



ALLIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND THE WELL-BEING OF OUR COMMUNITIES

Partnerships between the social
economy and the municipal world



**A framework
of analysis for
municipalities**

FORWARD

In the context where community development is a challenge to ensure the occupation of the territory, it is increasingly clear that municipalities have greater responsibilities that go well beyond snow and garbage collection. Elected officials are therefore involved in development and are expressing an interest in tools that can support them in this respect. Thus, several strategic projects that promote the economic development and well-being of communities are the result of partnerships between municipalities and actors of the social economy. The areas in which these are taking place are varied (waste management, recreational tourism, cultural development, community infrastructure, etc.), but in all cases, the focus has been on the potential of communities to find an innovative response to existing needs.

AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

This tool follows the publication by the TIESS of a collection of twelve innovative experiences of partnerships between municipalities and social economy enterprises (SEE)¹. The idea for these briefs was born in the context of the *Forum Économie sociale et municipalités* (Forum on the Social Economy and Municipalities), held in April 2014 in order to inspire decision makers in the municipal world and the social economy networks to deploy new ways of servicing their communities. A summary analysis of these experiments was produced and identified a number of successful ingredients, grouped into four categories:

1. Demystifying the social economy;
2. Establishing a shared vision;
3. Demonstrating leadership and tenacity;
4. Navigating existing regulation and identifying key stakeholders.

These ingredients are not a recipe for guaranteed success. Instead they are elements that may inspire businesses and municipalities wishing to develop partnerships. Courses of action that may facilitate the introduction of such collaborations also emerged from this analysis.

WHO SHOULD USE THE FOLLOWING FRAMEWORK?

Any municipality wishing to establish a partnership with a SEE, particularly municipal employees such as general directors, service directors, development agents, etc., will find useful items in this tool. Elected officials are also invited to use this tool in order to support their decision-making process in this context.

¹ *Alliés pour le développement et le mieux-être des collectivités, Expérience innovante de partenariat entre l'économie sociale et le monde municipal*, TIESS, June 2014
www.tiess.ca/documents/tiess_synthese-web.pdf

WHY USE THIS FRAMEWORK?

If your municipality is considering allying itself with a SEE, this tool will help you perform an auto-diagnosis of the state of affairs. By focusing on the key elements that emerged from the analysis of the twelve experiences discussed above, the framework aims to enable a more systematic analysis of the relevance and viability of a partnership project. It also helps identify adjustments that should be made or actions to be undertaken in order to ensure the success of the project. In short, the auto-diagnosis will allow you to know whether the context is ripe to create a sustainable partnership that is satisfactory for all of its stakeholders. The questions posed by this tool have been formulated under the assumption that the project has not yet been undertaken. However, you may also use the guide to evaluate an already-existing partnership. You would then need to adapt the questions to your particular situation.

WHO CAN HELP YOU?

A tutorial presenting this tool is available on the TIESS website. If you need help completing the framework, we also invite you to consult with the organizations on your territory that have an expertise in the social economy and can support you. You will find references in this regard at the end of the document.

HOW SHOULD THE FRAMEWORK BE USED?

- Each section corresponds to one of the ingredients of a successful business partnership between a municipality and a SEE. The questions raised will allow you to qualitatively evaluate the potential for success of your project. They are in this way indicators to facilitate your brainstorming.
- Each question offers a choice of answers and includes a **Notes** section, where you can complete your analysis with comments. This allows to better understand the results of your assessment and to present elements that should be part of the solution or the actions to be undertaken.
- At the end of each section, you can provide an overall assessment of all your answers according to the scale proposed in the **Global Appreciation** box.
- At the end of the exercise, you will be able to provide a diagnosis of the potential for success of your project according to the proposed indicators (strengths and weaknesses). You will also be able to explain why certain conditions are not met and what should be put in place to remedy this (or emit your own recommendations).

1. DEMYSTIFYING THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

In many communities, the social economy still has difficulties being recognized as a means for significant development. Recognizing the pertinence of choosing the social economy constitutes both a condition of success and a positive impact for many projects. One of the first realizations made by municipal and social economy actors is that it's essential to have a certain knowledge of this collective business model in order to create alliances.

See **Elements to be considered** on **page 5**.

