



JÖNKÖPING INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS SCHOOL  
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# Collaboration within a CSR Project

A Case Study of “Bra Bostäder för Småhushåll till Rimligt Pris”

Master Thesis within: Business Administration

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## Master's Thesis in Business Administration

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** The purpose of this thesis is to explore and analyze how collaboration within a CSR project develops and evolves over time. By analyzing a CSR project that involves actors from multiple sectors, the aim is to acquire an increased understanding of the collaborative process.

**Background:** Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as a concept has been growing in importance and is becoming an important part of corporations' strategy, but there are still issues of how to engage in an efficient and effective way. As consumers are becoming increasingly aware of CSR it can influence their buying behaviors. It is important for corporations to engage in CSR that can result in both social and financial value. CSR collaboration with external actors can provide and leverage unique combinations of resources and knowledge which could otherwise be hard for the corporation to obtain. The challenge for corporations is to find the right collaborative partnerships with the capabilities to meet the needs of society. Different types of actors can have different motivations behind their involvement, raising the issue of how they can collaborate without conflict.

**Method:** To answer the purpose, a case study was conducted. The case study is based on a project called “Bra bostäder för småhushåll till rimligt pris” which is aimed at alleviate the shortage of affordable housing in Sweden. The project intends to show that it is possible to build more affordable homes where the price for the end consumer is considered from the beginning. Primary data was collected through semi-structured interviews with important actors involved in the case.

**Conclusion:** The ability to develop a CSR project is critically dependent on the collaboration between the involved actors. The collaborative process and inclusion of different actors are based on the competencies, knowledge, and experience. Social aspects have been the foundation for a shared purpose, but the focus has been on issues regarding sustainable financial viability. The collaborative nature has allowed for a unique combination that would otherwise not been possible and have increased the value of the project.

# Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Bra Bostäder för Småhushåll till Rimligt Pris .....	2
1.2	Trästad 2012 .....	3
1.3	Problem Discussion .....	3
1.3.1	Purpose .....	4
1.3.2	Research Questions .....	4
<b>2</b>	<b>Theoretical Framework .....</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1	Corporate Social Responsibility .....	5
2.1.1	Definition .....	7
2.1.2	Stakeholders .....	8
2.2	CSR Collaboration .....	10
2.2.1	Business-to-Business .....	10
2.2.2	Private-Public .....	11
2.3	CSR and Strategy .....	12
2.3.1	CSR Initiatives .....	12
2.3.2	Selection of CSR Initiatives .....	14
2.3.3	Business-to-Business Strategy .....	15
2.3.4	Public-Private Strategy .....	17
<b>3</b>	<b>Method .....</b>	<b>20</b>
3.1	Research Approach .....	20
3.1.1	Qualitative Research .....	20
3.1.2	Primary and Secondary Data .....	21
3.1.3	Literature Review .....	21
3.2	Case Study .....	22
3.2.1	Case Selection .....	22
3.3	Data Collection Method .....	23
3.3.1	Interview Guide .....	24
3.4	Data Analysis .....	25
3.5	Validity and Reliability .....	26
3.5.1	Validity .....	26
3.5.2	Reliability .....	26
<b>4</b>	<b>Empirical Findings .....</b>	<b>27</b>
4.1	Bra Bostäder för Småhushåll till Rimligt Pris .....	27
4.2	Södra .....	27
4.3	Södra Timber .....	28
4.4	VKAB .....	30
4.5	Kronoberg County Administration .....	32
4.6	Linnaeus University .....	34
4.7	IKEA .....	35
4.8	SP - Technical Research Institute of Sweden .....	36
4.9	Videum .....	37
<b>5</b>	<b>Analysis .....</b>	<b>39</b>
5.1	Involvement in BRA BO .....	39
5.2	Collaboration within BRA BO .....	40

5.3	Future of BRA BO.....	42
<b>6</b>	<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Discussion.....</b>	<b>48</b>
7.1	Future Research.....	51
	<b>References .....</b>	<b>52</b>
	<b>Appendix: A.....</b>	<b>57</b>

## Table of Figures and Tables

Figure 1: Production Cost Index for Multi-family Homes vs. Consumer Price Index.....	2
Figure 2: Corporate Responsibility .....	7
Figure 3: Stakeholder View of the Corporation.....	9
Figure 4: Responsive vs. Strategic CSR. ....	12
Figure 5: Corporate Social Responsibility vs. Creating Shared Value.....	15
Figure 6: Social Businesses Model .....	17
Figure 7: Business Model for Collaboration .....	18
Table 1: The Roles of the Public Sector .....	11
Table 2: Interviewees .....	23
Table 3: Role(s) and Contributions of the Organizations within BRA BO .....	45
Table 4: Organizations Motivations to their Involvement in BRA BO.....	46
Table 5: Potential Role(s) and Contributions of the Current Organizations in the Future of BRA BO.....	46

# 1 Introduction

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as a business concept is growing in importance and more and more corporations have recognized its strategic value. By the end of century close to 90% of fortune 500 companies had recognized the strategic value of CSR (Min-Dong, 2008). This implies that CSR is taking a more important role in day-to-day operations of corporations. Acting on CSR is moving from being an ad-hoc cost with limited top management involvement to an integrated part of the corporation's goals and missions enabling them to create both social and financial value.

CSR is a concept which describes how corporations actively work with issues regarding social aspects and the environment. Most business concepts have a wide range of different definitions. This is especially true with CSR which is still developing as a concept, creating many different interpretations of what it actually means for a corporation to be socially responsible. The most common CSR definition is provided by the Commission of the European Communities (CEC) (Dahlsrud, 2008). CSR is defined as: "A concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis" (CEC, 2001, p. 6).

Consumers are increasingly aware of their communities and show interest and concern for the social environment. Individual consumer's purchases and use of certain products act as a statement and can be associated with their personal beliefs and values (Zucchella, 2007; Mohr, Webb, & Harris, 2001). The social responsibilities taken or not taken by corporations will influence the buying behaviors of consumers. There are examples of consumers boycotting products from corporations which have been proven to act socially irresponsibly (Zucchella, 2007; Kihlman, 2012). CSR efforts can also be used to attract new employees that share the same values as the organization (Yunus, Moingeon, & Lehman-Ortega, 2010).

Since competence related to social responsibility often is not a part of a corporations skill set, there could be a need for partnering with other actors that have these skills. Partnerships and joint efforts have the ability to pool and leverage resources and competences so that larger and more effective efforts can be undertaken, resulting in both social and financial value (LaFrance & Lehmann, 2005).

The relationship between CSR and corporate performance have neither been proven to be positive or negative (McWilliams, Siegel, & Wright, 2006), even though consumers perceive the relation to be positive (Mohr et al., 2001). It is argued that there is a positive correlation between CSR and financial performance when the motivations behind corporate action are strategic rather than altruistic (Hillman & Keim, 2001). In order to acquire the highest levels of social and financial benefits, simultaneously, products and/or services should be developed with consideration to both social and financial aspects from the initial development stages (Porter & Kramer, 2006).

## 1.1 Bra Bostäder för Småhushåll till Rimligt Pris

This thesis will examine a project called “Bra bostäder för småhushåll till rimligt pris” (“Good housing for small and single households for a reasonable price”) which is being developed in Växjö, Sweden. For the rest of this thesis “Bra bostäder för småhushåll till rimligt pris” will be referred to as BRA BO.

Housing shortage is a rising problem within the Swedish society, and the production numbers of new houses and apartments are far below the actual demand (von Platen, 2009). Another issue is costs, both for living in and constructing new homes. Since the 1980s production costs of multi-family homes have increased at over twice the rate as the consumer price index (Figure 1) (von Platen, 2009). Construction costs are transferred to the end-customers, creating a situation in which fewer homes are being built during economic down-turns. When the economy turns for the better, more consumers are able to purchase which increases the demand for new homes. Both these scenarios result in a situation in which builders can maintain high cost levels, by adjusting the supply of new homes to the demand at the time.

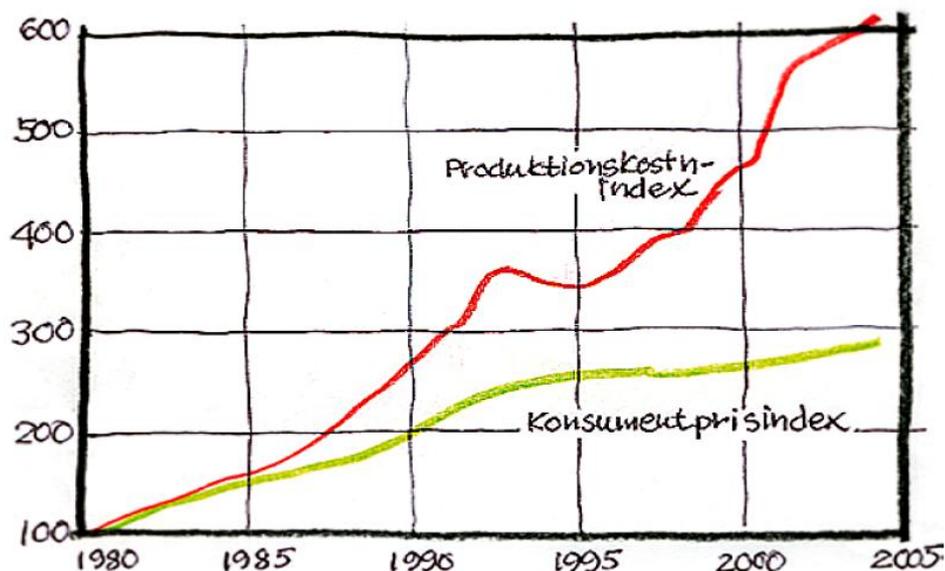


Figure 1: Production Cost Index for Multi-family Homes (red line) vs. Consumer Price Index (green line).  
Source: von Platen, 2009.

The lack of affordable housing in Sweden is especially tough for small and single households and it is becoming harder and harder to find affordable housing options that can fit their economic situation (von Platen, 2009). BRA BO intends to show that it is possible to build more affordable homes where the price for the end consumer is considered from the beginning. This is going to be achieved by utilizing a standardized and modularized construction process. Construction companies are often trying to reinvent the wheel by unnecessarily customizing each project, and have not utilized these processes leaving room for improvement (Bra Bostäder, 2012).

BRA BO is a part of a larger national program, Trästad 2012, which aims to promote wood construction technology and the use of wood in construction. The use of wood as the featured construction material has then become an integral part of BRA BO. If successful, BRA BO is aimed at resulting in something that is beneficial for small and single house-

holds looking for affordable housing. The focus of this thesis will be on the collaboration that was created to develop BRA BO and CSR.

## **1.2 Trästad 2012**

Trästad 2012 is a joint project of 16 municipalities, the counties of Västerbotten, Dalarna and Kronoberg, the Västra Götaland region, and Sweden's Träbyggnadskansli (The Wood Construction Administration). Trästad 2012 is divided into four different regions (corresponding to the four participating counties), in which Växjö is the leading member of "Region Sydost" (Southeast region).

The purpose of Trästad 2012 is to "develop Swedish expertise and technology, and in time create a European and global market for Swedish industrial wood construction technology" (Trästad 2012). The project aims to improve knowledge and create new ways of how modern wood buildings can renew urban environments and create attractive, sustainable cities (Trästad 2012). Trästad 2012 is a public project and is funded by the participating municipalities, counties, and Tillväxtverket (Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth).

A specific benefit of using wood as a building material, that Trästad 2012 aims to highlight, is that it is a renewable natural resource and relative to other construction materials, it requires small amounts of energy during the production process. Compared to concrete, the use of wood as a construction material can reduce carbon dioxide emissions by up to 90% (Trästad 2012). The goals of Trästad 2012 include contributions to an attractive town planning, urban development and to act as a source of inspiration for local builders, architects, city planners, and politicians.

## **1.3 Problem Discussion**

Though corporations have realized the growing importance of CSR, some do not know how to get involved (Porter & Kramer, 2006). As these corporations do not know how to act there is a risk that they will get engaged with initiatives that look "good" in the public eye, rather than those that will have greater social value. Several of the more commonly used initiatives of CSR are ad-hoc, and lay outside the corporations' strategic plan (Kotler & Lee, 2005). In the past corporations have been focusing on short-term goals rather than trying to understand customer needs in order to create long-term excellence. However, the developing trend of CSR intends for corporations to make their social responsibility a strategic part of their business model (Porter & Kramer, 2011). Different resources and possibilities in combination with the issues present and the unique pressures from stakeholders will influence each corporation's CSR strategies. Copying other corporations' approaches can be hard since CSR is a dynamic issue; a representation of the relationship between business and society (Hill, Stephens, & Smith, 2003). Therefore the strategic CSR plan needs to be context specific for each individual corporation (van Marrewijk, 2003). These situations create a challenging situation for corporations of how to act and open up for the need to collaborate with others. As CSR is becoming an integrated part of a corporation's business plan, the importance of the integration increases as it will have a greater impact upon the overall performance of the corporation. Thus resulting in a closer connection between social values and benefits as a direct correlation with business benefits; shareholders profits and stakeholders value (van Marrewijk, 2003).

What makes BRA BO interesting is that the project group is composed of members of the private, the public and the academic sector. Even if governments or agencies do not necessarily label their activities as CSR, it does not mean that they are doing anything less (Fox, Ward, & Howard, 2002). Collaboration with external actors can provide unique combinations of resources and knowledge which would otherwise be hard for the corporation to obtain (Zucchella, 2007; Yunus et al., 2010). In these scenarios there is a challenge for corporations to find the right collaborative partnerships so that the capabilities of the corporation and the needs of society will be met. According to Fox et al. (2002), there are a limited number of cases where the public sector has been involved in promoting CSR activities. An additional difficulty with collaborations is that the participants can lack previous experience of working with each other in regards to business development. Even though the involved actors share the same values and commitment to the partnership, the lack of experience can result in decreased levels of trust and communication which potentially can create conflicts between different types of actors (Dahan, Doh, Oetzel, & Yaziji, 2010). This raises the issue of how different types of actors can collaborate without there being a conflict between them.

### **1.3.1 Purpose**

The purpose of this thesis is to explore and analyze how collaboration within a CSR project develops and evolves over time. By analyzing a CSR project that involves actors from multiple sectors, the aim is to acquire an increased understanding of the collaborative process.

### **1.3.2 Research Questions**

To further define the purpose of this thesis the following research questions were constructed:

1. Who are the actors involved and what are their role(s) in a CSR project?

Before being able to analyze how the collaboration takes place, it is important to understand which actors are involved and what their role(s) and contribution(s) to the project are.

2. Which are the underlying motivations to the actors' involvement?

As the actors represent different organizations and corporations, motivations for their involvement could be different. If so, it could potentially affect their behavior in relation to the other members.

3. How will the actors' involvement change over time?

As the project develops and evolves so will the actors within it. It will be important to know for how long each actor is planning on being a part of the project and what their future roles might look like.

## 2 Theoretical Framework

The first part of the theoretical framework will discuss the background of CSR and will provide a general understanding of the concept. Next is a discussion and clarification of the different definitions used for CSR. The discussion will then move into the actors involved, e.g. the stakeholders. Once the concept and the involved actors have been established, a further discussion on how CSR can and is being used will follow. The importance of different types of collaborations will be highlighted. The final part will discuss how these different collaborations can be leveraged and developed to maximize both social and financial benefits.

