

solidar



**A Guide to Good Practice for
A non-discriminatory access to services provided by NGOs**

The Status Quo is not enough!

THE STATUS QUO IS NOT ENOUGH!

A Guide to Good Practice for a non-discriminatory access to services provided by NGOs

Published by SOLIDAR Dec 2001

Research and coordination Roshan Di Puppo and Gabriela Sierck

Editor Responsible Giampiero Alhadeff

The Guide to Good Practice is funded by the EU against discrimination

Experts who have kindly contributed to the Guide to Good Practice are:

Jackie Lewis ILGA-Europe **Nico J. Beger** ILGA-Europe **Liz Morrall** Eurolink Age **Annette Scholl** Eurolink Age **Michelynn Lafleche** ENAR **Gloria Mills** UNISON **Ruth Forster** AWO **Werner Eik** AWO **Martin Telser** LegaCoopBund **Alberto Stenico** LegaCoopBund **Heinz Stieb** Volkshilfe **Nicolas Delesque** La Ligue de l'Enseignement et de l'Education Permanente **Valerie Rogé** La Ligue de l'Enseignement et de l'Education Permanente **Suzy Sumner** SOLIDAR **Natalia Heyraud** SOLIDAR **Alice Castle** Journalist

SOLIDAR is an independent international alliance of non-governmental organisations that are involved in social service provision, international co-operation, humanitarian aid and life-long learning, and are historically linked to the free and democratic labour and trade union movement.

SOLIDAR believes in the indivisibility of social, civil, political and cultural human rights. Rooted in the trade union and labour movement, **SOLIDAR** campaigns for change by raising awareness for a sustainable and rights-based global economy and to bring about economic and social justice for all peoples, both within and between states.

SOLIDAR achieves its goals by strengthening alliances with organisations committed to our common principles, by promoting the participation of civil society and by engaging in lobbying and advocacy at national, EU and international levels.

solidar

22 rue du commerce 1000 Brussels

Tel +32.2.5001020 Fax +32.2.5001030

Email solidar@skynet.be

Website www.solidar.org

CONTENT

General introduction.....
Article 13
How was this Guide produced?
Who are the NGOs involved and what services do they provide?.....
Why is the Guide to Good Practice necessary?
Who is the Guide aimed at?

SAY IT AND DO IT!

1. Develop a clear mission statement.....

INTERNAL MEASURE - DO WHAT YOU SAY!

2. Create guiding principles to define your role.....
3. Make sure your employees know your mission statement and guiding principles.....
4. Train staff to work in a diverse environment.....
5. Train worker's council.....
6. Develop a transparent recruitment procedure.....
7. Develop a transparent workforce development strategy.....
8. Take positive action.....
9. Take symbolic action.....
10. Promote workers' rights.....

EXTERNAL MEASURE - SAY WHAT YOU DO!

11. Empower People!
12. Use marketing tools to fight discrimination.....
13. Provide the right services.....
14. Evaluate yourself.....
15. Educate against discrimination.....
16. Raise awareness and Lobby!
17. Balance ethics and commerce.....

TEST YOUR ORGANISATION!

A life free from discrimination is a fundamental human right, as is our right to receive quality social services. These two rights are bound together and cannot be separated.

If organisations fail to recognise the diversity of humanity, including women, transsexuals, lesbians and gays, people with disabilities, the old and the young, as well as religious and ethnic minorities, then the services they provide will be rigid, inflexible and will not reflect our society. This denies people their dignity as unique human beings and goes against their fundamental human rights.

Quality social services are inclusive, reflect the diverse groups they serve and discriminate neither over access nor over provision of services.

Because human diversity is limitless, we cannot apply definite norms to the provision of services. What we need to create, instead, is a climate of openness, ensuring that each individual is fully involved in shaping the aid they receive. Individuals should not only be actively committed to this process, but they should also be encouraged to explore themselves and their own prejudices.

It is not enough to adapt existing social services to fit people as and when necessary. We should, instead, challenge the whole process of providing services.

Service providers must welcome diversity in every way possible. Brochures, forms, staff, volunteers and the language they use must all reflect this positive attitude. Most importantly, organisations should also scrutinise their own workforces. This is where diversity starts. If lesbians and gay men, ethnic minorities, older people and disabled people cannot feel safe and fully accepted in their own work environment, an organisation will never be able to provide quality services to different groups.

This Guide to Good Practice is inspired by Article 13 of the Treaty of Amsterdam.

