



Partner Survey 2007

An online survey was carried out **July 30th - October 7th 2007** among all active partners both primary and secondary in the North and in the South. It was designed so that Fredskorpset could obtain more information on partner's perception of Fredskorpset and how to improve Fredskorpset's services.

An additional outcome of the survey was that several of the respondents printed out the questionnaire and employed it as a self-assessment in their institutions. Many found the exercise very helpful, as a useful reminder, and an eye opener regarding what they should do in the network.

- It has been a quite useful exercise which made us to reflect on our position in the exchange. This is with regard to our relationship with FK, with our partner and also with our participants. We recommend you to conduct this survey at least once every two years.

The 349 e-mail invitations generated 151 responses, a response rate of 43 percent. The statistics gathered are following the same distribution in sector, location and programmes as general FK statistics and demonstrate that the sample is a relatively representative group and the data might generate valuable information about FK partners in general.

The summary is organised under the following headlines: FK Norway's services to partners; Events during the exchange period; Institutional capacity building; Communication within the partnership; and Network activities.

FK Norway's services to partners:

Please indicate how satisfied you are with FK Norway's service to your organisation:	Satisfied	Not satisfied	Don't know	N
Obtaining information on how to become a FK partner	90 %	3 %	7 %	69
Processing time of application: Feasibility/preliminary study	90 %	0 %	6 %	71
Guidance throughout the planning period	92 %	4 %	4 %	71
Processing time of application: Collaboration Agreement	96 %	2 %	1 %	70
Program staff accessibility	93 %	4 %	3 %	71
Follow-up and monitoring	94 %	6 %	0 %	71
Guidance throughout the exchange period	90 %	6 %	4 %	71
Reporting routines	84 %	11 %	4 %	70

The survey illustrate that almost all partners were satisfied with FK Norway's services to their organisation. All the partners were given the possibility to describe with their own words how they perceived FK Norway's services to the partners. In general they were positive and provided constructive suggestions for improvement. A few respondents mentioned problems related to changes of officer in charge and not receiving timely responses during emergencies and difficulties with the financial reporting. Other general issues not directly related to FK's services were shortage of funds, age limitations for participants and short duration of the exchange period.

- I find FK very transparent and objective. So far, we have had a fruitful collaboration.

- FK is an organisation that is very easy to deal with, and we feel that the communication with the partners is good. FK seems to be constantly improving its procedures based on experience, evaluation and feedback. This is probably making the exchanges more and more successful.

Over 90 percent of the Primary partners in the survey are satisfied with the communication between their organisation and the FK offices. More than half on the Secondary partners keep in direct touch with the FK offices even though they are responsible only towards their Primary/Lead partner, the same amount of Secondary partners receive visits from FK Norway or its regional offices once a year.

- The communication between primary and secondary partner as well as FK Norway is smooth. (But) There were some communication gaps between sending and receiving organisations.

Events during the Exchange Round

How useful are the course topics and events at the preparatory course for your participants?	Useful	Less than useful	Don't know	
Orientation about FK	91 %	1 %	8 %	140
Information/Follow-up work	86 %	4 %	10 %	139
Development and North/South issues-conflict resolution	79 %	2 %	18 %	136
Intercultural communication and understanding	91 %	2 %	7 %	138
Partner visits	85 %	2 %	13 %	137
Excursions	81 %	2 %	16 %	133
Health and safety	87 %	0 %	12 %	135
Project work (Norway only)	58 %	2 %	42 %	76

Over 90 percent of the respondents stated that the Orientation about FK and the course in Intercultural communication and understanding at the preparatory course was useful for their participants. The other events and courses in health and safety; Information and follow-up work; Partner visits, Excursions; Development and North/South issues and conflict resolution; and Project work at the preparatory course were also useful to most of the respondents.

- There may be a need to allocate more time on intercultural communication and understanding because participants from the north more often get cultural shocks on arrival in south because they were not well prepared for the change.

