



Active work for Gender Equality – a challenge for municipalities and county councils

A SWEDISH PERSPECTIVE



Swedish Association
of Local Authorities
and Regions

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About SALAR:

The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) represents the governmental, professional and employer related interests of Sweden’s 290 local municipalities, 18 county councils and two regions. SALAR strives to promote and strengthen local government and to create the best possible conditions for the work of its members. One aim is to contribute to gender equality in society and give service on equal conditions to women and men as inhabitants in municipalities and as patients in the health care system administered by the county councils and regions.

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For more information on the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions please visit www.salar.eu or www.skl.se

Foreword

The goal of Swedish gender equality policy is for women and men to have the same power to shape society and influence their own lives. Through their government, activities and services municipalities and county councils are key players for the achievement of this goal.

The current inequality is a serious societal problem. Gender mainstreaming is a political strategy to achieve gender equality by integrating the gender equality perspective in all areas of activity and at all levels of society. Since gender equality – and inequality – is created where ordinary decisions are made and implemented, the gender equality perspective must be part of the everyday work of politicians, managers and co-workers.

Over the past ten years, the members of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) have implemented a lot of gender equality initiatives. To spread knowledge obtained from these initiatives SALAR took the initiative to produce the survey of knowledge *Gender Equality Work – a challenge for municipalities and county councils*. The survey reviews the experiences obtained from initiatives in activities which citizens, inhabitants and patients come into contact with. It also highlights research on gender equality work and draws conclusions from the gender equality projects evaluated. The survey is intended to shed light on the strategies and methods of work that lead to success in gender equality work and produce sustainable results. It is intended to serve as a knowledge bank and a source for reflection that can inspire and guide further work.

The booklet you are now reading is a condensed version that has been updated and adapted for European conditions.

Making everyday life equal – a challenge for municipalities and county councils

It is in everyday life that gender equality is created – or inequality sustained. The Swedish municipalities and county councils meet inhabitants in everyday life at all stages of life, from neonatal care to care of the elderly.

We go to pre-school or school, we borrow books at the library, we fall ill, we use public transport – we come into contact with the services of municipalities and county councils in all these areas and many more. Municipalities and county councils therefore have a key role when it comes to making gender equality policy a reality. The politicians and officials of these organisations bear an important responsibility and play a crucial part in whether the gender equality goals are implemented.

The overarching goal for Sweden's national gender equality policy is that women and men should have the same power to shape society and influence their own lives.

There are four sub-goals:

- **Even distribution of power and influence.** Women and men shall have the same right and ability to be active citizens and to shape the conditions for decision-making.
- **Economic gender equality.** Women and men shall have the same opportunities and conditions in education and paid work which provides economic independence throughout life.
- **Even distribution of unpaid housework and care work.** Women and men shall take the same responsibility for housework and be able to give and receive care on equal terms.
- **Men's violence against women shall cease.** Women and men, girls and boys, shall have the same right and ability to bodily integrity.

The important role played by municipalities and regions is also emphasised in the common European work for gender equality. CEMR stands for The Council of European Municipalities and Regions. CEMR's members consist of associations of municipal authorities and regional associations from over thirty European countries. They have together drawn up and support the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life. In Sweden, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions supports the charter and has urged its members to sign it and act accordingly with it.

The charter establishes, inter alia, that equality of women and men constitutes a fundamental right for all and an essential value for every democracy. It is also established that this right needs not only to be legally recognised but to be effectively applied to all aspects of life: political, economic, social and cultural.

Despite numerous instances of formal recognition and progress made, equality of women and men in daily life is still not a reality. Women and men do not enjoy the same rights in practice. Social, political, economic and cultural inequalities persist, for example, salary disparities and political under-representation. These inequalities are the results of social constructs built upon numerous stereotypes present in the family, education, culture, the media, the world of work, the organisation of society....(...) As the spheres of governance closest to the people, local and regional authorities represent the levels best placed to combat the persistence and the reproduction of inequalities, and to promote a truly egalitarian society.

European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life ¹

What is gender equality ?

Gender equality means that women and men have the same rights, opportunities and obligations.

Gender equality can mean that women and men

- have the same opportunities for earning a living and for self-development and responsibility in working life
- have the same influence in democratic and political processes
- have the same wages for the same or equivalent work
- have the same opportunities for good health and good quality care
- obtain equivalent care and service in care of the elderly
- are able to dare to go out in the evenings as easily
- are treated and assessed on equal terms by the social services, refugee reception and in rehabilitation when on sick leave
- are able to choose and engage in leisure activities on equal terms
- can develop as individuals without restrictive gender norms

Gender equality can also mean that gender shall not affect the risk of being exposed to violence at home.

In brief, society must change in all areas and at every level to make gender equality possible.

Gender equality and power

When we talk about gender equality, it often seems as if everyone is in agreement on what is meant. However, in fact gender equality can be interpreted in a number of different ways and mean different things.² A crucial factor for gender equality work is whether we perceive gender inequality as a question of power.

Women, like men, live in world that is structured by gender. So even if gender identity is a social and cultural construction, it is in no way a facade. Women and men are experienced categories. I don't mean that they are experienced in the same way. Being perceived as a gender and pointed out as a group is considerably more common for women than for men in public life. Women's demands to be present in democratic institutions is regarded as a gender interest, while men's established presence in the same institutions is seldom considered to have to do with gender. To put it more incisively, it could be said that the absent women are gender, the men who are present citizens.³

Maud Eduards, 2002

The overarching goal for Sweden's national gender equality policy is for women and men to have the same power to shape society and influence their own lives. The concept of power is accordingly central and recurs, for example, in the sub-goal, equal distribution of power and influence. Despite research and national goals, it is, however, far from always the case that gender equality is perceived as a question of power.

One example is when gender inequality is perceived as something natural according to differences between the sexes, and not something that is created in society by one group having more power than the other.⁴

Another example is that gender equality is regarded as a complement rather than a matter of justice. If there are few women at a workplace or on a board, it is primarily regarded as a deficiency of the organisation, and not primarily as a deficiency in justice, democracy or women's opportunities to exert influence. The deficiency for the organisation is considered to consist of the organisation not being able to have access to women's (in relation to

men) complementary characteristics.⁵ Women may participate but on condition that they are different, i.e. that they differ from men.

A major challenge for gender equality work is the view that one's own organisation already has gender equality. It is then not necessary to have special activity relating to gender equality.⁶ However, it often proves to be the case that, when an organisation is examined from a gender equality perspective, there are gender inequalities on a number of points.