The right not to be discriminated is also guaranteed by many other European and International treaties and conventions, including:

- Article 14 of the European Convention of Human Rights and its new Protocol 12
- Article 21 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights
- Article 26 of the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- Specific International Conventions prohibiting discrimination (including for example the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention on Discrimination in Employment and Occupation)

The European Union has always been concerned with discrimination issues. The Treaty of Rome provided for equal pay for men and women, and outlawed discrimination on grounds of nationality between citizens of EU member states. But it was not until 1997, with the adoption of the Treaty of the European Community, that anti-discrimination was included as a basic founding principle of the Union. Article 13 of the Amsterdam Treaty states that EU Member States may 'take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.'

How was this Guide produced?

Four large SOLIDAR members, LegaCoopBund, AWO, Volkshilfe and La Ligue de l'Enseignement et de l'Education Permanente, pledged to examine together the discriminatory barriers that prevent people with disabilities, those from ethnic minorities, older people and lesbian and gay men from gaining equal access to their services.

The Good Practice Guide is the result of seminars held in Brussels, Bonn, Vienna, Bolzano and Paris. SOLIDAR and its project partners developed a questionnaire to learn about the experience and the anti-discrimination policy of the organisations involved. On the basis of this questionnaire, interviews were carried out with many individuals in the different organisations involved. Experts from three European NGOs fighting discrimination - ENAR, ILGA-Europe and EuroLink Age - helped to identify the barriers to full access to services. Because of its long tradition of combating discrimination, UNISON has also offered its experience as a trade union and service provider.

European Network Against Racism (ENAR) is a network of European NGOs working to combat racism in all the EU member states. It is a major outcome of the 1997 European Year Against Racism. The establishment of ENAR endorses the recognition by NGOs of the European dimension to the fight against racism. ENAR is determined to fight racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and islamophobia, to promote equality of treatment between EU citizens and third country nationals, and to link local, regional and national initiatives with European initiatives.

www.enar-eu.org

International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) was founded in 1978. Its members are approximately 400 lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender groups in 70 countries. In the course of its regionalisation process, **ILGA-Europe** was founded in 1996. Among ILGA's achievements are its participation in the campaign to take homosexuality out of the WHO catalogue of diseases, its accreditation to the Council of Europe, its support of many human rights court cases, its decriminalisation campaigns in individual states, its participation in major reports of the EP and Council of Europe on discrimination, and the inclusion of sexual orientation in Article 13 and in the Charter for Fundamental Rights.
www.ilga-europe.org

Eurolink Age is a European NGO which exists to promote the interests of 121.4 million older people across the European Union. A wide range of activities was carried out between 1981 and 2000, working with member organisations drawn mainly from EU Member States. Recent actions to tackle discrimination have included devising a European code of good practice on age and employment, a directory of services provided by and for older gay and lesbian people and responses to EU policies on women and on disability. In 2001 Eurolink Age became a founder member of the European Platform of Older People, AGE. AGE was formed to promote older people's interests in a more comprehensive way and provides a range of services formerly offered by Eurolink Age.
www.eurolinkage.org

UNISON is the United Kingdom's largest public sector trade union, representing 1.3 million public sector workers in local government, healthcare, higher education, water, transport, gas and electricity. Its membership is diverse and its structures reflect this. More than two-thirds of its members are women. Black members, disabled members and lesbians and gay men play a significant role in the union. Many Unison members face discrimination - both at work and in society. At the heart of UNISON's aims and values is a commitment to equality. A core principle of UNISON's campaign is to improve access to public service provision and the need for joint action between government, service users, employers and trade unions to remove discrimination and promote equality.
www.unison.org.uk

Who are the NGOs involved and what services do they provide?

Arbeiterwohlfahrt Bundesverband e.V. (AWO) is a federation with associations at local level, at district level and at regional or State level. More than 600,000 members and thousands of volunteers support the social work of AWO. Over the years, AWO has developed into a modern social-service provider with 140,000 employees, 1,487 homes or units of sheltered accommodation, 3,674 day centres and counselling centres and 2,322 self-help groups. AWO fights for a socially just society with a combination of volunteers and professional services. It also exercises political influence. Against its historical background as part of the labour movement, AWO determines its actions through the values of free democratic socialism: solidarity, tolerance, freedom, equality and justice.
www.awo.org

Volkshilfe Österreich (VO) is one of the largest service-providers and human rights organisations in Austria, active in almost all fields of social work with more than 30,000 members, 4,500 Employees and 1,000 volunteers. It is a non-governmental, non-profit making organisation established in 1947 and its turnover is 94,5 million Euro.
www.volkshilfe.at

Lega Provinciale Cooperative Bolzano (LegaCoopBund) provides services in the South Tyrol region of Italy through 132 cooperatives which employ 5000 people. LegaCoopBund functions as an umbrella organisation that provides support, advice and lobbying.
www.legacoopbund.it

Ligue Francaise de l'Enseignement et de l'Education Permanente was created in 1866 with the aim of opening up culture and education to all individuals in order to make the notion of citizenship a reality. With 2.3 million members, it provides services such as education, culture, social inclusion holidays and life-long learning.
www.laligue.org

Why is a Guide to Good Practice necessary?

