

Gender Equality in Public Services

Some useful advice on gender mainstreaming

**A book of ideas for
managers and strategists**



STATENS OFFENTLIGA
UTREDNINGAR

Swedish Government Official Reports
SOU 2007:15

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*A book of ideas for managers and strategists
from the Swedish Gender Mainstreaming Support Committee*

Stockholm 2007



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This report is on sale in Stockholm at Fritzes Bookshop.

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Text: Sara Bergquist-Månsson and JämStöd

Translation: Lingon

Layout: Svensk Information

Printed by Edita Sverige AB
Stockholm 2007

ISBN 91-38-22730-5

ISSN 0375-250X

Foreword

JämStöd (Gender Mainstreaming Support) is a Swedish committee of inquiry that has worked for two years under a government mandate to provide information about gender mainstreaming and to develop practical methods and models for mainstreaming gender into central government activities. A further task of the committee has been to train central government staff in the practical implementation of the process. We have collaborated with a number of government agencies that have been at the forefront in seeking to ensure that the services they provide to the general public benefit women and men equally.

Working with gender mainstreaming is a groundbreaking task that represents one of the most important challenges facing the public sector. We hope that this book will inspire both those of you who are keen to get started and those wishing to make further progress towards public services of the same high quality for women and men. In these pages, we outline our own experience in this area and our conclusions, but we also give many of those with whom we have collaborated the opportunity to express their opinions.

In parallel, we have produced a method book, *The Gender Mainstreaming Manual*, to supplement the present publication. It contains methods and working models, complete with detailed explanations of practical approaches to gender mainstreaming. In addition, we have produced a separate offprint from our book of ideas, targeting managers and management groups. We have also delivered a final report to the Government containing our recommendations (SOU 2007:15).

Finally, we would like to express our thanks to Sara Bergqvist-Månsson, who carried out the interviews and wrote the final text on the basis of the material we had gathered in the course of our inquiry.

Stockholm, March 2007

Ann Boman
Committee Chair

/Ulrika Eklund
Carina Löfgren

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A new path

In publishing this book, our aim is to show how gender mainstreaming can upgrade and improve the activities of public organisations. As a technique, gender mainstreaming is guaranteed to produce results, paving the way for legally secure, democratic and efficient public services – for both women and men.

In Sweden, there is broad agreement on gender equality policy in general and on the need for all central government activities to be informed by an equality perspective. This task is prescribed in a range of policy documents, action plans and appropriation directions. And it is not confined to the usual gender equality issues: that women and men should have the same chance to advance in their careers, that there should be no unjustified pay differentials, or that both sexes should be represented at all levels in an organisation etc. These relate to staff policy and are dealt with under the Equal Opportunities Act.

Here, the aim is to mainstream gender into core activities, which is a completely different matter. Gender mainstreaming is a strategy for achieving equality of the sexes. It means applying a gender equality perspective throughout the operation, wherever decisions are made and wherever activities are undertaken. The aim is to ensure that the services provided to the general public are equally accessible, of the same high quality and of the same benefit to citizens, whether women or men.

Clear-eyed analysis

In practice, this means opening your eyes and analysing the situation. How do we work? Are there questions and needs that

we lose sight of when performing our duties? Do our decisions affect women and men differently? If you fail to study these questions, you will never find out.

In practical terms, it may for instance involve examining how a government agency goes about supervising the work of the social services. Are only men offered rehabilitation leading to training and jobs, while women are given a few hours' counselling and a disability pension? Are we considering the needs of both women and men and how each benefit from the services we provide? Are we addressing the needs of both women and men when planning regional development, projecting roads, building lifeboats, subsidising business start-ups, formulating information about potential emergencies, and so forth? The questions and issues involved are almost countless, and naturally differ, depending on the area of activity for which your particular agency is responsible. But the questions must be put. And the answers may reveal imbalances and disparities that no one had noticed before.

Essential knowledge

If it is to succeed, gender mainstreaming necessitates a grasp of the issues – among heads of agency, gender equality strategists and employees alike. This field of work is not uncomplicated. Naturally, we would all like to be sensible and aware people who have no difficulty seeing what needs to be done if we are to deal with citizens, customers and users in a respectful manner. But gender equality is an issue that challenges traditional attitudes, highly personal values and also the established power hier-

archies found in an organisation. It is a good idea, therefore, to be well prepared.