A common view is that gender equality is a women's issue, where women alone own the problem. Women are considered, for example, to lack qualifications or to have problems in combining working life and a family and children. However, making gender equality solely into a woman's issue disregards the role of men. Projects that aim at changing girls or women are relatively common. It is all the more difficult to talk about men having to change in order to achieve gender equality.⁷

Gender equality can be regarded as a natural development issue taking place over time. The development that has taken place to date in the sphere of gender equality is considered to have taken place naturally by itself. The next generation and the one following that will solve the problem of gender equality so that it will be even better.⁸ This disregards the intensive struggle by the women's movement, which has led to the successes achieved – for example, the right to vote, the right to education and a lot of other formal rights. This also displays a lack of knowledge of the mechanisms that result in gender equality work often encountering resistance.

Views such as the above are examples of approaches that do not have a power perspective on the issue of gender equality. Speaking about power and about interest conflicts between groups of women and men can make conflicts visible and is something that is therefore avoided in some areas of gender equality work. The political scientist Malin Rönnblom shows that views of gender equality and how work for gender equality is to be conducted can be restricted to *not* being about power relationships between women and men "[...] gender equality is associated with cooperation and consensus as far as possible, not with political conflicts of interest between women and men as groups in society."⁹

Perceiving gender equality as a power imbalance between women and men is more common in politics than within work organisations, according to organisational researcher Pia Höök.¹⁰ It may be taboo to speak about gender equality in terms of power in organisations since this approach indicates that men must give up privileges and power for women to be able to have more power.

Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming – for sustainable gender equality

Gender mainstreaming is a strategy that aims to carry out system-changing gender equality work, and is described in the following way by Eva Wittbom, Ph.D:

“This strategy is about always having a gender policy perspective on specific policy issues, to analyse power relationships between women and men with a view to carrying out measures in such a way that there is equal opportunity regardless of sex. Gender mainstreaming aims at systemic changes that differ from the strategies for gender equality initiatives which try to bring out changes by giving women a presence and a vote in existing systems.”¹¹

Gender mainstreaming does not say anything per se about the concrete changes that should be made in an activity to achieve sustainable gender equality, but is rather about making decisions that the entire operation at all levels should be carried out in such a way as to create gender equality. After the decision has been made, the strategy should be filled with different methods and measures that are adapted according to the intention of the change that is to be achieved and what the actual situation is like.

Short background

At the end of the 1980s, *informal* barriers to gender equality started to be noticed and discussed on a larger scale. Work had then been carried out, in Sweden among other places, on the basis of a gender perspective, and a number of changes had been won for formal gender equality.¹² However, despite the fact that gender equality had now been achieved in society in formal terms, gender inequality still persisted in practice. The informal barriers that one started to focus on at the end of the 1980s are barriers that are not primarily due to laws and rules but are more related to gender norms and conflicts of interest between the sexes, which are difficult to regulate or remove by legislation.¹³ Eventually, gender mainstreaming was developed in order to tackle gender inequality due to informal barriers.

Since 1994, gender mainstreaming has been the strategy advocated by the Swedish government to realise the gender equality policy goals.

Gender mainstreaming may be regarded as an attempt to counteract the *informal* barriers for gender equality through workplaces, the Government Offices, authorities, regions and municipalities that work with gender mainstreaming always applying a gender equality perspective throughout their work. This strategy shall lead to gender equality work not being pursued in individual project alongside or in addition to ordinary work. It is usually said that gender mainstreaming means that gender equality issues should be in the main stream of an organisation.

Definitions of gender mainstreaming

The Swedish Government on gender mainstreaming;

“In Sweden, gender mainstreaming is the main strategy used to achieve the gender equality policy objectives. [...] Gender mainstreaming as a strategy has been developed in order to counteract the tendency for gender equality issues to be overlooked or be assigned an ancillary position compared to other political issues and activities.”

(The Government, Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality).

The government uses the Council of Europe’s definition of gender mainstreaming:¹⁴

“The (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making.”

(The Government, Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications, 2004).

Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions:

“Gender mainstreaming is a political strategy to incorporate a gender equality perspective in all spheres of activity and at all levels of society.

This means that gender equality work has obtained a broader perspective since a gender perspective is to be a natural component of all work in an organisation. Gender mainstreaming is a strategy, a way of working to achieve the gender equality goals set. This means that:

Different terms and conditions for women and men should be made visible.

Every issue which concerns individuals shall be considered from a gender equality perspective. The consequences of how changes could impact on women and men shall be analysed.”

(Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions)

In a number of areas gender mainstreaming can be said to have integrated gender equality issues in ordinary goal documents and activities both within Sweden and in international contexts. In the UN Declaration on Human Rights men’s violence against women has been included as a human rights issue. An example from the EU is that Member States, as of membership, have been “compelled” to change laws in such a way as to prohibit women being discriminated against on the labour market.

The 3R method

A method often used by the members of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions when working with the gender mainstreaming strategy is the 3R method. This is initiated by quantitative surveys followed up by qualitative analyses. The goal of the 3R method is to integrate gender equality in different activities. The three Rs stand for representation, resources and reality. The 3R method makes it possible in a very concrete way to discuss how the gender equality perspective can be integrated into a particular service or activity instead of talking about gender equality in general terms. The idea of the 3R method is to find out whether there is gender inequality in one’s own activity and, if so, which forms this gender inequality takes. If it proves that there is gender inequality in the entire

activity or some component of it, the possible causes are analysed. Assistance is obtained from research-based theories on gender and gender equality. The 3R method must thus be combined with knowledge in these fields. When the analysis has been completed, action plans are prepared to reduce gender equality.

The 3R method was developed during the 1990s by the then Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Gertrud Åström, and has subsequently been further developed by the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions together with its member organisations.¹⁵ It has been applied in a number of different fields, such as education, community planning, social services, culture and leisure.

Keys to gender equality

- Knowledge and reflection about gender inequality and equality!
- Discover gender inequality in one's own activity and organisation and at the workplace.
- Realise one's own role in maintaining and recreating unequal power structures between women and men. How are you affected? How do you act towards others?
- Realise one's own potential to carry out changes in one's own area of responsibility!
- Act!

This applies to managers, politicians and co-workers!

Keys to gender equality have been obtained in its entirety from the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions' compendium *Hälsa, Arbete och Kön*, 2007, [Health, Work and Gender].

Gender equality work – challenges and resistance

“All change creates resistance. The greater the change, the stronger the resistance.”

Syvonne Nordström et al., 2006

To start with, we would like to point out two pitfalls for gender equality work: gender equality work is regarded as a voluntary occupation and gender equality work is pursued in projects whose results are not integrated into the ordinary work.

