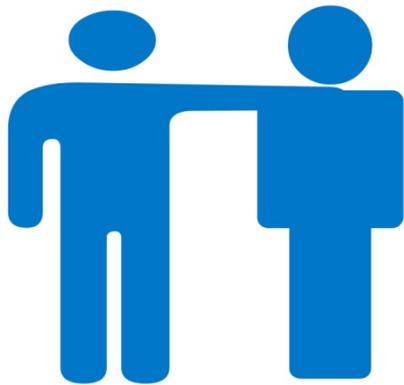


Social Solidarity Program



**SOCIAL
SOLIDARITY
PROGRAM**



**Nicosia Development Agency –ANEL
September 2013**

Introduction

- Nicosia Development Agency- the organization that introduced the “SOCIAL SOLIDARITY PROGRAM”- 9 out of 10 municipalities are members
- Global Financial Crisis - Current Situation in Cyprus.
- Effects on Cypriot Society
- Unemployment and Social Isolation
- The need of implementation of Social Policy by Local Authorities.
- The Idea - Board of Directors of the Agency

Description of the Program

- Implemented on a pilot basis for certain period of time
- Results will be recorder and conclusions will be drawn.
- The new service operates as a market in a different form- term alternative economy.
- exchange of goods and services among the participants
- principles of solidarity, justice and equality
- excluding consumerism, competition and speculation
- Use of alternative currency TOM – Local Currency.

How Does The Program Work?

1. Become a Member

- Register on line to the web portal designed. (tom.anel.com.cy)- enter name, address, etc. Introduction of a username and password is necessary to access the account.
- Upon registration you have to read, understand and agree the terms and conditions of the program.
- Send the necessary documents – copy of i.d and a service bill from a company with the address stated on the invoice, so the information stated in the web portal can be matched with the documents.
- The monitoring board will give you access right as soon as the documents are send and the relative check is performed.

How Does The Program Work?

2. Upload the Ads

- Every member can upload ads for goods and services offered or requested.
- Goods and services are categorized according to their nature. For example in the goods section there are categories for products like electronics, furniture, books and stationary etc
- By choosing the suitable category, the member has to describe the product supplied or demanded in detail.
- For the demand ads, the member has to give a description that can be understood fully by the other members.
- For the supply ads, members can describe the product or service, give value to it (in Local Currency TOM) and explain precisely the product or service. Furthermore, the member can upload an image of the supply, if it's a tangible good.
- Members have to state their contact details in order to be able to receive orders from other members for their goods and services.
- Ads are visible by everyone who enters into the portal. The contact details are only visible to members that are actually logged in.

Transaction between members

Members can transact in 2 ways-

1. Through exchange of goods and services directly- Barter.
2. Payment on a Local currency basis- TOM.

Barter exchange is not widely spread among members because it is difficult to match the offer of one member with the needs of the other directly.

The payment of local currency upon an exchange of a good or service is easier and more convenient for members to perform.

Payment procedures between members

- Every member maintains an account in the web portal, that is established along with their registration.
- This account is similar to a bank account.
- The account starts with a zero balance.
- It offers the ability to a member to use it as an overdraft with a credit limit of 300.00 TOM (local currency units)
- Members meet to exchange a good or service.
- Price in local currency –TOM, has been agreed.
 - Price can be displayed in the ads section of the web portal or
 - it can be established upon communication between members.

Payment procedures between members

- When the exchange of a good or service is complete members has to finalize the exchange by signing a document that includes the description of the item or service and the price.
- the document is available to members for printing thought the web portal (tom.anel.com.cy)
- By signing the documents the members agree formally (it is stated in the internal rules and regulations) that the one receiving the good or service has to transfer the amount stated on the document in 3 days.
- Failure to do so will be subject for evaluation to the monitoring board.

General Goals of the program

- Establish an alternative way of transacting between citizens
- Move away from the stereotype way that citizens approach the market. Away from money- banks, loans, interest rates, and capital.
- Introduce the term “solidarity” when transacting.
- avoid the categorization among citizens that is formed in the business market, and it divides people according to their wealth, and their financial power. In this way, equality of members in the program and in the society in general is promoted.

Specific Goals

- Help unemployed citizens to receive some goods and services that could not be obtained with the use of real money.
- Help poor and helpless citizens in their everyday life to fulfill their basic needs.
- Help elderly people that are inactive. They can find ways to produce something in return of some units (TOM) and spend their units on something beneficial for them.
- Unemployed people are socially excluded. In this program they are equally acting with all citizens, thus they are included into their local societies.
- Citizens develop stronger bonds between them, they learn to care about each other, and in this way isolation of citizens can be reduced.

Results

- 450 members registered
- 3 months of operation
- 90% are active members
- From 07/2013 members started transacting between them
- A great amount of goods and services has been uploaded in the web portal.
- New members are registering every day.
- 5 local meeting between members took place.
- By the end of the year – expect around 150 new members, and transactions to increase by 35-40%

Difficulties and Weaknesses

- People are not familiar with this new concept.
- Skepticism and disbelief.
- Some members are not so familiar with the use of computers.
- Geographical coverage of the program is quite large.

Actions to overcome the problems.

- People will become more familiar with this new concept through continuous provision of information about this program. Media coverage and local meeting will increase in time, in order to pass the message to everybody, that this program is very beneficial for citizens and that they have nothing to loose if they become members.
- Skepticism and disbelief will disappear only when actual members present and share their experience. Presentation of real examples of how members received aid through this program will change they way that the open public faces this program.

Actions to overcome the problems.

- The problem of internet access and computer illiteracy can be solved, since local service points were established in each of our members. All members can visit the service points that are near to them, and with the trained municipal staff, they can do everything they wish. (place their ads, search for goods and services, make an electronic transfer of units (TOM) etc.)
- The difficulty with the wide geographical coverage of the program is something that the monitoring board is working on. Some ideas like segmentation into municipal market or to establishment of regional markets are being examined, without any specific solution yet.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

SOCIAL SOLIDARITY PROGRAM

<http://tom.anel.com.cy>

NICOSIA DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (ANEL)