You will need gender skills – an understanding of the general situation of women and men in society, of which values govern people’s perceptions of what is ‘normal’ and desirable in the way women and men lead their lives, and of why it is so difficult to introduce change.

You will also need to familiarise yourself with good, practical methods for how an organisation should adopt gender mainstreaming as a work approach, i.e. how it

should analyse the present state of affairs in the organisation and how improvements can be made. Later in the book, we briefly describe the methods used by the committee in the course of its work.

We hope this publication will inspire you to join in and that you will benefit from the advice offered in these pages by other managers and gender equality strategists, based on their own experiences. We also hope the book will provide you with a basic fund of knowledge on which to draw for further work in this field.

GOVERNMENT POLICY ON GENDER EQUALITY

In 1980, the Equal Opportunities Act was passed, and in the same year the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman (JämO) was established to combat discrimination in working life. In 1984, the first mainstreaming strategy was adopted, stating that the gender perspective was to be integrated into all policy areas so that all decisions were to be analysed on the basis of their respective implications for women and men.

The international breakthrough for gender mainstreaming came in 1995 when most UN countries adopted it as a strategy, and the following year it was adopted by the EU.

The overall goal of gender equality policy in Sweden is to ensure that women and men have the same power to shape society and their own lives. The subgoals refer to an even division of power, influence and unpaid work and care in the home, to financial equality between the sexes, and to the need to stop male violence against women.

Gender equality work has long been about fair employment conditions for women and men at the workplace. Gender mainstreaming adopts a different approach – it is about integrating the gender equality perspective into external activities and ensuring that service provision and decisions have the same consequences for both women and men.

In 2004, the Plan for Gender Mainstreaming at the Government Offices was adopted for the period 2004–2009, and 2006 saw the adoption of new gender equality policy objectives.

What is the problem?

To mainstream gender into its activities, the agency concerned must review its mode of operation to ensure that its services to citizens, customers and users are provided on the same terms, i.e. that they meet the needs of women and men, girls and boys alike.

It is not just about dutifully formulating statements of objectives, but about analysing very specifically how the needs and conditions of women and men are affected by the agency's everyday actions and decisions. All public operations that directly address citizens need to be analysed from a gender equality perspective. And this work must be pursued both systematically and continuously. Otherwise, we may well fail to see that women and men are being treated differently, on the basis of different criteria.

Surely, no-one deliberately treats them differently? That kind of injustice is not reflected in the laws, rules and provisions that govern public activities. Yet it is there all the same, despite neutral rules and despite the stated aim that all individuals shall be treated according to their needs.

So what's it about?

To begin with, we must analyse how our own operation works in relation to women and men. What is the situation at our workplace? This simple question usually leads to some unexpected insights. When it is followed by a systematic review of the operation, an even clearer picture of decisions, actions and behaviour patterns tends to emerge showing how girls and boys, women and men in fact are provided with differing services and are treated differently.

The examples outlined below show that the gender equality perspective is a significant factor in the provision of public services and the exercise of official authority.

Are boys allowed to be frightened?

At a treatment centre for young people, the staff suspected that a boy who had recently arrived had an intellectual disability. The boy sat rocking to and fro with his legs tucked beneath him and a cushion pressed against his stomach. A member of the staff asked how we would have reacted if a girl had behaved in the same way. The answer was that most would have thought she was frightened. On closer examination, it turned out that the boy was in fact scared. Had the worst come to the worst, the traditional interpretation of his symptoms might have caused him to be examined for a developmental problem. The boy's behaviour was considered 'abnormal' precisely because he had behaved in a way that is thought natural in girls but unnatural in boys.

Don't women want a say?

When the road between Mellbystrand and Sandvad in southern Sweden was to be rebuilt, few women turned up at the public meeting held to discuss the matter, despite the fact that there had been several very serious accidents there in a short space of time and that the problems were well known. The National Road Administration then called a special consultative meeting for women only. It was well attended, and the women contributed a wide array of views and ideas, ranging over such matters as safety solutions, chil-

dren's routes to school, and bicycle traffic etc. This caused the Road Administration to ponder the question of how consultative meetings should be organised in the future.

