Main characteristics of the Groruddalen Action Plan and the State Grant Scheme

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Outline of the presentation

- Basic facts about Norwegian child poverty
- The main characteristics and outcomes of two programs
  - State grants to combat poverty among children and youth in larger urban areas
  - The Stork Project
- Lessons to be learned?
- Challenges?
Child poverty in Norway

Bilde: www.reddbarna.no/vaart-arbeid/barn-i-norge/barnefattigdom
Norway is doing well – relatively speaking

Share of people 18 years of age, at risk of poverty (below 60% of national median)

Source: Eurostat 2012
Low level of material deprivation

Source: authors’ calculation based on EU-SILC 2009
High poverty threshold

Poverty thresholds, 60% of median, PPP adjusted Euro

Source: Eurostat 2012
Large differences in child poverty rates across the country

Source: Table 4.15, Kirkeberg, Epland, Normann 2012

- Not immigrant
- Immigrant and Norwegian born with imm. parents
- Immigrant and Norwegian born with imm. parents from East-Europe, Africa, Asia etc.

Share of immigrants explains regional differences

Kilde: Inntektsstatistikk for husholdninger, Statistisk sentralbyrå

Source: Kjelvik (ed) 2012
Large differences between city districts of Oslo

Children, 60% of median, 2006

Source: Nadim and Nielsen 2009
Large share of poor children has immigrant background

Children, 60% of median, «non-western» background, 2006

Source: Nadim and Nielsen 2009
Child poverty rates by years of residence

Kilde: Epland og Kirkeberg 2009
Program area 4: Children and youth, schools, living conditions, cultural activity and inclusion

Main targets

- All children sufficient language proficiency to master school
- Strengthening kindergarten/family cooperation
- Better school outcomes
- Equal opportunities to care for own health
- Higher labour force participation
- All groups of the population take part in cultural/civil society activities
- Uphold youth activities and develop attractive and inclusive meeting points
Description of two projects
Projects described in the Host Country Paper

- State grants to combat poverty among children and youth in larger urban areas
- Free core time in Kindergartens
- Stork Groruddalen
- The public health project in district Alna
- The national strategy to enhance language and social competence in young speakers of minority languages (Språkløftet)
- Norwegian language offensive in Groruddalen (Norskoffensiv i Groruddalen)
- Initiatives to maintain cultural and voluntary organizational life
Projects described in the Host Country Paper

- State grants to combat poverty among children and youth in larger urban areas
  - Free core time in Kindergartens
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  - The public health project in district Alna
  - The national strategy to enhance language and social competence in young speakers of minority languages (Språkløftet)
  - Norwegian language offensive in Groruddalen (Norskoffensiv i Groruddalen)
  - Initiatives to maintain cultural and voluntary organizational life
1. State grants to combat poverty among children and youth in larger urban areas

- Not part of The Groruddalen Action Plan
- The «Measures for children and youth in urban areas» grant scheme
- Provided by the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion
- Started 2003
- Covers 23 urban areas and seven city districts of Oslo
Poverty in the 23 cities

Children (0-17) at risk of poverty
(60% of median)

Source: Nuland et al. 2010
Poverty in the Oslo districts

Children (0-17) at risk of poverty (60% of median)

Source: Nuland et al. 2010
State grants to combat poverty among children and youth in larger urban areas

- Eligible for grants:
  - Youth groups
  - City districts
  - NGOs
  - Public and private sector agencies and institutions
- NOK 31.5 mill allocated in 2009
- Main purpose: Increase awareness of measures that are efficient in alleviating the consequences of growing up in poverty
Evaluation of the grant scheme 2003-2009

- Evaluation of the measures
- Evaluation of how the grant scheme is managed
Areas covered in the evaluation report

1. Understanding of poverty
2. Application process and development of measures
3. Cooperation
4. Foundation
5. Interaction
6. Good practice

NOT EVALUATED:
Effects over time for individuals/families
Programmes that receive grants

- Leisure time
  - Holiday
  - Extra curricular activities
- Qualifying measures for young people
- Long term and concerted efforts to combat marginalisation of children and young people experiencing poverty
Understanding of poverty

- The term child poverty often avoided by informants
- Social participation as important as material living conditions

### All children should afford

- Games console
- Holiday abroad once a year
- MP3 player
- Down hill skies/snowboard
- PC
- Mobile phone
- Visit an amusement park once a year
- A room of one’s own
- Take part in school arrangements
- New clothes
- A bike
- Organised leisure activities
- Hold a birthday party with friends
- Attend birthday parties with a present
Understanding of poverty

- The term child poverty often avoided by informants
- Social participation as important as material living conditions
- Target groups:
  - Immigrant children
  - Children from jobless households
  - Drop outs
The development of measures/programmes

- Many based on existing measures
- Similar measures in different municipalities (NGOs)
- Based on actual needs
- Recruitment through
  - Schools/teachers
  - NGOs
  - NAV
  - Children and family office
  - Cross sectional cooperation
  - Child protection services
  - etc
Examples of projects

- Visit to amusement park
- Overnight stops in the wilderness
- Membership in soccer team
- Dance lessons
- Cultural activities
- Youth clubs
- Holiday work
- Homework assistance
- Activities for school drop outs
- Qualification measures
- Admission card to cultural activities
- Subsidised holidays
Examples of projects in Groruddalen