Voluntary occupation

Gender equality work may be regarded as something that takes place on a voluntary basis. Those who want to and have a special interest shall carry out this work instead of it being carried out in the way which work is normally performed in the organisation. According to researcher Malin Rönneblom, this approach is based on a concept that gender equality work should take place naturally, not through active measures. The pace of gender equality work should not be “forced” but it should develop at its own speed.¹⁶ In this case the interest conflicts, which usually become visible when power and resource are to be redistributed, are disregarded. One also disregards the reluctance that can be aroused when habitual gender norms are threatened, which can lead to various forms of resistance.

When this approach to gender equality work predominates, no system-changing work will be undertaken. To succeed in system-changing gender equality work, it is usually required that co-workers are given a clear directive by the management and politicians.

Gender equality work can also be imbued by it not being permitted to incur additional costs.¹⁷ However, if the management expect that gender equality work is to take place on a voluntary basis and must not cost anything in terms of skills development or time, they are at the same time saying that this work is unimportant. And, of course, it is difficult to carry out system-changing work under these premises.

A side project

Gender equality work often takes place in project form. Projects can be good, for example, to test a method in an activity or to initiate gender equality work. Long-term gender equality work aiming for sustainable gender equality may also include a number of different initiatives carried out in project form and which are part of the long-term process of change. However, unfortunately, research and analyses of a number of gender equality projects show that there is a risk that experience and knowledge from various initiatives will not be incorporated in ordinary activities. Instead, the results risk being forgotten about when the projects are concluded.¹⁸ Projects where it has not been made clear from the beginning how good experiences from the project are to be incorporated in ordinary activities seldom lead to system-changing work.

Resistance

Working for gender equality is often a challenge, and resistance can be anticipated.¹⁹ All those who have led or been involved in making changes know that changes often lead to questions, anxiety and fear. This is also the case with change for gender equality.

When changes for gender equality are to be implemented, it may be beneficial to think about the feelings and thoughts that these changes can arouse among co-workers, inhabitants or patients. A fruitful approach for those who are leading efforts to make changes is to assume that most people act in the way they do because they believe it is the best way to act – the intention is seldom deliberate discrimination. Those leading the change need knowledge to be able to identify challenges and resistance that change may encounter, in order to be able to deal with the challenges that arise in a patient and long-term way.



Politicians, managers and staff in municipalities, county councils and regions work hard to do their best for the activity. It may then feel tough and unpleasant to come to a gender equality course and realise that one has made mistakes, that one has created gender inequality. However, the norms and working methods that exist today have been created in an unequal society, and if we behave in the same way as until now, gender inequality will be maintained. It is tough to realise that I create inequality exactly by doing what I believe to be correct.”

Helena Spets, gender expert,
Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions

The greater the resistance to change

- the greater need of just that, change!



The process of change has different stages

One way of understanding challenges and resistance that may be aroused by gender equality work is to study theories of what happens during a process of change. Leading work for increased gender equality requires knowledge about the work of making changes and change processes.²⁰ Studies show that the management's willingness to change is crucially important for the process of change, not least with regard to gender equality issues.²¹

All of those who have been involved in reorganisation and major changes know that these can be difficult and challenging processes both for managers and staff.

One way of understanding change processes is to apply the model The Four Rooms of Change. The Four Rooms of Change divide a process of change into four different stages as outlined below.²²

Satisfaction

People at the workplace are contented with things as they are. Business goes on as usual. There is no wish for change.

Censure/denial

One would like there not to be any problems and pretends that the problems don't exist.

Confusion/conflict

Arises when we can no longer shut our eyes to problems. Questions are asked as to why things have become like they are and how to solve the problems.

Inspiration/renewal

In this phase, proposals for solutions are put forward and there is a belief that change is possible.

This is a very simplified and brief illustration of The Four Rooms of Change. The four rooms Satisfaction, Censure, Confusion and Inspiration illustrate different stages of the process of change. This process takes a long time and the role of management in the process is strongly emphasised by researchers Minna Gillberg and Eva Amundsdotter.²³

In order to understand what can be interpreted as challenges or resistance in the process of change, the room Censure/Denial is important.²⁴ In the case of gender equality work, questions relating to gender and inequality often give rise to strong feelings, for example, because we believe that we are already equal. It is not unusual to believe that one treats women and men equally or that female and male inhabitants are given the same resources. When a process of change for increased gender equality is initiated, it is common that we do not want to see gender inequality. We want to continue to believe that we work in an equal way and treat our inhabitants or patients equally with equal use of resources. We censure facts, new information and perhaps even our own actions and the unequal structures of the workplace.

In a censure phase, the role of the management, as mentioned above, is invaluable, just as in all other change processes. When the change has been initiated and resistance becomes visible, politicians and managers must then stick by their decisions and continue to develop the work and be clear in their communications with co-workers about the assignment for the change process.

Different forms of resistance

At the same time as the process of change for gender equality will encounter similar challenges and opposition as all other change processes, there are challenges in gender equality work that do not always exist in other types of change processes. This is due to real gender equality work often being about redistributing resources and power and often leading to our identities as women and men being called into question. Reports from gender equality initiatives show that the support and actions of the management are very important for change processes to be successful. This is shown not least by reports that the action of the management is very important when the change process encounters challenges and resistance.

To be able to counteract and deal with resistance, the first step is to identify the resistance. The following section describes some forms of challenges and resistance that gender equality work may encounter.

If you who are working with gender equality have not encountered resistance, then you are nowhere near changing things - then it's time to put your foot down and accelerate even more!

Anna-Klara Bratt, presentation of the method and the book *Könsbalans [Gender Balance]* at the conference NTG Gender Equality ARGUS, in Stockholm 21 October 2007

Redistribution of power and resources

Inequality is based on uneven power between women and men, which in turn, among other factors, depends on stereotype norms and valuations of women and femininity and men and masculinity respectively. In general, men as a group have a higher status and value than women as a group. We often take the differences that exist between women's and men's life experiences for granted. These differences are shown at the level of the individual, at workplaces and at the level of society. At the level of society, it is apparent, for example, that women generally have a lower wage than men and that more men than women are managers and sit on boards that have a greater impact on the community and entrepreneurship.