Do we listen to women?

When the management group at the Swedish Maritime Administration was given gender equality training, a research report that one of the participants had just come across was discussed. The report focused on safety in passenger ferries, and set out recommendations on how passengers were to be informed in the event of an emergency. One piece of advice was to let a man provide the requisite oral information as people consider men more trustworthy. If it was a woman who was to provide the information, she was advised to make it clear that she was acting on the captain's orders.

Do only boys have attention deficits?

When the National Social Insurance Board (as it was then called) was assigned by the Government in the late 1990s to investigate why the number of caring allowances had risen so sharply in recent years, the agency noticed that the greatest increase was in cases involving boys. The reason was that DAMP (deficits in attention, motor control and perception) and ADHD (attention-deficit-hyperactivity disorder) had been officially accepted as diagnostic terms qualifying for public benefit, and that these diagnoses were

most common among boys. The agency could have contented itself with this – after all, the caring allowance is not a universal right; it is an allowance given to parents who need to reduce their working hours in order to look after a child with a specific diagnosis. Instead, however, the agency asked itself why such diagnoses were so much more common among boys than girls. It then found a major imbalance in the research undertaken in this field. Some 5 000 studies had been carried out on boys with ADHD and DAMP diagnoses but only 25 on girls. Probably, the numerous studies conducted on boys had yielded knowledge that made it easier to diagnose them. As yet, we know little about girls.

Are men more motivated?

Women on sick leave are given less help in returning to working life than men. Men are more frequently referred for examination and occupational training, while women are given sheltered work training, which is the cheapest form of public support and the least likely to lead back to employment.

A study of the 2002 rehabilitation programme operated by the Social Insurance Agency shows that both doctors and local social insurance offices took different decisions when faced with the same problems or symptoms, depending on whether the person concerned was a woman or a man. Men were granted rehabilitation sooner than women and were allocated

«For women, the average cost of a rehabilitation-to-work training programme purchased by a social insurance office was under SEK 35 000 while the corresponding figure for men was SEK 113 000.»

longer periods of study or work training. For women, the average cost of a rehabilitation-to-work training programme purchased by a social insurance office was under SEK 35 000 while the corresponding figure for men was SEK 113 000. The study shows that men were able to improve their work capacity to a greater extent than women. Short-term cuts in rehabilitation programmes for women prove more costly to society in the long run as women then have less chance of returning to working life.

Farming – not for women?

Farming companies are largely owned by men and usually inherited by sons, according to a study undertaken by the Swedish Board of Agriculture. To ensure that the farm is not split up in the event of a divorce, couples often sign a marital property agreement. Such documents tend to be written in a one-sided way and seldom consider the woman's interests in the matter. The money and time she has invested in the business is seldom taken into account when the couple separate. In many other countries in Europe, partners in a farming company or the like frequently enter into operating agreements that regulate financial commitments and rights.

Who has the most pain?

Three out of four people who suffer hip-joint fractures are women, and the ailment is common among patients at hospital casualty departments in Sweden. A study conducted by the Sahlgrenska University Hospital in Göteborg showed that among elderly women who suffered such fractures, only one in ten was given a painkiller in the ambulance, compared with four men in ten.

The study further showed that the ambulance service concentrated primarily

on road accidents and male coronary attacks, despite the fact that it was chiefly older women who required ambulance transportation. The ambulance service managed to shorten the time from emergency response to operating table by adapting its routines so that it was better able to deal with patients suffering hip-joint fractures. Recovery for such patients is closely connected with the time it takes to transport them to hospital. Complications may otherwise prove fatal. One patient out of four with a hip-joint fracture dies within a year. Another study showed that men were more likely than women to be rushed to hospital with the blue light/siren on. Women's ailments were considered less acute.

«Asking how an operation is run from a gender equality perspective almost always yields fresh insights.»

