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Report on the Study Visit of the Swedish Steering group and Project team to Mombasa County, Kenya, January 8-13th 2017.

Purpose of the Steering group's visit: The purpose of the Steering group's visit was to anchor the project co-operation within the new management after the election in Mombasa 2017 and work to allocate necessary resources to implement the project in Mombasa. The purpose was also to exchange knowledge and experiences in order to enhance understanding of the "cause and effect" problem, the need of cross-sectoral co-operation and to study and discuss best practices with a broad scale of stakeholders in Mombasa.

Purpose of the Project group's visit:

The purpose of the Project group's visit was to exchange knowledge and experiences about causes and effects of decreasing reading comprehension among young people as well as to plan the project activities for the second project year in order to increase the ability young people to read and write through cross sectoral cooperation and cooperation with different stakeholders in Mombasa.

8 January (Monday)

12:00 Arrival at Moi International Airport, taxi to the Nyali Sun Africa Beach Hotel. Rest day in the Hotel and Dinner at the hotel.

Rajab Babu, Chief Officer waited for us at the Mombasa airport and transported us to the hotel. Per Wahlberg who landed some hours before us was already there. At 7 p.m. we gathered for the dinner and Pamela joined to us with a stakeholder from the business sector. Babu also joined to us after a while. We went through the programme and noted some minor changes during the week. The visit to the school library and the Bandari Library were moved to Friday morning. The venue of the seminar was changed to our hotel. We got a detailed programme for the visits to the decision makers on Tuesday.

9 January (Tuesday)

10.00-11.00 Courtesy call to the Governor of Mombasa County and presentation of Mombasa County (The Governor will be with His Deputy. He will also be with the County Executive Members and the Chief Officers for the relevant Departments)

We took the bus with some delay before we started the programme at "the Government office" to meet the new Deputy Governor and Tumbo, the Chief of Staff (similar position as the "regiondirektör" in Sweden). We entered the new building which was build last year next to the old one. We went to a meeting room and the host representatives arrived with a broad range of decision-makers in the lead of the Deputy Governor. Chief Executives of for instance the Youth, Gender and Sport, Education (the DG is also the CE for Education), leading politicians and PR people. The DG opened the meeting and highlighted our project area as one of the most important for future development in Mombasa. Pamela made a very good and informative summary of our project cooperation. Afterwards the DG gave the word to Anna-Karin who after some meaning asked Ilona, to present the project focused on the objectives and sub-objectives of the activities during the implementation.

After some information and speeches about needs and efforts in the field of our project from other leaders in Mombasa the DG closed the meeting with a summary. He also confirmed that our project cooperation between Mombasa and Västernorrland has priority on the highest level in Mombasa.

After the meeting we went to the building of Mombasa Assembly to meet the leading politicians.

**11.00-12.00 Courtesy call to Speaker of County Assembly and the Committee on education& sports, and tour of assembly chambers
(You will also meet Parliamentary Committee on Education)**

The Speaker received us in his room. He was surrounded by other leading politicians from the committee of education, youth, gender, sports, etc. Ilona gav a short presentation about the cooperation and the project implementation. The Speaker informed the guests about Mombasa's efforts in the field of youth, education and sport and expressed his appreciation of our cooperation. It was clear that using football as a way into promoting reading was an excellent idea. Football is extremely popular in Kenya. The speaker himself talked about how popular the new Speaker's Cup was among the young people of Mombasa. The newly-elected members of the assembly seemed to be young and enthusiastic both about the project and their own roles. The speaker of the County Assembly stated that cooperation could also be developed in other areas, for example within environment / waste management and energy. The delegation of Västernorrland explained that this project is about reading ability of youth by cross-sectoral cooperation, but the county council has a successful environmental and energy work within its operational areas and can also take the role as door opener to actors within municipal waste management for cooperation with Mombasa. The Speaker expressed his wish to conduct a study visit in Västernorrland at the own expense and investigate the municipal waste management and the county council's environmental work in the near future.

After the visit we went to the Governor's office to meet him. The Governor talked about our cooperation as prioritized in Mombasa and it is an important part of Mombasa's international collaboration to promote regional development.