A process of change may, for example, aim at a more fair distribution of financial resources between the sexes or that women and men shall have the same power. This means that resources have to be redistributed. Most often it means that men must give up resources and women receive more. Giving up resources, privileges and power is difficult. The greatest resistance in a change process for increased gender equality is perhaps therefore the reactions that may be expressed when resources and power are to be redistributed.²⁵

Reconsidering our view of the sexes

We seem to be so accustomed to the gender order that we live in that we have difficulties in seeing gender inequality. Gender equality work often encounters challenges therefore both at an individual level and in our professions. Gender equality work is not just about changing superficial habits, but sometimes also about reconsidering what it means to be a man or a woman – reconsidering a central part of our own identity. When things that we have previously regarded as being “natural” for women or men are called into question and reconsidered, both women and men may feel criticised and threatened.

Active and passive resistance

The research of political scientist Ingrid Pincus on gender equality projects points out two common forms of opposition: passive and active opposition. The most common form of passive opposition is *silence*. Gender equality issues may never be placed on the agenda and accordingly never come into question.²⁶

Another form of passive resistance is called *pseudo-actions*, where the issue of gender equality is taken up on the agenda but is not provided with the prerequisites to become a reality. “[...] a plan can be drawn up, a gender equality committee set up, a gender equality ombud appointed without this leading to either legitimacy or action.”²⁷

In organisations where gender equality issues are on the agenda and gender equality work has started, it may encounter active resistance. Active resistance is often preceded by passive resistance. The more the pressure grows to work with gender equality issues, the more active the resistance will become. One form of active resistance is *to argue against*. Counter arguments can be raised when, for example, real decisions on gender equality are to be made. Counter arguments can, for instance, take the form of stating that there are other more important issues that must be given priority and that gender equality work is not compatible with these important issues.²⁸

Another form of active resistance is to *undermine* gender equality work. Gender equality measures can, for example, be undermined by withdrawing posts or resources, or employing people without gender equality expertise.²⁹

A further form of undermining is targeted on the people who work with gender equality issues in the organisation. “Resistance focused on people takes place when individuals in managerial positions undermine the authority of gender equality work in different ways. This may involve both the calling into question of the knowledge of the person working with gender equality and their personality.”³⁰

As a gender equality worker, it is important to be aware that resistance focused on one’s person is actually more closely related to the issues one is working with rather than one’s personality – even if the resistance often takes the form of a person’s personality being called into question!

Identifying and overcoming opposition is a challenge for all organisations that want to work for sustainable gender equality.

Practical gender equality work – some examples

Citizens and inhabitants encounter the activities carried out by the member organisations of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions at all stages of life, from neonatal care to care of the elderly. Many member organisations work actively to promote equality in their services. Some examples are presented below of different gender equality work associated with member organisations. To start with, we give examples of surveys of gender inequality. There is subsequently a section on work for women's security and safety. This is followed by a section on gender equality work in schools and pre-schools. After that follows some examples of how a municipality used gender equality training and surveys as part of its gender mainstreaming. After that there is an example on courses for managers and politicians, and finally there is a short presentation of Programme for Sustainable Gender Equality.

Detecting one's own gender inequality

A first stage of gender equality work is often to detect inequality through surveys and gender analysis. This includes the 3R method that we described above. At the same time as surveys can be a necessary component to create an up-to-date picture of the situation, it is important that gender equality work does not cease after the survey stage but continues with measures to change the inequality detected. In this section, we provide three examples of areas that have been surveyed and analysed from a gender equality perspective, and where in two of the cases one has come as far as to document measures against the gender inequality detected.

More important to alleviate men's pain?

One example of how a particular service area detected gender inequality and introduced new routines is ambulance health care in Gothenburg. With the aid of sex-disaggregated statistics, the group hip fracture patients was investigated, what the group consists of, how they were treated by the emergency call service and how they were treated by the ambulance service.³¹ The survey showed that 75 per cent of the hip fracture patients were women with an average age of 85. These women were given lower priority than

men by the emergency call service and men were given more pain relief by ambulance nurses. This survey led to a number of changes and new methods of work which also saved patients from long waiting times.

More home help services for men

Is it easier for male recipients of care to have food delivered to their home than for women? And is it easier for men to be granted home help services? This was at any rate the case in the municipality of Ovanåker, which investigated this matter.³² Among other things, the survey showed that men were granted food delivery to a greater extent than women and that women experienced more anxiety than men. Men received several hours more of home help services than women despite the same care needs.

This survey gave the social services administration more questions than answers. How did it come about that more men received food deliveries? How did it come about that men receive more hours of home help services than women despite the same need for care? And that men say that they do not feel as much anxiety – can this be related to gender norms where anxiety is regarded as unmanly?

More generous grants to associations for men

In a training initiative in the 3R method at the end of the 1990s, Lundby Neighbourhood Council in Gothenburg enquired about the extent to which grants to associations benefited women and men respectively. The associations which received grants were asked in a questionnaire to state the distribution of sexes among their members, leaders/employees, participants and on their boards.

This survey showed among other things that associations with mostly male participants received more generous grants than associations with mainly women participants.³³ In the light of the survey findings, application forms for grants to associations were redesigned where applicant associations shall state the number of members, leaders/employees, participants and boards broken down by men and women.

Work for women's security and safety

The UN has established that men's violence against women is a violation of women's rights and fundamental freedoms.³⁴ Both the UN and the EU

consider that the cause of men's violence against women is an unequal distribution of power between women and men.³⁵ In Sweden as well, it is considered that men's violence against women must be understood in the context of a gender power arrangement.³⁶ One of the sub-goals for Swedish gender equality policy is that men's violence should cease.

The National Board of Health and Welfare estimates the costs to society of men's violence against women in Sweden to be between SEK 2,695–3,300 million per year.³⁷ Not least the county councils, which administer health care, and the municipalities are affected by costs for men's violence against women.

Many women are afraid to move around alone out of doors, especially when it's dark.³⁸ Women, in particular, are afraid of being raped by a man. Men's violence against women is started to attract greater attention as a public health problem and as a gender equality issue. Men's violence against women restricts everyday life for women, if not in other words by forcing women to take a position to this threat of violence.³⁹

In the following section, professor of psychology Mona Eliasson shows how the threat of violence affects women's everyday situation:

The threat of violence is a phenomenon that women must devote attention to in their everyday life, regardless of whether they live together with violent men or not. This threat dictates whether they should wait alone at a bus stop late in the evening, whether they should go alone to a male acquaintance for a cup of coffee, how they should relate to certain male colleagues at work and whether they open the door to unexpected visits. Violence is a very important part of women's reality which no one can shut their eyes to any more.⁴⁰

Mona Eliasson, 1997

Among other things, the National Institute of Public Health have drawn attention to women refraining from using green areas for exercise because of fear of being exposed to male violence.⁴¹

Through their services, county councils and municipalities meet women who have been exposed to violence, and have a great responsibility to give them adequate treatment, care and service. However, there are surveys which show that women exposed to violence are treated differently and receive differing information depending on where in Sweden they live, and that far from all municipalities and county councils have adequate help to give. Treatment of women subjected to violence varies throughout Sweden.⁴²

There are also positive examples where different services work, for example, to reduce women's fear or where work against violence against women is developed actively. In this section, we will present some projects associated with women's fear and work with women subjected to violence and men who use violence. And finally we present a project about men and masculinity. But first a more principled discussion about preventive work.