### 2.1 Corporate Social Responsibility

The importance of CSR has been increasing over the past few years, to the point that CSR has become “an inescapable priority for business leaders in every country” (Porter & Kramer, 2006, p. 78). CSR is recognized as a strategic success factor, which means that CSR has become an important part of corporations overall business goal and mission. Hence much research has come to focus on the strategic role of CSR (McWilliams et al., 2006), as a long-term strategic approach is more conducive to sustainable objectives (LaFrance & Lehmann, 2005).

One benefit of socially engaged and involved corporations is that they have become more effective than governments and non-profit organizations at promoting products and services that are beneficial for society (Porter & Kramer, 2011). Another benefit is that engagement in CSR has shown to have a positive impact on both current and prospective employees. The involvement can be used to attract new employees that share the same values as the organization (Yunus et al., 2010).

Corporate involvement in CSR is not only a result of decisions by owners; increased focuses on CSR issues have been influenced by external actors. These actors attempt to hold corporations accountable for their actions, which has resulted in more corporations taking responsibility for their role in and impact on societal and environmental well-being (Maignan & Ferrell, 2004; LaFrance & Lehmann, 2005; Panwar, Rinne, Hansen, & Juslin, 2006; Porter & Kramer, 2006; Zucchella, 2007; Andersen & Skjoett-Larsen, 2009; Vaaland & Owusu, 2012). Much this external influence can be credited to specific advocacy groups, such as PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) and Greenpeace. These groups have understood their relative power to corporations and are willing to take advantage of their situation (Amaeshi, Osuji, & Nnodim, 2008). The groups are both aggressive and efficient when communicating their opinions, positive and negative, in order to raise awareness both to the public and the involved corporations (Porter & Kramer, 2006).

The ability of external actors to communicate has been assisted by the development of information technology. These advancements have made information more widely distributed and transparent, making it easier to access information about corporate business practices (Panwar et al., 2006; Frost & Burnett, 2007). Information is no longer limited to specific markets, as it can transcend national borders, enabling news of both positive and negative business practices to spread to anyone interested. In a globalized market, it is important to ensure a positive information flow as it has an impact on the reputation of a corporation (Welford, 2003). These factors increase the pressure on corporations to adhere to CSR and have made them more aware of the effects of their actions. The flow of information has given light to several corporate scandals involving irresponsible behavior by

corporations such as Nike, the Gap, H&M, Wal-Mart, and Mattel (Frost & Burnett, 2007). These instances incited an outrage from consumers, who responded by boycotting products, forcing the corporations to take appropriate action and resume responsibility for their business practices. Consumers are more likely to boycott a socially irresponsible corporation than they are to support responsible ones (Mohr et al., 2001). After these instances, corporations must rebuild the trust between themselves and their stakeholders (LaFrance & Lehmann, 2005), and regain consumer confidence which can potentially be done through increased and targeted CSR efforts.

Producing corporations are increasingly sensitive to negative publicity as it will directly affect the buying behaviors of consumers (Zucchella, 2007; Andersen & Skjoett-Larsen, 2009). Consumers sensitivity has revealed new ways of competition, where products and/or services can be created and sustained based on the social responsibility and values they represent (Girod & Bryane, 2003; Porter & Kramer, 2006; Jones, Comfort & Hillier, 2006; Zucchella, 2007). The ability to create significant value from a product or service that is promoted as socially responsible is based on two requirements. First, consumers must be aware that the corporation, the product, or the service is “responsible”, and second, there must be barriers in place that hinder competition from breaking into the market place and imitating the product or service (Reinhardt, 1998; Mohr et al., 2001). A way to differentiate and create a competitive advantage is through utilization of fair trade and the ethical values it represents when developing products and services (Welford, 2003).

McWilliams et al. (2006) discusses the relationship between CSR and firm performance and conclude that the results are very inconsistent, displaying negative, nonexistent, and positive relations. The inconsistent results are attributed to inconsistencies in not only the definition of CSR but also in the sampling and measurement of corporate performance in the reported studies (McWilliams et al., 2006). However, Besley & Ghatak (2007) claim that corporations that are exposed to irresponsible business practices can earn a lower profit while the corporations that act responsibly can gain higher profits, which are viewed as a premium. Based on the studies by Mohr et al. (2001), consumers believe that social responsibility or the lack thereof will have an effect on corporate performance. Participants in one of these studies believed that some corporations engaged in CSR based on doing “good” to others, but also commented that corporations get involved in CSR in order to help themselves. Corporations that engage in social responsibility will be able to improve their image, which will influence sales, and those that do not will be penalized by the market forces. The consumers in the studies added that “they expect firms to protect the environment and behave ethically and that they sometimes base their purchasing decisions on these factors” (Mohr et al., 2001, p. 49).

Opinions exist that corporations should not be involved in CSR and should instead focus on maximizing shareholder value. Levitt (1958, p.47) stated that “government’s job is not business, and business’s job is not government”, which according to McWilliams et al. (2006) initiated the debate on CSR. Levitt’s (1958) approach is supported by Friedman (1970) which states that excess resources should either be reinvested or paid out to owners and not spent on CSR. Kihlman (2012) adds that from a pure business perspective, CSR is nothing more than brand management including efforts to increase the competitiveness, profit and value of the corporation.

### 2.1.1 Definition

When reviewing the literature several different definitions of CSR have been identified and the dispersion creates confusion when discussing the concept. The problem in defining CSR lies in that it stems from the relationship between business and society, which is a relationship that constantly fluctuates based on the relevant issues at the time (Hill et al., 2003). Another view on the issue is that CSR is a "vague and intangible term which can mean anything to anybody, and therefore is effectively without meaning" (Frankental, 2001, p.20).

When the concept of CSR was initially discussed and formally defined in 1953 by Bowen; "it refers to the obligations of businessmen to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society" (Carroll, 1999, p.270). When discussing CSR, the concept of sustainability is one of the underlying components. The most accepted definition of sustainability was first presented by Gro Harlem Brundtland in the Brundtland Commission (1987), as "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". This definition can be applied to societal, environmental, and economic sustainability.

There is a common misconception that CSR is equal to environmentally sound business practices. CSR is not specifically about the environment, it is rather about taking care of the society in which a corporation operates. The second most common definition of CSR, according to Dahlsrud (2008), was published by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) in 1999: "Corporate social responsibility is the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as the local community and society at large" (Watts & Holme, 1999). Worth noticing is the lack of inclusion of the environment. In the WBCSD report, Watts & Holme discussed the distinction of the three aspects of a corporation's responsibility: financial, environmental and social aspects (Figure 2). The distinction of the three types of responsibility as separate entities explains the lack of explicit mentioning of the environment in the definition. Although, it can be argued that without both financial and/or environmentally responsible business practices a corporation will not be able to improve the quality of society. The important aspect is that for a corporation to be fully responsible, three aspects of responsibility (financial, environmental, and social) must be balanced (Watts & Holme, 1999).

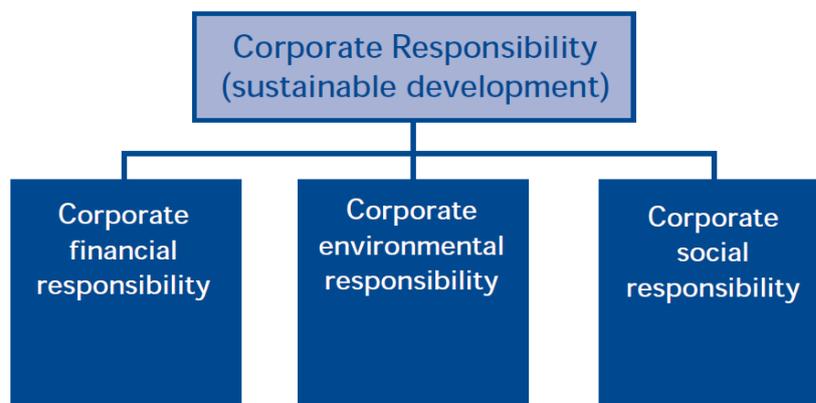


Figure 2: Corporate Responsibility.  
Source: Watts & Holme, 1999.

When utilizing a frequency count of the different dimensions of CSR, the results showed that the environmental dimension was underrepresented (Dahlsrud, 2008). A potential explanation is that the environmental factor was not initially included in definitions of CSR, which has resulted in the coining of alternative terms which will address those specific issues (Carroll, 1999). Several of the CSR definitions currently used are often biased to the specific interest that it is intended to describe (van Marrewijk, 2003; Dahlsrud, 2008). CSR has different meanings to different people and has been used as a “rallying cry and value crusade for optimists seeking to correct the business and environmental excesses of some corporations, as well as being used as a tactical play to protect and enhance the reputation of firms” (Pettigrew, 2006, p.12). Dahlsrud (2008) commented that due to the pre-inherent biases and lack of a unified definition of CSR, discussions and development of the concept has not been as productive as they potentially could have been. Additionally, the lack of a clear definition makes theoretical development and measurement difficult (McWilliams et al., 2006).

In an effort to categorize the different definitions of CSR, Dahlsrud (2008) analyzed 37 different definitions of CSR used between 1980 and 2003. After analyzing the meaning of the definitions based on the objective and targeted audience, five separate dimensions of CSR were distinguished: (1) the environmental (the natural environment), (2) the social (the relationship between business and society), (3) the economic (socio-economic or financial aspects), (4) the stakeholder (stakeholders or stakeholder groups), and (5) the voluntariness dimension (actions not prescribed by law). Even though several dimensions of CSR definitions can be identified, they are not distinct enough to completely differentiate them (Dahlsrud, 2008). However, two separate characteristics can be identified among the dimensions. First, there is the relationship between society and business and second, that corporations are engaged in initiatives to address social and environmental issue voluntarily (Andersen & Skjoett-Larsen, 2009).

Additional grounds for confusion about CSR is the related and alternative terms used to describe similar socio-environmental concepts, such as: business ethics, community development, community giving, community involvement, corporate citizenship, corporate ethics, corporate governance, corporate greening, corporate responsibility, environmental management, green supply, social enterprise, supply chain sustainability, sustainable entrepreneurship, sustainable development, sustainability, and triple bottom line (economic, environmental, and social) (van Marrewijk, 2003; Kotler & Lee, 2005; Panwar et al., 2006; Andersen & Skjoett-Larsen, 2009). Even though these are different expressions, they all point in the same direction of sustainable and responsible corporate practices.

### **2.1.2 Stakeholders**

Traditionally corporations, and their owners, have been able to dictate and control the market by pushing products to the market. However, the market place has changed and corporations now need to compete on a global level with increasingly informed consumers making their own educated purchasing decisions. As the power has shifted to the consumers, they are in a better place to demand actions and influence the behavior of the corporations they interact with (Levy & Weitz, 2009).

According to Maignan & Ferrell (2004, p. 8), “an organization’s commitment to social responsibility can be assessed by scrutinizing its impact on the issues of concern to its stakeholders”. Corporations have realized the importance of not only shareholders, with direct ownership and control, but also the power and influence of all the stakeholders. Freeman

(1984) introduced the study of the relationship and behavior between the company and its external environment as stakeholder theory. “A stakeholder in an organization is (by definition) any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievements of the company’s objectives” (Figure 3) (Freeman, 1984, p. 46).

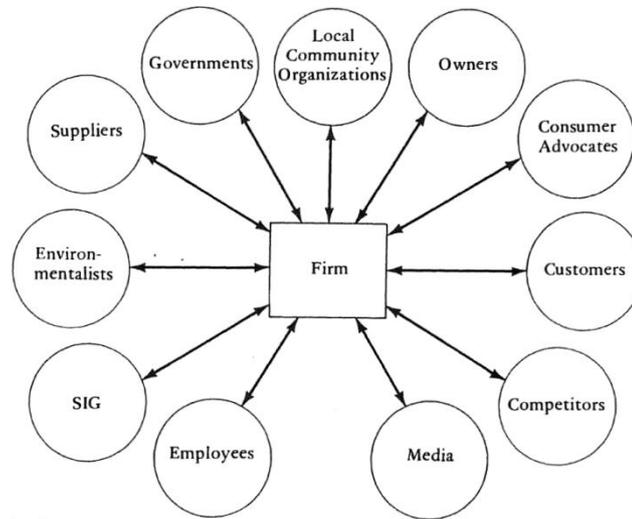


Figure 3: Stakeholder View of the Corporation.  
Source: Freeman, 1984.

In Maignan & Ferrell (2004, p. 6), “a stakeholder community is defined as a group of individual stakeholders who (a) interact with one another and (b) share common norms and goals with respect to a given issue”. As actors in the market place, stakeholders provide the resources necessary for corporations to produce, but they are also the same actors that buy back what has been produced. Stakeholders are both the internal actors with direct influence over the corporations and the external actors which are indirectly affected by or indirectly affect the corporation. Another unique feature of stakeholders is that they are not only concerned with issues that are directly related to them, but are willing to comment on indirect issues, such as the use of child labor (Maignan & Ferrell, 2004). Panwar et al. (2006) specified the stakeholders as the owners and investors, employees, customers, business partners, suppliers, competitors, government, regulators, non-governmental organizations, and communities.

The power asserted by stakeholders is only as strong as their ability to utilize resources to enforce action (LaFrance & Lehmann, 2005). If the corporation is not dependent upon the stakeholders in order to conduct their business, they have no direct reason to respond to them. According to Hill & Jones (1992), stakeholders can express their power towards corporations through the use of three different strategies; legal-, exit-, and voice- strategies. The legal strategy involves stakeholders utilizing the laws and regulations to file lawsuits and thus control the behavior of a corporation. When utilizing the exit strategy stakeholders can, or threaten to, boycott products or services of the corporation. In a perfect market the stakeholders can shift their business to another corporation and owners can sell off their holdings. Consumers use their daily purchasing choices as their votes and statements about their options towards the actions of corporations (Zucchella, 2007). The third option is the voice strategy, where stakeholders publicize the issue in order to stimulate awareness and public opinion. The legal strategy is only as strong as the laws in place, and the exit strategy is only as strong as the purchasing power of the consumers, but the voice strategy has the possibility of leveraging a greater public opinion and thus increasing the impact on

the corporation. It is worth noting that “publicity comes cheap, yet it can severely damage managerial reputations and the intrinsic value of manager’s human capital” (Hill & Jones, 1992, p.142).

A potential downside of too much stakeholder involvement is when misinformed stakeholders assert their power wrongfully, demanding actions that are not optimal for either the corporation or society. Stakeholders view the issue from the outside, and will thus not have a full understanding of the internal dimensions of a corporation (Porter & Kramer, 2006). Corporations should utilize excess capabilities and resources when engaging in CSR initiatives (Kotler& Lee, 2005), but for an outside stakeholder to be able to identify what these are can be next to impossible. Therefore it is crucial for the corporation to understand what their stakeholders are requesting, but at the same time understand their own capabilities and resources. This puts extra pressure on the corporation to correctly engage in CSR in order to have the largest impact on society, while also creating value for themselves.

## **2.2 CSR Collaboration**

In those instances that individual corporations do not have the required competences and/or resources to manage their social responsibility, they can engage in collaborations with others. These joint efforts can be with other corporate actors as well as actors from the public sector.