SOLIDAR believes that there is a real need for measures specifically designed to combat institutionalised discrimination, which is hard to tackle through normal complaint procedures. Non-discrimination must be promoted through non-legislative, as well as legislative, means. The Guide's aim is, therefore, to develop a set of voluntary guidelines to add to anti-discrimination legislation. We want to:

- Raise awareness of discrimination issues;
- Stimulate debate;
- Disseminate information, policies and materials;
- Challenge the status quo within organisations;
- Provide proposals and practical solutions for organisations committed to equality and change.

Who is the Guide aimed at?

We are aiming this Guide at:

- Providers of social services, whether NGOs, governmental organisations, public or private institutions,
- Organisations that are already active in fighting discrimination and those who wish to start.

SAY IT AND DO IT!

Recommendation 1 Develop a clear Mission Statement

Why should we develop a clear mission statement? You must make it clear, both within your organisation and outside it, that you are non-discriminatory. The best way to get this message across is to put it in your mission statement. This should attract future users and employees, it could re-define the position of your existing staff, it should clarify and explain your positions on certain issues for any target audience and it may also have an influence on your organisational culture.

How do we go about it? You should involve everyone concerned, including employees, employers, clients and contractors, in order to avoid producing a set of quality targets and philosophies that no-one really understands and implements. Resistance and misunderstandings need to be dealt with during the drafting process - if they are ignored until the project is completed, this may weaken or even destroy the impact of the project. You will need to evaluate your mission statement and its implementation regularly.

Why not? The only argument against having a clear mention of anti-discrimination in the mission statement is that there is already an underlying assumption that social welfare organisations do not discriminate.

What should the statement say? A mission statement should contain your organisation's core principles. They can be political, confessional and ethical, as well as practical. They should be valid for the whole of the organisation and should define its role in society and/or in the market

Good Practice Organisations like AWO, which have recently changed their mission statement and who have included a section on anti-discrimination, report that staff start to discuss how to achieve these goals. Here is the AWO statement on anti discrimination:

'Against its historical background as part of the labour movement, AWO determines its actions through the values of free democratic socialism: solidarity, tolerance, freedom, equality and justice'

'Equality is founded on equal respect for the dignity of all. It demands the same right before the law, the same opportunities to participate in political and community life, the right to social security and equality in society for men and women'.

INTERNAL MEASURES – DO WHAT YOU SAY!

Recommendation 2

Create Guiding Principles to define your role

Why are guiding principles useful? In some parts of Europe there has been a policy to privatise health and person social services. In some instances these have been taken over by either not for profit or by profit making concerns. Sometimes the NGOs who are in this role become indistinguishable from profit making organisations. This is why it is important to refine the role of these organisations by establishing their guiding principles.

How do we go about drawing up guiding principles? As with your mission statement, you should involve everyone concerned - employees, employers, clients and contractors - to avoid settling on targets and philosophies which no-one really understands or implements. Don't forget to deal with any worries during the drafting process, and to keep monitoring both the message of your guiding principles, and their implementation, at frequent intervals.

What should these principles be? Every organisation has formal or informal goals, aims, quality principles and targets for their different activities, and you should base your principles on these. Don't forget that your Guiding Principles need to tie in with your Mission Statement.

Good Practice A 20 pages booklet has been produced by Volkshilfe Österreich in order to clarify the position of the organisation on unemployment. The booklet contains short texts on: health and social issues, non profit organisation as employer, work and disability and a presentation of Volkshilfe initiatives for fighting unemployment i.e. second hand shops, catering, office training.

Recommendation 3

Make sure your employees know your Mission Statement and Guiding Principles

Why should we do this? Your staff members are the ones implementing your organisation's objectives on a day-to-day basis, so it is crucial that they fully understand your history and your aim. No matter what their position, they must feel that they contribute to the overall strategy of the organisation. This is also an excellent way to improve staff motivation and encourage links between different departments.

How can we ensure the message gets across? It is not enough just to hand over brochures or info-packages. A full understanding of an organisation's policy can only be achieved through constant formal and informal dialogue between employer and employee. Practical examples of policy implementation are also vital. The implementation of the mission statement and guiding principles needs to be part of the goal that the employees feel challenged and obliged to reach.