Prevent fear or prevent the actual violence?

Men's violence against women thus affects life for women and is to be regarded as an important gender equality issue. In this light, one may wonder what is most important to prevent – women's fear or men's violence as such? In the work of creating security in the urban environment, discussions take place, for example, on how parks should be lit to reduce women's fear. Preventive work targeted on men's behaviour in relation to violence against women is discussed to a far less extent. Work for increased security to counteract women's fear thus risks stigmatising women as afraid.⁴³ In this way, the power relationship between the sexes is made invisible.

Most consider that women's fear is about fear of rape, but although the act (rape as a phenomenon) is often discussed, questions are more seldom asked about the socially created manhood which leads to these assaults: the problem of the rapist is discussed to a far less extent than women's fear.

(Carina Listerborn, 2002, p 252)

Fear limits freedom of movement not least for women. However, in parallel with the work to reduce women's fear, for example through design of the public space, it is thus important to also focus on working with men's values and behaviour and in this way to reduce men's violence towards women. In this way, one can reduce the risk for women of being exposed to violence and thus reduce the real risk that is ultimately the basis for women's fear.

The design of a multi-story car park – a gender equality issue

This example shows how design of public places can reduce women's fear and also in other aspects be a part of a gender equality work. The board of a municipal parking company in Umeå decided to use the 3R method

to investigate how visitors perceived the multi-storey car park Nanna. The car park had had problems with low capacity use and it was desired to increase take-up to improve finances. The survey of the first R, representation, showed that most of the people who used the car park were men. This meant in turn that R₂, resources, primarily benefited men. But why did so few women park in the multi-storey car park?

Officials and politicians went on a round trip in the house where they assumed various roles with regard to sex, age and also disability. One person was a mother of two children with a food bag in either hand, another arrived at the car park with an elderly father who couldn't move around without a walking frame with wheels. A third was a young woman in her twenties.

How did these fictitious people perceive the multi-storey car park? It was noted that the lift only served every other floor and that it was not properly marked with signs. Those who parked on the wrong floor had to use the stairs or access the lift via the car ramp. But what it's like to walk up a sloping car ramp with two children if you have a bag of food in each hand? A safety problem arose here since the children could run out into the traffic and get run over. Neither was it easy to get up via the ramp if one pushed someone in a walking frame with wheels.

These are two situations with a bearing on gender equality. It is often women who look after children and elderly relatives. However, the multi-storey car park was built on the basis of a more "male" standard, according to which one did not, for example, have to keep a check on food bags and small children at the same time as walking up a sloping ramp.

Furthermore, the multi-storey park was experienced as unpleasant. The walls of the stairwell were all made of concrete producing a claustrophobic feeling. For women, it was easy to imagine that if one was attacked by a rapist that one would neither be able to flee nor be visible from outside.

As a result of this survey, the multi-storey car park was refurbished. For example, signs were set up for the lifts so that it could clearly be seen which floors the lifts were on and more easily avoid having to walk along the ramps. Graffiti was removed and the car park repainted and the lighting was improved. The stairwell was refurbished – two of the three concrete walls were replaced by glass walls. After a short period, the investments paid off since more women, but also more men, started to use the multi-storey car park.⁴⁴

Development of work for women's freedom from molestation

In the early 2000s, the social services in Rinkeby – Kista started a development work for women's freedom from molestation. After a number of

lessons and reorganisations, this work led to a special unit for housing and women's freedom from molestation being set up as well as cooperation between several different units being developed. This service works with several target groups: women and children who need to be protected against violence and with violent men in order to get them to cease their conduct.

If the Children's Unit has a case with a father involved, cooperation now takes place between the Children's Unit and the Unit for Women's Freedom from Molestation including staff who work with the men.

If the Unit for Women's Freedom from Molestation knows that the father in one of the Children's Unit's cases subjects the children and/or the mother to violence, he is urged to attend a number of talk sessions with the staff at the Unit for Women's Freedom from Molestation who work with violent men. These talk sessions are based on the man being responsible for the violence. Through this cooperation, the Children's Unit will become better at providing support both to children who have been exposed to violence and to children who have witnessed that their mother has been exposed to violence. Awareness of men's violence has increased in a number of units at the social services.

Today, outpatient initiatives have been developed for women who are addicted to drugs and/or alcohol and are exposed to violence

During the project the Unit for Women's Freedom from Molestation have started to initiate reports. One effect of that is that the Family Court can see whether a man in the case in question has also been a case for the social services. This has led to the Family Court contacting the Unit for Women's Freedom from Molestation to obtain reference material on the case. Due to men's violence being visible for the Family Court as well, there are now more women who are granted sole custody of children.⁴⁵

Unique project for boys

It's not so uncommon for women and girls to hear that they should change but projects that aim to change boys or men are all the more infrequent. However, this is what the Women's Freedom from Molestation project in Umeå did. From 2002 to 2004, the project *Normal or?* took place where teenage boys discussed masculinity, sexism and homophobia.⁴⁶ One important aim was also to discuss and change boys way of shaping themselves and others as men.

The project also included training boys' group leaders who would then hold group meetings themselves and producing guidance material for leaders of boys' groups. The project was evaluated by the researcher Malin Rönnblom,

who drew attention to the uniqueness of the project. She describes the project as “one of the few – perhaps the only – project that works consistently with issues relating to men from a feminist perspective, where gender and sexuality are included the whole time as power dimensions in the work.”⁴⁷

The project may be regarded as a gender equality project in the sense that they intended to discuss the roles of boys and men from a feminist perspective and aimed at changing boys in the direction of increased gender equality. The project is also interesting because feminist theory is combined with research on masculinity as a basis for work with groups of boys, which is uncommon.