### **2.2.1 Business-to-Business**

Much of the research on CSR focuses on corporations and their interactions with especially end-consumers, but there is a lack of research related to interactions on a network and business-to-business (B2B) level (Zucchella, 2007). This is noteworthy in a business environment where networks and chain relationships are becoming more and more important. In complex CSR initiatives, collaboration and partnerships can prove to be crucial. Corporate networks, partnerships, and collaborations provide a unique way of combining resources and knowledge, which would be hard to attain for the individual corporation (Zucchella, 2007, Yunus et al., 2010). These combinations are as applicable for traditional business practices as they are for CSR initiatives. There can be a need to join with others in the network, so that enough resources to engage in specific CSR initiatives can be pooled.

For a corporation attempting to leverage the resources in their network, Fichter & Sydow (2002) discussed three conditions that will enable networks to support corporate responsiveness; (1) the size of the network, (2) the nature of the ties between the corporations, and (3) the presence of hubs (hierarchical/coordination element). The larger the network the more potential resources are available, but at the same time the ability to access and utilize those resources will depend on the ties between the network members. The third aspect relates to the power and ability of a hub corporation to be able to provide leadership, organize, and manage network wide initiatives of social responsibility (Fichter & Sydow, 2002). As with any business relationship and supply chain involvement, the networks provide a positive method of combining resources.

### 2.2.2 Private-Public

In response to stakeholder pressures, corporations are not only able to partner with other corporations, but there is also the option to partner with actors from the public sector, NGOs (non-governmental organizations), and international organizations. These types of partnerships represent different types of experiences, knowledge, and resources that can be leveraged to achieve a greater social impact (LaFrance & Lehmann, 2005). Through collaboration in these often complex partnerships, the actors are able to “co-imagine and co-create complex systems of value delivery that would probably otherwise be inconceivable” (Dahan et al., 2010, p. 335). According to Fox et al. (2002), there are a limited amount of cases where the public sector has been involved in promoting CSR activities. One of the difficulties with private-public collaborations is that the participants often lack previous experience of working with each other in regards to business development. Even though the involved actors share the same values and commitment for the partnership, the lack of experience can result in decreased levels of trust and communication which potentially can create conflicts between the non-profit and for-profit organizations (Dahan et al., 2010). This leaves potential room for increased involvement from the public sector. Fox et al. (2002) propose that the public sector can assume four different roles to achieve this; (1) mandating, (2) facilitating, (3) partnering, and (4) endorsing (Table 1).

Table 1: The Roles of the Public Sector.  
Source: Fox et al., 2002

	Roles		
<b>Mandating</b>	"Command and control" legislation	Regulators and inspectorates	Legal and fiscal penalties and rewards
<b>Facilitating</b>	“Enabling” legislation	Creating incentives	Capacity building
	Funding support	Raising awareness	Stimulating markets
<b>Partnering</b>	Combining resources	Stakeholder engagement	Dialogue
<b>Endorsing</b>	Political support		Publicity and praise

In the first role of mandating, governments are able to set minimum requirements and standards within the current legal framework. As a facilitator, the public sector is more of an active supporter of CSR development as they facilitate information, provide training and funding, and raise awareness. Fox et al. (2002) specifically mention that the public sector could leverage their procurement and investment power as a way to facilitate CSR development. By utilizing their size as a market player they can lead a change, which can stimulate the rest of the market to follow the same path. The third role of the public sector is to be a partner in the development. Pooled resources can create unique constellations of competencies that have the potential to provide new insights and solutions to previous problems (Fox et al., 2002). From a business perspective, partnering with any type of non-profit organizations can be seen as a way to strengthen a corporation’s image and contribute to society’s perception. In situations in which stakeholders are skeptical whether a corporation is involved in CSR for the right reasons (to do good or to look good), a public partnership can bring credibility and transparency to the initiative and thus reduce any adverse effects (LaFrance & Lehman, 2005). A positive corporate image can have an effect

on both the corporation's financial and social performance. In the role as a partner the public sector could act as either a participant, a convener, or a facilitator (Fox et al., 2002). The fourth and final role the public sector can play is as an endorser and to give political support of CSR initiatives. The specific endorsement can materialize in several different ways, all from being part of internal policy documents, official awards, to being mentioned by senior politicians (Fox et al., 2002).

## 2.3 CSR and Strategy

In this section the discussion will shift toward the possibility and ability to integrate social awareness and responsibility further into corporate strategy. Depending on the desired outcome and basic motivations to get involved with CSR, the approach to the matter will differ. Corporation's effort can range from being a "good citizen" and do what "looks good", to integrate CSR into the business model where the CSR involvement is tied to the competitive advantage and differentiation strategies. Porter & Kramer (2006) calls the former approach *responsive CSR* and the later *strategic CSR* (Figure 4).

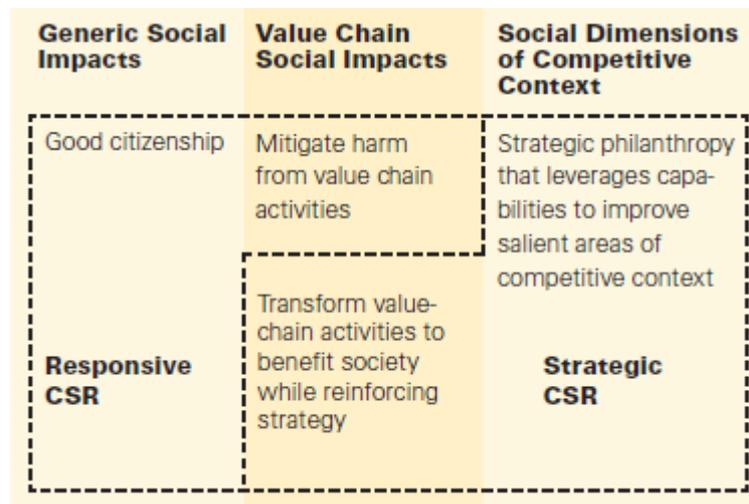


Figure 4: Responsive vs. Strategic CSR.  
Source: Porter & Kramer, 2006.

Hillman & Keim (2001) state that there can be a correlation between corporate performance and CSR efforts. When a CSR involvement is based on strategic (stakeholder management) motives the correlation is positive, but there is a negative correlation when the motives are altruistic. These findings show that to be successful, deeper consideration and involvement of strategic reasoning is required rather than tactical contribution to specific causes that feels important at the time (Hillman & Keim, 2001). CSR is very dynamic, therefore the strategic CSR plan needs to be context-specific for each individual corporation (van Marrewijk, 2003). Different resources and possibilities in combination with the issues present, as well as the unique pressures from stakeholders, will eventually result in individualized CSR strategies.

### 2.3.1 CSR Initiatives

The importance of CSR is clear to most corporations, but there is still more that can be done. According to Porter & Kramer (2006), it is not that corporations do not want to get involved with CSR but rather that they do not know how to do it. This has created a situation in which there is a risk that corporations become engaged with initiative that only look

“good” in the public eye. When practicing CSR, there are several different ways in which corporations can contribute to society and demonstrate their responsibility. Kotler & Lee (2005) have identified and classified six types of CSR initiatives which corporations can get involved in. Depending on the desired outcome and the inherent capabilities, different types of CSR initiatives are better suited for different corporations.

The first type of CSR initiative is *corporate cause promotions*, where the goal is to increase awareness for specific social causes through targeted promotions and persuasive communication (Kotler & Lee, 2005). An association between a specific cause and the corporation can strengthen the brand and build customer loyalty. If there is too much focus on the cause being promoted rather than on the corporation promoting the cause, there is a potential risk that the corporation’s involvement will be overshadowed and thus diminish any marketing efforts. These promotions are also easily replicated by competitors, making it hard for corporations to differentiate themselves with this type of initiative (Kotler & Lee, 2005).

The second initiative is *cause-related marketing*, where the main purpose is to raise public awareness by connecting the contributions to the cause with the performance of a specific item (Mohr et al., 2001; Kotler & Lee, 2005). There are examples of initiatives in which several corporations have joined forces, for example the “(RED)” initiative which aims to eliminate AIDS. In this case, a line of products are tied together and sold as “(RED)” products, involving global corporations such as Apple, Dell, the Gap, Nike, and Starbucks (joinred.com). When the association with the cause strengthens, it enables the corporation to “attract new customers, reach niche markets, increase product sales, and build positive brand identity” (Kotler & Lee, 2005, p. 84). Difficulties with cause-related marketing include the need to monitor sales levels, so that the correct contributions are paid out. Cost estimations are difficult, so it is recommended that a minimum and/or maximum dollar value of contribution is assigned from the beginning (Kotler & Lee, 2005).

The third type of CSR initiative is *corporate social marketing*, where the goal is to support specific behavioral changes. Examples of these types of changes can be related to improvement of personal health and well-being, environmental protectionism, and increased community involvement (Kotler & Lee, 2005). Corporations can run into trouble if they cannot show that they have the prerogative to suggest a specific behavior. In that case they would be seen as hypocrites, increasing the possibility of the efforts having a reverse effect. However if it is done right, the promotion will assist in strengthening the brand in the eye of consumers. Behavioral change will not happen overnight, so the corporation must be ready to make a long-term commitment to the cause (Kotler & Lee, 2005).

*Corporate philanthropy* is the fourth and most traditional CSR initiative, where a corporation is making a direct contribution to a specific cause. Previously the most common type of philanthropy was cash donations, but now corporations also donate products and/or services, technical knowledge, use of facilities, equipment and even access to their distribution channels (Kotler & Lee, 2005). Much of the motivations behind philanthropy are to build the reputation and goodwill of the corporation, as donations are easy to identify and market. The risk of philanthropy is that it can be seen as a “one-off” donation to fix a symptom, rather than a long-term commitment to fix the underlying issue (Kotler & Lee, 2005).

The fifth type proposed by Kotler & Lee (2005) is *community volunteering*, where employees donate their time, experience, and/or knowledge. Volunteering has the possibility of creating motivated employees, as they can get involved in causes that they really care about. Volunteering will help the corporation to build relationships within the communities in

which they operate, as much of the work is done on a local level. The corporation's involvement can differ in many ways. Ranging from encouraging volunteering in general, to suggesting a specific cause those employees should get involved with, to giving employees paid time-off when volunteering. An alternative motive for the corporation is to find an outlet for them to promote their own products and services (Kotler & Lee, 2005). With this added aspect of community volunteering the corporation will assist a cause, while also exposing themselves, their employees, and their products and/or services.

The sixth and final type of CSR initiative is according to Kotler & Lee (2005) *socially responsible business practices*; which are discretionary business practices and investments to support social and environmental causes. These types of initiatives often require corporations to go beyond regulatory standards and being pro-active in their day-to-day operations. An example of this type of initiative is corporations that purchase more fuel efficient trucks, which both reduces operating expenditures and emissions. This results in benefits that are easily identifiable; not only to society but also for the financial well-being of the corporation. If implemented correctly this type of initiative will be less of an ad-hoc solution compared to the other initiatives, and will also result in a closer connection between corporate and social benefits (Kotler & Lee, 2005).

### **2.3.2 Selection of CSR Initiatives**

Before selecting which cause to promote, Porter & Kramer (2006) argue that corporations should identify the intersection between themselves and the communities in which they operate. This will enable the corporation to understand how their actions affect society and vice versa. A corporation needs to accept that business and society are interconnected rather than two separate entities working against each other (Wood, 1991). When a corporation matures and learns more about how to deal with CSR, they will get engaged in initiatives that will have a stronger impact upon society (Porter & Kramer, 2006). Once an understanding has been created the corporation can move forward with the important decision of choosing the focal area for CSR contributions.

Corporations are trying to create synergy effects by combining several different efforts targeted towards a few particular causes. By focusing their efforts in one specific area, with for example philanthropic donations, employees volunteering, and cause promotions, both the impact and the brand association can be strengthened. By increasing their engagement towards one specific cause, consumers will make a stronger connection between that cause and the corporation (Kotler & Lee, 2005). When selecting causes to support, the focus should be on a few issues over a long period of time. This will enable corporations to affect society in a more meaningful way (Kotler & Lee, 2005; Porter & Kramer, 2006). Careful selection is crucial as the corporation will be closely associated to a specific cause and will have a responsibility to that cause. Another important aspect is that corporations should support causes that are "close to home", meaning that there should be a connection between the cause supported and one or more of the following; the corporations products and/or services; mission, values, and goals; geographical presence; employees interests; or customer demographics (Kotler & Lee, 2005).

Once the cause has been identified and selected, the next step of implementation involves establishing clear objectives and desired outcomes for both the initiative and for the corporation (Kotler & Lee, 2005). When an initiative is becoming more strategic in nature the importance of commitment at all levels of the corporation becomes crucial. In order to integrate the decision with the strategic direction of the corporation, top management in-

volvement is required as well as the establishment of internal teams that run the initiative (Kotler & Lee, 2005; Porter & Kramer, 2006). If needed, external actors, such as NGOs, community groups, and experts can be involved in order to provide vital knowledge or to give the initiative more credibility. The last step is to evaluate and assess the CSR initiative in order to gain an understanding of the impact on society and the corporation, so that lessons can be learned until the next initiative (Kotler & Lee, 2005).

When a corporation attempts to act upon a CSR initiative they have the option of utilizing their current business model, or if that is not adequate they will need to develop a new business model that will better support the initiative. A new business model, which integrates the social perspectives from the beginning, will be able to jointly create social and economic value, thus supporting both causes simultaneously. Rather than addressing CSR through specific initiatives, a corporation should focus on how to integrate the social dimensions further into the corporate goals, thus making the social aspect a vital part of the overall strategy. An increased strategic focus on societal issues as a part of a business model will enable corporations to “serve new needs, gain efficiency, create differentiation, and expand markets” (Porter & Kramer, 2011).

### 2.3.3 Business-to-Business Strategy

The concept of Creating Shared Value (CSV) is defined as “policies and operating practices that enhance the competitiveness of a company while simultaneously advancing the economic and social conditions in the communities in which it operates. Shared value creation focuses on identifying and expanding the connections between societal and economic progress” (Figure 5) (Porter & Kramer, 2011, p. 6).



Figure 5: Corporate Social Responsibility vs. Creating Shared Value.  
Source: Porter & Kramer, 2011.

CSV will be able to supersede the impact and long-term sustainability of any of the other major CSR initiatives, as it moves the social responsibility further into the core of the corporation’s strategic objectives (Porter & Kramer, 2011). The argument continues by addressing the fact that some CSR initiatives lack a real connection to the corporation, which makes it hard to justify and support the initiative over longer periods of time. However, when adhering to social responsibility in accordance to CSV, the corporation can leverage

its internal abilities to create both social and economic value (Porter & Kramer, 2006; Porter & Kramer, 2011). The goal of CSV is to create new, or improve old, products and services so that they can increase profits and be used to differentiate and strengthen the position in the market. By finding new ways of utilizing resources, the corporation will be able to create both economic and social value simultaneously.

It is important to successfully combine the goal of shareholder value maximization with the social objectives. For implementing and attempting to create shared value, Porter & Kramer (2011) argue that corporations can follow three different avenues: (1) by reconceiving products and markets, (2) by redefining productivity in the value chain, and (3) by enabling local cluster development.

The first path of CSV is to *reconceiving products and markets* and is based on corporations' ability to "identify all the societal needs, benefits, and harms that are or could be embodied in the firm's products" (Porter & Kramer, 2011, p.8) and adjust their offerings accordingly. By gaining a further understanding of the development and shifts in economic, technological, and societal development, corporations will be able to find new opportunities for differentiation in the market place (Porter & Kramer, 2011).