What are the best methods? A holistic approach needs to be taken in order to ensure the right level of commitment from your staff. Supervising staff need to feel clear responsibility for

the implementation of the mission statement and guiding principles. Formal training, information material, and continuing involvement for other staff should ensure a successful (re)adjustment procedure for your organisation.

Good Practice AWO regularly organises introductory seminars for the new staff to explain the principles and philosophy of the organisation. General information is regularly provided by La Ligue de l'Enseignement, LegaCoopBund and Volkshilfe.

Recommendation 4 Train staff to work in a diverse environment
--

Why is diversity important? As employers, social welfare organisations have a responsibility to provide opportunities for all employees regardless of their age, race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or disability. Individuals working in social welfare organisations often come into direct contact with discrimination, especially when they are working with long-term unemployed, disabled or ethnic minorities. At the same time, they also experience cultural diversity, contacts with gays and lesbians, disabled persons and others, at first hand. This helps develop their understanding of the rich diversity of human beings. It is very important to encourage staff to abandon ingrained assumptions about what is 'normal.'

How can we break down barriers? Awareness training should be made available for staff on rarely discussed topics such as transgender issues. It is also important to develop an open working culture where people feel both free and safe to discuss such issues among themselves and with their supervisors.

Which methods should we use? This can be considered mainly as a 'top-down' issue - a good example from supervisors is the key to progress. Formal training should be made available but true understanding needs to develop through contact with the groups facing discrimination.

Good Practice

A) Training for staff for confronting discrimination directly.

Volkshilfe Wohndrehscheibe (Vienna) is looking for accommodation for those who are excluded from the normal housing market. The staff in the organisation telephone landlords on behalf of their clients who are mainly from ethnic minorities. They have received special training to negotiate with landlords who may express prejudice against renting their property to non-Austrian tenants. They receive guidance in challenging these prejudices directly on the telephone. In one example, the staff member, speaking with a perfect Austrian accent, challenged the landlord who refused to rent his property to a Turkish family, by saying "What! So you would not even rent it to me?" The landlord was surprised that someone of Turkish origin could possibly speak with such a perfect accent, and his beliefs were challenged.

B) Setting limits

Sometimes, it becomes impossible to deal with persistent discriminators. In these circumstances, all co-operation with the offender (who may be a landlord, an insurer or similar) should stop and an official letter stating the reasons should be sent. Legal action should also be considered.

Recommendation 5 **Train Workers' Councils**

Why should we train workers' councils? Workers' councils are often the first resort for staff with problems. It is, therefore, very important that employee representatives receive specific training on dealing with diversity within an organisation. They should also be encouraged to make proposals on how to fight discrimination.

Who can train workers' councils? Training workers' councils is the responsibility of trade unions, and their members should support this work. Members of workers' councils should be in a position to fight discrimination actively, both as counsellors for employers and representatives of employees.

How can we get these ideas across? Formal training is needed, to raise awareness and develop greater understanding.

Good Practice

At UNISON, tackling discrimination and raising equality awareness is built into all training courses for workplace representatives. Specialist courses on equality, discrimination and harassment are also available. A UNISON tutor-training scheme trains workplace representatives from discriminated groups (women, black members, disabled, lesbians and gay men) as tutors. All tutors are required to be equality-aware and take a three-day, compulsory course. Equality training is also a compulsory element in the staff tutor training scheme.

N.B. Not all organisations are large enough to have workers' councils. If this is the case for your organisation, there are other possible schemes that could help, for example mentoring schemes, or a staff member especially trained in dealing with discrimination issues. The most important aspect is that staff have someone to go to, beyond the person who could be discriminating against them, to talk the issues through with.

Recommendation 6 **Develop a transparent recruitment procedure**

Why is transparent recruitment necessary? Working for change can often mean starting with your own organisation's structure. Employment policy is crucial for an organisation that wishes to be non-discriminatory. Recruitment policies and procedures are areas where an organisation can take positive action to address imbalances in its workforce. This

demonstrates both internally and externally the organisation's commitment to reflecting society and the communities it serves.

How can organisations put transparent recruitment in practice? Organisations committed to non-discrimination should take steps to increase their complement of staff from under-represented groups, such as people from ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, older people and gay, lesbian and transgender people. Recruitment and selection procedures should be examined to ensure that they are bias-free and do not discriminate unlawfully or unfairly - either directly or indirectly. There are a number of tried and tested methods that can be applied to recruitment policies and procedures to ensure that they are fair and non-discriminatory.

