
State of Play Report



**THE PARTNERSHIP-PROJECT BETWEEN:
REGION VÄSTERNORRLAND AND MOMBASA COUNTY
GOVERNMENT**

Drafted in
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About this report

The purpose of this report is to provide the current situation in the ongoing joint-project, supported by the Municipal Partnership Programme, between Region Västernorrland and Mombasa County Government. The project is to be administered by the Department of Regional development of Region Västernorrland and its co-part at the County Government of Mombasa County in the Republic of Kenya.

About Region Västernorrland

Sweden is today divided into 21 counties and one pivotal purpose of the counties is regional administration. Situated in the north of Sweden and bordered by the Gulf of Bothnia, the county of Västernorrland is populated by 245 720 inhabitants. On an administrative county level, Region Västernorrland is a self-governing local authority tasked to improve public health and promote development within the county. The three main tasks of the authority comprise health and primary care, dental care and regional development. The area of regional development contains among other; international collaboration, environment & sustainability and regional growth. Each region is free to decide how to perform its duties, and how resources are to be allocated. Elected officials of the regions decide the rate of county council tax.

About the Partnership Programme

The Municipal Partnership Programme (MPP) are developmental partnerships between Swedish local authorities and their equivalents in developed countries to increase civil influence. The programme is administered by the Swedish International Centre for Local Democracy (ICLD).¹ It is designed to improve functioning, democratic local authorities in both partner countries in areas such as inclusion, transparency, possibility to demand accountability and citizen participation. The MPP is based on the UN's Agenda 2030 and on Sweden's Global Development Policy. The latter stresses the Swedish tradition of local self-governance and its potential for assisting with the development of local democracy in other countries. The MPP also highlights the importance of new, international collaborations through partnerships.

Region Västernorrland-Mombasa County

The bilateral relation between Region Västernorrland (hereby also referred to as the Region) and Mombasa County started as a preparatory project² was successfully implemented within the MPP between 2014 and 2015. During the inception phase, representatives of the two partners, via respective steering group, identified multiple areas of mutual interest for a long-term co-operation. One of these areas encompasses joint developments of projects in environment and energy.

¹ ICLD's principal is the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions while its operations are financed by Sida (the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency).

² The project regarding building capacity to address literacy challenges and enhance democratic engagement in Västernorrland County and Mombasa County.

Background of this partnership agreement

In June 2019, the project application by the two partner-parties, was granted by the ICLD. Whereas the project plan concerns sustainable consumption and waste management, its overall objective is to examine and develop user-friendly system for education in the above-mentioned field of areas. This concerns pedagogical web-based training as part of region-specific examples in sustainable consumption and waste management. The digital education, which primarily is intended for the employees, seeks to enhance the knowledge of handling and significantly reducing plastic waste in a sustainable manner (designated area of the project).

Linkage between the SDGs and the partnership

The designated areas of this partnership are perceived as compatible with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the United Nation in 2015. The SDGs are a shared blueprint in a global partnership, such as this one, to promote prosperity while protecting the environment, now and into the future. The objectives of this partnership and its subsequent bilateral exertions have great potential to promote Sustainable Development Goal 12; *to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns*. More precisely the project-plan attempts to achieve the target goals 12.3, 12.4 and 12.5.³

The educational and inclusive features of the partnership also help promoting Sustainable Development Goal 17 (see target goals 17.6 to 17.9); *to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize global partnership for sustainable development*.

Potential challenges and possibilities

Possibilities

The efforts focusing on increased knowledge regarding energy, consumption and the environment are decisive to achieve a sustainable transition. The Region is already active in conducting eco-friendly environmental and energy work in several work areas like energy, transportation, chemicals and waste-management. Reduced energy consumption and waste in properties demonstrates that targeted, long-term measures reduce both the financial expenses and the adverse impact on the environment. The Region would gain more if the joint-project would induce new e-learning methods to be practised by our employees in sustainable consumption and waste management.

The partnership with Mombasa County facilitates a joint and inclusive platform to disseminate inspirational examples by knowing how the local authorities in Mombasa County are integrating sustainability work within their organisation and operations. Each context manifests its own challenges and opportunities when it comes to sustainability work, and surely there are technical and theoretical qualities that respective partner-organisation can explore and take advantage of. Any useful, proactive efforts by the two partner-regions,

³ The targets goals are to halve the global food waste per capita, achieve environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes to substantially reduce waste generation.

regardless on local, national or international stage, may inspire other organisations as well to engage in sustainability work.