The second path to shared value is through *redefining productivity in the value chain*, which means that efficiency gains can result in both economic and social benefits. This path is very similar to "socially responsible business practices" discussed by Kotler & Lee (2005), as it attempts to integrate external societal problems that can create inefficiencies and cost for the corporation, into their internal operations. The productivity in the value chain can be increased in several areas such as (1) energy use and logistics (use of efficient buildings and trucks saves costs), (2) resources use (smart packaging can decrease the total amount of material used), (3) procurement (co-development of supplier's quality and capacity will benefit all actors in the chain), (4) distribution (how customers received the product, foremost in regards to electronic media), (5) employee productivity (healthy employees will have higher attendance and will be more productive), and (6) location (challenging that transport is cheap, based on increasing energy costs and emissions) (Porter & Kramer, 2011).

The third and final path discussed by Porter & Kramer (2011, p.12) is the *enabling of local cluster development* where the "success of every company is affected by the supporting companies and infrastructure around it". McCann (2001) identifies three factors that benefit corporations located in clusters (agglomeration economies); (1) information spillover, (2) local non-traded inputs, and (3) local skilled labor pool. First, due to the close physical relations to other cluster-members there is an increase of information exchange, spurring development. Second, the concentration of corporations with similar activities can create a large enough demand and market for supporting "specialists" and ancillary services to establish (McCann, 2001). Third, clusters and industrial concentration creates a local group of specialized employees. This will result in a larger pool of potential employees that the cluster corporations can choose from and the employees can be acquired at lower costs (McCann, 2001). These effects create multiplying benefits not only for the participants in the cluster but also for the local communities (Porter & Kramer, 2011). As the cluster grows the faith of the cluster, the individual corporations, and the related communities become more intertwined. Thus both positive and negative occurrences will have a multiplying effect within the cluster.

The most successful cluster development initiatives are the ones that involve and engage several different partners, such as the private sector, the public sector and NGOs (Porter & Kramer, 2011). A typical example of a successful cluster is Silicon Valley in California, USA, where businesses are focused around the development of IT. Other examples of successful clusters that have had an even greater impact on society can be seen in EPZs (export processing zones) in developing countries. By pursuing a joint effort, necessary knowledge and costs can be shared among several organizations to better establish the most suited cluster (McCann, 2001). The three options discussed are not mutually exclusive, thus a combination of more than one avenue will act to enhance the outcome. When developing and implementing the different avenues, each corporation needs to employ a strategy that is unique to them. The complex combination of offered products and services, targeted customers, and involved communities will make it hard to find two situations that are the same (Porter & Kramer, 2011).

Porter & Kramer (2011) predict that CSV will become one of the main driving forces of growth in the global economy. A focus on CSV will open up new ways for corporations to develop products and services that will be beneficial to all actors over a long period of time. A reason for the potential success of CSV is the many untapped opportunities for companies to get engaged with, both in the developed and even more so in the developing world where societal needs often trump economic needs. While trying to achieve CSV, it will require new and increased levels of collaboration (Porter & Kramer, 2011). The shared value initiatives that will have the greatest impact are those that are closely related to current corporate business practices. When tying the initiative to the core business of the corporation, total benefits will be leveraged and the likelihood of long-term commitment is enhanced (Porter & Kramer, 2011).

### 2.3.4 Public-Private Strategy

Suggestions as to how to create new business models that could support CSR initiatives are discussed by Yunus et al. (2010), who suggest that “social businesses” can provide social profit as well as repayment of invested capital (Figure 6).



Figure 6: Social Businesses Model.  
Source: Yunus et al., 2010.

To achieve this it is suggested that five strategic steps should be taken; (1) challenge conventional wisdom, (2) set up appropriate partnerships, (3) undertake experimentation, (4) favor social profit-oriented shareholders, and (5) clearly specify the social profit objective (Yunus et al., 2010). The first three steps are applicable to any business model, whereas the last two are specific for socially motivated models. First, by challenging the current norm of reference new products and services can be developed. Second, necessary competencies and/or resources might not be present internally in the corporation, prompting the need to leverage a partner. Third, to actualize the new products and/or services, the corporation will be required to develop new business procedures. The best way to develop new procedures is to start experimenting on a small scale before the necessary lessons have been learned. The fourth step suggested by Yunus et al. (2010), involves the need to include shareholders that not only understand the financial but also the social aspects. The fifth and last step stresses the need to determine the importance of the social objectives as early as possible in case there is a conflict between financial and social profit (Yunus et al., 2010).

The challenge will be to find the right collaborative partnerships which will be able to facilitate the necessary knowledge and insight required to create a business model in which the capabilities of the corporation and the needs of society will be met. At a later stage there is a need for an attitude transformation to integrate social values and benefits as a direct correlation with business benefits, shareholders' profits and stakeholder values (van Marrewijk, 2003).

A second model for value creation and collaboration between corporations, NGOs, “and other types of non-traditional partners”, is proposed by Dahan et al. (2010). As with other CSR initiatives and strategies discussed, corporations may need to seek out new and non-typical business partners to develop and/or support new projects. When establishing this collaboration, Dahan et al. (2010) have identified three scenarios of managing the relationship (Figure 7).

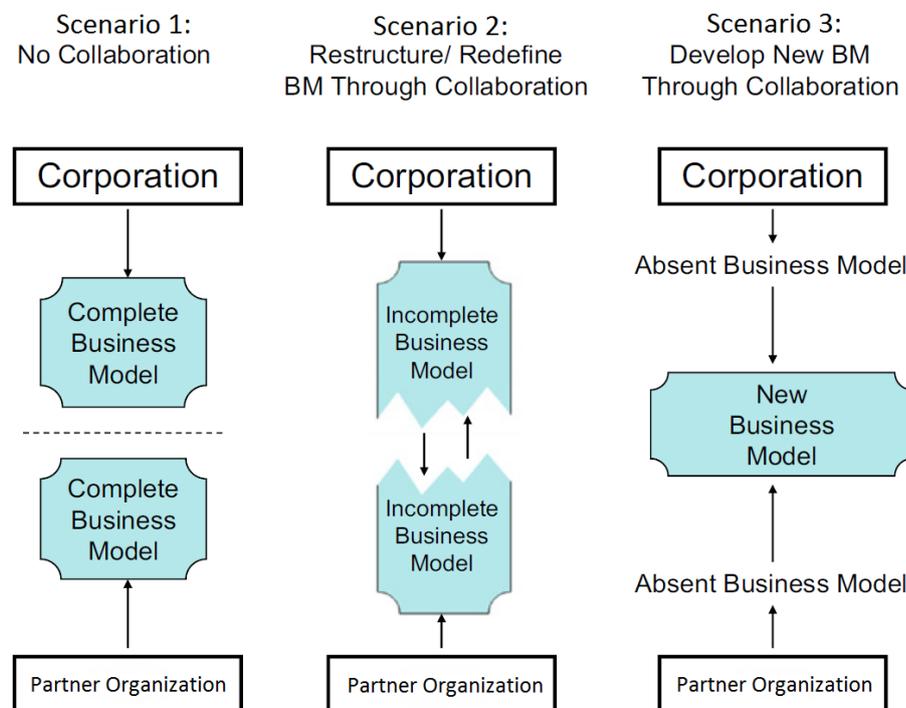


Figure 7: Business Model for Collaboration.  
Source: Dahan et al., 2010.

In the first scenario, the actors have their own independent and complete business models which they follow, thus neglecting the need for any collaboration. In the second scenario, both actors have independent but incomplete business models lacking certain resources. The required resources can be mustered through contributions from each of the actor's resources. Both actors are now depending on access to each other to be successful. In the third and final scenario, the different actors have created a joint business model pooling resources from both actors. The joint model is carried out by the actors working together with the understanding that the private corporation will gain financial value and that the public organization will be achieve social value (Dahan et al., 2010).

To facilitate the collaboration, Dahan et al. (2010) suggest four essential strategic steps. Though the model is designed for the developing world, the two first steps still hold true in any part of the world. The first step is to find combinative capabilities across business activities, which implies that corporations should explore all options when partnering with a non-profit organization (Dahan et al., 2010). Corporations should not only be limited to the development of new products and services, rather they should also consider partners that can assist in developing their distribution and procurement channels, and marketing strategy. The second step is to find an organizational fit and cultural compatibility that can enable the development of trust between the actors (Dahan et al., 2010). Required for the success of most partnerships, trust is critical for private-public collaborations, as the values and missions are inherently different to start with. The third and fourth steps are mainly targeted at scenarios related to the developing world and include the importance of supporting the local business environment, and gaining an understanding of the unique conditions in these countries.

## **3 Method**

This section will present the method used for this thesis, starting with a discussion about the research approach used. It is followed by a presentation of the case study method used within this research. Then the data collection method is presented together with how the data was analyzed. Finally, issues of data reliability and validity are presented.

### **3.1 Research Approach**

There are two main approaches of scientific reasoning; deductive and inductive. A deductive approach produces propositions and hypotheses theoretically through a logical process, while using an inductive approach can be defined as searching for patterns and associations from observations (Snape & Spencer, 2003). A deductive approach is in other words a search to discover if generalizations can be applied to a specific case. The inductive approach goes in the other direction and aims to establish generalization by observing specific examples (Hyde, 2000). However it is noted that an inductive approach may not entirely lead straightforward to new theory. Much inductive researches using a qualitative strategy might not generate theory and theory is often used to give background to a problem (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

The two approaches can be associated with a waterfall (deductive) and a climbing hill (inductive). The deductive approach starts with a theory moving to hypothesis, to observations to end up with a confirmation; “water falling down”. The inductive approach starts with observations moving to a pattern, to a tentative hypothesis and end up with a theory; “climbing up” (Burney, 2008). Both methods are used in qualitative and quantitative research. However, quantitative research is mostly associated with a deductive approach and qualitative research with an inductive approach (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

This research takes use of an inductive approach. The research is focused around the observation of a specific case. The observations have been a search for identifying patterns and associations within the BRA BO project. In accordance with the purpose of this research an inductive reasoning, compared to deductive, was found to be the most appropriate way to approach the problem. The observations will act as the basis for the conclusions and build toward the future development of theory within CSR collaboration among actors from different sectors.

#### **3.1.1 Qualitative Research**

When conducting research, two distinguished strategies can be used: qualitative and quantitative research strategy. A qualitative strategy is deeper and focuses upon observations in the analysis. The quantitative strategy focuses on quantification of data and the analysis is based upon numbers and statistics (Bryman & Bell, 2007). The exact definitions of the two research strategies vary somewhat from researcher to researcher. One definition is provided by Brannick & Roche (1997), which define qualitative research as research with a focus on the link between contextualized attributes concerning relative few cases, and quantitative research as research with a focus on the link between several defined attributes concerning many cases.

The similarities between the two types are that they both concern the interplay between ideas and evidence (Brannick & Roche, 1997). The main differences between the two strategies are the number of participants in the research, or the sample size, and in which way the data is gathered and analyzed. Qualitative research is open and participants have a greater chance to express their attitudes and experiences. The method of in-depth interviews and/or focus groups is widely used for the qualitative strategy. The aim of quantitative research is to generate statistics and find patterns and analyze a larger population mostly by using methods of questionnaires and/or structured interviews (Sanchez, 2006).

This research is based upon a qualitative strategy. The purpose of this research is to get a greater understanding of how a project develops and how the collaboration among partners evolves. In order to understand the involvement in a CSR related project a case study of a project using in-depth interviews has been conducted. The definition of qualitative research found to be most appropriate to the purpose of this research is provided by Snape & Spencer (2003, p. 22):

*“The aims of qualitative research are generally directed at providing an in-depth and interpreted understanding of the social world, by learning about peoples social and material circumstances, their experiences perspectives and histories.”*

### **3.1.2 Primary and Secondary Data**

Research data can be collected both from primary and secondary sources. Primary data is data gathered and collected for the purpose of a specific research. Secondary data on the other hand is previously gathered data collected by other researchers for their specific purpose. Secondary data could be in the form of historic data and background information and is mostly used as a complement to the primary data collected for research (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009).

Within this research secondary data is used to get background information about the problem in the form of reports, news articles and company presentation information. The primary data of this research comes from in-depth interviews conducted with key persons involved in BRA BO. The analysis is based on the primary data collected from the interviews with the secondary data working as a complement to further describe and explain certain aspects of the problem.

### **3.1.3 Literature Review**

A literature review is conducted with the purpose of exploring existing literature about the subject or the concepts which are of interest within research. The review should provide a basis for the development of question and the design of a research. It is a process of searching and gathering information about a specific subject. Conducting a literature review includes taking decisions and making judgments about what and what not to include within a research study (Bryman & Bell, 2007). Conducting a literature review gives background and contributes to the understanding of a specific subject. However, it also works as a tool from which arguments are formed. Within any research it is important to be able to find new angles and find a “new” problem within a specific topic. The aim of any scientific research has to be to make some kind of new contribution (Bryman & Bell, 2007). Exploring the existing literature is a search for identifying existing concepts, methods and inconsistencies.

In the literature review or theoretical framework of this research the subject of CSR has been the main interest. There has been a search within the existing literature to get a background and deeper understanding to the concept of CSR. There has also been a search for how CSR is connected to, and can affect, the business collaboration between actors from the private and public sector.

## **3.2 Case Study**

Case study is a research strategy often associated with qualitative research. It is a strategy that focuses on understanding dynamics within a specific case (Eisenhardt, 1989). A case study could include single or multiple cases and be analyzed on several levels. Using a case study strategy is found to be most appropriate when researchers search for answers to questions of the type “how” and “why” (Yin, 2003). One of the defining features of a case study is the range of perspectives that it presents, and the focus is rather on the context than the participating individual. A case study can be associated with following a process and providing different perspectives of how a project has changed and/or evolved over time (Lewis, 2003). Another feature that is associated with using a case study is the fact that a specific case is selected for a specific purpose of research. A case study is a process which is rich in detail and could be very intensive, which is why it mostly is associated with qualitative research (Lewis, 2003).

This research focuses on a single case study: the BRA BO project. The intention is to answer “how” and “why” questions and gain a deeper understanding of the project within the context of CSR and collaboration among different types of actors. The purpose has been to study the process of the project to understand why actors get involved in the project and how it has evolved over time.

### **3.2.1 Case Selection**

The sample size of a qualitative research is generally small, compared to quantitative, for which there are three main reasons. First, there will come a point in qualitative research when very little new evidence will be identified from increasing the number of participants in a research (Lewis, 2003). Second, qualitative research is not based on statistics where there are certain requirements on the sample size in order for it to be sufficient and statistically valid. Third and finally, qualitative data is richer in detail and the recourses needed to gather the data is more demanding (Lewis, 2003).

BRA BO is under development which means that there are a limited number of people involved at this point. From the information gathered in the beginning of the research, eleven actors were identified as being involved with the management and development of BRA BO. All individuals were contacted and nine responded positively within the timeframe of the research. The final number of participants in this case study should be sufficient in describing all aspects of the BRA BO project.

Table 2 presents the participants in the case study and which organization they represent.