We were satisfied with the result of the different meetings because several high level decision-makers confirmed that the project cooperation between our regions has priority also in Mombasa and is considered an important part of their efforts in the field of education and youth as well as in sport.

13.15-14.00 Lunch at Barka

**14.15-16.00 Study visit of Fort Jesus & Swahili Cultural and learning Centre
(Fort Jesus is a pre- Historic site where many people learn about the origin of the people of Mombasa and many issues such as religion and Literacy. At the Cultural and learning centre we will meet the centre managers who will give us a historic account of the swahili culture of the coastal people and how it impacts on gender equality and particularly literacy of the girl child whose literacy levels have consistently remained low in this region as most are married off at an early age.)**

Because of transport delays, most of the afternoon was spent at Fort Jesus and walking through the Old Town. It contributed to putting the project into a context but it did not allow for discussions on gender equality and the literacy of girls in the Swahili culture mentioned above.

There was a very quick visit to the Pot Hub where young students with an interest in gamification, programming, culture, "computers", creativity could have access to internet, medialab and computers. Students from Mombasa University are volunteers. Perhaps an interesting partner to connect to.

10 January (Wednesday)

09.00-16.30 Seminar and workshops on reading and Comprehension skills, Accelerated Learning curriculum and sporting activities for Enhanced literacy

Participants include: The steering group from Västernorrland & Mombasa, The project team from both sides CEC and CO sports and Culture, The DG and CO education, 2 Sub -County Administrators, 3 teachers, 2 Couches, 1 Director for Education and 2 libararians)

Both the Deputy Governor and the Speaker of County Assembly attended and held interesting speeches around literacy. There were around 30 participants from different sectors (decision-makers from the government, NGOs, libraries, etc. A good way of networking, working across sectors and starting capacity building and method development in Kenya, in Västernorrland, and together.

The morning began with a recap of the study reports leading up to where we are now in the project in Mombasa and in Västernorrland. That included best practices from Sweden as methods, key factors, facts as in the “Booksport and Teamreading” Project presented by the project member from the Swedish Sports Federation and more input on libraries including school libraries presented by the project team member, a librarian from the municipality of Sundsvall.

The input from Mombasa was extremely interesting. There were novel solutions to problems, similar challenges albeit on greater scale than the problems facing Västernorrland and a willingness to try new things while keeping the goal in sight.

Below are some references from the Mombasa presentations:

<http://www.elimu.ca/index.html>

An interesting education project sponsored by a Canadian organisation working in Malindi.

<http://wemacentre.org/the-projects/education-and-skills-training/dreamcatcher/>

From the Wema Website: Wema believes that providing disadvantaged young people with an education is a vital step in assisting them to access the skills, investment and inspiration they need to have a sustainable livelihood. To this end, Wema launched the “DreamCatcher”, a modified and refurbished Bus equipped with computers as a Mobile Computer School which street children and youth access regularly. The main objective of the project is to ensure a productive livelihood and improve the life chances of the young people.

<http://www.gladshouse.com/>

From the website of Glad’s House:

Thousands of young people live on the streets of Mombasa, Kenya. For these children life has always been a struggle for survival, often leading to the misuse of alcohol, drugs and a life of crime. Our purpose is to help as many ‘street children & youths’ as possible so that they can lead a ‘normal life’ and realise their potential. We achieve this in following ways:

- We try to reunite children with their families using our team of social workers. Alternatively, we place the children with foster families.
- We place the children in full-time education. We also support higher education for them.
- We use our sports programmes to engage with the children & youths and provide practical and emotional support.
- Our enterprise schemes provide training and apprenticeships for young adults

The participants including the decision makers were active during the seminar and answered questions which were addressed to them. For example, on the question of the need to allocate resources and budget to our project cooperation, it was confirmed by the Chair of Committee of Education that it will not be any problem with that.

11 January (Thursday)

9.00 Study visit to UwanjawaMbuzi

(This is our new stadium)

9.00-12.30 Football Match for both Boys and Girls teams while running the mobile Library and awarding the participants.