How satisfied are you with FK Norway's (including its regional offices) contribution to the following events?	Satisfied	Less than satisfied	Don't know	
Planning meeting	84%	5 %	12 %	145
Preparatory course	88 %	4 %	8 %	143
Mid-term review	68 %	6 %	27 %	137
Homecoming seminar (if applicable)	74 %	2 %	24 %	112

The vast majority of the respondents were satisfied with FK's contribution to the preparatory course, planning meeting and the Homecoming seminar while more than half were satisfied with FK's contribution to the Mid-term review.

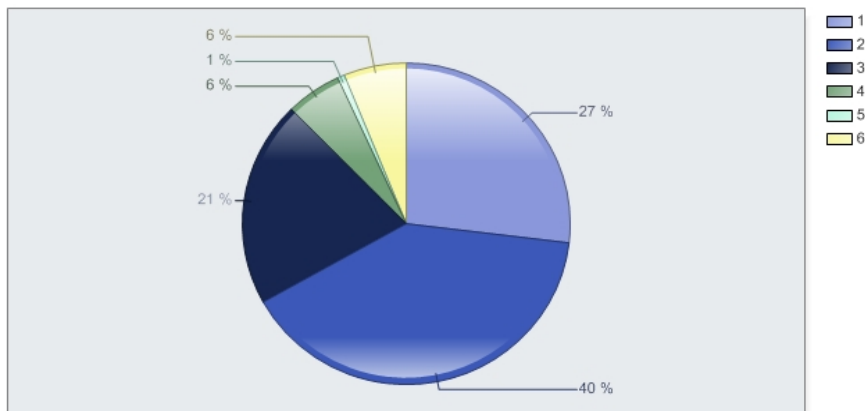
- Our present participants have given us very positive feedback on the FK preparatory course, but there are differences in the overall impression we get of the courses. The outcome probably depends on both the course leaders and the participants involved.

When comparing satisfaction of Mid-term review with partnership a very high percentage of the Norwegian partners did not know whether they were satisfied with the Mid-term review. The explanation might be that the term is not that familiar as it is normally called Partner review or 'gjennomgang' in Norway. This demonstrates that FK Norway employ a different terminology among Norwegian partners than among South partners.

Institutional Capacity Building

How satisfied is your organisation with the institutional capacity building related to the FK exchange?

1) Very satisfied 2) Quite satisfied 3) satisfied 4) Less than satisfied 5) Not satisfied at all 6) Don't know



88 percent of the respondents were satisfied with the institutional capacity building related to the FK exchange programme.

What concrete results of the FK Norway exchange have you seen so far?	Score
The language skills have improved	56 %
The technical skills have improved	56 %
The staff is better trained	47 %
The staff is more motivated	63 %
The organisation has developed	57 %
The quality of the leadership has improved	44 %
The informational work/PR has improved	43 %
The organisation takes part in more strategic international networks	45 %
The organisation gets more international exposure	69 %
The staff knows more about other cultural traits (e.g. values, beliefs, perception of time, importance of arts)	74 %
The intercultural acceptance has improved	68 %
The knowledge on North/South issues has increased	70 %
The staff has developed friendships across borders	87 %
N*	142

87 percent of the respondents said the concrete result of the FK exchange has been that the employees have developed friendships across borders. The majority of the partners also ticked off most of the other alternatives. This illustrates that the exchange has had a great influence in a variety of areas in the different partner institutions.

- Of all the boxes ticked above, the most concrete result has been the intercultural acceptance, knowledge about cultural traits, and knowledge level about North/South issues. All of these have helped the organisation improve and develop its capacity to interact with Norwegian and other partner's agencies.

- Our organisation is already cooperating on an international level in other projects; therefore many of the qualities mentioned are already in place. However, the exchange with FK has highlighted these qualities. One thing that has happened is that the exchange has improved and has become more rooted in the organisation during the different exchanges and thereby opened the eyes for the participants as important in the staff and with knowledge that must be used.

Almost half of the partners say that all or the majority of their staff members feel ownership towards the FK Norway exchange programme. The other half says that some does.