Insight is the first step

Asking how an operation is run from a gender equality perspective almost always yields fresh insights, as the above examples show. From there to actually changing the ways we act and work is often quite a step, however. Only when we apply the insights we have arrived at by introducing changes into our everyday actions does the activity or operation enhance gender equality in society. We now know that systematic and ongoing efforts are required to this end. And it is here that gender mainstreaming as a strategy comes into the picture.

Gender mainstreaming in practice

Most people get upset when they read about the kinds of injustices outlined above, and agree that gender mainstreaming would seem to be a good and reasonable strategy for improving activities from a gender equality perspective.

Yet understanding how one's own operation or activity is affected by the problem may present difficulties. A frequent response among staff is that gender analyses can hardly be expected to bring about major changes in the way an agency operates. Surely, they say, we cannot have been wrong in everything we have done so far?

In the course of our work with the JämStöd mandate, we have learned that this line of argument does not hold water. Taking the needs of both women and men into consideration in a systematic and structured manner leads to changes and new approaches, not only in the way we treat people but also in how we arrive at decisions and how we operate at a more strategic level.

Below, we describe how various organisations have worked systematically with gender mainstreaming and gender equality issues from different perspectives.

The laundry bag brought the message home

The tale of the laundry bag has become one of the foremost success stories in the gender equality field in the Stockholm County Council. It has signalled that health care in the county must place greater emphasis on gender equality in its work. It has also prompted managers to support the provision of accredited leadership training in gender equality. The laundry bag case has had a dramatic effect both on the way

money is used in the health care service and how the operation is run.

Health care is not an easy area to change. The workforce is large and the organisation is complicated. But this did not deter Birgitta Evengård, a chief physician and clinical researcher. When she was asked to undertake a thorough shake-up of the organisation and introduce a gender-minded approach, she immediately accepted. She was given a free rein and enjoyed the full support both of the county's political representatives and of top management. She was also given a senior administrative position at the heart of the organisation.

Birgitta Evengård learned about the laundry bag at a meeting of the strategy group. A nurse had observed that the laundry bags in the male patients' shower room at the skin clinic were always very heavy and difficult to cope with. The laundry bags in the women's shower room, meanwhile, were always light. The head of department investigated the matter, and the laundry bags were also subjected to scientific examination. It turned out that male patients with psoriasis and eczema were prescribed light therapy at the clinic to a much greater extent than female patients with the same problems. They were also given help with rubbing in the skin ointments, after which they used the ward's shower room, as a result of which the laundry bags in the men's room were always well filled. The women, on the other hand, were given a prescription and had to go to the pharmacy, pay for the ointment and rub it in themselves at home. A rough estimate showed that costs would be reduced by 22 per cent if the

men were treated in the same way as the women.

Birgitta Evengård describes how other studies, too, led to totally new conclusions when they specifically examined the respective care needs of women and men. In her view, such examples are important when gender equality considerations are to be introduced into health care. They enable everyone to feel a part of the operation.

The Government Offices

Over the past couple of years, the Swedish Government Offices have been mainstreaming gender into all their activities. This is a major task affecting some 4 000 members of staff. A large number of administrative officers in the various ministries are directly involved in building up a gender equality perspective in the budget and legislative processes, step by step. Committee terms of reference and central government management of public authorities are two of the main targets in this respect.

Since 2004, an overall plan for mainstreaming gender into the Government Offices has been in place, and will run until 2009. Based on this plan, annual action programmes are developed setting out the priorities for the year. The programmes may focus on the need to formulate appropriate committee terms of reference from a gender equality perspective, or on how gender is to be mainstreamed into the budget process. It is then up to each ministry to produce a more detailed programme for its own uses.

The various areas are being dealt with one after another, and when the task has been completed in 2009, the aim is for all important processes to have been reviewed and for gender equality to have become a natural part of the Government Offices' ongoing work.

In a major development effort such as

this, the organisational aspect is vital. All the ministries, the Prime Minister's Office and the Office for Administrative Affairs have appointed their own gender equality coordinators whose task is to take forward and harmonise the gender mainstreaming work in their sphere of operation. These officers occupy strategically important positions and lead the mainstreaming work on the basis of the objectives. They are assisted in this task by special contact groups. Also, the Division for Gender Equality has a working group that acts as a consultative aid and a source of inspiration vis-à-vis the ministries.

