

Building capacity to address literacy challenges and enhance democratic engagement in Västernorrland and Mombasa

Study report on state of play regarding literacy and reading promotion in the regional context in the county of Västernorrland

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1. Summary

The rapid decline in the reading ability of children and young adults and insufficient capacity to remedy the situation have been identified as common problems in Mombasa and the County of Västernorrland. This is ultimately a democracy problem as literacy is the basis of being able to participate in the democratic process. Because of the importance of this issue, efforts to promote reading are being made both in formal education as well as in the non-formal education system. The following is intended to provide an overall view of the existing conditions in the county of Västernorrland regarding these areas. Information about student performance on international reading tests, background information about Swedish government and demographics and a brief description of the Swedish school system provide the context. Information on the Swedish sports movement, the public library and the policy documents that shape the activities regarding reading promotion are presented to provide background for exploring cross-sectoral cooperation with other stakeholders. The greatest obstacles to solving the problem of insufficient capacity to address the decline in reading skills are the lack of knowledge of cause and effect in the field, the lack of methods to increase literacy skills through cross-sectoral collaboration and poor cooperation between stakeholders who could play a role in increasing motivation and allocating time for reading. It is hoped that this report will be a starting point for the exploration of ways of working cross-sectorally with reading promotion that will benefit partners in Mombasa and Västernorrland.

2. Introduction

On 22 August 2016 the Prime Minister of Sweden held his annual summer talk to the nation. Although the focus was on schools, an important part of his speech had to do specifically with reading. In ten years the reading results of Swedish school children have fallen from fifth place to 20th in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). Increased efforts are already being made to promote reading within the formal education system in schools and outside the formal education system in the sectors of culture, sport and civil society organisations. These efforts are to be intensified. In the autumn of 2016 a reading delegation that is to coordinate reading promotion efforts has been established. Among other things, the reading delegation is, with its starting point in the national goals for literature and reading promotion as well as the school's steering documents, to survey and follow-up the cross-sectoral development of reading.

2.1 The purpose of this report and of the project as a whole

The project for building capacity to address literacy challenges and enhance democratic engagement in Västernorrland and Mombasa is such a reading promotion project. The goal of the project is to contribute to knowledge about developing reading promotion across the sectors of culture, sport and civil society organisations. Insufficient capacity to address rapid changes in the literacy proficiency of children and youth in society has been identified at the organisational level in Västernorrland and Mombasa as a common problem. The greatest obstacles to solving this problem are the lack of knowledge of cause and effect in the field, the lack of methods to increase literacy skills through cross-sectoral collaboration and poor cooperation between stakeholders who could play a role in increasing motivation and allocating time for reading.

The purpose of this report is to describe the current situation in the county of Västernorrland by providing an overall view of the system, mandate, conditions and collaboration in the

field of literacy and reading promotion, thus providing a solid base for understanding the cause and effect of the main problem in the next stage of the project.

2.2 What is reading promotion?

In connection with the development of the national action plan for the promotion of reading, the Swedish Arts Council has defined reading promotion as:

- making readers literate
- opening paths to literature for those who do not read
- increasing the accessibility to diverse literature in different languages and in different formats for readers of all ages
- providing more people with opportunities for artistic experiences through literature
- removing obstacles to reading, broadening a repertoire and strengthening the reader's self-reliance and reader identity

2.3 The importance of reading promotion today

Decline in reading proficiency is a serious issue for democracy as good reading comprehension is the key to succeeding in school and being able to take an active part in society. According to the International Literacy Association, young people growing up today are going to read and write more than at any other time in history. Work and private life both require advanced forms of reading and writing ability. The formal education system cannot stand alone in providing the solution to the problem of declining reading proficiency.

3. General Country and County Background Information

It is important to note that discussions are going on concerning the existing county divisions. It has been suggested that six regions replace the twenty Swedish counties of today. In January 2019 it is possible that the County of Västernorrland will become part of Norrland Region, a geographically much larger area.