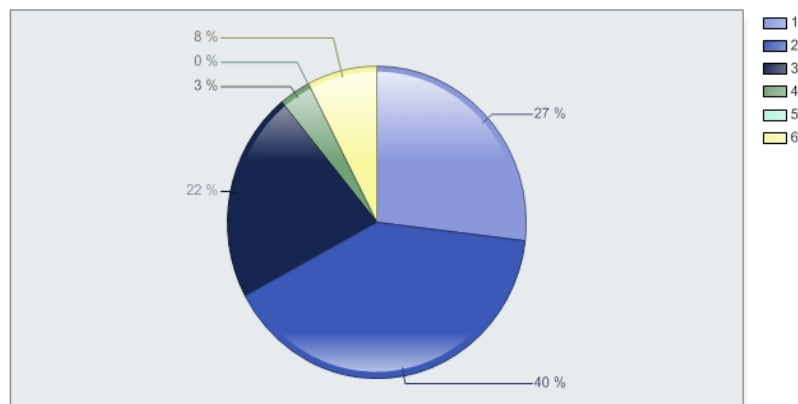
Among the participants you recruited to send abroad, how many were recruited among your staff?	Total	We represent a:			
		Primary partner in the North	Secondary partner in the South	Primary partner in the South	Secondary partner in the North
All participants	39 %	15 %	49 %	54 %	100 %
Most participants	13 %	17 %	14 %	4 %	0 %
Some participants	23 %	30 %	14 %	33 %	0 %
None	25 %	37 %	23 %	8 %	0 %
N	142	46	71	24	1

More than half of the Secondary and Primary partners in the South recruit all participants among staff members. Only 15 percent of the partners in the North do the same. This illustrates that a larger percent of Primary than among Secondary partners recruit all their participants internally and it occurs more often in the South than in the North.

- The interest for the project is increasing and more of our own employees are interested in participating. However, the possibilities for sending out our own staff members are limited due to the age limitations.

Are you satisfied with how the members of your organisation that you recruited to be FK participants contributed to the institutional capacity building in your organisation?

1) Very satisfied 2) Quite satisfied 3) Satisfied 4) Less than satisfied 5) Not satisfied at all 6) Don't know



Of the 45 percent that recruited all FK participants from among members of network/partner organisations almost 90 percent were satisfied with their contribution to the institutional capacity building in their organisation. Of the partners recruiting participants among staff members 86 percent were satisfied with their contribution and of the partners employing external recruitment 72 percent were satisfied with their contribution to the institutional capacity building in their organisation.

- We'd like to receive more participants from network partnership.

What happened to the participants you recruited after their exchange period finished?	Internally recruited		Externally recruited
	staff members	members of your organisation/network	
They got promoted/ still members of our organisation	36 %	58 %	-
They kept the same/got a job	43 %	25 %	25 %
They left our organisation	19 %	25 %	16 %
They stay in touch with us informally	32 %	40 %	64 %
At times we use them as a resource to improve our capacity building	17 %	21 %	36 %
Don't know	6 %	3 %	12 %
Other:	27 %	21 %	12 %
N	109	120	69

The FK statutes clearly state that exchanges consist of partner institutions exchanging members of staff, meaning employed in the partner institution. However, FK accepts that participants may be externally recruited. The survey illustrates that the intended internal recruitment occurs to a much larger extent in the South than in

the North. However, the findings show that recruitment among members of network or partner organisations generates even more capacity to the different partner institutions than participants recruited among staff members. The survey also demonstrates that the FK partners make an effort to employ the externally recruited in a way that build institutional capacity.

- (We) have participated in two exchanges: one completed and one ongoing. In both these, we have received participants from other organisations. As such, the direct capacity building of our organisation has happened as a result of having new staff and being part of the FK network and the (...) partnership. In the next exchange, we plan to send a participant from our team.

- The programme has enhanced youth involvement in sustainable projects, information work and publicity, gender mainstreaming as well as understanding of international issues. Most participants have been recruited as staff after the exchange.