During the period 2004–2005, some 120 gender analyses were undertaken in all policy areas in the Government Offices as a first step in implementing the plan. Based on these analyses, the aim was to develop activity-specific gender equality goals for relevant government agencies. In the analysis phase, some 400 people received training and supervision in the performance of gender analyses and the formulation of operational goals embodying a gender equality perspective.

In addition, the Office for Administrative Affairs broadened its programme of training courses to encompass gender equality studies and sex-disaggregated statistics.

In 2006, the main focus was on ensuring that individually based statistics in the Budget Bill were gender-specific, that all committee terms of reference were preceded by a gender equality inventory, and that work continued on mainstreaming gender into central government management of public authorities.

Gender mainstreaming the budget

The Västra Götaland regional authority has decided to focus on the situation of women and men. Ahead of each decision, the question will now be asked: "How will

this affect women and men respectively?'. Are women and men being treated equally at care centres? Are we aware of how women's and men's symptoms differ and how medicines are prescribed to them? Why do women use public transport to a greater extent, and why do men borrow fewer books at the library?

To begin with, the regional authority has decided to introduce gender mainstreaming into the internal decision-making process when preparing the budget. The budget constitutes the basis for all activities undertaken during the year, and is therefore a natural hub from which to proceed.

«Prior to each course of action, the operation concerned is required to consider if and where the gender equality perspective is to be found at the present time.»

Prior to each course of action, the operation concerned is required to consider if and where the gender equality perspective is to be found at the present time and how it corresponds to the goals. The budget instructions also call for an analysis of the more traditional gender equality issues such as the gender pay gap and the prospects for acquiring additional job skills. Statistics are an important part of this effort, and care purchasers are urged to demand facts and figures that make clear how care is distributed between women and men today. How are women and men treated, for instance, in relation to mental ill-health, cardiac care and rehabilitation?

Indicators for health and medical care are included in the annual reports for 2006.

Scorecards specify what is to be measured in the quest for care on equal terms. What is the position as regards emergency cardiac care, waiting times, the diabetes register? How is the care guarantee working with regard to waiting times for hip operations for women and men requiring arthroplasty? What resources are being invested in gender-specific operations such as enlargement of the prostate gland for men and incontinence for women? The distribution of hearing aids should also be specified. In the search for better and safer care, it is important to acquire an understanding of how the care and treatment of the sexes differs so that a gender equality perspective may be incorporated when care programmes are developed. Purchasers are also urged to seek information both about care periods for certain diagnoses, disaggregated by sex, and about the costs of certain courses of action.

Kungälv Hospital has introduced a gender perspective into its scorecard for the 2007 financial year. Among the issues given priority during the year are "understanding care from a gender equality perspective". Such knowledge may be acquired by for instance ensuring that care statistics are gender-specific and that key goal indicators are reported separately for women and men.

Rural development in Gävleborg
The county administrative board in Gävleborg has worked with gender mainstreaming as part of its rural development programme. Via measures of different kinds, the board has sought to shift the present focus in education and training and in funding programmes for entrepreneurs, such as those targeting farmers wishing to branch out. Traditionally, contact has been established with the formal representative of the farming enterprise,

who was usually a man. The county administrative board has now introduced measures that specifically target women. They are almost always part-owners of the enterprise, even if their names are not in the contact register.

“The idea of introducing a gender equality perspective into the rural development programme has evolved gradually over time,” says Mats Hindström, director of the programme in Gävleborg. “We’ve become aware that rural development is one of the designated areas for the county administrative boards, but it was already apparent six years ago when we were working with gender mainstreaming as a separate project that this was an imperative issue.

“Then, of course, managerial training in gender equality and the work being done with JämKAS Bas (a method described later in the book) have also contributed. We want to create an attractive rural development programme for girls and boys, women and men in Gävleborg by mainstreaming a gender equality perspective into it.”

Tradition impedes development

The county administrative board has built on gender analyses in pursuing its development programme.

