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Regional Development in Yorkshire and the Humber (A)

The creation of Regional Development Agencies in England

In 1999, the UK's Department of Trade and Investment launched nine Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) (See Exhibit 1) with the mission of improving local economic performance and reducing social and economic disparities. Each RDA had five statutory purposes:

- To further economic development and regeneration
- To promote business efficiency, investment and competitiveness
- To promote employment
- To enhance development and application of skill relevant to employment
- To contribute to sustainable development

The RDA corresponding to the newly defined region of Yorkshire and the Humber (See Exhibit 2) was branded as "Yorkshire Forward". It was an organization of more than 300 employees grouped from existing organizations, all funded by central government, based in five offices across the region – Leeds, Hull, Bradford, York and Wath-upon-Deerne.

Yorkshire Forward was given very ambitious 10-year targets:

- Above EU average increases in GDP
- Create 150,000 jobs
- Double the rate of business start ups
- Treble foreign manufacturing investment
- Train 3 million people in IT skills
- Halve the number of most deprived wards (in bottom 10% in England)
- Cut greenhouse gases by more than 20% (1990 to 2010)

During its first years of existence, up to 2005, Yorkshire Forward concentrated in the following actions:

This case was prepared by Amy Cogan Wares on 2011 based on a real experience at the Yorkshire and the Humber Region (England), as the basis for class discussion rather than to illustrate the effective or ineffective handling of an administrative situation. Some situations, characters and companies have been disguised to preserve confidentiality.
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- 5 clusters: Advanced engineering/metals, Bioscience, Chemicals, Digital, Food and drink
- Manufacturing
- Enterprise, particularly young people and ethnic minorities
- Tourism
- Public investment in health and education: supply chains and skills
- Connecting people to jobs
- 7 transport priorities
- City centers: Leeds, Bradford, Sheffield, Hull and York
- 20 urban and rural renaissance towns

A key goal of the RDAs was to support the development of clusters in their regions. The emphasis was intended to be on knowledge industries, but Yorkshire Forward, chose to work with the Food and drink industry due to its economic significance for the area. Food processing employs over 100,000 people and is the second largest manufacturing sector in the region.

Yorkshire Forward also felt that food exhibited many characteristics of clusters, such as being highly concentrated and linked through sales arrangements.

Once the cluster work began, Yorkshire Forward determined that the food cluster was too broadly defined. There were surprisingly few similarities among the subsets of the food cluster and, as a result, the problems and recommendations to be developed run the risk of being too general to have meaningful impact (See Exhibit 3).

Questions for discussion

Please prepare the answer to the following questions with your group, and be ready to discuss them with the rest of the teams:

- How should Yorkshire Forward use its clusters to achieve its regional development goals?
- What “cluster work” should be carried at regional level, cluster level or sub-cluster level?
- Should a private sector Steering Committee be created? At what level? When? Who should be in it?
- What should be the next step? How should it be done?

Exhibits

Exhibit 1: Regional Development Agencies in England



Exhibit 2: The Yorkshire and the Humber region



Exhibit 3: Main food categories in the Yorkshire and Humber Food and Drink cluster

Sector	Companies	Jobs	Major Companies
Meat & Poultry	68	20,000	2 Sisters Premier Division, F.W. Farnsworth, Farmers Boy, Grampian Country Food
Fruit & Veg	42	12,000	Del Monte, Axgro, Daniels Chilled foods, Gordon Jopling
Seafood	120	10,000	Young's, Seachill, Sealord
Confectionery	21	7,000	Nestle, Dunhills (Haribo)
Beer	31	5,000	Carlsberg, Theakstons, Black Sheep, HB Clark
Water/Soft Drinks	18	4,500	Major Companies: Cott Beverages, Benjamin Shaw, Nestle Waters Powwow, Coca Cola
Ethnic	10	1,500	Kwoks, King Asia, Mumtaz Food Industries
Ice cream	15	Limited data available	
Tea	7		