Rönblom considers that some factors for the success of the project were that research and practice met, that the project had a clear power perspective and that the intention was to provide boys with space to discuss how they create themselves and others as boys and men.⁴⁸

The evaluation thus points out that the project did something unique when they discussed boys and change. In activities with groups of girls, it is common to talk about girls having to change. “When speaking with groups of girls, it is wholly legitimate to talk about girls having to change to be made stronger and to take more space. This change is linked to the girls themselves” writes Rönblom, who considers that it is far more difficult to speak about boys/men having to change: “It is incredibly difficult in the discourse that is predominant in Sweden with regard to matters relating to women’s and men’s positions, to take up questions relating to men and change. In other words, it is difficult to create space for saying that boys have to change.”⁴⁹

Gender equality work at pre-school and in school

In Sweden, the work of the pre-school and school is governed by the curricula, which clearly describe how they should work for increased gender equality. Since the 1960s, formulations about gender equality have been included in the steering documents for schools. There are many examples of schools and pre-schools that work actively with gender equality and gender issues. We will give three examples here.

Can we really just cut and paste a bit to achieve gender equality?



Compensatory pedagogy

Mariaskolan in Stockholm, a compulsory school with children aged between around 6 and 16, has worked with gender issues for a number of years. In 2003, the headteacher took the initiative to start to work actively with gender and gender equality issues in the school's activities

The first step was for the co-workers to develop their knowledge about gender-related issues. They should then attempt to translate their theoretical knowledge into action in interaction with the pupils. The goal was to change the school's practice in a more gender aware and gender equal direction.

The school also employed a gender pedagogue half time whose task included training and providing guidance for co-workers, being responsible for development of work with gender education as well as to hold gender lessons for pupils in all classes at the school.

At the same time, one of the school's teachers was trained as a gender pedagogue. The headteacher and the two gender pedagogues then acted to drive forward the work of gender education and served as motors in the gender education work.

As part of the gender work, a work team made a survey of pupil groups at the pre-school. This survey showed that there were traditional gender patterns and extroverted boys who took space and girls who were silent and shy. At the same time, the survey showed that there was also a group of extroverted girls who made their presence felt and a group of more timid boys.

At the same time, the work team contacted the gender pedagogue and asked for help with methods to develop gender equality work in the classes. The gender pedagogue introduced compensatory pedagogy to the work team and informed about a number of method books which the work team read. Together with the gender pedagogue, the work team divided the pupils into six groups which were internally called quiet girls, quiet boys, intermediate group boys, intermediate group girls, extroverted girls and extroverted boys.

The work team worked with the children in groups once a week during an hour's life studies lesson. The goal of this compensatory work was that pupils would be strengthened in the skills they were weak in. For instance, the teachers had pupils in the quiet girls group try standing on a stage to say something to the others. They worked at a calm pace and did not put pressure on the pupils. It was seen that children could relax in this group and most of them made rapid progress. The work was evaluated continuously with the gender pedagogue. It was seen that everyone experienced a great improvement in the ordinary classes. For example, pupils who had previously

been quiet started to make their presence felt. Girls who had never dared to say anything started to speak in front of the whole group of pupils. All groups had made progress, and progress was clearest in the quiet girl group, the extroverted girl group and the extroverted boy group.⁵¹

What is a gender pedagogue?

In 2001–2002 the Swedish government earmarks SEK 10 million for gender equality education in school and pre-school. The goal was that every municipality before 2004 should have sent at least one teacher, pre-school teacher or recreation leader to a specially designed education about gender and gender equality. After the education they would become gender pedagogues, and work with gender equality questions in the pedagogic practice to increase quality and fulfilment of goals for gender equality in school and pre-school. The vision was that it by 2012 should be one gender pedagogue on 25 persons employed, and that the gender pedagogues would support the others with knowledge and give guidance in gender equality work in school and pre-school.⁵⁰

Boys' lower grades a gender equality issue

Are boys' lower grades related to gender and gender equality issues? This question was raised in Jokkmokk's schools. A survey from the Swedish National Agency for Education showed that boys in Jokkmokk had lower grades than girls in the final year of the compulsory school. This acted as a wake-up call for Jokkmokk's schools which in 2002 started gender work with the intention of designing a school that counteracted gender differences.⁵²

Thought was given as to whether adults' different expectations of boys and girls affected boys' lower motivation for school work. Another idea was whether it was "unmanly" to be good at school. Jokkmokk's initiative started with differences in grades but came mainly to be about gender issues in schools.

For a year, teachers discussed gender issues in research circles in collaboration with Uppsala University and the Swedish National Agency for Education. In these circles, it was observed, among other things, that girls became committed to school work and were given support by parents and teachers, while boys were less interested and did not receive the same support from adults.

On the basis of these observations, an action plan was drawn up with training of teachers in gender issues and gender lectures for parents. Teachers were trained in cooperation with researchers to obtain tools to change the content, method of work and conduct in school. The aim was to be able to give both boys and girls optimum possibilities for learning. Gender pedagogues were trained and was given responsibility for a process of change, among other things, an extensive multi-year strategy document was produced.

Pre-school co-workers redistribute resources and change stereotype gender patterns

In Södertälje, the municipal leadership decided to carry out a number of gender initiatives at the beginning of the 2000s. In one of the projects, supervisors and co-workers at three schools took part in a training initiative on gender and gender equality issues.

This project used the 3R method among others and video filming to survey their own gender inequality in the form of co-workers behaviour to girls and boys.

At the Humlan section of Hästhoven pre-school, the co-workers decided to film their allocation of resources to small boys and girls aged between 1½ and 2½ in the situation where children are dressed in the hall before going out. The co-workers looked at the filmed dressing situations and made a quantitative survey of how they spoke to the children. Different types of treatment were counted as resources, and, among other things, the co-workers counted the distribution of the following treatment/resources: instructions, short and long sentences, encouragement by words or by body language to manage by oneself, encouragement to helpfulness and speaking with a softer and harder voice. The co-workers noticed that they gave the boys more resources in the form of short and long sentences. However, girls were more frequently given shorter instructions and encouragement by body language.

In a qualitative examination of the video films, it was noticed that the content of what the co-workers said to the children differed depending on whether it was a boy or a girl that was spoken to. It was only in relation to boys that the co-workers gave confirmation and put words to the actions of the child.

The staff worked in accordance with this survey for six months on changing their treatment of the children in dressing situations. Subsequently, a new survey was made where dressing situations were again filmed and analysed. The survey showed that the staff had changed their treatment

of children and that boys and girls were treated more equally. The active gender equality work was also broadened to cover many different activities at the pre-school.⁵³

Gender mainstreaming in a member organisation

We have previously seen examples of how gender equality was integrated in different services such as the pre-school.⁵⁴ Here is an example of how a municipality chose to work with gender mainstreaming on a broader front. In the Municipality of Karlstad, gender equality is a prioritised political goal – both for internal and external work. Between 1999 and 2001, the municipality had a gender equality committee with politicians. Now gender equality issues are owned by the municipal executive committee, which is responsible for the municipality's finances, services and personnel policy.