“We know that our labour market is extensively gender-segregated and that traditional career choices place obstacles in the way of rural development,” says Mats Hindström. “So we have sought to broaden our training programme to make traditional courses for farmers attractive to women as well. We’ve also tried to develop new types of training that specifically target rural women and which aim to give them the incentive to develop the kinds of things that they’ve identified as being of interest to them. We encourage them to start new companies, or to supplement existing ones, as a way of improving the

traditional farming situation.

In the course of this effort, the county administrative board has found it is important to review its contact with farmers and to determine whether both women and men are receiving the information sent out.

“By analysing who are the registered owners of the company or farm, we’ve found that most of those who sign for the enterprise are men. Before, we always addressed our documents to the owners – in other words almost always the male – with traditional offers and ‘information for men’. Nowadays, however, as a result of our gender equality work, we deliberately seek to widen the scope of our information so that it reaches both partners in farming enterprises. We want to reach the women who we know are there, working with the farm as actively as the formal addressee.”

The county administrative board has launched special initiatives aimed at women, inviting them to meetings and training courses that specifically meet their needs. While the letters continue to go to the company representative, the man, they deliberately target women or both the partners to show the board’s intentions.

Integration in day-to-day activities

From previously having worked with gender mainstreaming in project form, the county administrative board in Gävleborg has now brought it into its regular, day-to-day activities.

“We’ve sought to identify areas we need to focus on in the rural development programme so that the gender equality issue can be given priority when the programme is finally launched,” says Mats Hindström. “We need to get everyone involved in promoting rural development in our county, which means a gender equality perspective is absolutely essential”.

The tasks of senior management

This section specifically targets senior managers in public administration, and includes examples of how agency executives have worked with gender mainstreaming. Later in the book, we briefly describe various analytical methods and working models for tackling the issues practically.

Gender mainstreaming is about operational development. When the way operational decisions affect women and men is analysed at a deeper level, the conditions are created for improving procedures and priorities. This is why it is so important for the person at the top to become involved in the work.

The top manager is quite clearly essential to the process. Our experience shows that the active participation of top management is a decisive factor if gender mainstreaming is to succeed. As the person in command, you can give the gender equality strategist a fully-fledged mandate to take action. When you demand results and reports, things happen in the organisation. When you give an issue priority and allocate the necessary time and resources for the work involved, you are nearing your goal.

Managers who show no interest in the work, or remain passive, severely hamper the development process.

“Gender equality must become a part of everyday life”

– INTERVIEW WITH COUNTY DIRECTOR ANDERS GRANAT

The trick is to make gender equality a part of everyday life. This, in brief, is the conclusion of Anders Granat, Director of the Gotland County Administrative Board, describing the region’s successful work with gender mainstreaming. Also, he adds, the issues must have the support of top management.

“It’s not that extraordinary,” he says. “Gender mainstreaming is about hard work and sustained effort, being committed and having a reasonably good development programme.”

Commitment is one of the qualities he feels is vital to the success of the change process, from a managerial viewpoint.

“It’s not enough to see gender mainstreaming simply as an administrative matter. There must be passion there as well, an inner fire that demands change. Otherwise, as a leader you are just one more thing to be avoided.”

Anders Granat himself is infused by a commitment to the notion of shared human interest and how we relate to one another.

“If we have a system that permits the existence of a power structure that keeps certain people back and that attaches dif-

ferent weight to the needs of women and men, this is not my idea of what a democracy should be,” he says. “So it makes me want to help break down the structure, even if this involves viewing myself as a part of the problem.”

Pushing for change

As a consequence, he has chosen to be an active leader. He wants to help drive through a policy whereby all the activities of the county administrative board are based on the principle that the exercise of public authority, public services and community development must proceed from the needs of both women and men.

“This means adopting an outward-looking approach, being willing to learn, which in turn adds a deeper dimension to your work as a leader. You have to try and see things in a new light.”

Anders Granat became County Director of Gotland three and a half years ago, since when much has changed.

“When I arrived, there were a lot of good projects that involved promoting gender equality, both among the staff and in our external activities. But they were pursued outside our regular organisation.

«It’s not enough to see gender mainstreaming simply as an administrative matter. There must be passion there as well, an inner fire that demands change.»