We waited almost an hour but no bus arrived at the scheduled time in the morning. After about an hour waiting there came several large cars with the company's owner who explained that the bus's air conditioning broke down and therefore he needed to collect several cars for our transportation. When we arrived at the new arena we watched the self-defense training of some girls and boys before the football team entered the field. We also got the opportunity to see the football team experimenting with one of the suggestions from the Mombasa Project Group's visit to Västernorrland. The players sat writing about "how they felt about playing in the new arena" in their exercise books before the match. They were given individual feedback by a teacher who was present. There was also a book box where the players could borrow books, read aloud or silent reading. They always start the exercise with a reading and writing session. The mobile bus has broken down so they need to find new solutions. And they need more book boxes. It was acknowledged that some of the players were still skeptical about reading and sport, but that they were going to continue to experiment. The leaders are very positive and talked about the possibilities to strengthen the individual child (to give them a future, a better education, a hope in this "poor" area) and to the team (core values, higher education, capacity building). Both a girls' and a boys' team is in the project. Sport is one way to get a scholarship and higher education in Kenya and out in the world.

12.30-14.00 Lunch and study visit to Bombolulu Non formal centre Work Shop

Bombolulu is a non-formal education centre where literacy and technical skill training is done for youth out of school there they display their products in the workshop

During the lunch in the Nyali Lava Centre restaurant the handbag of one of the visitors from Västernorrland was stolen which made some participants occupied to make all the necessary measures in such a case during the afternoon. The rest of the visitors and the participants from Mombasa continued the programme to Bombolulu Non formal centre.

<http://www.apdkbombolulu.org/>

Bombolulu is a residential centre for people with different disabilities. There is a wide variety of activities including textile printing, production of custom-made tricycles and wheelchairs, wood carving, in the different workshops. Perhaps they could make book-bikes for delivering books? There is also a culture centre (training dancers and musicians), a preschool and outdoor exhibition with different types of typical Kenyan villages.

Bombolulu's goal is "To enable persons with disabilities to overcome their physical limitations and empower them economically and socially to become self-reliant and fully integrated members of their communities." The idea was that the residents would learn a trade or skill and would then go back into society. Unfortunately quick assimilation back into society was the exception rather than the rule. The director mentioned that some of the residents had been living at the centre for twenty years. They wanted to start a library in the centre. A library for disabilities. A possible way is to connect to Sweden and MTM (Myndigheten för tillgängliga media) in Sweden and get some help with different types of books and media for disabilities and start the work of reading rights for everyone that is capacity building for Kenya as a whole. Bombolulu could also start printing, sewing, making books in braille, tactile books etc.

~~14.30 Visit to School Library and Bandari Library~~

12 January (Friday)

09.00 Visit to School Library and Bandari

10.00 Study visit to the Digital School

(The Government has initiated a lap top project in schools and the digital school is a pioneering one where the digital curriculum is to be tested. You will meet the management representative, student and the staff)

We moved the library visit from Thursday to Friday morning but the bus didn't come at the agreed time. After one and a half hours waiting the bus came without any explanation which we considered very impolite and

strange. This delay caused that we couldn't visit the Bandari library as it was planned. Pamela decided to drive us directly to the only public library in Mombasa which is connected to KNLS (Kenya National Library Service). Seeing the trained, committed personnel with enthusiasm who lack conditions and resources to run a library on the scale that is needed to serve a city with one 1.4 million residents caused frustration. Additionally, 48% of the population has literacy problems. There were few resources and what they had were antiquated and inadequate. With those few resources the personnel try to help the visitors to the library. The staff were extremely proud of the donation, 8 computers, in a small room. The book bus has been broken down for some time and it is not sure that it will be repaired. There are six container libraries each with about a thousand books and a tablet that are placed around the city. The children's section needs renovation and support for more adequate books. The librarians talked a lot about the need of capacity building of school librarians, digital literacy, library volunteers (parents, community members, young students), more container libraries or mobile solutions (camel, donkeys, bus, tuk tuk..)

The library personnel hope that there will be investments in libraries and that there will be more libraries, trained personnel and more varieties of mobile libraries. In Mombasa they have a education for librarians. They want to start educating "other groups" as volunteers, school librarians, students. They also need more support from decision makers. They need a library strategy plan for Mombasa County and a literacy plan for the county Mombasa which includes all sectors (library, culture, education, sport, health social ...)

After the library visit we visited The Tudor School.