3.1 Description: demographics

Sweden

The population of Sweden is 9.9 million. Of those 86% live in cities, the largest of which is Stockholm with a population of about 1.4 million. Of the total population, 23% are younger than 20 and 17% were born in another country. One in five children in Sweden has a family with roots in another country. [Sweden has an aging population](#). In 2015 the average age had risen from 37.1 years in 1968 to 41.2 years. The proportion of persons age 65 and above is steadily increasing.

Västernorrland

Västernorrland is the sixth largest of the counties in Sweden and has 5% of the total land area. In population it is the sixth smallest. In 2015 the total population of Västernorrland was approximately 244,000, which is 2.49% of Sweden's total. The overall population density of Sweden is 24 persons/km² and the population density of Västernorrland is 11.3 persons/km². The average age in Västernorrland in 2015 was 43.6 years compared to the national average of 41.2. In 2015 the open unemployment in Västernorrland was 9.1 when the national average was 7.8.

3.2 Levels of government

Sweden has three levels of government: national, regional and local. In addition, there is the

European level that has become more important since Sweden joined the European Union in 1995.

National level

At the national level, the Swedish people are represented by the Swedish parliament (*Riksdag*). Proposals for new laws are presented by the government that also implement decisions taken by the parliament. The government is assisted in its work by the government offices, comprising a number of ministries, and some 400 central government agencies and public administrations.

Regional level

Sweden is divided into 20 counties (*Landsting*) or regions. The county councils are elected bodies in the counties and regions that are required by law to take responsibility for health care and dental care. In addition, the county has tasks regarding regional development such as non-formal adult education, public transport and infrastructure, culture and libraries, the environment and sustainability, growth and tourism. Included in the tasks of the [County Council of Västernorrland](#) is international collaboration. The county of Västernorrland consists of 7 municipalities.

Local level: Municipalities

Sweden has 290 municipalities. Each municipality (*kommun*) has an elected assembly, the municipal council. The most important public services for which the municipalities are responsible are pre-school, schools, social services and care of the elderly.

Municipalities in Västernorrland



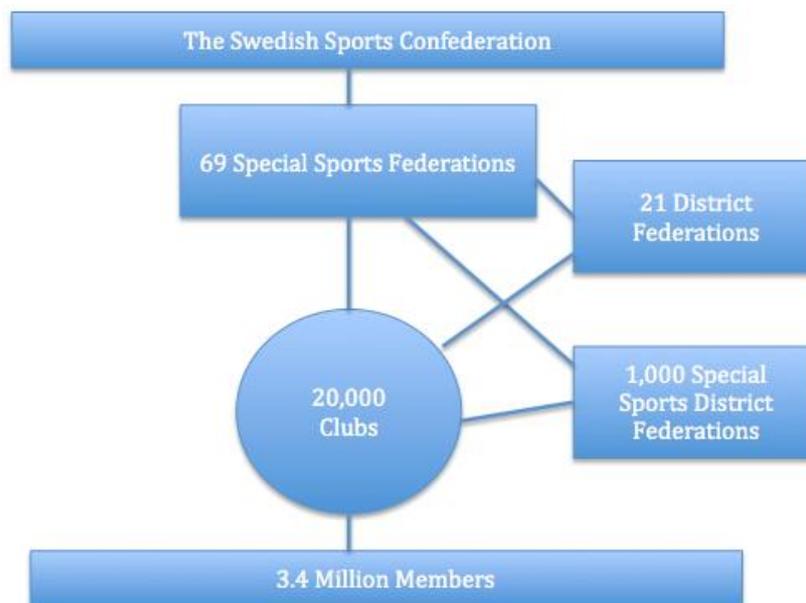
From Landstinget Västernorrlands information material.

3.3 The organisation of sport in Sweden

Almost half of all Swedes between the ages of 7 and seventy are members of sports clubs. Of those, 2.4 million compete regularly. Sport has an even more dominant position among youngsters. More than two out of every three boys and every other girl between the ages of 7 and 15 belong to a sports club.

Clubs are the foundation of the sports movement in Sweden that has been built on the initiatives of countless people and developed at the grass-roots level by the participants themselves. Most sports associations are operated by people who work for the club without pay. These people can be parents of children who play sports in the association, but they can also be others, who are involved because of their passion for the sport and the association. There is a strong sentiment that sports clubs are important. For that reason most clubs receive contributions from the municipality and from the state. The members have the possibility to raise more money by selling raffle tickets, refreshments at matches, but also by charging participation fees and annual membership fees.

