman and colleagues (VIA, 2018) is the most prominent as it lists the client of inquiry among the twenty-four various character strengths and also lists the signature strengths of the client performing the test. By applying character strengths beyond individual subjects such as on cities or organizations instead of subjective clients, the result becomes far more extraordinary. Such results have occurred in different studies of how character strengths work in practice on not only individual subjects, but also geographical areas which are inhabited by subjects. The well-being of people in an organization seems to strengthen the organization as a whole and, beyond only individual effects (Rentfrow, 2015).

2.3 Appreciative Inquiry

Designed by David Cooperrider, the method of appreciative inquiry (A.I) has since the 1980s had a significant impact on how action researchers gather data. Because of the interpretable approach that one can have when using A.I, Cooperrider refrained from defining the method since he thought of A.I as a philosophy rather than an actual technique when designing it. Positive psychology influenced the method (Satinder, 2017, p. 136). The method of gathering appreciative data is a way of enhancing, in this case, organizations on the premise of what works within an organization rather than that which doesn't work in the organization (Bushe, 2011). Today, the A.I method is widely accepted as an efficient way of generating data on how organizations function. The humble origin of A.I began with Cooperrider being asked to perform an inquiry of how to develop an organization further. When engaging this project with colleagues they found themselves in a frustrating situation regarding their inquiry of organizational development, and quarrel among Cooperrider and his colleagues manifested because of the frustration of being stuck. One of the researchers, Suresh Srivastava, asked if it could be that the frustration and annoyance they were experiencing within their group was, in fact, a result of their approach to the matter and that the fault lied in the questions they were asking in their inquiry. That is where A.I took its first steps as Cooperrider himself had already pondered the possibility of the inquiry method and organizational design (Bushe, 2012). Was it possible that the fault lay in the approach rather than the object of inquiry?

Further developing the theory of appreciative inquiry during the 1990s as an innovative way of approaching inquiry, the field of organizational development was designed. Action researchers designed a method known today as the 4D-model to develop further the theory of A.I. (Dhiman, 2017, p. 149). The 4D model has since become the practice of how one conducts an appreciative inquiry into organizational design.

- **Discovery:** Discover the organization's positive capacity. What gives life to the organization and allows it to function at its best?
- **Dream:** A visualization of the organization's future in line with its true purpose.

- **Design:** Cooperrider called it “Provocative proposals”. A manifestation of the dream into reality by using creativity to further develop the positive and best parts of the organization.
- **Delivery/Destiny:** This stage emphasizes the implementation of change, making people commit the aspirations they want to achieve (Cram, 2010).

A.I is a theory of how to construct organizations around their functional parts rather than approaching, or rather acknowledging, occurrences within the organizations that do not work. Instead A.I assumes that all systems have the potential to further develop productive and influential positive outcomes for themselves by looking inwards and that by asking the right engaging questions one can find precisely what it is that sufficiently works and further develop that (Satinder, 2017, p. 138). It is a theory within the field of action research that allows the researcher to have a holistic approach to her inquiry. Holistic because it involves the whole system it is researching by using the 4D model (Satinder, 2017, p. 137). Because of the holistic approach, A.I is an approach that furthers collaboration within the organization in a positive and growing way.

2.4 Inter Business Principles

Inter Business has developed a theory of understanding holistic value creation through the lens of four skills—purpose, systems approach, empathy and transformation (Hallin et al., 2017). It has been used to understand companies’ move from traditional, reactive sustainability towards future preparedness. These principles have been used to design the project Tailwind and have inspired the A.I. process of this research. Headlines 2.4.1 to 2.4.4 describing the principles are at large quoted from “The Inter Business Index: Developing a Tool for Measurement and Comparability of Holistic Sustainability in Businesses” (2017) for accuracy.

2.4.1 Purpose

The purpose is what the company is really about and requires a clear understanding of the operations. Purpose allows companies to work with intention and with a shared cause, as written by Schultz (2014). It is central to work with purpose in the core of strategy and operations when applying a holistic approach to sustainability. Hollensby et al. (2014) research on purpose acknowledges the interconnection of both business and society, both of which are dependent on, and cannot thrive without, the other.