The municipality has employed a gender equality developer since 2000. The external gender equality work, i.e. gender equality work targeted on inhabitants, includes both quantitative and qualitative gender equality. As regards the quantitative aspect, there are set goals that aim at even gender distribution in education, occupations, leisure activities, and positions of power. Qualitative gender equality means that women's and men's knowledge, experience and values shall be expressed and made use of.⁵⁵

Between 2001 and 2006, the municipality arranged four method courses where managers and staff were trained in gender equality work targeted on inhabitants. The intention was, among other things, for the municipality's activities to work with the strategy of gender mainstreaming. Every course lasted a year and had a number of course sessions. Co-workers from all departments and companies besides public transport attended the courses.

These training sessions took up the gender equality objectives in Sweden, gender theory, gender equality knowledge, and practical work with statistics. Participants were taught to use the 3R method and carried out practical work between course sessions with a chosen project area in their own activity.⁵⁶

Examples of projects within the Municipality of Karlstad's 3R courses:

- Do more men than women receive budget advice? Social Services Department
- Pupil absence, a gender equality problem? Karlstad-Hammarö Upper Secondary School Department
- Security aspects in physical planning, Technical Services Department
- Training sessions at Sundsta sports centre, Leisure and Recreation Services Department
- Gender equality at the library, Culture Department
- Survey service on equal terms, Community Planning
- Most important in housing, Karlstad Bostad AB
- Information on equal terms, City Management Office

Managers and politicians develop their work

During the 2000s, Stockholm County Council carried out a large gender equality initiative called “Att nå ända fram” (Getting all the way). This initiative included making gender equality analyses of differing areas, for example purchase of works of art, training and patient complaints.

Stockholm County Council has had a special person employed in the management to lead this initiative. It was concluded that the management must have knowledge about gender and gender equality to enable activities to work towards increased gender equality. From 2004–2007, Stockholm County Council arranged certified gender equality training for over 500 managers in collaboration with the Karolinska Institute and with financial grants from the Swedish ESF Council. This training initiative was well supported at managerial level and was part of the “Getting all the way” project.

The target group was division managers and operational managers within the county council, teachers at Karolinska Institute and trade union officials. The course was intended to provide the participants with in-depth knowledge in the sphere of gender equality and to enable them to reflect about their own role and approach with the aid of research results. The

course was also intended to strengthen the participants' ability to analyse their own role in the practical gender equality work close to operations and to increase the participants' human environment expertise.⁵⁷

Programme for Sustainable Gender Equality

SALAR is granted SEK 125 million by the Swedish government through the Programme for Sustainability Gender Equality to support the work of integrating the gender equality perspective as a natural part of all decision-making, i.e. gender mainstreaming. The aim of this programme is to achieve concrete and durable improvements in the activities which have been granted assistance. The funds have largely been used for training politicians and managers and to gender mainstreaming of decisions, steering documents and managerial systems. Many of Sweden's municipalities and county councils have received funds for development of gender equality in their services to inhabitants and patients. The programme also generates research on gender equality work.

What is required for effective gender equality work?

Tips and conclusions

Working effectively for increased gender equality demands a long-term approach. This work also requires inventiveness – no single method works everywhere. It entails daring to test different methods and learning from mistakes. Gender equality work also requires courage to dare to think about how one maintains gender inequality in one's own profession and activity. In addition, knowledge is required about gender issues and gender equality. Gender equality is a sphere of knowledge and expertise.

The experiences and the research described in this survey of knowledge indicate a number of factors that are important for meaningful gender equality work. In the light of this and experiences from SALAR's gender equality work, a summary of factors that contribute to really effective gender equality work is shown below.

- **The responsibility of politicians and management.** A crucial factor for effective gender equality work is how politicians and the management act. It makes a crucial difference if politicians produce instructions and demand work for gender equality compared with if they do not do so. When management at all levels gives clear assignments and gives co-workers the prerequisites to carry out assignments, it also provides completely different conditions than if the management does not do this.
- **An ongoing process of change.** Work on gender equality in services is a *long-term and continuous process of change*. Politicians and management therefore need to establish both long-term and short-term goals with clearly formulated goals. Long-term goals are important because a process of change requires a long time. However, it is also important to set up sub-goals that aim at meeting the long-term goals eventually.

- **Make an analysis of power and interests.** Investigate whether it is the group of women or men that benefits most from the present situation, and which group would gain most from a change. Analyse what the privileged group risks losing from gender equality, among other things in the form of financial resources and influential positions. Use gender science expertise and analyse also the more intangible losses such as the loss of status and confirmation of gender identities that a change might entail. This analysis can be helpful to understanding the resistance that gender equality work risks meeting. If the analysis is not carried out, the resistance appears irrational and can be more difficult to counter. Gender equality work without analysis of power and interest conflicts risks remaining at the level of rhetoric and cosmetic measures without real changes and redistributions.
- **Make an inventory of expertise.** A good way of starting gender equality work can be to find out which co-workers have gender and gender equality expertise. In which services and departments have co-workers worked with gender equality issues? The management can have great use of their knowledge and expertise. It is also important to make an inventory of the gender equality work already in process in the organisation.
- **Change patterns with knowledge.** Training is needed to obtain the knowledge to make activity and services equal. Gender inequality is based, among other things, on habitual patterns where women and men are often perceived and treated differently. To be able to change this, knowledge and reflection are required. Changing habitual ways of thought and actions requires patience and a long-term approach.

Most people probably consider that they work in a gender equal way. However, to be able to meet the requirements for gender equality in services for inhabitants and patients, personal opinions are not enough.

Gender equality and gender research are areas of expertise comparable with, for example, accounting or personnel management. Politicians, management and co-workers must have knowledge which enables them to have a correct picture of the service which is to be changed.

- **Small steps on the way.** Different services and parts of services may need to carry out changes in different ways. It is important to dare to try and learn from any mistakes. One way is to let small parts of the service try to change in a project and to implement successful methods of work in other activities. The management has a great responsibility here for creating the prerequisites for implementation so that the gender equality effects will be durable.
- **Make it possible for co-workers.** The management must ensure that co-workers have the prerequisites to be able to work for gender equality through knowledge, time and financial resources. The organisational prerequisites must also be created. The person who has overall responsibility for gender equality work should be a member of the senior management. There is otherwise a risk that gender equality issues are not perceived as important and a priority in the organisation.