The organisational structure of Swedish Sports



Adapted from the webpage of the Swedish Sports Confederation (*Riksidrottsförbundet*).

The County Library of Västernorrland has well-established cooperation with the District Federation of Västernorrland and SISU Sports Education. SISU is the confederation's educational training organisation that works to stimulate people's learning, strengthen their commitment and to develop sport activities. SISU has member organisations in each region in Sweden. The aim of the project with SISU in Västernorrland was to test different methods where sports and culture work together to promote reading in the county.

3.4 Comparative reading skills: National, International

Sweden participates in two important international reading studies: PIRLS and PISA. The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) is an international study of reading achievement in fourth graders. PIRLS is designed to provide knowledge about

pupils' reading development in an internationally comparable perspective. It sheds light on reading comprehension of both literary and informational texts and gives information about the ability of the pupils to understand, interpret and evaluate.

Swedish fourth graders read well in comparison with pupils in other participating countries. The average result for the Swedish pupils was higher than average for participating EU and OECD countries. However, over the past few decades the reading comprehension ability of Swedish pupils has been decreasing. Of all the participating countries, Sweden was one of few countries where the pupils' results have declined consistently since 2006. This means that fewer pupils can manage more complex and linguistically advanced ways to construct understanding of what they have read. Some other observations are that boys in Sweden read at a lower level than girls and that reading comprehension of informational texts is decreasing at a greater rate than comprehension of literary texts.

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is another international survey taking place every third year that aims to evaluate education systems worldwide by testing the skills and knowledge of 15-year-old students in reading, mathematics and science. Since the first PISA assessment in 2000, Swedish performance has steadily declined and is now below the OECD average in all subject areas. In fact, Sweden is the country whose performance has declined most. In 2000 and 2003 the performance of Swedish 15-year-olds was significantly above the OECD average in all subjects and in 2012 the average performance was significantly lower in all areas. In reading literacy it was the low-performing students who had declined the most in Sweden. The performance of girls and boys has been negative in all areas; the performance of boys declined more than the performance of girls. The total variation between students as well as the variation between schools is sharply increasing in reading. There are significant differences in performance between native students and students with an immigrant background. An increasing number of students in Sweden perceive school as a waste of time and feel little affinity with their school. According to the report there is no simple explanation for the decline. It is most likely the effect of many different factors, some of which are related to schools and others that may have to do with society as a whole.

Results from the PIRLS and PISA surveys cannot be used to compare the performance of the county of Västernorrland with the rest of Sweden. Both of the surveys represent a selection of schools and were not chosen to reflect the performance of particular counties or municipalities, but rather countries as a whole. As there are no statistics available concerning reading specifically, levels of reading comprehension can only be inferred at the county level. For example, an examination of the results of students leaving compulsory school at the end of grade nine could be considered to have relevance to reading and literacy levels; a student who has achieved a passing grade in all subjects could be assumed to have better reading skills than a student who has not. Nationally 77% of students attained a passing result in all subjects. In Västernorrland, although one municipality had a rather high success rate, all of the other municipalities were below the national average and in some cases far below.

Percentage of students who achieved a passing grade in all of their subjects in the county of Västernorrland (2014/2015)

Municipality	Success Rate
Härnösand	74.6

Kramfors	74.3
Sollefteå	70.6
Sundsvall	71.8
Timrå	68.0
Ånge	67.6
Örnsköldsvik	81.5

Information from SIRIS webpage.

4. Reading Promotion Policy

4.1 Education system

4.1.1 [Formal education in Sweden](#)

Children in Sweden have access to free education from the age of six. The Swedish Education Act that regulates the Swedish school system mandates nine years of school attendance from the year children turn seven.