Good Practice

UNISON advertises its job vacancies simultaneously, both internally and externally. Job vacancies are circulated widely in union publications and specifically to ethnic press and other publications to recruit from diverse communities. For example, the union introduced a trainee officer scheme as part of its positive action strategy to recruit women or those from ethnic and other disadvantaged groups. Equality training in recruitment and selection is mandatory for managers, and for officers representing members in discrimination cases.

SOLIDAR is starting to develop an application form which will move away from the traditional CV and letter approach to applying for positions in the organisation. In this way all candidates answer the same questions in the same amount of space, and only on an additional detachable form does the candidate detail their name, address, sex, date of birth and ethnic origin. This form is not seen by the jury who select who will be called for interview.

Recommendation 7 Develop a transparent workforce development strategy
--

Why do we need this strategy? Recruitment is only the first step in creating and sustaining a diverse workforce. Of course it is essential for organisations to increase the complement of under-represented groups on their staff, but it is also necessary to ensure that these new staff members get a fair share of opportunities within the organisation over time. At a very early stage of planning pro-diversity employment policies, organisations should also include procedures for the retention, progression and development of such staff as part of their overall strategy.

How will this work? In the same way that recruitment can be monitored, evaluated and measured against set criteria and objectives, so too can retention of staff, and their progression and professional development. Ensuring the success of retention, progression and development strategies, however, is also about making overall cultural change in your organisation. This means that you should not only look at the 'hard' data - who works for the organisation, in what capacity, who stays/leaves, who gets promoted/stagnates - but also develop ways of learning from all staff how they feel about the organisation.

How do we go about this? Hard data should be evaluated, as it is with recruitment. You should also consider other ways of finding out how people feel about the organisation, about

their opportunities there and about what would make them want to stay or leave. Staff questionnaires or consultation schemes are a good way of doing this. Other more creative and supportive methods of gleaning information are:

- Formal appraisal systems,
- Support groups or networks of employees with similar backgrounds or experiences;
- Developing innovative and appropriate interventions for career progression for under-represented staff groups and;
- Mentoring schemes.

Good Practice The European Code on ageing in employment, co-ordinated by Eurolink Age and based on interviews with employers, trade unions and others, makes the following recommendation:

‘Encourage all employees to take advantage of relevant and suitable training and ensure that, as far as possible, all employees have access to learning, training and development opportunities throughout their working life. To create a skilled and up-to-date workforce:

- Ensure that learning and training opportunities are an integral part of career planning and not purely job specific;
- Ensure that such opportunities are regularly reviewed and that age is not used as a barrier to training;
- Encourage workers of all ages to take up learning and training opportunities;
- Focus on the individual’s, as well as the organisations, needs when providing training and development opportunities;
- Ensure that different learning styles and needs and the diversity of previous occupations and skills are taken into account in the delivery of training;
- Work to combat negative age stereotypes about motivation and capacity to learn (among older and younger workers and managers).

<p>Recommendation 8 Take Positive Action</p>
--

Where is positive action already being taken? Public institutions have used positive action for many years to promote women. They check areas where women are under-represented, and decide that, at the same level of competence, women will be preferred to men. In some EU Member States, companies of a certain size have to employ a quota of disabled persons or pay a fine. We should make sure that service providers always respect these quotas. Similar schemes are not yet in force for other vulnerable groups - for instance, ethnic minorities are often found doing low-income jobs in social welfare organisations.

How can we take positive action? Organisations should take steps to increase the complement of staff from under-represented groups, such as people from ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, older people and gay, lesbian and transgender people. Even if there is no legal obligation to address this issue, equality targets should be set in order to achieve or maintain credibility as anti-discriminatory organisations.

What is the best strategy? Positive action must not be carried out secretly or randomly. It needs to be transparent and justified and must, therefore, be part of the organisation's policy.

Establishing a Diversity Manager who can be consulted by people worried about discrimination is a good move. This could be a member of the workers' council, or someone directly elected by employees. Another good practice is to set objectives for example: 'in 5 years, we want a certain percentage of high ranking jobs or directorships to be taken by women, ethnic minorities or transgender' or 'In 3 years we want a truly age-diverse workforce'. You can revise your objectives at intervals to check whether they have been reached or not.

Good Practice It is still too soon to report on any concrete examples of positive action being a success in the participating organisations, but following the project AWO, Volkshilfe and La Ligue d L'Enseignement have all put in place a diversity working group at the highest level to look at meeting some of these challenges.

Recommendation 9 **Take Symbolic Action**

Why is symbolic action important? Anti-discrimination legislation such as the new European directives based on Article 13 will remain unknown, if they are not publicised. Diversity, too, will remain a dream if we do not make small but significant changes. It is vital, therefore, to take symbolic action to raise awareness of discrimination.