Challenges

An internal challenge is to avoid web-based learning instruments that are not perceived as user-friendly by the targeted audience. Convenience qualities and functions are determined by the tool's technical application, set-up, graphics, content and language. User-friendly characteristics are crucial to communicate content and message about climate-adaptive behaviour and attitude. By adhering to the actual need of the employees in matters related to consumption and environment, the staff would be in better position to avoid non-practical, web-based training modules.

A partnership-project requires that the co-parties keep engaging in productive communication within and between the two organisations to preserve dialogue and facilitate exchange of region-specific ideas and examples. Despite the distance between Mombasa and Västernorrland, it is easier than ever to interconnect to limit any challenges related to communication. Other probable challenges within any partaking organisation are mostly administrative, personnel related, financial or policy related issues that can arise during the project. An early awareness of these issues can help to cope with them by adaptive and pragmatic measurements.

Acknowledgement in sustainability work

Region Västernorrland's efforts for sustainable and climate-adapted actions have drawn positive attention and been bestowed as innovative and ambitious by various parties.

The Region was in 2014 one of three nominees in the category "The most preventive in waste-management" by the Swedish Recycling Award⁴ due to our remarkable reduction of food waste at the Sundsvall Regional Hospital. The huge decrease amounted to 47 percent and was equivalent to a value of SEK 3,8 million.⁵ The downsize was also acknowledged by the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions and the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency. The achievement was brought up by Swedish state-officials as the single case representing exemplary Swedish environmental accomplishments in an international conference held in Washington D.C.

Two years later, the Region was once again compensated for its strategic climate-friendly work in energy and climate. A nation-wide environmental magazine⁶ announced the Region as the recipient of an award for exemplary environmental strategy. The merit that earned that prize was the Region's new internal climate compensation rewards for business travels. The prelude of the new travelling system was a pilot-project in 2013-2014 that contributed to an increased use of sustainable travel modes. A cost was added to non-eco-friendly flights

⁴ An annual award hold by the magazine *Recycling*, the Swedish Waste Management and Recycling association and the Swedish Recycling Industries' Association.

⁵ Per the currency rate of 2019/08/20, it corresponds to a total of USD 390 900.

⁶ *Miljö och Utveckling* is a Swedish non-partisan magazine specializing in sustainability and environment issues. Its main target groups are professionals within industry and organisations.

and car travel by personnel, and the money was used via a climate-account for regional business travels by rail and bus as well as travel advices. The outcome of the eco-friendlier travel system was a reduction of business travels flights by 80 percent since 2012 while the use of public transportation increased with 350 percent.

Mandate and regulatory documents

Cooperation-agreement

In December of 2015, the Region's Regional Executive Committee⁷ opted to sign a cooperation-agreement with Mombasa County to carry out joint development of projects framed by mutual preferences. The basis of that partnership is to strive for an equally beneficial development and to successively expand the areas of co-operation between the two counties. As part of an external collaboration in environmental work, the co-operation is intended to improve conditions to reduce poverty and achieve a sustainable global development in the partner regions.

The regional county development strategy

The regional development strategy (Swedish abbreviation; RUS) is an overall programme document for the future development of Västernorrland. The strategy is intended as a guide for the initiatives of the local, regional and national operators involved in work to promote development and growth during the calendar-years 2011-2020. The actual regional development strategy was established and implemented in a broad collaboration with municipalities, government agencies and other regional actors to make the county more attractive and competitive. As the overall directive document for the county, the RUS shall also be a guide for various regional sector programmes and strategies (such as growth programmes, transport plans and cultural environment programmes). The RUS also provides direction for national and regional resource allocation, including prioritisations in connection with applications for the EU Structural Funds.

In the autumn of 2019, a new regional county development strategy is to be proposed for the Region's Assembly of Region Västernorrland to decide upon. Although the document is determined by the Assembly, it is formulated with regards to the political formation, governmental tasks, demographical needs, laws and provisions and the conditions of the county. The content of the strategy is of significant value to the political subcommittees and the non-political administrative organisation of the Region. In the drafts of the new proposed strategy, an active climate and environment policy is to be accentuated while international cooperation is to be defined as one means of sustainable regional development and growth.

The Region's operational and economic plan

Specific to Region Västernorrland, the *operational and economic plan* (in Swedish *regionplan*) constitutes another central regulatory document as it covers the vision, goals and financial priorities for the Region's areas of activities in a three years period. The current plan covers

⁷ The Regional Executive Committee, which is a political committee, has the overall responsibility for the organisation of Region Västernorrland and is tasked to implement and follow-up on the Regional Assembly's decisions.

the period of 2019-2021. The operational and economic plan seek, not only to outline the organisations priorities, but it is also a steering tool to harmonise the political intentions with the operational activities.