Level of appreciation 1 Very good 2 Good 3 Average 4 Weak 5 Very weak DK Don't know NA Not applicable	Qualify	Notes
What is your degree of knowledge: • of the social economy?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
• of the SEEs in your community?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
• of the products and services that they supply or that they could supply?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
• of the networks or organisations that can help you learn more about SEEs?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
To what extent is the social economy a useful business model for your project?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
To what extent: • do you believe in the economic credibility of the project?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
• do you believe that it can have a positive social impact on the community?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
Is the project supported by a study (feasibility, market, impact) or by research?	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ DK ☐ NA	
Global appreciation	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	

Elements to be considered:

- If you don't think you know enough about the social economy, this doesn't mean that it'll be impossible to create a partnership or support the social economy. Don't hesitate to ask an expert or an organization with the necessary expertise to assist you. There exist many local and regional organizations that can help you better understand the social economy. To find local support and organizations in Québec, consult the websites of *Chantier de l'économie sociale*, of the *Association des centres locaux de développement du Québec*, of the *Regroupement des CDEC du Québec* or the Québec Federation of Regional Development Cooperatives. Elsewhere in Canada, visit the Canadian Community Economic Development Network.
- To learn more on the social economy, consult the definition used by the *Chantier de l'économie sociale* in Québec.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- ... in many sectors, including housing, leisure, culture and community services, services to people and waste management, municipalities rely on SEEs to answer the needs of their community?
- ... training is available to elected officials and other actors in order for them to learn more on the social economy?

2. ESTABLISHING A SHARED VISION

Partnerships are a token of success because they allow enterprises to receive support in several ways (financial, technical, etc.) and to offer indispensable products or services to their partners.

See **Elements to be considered** on **page 7**.

Level of appreciation 1 Very good 2 Good 3 Average 4 Weak 5 Very weak DK Don't know NA Not applicable	Qualify	Notes
What is your degree of familiarity and comprehension of the mission of the SEE involved in the project?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
To what extent:		
• do you agree with this mission or with the objectives of this SEE?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
• do you know the impact that it produces?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
• would you be comfortable with asserting these in order to promote your partnership with this organization?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
To what extent:		
• does the project mobilise different actors sharing a common vision of the project?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
• do the potential partners all have the same understanding of the needs to be met?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
• have you identified other partners that should be mobilised?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
• have you identified the means to do so?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
How would you evaluate:		
• the consensus of elected officials on this issue?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
• the support of the population?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
Global appreciation	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	

Elements to consider:

- Several actors may be involved in a project: the municipal administration, the municipal council, the business community, associations, citizens, public institutions, etc.
- To obtain the support of the population, the following strategies may be effective:
 - Organizing meetings with the citizens;
 - Engaging both long-time residents and newcomers to the area, when appropriate;
 - Disseminating information in the local media.
- Social economy projects can generate many kinds of impact:
 - Maintaining local services;
 - Revitalising or maintain the vitality of a community;
 - Creating jobs;
 - Developing responsible and equitable procurement practices;
 - Developing local touristic and cultural activities;
 - Increasing access to local information;
 - Developing new means of transportation.

3. DEMONSTRATING LEADERSHIP AND TENACITY

Mobilization, consensus and a shared vision develop more easily when there is strong leadership. The project can be led by certain people, but also by organizations. Effective leadership often translates into mobilization and support for the project.

See **Elements to be considered** on **page 9**.

Level of appreciation 1 Very good 2 Good 3 Average 4 Weak 5 Very weak DK Don't know NA Not applicable	Qualify	Notes
To what extent is your project based on shared leadership ² between municipal partners and organizations, SEEs or a group of citizens?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
To what extent have you established the roles and responsibilities of each party? For example: - the sharing of power - the recourses in case of difficulties	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
What is your evaluation of the capacity of promoters (including the municipality if this is the case) to maintain the interest and the mobilization of the partners regarding the project?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
Have you established a strategy to convince decision-makers of the legitimacy of the partnership (ex: the people responsible for purchasing in public institutions/ procurement officers)?	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ DK ☐ NA	
What is your degree of familiarity with the schedule and functioning (with regards to decision-making) of the different partners?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
Global appreciation	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	

² Shared leadership is based on the distribution of the roles of influence between different people and at different times. It optimizes the use of the skills present in a group instead of always placing the same individual at the forefront.