What kind of action can we take? To show practical respect for people's needs, an employer has a broad choice of options. These range from celebrating certain festivals in multi-cultural teams, offering food in the canteen to cater for different diets or publicly supporting self-help groups for people who may be subject to discrimination.

How will this help? Employers may see these actions as symbolic but, as concrete and visible attempts to encourage diversity, they can seem not only real but also most welcome to minorities in the workforce.

Good practice During the seminars organised to produce this Guide, the possibility of guaranteeing one day off a year, to be decided by the employee, was discussed. This day would be included in employees' contracts and could coincide with, for example, Ramadan, a Gay Pride March or the Monday after the Greek orthodox Easter. This is a way to give a practical and concrete example to your workforce that you are practising diversity. Some employers may be in a position to allow employees to work during holidays that they do not celebrate, such as Christmas.

Recommendation 10 **Promote Workers' rights**

Why are workers' rights important? The job market has changed in the last few years. Social welfare organisations are often in competition with private companies. More and more personnel have short-term or part-time contracts. Most organisations are dependent on public funds and cannot justify higher personnel costs than other organisations. Individuals from

vulnerable groups are often employed in part-time or short-term contracts and equal treatment is therefore important. It is in the nature of social welfare organisations to also employ a large number of volunteers, whose role, needs and expectations differ from the paid staff.

What is equal treatment? Equal treatment means that long-time, full-time staff members and part-time, short term staff members have equal pay and equal social benefits. It's sometimes difficult to raise awareness for this and to justify higher personnel costs as a service provider. Equal treatment, though, helps to promote a stronger feeling of solidarity among employees.

How can this be achieved? Employers should actively seek advice from workers' councils, instead of turning to them only as mediators in disputes or, at worst, as adversaries in the fight for higher profits against human working conditions. Employers also need to carefully consider the role of a volunteer in their organisations; they are not a cheap substitute for paid staff, but offer different skills and services and also need investment in training and support.

Good Practice SOLIDAR organised a conference in June 2001 which brought together volunteers from four large service providing organisations to discuss the role of a volunteer in social service provision. Training, valuing volunteer work and the formalisation at a European level in a statute for volunteers were some of the issues addressed in the seminar.

EXTERNAL MEASURES - SAY WHAT YOU DO!

Recommendation 11 Empower People

Why do people need to be empowered? Sometimes, large organisations can overwhelm smaller, self-help groups. The philosophy of all SOLIDAR members is that social inclusion can only be achieved through helping people to help themselves. We must make sure that we leave room for all to operate.

How do we go about this? Empowering people demands a great deal of flexibility and confidence within an organisation. Large organisations need to look at the ways they can support new initiatives from within their membership and from other smaller grass-roots organisations. Small organisations often need advice on how to implement their ideas, and although they may be less professional in their activities, they may be responding to a direct need from a group in society and raising crucial concerns. There should be no need for large organisations to be threatened by smaller ones. They should, instead, encourage and empower them.

What methods should we use? Organisations should actively seek and welcome advice and opinions from self-advocacy groups and give them feedback. If financial support for such groups is provided, an organisation should not expect to be able to suppress views it disagrees with or to offer funding in exchange for compliance.

Good Practice

Start by saying “yes” is the philosophy that should guide social welfare organisations. Questions and details always arise later, but that initial positive response is the most empowering catalyst to development of new initiatives.

The cooperative movement as, represented by the LegaCoopBund, welcome many new initiatives from smaller groups and train them in the cooperative model. This is a response to direct needs from small groups of people. For example when 15 people lost their jobs after their company closed, they went to LegaCoopBund to set up the Cooperativa Centro Servizi Urbani, which offers public services to the local community.

Empowerment is in the core structure of a cooperative. Key characteristics include reinvestment of profit in the enterprise; the self-help and bottom-up approach; mutuality and democracy between the members (one partner one vote) and social solidarity.

Recommendation 12

Use marketing tools to fight discrimination

Why should we use marketing? Marketing tools can be used to reach different goals, from raising funds to building awareness. The image of an organisation depends very much on the visuals it uses in videos, publications and other material. Does your organisation mainly portray white, heterosexual men and women? If so, ask yourself why and whether you want to perpetuate this image.

How can we use these tools? It is possible to create an anti-discriminatory image of an organisation by, for example, using photos which reflect diversity. This will encourage the idea that everyone is welcome and safe inside your organisation.

Why is image important? Employees, clients, contractors and the general public should all be able to identify with the organisation's image. Make sure that your company's image reflects the make-up of its personnel.

Good Practice For its awareness-raising campaign on unemployment, Volkshilfe has used photos showing the real diversity of the people rather than 'typical Austrian'. The photos included ethnic minorities, young and old people, men and women and a lesbian couple.