In this regard, the elected officials have emphasized the environment as a prioritised part of a sustainable regional development work. A proactive environmental direction is viewed as a path to strengthen both the future employment sector and the future welfare. The energy and climate challenges are considered as a possibility as well. By rationalising the energy-use and promoting innovative and green solutions within, the Region can pave the way for other municipalities and local businesses. The ecological, economic and social dimensions are highlighted in the structure of the plan; the social dimension hereby also covers competence provision and health promoting workplaces. The enlisted goals are to be conducted through formulated programme documents (see below) stating policies and directions for the entire Region.

The environmental and energy programme 2015-2019

The Region's environmental and energy policy navigates the more comprehensive environmental and energy programme for the period of 2015-2019. The programme, which incapsulates determined environmental sub-goals, aims to steer the operations of the Region to reduce its adverse environmental impact.

Striving environmental ambitions are in conjunction with the Region's task to improve public health and promote development within the county. Environmental protection, sustainable service and the effective use of natural resources are fundamental in good public health and sustainable development. Our operative activities in the health care, service organisations, public transport and regional development have considerable environmental effects. Hence all activities within Region Västernorrland shall contribute to sustainable development by (i.a.):

- Utilising renewable energy sources in a sustainable manner and reducing use of resources
- Complying with environmental legislation and preparing for future demands
- Engaging all our staff in the environmental work
- Exerting regional political responsibility within environmental and energy fields and interacting with other organisations

To comply with the above-listed desires requires to utilise education and targeted information. Digital training and web-based education are therefore essential assets due to its compatibility with the outlined goal in the Region's environment and energy programme. It dictates that 95 per cent of all employees will have undergone basic environmental training through recurring information sessions, e-learning and targeted environmental training.

Annual environmental- and energy statement

To assure that all departments are on the right track with the environmental and energy programme, the Region follows-up, on yearly basis, the environmental work. Each year the results are compiled in an environmental- and energy statement that is submitted to the Regional Assembly and Regional Executive Board of the organisation.

The Region's international policy and work-plan

Regarding the international work of our organisation, it is structured more specifically by two other regulatory papers; the international policy and the international work-plan. The international policy, that is determined by the Regional Assembly, set the Region's long-term goals in the international activities. In this regard, officials are instructed to promote sustainable development by increasing the possibilities for internationally joint-projects in environment, energy and competence provision. Additional goals, when it comes to international collaboration, are to enhance the knowledge and experience of our elected officials and to benefit the inhabitants of Västernorrland County by stimulating exchange of culture.

The international policy is supplemented by an annual international work-plan which specifies sub-targets and prioritised activities for more symmetric results.

Key stakeholders and recipients of the project's outcome

The two main stakeholders are obviously Region Västernorrland and the County Government of Mombasa County due to their roles as implementors and administrators of the project. Within the administrative organisation of Region Västernorrland, the Department of Regional Development, in consultation with concerned political committees, is tasked to assess and identify relevant aspects of the project and match it with the actual needs in the rest of the organisation. Since the outcome of the project is to endorse sustainability and educate the employees, it is required to disseminate the results of the efforts. Hereby the communication unit is widely needed to distribute gained knowledge to targeted groups but also to assist in developing digital learning instruments and material.

During and after completion of the project, there are cross-sectorial and converging networks to interact with regional organisations to share outcome and insights from the partnership and the project. Such actors may include; the municipalities, the County Administrative Board, other regions, local industries, education institutions, the Association of Municipalities in Västernorrland County, non-governmental organisations and non-profit organisations.

Operational work

A core area of the project is to build knowledge and understanding of the SDGs relating to sustainable consumption and waste management. Educative web-based training is paramount as it is accessible and cost-effective for large organization (the Region has around 7,500 employees from over 200 occupations) to organize, share and display educational

material. In the following sections, actions relevant to the three sub-targets of the project plan, will be outlined.

Sub-target: Increase the knowledge within the designated areas

Educating the project-organisation

Participants of the project and its steering group have taken part of various educational sessions and information activities to be acquainted and updated on the project activities and the SDGs. Existing information material and external websites have been used to conduct this task. Upon request, reporting on specific issues or presentation of reports are regularly undertaken by officials in the Sustainable Development Committee. Similar proceedings appeared in the then existing drafting-body for sustainability affairs.⁸ For the elected politicians, these proceedings are informative with an updating function on sustainability matters and the project activities.