This is a primary school in one of the poorest areas of Mombasa. All of the pupils at the school come from homes that are under the poverty line. That means that there is no electricity and often only one meal a day. The school's headmistress and teachers were fantastic. The challenges the school faces were seen as part of the learning process. Recently they received a community library that is looked after by the library council in the school and the parents in the area. There is electricity so they can read in the evenings run by volunteers. The teachers at the school are trained in ICT and are in Digischool, a digital literacy programme. They have 48 preprogrammed tablets that are in use the whole day. Two pupils work together sharing a tablet. Each class has 48 students so that two classes can work at the same time. The tablets are incredibly popular and have helped to raise the level of education.

The school has also been part of Football for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene where they have learned about hygiene while playing football. The school works a lot with music, storytelling and reading in spite of their lack of resources. The headmistress stressed that money is not everything and that the struggle for the school has developed her as a person and made it possible for her to see that everyone can make a difference. And she really believed in "together we can do it".

<http://www.tudorprimaryschool.com/content.php?pid=Welcome>

12.00 Study visit to the NGO for Street Kids (Meeting with the kids and the management)

<http://www.gladshouse.com/> (as above)

Because of the long delay from the morning and the long distance between the school and the NGO the Steering group members had to leave the place after some minutes to start the Steering group meeting at the hotel in the agreed time. The project team stayed. This was one of the most interesting visits of our stay. We were guided by the director Fred Achola (<http://www.gladshouse.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/BokeyArticle.pdf>) around Glad's House for street connected kids. Young people are able to get some food, rest, study, empowerment/attitude-sessions, wash their clothes, do sports, read and just basically get support. It was interesting seeing their mobile school built using aircraft technology so that you easily can take it out into parks and areas where the street kids are. It can be opened up to do classes for lots of children (100-200) using pictograms, easy symbols, texts, and colors. In this area the drop outs start at ages 9-10. The illiteracy rate is high. There are now 300 young people who are working to change attitudes towards littering and leaving rubbish in the streets which is a big problem in the area. A politician and staff from the County assembly joined us here and talked about the importance of working in "poor" areas with literacy, environment, empowerment

and health. In spite of all the challenges and the harsh reality, there is a hope for the future. Glad's house has a library and study room. They need more easy readers, books, training in methods and volunteers for reading groups and study groups. Also book boxes/book bags are needed to bring books out to other areas.

The Values of Glad's House

- No child should grow up in an institution
- Every child is an individual and their journey should be dealt with individually
- Work of high quality is prioritized over quantity
- Children should not be forced to live in fear
- Children and young people should be protected by adults, not abused by them
- Children and young people should have safe access to food, water and shelter
- Children should not have to live their lives on the street.

Visit to the new football field there they are building reading corner and community kitchen so you can stay in the arena/stadium for a long time. Interesting solution also about waste water and new environmental thinking. We also got a disaster report.

14:00-16:00 16.00-18.00 Joint Steering group and Project group meeting

(Place: the hotel)

Tumbo and the Deputy Governor couldn't participate because of an urgent meeting with the Governor. Hamisi, the majority leader had to leave for a funeral and unfortunately only Kyalo, Chief Executive of Youth, Gender and Sport could participate in the Steering group meeting together with Pamela. Anna-Karin was on the way back from the Swedish Embassy in Nairobi there she got a temporarily passport. Per Wahlberg opened the meeting and started the follow up of the visit during the week. Both part were satisfied with the programme and its results. Per expressed that Västernorrland is pleased with Mombasa's promise to allocate resources to implement the project in Mombasa in the next two years.

Kyalo reported that his administration has already allocated several million KES to finance good youth projects and they designed a "mini program" to be able to apply for grant from this pot. He said that Pamela could submit a written application to him and she could get money for these necessary expenses the project needs for the implementation in Mombasa.

The project group returned from the study visit and we agreed that they first had a short group meeting and then they should return to the meeting room for the joint meeting. Anna-Karin was also back from Nairobi and she took over the chair to lead the meeting. Meanwhile we discussed dates for visits in 2018. Two alternative dates for Mombasa's visit to Västernorrland were proposed as follows: Alt.1 28 May-2 June and Alt.2 11-16 June. For Västernorrland's visit in Mombasa: Alt. 1 10-15 September and Alt. 2 17-22 sept. Pamela should check these dates with the management in Mombasa and give us the decision as soon as possible.