- Gran Open School (district Alna)
- Youth in employment – spare time as qualification
Success criteria

1. Enthusiasts/driving force
2. Continuity of staff
3. Measures embedded in existing services
4. Good collaboration within municipalities
5. System for the recruitment of participants
6. Development of measures that lead to social inclusion (universal measures)
7. Contact with parents
8. Early intervention
9. Involvement of employers and the private sector
2. The Stork Project

- Public health project (research and intervention)
- Target group: Pregnant women + women who recently have given birth
- Ambition: improved health for mother and child
The research project

- 74% of the women approached participated (823 women from 65 countries)
- Main result (so far): Gestational diabetes far more common than previously assumed (11% ethnic norwegian women / 15% minority women)
The research project

- Recruited 74% of the targetted women from local health centres (823 women from 65 countries)
- Main result (so far): Gestational diabetes far more common than previously assumed
- Small changes in health personell’s work
  - Improved information
  - Separate consultation on diet and physical activities
  - Screening of gestational diabetes (the whole country)
Success factors

- The use of professional interpreters
- Translation of material
- Recruitment in a familiar arena
- All tests undertaken at the health station
The public health part of STORK

- Physical activity for pregnant women/women who have recently given birth → activity groups
- Recruitment = demanding (women worried about exercising when pregnant)
- Pre-natal care expanded (testing and information) – 85% of approached women accept the offer to take part
- In addition to the success factors in the research project: cooperation between Stork and institutions as Labour and welfare offices, language courses, introduction program etc
- Problem: Low participation rates in exercise classes
Lessons to be learned

Multitude of projects

- Difficult to see commonalities
- BUT: many effects that in sum can lead to changes

- Increased awareness of the challenges of the area
- Local anchoring/local knowledge as an important asset (and precondition for success)
- Cross sectional cooperation → increased knowledge and understanding (but it takes time), and administrative learning
- Extensive (and understandable) information
- At least some projects based on existing
- At least some projects must be universal (to enhance inclusion)
Challenges

- Continuation of the projects/efforts after the action plan period
- Difficult to measure the effects at individual level, at least for some of the more general projects
- Cooperation with all relevant partners – also private business and social partners
- Assuring the local anchoring
- Assuring truly inclusive projects
- Assuring (systematic) user involvement in the development of projects
- Is there such a thing as «a best practice»?
All in all:
The Groruddalen Action plan appears as a promising model for urban development
The Groruddalen Action Plan
2007-2016

Facilitate sustainable urban development
Visible improvements to the environment
Higher standards of living
Overall better living conditions in the valley
Organisation and budget

- Joint initiative
  - The State + The Municipality of Oslo

- Budget
  - At least NOK 50 mill per year
  - Estimated total: NOK 1 billion (€125 mill)

- Responsibility:
  Ministry of Environment + City council of Oslo
The program areas

1. Environment friendly transport
2. The river Alna, green spaces, sports, cultural milieu
3. Development of housing and local communities
4. Children and youth, schools, living conditions, cultural activity and inclusion
Application process - storbymidlene

- The 30 municipalities/city districts selected by the ministry
- City status/27000+ inhabitants
- Based on living condition statistics

The applications
- Public announcement
- Municipal freedom
- Political prioritization
- Application to the ministry
Organisation - storbymidlene

- Local government agencies cooperate → coordinated efforts within the municipality and between municipalities and NGOs
- Request for more cooperation with private sector, employers, child protection services, schools, arts
- Challenge: Sharing of sensitive personal information
2. Språkløftet – The national strategy to enhance language and social competence in young speakers of minority languages

- 2007 – part of «Equal education in practice»
- Oslo (Groruddalen) and 8 other bigger cities
- Covering kindergartens and schools
- Evaluated twice (together with «Utviklingsprosjektet» (the Development Project in Primary Schools where more than 25% of the pupils are speakers of minority languages)) by Telemark Research Institute and Rambøll Consulting A/S
Effects of the projects

- Generated attention to language learning
- Awareness of the contribution of nurseries
- New models for a) cooperation and b) language learning
- Not as much attention to building of social competence
- Varying results in the participating municipalities
  - Degree of implementation
  - Contributing partners
- The cooperation between kindergartens and school is the most successful – mutual respect, shared understanding, shared responsibility

Picture from barnehageipraksis.no
Effects of the projects - 2

- New ways to reach parents
- New teaching materials
- Mapping tools
- Enhancing the skills of managers and teachers in kindergartens and schools
5. The Public Health Project in District Alna

- Alna has not implemented Stork
- Full time public health coordinator
- Activities:
  - Low threshold physical exercise for women (120 participants in 2011)
  - Diet course «Better food for better health» (30 participants in 2011)
  - ActivePregnant – exercise + diet advice + health information (difficult to recruit)
  - Summer training
  - Exercise at senior centre (full classes)
  - Health day – high profiled talks etc (80-100 persons)
- Healthy life prescription
6. Initiatives to maintain cultural and voluntary organizational life

- State and municipal money to promote and maintain voluntary activities
- Different priorities in the four city districts
3. Norwegian language offensive in Groruddalen (NOG)

- Language course, free of charge, 200 sessions, initiated 2008

- Target group: Adults with very little knowledge of Norwegian language (newcomers and others)

- Both low skilled and high skilled immigrants → tighter access criteria
Results

- No evaluation