Recommendation 13 Provide the right services

Why do we need to focus on the right services? Every organisation has to set priorities; it cannot provide all the social services that a society needs. For a social welfare organisation, it's important to analyse which services are provided by the State or by private companies and which social services can only be provided by the organisation itself.

Why can't services be uniform? All of us would like to set the same high standards of care for everyone. But not everyone can be treated in the same way. For example, a health care rule for the homeless, stating that two people must always share a room, might cause emotional or physical difficulties for a transgender person, whose outer appearance might not match all body parts.

How can we provide the right services? To provide the right services, we must address individuals, as individuals. A human being cannot be reduced to an articulated need and a provided service. Quality in service provision depends on making sure that we never lose sight of the person behind the need. We must also ensure that the recipient and the provider are always on an equal footing.

Good Practice NGOs can play a crucial role in breaking taboos and providing social service to all those left outside the traditional welfare system. AWO has developed a few innovative projects:

- Based on research which proves that certain mentally disabled women are capable of bringing up children, a project was developed in Bremen to provide home care for such families.

- The Lore-Agnes-Haus in Essen has put in place a family planning centre that offers consultations and group activities to people of all ages. Topics covered include sexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality and transgender. Consultation and materials are also provided in Turkish.

Recommendation 14

Evaluate yourself

Why should we evaluate ourselves? Projects depending on funding are usually subjected to evaluation. For activities financed by users, i.e. home-care, evaluation is not so common. To ensure non-discriminatory access to social services, it is crucial that you keep carrying out external and internal evaluations.

What are we looking for? You should make sure that equality targets have been met, for both the services provided and the organisational culture of your workplace.

How should we carry out an evaluation? In your evaluation, you must determine whether groups vulnerable to discrimination have access to your services, both as clients and employees. Are they invited to cooperate actively in the evaluation procedure? Self-help groups or expert organisations can also give you feedback. There are practical matters to consider. Whenever we apply for services, we have to fill in a form. Does your administration really need to know whether people are female or male (or can there be a third box)? Do you need to know whether people are married? Can the questions on next of kin, health, living arrangement etc. be gender neutral, or offer as many options as possible?

Good practice The co-operative Alpha Beta is a people's education co-operative member of LegaCoopBund. Alpha Beta systematically evaluates all the seminars and services they offer to the public by asking all participants to fill in a questionnaire on each of the aspects of the seminar and inviting comments on their services. The results of these questionnaires are subsequently analysed to find areas of improvement for the organisation.

Recommendation 15

Educate against discrimination

Why do we need to educate against discrimination? Service providers can play a key public role in promoting anti-discrimination. It is very important, therefore, to address issues such as multiculturalism, sexual orientation, ageism and disability in any educational activity. Emphasise the importance of education - teach those who access your services about minorities and diversity.

How can we use our training schemes? If an organisation is actively fighting discrimination it is vital to train its own staff for this part of their work. Such training programmes can also be adapted for other target groups and may even be developed into services of their own, which can be offered to other organisations, public institutions or private enterprises. To achieve

change, people need to know about and understand discrimination as a phenomenon that can be reduced and possibly overcome by certain strategies. They need to be given the tools to do this effectively and must be shown the advantage of a society in which discrimination is fought. If this does not happen, it is unfair to expect their commitment.

How can we use our experiences? While we need to use formal training on anti-discrimination issues, this is often mistakenly thought of as the only way to increase awareness of discrimination. In fact, we often learn more as a side-effect of other activities that do not, themselves, qualify as strictly 'educational'. Going about your daily business of service provision, dealing with clients and contractors, can often be more enlightening than any formal training. This does not, of course, mean that service providers should rely on this. Every possible method should be used to increase awareness and get the anti-discrimination message across, from education to lobbying and fund-raising.

Good Practice AWO offers language courses for migrants or refugees. It is important that within the essential language training, vocabulary such as 'homosexual', 'disabled' and the ability to describe your situation is taught. For many people language classes are the door into a new culture and therefore the teachers need to be trained and sensitive to the needs of all people involved. This can also be an opportunity to inform the participants about the existence of self-help groups for minorities and other groups.

<p>Recommendation 16 Raise Awareness and Lobby!</p>

Why should we lobby? Many large social welfare organisations also have a great deal of political influence. It is therefore vital that this influence is used to bring about change in society. Lobbying by social welfare organisations is essential to improve the political and legal situation of disadvantaged groups. Social welfare organisations are permanently raising awareness in their activities and publicity, but it is also important to take this one step further and to hold specific awareness days on certain issues. This focuses the public and media on their work in the community and publicises their image as an inclusive organisation working for all people.