It is also important to give clear mandates to the co-workers responsible for gender equality work. These may also need a supporting structure within the organisation with responsible co-workers at every level. A permissive and trusting atmosphere is needed where co-workers are able to try different ways of working for increased gender equality.

- **Communicate.** Clear communication is required for co-workers to be able to carry out the assignments given. Information about gender equality work in process should be spread to other activities and services within the organisation. It is valuable to share one another's experiences and the spread of information makes cooperation possible. It is also important to spread information within the organisation about a successful process of change. This gives co-workers who have worked with changes valuable attention and can inspire other staff.
- **Participation.** For a real and durable change to take place, it is important that all co-workers and agents participate in the change process. It is important that courses are compulsory, i.e. that the management demand that all co-workers take part. If the management is unclear and does not demand this, there is a risk that only those who are especially interested will take part. Gender equality work will then be something optional and a matter of personal interest. Another factor is that the management gives co-workers the time to be able to participate.

- **Be brave.** In all change, it is necessary that politicians and management have the courage to lead and translate visions into reality. Since gender equality is based on unequal power relations between women and men, this type of change process requires additional courage. Changing power structures is always a challenge. It can be an especially great challenge when people are affected at the personal level and feel that their ideas of what it means to be a woman or a man are called into question. The change process is confronted by challenges at different stages and often meets resistance. When various forms of resistance occur, the action of management is very important. The management must be clear and supportive.
- **Demand results.** As in all change processes, it is important to demand results, and that the demands are in proportion to resources given. Politicians and managers should to a greater extent than to date demand evaluations, in particular evaluations of *the effects* of gender equality work, both in the short- and long-term. It is also important to evaluate how the working process works in gender equality work to enable lessons to be drawn on how it is to be organised in the best way. To demand evaluations is also a way of showing that gender equality is an important and prioritised issue. One good way can be to include the results in the ordinary follow-up of operations.
- **Celebrate successes.** A process of change for increased gender equality is, as stated above, long-term work which often meets resistance. It is therefore important that the management take responsibility for celebrating small and large successes and for making them visible in the organisation!

Don't forget to complete the steering document, gain acceptance for decisions, document progress, responsibility for implementation ...

...demand results, make use of co-workers gender equality expertise... And, above all, do not forget to celebrate successes!



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- 36 For example, Heimer, Gun & Posse, Barbro (eds.) (2003) *Våldsutsatta kvinnor – samhällets ansvar*. Lund: Studentlitteratur, Eliasson, Mona & Ellgrim, Barbro (2006) *En kunskapsöversikt, Mäns våld mot kvinnor i nära relationer*. Stockholm: Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions and SOU 2004:121, *Slag i luften En utredning om myndigheter, mansvåld och makt*. Stockholm: Fritzes.
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- 40 Eliasson, Mona (1997) *Mäns våld mot kvinnor: en kunskapsöversikt om kvinnomisshandel och våldtäkt, dominans och kontroll*. Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, p 80.
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- 42 Andreasson, Cecilia et al. (2006) *Den svenska hälso- och sjukvårdens arbete inom kompetensområdet våld mot kvinnor, Nationell kartläggning*. Uppsala: The National Center for Raped and Battered Women. Norén, Jenny (2009) *Utveckling pågår — En kartläggning av Kvinnofridsarbetet i kommuner, landsting och regioner*. Stockholm: Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions.
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- 44 Swedish Association of Local Authorities (2002) *Aktivt jämställdhetsarbete Jämtegrering och 3R-metoden i kommunala verksamheter*, Stockholm and notes from Aurora Mobergs lecture at a gender equality conference in Vilnius, Lithuania, 2005. Aurora Moberg was then gender equality developer in the Municipality of Umeå.
- 45 This documentation is based on an interview with Lina Blombergsson, head of the Unit for Housing and Women's Freedom from Molestation at the Social Services Department in Rinkeby-Kista.
- 46 This project was based on collaboration between the Red Cross, Sensus and the County Administrative Board of Västerbotten. Although the project was not conducted directly by the Municipality of Umeå, it is presented here as an example of a unique gender equality project targeted on young men. The project is relevant for the Municipality of Umeå in several aspects, for example it was partly financed by the municipality, and the participants were pupils in the municipalities' schools.
- 47 Rönnblom, Malin (2004) *Om att förändra män...Utvärdering av projektet NORMAL, ELLER?* Stockholm: Sensus studieförbund.
- 48 Ibid.
- 49 Ibid.
- 50 SOU 2006: 75 *Jämställdhet i förskolan : om betydelsen av jämställdhet och genus i förskolans pedagogiska arbete : slutbetänkande av Delegationen för jämställdhet i förskolan*. Stockholm: Fritzes.
- 51 Documentation of this example is based on interviews with Carolina Engström, who was gender pedagogue at Mariaskolan during the relevant period.
- 52 Almqvist, Agnetha et al (2005) *Genus/Jämställdhetsstrategi Förskolor och skolor 2005–2008*. Jokkmokk: Municipality of Jokkmokk.

- 53 Spets, Helena (2005) *Slutrapport från Södertäljes kommuns Jämställdhetsprojekt 2002 – 2005 Jämställdhetsintegrering i Kommunens verksamheter gentemot Södertäljes invånare* – “Tre jämställdhetsprojekt som blev ett Machiavelliskt gerillakrig eller “Ett spännande arbete där kunskap, mod och prestigelöshet är ledorden för förändring”. Södertälje: Municipality of Södertälje.
- 54 Some of these previous examples could be parts of more comprehensive gender equality work, but have been presented here as concrete examples of projects within a specific service.
- 55 Rosenberg, Kerstin & Iwarsson, Malin (2007) “*Det är politiskt korrekt att arbeta med jämställdhet*” – en utvärdering av det externa jämställdhetsarbetet i Karlstad kommun. Arbetsrapport 2007:4. Karlstad University: Faculty of Social and Life Sciences, Cerut.
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It is in everyday life that gender equality is created – or inequality sustained. The Swedish municipalities and county councils meet inhabitants in everyday life at all stages of life, from neonatal care to care of the elderly. We go to pre-school or school, we borrow books at the library, we fall ill, we use public transport – we come into contact with the services of municipalities and county councils in all these areas and many more. Municipalities and county councils therefore have a key role when it comes to making gender equality policy a reality.

The members of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions have implemented a lot of gender equality initiatives. This booklet reviews the experiences obtained from initiatives in activities which citizens, inhabitants and patients come into contact with. What can be learned from these initiatives? What is important for a sustainable work for gender equality?

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