95 percent

Environmental education is an integral element in getting employees to join the systematic environmental and energy efforts. All employees of the Region are offered training comprising basic environmental awareness and information about the Region's environmental and energy policy. One specific goal, outlined in the Region's environment and energy programme for 2015-2019, dictates that 95 per cent of all employees will have undergone basic environmental training.

Study visits

Local contractors within the county have been visited by staff or been scrutinized through external information channel to review their waste management activities. Informative visits have been conducted to municipal energy- and sewage companies to exchange ideas for possible improvement work and to examine potential collaborations.⁹

Knowledge days

Two one-day seminars about Agenda 2030 have been arranged in 2018 with various lecturers and presenters. Besides various municipalities, governmental agencies and private companies, the arrangement was also attended by key administrators and politicians from Region Västernorrland. The event combined interactive workshops with inspirational lectures to disseminate knowledge and information about the value of sustainability work on local and global level.

Publicized activities

By publishing conducted activities with regards to the SDGs on the web-site of Region Västernorrland and the intranet, the public and employees have been given the opportunity to be updated and informed in this matter. This includes both website versions in Swedish and English.

⁸ As part of a drafting organisation, this body prepares sustainability matters to be decided in the Sustainable Development Committee as well as to follow-up on the goals of the environmental and energy programme

⁹ In the municipalities of Härnösand and Sundsvall.

Uploaded regulatory documents

The principle of public access gives citizens the right to access all documents written or received by Region Västernorrland except for confidential documents. On the external webpage of the Region and the intranet, regulatory documents (e.g. the environmental- and energy policy and the international policy) have been accessible to inform about the decided ratios and guidelines for the organisation. This is in line with the principle of citizen participation which is one of the stipulated core-areas of ICLD.

Instructional videos

In addition, information-videos, produced in Swedish and English, are uploaded for use and viewing. The videos are considered as educational as they guide the viewers in how they can economise their energy and waste, both in home and the workplace.

Transparency

Region Västernorrland is a democratically controlled organisation which citizens of the county can influence. Descriptive and mandatory documents such as the annual report, entails complete disclosure of the Region's work and performance with regards to environment and energy.

Sub-target: Find methods of education within the designated areas

Certified per ISO 14001

The notion of environmental management system is an instrument that administratively structures the internal environmental work of the Region by supporting how it shall be navigated, executed, followed-up and improved. The Region's environmental management system is certified according to the internationally acknowledged ISO 14001. Certification to the ISO 14001 standard demonstrates an ongoing commitment to improve environmental performances and embeds environmental management within an organisation's strategic plans. For example, in connection with public procurements of supplies and services, the Region applies systematic environmental and ethical requirements to be fulfilled.

The benefits of certification are many. It complies with legal requirements and improve performance in key metric areas such as lower energy-usage, waste reduction, increased recycling, lower raw-material and consumable costs. Moreover, it is a legitimatizing and credible attribute in our outreach activities. Since 2018, the whole organisation of Region Västernorrland is certified in accordance with ISO 14001.

Web-based environmental training

As an effect of the ISO 14001 certification, a certain and specialized unit of the Region has formed an elementary environmental training for all co-workers. The unit also follows-up and evaluates the training. The concept of the training consists of six segments (see below) where each one is attached with an information-video and study-material to be used in work-place meetings. The purpose of this training is to vitalise the interest in sustainability issues within the organisation but also to integrate the environmental management system (based on ISO 14001).

The six segments are as follows: Segment 1-Introduction, Segment 2-Energy, Segment 3-Communication, IT and traveling, Segment 4-Sustainable purchasing and waste, Segment 5-Farmaceuticals and chemicals, Segment 6-How do we move on?

Newsletter for personnel

The internal newsletter¹⁰, which is sent to co-workers of the Region, has been utilised to inform about the Region's sustainability work and mission. The channel has been used to brief about the next operational and economic plan of the Region (*regionplan*) in 2020-2022 and the new sustainability plan which is to replace the environmental and energy programme (previously mentioned in pages 4-5).

Sub-target: Improve cooperation and knowledge within designated areas

Seminar on sustainable procurement

In consultation with the unit for procurement and purchases, a one-day seminar was held regarding public procurements by the Region. One of the sessions was specially focused on the social and environmental aspects of sustainable procurement. The event was held to disseminate information on the diversity of the Region's sustainability work but also to strengthen its image as a self-conscious organisation when making tenders.