The project group returned to the meeting room and was informed about the alternative dates.

The chair asked the project group to present their results. Tuni and Anna took the floor and presented the following:

The project groups from Mombasa and Västernorrland held a short meeting. We began by going through the list of activities that had been established at the previous meeting in Sweden. These included initiation of box boxes and writing in conjunction with matches. Teachers found this activity to be positive. The mobile library have been contacted. Work is being continued on six container libraries. Reading corner in new arenas. Methods and "cultural expression" are now in focus and capacity building.

Because of time constraints and because of the nature of the discussion, we very quickly started to write a "wish list" which was then presented to the steering committee. The idea being that within the local government of Mombasa, funding could be made available for some of the activities. But also the importance of capacity building, cross-sectoral work, out of the box-thinking, simplicity and sustainability and strategic plans and hands on-work.

Some of the activities are things that do not "have a price tag" and others require some creative thinking.

The list is as follows:

1. Acquisition of more books, especially books on sports.
2. Establishment of a “hotspot”. The feasibility and cost have to be investigated.
3. More tablets. There are already seven more tablets budgeted for. The project group thought that there was a need for 17 beyond the original 14 bringing the total to 27. There was some discussion about the type of tablets that should be purchased (robust, processors, suits the tough climate and environment etc)
4. There was a need for accessibility for readers with special needs. This is an area that needs to be investigated. Connect to Sweden’s national MTM (myndigheten för tillgängliga media)
5. Another area that needs to be studied is the possibility of simple mobile libraries. The use perhaps of tuktuks, cycle, or other smart solutions.
6. It was decided that for the time being google docs would be used as a communication platform by the project groups in Mombasa and Västernorrland. We are doing a lot but we need to communicate and learn from each other.
7. A need for publicity materials for the project was identified. The idea is to create enthusiasm for reading and sports. An example was using “branded” footballs, t-shirts, bracelets, badges. Region campaigns about sports and reading...
8. Capacity building of librarians was a topic that came up again from last spring’s meeting. This could be in part carried out by the Library Science students at the university. The subject areas mentioned were:
 - Processing books
 - Maintenance
 - Improving book lifespan
 - energy supply and connectivity
 - Training for libraries in schools, upgrading teachers
 - reading role models reading and sport coaches
 - parent involvement or other volunteers

~~18.00~~ 19.00 Official Dinner at Tamarind Splended View Cafe

We were 20 persons during the dinner. Leaders and project members from Mombasa also participated in it beside of the visitors from Västernorrland.

Saturday, 13 January

Reflections and packing

13.00 Travel from the hotel to the Airport

Conclusions and Recommendations of the project group

Time:

At our next meeting more time has to be allowed for the project group meeting. Too little time was given for discussions and collegial learning and exchange. Perhaps after every study visit there should be a reflection block and summary. The project group needs to see more of Mombasa, dig deeper into literacy (key factors) and also talk strategically. We discussed the possibilities that the project group have more time together next trip, work hands on together, and also have a longer stay.

Areas that need to be explored:

- Other means of financing (especially in Mombasa, Kenya)
- Cooperation partners already involved with reading promotion in Mombasa
- matching cross sectorial
- Cultural activities within the framework of the project
- A desire expressed by some of our partners to explore environmental aspects of the project
- Focus on sustainability after the project

References to follow-up:

Report: Are Our Children Learning? Literacy and Numeracy Across East Africa 2013

<http://www.uwezo.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/2013-Annual-Report-Final-Web-version.pdf>

Start A Library (SAL) is on a mission to start libraries in primary schools while creating interest & excitement in books and reading through creative and innovative reading promotion programmes. They are committed to enhancing access to storybooks, the kind that whet the appetite for discovery, imagination and critical thinking. Story books help children increase their vocabulary, nurture creativity and improve critical thinking.

<http://startalibrary.org/>

Open Library is an initiative of the [Internet Archive](#), a 501(c)(3) non-profit, building a digital library of Internet sites and other cultural artifacts in digital form. Sasa sema.

https://openlibrary.org/publishers/Sasa_Sema_Publications

The Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, educational publishers

<http://www.jkf.co.ke/>