Prior to the age of six, between the ages of one and five, subsidized pre-school is provided by the municipalities. The amount a family pays for having a child or children in pre-school depends on the household's income per year. It also depends on how many children there are in the family and in which municipality the family lives. According to the law regulating pre-school, all children are entitled to 524 hours of pre-school a year free of charge from the autumn term the child turns three. Swedish pre-school emphasises the importance of play in the development of the child and has a curriculum that aims to ensure that the needs of each child are met. A year before starting compulsory school, all children are guaranteed a place in a pre-school starting in the autumn term of the year they turn six. Although this year is not compulsory, nearly all children in Sweden attend it.

Compulsory school is divided into three stages: *lågstadiet* (years 1-3, children aged 7-9), *mellanstadiet* (years 4-6, children aged 10-12) and *högstadiet* (years 7-9, children aged 13-15). Children between the ages of 6 and 13 are also offered out-of-school recreation centres before and after school.

Upper secondary school, *gymnasium*, years 10-12, is optional. There are 18 regular national programmes of 3 years. Six of these are preparatory for higher education and 12 are vocational. Entrance requirements vary between the programmes although all of them require passing grades in Swedish, English and mathematics from the final year of compulsory school.

4.1.2 Literacy and reading promotion in the curriculum of the formal education system

The curricula for compulsory school emphasize the importance of the development of the reading and writing ability of the students. In the curriculum for compulsory school it is stated that teaching is to stimulate the student's interest in reading and writing and that students are to be given the opportunity to develop knowledge about how to formulate opinions and thoughts in different types of texts and different media. In the curricula it is also emphasized that students acquire reading strategies for understanding, interpreting and

analysing texts from different media. In the curriculum for upper secondary school it is stated that the school is responsible for ensuring that each student is able to seek different types of literature and other cultural offerings as a source of knowledge, self-awareness and pleasure.

4.1.3 Policy documents regarding reading promotion in the formal education system

The Swedish Education Act of 2011 (*Skollagen* SFS 2010:800) states that pupils and students in compulsory school and upper secondary schools as well as students in other special schools shall have access to a school library. In the county of Västernorrland there are 28 school libraries that are integrated with one of the 36 municipal or branch libraries. This figure is subject to change as municipalities are free to organise school libraries according to their own resources and needs. There are nine upper secondary school libraries and a number of school libraries and folk high school libraries. From the school year 2016-2017 the Swedish National Agency for Education is also allocating government grants to schools to increase the staff in school libraries, equivalent school forms and upper secondary school.

Since 2014 the Swedish National Agency for Education has carried out extensive in-service training for teachers in reading and writing development as part of *Läslyftet*, a measure brought about as a result of the government bill from 2013/14:3 described below. Above all *Läslyftet* targets teachers in compulsory school and upper secondary school but also even teachers in pre-school and the pre-school for six-year-olds. Personnel from school libraries are also able to participate in the training. During 2016 it has also become possible for teachers of other subjects, such as social science and natural science teachers, to participate to a greater extent.

During 2016, as a result of the decline in the reading ability of Swedish students, changes were made in the Ordinance on the Compulsory School System in the Code of Statutes of the National Agency for Education (SKOLFS 2010:37, SKOLFS 2010:251 and SKOLFS 2010:250). Changes regarding the curricula for pre-school for six-year-olds out-of-school recreation centres were decided upon. These changes that recognize the importance of stimulating reading early, have resulted in the pre-school class for six-year-olds and out-of-school recreation centres have each been given their own section in the curriculum where the task and the goals of the activities are clarified. Among other things, language and communication are highlighted in the central content for teaching.

4.2 Non-formal education

4.2.1 Libraries and other actors

In Sweden different types of library are part of the publicly financed general library system. These libraries are to encourage the development of a democratic society by contributing to knowledge sharing and the free formation of opinions. Libraries are also to promote the position of literature and interest in culture, information, education, research and cultural activities in general. Libraries are to be available to everyone.

In the Swedish Library Act from 2013 (*Bibliotekslagen* 2013:801) it is stated that all publicly funded libraries are to give special attention to people with disabilities by offering literature and technical aids that meet their different needs and conditions in order to make it possible for them to access information. Special attention is also to be given to the national minorities

and people who have a different mother tongue than Swedish by offering literature in the national minority languages, other languages than the national minority languages and in easy-to-read Swedish.