Local representatives

Region Västernorrland works systematically to improve the environment at all places of work. Our personnel have been given environmental training, and there is a local environmental representative at every workplace, who is the driving force in the environmental intention. These representatives are also a valuable support to supervisors and head of units in environmental issues. The representatives are also contact persons and informants in environmental issues at the workplace. The Region's Unit for Environment and Sustainability provides practical and consultative support to these representatives.

2018: Sustainability festival

The latest sustainability festival was held in 2018 through one of the Region's folk high school¹¹. Offering workshops, advisory service, film screenings, handout of eco-philosophical material and try-out activities for electrical bicycles and electric car, the festival is considered as an educational rendezvous mixed with festivity.

External environmental collaboration

In addition to its internal environmental work, Region Västernorrland endeavours to actively participate in sustainable development in the areas of environment and energy, in partnership with other stakeholders in society.

As one of the project goals was to enhance collaboration with local actors in the sustainability affairs, involved staff-members and elected officials, have proactively sought and encouraged local actors in the communal sustainability work. The Region is present in

¹⁰ Edition 2019/2

¹¹ Hola folkhögskola (Hola folk high school).

multiple regional, national, cross-sectorial networks and task groups related to regional development and growth. This type of networking creates supplementary opportunities to engage in joint-actions or embrace new influences to accomplish the goals set by the regulatory documents.

The Region is an active participant and driving force in several regional networks and organisations. In several instances, we either act as the chair of, or hold other executive positions within these networks. Geographic networks have been established that focus on development around the county and the northern region of Sweden. Thematic networks are also in place for addressing issues such as the environment and bio-economy, for example. In addition, broad regional organisations also exist that strengthen regions' influence on European decision-making bodies.

Digital training-material and workshops via collaboration

The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions and the United Nations Association of Sweden are committed to a joint-project running in 2018-2020, *Glokala Sverige* (translated in English, *the Glocal Sweden*).¹² The co-operation is a communication project aiming to strengthen the knowledge and commitment of Agenda 2030 in the Swedish municipalities and regions to illustrate how behaviour on local level can affect the global one and vice versa (hence the name *glocal*).

The target audience of the project covers locally elected officials, administrators and key personnel working with sustainability issues within regions, municipalities and relevant NGOs¹³ and NPOs¹⁴. A familiar attribute of this project is its web-based approach to communicate and educate. The project disposes digital education-material in the shape of a web-based training module, information-videos, newsletter and work-material. In the upcoming November, staff-members of the Region will co-host a regional seminar to discuss key public authorities' efforts with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals in the regional development work.

Folk high schools' sessions

In co-operation with folk high schools¹⁵, which Region Västernorrland is the accountable authority for, staff-members have been holding advanced environmental training sessions for students and teachers on place.

Upcoming activities

The forthcoming visit, by the delegation of esteemed officials from the County Government of Mombasa County, is an opportunity for both partner-organisations to acquaint and exchange valuable inputs. By doing so, the involved officials may obtain new inspiration and

¹² <https://fn.se/vi-gor/utveckling-och-fattigdomsbekampning/agenda-2030/glokala-sverige/>

¹³ Non-governmental organisations.

¹⁴ Non-profit civic organisations.

¹⁵ Independent adult education college

useful guidance. Therefore, Region Västernorrland looks forward to hosting the delegation and display the Region's organisation, the county of Västernorrland and its inhabitants.

Project evaluation

The next phase, besides the ongoing and upcoming project-activities, is a post-project evaluation that entails an objective assessment of the project results, activities and processes. The purpose is to allow the project-owners to recognize project achievements, identify applicable and non-applicable techniques, and create steps to ensure they are considered in the future. These steps are principal to determine whether the project has delivered expected benefits and enabled desired change in the sustainability work.

Project organisation and contact information

Following staff-members and politicians (in alphabetical order), within the organisation of Region Västernorrland, constitutes active parties in this partnership project. They are accessible for eventual inquiries by representatives of the County Government of Mombasa County related to the partnership and/or project-activities.

Mackin, Sofia. Head of the Unit for environment and sustainability

E-mail: sofia.mackin@rvn.se

Novak, Ilona. Senior international adviser

E-mail: ilona.novak@rvn.se

Qadiri, Ali. Sustainability coordinator

E-mail: ali.qadiri@rvn.se

Wahlberg, Per. Member of the Regional Executive Board and the Regional Assembly. The Assembly's elected steering-group member in the Municipal Partnership Programme with Mombasa County.

E-mail: per.valberg@rvn.se

For further information regarding the above-stated officials and their specific role and skills to this project, kindly see section 4 of the development/expansion application (submitted to the ICLD in 01/01 2018).