Table 2: Interviewees

<i>Name</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Sector</i>	<i>Interview Type</i>
Peter Nilsson	Södra Timber	CEO	Private	Face-to-face
Hans Andrén	VKAB	Project Coordinator	Public	Face-to-face
Erland Ullstad	Kronoberg County Administration	Process Leader	Public	Face-to-face
Malin Bendz-Hellgren	Kronoberg County Administration	Project Developer	Public	Face-to-face
Erik Serrano	Linnaeus University	Professor: Wood Construction Technology	Academic	Telephone
Mikael Ydholm	IKEA	Head of Research	Private	Telephone
Johan Blixt	Södra Timber	Head of Business Development	Private	Face-to-face
Charlotte Bengtsson	SP	Head SP Wood Technology	Public	Telephone
Patrik Hjelm	Videum	Property Manager	Public	Telephone

### 3.3 Data Collection Method

In-depth interviewing is a method of collecting data for qualitative research (Darlington & Scott, 2002). In-depth interviews open up for a deeper understanding of a phenomena or a specific case. It is a method that takes the notion in that people are experts in their own fields and are able to describe their own experiences in the best manner. By interviewing different people involved in the same project, a researcher will get a range of perspectives from all the involved actors (Darlington & Scott, 2002). In-depth interviews can be described as a conversation with a purpose (Legard, Keegan, & Ward, 2003).

Semi-structured interviews are a type of in-depth interview used in qualitative research. With the use of a semi-structured interview the researchers have a list of questions prepared which can be referred to as the interview guide (Bryman & Bell, 2007). The guide does not have to be followed exactly every time, however, it does contain a set of main questions and topics that are desired to be covered during each interview. Questions do not have to be asked in the exact order every time but will in large be asked in the same way at some point during each interview with all participants included within a research study (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

There are a number of key features and advantages with using in-depth interviewing within a qualitative research. First, an in-depth interview is set to combine structure with flexibility. Second, in-depth interviews are interactive in their nature and data is generated through the interaction between the actors involved in the interview (Legard et al., 2003). Third, there is the possibility to get more depth in the answers gathered. A researcher has the ability to ask follow-up questions to fully understand the respondent and get deeper answers about opinions and beliefs together with the reasons and feeling associated with the discussed topics. Forth, an in-depth interview is likely to at some point generate new knowledge (Legard et al., 2003).

Audio recording is a tool often used when conducting in-depth interviews. Recording an interview allows the researcher to pay full attention to listening to the respondent without hesitation and without having to wait for hand written notes to be completed (Darlington & Scott, 2002; Legard et al., 2003). In order for an interview to be in-depth it is important that the researcher is devoted to what transpires during the interview. A recording gives security and freedom to the researcher and offers the possibility to go back and review the material at a later stage. However, some people could be hesitant about getting recorded, as it can make people “act” in a way that is felt to be appropriate for the situation, but the use of audio recordings during an interview is seen as less intrusive than note taking (Legard et al., 2003).

This research uses semi-structured interviews as the primary method of collecting data. This method was found to be most appropriate in order to achieve the purpose of the research. During the data collection process the authors took use of the semi-structured interviews advantages of combining structure with flexibility. It was important to have a set of main topics and question in order to fully understand the basis of the BRA BO project. The structure of the interviews acted as a tool in the search for patterns and to make comparisons between the different actors. Flexibility was also a very important factor in the data gathering process. Since this is a case which involves different actors from different sectors it was important to have a data collection method that was very open in its form. It could not be fully predicted what type of topics that were going to be discussed during each interview due to the different competences that the actors contribute with to the BRA BO project.

### **3.3.1 Interview Guide**

Before each interview the potential participants were firstly contacted by telephone. The authors of this thesis presented themselves and described how they had learned about BRA BO. The authors also described the purpose of the study and what topic areas the interview would be targeting (Darlington & Scott, 2002; Lewis, 2003). At the end of the presentation, each participant was asked if they would consent to participate in the interview (Lewis, 2003). In the situation of a positive answer, an interview was scheduled for a later time and place. This initial contact helped to establish a relationship before the actual interview.

This research study has included a combination of face-to-face and telephone interviews. Telephone has been used as a complement where an appropriate face-to-face meeting was not possible to be scheduled within the timeframe of this research. However, more than half of the interviews were conducted face-to-face. In this research all participants, both during face-to-face and telephone interviews, have been made aware that the interviews were being recorded. No one has opposed this and the recordings have been made using a Smartphone.

An interview guide was constructed in order to act as a foundation and a starting point to the discussion during each interview. The questions were designed to get an understanding of the interviewee's involvement and roles within BRA BO. Each interview has been different but at some point during each interview all the questions have been asked (Appendix: A). Before the questions were asked, a general discussion about the participants' daily work and background took place. The approximate time of each interview was one hour.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

The data analysis of this research consisted of two steps. In the first step, all the interviews were transcribed. It is argued that in order for qualitative data, from interviews, to be analyzed in a systematic way the interviews need to be transcribed (Darlington & Scott, 2002). Since high quality audio recordings were made during each interview the transcribing process was efficient however time consuming. The transcripts have been completed manually by the authors without the aid of any specific computer software. The transcribing process has left out portions of the interviews which were not relevant for this research. This is in line with suggestions from Bryman & Bell (2007), who recognize that not all data collected from an interview will be relevant. Since the interviews of this research were conducted in the native language, Swedish, of both the authors and the participants, the interviews were firstly transcribed in Swedish. At the next stage the Swedish transcripts were translated into English. Due to the fact that words can have different meanings in different languages distortion in the data can be created (Bryman & Bell, 2007). However, this has been minimized by back-translating the analysis to Swedish to compare the findings. No distortion or differences were found between the two versions whereby the English translation is found to be valid for this research.

When a transcript has been completed it gives the authors a chance to become more familiar with the data. During the actual interviews it can be hard to get familiar with the data due to other aspects of the interview process which require the attention of the researchers (Darlington & Scott, 2002). Riessman (1993) suggests that it is at a stage after transcripts have been made that a researcher fully gets a sense of the focus for the analysis and the findings become clearer.

The second step of the analysis consisted of coding or breaking down the data into components. In qualitative research coding is a process of shifting through data to categorize it and making sense of the information that has been gathered. In qualitative research this process can also be referred to as indexing (Darlington & Scott, 2002). For this research coding has been a process of shifting through transcripts in order to find patterns and identifying different ways in which the data from the interviews relate to each other. This process has been made manually without the aid of any computer software. The interview guide used for the semi-structured interview act as a tool which have made it easier to identify and categorized the data.

## **3.5 Validity and Reliability**

### **3.5.1 Validity**

Validity refers to whether a researcher acts according to the claims within a research study (Bryman & Bell, 2007). Validity is a concept with two distinct dimensions, internal and external validity (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003). Internal validity concerns issues regarding whether the research has an identifiable match between the research's observations and the theoretical ideas which are generated (Bryman & Bell, 2007). External validity on the other hand refers to which of the findings from a research that could be applicable to others within a larger group (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003).

In this research issues of internal validity have been maximized by offering all the participants the option to review the findings of the research. As this is a qualitative research focusing on a very specific and relative small regional case there could be an issue with the external validity. Because this study included only one case, the findings may not be generalized, however the purpose of the research was to gain a deeper understanding of the studied problems. Additionally, BRA BO is a part of Trästad 2012, which is a national project involving four regions in Sweden. This means that the findings from this study could be of value for other CSR projects which include collaboration between actors from different sectors.

### **3.5.2 Reliability**

Reliability refers to the replicability of research. It raises questions of whether or not the findings of the research can be repeated if another study were to apply the same methods on a similar problem (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003). As with validity, there are two dimensions to reliability, internal and external. Internal reliability can become an issue if a research study includes a team with two or more researchers. It relates to issues concerning whether the members of the research team agree on the main issues and if they have made the same observations (Bryman & Bell, 2007). External reliability refers to the issue of the concept, if and to what degree a study can be repeated. Within qualitative research there is a tendency to avoid searching for reliability as well as validity (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003). As stated by LeCompte & Goetz (1982) it is more or less impossible to "freeze" a social setting and the surrounding circumstances of an initial study which is why replicability is hard to accomplish within qualitative research.

Internal reliability has been maximized by the attendance of both authors during each interview. The authors have jointly reviewed the recordings and transcripts from each interview to discuss the results. Within this research true replicability will be hard to accomplish due to the studied case which is very specific and unique. BRA BO is under development and its circumstances are constantly changing, which means that findings will be hard to replicate in future. The authors have aimed to confirm their findings by having an interview guide with the same process for the data collection as well as presenting the findings to the participants for review.

## 4 Empirical Findings

In this section the empirical findings from each interview will be presented. The interviews have been summarized and represent the discussion with each individual in accordance to the organization they represent. The findings have been categorized according to four main subject areas and highlight key information in regards to; involvement, collaboration, and the future of BRA BO. This section starts with information gathered about the background and formation of BRA BO, as these findings were consistent among all participants. There will also be a company presentation of Södra before the interviews are presented.

### 4.1 Bra Bostäder för Småhushåll till Rimligt Pris

Until 1994 wood was banned as a construction material for buildings higher than two stories in Sweden. In accordance to new EU regulations it was decided to no longer ban, but rather design new standards and requirements for the use of wood in the construction of higher buildings. The Swedish government then implemented a wood strategy that would promote the use of wood as a construction material in multi-story buildings. This national strategy led to the formation of Trästad 2012.

BRA BO was initiated during an official dinner at the residence of the county governor of Kronoberg in October 2010, as a part of the work to develop Trästad Sydost. In addition to the governor, prominent guests included; the CEO of Södra Timber, the CEO of IKEA Sweden, the CEO of SP (the Technical Research Institute of Sweden), the Rector of the Linnaeus University, the CEO of Skogsindustrierna (the Swedish Forest Industries Federation) and some others.

During the dinner, discussions were based on the current housing situation, including issues of the consumer price index in relation to the construction cost index (Figure 1). The discussion included other but related issues such as the mismatch between supply and demand of homes, and that family constellations are different today than some years ago. These issues have created a lack of housing options adapted for small and single households and the demand for these smaller apartments are extremely high in certain areas of Sweden. The discussion created the thought of attempting to build good affordable housing for small and single households. It was agreed upon that new homes does not necessary have to cost as much as they currently do, and there needs to be an increased focus on good housing, for a reasonable price. It was important to create buildings which offer different sizes of apartments (between 40 and 70 sqm), which will be targeted at different demographics of small and single households. As several different topics were discussed, it was important to include a wide pool of competencies in the development group.

### 4.2 Södra

Södra was the organization through which the authors first came in contact with the BRA BO project. As they are one of the main corporate actors within this project, a short company background will be presented.

Södra is a co-operative society (ekonomisk förening) with headquarters is located in Växjö, Sweden. They operate in the south of Sweden and have 51 000 members which in turn represent 36 000 forest farms (Södra, 2010). Combined they represent more than half of the privately owned forest area in the south of Sweden. The Södra group has four business areas; Södra Skog, Södra Cell, Södra Timber and Södra Interiör, which in total have almost

4000 employees and a turnover of nearly 20 billion SEK. Södra Timber is the business area which is involved in BRA BO, and they are the owner of Trivselhus; which produce pre-fabricated wooden family houses (Södra, 2010).

CSR as a concept is recognized within the Södra group and initiatives together with general ethics and a code of conduct are published in special “Södra and CSR” report. Due to the nature of their industry and the fact that Södra is working with wood as a basis for all their products, which is a natural resource, most of the CSR initiatives are focused on the environment and sustainability. Concerning energy, Södra has a long term goal of a production process completely free of mineral fuels. This is a goal that has already been accomplished in Värö, one of their largest pulp production facilities. Södra also works with their carbon footprint and uses a carbon declaration created by the Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI). Generally 95% of the energy used by Södra at their production facilities is renewable. They are also working with projects involving wind power in relation to their production facilities (Södra, 2010)

Part of Södra’s CSR initiative is to work with forest certifications such as FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) and PEFC (Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes). These are global certifications which promote sustainability within the wood industry. The brand value and understanding of these certifications are growing and more and more of Södra’s customers are demanding that the products that they use have at least one type of certification.

With almost 4000 employees and being one of the largest exporters of wood based products in Sweden, Södra has an impact and a responsibility both on a local and national level. Södra strives for harmony with the local community in which they operate. Södra collaborates on a local level with the community, schools, non-profit organizations and local politicians to work for positive and sustainable social progress (Södra, 2010)

### **4.3 Södra Timber**

The following section is based on the interviews with the representatives from Södra Timber, Peter Nilsson (CEO) and Johan Blixt (Business Developer).

#### **Involvement**

Both Södra and Peter have been involved from the initial discussion and formation of BRA BO. As a large organization in the Växjö region, Södra was already involved with Trästad 2012 previous to the creation of BRA BO. Part of Södra’s involvement is to finance BRA BO, and they have involved Trivselhus as a potential producer of pre-fabricated BRA BO buildings.

Peter believes that Södra has a responsibility to be involved in the evolution of wood construction. His role in the project is to make sure that BRA BO will be affordable. It is important that the first pilot building is shown to be affordable. However there is a potential risk that later in the process, construction costs will increase which will bring the project back to square one. On the contrary the project should evolve and become more efficient over time. All aspects of efficiency and productivity should be addressed. Peter refers to IKEA’s business model.

## **Collaboration Among Actors**

Even though the project is in an early stage and has a quite unclear structure, collaboration between the actors is generally good and Peter feels that the actors share a common purpose to the involvement in the project. Peter adds that it is important to include highly motivated and engaged people in the project.

## **Future Aspects**

BRA BO is still in a concept stage and details about the next stage are being formulated. Södra are ready to build once all the details are completed. They are not interested in putting up a scale model; they want to build it for real. This will probably mean that a BRA BO pilot building will not be included in Trästad 2012 but rather that it will be constructed during 2013.

In the future Peter could see that Södra will have a production facility that produces homes of this type. There are enough resources available on an industrial scale within the Södra group. Their ambition is to be involved in the running of the project in the future and to own the concept. However, securing the price point in the long haul will be extremely hard based on the economic situation at the time for whoever is involved in the project.

Peter sees a large future potential value and a business opportunity in BRA BO. However, it is based on whether they can get through the first stages. It is necessary for the project to follow through and become more real and structured. Peter is convinced that the idea has a huge potential but more resources are required at this point. There is a large risk that other tasks will come along that will require the time and attention of Södra and the other actors. This could potentially influence the outcome of BRA BO.

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Johan is working with business development at Södra Timber and has in the past been both a site manager and worked with productivity and efficiency questions for the whole Södra group.

## **Involvement**

Johan was chosen by Peter Nilsson, the CEO of Södra Timber, to represent the corporation in BRA BO. Johan has experience and understanding of the processes and the production involved when using wood for construction. His previous experience with efficiency and productivity will be beneficial while developing the means of productions for BRA BO.

## **Collaboration Among Actors**

Johan feels that the collaboration with the other actors within BRA BO is really good, much due to the fact that everybody has different roles and different competencies. However, he mentions that no controversial questions have been discussed so far. He believes that all the actors share the same motivation of doing something good and they all want BRA BO to become a reality. He mentions that the focus on wood, which is very important for Södra, might not be the major aspect for all the other participants as they focus on the building rather than the material used.

## **Future Aspects**

BRA BO is about to get in to the stage of construction, where they hope to show that it is possible to build affordable multi-story housing using wood. Johan realizes that the housing and construction industry is very traditional and it can be very tough to change their behavior. He hopes that BRA BO will be successful so that affordable housing for small and single households can be created. The challenge is to show that BRA BO has a large-scale potential. The necessary scale economies required will happen once the project is repeated and industrial processes are applied.