How do we lobby? Use your influence on decision-makers of all kinds and levels to push forward the fight against discrimination. Most political issues have a link to anti-discrimination-issues and this must be communicated as clearly as possible. Social welfare organisations are well placed to raise awareness, explore the scope of existing legislation and seek to create or strengthen effective legal measures to fight discrimination.

What methods should we use? Public events, conferences and seminars on non-discrimination all help to raise awareness. The process of implementing recent EU Directives on non-discrimination in employment, and on tackling racism in national legislation, offers an excellent opportunity to promote good practice, produce position papers and organise press conferences.

Good Practice Every year, La Ligue de l'Enseignement et de l'Education Permanente organises an anti-racism week that takes place in all schools throughout France. The aim of

the week is to raise awareness, organise exhibitions and invite NGOs to come and debate with school children.

Recommendation 17 Balance ethics and commerce
--

Why do we need to balance ethics and commerce? Service providers have to face questions about efficient use of available economic resources, especially when dealing with increased competition from the private sector. This is due to ideals of keeping costs low while sustaining or even increasing quality, efficiency and sometimes profit. In this market-oriented approach, there is a real tendency towards discriminating against people, and especially the most marginalized. It is becoming more and more obvious that the mechanisms of the free market put pressure on individual rights. If no counterforce is applied, economic pressure will prevail and anti-discriminatory ethics will be reduced to so much paper and hot air from 'do-gooders'. In the course of this project it has become clear that this issue is the key challenge faced by social service providers. We plan to devote further thought and action to this important issue.

How do we achieve balance? We must be aware of the dilemma between economic pressure and ethical principles. This question must be addressed, especially at management level, and we must develop strategies in order to reduce gap between these extremes. Changing attitudes is a viable, albeit long-term, strategy.

How can we change attitudes? All organisations and staff interviewed agreed that some activities of welfare organisations are particularly discrimination-prone. One organisation mentioned clients who refuse to accept foreign nurses in home-care. Examples of companies who refuse to pay staff benefits and can therefore undercut competition were also given. There is no easy way to break this vicious circle. In the long run, though, the implementation of this Guide to Good Practice, in combination with other forces of change, will, we feel confident, eventually create an environment in which balance can be achieved.

Good practice. It is clear that the conflict between commerce and ethics is becoming a key issue for social service providers. NGOs as social service providers are facing difficulties due to the increase in for-profit services provided by private companies. This pressure must not be allowed to take away the essence of the member agencies of SOLIDAR in their provision of social services. Competition rules need to be based on the criteria of quality and inclusion and not on the profit motive. SOLIDAR has produced a full report on this issue that is available on the SOLIDAR website or from the address provided.



The Status quo is not enough!

- You work for an NGO, a Trade Union or a public organisation?
- You know that society is made up of many groups and appreciate the rich diversity of human beings (women, men, transgender, gay, lesbian, young, old, disabled people, different cultures and religions)?
- You want to know if your organisation is free from discrimination?

If you answered YES to the above, then it is time to...

TEST YOUR ORGANISATION ONLINE at www.solidar.org

MEMBERS

Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund e.V., Germany

Arbeiterwohlfahrt Bundesverband e.V., Germany

Arbejderbevægelsens Internationale Forum, Denmark

War on Want, United Kingdom
One World Action, United Kingdom
Norsk Folkehjelp, Norway
Associação de Serviço de Apoio Social, Portugal
FCD Solidarité Socialiste, Belgium
FOS Fonds voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking, Belgium
Kansainvälinen Solidaarisuussäätiö, Suomi/Finland
TSL Workers' Educational Association, Finland
La Ligue Française de l'Enseignement et de l'Education Permanente, France
Volkshilfe Österreich, Austria
Nord-Süd Institut, Austria
Schweizerisches ArbeiterInnenhilfswerk SAH, Switzerland
Solidaridad Internacional, Spain
ISCOD, Spain
MPDL, Spain
OGBL Solidarité Syndicale, Luxembourg
COCIS, Italy
Lega Provinciale Cooperative Bolzano, Italy
ISI (CGIL/CISL/UIL), Italy
IFWEA, International Federation of Workers' Education Association
Olof Palme Centre, Sweden
Humanitas, The Netherlands

AFFILIATED MEMBERS

UNISON, United Kingdom
STUC, United Kingdom
Kalayaan, United Kingdom
Low Pay Unit, United Kingdom
IFIAS, Belgium
INOUE, Ireland
Narodna Dopomoha, Ukraine

OBSERVERS

ICFTU, International Confederation of Free Trade Unions