Municipal libraries

A special task of municipal libraries is reading promotion and access to literature. The libraries are to work towards increasing knowledge about how information technology can be used for gathering knowledge, learning and participation in cultural life. Outside the school, the libraries are the single most important actors in the work of promoting reading. The Library Act clearly states that special attention should be given to children and young adults in order to promote their language development, for example by offering literature based on their needs and requirements and by stimulating reading. In general, people living in the municipality should be able to borrow or in another way get access to literature for a period of time regardless of the form of publication. In Västernorrland there are seven main municipal libraries, 36 local branch libraries and two mobile libraries, book buses in Sundsvall and Kramfors.

Regional and county libraries - *Länsbiblioteket Västernorrland*

In general, in each county council there is a library that is responsible for regional library activities with the purpose of promoting cooperation, organisational development and the quality of the public libraries in the county. The task of the county libraries is regulated by law (*Bibliotekslagen* 2013:801). The collaboration between the municipal and regional level is described in the regional library plans.

The County Library of Västernorrland (*Länsbiblioteket Västernorrland*) is a part of the administration that works with regional development in the County Council of Västernorrland. In addition to the general responsibilities mentioned above, the county library works closely with the seven municipal libraries regarding reading promotion and digital competence.

Through collaboration, the county library can contribute to ensuring that the inhabitants of Västernorrland have equal access to information and literature regardless of the municipality in which they live. The regional library is to give priority to children and young adults and give special attention to disabled people and people with a different mother tongue than Swedish as well as Sweden's minority languages.

While the county library works primarily with the municipal libraries, part of its activities are aimed at other partners such as schools and pre-schools. Most of the activities are carried out in the form of projects with external financing. The County Library of Västernorrland is also responsible for promoting local literature and literature as an art form in the county.

The activities of the county library are part of the regional cultural activities in the region. The County Library of Västernorrland cooperates with other organisations, institutions and authorities. It has developed cooperation with *ABM Resurs* in Västernorrland. *ABM*, or *MLA* in English, stands for the collaboration between museums, libraries and archives. The County Library also has extensive collaboration on the national level with other county and

regional libraries, the national library of Sweden (*Kungliga biblioteket*), international libraries, the Swedish Agency for Accessible Media (*MTM*) and others.

The National Library of Sweden - *Kungliga biblioteket*

The National Library of Sweden is a state agency responsible for coordinating the services and programmes for all publicly funded libraries in Sweden. The National Library gathers in statistics, allocates grants and administers and develops Libris, the national library catalogue system. The National Library has been collecting virtually everything printed in Sweden or in Swedish since 1661. There are also collections of TV and radio programmes, movies and videos distributed in Sweden as well as Swedish music and computer games. The government has also given the National Library of Sweden the task of suggesting a library strategy (dnr Ku2014/01693/KI and Ku2015/00747/KI). Among other things the task also includes an analysis of the needs for development of school libraries so that they can promote language development and stimulate reading to a greater extent.

Other actors – The Reading Movement

Läsrörelsen (The Reading Movement) is a countrywide campaign that started in 2000 with the motto “Give your child a language.” It was partly a reaction to the decrease in reading for children between the ages of 3 and 8 recounted in a report of the culture and media habits of children and partly as a reaction to the OECD study that revealed that 25 per cent of all adult Swedes had deficient reading and writing abilities. A follow-up study showed that 20 per cent of young adults (18-25 years of age) did not perform at the reading and writing levels required of school leavers. *Läsrörelsen* developed out of the campaign for dyslexia at the end of the 90s. A visit to their website lists 159 partners and a number of interesting projects supported by the organisation. The list includes student organisations, book publishers, bookshops, sports organisations, labour unions, cultural institutions and companies in a growing network. An example of a reading promotion activity is the distribution of high quality children’s books with “happy meals” that MacDonal’d’s will be doing from 7 October and 3 November as it has been doing since 2000.