2.4.2 Empathy

Pavlovich and Krahnke (2012) define that empathy represents the ability to place oneself in the shoes of the stakeholder, allowing us to share the experience of others. Gorry and Westbrook (2011) argue that empathy helps businesses see matters from the stakeholders’ view and helps them understand that ultimately, the goal of bringing solutions and products to the marketplace is to improve peoples’ lives, not to simply make organizations more profitable or efficient, which Chokdee Rutirasiri emphasize in an interview with Hallin et al. (2016).

2.4.3 Systems Approach

Businesses are part of society, and, as Rüdiger (2011) writes; responsibility for human development and

wellbeing has been increasingly assigned to companies. Barile et al. (2014) claim that for businesses to fully do this; they need to holistically take account of all the different aspects that affect and interact with each other and consider the whole system that they are a part of. That is—according to Arnold and Wade (2015) to move away from linear thinking and instead adopting a systematic approach to better understand and predict possible outcomes of their decisions.

2.4.4 Transformation

The field of business transformation is about making changes to meet new circumstances and external factors like new markets, challenges and demands. Companies today exist in a global context with a highly present technological transformation occurring. Pahrkar (2014) writes that businesses affect and are affected by more factors than they did just acting on local and regional markets, making it imperative to adapt and innovate to be able to stay competitive and even survive. This makes it impossible for businesses to remain a status quo, and the skills of transformation are necessary for navigating forward and forging new ways ahead.

2.5 Interviews, Mapping, and Structure

To gather material for the case study, we conducted semi-structured interviews focused on the history of the organization and the strengths that they have. We went to visit each organization to meet their target groups, staff, and volunteers and see the operational work in progress. We used appreciative inquiry as a method to frame and ask questions both in interviews and as a tool in our joint work together in workshops and meetings. We conducted in-depth interviews with the operational leaders of the TailWind organizations on several occasions during the fall and winter of 2017, as well as the spring of 2018. The interviews were semi-structured and focused on general topics of organizational history, their development, future needs, and transformation. As a way to structure their support, we mapped out their organizational opportunities, and in the process spoke about the future of their sector—and what they needed to succeed in an uncertain future. We organized a workshop day where the leaders from the organizations could meet up, share learnings and knowledge and support each other in chosen development areas from each organization.

Another vital part of the project was an advocacy-project, where the organizations invited a photographer to meet the target group and join them in their everyday lives. The result was used in an opinion forming digital campaign aimed at raising the issues of the rights left outside of the Swedish welfare system.

3. Result

3.1 Theoretical Basis for Appreciative Inquiry

To further affirm A.I, Cooperider invented five principles that should be present in an inquiry done appreciatively. In our work with the Tailwind project, we have made sure to follow those principles that are the foundation of A.I.

The principles follow as such:

Constructionist: We construct reality through conversation.

Simultaneity: Change starts by asking the right questions.

Anticipatory: If you approach a project positively you can anticipate positive results.

Poetic: One can choose what to study and therefore choose what world to create.

Positive: Therefore, asking real questions we create a positive reality.

These principles of AI are enabling us to understand our work and to see if we have succeeded in applying positive psychology framework in our process. In the Tailwind project—they have been used as guidelines along the way—ensuring that the project is on the right path. They have also been incorporated in meetings, engagement plans, strategic workshops, and meetings.