Johan believes political involvement will be important to ensure that the currently involved municipalities will move forward with BRA BO. At that point they will be able to create a debate and create public opinion in favor of the project.

A future role for Södra Timber in BRA BO will be to assist with the research and development work of the concept as well as contribute with the financing of the project. Trivselhus might have a more substantial role in the future.

The focus of the project so far has been on how to start constructing apartments rather than the future management of those apartments, however Johan recognizes the importance that issues such as results and returns on invested capital must eventually be addressed. In regards to the commercial potential of BRA BO for Södra, Johan adds that one to two percent of their total wood production is used for multi-story housing buildings.

## **4.4 VKAB**

The following section is based on the interview with the representative from VKAB, Hans Andrén (Project Coordinator).

Hans Andrén is a project coordinator at VKAB (Växjö Kommunföretag AB, Corporation of Växjö Municipality). VKAB is a corporate group that owns several companies within the municipality including the management of about 12000 apartments, the ownership of the properties of the university (through Videum), and Växjö Energy. VKAB manage a portfolio worth about 7 billion SEK and invest around 500-600 million SEK each year in maintenance and new acquisitions.

Hans is one of the process leaders for Trästad 2012 in Växjö. In that role his responsibilities include to organize seminars, tie together the triple helix (the public-, the private-, and the academic sector), ensuring that Trästad 2012 is open for research and available to anybody that is interested, collaborate with other actors, and evaluate the project once it ends.

## **Involvement**

After the initial meeting with the governor a work group was created, consisting of representatives of the initiating members, to develop the concept of BRA BO further. The workgroup participants represent different actors than would ordinarily not be a part of a project like this; creating a “fresh” approach to the issues at hand. The participants in workgroup for BRA BO created a “triple helix” that consists of the county and the municipality of Växjö (public), Södra and IKEA (private), and the Linnaeus University (academic).

To reach the end goal and move BRA BO forward other aspects have also been included, such as the need to develop a procurement structure in the construction industry. An important part of BRA BO is that the buildings will be standardized and modularized, which means that the same parts can be used individually but could be combined in creating an eight-floor building utilizing the same concept.

### **Collaboration Among Actors**

Hans finds the involvement of both private and public actors within BRA BO really interesting, as it is a non-traditional structure to a project like this. Although he has wondered why the private actors (Södra and IKEA) are willing to dedicate resources to BRA BO, he believes that there are “degrees of convergence” between the actors that justifies their participation.

Hans believes that all participants share the same purpose and motivation of taking part in BRA BO, and that the social aspect makes it even more interesting. The participants have not only shown a strong understanding of the issues at hand, but also a desire to participate and develop the concept. The efforts in the group have focused on creating joint-procurement strategies, finding new tendering strategies, and creating different volumes and price levels.

### **Future Aspects**

Hans argues that it should be the municipalities that decide a reasonable construction costs upon which rents can be set. To be able to secure the pricing of the apartments in the future it is important that the first rents are set correctly. In order to achieve that goal large enough construction volumes must be generated. Increased volumes could be created through joint-procurement among several different municipalities, giving them more purchasing power.

The plan for BRA BO is to articulate and describe the context and concept that has been developed so far, and then take it out to the open market to see which organizations are interested in constructing and at what cost, while at the same time share the motivations of BRA BO. In May of 2012, there will be a meeting at which representatives from the municipalities of Jönköping, Kalmar, and Växjö will meet to discuss a letter of intent for BRA BO. In the intent, the context and concept of BRA BO will be formulated on a few, comprehensible pages which the representatives can bring back to their municipalities. At that point it can be incorporated in the tendering process of the municipalities.

As an open project, BRA BO will become more affected by external actors as it moves in to the next stages. The project group have realized a need to own or in some way secure the concept so that it will stay consistent to the original idea; in regards to price, quality, design, and purpose.

When BRA BO moves into the next phase VKAB will not have an active role, although there is a possibility that one of their subsidiaries will. If BRA BO is shown to be successful, it will be able to influence and raise awareness in the entire value chain of the construction industry, challenging the current pricing structure. As an early evaluation of BRA BO, Hans attributes the potential success in the future to the triple helix combination which created “multi-competence thinking from day one”. Hans believes that it is important to include as many competences as possible as early as possible, both in small and large project.

## 4.5 Kronoberg County Administration

The following section is based on the interviews with the representatives from Kronoberg County Administration, Erland Ullstad (Process Leader) and Malin Bendz-Hellgren (Project Developer).

Erland is employed by Kronoberg county as a process leader for Trästad Sydost. He has a background of being a city architect in Växjö, and during those years he became increasingly involved in wood construction.

### Involvement

The county administration can only be involved at the concept stage of BRA BO and their role is to contribute with spreading knowledge and placing actors together which can discuss and form a project like BRA BO.

One of the main purposes why Erland and the county got involved with BRA BO was that they view wood as a construction material which has an opportunity to lower the costs of construction in general. They have been inspired by other often small firms that have been working with wood products for construction of larger and higher wood buildings and seen that there is an opportunity to lower the costs of construction.

### Collaboration Among Actors

Collaboration between the actors involved is crucial for any project of this type to succeed. Erland mentions the importance of the “triple helix”; describing the interaction between the private, the public, and the academic world. The collaboration between the different members has yielded interesting discussions about how one can change and challenge the construction industry to lower costs.

Erland feels that the other actors share the same purpose of their involvement in the project. There is an honest and true belief in that they all want to share and spread knowledge and be on the forefront of showing the potential use of wood as a construction material. The participants have a long-term interest in the promotion of wood compared to many other construction companies which have a much more short term interest in maximizing profits. However, sometimes it is hard to manage the commercial aspects with the “good will” of a project like BRA BO.

### Future Aspects

At this stage of BRA BO they are trying to decide and to formulate what is a “good home” and what is a “reasonable price”. Växjö has together with Kalmar and Jönköping designated land areas which they are willing to use for the construction of pilot buildings. Trivselhus, which is a part of Södra Timber, has been involved to calculate the construction costs. Their first indications show that the project will be feasible at the appropriate cost margin. However there are a lot of local construction rules and regulations that are making it hard to formulate what the final product will look like. A specific example of this is the different local rules addressing accessibility, which might have an impact on the price and cost of construction.

Initially, the hope was to have functional apartments ready to show during the autumn of 2012 but this will be hard to achieve. They will potentially be able to have a demo apartment to be shown at the town square in Växjö, which will be able to promote and give credibility to the future of BRA BO.

Erland and the county administration will not be involved in managing BRA BO apartments in the future. However ensuring and securing the price of the apartments in the future has been identified as an interesting topic that has not yet been fully discussed. Erland believes that BRA BO has a great future potential. It is just important that the project gains credibility in its initial stage.

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Malin is one of four representatives (one for each participating region) in the administration office of Trästad 2012, whose role is to drive the project forward in conjunction with the regional process leaders.

### **Involvement**

According to Malin, the reason why the county became a part of Trästad 2012 is that they play a large role in sustainable development in their region. At first BRA BO was about promoting the use of wood as an environmentally sustainable construction material and that the promotion would be beneficial for the region. As the project developed, the aspect of social responsibility has become an even more integral part of the project. Malin feels that the social aspect of the project has become the most interesting aspect to present as it is something that feels new and is important for the society as a whole.

### **Collaboration Among Actors**

The speed with which BRA BO has developed is contributed to the strong interest and motivation by the participating actors. Malin feels that the collaboration with the other actors within BRA BO is working out very well. She mentions the importance of including the triple helix in a project like this. For example, Södra has previously been involved and financed several other projects in the region, and they have a good connection with the university which has studied and evaluated previous projects. Collaborative involvement is especially important in situations like BRA BO when a new concept is being developed. The public sector does not have all the resources and competencies alone that are required for a project like this.

Malin realized that all actors within the project may not share the same purpose and motivation behind their involvement. She adds that other actors, such as Södra, must have motivations of financial gain as a part of their involvement, however she has not seen that it has led to any conflicts or discrepancies in their contributions so far in the project. Since BRA BO is funded with public money everything has to be, and is, open to everyone that is interested.

## **Future Aspects**

In Malin's opinion BRA BO is on the threshold to start constructing and they are waiting for further involvement by other municipalities so that procurement can be coordinated. There were hopes that the BRA BO project would be able to build something that could be displayed as a part of Trästad 2012, but according to Malin that is not very likely as there are still several steps to be taken.

Malin finds it hard to estimate the future success of BRA BO. This depends on whether the project can get a foothold in the municipalities of Växjö, Kalmar, and Jönköping and can show that it is possible to build on a large scale. At this point the first indications of BRA BO's success can be estimated, but it is only when production has become industrialized that the future value can be assessed.

The future role of Kronoberg county administration in BRA BO is still unclear. A role the county administration could take would be to continue to support the municipality and act as a coordinator. The county administration could also be a part of the evaluation and follow-up of the project and make sure that the University is able to take part in the results.

The largest potential benefits of BRA BO, would be that a group in society that previously has been neglected (small households, young families, immigrants) would now be given a chance to attain better living arrangements.

## **4.6 Linnaeus University**

The following section is based on the interview with the representative from Linnaeus University, Erik Serrano (Professor Wood Construction Technology).

Erik is a professor within wood construction technology at Linnaeus University in Växjö. He is involved with research projects, lecturing, as well as being a tutor for bachelor and master students. His work is focused on the technical aspects within wood construction.

### **Involvement**

The main purpose for the University's involvement in BRA BO is to contribute with technical competence. Erik is the representative from Linnaeus University in BRA BO and his role is to act as a sort of technical advisor for the project group on issues related to the use of wood. Linnaeus University has been involved in many different projects concerning the use of wood in Sweden and has acquired a large network of actors. The university wants to show the benefits of wood as a construction material and influence the construction industry to increase the use of wood in multi-story buildings.

### **Collaboration Among Actors**

Collaboration with the other actors in the project has been good. There has been a good dialogue and working relationship between the different actors and there is a true interest in the project from all the involved actors. Erik speculates as to why some organizations get involved in projects like this, however he feels that there is an interesting constellation of involved actors. It is especially interesting that an organization such as Södra Timber is involved; a company that basically makes trees into planks is involved in a project about how homes are to be formed. Erik finds it very interesting in a positive way that a large or-

ganization shows such a maturity and long-term interest in getting involved in how their products are used and could be used in the future.

## **Future Aspects**

Erik mentions that at this point the project is at a critical crossroad. The ambition was to construct a pilot building as a part of Trästad 2012, but this is more likely to be realized sometime during 2013. Instead the ambitions are to have some kind of exhibition model of the apartments to show during 2012. The initial plan was to construct the pilot building at the university campus in Växjö, but it is important to note that the project is not just formulated for students and young people. The main issue in Sweden is that there are too few homes for small and single household and that students are just a part of a much larger group.

## **4.7 IKEA**

The following section is based on the interview with the representative from IKEA, Mikael Ydholm (Head of Research).

Mikael is responsible for research and development (R&D) at IKEA. His responsibility involves looking 10 years ahead, trying to predict the future development of people's life at home and how IKEA can be a part of that development. Mikael and IKEA are only involved with BRA BO and are not a part of Trästad 2012.

### **Involvement**

The reason for Mikael's involvement in BRA BO was to be a "challenger of ideas" and to inspire an IKEA philosophy. Mikael states that it was an interesting project to get involved with as he wanted to get a deeper understanding of how to construct a more sustainable way of living without it costing too much. On a personal level he wanted to get involved as he felt that it was a very interesting collaboration between the different actors.

Since Mikael works with global issues he was hesitant about his involvement, as BRA BO is concentrated to a limited local market in Sweden. However he found the principle question to be of such interest that it was something that he and IKEA could benefit from and contribute to.

### **Collaboration Among Actors**

Mikael feels that most of the actors involved share the same purpose to their involvement in BRA BO. Although, in general sense Mikael expresses that there might be an underlying hesitation to actually challenge the construction industry as a whole when it comes to costs.

Since IKEA is not a publicly traded company they do not have as much short-term profit goals to adhere to, instead they can stay true to their core values and ideas and have a long-term perspective when developing their business. At times they have collaborated with organizations with much more short-term and profit maximizing goals and this has resulted in a counter-productive relationship.

## **Future Aspects**

At this point, BRA BO has together with two architect firms created designs for two pilot apartments which they would like to produce. The next step is to find interested builders and suppliers, so that a pilot building can be constructed and show that BRA BO is feasible. They will then be able to present a final product to the construction industry and the general public. Mikael intends to be a part of BRA BO as long as he has something to contribute and feels that the collaboration is valuable.

## **4.8 SP - Technical Research Institute of Sweden**

The following section is based on the interview with the representative from SP, Charlotte Bengtsson (Head of SP Wood Technology).

Charlotte is responsible for the department focusing on wood technology and wood construction. She is also a professor in wood construction technology at the Linnaeus University in Växjö.

### **Involvement**

SP have been involved in BRA BO from the beginning and the involvement came as a part of their role as process leaders within Trästad 2012. As a technological and research institute, SP work with the technical types of questions that arise in BRA BO on a daily basis and have extensive knowledge about wood construction in general. Charlotte mentions that it was important for SP to get involved in a project like this and that SP is an important actor when it comes to questions and concerns regarding wood technology and wood construction. SP hopes that the involvement in BRA BO will lead to some kind of business opportunity, such as an increase in the sales of their services.

### **Collaboration Among Actors**

SP's view on the collaboration between the actors has been positive. Charlotte takes for granted that each actor involved in the project has the same kind of purpose to their involvement in the project. Each actor has different starting points and motivations to get involved, but she feels that each actor contributes with their specific knowledge and expertise. In addition to their involvement with BRA BO, SP has experience from other projects that have involved collaboration with actors from both the private and the public sector.

### **Future Aspects**

When it comes to BRA BO, SP's involvement in the future will be small. It would be interesting for SP to do a follow-up on the project in the future to better understand the outcome, but also look at more specific issues such as the energy consumption or any other technical aspects.

If the project evolves into an actual project with a building that people will live in she believes that the future value of the project will be high.

## **4.9 Videum**

The following section is based on the interview with the representative from Videum, Patrik Hjelm (Property Manager).

Videum is a municipality-owned real-estate company in Växjö that owns all the property and land on and surrounding the Linnaeus University campus. In total they currently manage 113 000 sqm of property.

### **Involvement**

The underlying reason for Videum's involvement with BRA BO was because the first construction site of BRA BO was planned to be constructed in conjunction with the university, on land owned by Videum. If so, Videum will take part in managing the buildings. Patrick adds that as students are in need of affordable living arrangements, it is a good place for the project to start.

Patrik finds it important to be involved in a project like this due to the problems in the construction industry, and the difficulties of creating efficient construction methods. Currently many projects are designed and built with one single purpose in mind, resulting in a unique building process, forcing each new project to start over from the very beginning, and disabling any lessons learned from previous work. However if the actors involved in the construction could become more efficient and utilize scale benefits, they would be able to bring down productions costs.

### **Collaboration Among Actors**

Videum are not that active in the design and development of BRA BO, even though participation in the project is interesting for them as it brings together actors with different backgrounds which enable an interesting development of the project as a whole. Patrik expresses that the different participants influence and challenge each other to generate thoughts and new ideas. Patrik states that all the involved actors share the same purpose and motivation for their involvement.