This year for the first time the weeklong autumn break in the Swedish school year is going to be the Reading Break (*Läslov*). *Läsrörelsen* is behind efforts to encourage children and young adults’ pleasure in reading and writing in all forms and in all imaginable places throughout the country. Some examples of activities are: book exchange days, writing workshops, film versions of books projected on facades of building, reading underwater, rappers. A panel of experts offer suggestions on *Läsrörelsen*’s website.

A new project, Stories that Make a Change (*Berättelser som förändrar*), is aimed at children in the last three years of compulsory school and upper secondary school. More information is available [here](#).

A Reading Class (*En läsande klass*) is another project that has been initiated by Maritn Widmark who is an author of children’s books and a teacher. In the project teachers are encouraged to set aside 30 minutes every school day for reading and reading comprehension. Based on research in the field, the project offers simple tools that can be applied directly in teaching. The project will continue up to 2018 when the next PISA study will be made.

4.2.2 Literacy and reading promotion in non-formal education – Activities of the Swedish Arts Council

Since 2014 the task of the Swedish Arts Council (*Kulturrådet*) has been expanded to include initiating, coordinating and following up reading promotion efforts of national interest. Within the framework of the task, the Swedish Arts Council has produced an action programme for reading promotion work with the starting point in the national goals for literature and reading promotion outside of school in cooperation with among others, the Swedish National Agency for Education, the Swedish Agency for Accessible Media (MTM), organisations of liberal non-formal education and the National Library of Sweden (*Kungliga biblioteket*).

Included in the task of the Swedish Arts Council is also the disbursement of funds to activities that promote reading as well as the initiation of activities. The Swedish Arts Council has initiated *Bokstart*, which is an effort to stimulate language development in young children. Another reading promotion effort is *Paus - du och en bok*, the purpose of which is to get more young people who are active in sports to read books in their leisure time. The Swedish Arts Council has been allocating funds to different reading and literature promoting projects for several years. For the year 2016 that funding amounts to 19 million SEK.

The Swedish Arts Council has also a reading ambassador who is to work to increase interest in reading in children and young adults. Additionally, the Swedish Arts Council allocates approximately 24 million SEK for the purchase of literature for public and school libraries to promote reading in children and young adults. The Swedish Arts Council is also responsible for a prize in literature in memory of Astrid Lindgren, which is the world's largest award for children and young adult literature. The sum of the prize is 5 million SEK. The purpose of the prize is to strengthen and increase interest in literature for children and young adults.

4.2.3 Culture and library policy documents and activities for reading promotion on the national and regional level

National level

In 2012 an official report, *The Culture of Reading* (SOU 2012:65), was commissioned by the Swedish government. According to the directive, the position of literature was to be analysed and trends that could be expected to influence the area of literature in the future were to be identified. The report was also to include suggestions on how to strengthen the position of literature, and an evaluation of and suggestions for measures that should be taken to meet the challenges of technological developments.

This report in turn led to the government bill, *Reading for Life* (*Läsa för livet*, proposition 2013/14:3), where national goals for literature and reading promotion were formulated as well as the overarching goals of the efforts of the state. The task of taking the initiative for coordinating and following up efforts to promote reading outside of school was given to the Swedish Arts Council as described in the previous section.

The national goals that are to apply for literature and reading promotion are stated as below.

Everyone in Sweden shall, regardless of background and with the starting point in each and

everyone's individual needs and interests, be given the opportunity to develop good reading ability and have access to quality literature. To achieve the overall goals the combined efforts of the state shall lead to

- the improvement of reading ability compared to today,
- an increase in the number of people who regularly access both non-fiction and literature, and
- an increase in knowledge about the importance of reading for education, culture and participation in society.

The national goals for literature and reading promotion shall be the guiding principle in the work of government authorities. They shall also inspire and guide municipalities and county councils as well as inspire actors in civil society.

There are other regulatory documents connected to the promotion of reading. The Swedish Library Act (*Bibliotekslagen* SFS 2013:801) is the overarching document regulating libraries. It is based on international agreements that are gathered in the library association's text, *Bibliotekens internationella manifest* (2014). The Swedish Education Act of 2011 (*Skollagen* SFS 2010:800) regulates access to libraries for Swedish pupils and students.

