

Hedemora municipality - focus on equality in governance

Hedemora municipality's vision for a welcoming and sustainable municipality is called *A Sustainable Hedemora*. The purpose of this vision is to create sustainable social development through creative ideas and long-term planning. The municipality's governance model covers perspectives concerning residents, finances, employees and sustainable development. Beyond this the work on human rights, as a starting point, has four focus areas: public health, integration, gender equality and the environment. Three sustainability goals were adopted by the City Council in 2017. These are covered in the municipality's budget.

- Hedemora is gender equal, provides equality in other ways, and good public health
- In Hedemora people are included and the society is free from racism
- Hedemora is a climate friendly and environmentally sustainable city

This means that all committees, departments and activities of Hedemora municipality will work together towards these goals and for sustainable development. The activities are to be carried out in non-discriminatory manner and lead to equal outcomes for women, men, girls and boys as well as non-binary persons.

In order to systematize the follow-up, the goals are linked to key indicators that are based on an analysis of important areas that need improvement. The key indicators are described on the basis of the current situation and the desired outcome in Hedemora up to 2020. The present situation in Hedemora is compared, when possible, with the Dalarna region and Sweden. All of the key indicators relating to individual-based statistics indicate gender, when such statistics are available. The goals and key indicators are linked to activity plans for the various activities. These plans can be said to be in the form of basic business plans. The follow-up of the activity plans and key indicators takes place regularly and is of central importance to demonstrating whether the overall goals are achieved. The municipality has a special analysis group and Hedemora also uses key indicators to follow how the activity plans live up to certain standards concerning gender equality and other forms of equality.

An additional tool for follow-up and analysis in the area of equality is the tool called "Well-founded".

Well-founded - a guide for ensuring equality in decision-making

Hedemora municipality, through the EU project "One way in" which is co-financed by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), together with Fagersta municipality and Make equal have produced the material entitled "Well-founded".

Well-founded is a tool for making decisions and activities in municipalities that ensure gender equality and other forms of equality. The material can be applied to everything from decisions to ideas and activities to see to what extent the municipality is inclusive in its decisions and activities. The tool is designed to be applicable to all municipal operations. Well-founded consists of the following steps:

- The target group: identify who is affected, both directly and indirectly.
- Current situation: needs, experiences, and resource allocation. How is the allocation between different groups of women and men, girls and boys and non-binary persons?
- Check the situation? Obtain additional information through e.g. dialogue, surveys and research.
- Analysis: why does the current situation look like it does? What conditions, attitudes or other factors affect the situation?
- Our role? Should we do something? Suggest/make decisions? Plan/carry out actions? Refer to another party?
- Choices: for actions or decisions.
- Decisions: to solve the problem
- Actions: Which ones? Are special measures needed concerning a particular target group? Do we need to change e.g. our means of communication or service?
- Doing: which order of priority should apply? Who is responsible? When? How should it be followed up?
- Objective: the process has resulted in decisions or measures. Don't forget about the follow-up!

One way in and Women meeting

One way in is a meeting place for those who are not yet Swedish citizens. The purpose is to create the best possible conditions for establishing a life in Hedemora. The initiative is also aimed at the business sector in order to establish contact between employers and newly arrived workers. The project is underway for a three-year period, and the overall goal is to develop new sustainable methods and tools for increasing the employment rate and reducing unemployment in the target group. When following up on targets and key indicators for *One way in*, it turned out that a smaller proportion of women than men took part in the activities. Newly arrived women have more difficulty than men to get out into work and other activities. Thus an area for improvement was to increase the number of women participating in different activities. It was in this work that the idea for Well-founded first came to light.

Well-founded was used to identify which target groups were difficult to reach and to analyze the target group's situation. To find out about the situation, newly arrived women were interviewed about what they needed, which led to the formation of a meeting place in close dialogue with the women themselves. The new meeting place was named "Women meet". The activity is designed to be as accessible as possible; participation is free of charge, no prior knowledge is required, the activity is open to all ages and to anyone who identifies themselves as a woman regardless of where the person comes from. "Women meet" also functions as connecting point through which newly arrived women are included in other activities, which has in turn led to changes that increase inclusion. Some examples of concrete measures are that childcare is offered during activities, new routines have been introduced such as always asking about participants' partners and asking people, where applicable, to bring partners to meeting places, and that the project works more with outreach to find the persons in the target groups. As long as there is a demand and under-representation of newly arrived women in other initiatives concerning work and other activities, the efforts continue. In 2018, "Men meet" was also started as a forum for newly arrived men to discuss macho norms and gender equality issues.

In order to improve and ensure the quality of the efforts of the municipality, there is a continuous dialogue with the target group, which is followed up with the help of a focus group consisting of newly arrived women and men.

Link to a rights-based approach and human rights

Like many of the other examples of human rights work in local activities that are highlighted, participation is a central aspect in the work with the "Women meet" meeting place. Hedemora municipality used the Well-founded tool to make the target group visible in a systematic manner and to invite the target group into a process involving dialogue and co-creation. The municipality was responsive, and through the work on key indicators and follow-up, it was realized that the original initiative "One way in" meant different conditions and unequal outcomes for men and women. A curiosity and willingness to survey the situation and its underlying causes, and a desire to improve the situation, permeated the work. The target group's actual needs emerged in the conversations, and solutions that otherwise might not have surfaced were found together with the participating women. Without knowing the target group, it is difficult to draw conclusions about the group's needs. One example is that the needs identified through "Women meet" are also transferred to other activities - as in the case of childcare, and other target groups – as occurred in regard to the establishment of "Men meet".

Well-founded, as a model for ensuring that gender equality and other forms of equality in decisions and activities are taken into account, also provides support to a systematic means for establishing priorities and responsibilities in a transparent and clear manner. Clarity concerning responsibility and transparency are important principles for a rights-based working method. Among other things, this is needed to create trust between the municipality's operations and its residents. As in the case of most initiatives aimed at a particular group to compensate for, for example, poorer access to the labor market, the work is ultimately about equality and non-discrimination. All people, regardless of their gender, should have equal opportunities concerning their own livelihood and a meaningful life.