Elements to be considered:

- It may be wise to have the project be led by a group of actors and organizations (regional conferences of elected officials [CRÉ], local development centers [CLD], Community Futures Development Corporation [CFDC], other SEEs, school boards, police, etc.) that can take turns leading it through the different steps and facing the difficulties encountered.
- When a project involves modifying practices, it can lead to internal blockages even when the partnership has been well established.
- A social economy project may bring about hybrid forms of governance, business models adapted to local reality or different ways of working.
For example:
 - the creation of a new company jointly owned by a municipal organization and a SEE;
 - an inter-municipal board;
 - a cooperative for local services;
 - a consortium of companies to provide services;
 - the introduction of clauses that take into account the social benefits generated by companies that meet tenders;
 - the introduction of institutional (partnerships imbedded within a municipal action plan) or sectorial (worker integration, environment, culture) measures;
 - the pooling of training tools, work, etc.
- The types of support available are:
 - financial: local funds (CLD, rural pact and others); regional funds (CRÉ); discretionary budgets; municipal contributions; moral, human or technical resources; accession; donations, leases or loans (capital, land, equipment), etc.
 - forms of investment: in conjunction with SEE; asset acquisitions; etc.
 - form of business contracts: service agreements; purchases of services or products, etc.
 - of various kinds: participation in governance bodies; promotion; joint creation of services or products, etc.

4. KNOWING HOW TO NAVIGATE EXISTING REGULATION AND IDENTIFYING KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Mutual knowledge of the different partners, of their objectives and their constraints is essential to a successful partnership between SEEs and municipal agencies.

Level of appreciation 1 Very good 2 Good 3 Average 4 Weak 5 Very weak DK Don't know NA Not applicable	Qualify	Notes
What is your degree of familiarity with:		
• the operating rules of collective enterprises (non-profits and cooperatives)?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
• the legislation to which your partnership is subject?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
According to you, to what extent are the promoters of the social economy project and the other stakeholders, if they exist, familiar with the rules in force in the municipal arena?	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	
In the case of public procurement, do you believe that the people responsible for awarding contracts in your municipality's administration are convinced of the appropriateness of establishing a partnership with a SEE?	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ DK ☐ NA	
Have you identified public policies that can support your partnership?	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ DK ☐ NA	
Have you put into place mechanisms to institutionalize or sustain your partnership?	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ DK ☐ NA	
Global appreciation	☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA	

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

... the guidebook *Marchés publics et économie sociale, un tandem au service des collectivités*, produced by the Chantier de l'économie sociale, presents the main information on public procurement in Québec? This document also aims to demystify the legislative and regulatory framework surrounding it, to show that it is advantageous to work with social economy enterprises and to highlight their potential.

... in Québec, the *Ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Occupation du territoire* has produced a set of toolkits that detail the administrative and legislative rules that govern the actions of public institutions?

AUTO-DIAGNOSIS

Following your evaluation of each section, you can generally assess the strengths and weaknesses of your partnership project. If you wish, you may identify actions that should be implemented and make recommendations in order to improve the chances of success of your project.

Level of appreciation

1 Very good

2 Good

3 Average

4 Weak

5 Very weak

DK Don't know

NA Not applicable

Qualify

Global appreciation

DEMYSTIFYING THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

1

2

3

4

5

DK

NA

Global appreciation

ESTABLISHING A SHARED VISION

1

2

3

4

5

DK

NA

Global appreciation

DEMONSTRATING LEADERSHIP AND TENACITY

1

2

3

4

5

DK

NA

Global appreciation

KNOWING HOW TO NAVIGATE THE EXISTING REGULATION AND IDENTIFYING KEY STAKEHOLDERS

1

2

3

4

5

DK

NA

SUMMARY OF THE ANALYSIS

1

2

3

4

5

DK

NA

Strengths of the partnership:

Weaknesses of the partnership:

Actions to be undertaken:

OTHER POSSIBLE ACTIONS

This framework of analysis is primarily intended to assess the potential of business partnerships between municipalities and social economy enterprises. However, other forms of collaboration or support exist. Indeed, municipalities may establish or support organizations that enable the development of all social enterprises in the territory, such as incubators or development funds. They may also adopt transversal policy or specific measures to promote the development of social economy enterprises in certain sector of activities, for example in the environmental sector (recycling and refurbishing facilities, sorting services, etc.), culture, leisure, etc., or policies and measures that support certain target population. Finally, adjusting programs or measures to take into account the social benefits generated by these businesses, for example through the inclusion of social clauses, is also a way to promote the growth of social economy enterprises while incorporating social or environmental concerns in the actions of the municipality. More information on these options is available on the RELIESS website.

HYPERLINKS AND REFERENCES

Association des centres locaux de développement du Québec

Chantier de l'économie sociale

Co-operatives and Mutuals Canada

Économie sociale Québec

Fédération des coopératives de développement régional du Québec

Regroupement des CDEC du Québec

Social Entreprise Canada

Territoires innovants en économie sociale et solidaire

The Canadian Community Economic Development Network