3.2 *Discovery*

The Tailwind project was launched in August of 2017, after gathering organizations that were looking for support to transform their organizations. To find the potential of each of them individually as well as a group—we conducted in-depth interviews along with site visits in their operations. We met with operational leaders, staff, volunteers, and guests in their daily work environment, to learn from their experiences of working and visiting this setting. Through our discussions, it became apparent that they all shared an understanding of the changing climate and context of their operations. They all were negatively affected by new and stricter legislation, a changing political climate and a harsher tone in the public opinion in Sweden and could see that development ranging over the past few years. By discussing strengths and opportunities within the organizations in our initial interviews, we also found that they all excelled in their core operations—working directly with the target group, meeting them with empathy and without judgment, was apparent in all Tailwind participants. They have in-depth knowledge of the living conditions of the target group, the problems they face and where support is needed. They have adapted their organizations in a very flexible way to meet the target group in an empathic way—and have tremendous experience in collaborating with other organizations to cover the gaps in the welfare system. “These are organizations built with much heart”, as one of the managers said. However, the changing social climate demands new competencies of these organizations, and no matter how great they are at their daily work—the strategies and top-level decision-making need development to survive in their new context. From our insights in the Discovery phase, we drew up Engagement plans for the organizations individually, looking at their development needs as opportunities for transformation geared towards the future, based on their strengths.

3.3 *Dream*

To truly understand the organizations and their strengths in an in-depth way, we conducted purpose workshops with all participants. Based on purpose research by Imperative (Aaron Hurst, 2014), EY Beacon Institute (The business case for purpose, HBR) and Inter Business (Hallin et al., 2017) we discussed which values they individually bring to the table. Are they mainly affecting society, other organizations or individuals? Does justice or development motivate them? Are they creating value by providing structures, building communities, working with people or gathering knowledge? The purpose

workshops shone a light on the fact that they are all different in the sense that they do have different strategies and operations—mainly understood as “tacit knowledge” within the organizations—but that they are all aligned in their vision of a more empathic and just society at an abstract level. Understanding how these organizations could create more momentum is much related to their ability to use their knowledge about the target group, their empathic approach and their joint vision in their strategic work when they are building their organizations. The purpose workshops also highlighted the need to bring the tacit knowledge forward and make it a clear strategy in the organization to guide future decision making—grounded in the organization, and with the staff. Dependent on each organization’s engagement plan we conducted several strategy workshops—looking at opportunities in fundraising, communications, board work and overall strategies. In each of them, the starting point was a desire to develop the structures that support their core operations—ensuring their future position in society. To become the best organizations possible to be delivering impact to the people they are committed to supporting, they needed to build sustainable organizations rooted in the fundamental strengths we found in the discovery phase. They also needed support from other organizations in a similar situation—sharing knowledge and learning from each other’s developmental journey.

3.4 Design

In this stage, when we had built close relationships with each organization participating in Tailwind and knew their purpose through the previous 4D-stages, it was now time to determine the soundest way forward, together. Therefore, we assembled all four organizations to a joint and collaborative workshop day to discuss the future. Conducting this workshop, we wanted to find out how we could best implement new strategies for each organization, so they could face the challenges that they were facing. We contend that each organization shares the same opportunity of development and growth because although they all are unique and stand on their inspiring foundation, they also all work within the same paradigm that now is changing, rapidly. During the workshop, all participants were keen and eager for cooperation between each other as a result of the purpose alignments that came to when participating in our exercises. During this joint workshop day, we discussed experiences from each of the organizations. In the discussion, it became adamant that all organizations are now facing challenges of such a magnitude that the only way forward is internal change and also to further develop those strengths acquired through years of hand-on experience within their different operations. Following the 4D model of Design, we divided the group into four smaller groups to discuss how to develop this vision of growth and change most efficiently. Each group discussed proposals for creating awareness around the societal challenges their organizations are facing in contemporary Sweden. Each group made proposals such as including a campaign for creating awareness, using the photographs by Elin Berge in a provocative but thoughtful way. Other proposals were that we should pursue journalistic coverage for the project in Sweden’s most prominent media outlets, political initiatives that include the target groups with the purpose of fighting the prejudice and misunderstanding that surrounds their situation. The concept of awareness became the mantra of the day. The organizations all agreed that the knowledge

they had within their organizations had to be somehow lifted in society so that people are adequately informed of the work they do and the work that still needs to be done. Summing up the workshop day; everyone agreed that collaboration and change were the strategy forward. More efficient cooperation between the organizations and internal organizational change to better match the challenges in their target groups without risking the organizations' well-being. Change is perhaps a challenging aspect of development, but all agreed that it was possible through the strategy of collaboration.