Private corporations are at times not as willing to take risks as they are constricted by realizing their returns on investments quicker. It can be easier for the municipality to take decisions to move forward with a project, even if it might be expensive at first. If the municipality is able to lead the way and then convince the private companies that BRA BO or any other project like it, has a societal value; then more private involvement can be generated. For these types of projects it can be hard to see any direct returns, but the investments can generate ten-fold indirect benefits in other places in society.

### **Future Aspects**

BRA BO has created a few suggestions of how the buildings could be realized and the next step is to decide where to build and find builders that are willing to do it, while at the same time hold costs down. Several decisions are still left out, all the building codes must be considered, and the building must be fully accessible. These aspects are cost drivers and will have a large effect on a project in which low cost is essential.

Videum intends to be a part of the BRA BO project for as long as it is running. However, their involvement could change depending on whether the buildings will be constructed on the land owned by Videum or not. If construction is done in a different location or if Videum sells off the land to be used to a different builder, their role in the project will change or diminish. Patrik points out that BRA BO is not at that stage so it is hard to say exactly what would be done.

For the future development of the project, Patrik identifies two important steps. First, show that affordable housing can be constructed in wood. Second, attach the concept of affordable housing to a strong brand that would be able to validate and promote the concept to a broader audience. Patrik states that it would be great if the concept could become associated with a brand that represents “good quality to a low cost”.

Once the first prototype has been constructed, Patrik is convinced that they will gain lots of experience that would benefit the future development of the project. It will be a process of learning before the construction can be optimized. If BRA BO can prove that housing can be produced in a more affordable way, it will be spread nationally and could benefit all municipalities in Sweden.

## 5 Analysis

In this section, the observations from the case, and the patterns identified, will be connected to the frame of reference. In the same manner as the empirical findings were categorized, the analysis will first start with the involvement in-, to be followed by the collaboration within-, and end with the future aspects of BRA BO.

### 5.1 Involvement in BRA BO

A reason for the creation of BRA BO was that a problem had been identified (the housing situation) which neither of the actors interviewed could challenge alone. In the case of BRA BO the collaboration between the different types of actors has enabled them to do something that neither one could have done alone. In BRA BO, the individual actors were invited by the county governor based on their different experiences, competences, and backgrounds. By bringing them together, the hopes were that it would generate new perspectives, ideas, and solutions. The development of the BRA BO project is much supported by Dahan et al. (2010), who argue that collaboration among different type of actors has the ability to generate new value that would otherwise be inconceivable.

Within BRA BO actors from both the private sector (Södra and IKEA), the public sector (Kronoberg county administration, VKAB, SP, Videum), and the academic sector (Linnaeus University) are participating. When comparing these actors with all the potential stakeholders listed by Freeman (1984) and Panwar et al. (2006), several stakeholders have not been included in the development work of BRA BO. Valuable inputs from future customers have not been identified; rather the concept has developed within the realm of the working group. An explanation to the lack of involvement of additional stakeholders can be that BRA BO is still in the concept stage and has not yet been presented to the general market. This would also explain the lack of external promotion of BRA BO so far. There is an interest to present BRA BO to a wider audience, and thus involve more stakeholders in the process, but only when the concept is fully developed. From the interviews with representatives of both IKEA and Södra it was a clear that the organizations find it more important to “act” before any promotions are initiated.

According to theory, external stakeholders have the ability to influence and pressure individual corporations into socially responsible actions (Maignan & Ferrell, 2004; LaFrance & Lehmann, 2005; Panwar et al., 2006; Porter & Kramer, 2006; Zucchella, 2007; Andersen & Skjoett-Larsen, 2009; Vaaland & Owusu, 2012), but in the of case BRA BO, no external pressure can be identified at this point. Instead BRA BO was created within the organizations and was initiated by motivated employees. The reason for involvement was highlighted by a statement from the CEO of Södra Timber, when he says that Södra has a responsibility to be involved with the evolution of wood products.

In accordance to Freeman’s (1984) definition of stakeholders, there are actors within BRA BO that both affect and are affected by the actions of each other. The municipality of Växjö plays a major part as they have the potential to become one of the largest procurers of, and providers of land for, BRA BO homes. The connection between the university as a whole and BRA BO is both direct and indirect. The university has a direct ability to affect the development as they provide the necessary technical skills. They will also be indirectly affected if BRA BO becomes a reality. The target of BRA BO is to alleviating the situation for small and single households, which include students attending, or planning to attend, the university in Växjö.

Fox et al. (2002) proposed four different roles for the public sector in relation to CSR; (1) mandating, (2) facilitating, (3) partnering, and (4) endorsing. In the case of BRA BO, the second and third roles are currently active, while the first and fourth are not yet fully utilized. The public sector is an active supporter of the development of BRA BO, both in funding and the facilitation of information. There is a potential that the public actors, such as VKAB, will be able to stimulate the market by leveraging their procurements and investment power. The public sector, and foremost the county administration, lay the foundation for BRA BO by inviting key actors and initiating a conversation. The combination of resources and varied competences from the different actors has created an environment for new ideas and solutions to a specific problem. The mandating role of the public sector has not been utilized so far in BRA BO, neither was it discussed by any of the interviewees. Their main point was that it is important for BRA BO to show that the concept can be successful based on its own merits, rather than on legislation and/or incentives. The fourth role of the public sector, endorsing, is not fully utilized but is growing in importance. So far, BRA BO has mostly been discussed within the project group, but as more and more municipalities are invited to take part in the project publicity will increase. The municipalities of Växjö, Jönköping, and Kalmar will discuss a letter of intent which will move BRA BO closer to being a final product.

Based on the empirical finding all participants claim that they share similar basic motivations behind their involvement in BRA BO. Although questions were raised in regards to the involvement of private actors. None of the interviewees directly claimed that they could identify any alternative motives among the actors so far in the development stage of BRA BO. The results from the interviews show that some of the participating actors have had past interactions with each other in regards to other projects. All actors have realized the need to challenge the cost structure in the construction industry as they see that it has created a situation in which a section of society cannot afford reasonable housing. In addition to the underlying issue, the actors share the interest of promoting multi-story wood buildings as a potential solution to the problem.

In addition to finding a solution to a real societal problem, BRA BO has the potential to become a good business opportunity. This insight is not only limited to the private actors, rather it is shared among the interviewees. Based on the arguments of Hillman & Keim (2001), in regards to strategic and altruistic motivations to CSR, the fact that BRA BO is a business opportunity speaks in its favor. The increased potential of financial benefits should increase the motivations of the private actors. If BRA BO and the reasons behind collaboration had only been based on the social aspects, the potential for financial success might not have been as large.

## **5.2 Collaboration within BRA BO**

What makes the collaboration within BRA BO unique is that it has not only involved private-public actors, but also the world of academics in shape of Linnaeus University. The involved actors label this extended involvement as the triple helix. By including the academic sector, BRA BO has gained access to the latest research and development of wood technology.

The success behind the collaborative efforts of private-public relationships lies in the pooling of resources, as collaborations provide a unique way of combining resources and knowledge, which would be hard to attain for an individual corporation (Zucchella, 2007, Yunus et al., 2010). The combinations of experiences, resources, and knowledge have in

the case of BRA BO been able to produce a concept that can have large, social and financial, potential.

Even when the participants in a collaboration shared complementing motivations, the lack of previous experience can have a negative effect on trust which could lead to conflicts between different types of actors (Dahan et al., 2010). Several of the actors within BRA BO had been involved in different types of project in the past. The fact that the actors had past experience working with each other enabled for greater trust to exist from the very beginning. From the interviewees, none of the questions discussed so far within BRA BO had created a situation in which trust might have been compromised. As with the situation of shared motivation going into the project, hesitation was raised about the underlying motivations of corporate involvement.

Yunus et al. (2010) suggested five strategic steps to enable the creation of social businesses, where the goal is to both provide social profit and repayment of invested capital. The intentions of BRA BO are in line with a social business. The first step was to challenge conventional wisdom which BRA BO attempts to do by proposing new approaches to procurement and the use of wood in the construction industry. The second step was to set up appropriate partnerships, which BRA BO has done for the development of the concept, although important partnerships for the next stage of construction have not yet been formed. Though the collaboration has been necessary for the development of BRA BO, the importance of designing the right partnership and/or continued collaboration in the next stages are even more important. The third step of experimentation has also not taken place yet, and from the interviews it does not seem likely that any pilot homes will be built as a part of Trästad 2012. The fourth step of favoring social profit-oriented shareholders is not identifiable from the observations. The fifth and last step was to clearly specify the social profit objective, which has not yet been done in BRA BO. Kotler & Lee (2005) also argued for the importance of establishing clear objectives and desired outcomes. There is a clear understanding of what the social profit objective could be, but it has not yet been clearly specified. This will become a very important issue for the future of BRA BO as the priority between social and financial profit must be determined. It is clear that the collaborative efforts so far have not been able to create a social business, but BRA BO has taken the first steps of the process.

When analyzing Dahan et al.'s (2010) model to facilitate collaboration, the consistency with BRA BO is identified. The model suggests that corporations should attempt to find combinative capabilities and that there needs to be an organizational fit and cultural compatibility between the collaborating actors (Dahan et al., 2010). The working group of BRA BO was assembled based on the collective capabilities they represent and several of the actors within the project had worked together in the past. These past experience has enabled for more trust within the group during the development stage. The third and fourth step in Dahan et al.'s (2010) model, which is more related to the developing world and includes the importance to support the local business environment and to gain an understanding of the unique conditions in these countries, still hold value for BRA BO with minor modifications. As BRA BO attempts to increase the use of wood, it can be beneficial for other companies in the Våxjö regions which are involved within the wood industry. For BRA BO, the understanding of the unique conditions within an industry (construction), rather than within a country, is of importance. Within BRA BO, the collective experience of how the construction industry functions is good which enables an understanding of what needs to be done.

### 5.3 Future of BRA BO

In accordance to the main initiatives of CSR, defined by Kotler & Lee (2005), BRA BO can be identified as a multi-initiative project where several actions are leveraged to generate the largest impact. BRA BO can be seen as corporate cause promotion, corporate social marketing, and socially responsible business practices.

One of the goals with BRA BO is to increase the awareness and initiate a debate by creating a solution that could potentially alleviate the housing situation in Sweden. So far BRA BO has not been openly marketed or presented, though they initially hoped to do so as a part of Trästad 2012. Once a pilot building has been constructed, the involved actors will be able to promote the concept even further. According to Kotler & Lee (2005), one of the motivations for corporate involvement in corporate cause promotion is to build brand loyalty, but none of those motivations were identifiable with any of the actors in the case study. The comments from both representatives of Södra stated that they do not feel that they have to explicitly get involved with CSR to build loyalty. Rather the motivation comes naturally as a part of their already established brand.

BRA BO can be identified as an example of corporate social marketing, as in order to move past the stage of debate and into action, there is according to the actors in BRA BO, a need to change the fundamentals of how the construction industry deals with costs and pricing. BRA BO also aims to change the view of wood as a potential construction material. The previous legislation in Sweden was identified as having had a negative impact on the use of wood and the development of production technologies. Since wood is not being used to a larger extent, the potential of a sustainable material which can “build in” carbon emissions in a building has been neglected. A potential issue in trying to promote a behavioral change is whether or not the promoter has the prerogative to do so (Kotler & Lee, 2005). These changes would be hard for either one of the actors to suggest individually. Although, LaFrance & Lehmann (2005) suggest that the private actor can leverage the reputation of public involvement in a CSR project. This could further the potential for success as the credibility of BRA BO would be increased. The collaboration does not only pool competences and knowledge, but also legitimacy and credibility. From the interviews it was clear that none of the participants had made any efforts of using BRA BO in any marketing efforts. Porter & Kramer (2011) argue that corporations are better at promoting products and services than governments and other non-profits. Therefore it could be expected that the private actors would be able to take on a larger marketing role as to spread the BRA BO concept in the future. That in combination with the credibility given to the project by the public involvement would strengthen the concept.

Corporate social marketing initiatives often require a long-term approach in order for the behavioral changes to occur (Kotler & Lee, 2005). As described in the interviews, BRA BO is a development project, and will thus eventually have an end. Therefore it is not reasonable to think that the BRA BO project, in its current constellation, will be able to create long-term influence. However, the concept developed by BRA BO is long-term and has the ability to change behavior as it goes in to the next stage of physical actualization.

BRA BO can also be viewed as socially responsible business practices, as it goes beyond regulatory standards and is a pro-active solution. All the interviewed actors agree that the potential results of a successful implementation of BRA BO will result in easily identifiable benefits for society. BRA BO was also identified as a business opportunity by the involved actors, and thus has the potential to bring financial value to the corporation that is manufacturing and selling the product.

Porter & Kramer (2011) argue that CSV will supersede other types of CSR initiatives due to the closer connection between the social responsibility and the corporation's strategic objectives. Though BRA BO is still in a concept stage and has not yet been able to create any new value, the steps suggested by Porter & Kramer (2011) to achieve CSV can still be recognized in the collaboration. The first step of CSV is to reconceive products and markets; which adhere to the plans to expand the use of wood as construction material in multi-story buildings. By educating and promoting the abilities of wood, the product can be presented to new markets and areas of use. The success of BRA BO is closely connected to the ability of creating efficiencies and increasing productivity in the value chain; which is the second step in Porter & Kramer (2011)'s model. As suggested in the interviews with the actors in BRA BO, it was not only production productivity that were necessary for success but also the need to develop an effective procurement process. More efficient and joint procurement strategies have the potential to lower the total construction costs. In order to achieve a standardized and modularized building process, which would act to decrease the costs, it will be necessary to include suppliers in the process. Co-development with a supplier would enable discussions about potential solutions early. The inclusion of technological expertise in BRA BO can be manifested by the university, SP, and Södra. As described in the interviews with the representatives from Södra, they have the capability, through Trivselhus, to produce according to concept developed by the BRA BO project group. The municipality is a large procurer of new homes, and as VKAB is included in BRA BO, the buyer's perspective has been included early in the process. As suggested by Kotler & Lee (2005), corporations should be involved with CSR causes that are "close to home". In the case of BRA BO, there is a close connection between the aspect of promoting wood and the community in which it is being developed. The region of Växjö has a profile of being a "green" city and a center for wood technology. This can be recognized by the specialization of wood technology at Linnaeus University, large corporations in the wood industry such as Södra, and the established knowledge by city architects from the county administration about wood construction. With these attributes in mind, Växjö could be considered as a cluster of the wood industry in Sweden. As a cluster, the region will experience certain benefits such as information spill-over, local non-traded inputs, and a local skilled labor pool (McCann, 2001). It can be argued that if the "cluster" attributes had not been existent in Växjö, BRA BO would not have been a viable project as it is so dependent on the local actors and the competencies they provide.

All these aspect of CSV are related to the "how" (reasons to use wood) of BRA BO rather than the "why" (social benefits). The potential of following the process of CSV is that the social values will be considered from the initial stages of development. Corporations should consider how CSV can be incorporated when discussing any major strategic decisions (Porter & Kramer, 2011), and in BRA BO it is clear that the social aspects are very important for all of the participants. The lack of affordable housing has created a joint platform for all actors to rally around. Based on the interviews the understanding is that the social benefits of a successful implementation of BRA BO will be great, but to get there the business aspects need to be dealt with first. It is stressed that the priority, as of now, is to show that BRA BO has economic potential, as it is one of the requirements to move the project forward.