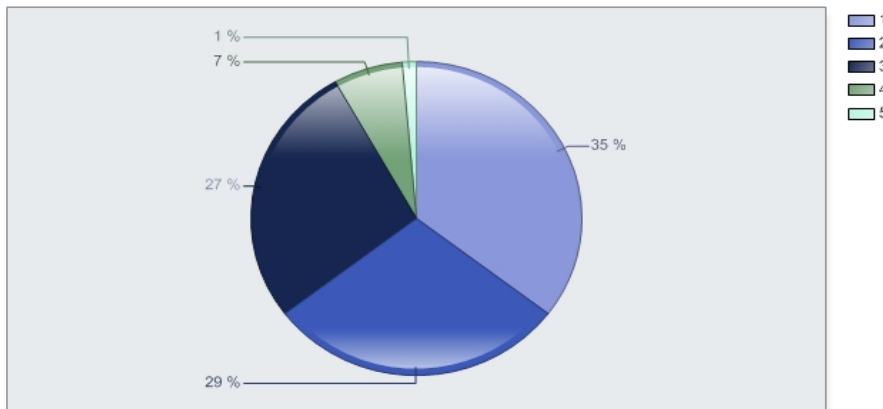
Almost half of the partners say that of the internally recruited participants men and women leave in equal numbers after the exchange period. However, 6 percent say that mostly women leave compared to 44 percent saying that mostly men leave the organisation. This illustrates that there is a tendency that women continue to work in the partner institution while men leave after the exchange. The few women who actually leave are according to this survey mainly South-South participants working with Secondary Partners in Asia.

Communication within the Partnership

More than half of the partners mentioned communication problems as the most challenging issue within the partnership and also the major challenge in integrating participants at the work place. More than 20 percent mentioned that the partner does not act in accordance with the contract; irregular payments; lack of acknowledgement of the participants they sent abroad; and unclear roles in the partnership was the most challenging issue within the partnership, more among Primary leads in the South than in the North and also more than Secondary partners. Not getting along with people from their partner was only mentioned by a few.

How satisfied are you with the communication within your partnership?

1) Very satisfied 2) Quite satisfied 3) satisfied 4) Less than satisfied 5) Not satisfied at all



About 90 percent of the respondents were satisfied with the communication, and equality and the reciprocity in within their partnership.

What have been the greatest challenges regarding the communication within your partnership?	Score
Language barriers	18 %
Location in different time zones	13 %
Technical problems (phone, internet, fax, etcetera)	46%
Participants are intermediaries, so we have little direct contact	10 %
High turnover among the contact persons	10 %
Visa problems	30 %
Other, please specify:	32 %
<i>N</i>	125

Almost half of the respondents mentioned that technical problems had been the greatest challenge regarding the communication within their partnership, 30 percent visa problems, and 18 percent language barriers. Under other a few mentioned here that they had no challenges or challenges that were not related to communication.

Network Activities

How useful have FK Norway's network activities and resources been for your organisation?	Useful	Not useful	Not applicable	<i>N</i>
The North/South Forum in Oslo	80 %	1 %	20 %	139
Network meetings (South partners)	75 %	2 %	24 %	128
FK Norway's WebPages	82 %	9 %	10 %	137
Participant blogs	49 %	14 %	37 %	128
Preparatory courses	88 %	2 %	10 %	140
Homecoming seminars	73 %	3 %	25 %	135
Participant conferences (in Norway)	51 %	5 %	45 %	131
X-participants networks and meetings (in Norway)	35 %	5 %	60 %	119
Thematic conferences (in South)	47 %	3 %	51 %	117
Bringing People Together-events (in Norway)	61 %	2 %	38 %	132

Almost 90 percent of the partners found the preparatory course useful for their organisation. When comparing activities with partnership status and location the survey demonstrates that the FK activities and resources are relevant for the target groups they are meant to support. While 89 percent were satisfied with the web pages, 82 found them useful for their organisation.

- We appreciate so much the services offered to us as well as to the services being provided to our FK participants in terms of knowledge, cultural and experience sharing. We hope the same will be extended for many more years so as to cement our friendship.