3.5 Delivery/Destiny

Traditionally, these organizations have been an invisible support structure to the welfare state where it is flawed. They have been working in the background—intercepting the people falling through the cracks and quietly supporting them. They have had (and have) close working relationships with social services—but fill an interesting gap in the field where they are desperately needed—but not so much acknowledged. Previously, this relationship has been accepted by the authorities as they have been able to withstand the test of time and relentlessly support their target groups so adamantly. However, as the societal structure is changing, so is the need for their role in society. During the process that we facilitated through the AI model, it has become clear that the key strengths that the Tailwind organizations possess; empathy, close relationships with the target group and resilience, need to be used to make policy- decision-makers understand how they must act to ensure a human society working to against social exclusion. Their core operations are not extended enough within themselves – but these organizations must take additional steps to share the knowledge and insights they are gathering. The organizations need to claim the role as the expert in the public eye with knowledge and insight about the needs of the target group, rooted in relationships and empathic meetings that they facilitate on an everyday basis. Their position is unique in the way that they are collaborating with public services, other CSOs, volunteers, and funders to provide the necessary support to the outcasts of society and standing up for their civil rights. This position is unique because they have a holistic view of the social exclusion in Sweden today, together with a substantial amount of experience to be able to understand the course of development in the field. In claiming this new position and transformation they can pave the way for the CSO-sector as a whole and change in the perception of what a CSO is and their role in Swedish society today.

4. Discussion

The Tailwind project has been built on the Inter Business principles of purpose, empathy, systems approach and transformation. These competencies are, according to our previous research (Hallin et al., 2016), important to bring about sustainable organizations that can create value in all of their relations. The perspectives have been key to understanding the strengths and gains of the participating organizations. The participating organizations have found that the understanding of the true purpose and value they bring to society, their place in the complex welfare system, and the information found in the empathic meetings with the target group, are key skills which together shine a light on the need for

and the path of transformation. Using the Inter Business lens has been imperative to understand how to bring out the opportunities within each organization—and how to build strong CSOs for the future.

The challenges facing the CSO sector are huge; transforming demographics, new social problems, harsher political decision making, and lower public engagement to name a few. The way the sector has understood transformation as a professionalization process in the past has often resulted in a farther distance to the target group by creating organizations run by outsiders without their connection to the social problem they are working with. The Tailwind project takes on a different approach—focusing on how we can use the strengths of these organizations to build sustainable structures for the future, using professionalization merely as a tool to bring out these strengths and implementing them. To bring about lasting change, we need to ensure that the organizations we build are sustainable—they need to function today, and they need to function tomorrow. So how will a CSO have to be functioning in the future? The key insights we found in our work (as described in the Delivery/Destiny Phase) can be summarized as:

- Drawing on the strengths of the organization when strategically developing the operations
- Building their operations on empathic meetings with the target group, and
- Stepping up to claim an expert position in the public eye sharing knowledge and insight with decision-makers about the needs of the target group.

To be able to ensure that CSOs have the opportunity to do this, they need support in building their organizations. Funds, strategic support and a network of peers that all work towards a common goal.

Tailwind is a pilot project, aiming to secure the value created by traditional social work organizations by supporting them in transforming their organizations for a future. But to build sustainable organizations that bring holistic value to the societies that they operate in is not only a CSO business. The transformation that the CSO-sector needs to undergo—meeting a rapidly changing future—is true for companies and government as well. They all meet the same changing climate, social and environmental, increasingly complex value chains and inter dependability across people and planet. The most interesting strength that we found that these CSOs possess is the close relationships with the target groups, the empathic way of listening and understanding needs and wants. What is a worthy life? One answer can be true for one person but might not resonate with the next. The flexibility that comes when developing structures from the stakeholder's perspective is very important when transforming society for the future, no matter the actor. There is an imminent need to gather information from the target groups and using that to build coherent structures within their organizations. At the same time is also a need to pass that information on—making and politicians and decision-makers understand what they need to do—based on the true needs of the target group. There is a great opportunity in developing CSO's by this structure, both in meeting a changing social demographics, a declining interest, as well as supporting more informed decision making on all levels and across sectors.

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