Regional level

The division of responsibilities is made clear in the Library Act (*Bibliotekslagen* SFS 2013:801). The County Council is responsible for the activities of the regional library and is to establish a regional library plan that constitutes a special steering document for all of the library activities in the region. Municipalities are also to establish library plans. This is a special document, not an activity plan or a culture plan. The law also says that the libraries are to collaborate. At the regional level the county library is also a part of the culture collaboration model. The county councils/regions, in collaboration with the county's municipalities are to produce a regional culture plan that makes up the foundation for the distribution of grants.

Reading promotion activities at the regional level – Västernorrland

The County Library in Västernorrland puts efforts into developing methods for reading promotion that give long-term effects. Several successful literature and reading promotion projects form the foundation for continued work.

Some projects were

- “*PPP - pappor, pojkar och prat om böcker*” (Fathers, Boys and Talk about Books) aimed at teenage boys and their fathers,
- “*Läsrätt! Om barns delaktighet och rätten till berättelsen*” (Reading Right! On children's participation and right to their own stories) where the municipal libraries in the county tested different methods for strengthening their own competence and the participation of children and young adults,
- “*Språkjakten*” (Language Hunt) carried out in cooperation with the County Council's speech therapists aimed at children with disturbances in language development
- “*Läsbryggan*” (Reading Bridge) that was aimed at groups that were not used to reading, above men, in cooperation with a study organisation and the labour union,
- “*Vargbröder*” (Wolf Brothers) a project in cooperation with the county museum with

the goal of making children aware of their unique cultural inheritance existing since the stone age through pedagogical work based on a popular book series for children and young adults.

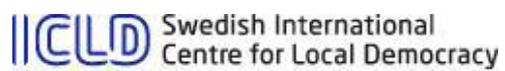
A current project is “Boksport & lagläsning” (Book Sport and Team Reading) that is being run together with SISU, the sports education organisation. The project is testing different methods where sports and culture work together to promote literacy in the county. Starting in 2016 Västernorrland will be participating in the Swedish Arts Council’s “Bokstart” (Book Start) the purpose of which is to approach first time parents with information and inspiration about reading out loud. In Västernorrland this effort is aimed especially at refugees with young children.

5. Collaboration between the formal and non-formal education system and other stakeholders for reading promotion

The last few years several reading promotion efforts have been initiated in both the cultural area and schools as well as in publishing and civil society. It is important that reading promotion in schools and outside of schools are seen in a context and work together to a greater extent than today for the purpose of contributing to giving children and young adults equal opportunities for adequate reading ability and pleasurable reading experiences. In the spring of 2016 a delegation with the task of gathering all of the efforts for reading promotion within and outside the school system was presented in a government bill (prop.2015/16:100). The delegation will see to it that all of the actors - school, culture, civil society, and for example sport – and efforts to promote reading are gathered together under one umbrella called *Hela Sverige läser med barnen* (All of Sweden is reading with the kids). In its work the delegation shall take into account relevant research and proven experience and get inspiration from different initiatives within the area of reading promotion in and outside Sweden. The delegation shall also in a suitable way take into consideration children’s and young adults’ own experiences of reading and reading promotion efforts. The delegation shall

- with the starting point in the national goals for literature and reading promotion as well as steering documents from the school it will survey and follow developments in the area,
- ensure that follow-up takes place in accordance with the national goals for literature and reading promotion in the school’s steering documents,
- coordinate reading promotion efforts in and outside the school by arranging outgoing activities and working for reading promotion,
- creating meeting places for public and private actors as well as actors from civil society who drive reading promotion efforts and for experts and decision makers in the area for the purpose of facilitating dialogue, exchange of experience, collaboration and coordination,
- give attention to parents and other closely related adults relationship to reading for the purpose of promoting the reading ability of children and young adults
- drive the work in such a way that the efforts carried out outside the school are sustainable after the delegation has completed its mission, and
- when necessary make suggestions on how reading can be promoted with the starting point in the school’s steering document and the national goals for literature and the promotion of reading, within unchanged cost ceiling for the state culture and education policy.

Plans for the project of building capacity to address literacy challenges and enhance democratic engagement in Västernorrland and Mombasa are in line with the current initiative.



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