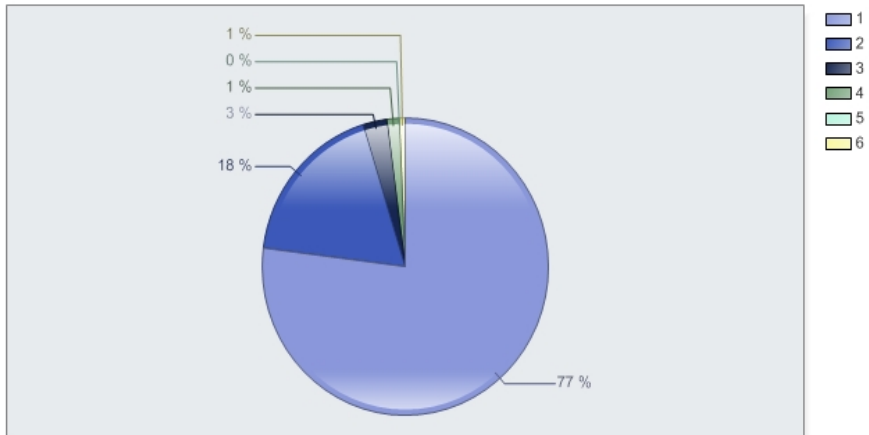
60 percent of the respondents keep in touch with the FK partner organisation outside their exchange program. The main reasons for this contact are sharing practical information, to discuss issues within their professional field, and for providing support when challenges erupt in the exchange programme. Only 7 percent do not have much contact. This illustrates that the FK exchange programme is one of many activities for most partners, but also that the FK programme generates international exposure and networking.

- Greatly improved international culture understanding. This has a great understanding of our selves and has great impact on world peace and tolerance to each other in the world as we know each other better.

- In our experience the exchange program has been a splendid opportunity to forge international solidarity and concern between participating interns from both North and South. There has been increased awareness to the realities of both countries and has seen how the youth addresses and struggle to effect meaningful change in our particular societies while at the same time, linking it to a much broader perspective at the global level.

How likely is it that you would recommend FK Norway's exchange program to others?

1) Very likely 2) Quite likely 3) Likely 4) less than likely 5) Not likely at all 6) Don't know



Almost all respondents state that it is likely that they would recommend FK Norway's exchange programme to others, of which 77 percent said it was very likely, 18 percent quite likely and 3 percent likely. For one percent it was less than likely and another percent did not know.

In the survey FK is described as a service-oriented, transparent and objective facilitator. The findings demonstrate that the vast majority are satisfied with FK's services. The survey also show that the FK exchange programme has led to increased understanding between different cultures, promoted global networking and increased strategic cooperation between institutions and individuals in Norway and in the South. Furthermore, the survey illustrates that FK partners are satisfied with the participant's contribution to the institutional capacity building. Then again, the survey does not say anything about what institutional capacity building is.

The survey demonstrates that FK operates with a broad scope of activities and seeks involvement in many sectors of society and professions with an exceptionally wide range of organisational, cultural and regional variety. This great variety implicates that it will be difficult to customise the services to fit all and that communication within the partnership will persist as a challenge as both individuals and partner institutions are changing.

Recommendations:

- Improve information sharing between partners, between partners and FK, between partners and participants, and between participants and FK
 - Not only rely on the internet when publishing relevant news and changes
 - Open for partners to share bi-annual progress reports with FK
 - Ensure regular update of database information
 - Create a user friendly guide to FK financial routines/control
 - Better inform partners **when, what** and **why** in relation to Homecoming Seminar, Network meetings in the South and FK events and conferences in Norway
 - Create a user friendly and interactive network for partners and former, active and future participants. Encourage volunteers to take on limited coordinator responsibilities for relevant thematic issues. This network should not only be accessible through the internet.
- Focus even more on sustainable learning than what is already being done.
- Clear definition and consistent employment of frequently used terms and concept e.g. institutional capacity building, mid-term review and etcetera
- Ensure equal practice and services in FK headquarter and the regional offices.
- More focus on capacity needs within the partner institution during Preliminary study prior to signing of Collaboration Agreement
- Emphasize more on institutional capacity building during planning meeting
- Improve the monitoring mechanism and disseminate information about this system among partners (not only publish on website) e.g. ensure that partners actively take part in the participants work cycles and that contracts are fulfilled.