The role of the public sector was described by Fox et al. (2002) to include endorsing and this role can increase as BRA BO moves in to the next stages. On a local level, where the actual decisions are going to be made, it is crucial that the concept and value of BRA BO is understood. The more municipalities that join BRA BO will not only increase the exposure but it will also increase potential scale economies of joint procurement, thus potentially cut

costs even more. On a national level, political endorsement can stimulate the debate about the housing situation.

As BRA BO continues to evolve and move in to the next stages the involvement of each individual actor in BRA BO will most likely change. The participants are of the understanding that the attributes that first included them in the collaboration of BRA BO, might not be necessary in the future. As the project evolves, new questions and problems will arise requiring new types of competencies and resources, however collaboration will continue to be an important part of BRA BO. For example, it was clearly stated by Videum that their involvement is based on the possibility of them providing the land for the buildings. If the homes are to be built anywhere else there is no need for them to be involved, neither will they be able to contribute to the project. Of the currently involved actors it is only the municipality (VKAB) and Södra that can be viewed as naturally having an active part in the next stages of BRA BO. The municipality will be one of the potentially largest procurers of BRA BO apartment buildings, and Södra, through Trivselhus, could be one of the suppliers.

## 6 Conclusion

The conclusion of this thesis will start with answering the research questions, these answers will act as a guide when addressing the purpose.

### 1. *Who are the actors involved and what are their role(s) in a CSR project?*

In the case of BRA BO, eleven individual actors were identified as being active members. The authors were able to interview nine of these actors representing seven different organizations and corporations from three different sectors (private, public, and academic). Their involvement is based on the competences and resources which they provide, which have created different role(s) for the different organization (Table 3).

Table 3: Role(s) and Contributions of the Organizations within BRA BO

<i>Actor</i>	<i>Sector</i>	<i>Role(s) and Contribution</i>
Södra Timber	Private	Product knowledge, production capabilities (Trivselhus), financier, provide a commercial perspective
VKAB	Public	Knowledge of local rules and regulations, financier, project coordinator
Kronoberg County Administration	Public	Administrative support, knowledge of local rules and regulations, process leader, act as a facilitator
Linnaeus University	Academic	Expertise in wood construction technology
IKEA	Private	Challenger of ideas, inspire an IKEA philosophy
SP	Public	Expertise in wood construction technology
Videum	Public	Management of future buildings

### 2. *Which are the underlying motivations to the actors' involvement?*

The actors state that they share the same purpose and motivation behind their involvement in BRA BO; the need to create affordable housing for small and single households and initiate a debate on the issue. Individual motivation among the actors have so far not affected the project nor created any conflicts of interest. One explanation is that BRA BO is still in the development stages and the issues the actors have addressed so far have been non-controversial. However, the authors were able to identify an additional underlying motivations specific to the individual organizations (Table 4).

Table 4: Organizations Motivations to their Involvement in BRA BO

<i>Actor</i>	<i>Sector</i>	<i>Motivations</i>
Södra Timber	Private	Increase the use of wood as a construction material, business opportunity, engaging in a socially responsible project
VKAB	Public	Finding an affordable housing solution, collaboration with other actors, continuation of Trästad 2012
Kronoberg County Administration	Public	The need to decrease costs in the construction industry, collaboration with other actors, continuation of Trästad 2012, sustainable development
Linnaeus University	Academic	Show the benefits and increase the use of wood as a construction material in multi-story buildings
IKEA	Private	To gain an understanding of sustainable construction and “way of living”
SP	Public	Promote wood technology and wood construction
Videum	Public	Potential provider of land, creating efficient construction methods

### 3. How will the actors' involvement change over time?

As BRA BO evolve from the development and concept stage there will be changes to the composition of the project group. New competencies and resources will be required as BRA BO moves closer towards production. There is a need for a clear structure and leadership from a focal actor that can entirely devote their time and effort to BRA BO. It is important that BRA BO is recognized and managed as a separate business endeavor, which potentially include the need the need for a new business model. Though the composition of actors in BRA BO will change, each organization expressed what their future role(s) could be (Table 5).

Table 5: Potential Role(s) and Contributions of the Current Organizations in the Future of BRA BO

<i>Actor</i>	<i>Sector</i>	<i>Potential role(s) and contribution in the future</i>
Södra Timber	Private	Producer of pre-fabricated sections (Trivselhus), owner of the concept
VKAB	Public	The direct role for VKAB is limited, but their subsidiaries could be involved in procuring “BRA BO” buildings
Kronoberg County Administration	Public	Support the municipalities, act as a coordinator, evaluating the outcome
Linnaeus University	Academic	Technical consultant, evaluate the outcome

IKEA	Private	Continue the current role
SP	Public	Evaluate the outcome
Videum	Public	Limited to whether or not a building is constructed on their land

*The purpose of this thesis is to explore and analyze how collaboration within a CSR project develops and evolves over time. By analyzing a CSR project that involves actors from multiple sectors, the aim is to acquire an increased understanding of the collaborative process.*

The ability to develop a CSR project, such as BRA BO, is critically dependent on the collaboration between the involved actors. In this case, one actor had identified a social need and realized that they were not able to act upon it alone, requiring additional resources. The collaborative process and inclusion of different actors are based on the required competencies, knowledge, and experience.

A success factor for the case observed in this thesis is the inclusion of what the involved actors call the “triple helix”. The triple helix represents a combination of the private, public, and academic actors which create an environment of multi-competencies. The collaborative process is guided by a purpose of providing social value, which is shared among all actors involved.

It has been observed that BRA BO has been able to form the basis for the development of a new business model, which has been determined through observations made via interviews. This also is supported by theoretical models which address collaboration and development of socially responsible initiatives. BRA BO has developed a solution to a social problem combined with a business opportunity, which can create value for a segment that has previously been neglected by the construction industry: small and single households. The importance of BRA BO for creating financial value cannot be understated; it has become clear that it will be the business aspects that will move the project forward. The social aspects have been the foundation for the shared purpose of involvement, but it has been issues regarding sustainable financial viability that have been the focus of their efforts.

For a CSR project to be successful, it is necessary to have clear objectives and outcomes which are shared among the involved actors. It has been identified that BRA BO does have a clear and shared objective. In regards to the desired outcomes, they are shared, but at this stage of the project it has not yet been made clear how they are to be achieved. A positive aspect in the collaborative process of BRA BO is that it is not a short-term ad-hoc CSR initiative, but rather a further developed and integrated initiative with the ability to achieve social and financial values simultaneously. The collaborative nature of BRA BO has allowed for a combination of competencies, knowledge, experience, resources, insights and perspectives that would otherwise not been possible and has increased the value of the project.

## 7 Discussion

During the process of this research the authors have recognized many interesting aspects of the BRA BO project. BRA BO is a project which has the chance to influence the construction industry and change the current behavior. The project has developed into something larger than one single aspect. It is a project that wants to promote wood as a construction material, at the same time it is a project which takes deep social aspects into consideration.

One of the most interesting aspects of the BRA BO is the collaboration among the different actors. The project combines a very special set of competences. Competences that when combined provide the knowledge and expertise necessary to find a solution to the problem from a technical, financial and social perspective. The solution will create a sustainable product, start a debate and find ways to challenge an industry.

Of advantage to BRA BO is that some of the involved actors have previously been involved in collaborations around other projects. Having collaborated before can contribute with creating trust among the actors which increases the chance for BRA BO to have a well defined and trustworthy relationship. This will enable the actors to learn from each other which further will contribute to a positive development of BRA BO in the future.

As established in this thesis, there is a growing problem with housing shortage in Sweden and not enough new homes are being produced. Costs of construction and price for the end consumer have increased exponentially over time. In general any corporation in any industry is focusing on increasing productivity, develop their products and lower the price for the consumer. Over time customers are demanding “more for less”. One of the main topics discussed within BRA BO is that the construction industry needs to develop a more industrialized production and standardize more aspects of their work.

BRA BO aims to provide a product which is based on modules which will enable a more industrialized and standardized production of new homes. The hope is that more actors within the construction industry will realize the advantages and adapt to offer products which will be more affordable for the end customer. More homes of this kind could contribute to a stimulation of the housing market, which over time will decrease the price and offer more affordable housing. Sustainable and more affordable housing options can contribute to a long-term positive development of society.

The initiative takers of BRA BO are convinced that there is a possibility to challenge and change the conventional standards within the construction industry. BRA BO is also recognized as a project with a potentially great business opportunity. This is not a CSR project in the form of charity or philanthropy. It is a project aimed at presenting a solution to a social problem, by producing affordable housing options. The private actors involved are not there to simply give something away. There is a true belief within the project group that BRA BO has a real business potential which can be combined with social aspects. Profit margins will be generated and increased over time by working with productivity and efficiency at all stages of the project. Profits should not be generated by increasing the price for the end consumer. Instead the whole project summits around that the price for the end consumer should be kept low, while they at the same time are offered a quality product. BRA BO has the potential to be developed into a niche product for small and single households. However, it is important that the business side of the project can be realized at an early stage to involve more private actors. Because as identified during the interviews, though the public and academic actors involved at this stage are able to contribute with

their competences they do not have the financial means or the power to actually produce a final product.

One of the largest hindrances for BRA BO that have been identified during this research is that municipal rules and regulations for construction are not the same in all of Sweden. This could make it hard to duplicate buildings and take advantages from increased productivity, which is the idea behind BRA BO. All participants within this research have also stressed an urgency to start and create a through debate about housing issues, in which the local rules and regulations are an important topic. IKEA have with its involvement in “BoKlok” realized that it is a hard process to achieve higher productivity and that the local rules and regulations can become a cost driver which quickly can take away any margins achieved through productivity.

One specific aspect of local rules and regulations that have been brought up for discussion during the interviews is accessibility for disabled. Though it is a controversial question there have to be a discussion about if it really is reasonable that all apartments should be adapted for disabled people. This is a factor that drives costs and can hinder the progress of projects such as BRA BO. It is hard to see that anyone would really appose BRA BO as a product, but some of these underlying factors might well hold back the future spread of BRA BO. Therefore there is a need for collaboration between more municipalities to decide and value these two aspects.

From a CSR perspective the private actors included in this research have realized that it is the actions that organizations take that are important. “Story lived, not story told” and “act before we tell” are the philosophy for CSR expressed by these participants. The actors involved in BRA BO have all identified a problem to which they are developing a potential a solution which can combine social and business aspects. All actors within the research have stated that they do not use BRA BO or any other CSR activity in marketing. There is no interest in only generating publicity and goodwill. There is a will to act, and provide a solution for a large and growing social issue in the Swedish society. The question is if CSR activities would not benefit from being involved in more marketing purposes? In order to generate more interest from private actors which can contribute to further develop the final product, BRA BO needs to be more specifically promoted.

So far one important stakeholder has been more or less excluded from the collaborative process and development of BRA BO, which is the customer. The price for the end customer has always been in focus but they have never been involved in expressing their thoughts about the project. It can be assumed that no one will oppose decreasing their living costs. However, what sacrifices, if any, will the customers have to make? During some of the interviews a project in Lund was discussed, which aims to construct 8 sqm homes to an approximant price of 4500 SEK. In comparison BRA BO aims to offer 40 sqm to a price of less than 3500 SEK. The Lund project is more specified at students while BRA BO are considering small and single households which includes but are not specific for students. However, the projects are similar in the way that both are searching for ways to decrease the housing problem in Sweden, but their approach is very different. The authors of this thesis argue for that the BRA BO solution is a better and a more sustainable way to resolve the problem. However, with both projects there will be sacrifices that customers will have to make. In the Lund project it is clearer that costumers have to sacrifice space, with a very small and limited living space. What sacrifices that customers will have to make within a BRA BO apartment is a something that can't be fully answered yet. However, the intentions as stated in the project name are to offer a “good” product to a “reasonable” price.

However there are some risks which potentially could stop BRA BO from evolving into a final product. For BRA BO to become a success it needs to be credible and show its business potential at an early stage. The progress of the project could be hindered or slowed down if the actors get more urgent matters on their agenda and that it only will end up as another report describing a concept. For the product itself, if produced, there is a risk that it will turn in to a low quality product in order to keep the price down. In the future the project also need to focus on identifying external stakeholders and factors which can affect the project and drive costs. As stated several times the main issue of BRA BO is to offer an affordable product.

BRA BO definitely has the ability to succeed in the future. An interesting question for the future is though how the constellation of the group will look like. One thing that has become clear during the interviews is that the project group will not stay the same in the future. There is very few of the involved actors that actually have the power and intention to be involved in making BRA BO into a final product.

The question is when the different actors will end their involvement in the project? The actors are at this stage all involved in developing a product which can become commercially successful. At the same time the actors have stated that they share similar motivations to their involvement, which is to solve a social problem. However, the question is if this fact can stay true over time or if the project will involve conflicts of interest over the next stages? From this research it can be established that all the individual actors will not be able to take advantage from the project in the same way.

Södra is one of the actors which have stated that they really could see a future involvement in form of actually producing a product in accordance with BRA BO. Other actors have also recognized that Södra is one of the private actors that could benefit commercially from BRA BO in the future. Södra have with their ownership in Trivselhus a production facility which are capable of producing the actual product. However, this does not necessary mean that it will go under the BRA BO name. BRA BO as a project under its current constellation might come to an end in a nearby future. Still, the actors have been involved in spreading knowledge among each other and have created a concept that individually have created value for each organization. Södra or any other of the involved actors might take that knowledge into creating new products and/or services which will have value for their specific market and costumers.

If and when BRA BO will be a success, is not a question which can be answered at this point. However, what this research has found is that for a CSR project like BRA BO to be successful, in changing the mindset of the construction industry, a collaborative process with different types of actors is necessary.

## **7.1 Future Research**

From the interviews many of the participants expressed that there is a lack of academic research of “living”. A project like BRA BO as well as the construction industry as a whole would benefit from more social and behavioral research about how people actually live inside their homes. This would contribute the future development of homes that are better adapted to a modern way of living and that are more customized for different demographics groups.

From a collaborative and CSR perspective it would be interesting to follow the development of BRA BO in the future. Develop a similar research to follow-up and analyze the future performance of the project. It would also be interesting to search for similar projects outside Sweden to search for discrepancies and similarities.

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## Appendix: A

Interview guide:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is your and your organization's role in:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Trästad2012?</li><li>○ BRA BO?</li></ul></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How did you and your organization get involved in BRA BO?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What was the purpose for your organization's involvement in BRA BO?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How do you perceive the collaboration between the private and public actors involved in BRA BO?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do you perceive that there is a shared purpose and motivation among the actors within BRA BO?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Which actor(s) outside the project do you aim to influence with BRA BO?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Are there any outside actor(s) that could be valuable to involve within the next stages of BRA BO?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is there anything that could be done on a political level to further BRA BO?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is the current status of BRA BO and what is the next step?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How do you perceive you and your organization's future involvement in BRA BO?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What benefits could be an outcome from BRA BO?<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Social benefits?</li><li>○ Financial benefits?</li></ul></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do you see a future expansion of BRA BO to other parts of Sweden?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do you use BRA BO in any form of marketing?</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is your organization involved in any similar project?</li></ul>