They were good projects but they didn't affect our operation as a whole. If you work like that, gender equality is just an appendage. That's why I want to mainstream the work into our regular operation. That's much more laborious, as it has to be based on a shared conviction that this is an important matter."

Found support

Together with Kicki Scheller, the board's gender equality expert, he developed a strategy aimed at deliberately and systematically introducing the issues into regular decision-making processes and action plans.

In Gotland today, the gender equality issue is pursued at the strategic level, as a part of the board's definition of what is essentially 'sustainable development'. It is then spread through the organisation via Kicki Scheller.

In 2004, the issue was incorporated into a long-term action plan for gender mainstreaming due to run until 2009. It has since been incorporated into the county administrative board's policy documents and statements of objectives. Today, gender mainstreaming is a part of the mandate that each work team develops together with the manager concerned and which is then broken down into separate working plans for the various teams. These plans are evaluated three times a year together with the strategic manager. Anders Granat emphasises the importance of Kicki Scheller in the undertaking. Her cooperation, he says, has been a vital factor in the success of the undertaking.

"We hit it off immediately as we shared the same view of how we were to approach things," he says. "Otherwise, when you get involved in the gender equality issue as a man, some people seem to find it a bit suspect. They try to trip you

«When you get involved in the gender equality issue as a man, some people seem to find it a bit suspect. They try to trip you up.»

up. This means you have to think very carefully about what you're after. But we believed in one another from the start and were able to develop a good strategy. In other county administrative boards, the gender equality expert sometimes sees it as part of the job to judge management, which makes cooperation more difficult."

Many argue that what really brings about change in an organisation's working methods is the requirement that gender mainstreaming must be evaluated and followed up.

"Follow-up is of course important," says Anders Granat, "but I see this as part of the organisation's regular operation. You have a discussion before the year starts, then you evaluate what happened and then this perspective is automatically included."

Everyone knows what applies

He hasn't the slightest doubt that people in the organisation know what applies.

"I really do believe that everyone has got the message. They know what I stand for, and I've shown my commitment in ways that people notice, for instance by going to seminars and conferences. It's important that people in positions like mine exploit the fact that they're interesting as leaders. If someone tries to block the agency's efforts in this respect, or ignore them, it's not up to us at the top to intervene. As in

all other matters, that's primarily for the person's immediate superior to deal with."

Managerial appointments are one of Anders Granat's principal tasks.

"Today, I feel we have a good balance in the management group. It's also important for me personally to keep informed and to take an interest in the issues I pursue. That's a way of exercising leadership."

Nowadays, he has the support of a management group that shares his views on gender equality. When he took up his appointment, that was not always the case. When the board's organisational set-up was overhauled, however, a management group emerged that was more homogeneous in its approach.

Anders Granat emphasises the importance of ensuring that the entire organisation feels it is moving in the right direction, that the operation is improving. This also makes it easier to mainstream gender into the organisation's activities. That this is the Government's policy aim, as set out in the appropriation directions to the board, is not enough – there must be a shared conviction that a gender-equal Gotland will indeed be a better place. What, then, causes people to become actively involved in the issue?

"It differs little from other issues in this respect," says Anders Granat. "People must find it attractive, a source of satisfaction, rather than a dogma to be blindly followed. There must be a tolerant atmosphere so that people dare to say what they think, to discuss openly how the job can

be improved. Having the issue on the agenda each time a team meets is asking too much."

Not just because the boss wants it. Since values are involved, he says, there is no point in the staff adopting new approaches simply because that is what the person at the top wants. Rather, it is something that each individual must arrive at personally.

Anders Granat is reluctant to talk about success factors.

"What we're doing here in Gotland is nothing special," he says. "We're labouring away and keeping at it, using an approach that we believe in. It's like most other things in life – sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't."

He attributes the success of the venture to Kicki Scheller. And the mistakes?

"We've certainly made some. Our dealings with the municipality, for instance, sometimes run into trouble over regional development issues. They haven't always kept up when we've moved on to new work methods. When others don't operate in the same way as we do, we try and get them to collaborate with us. We're supposed to be responsible for coordinating matters at central government level, and gender equality policy is part of that brief. We feel we're making good progress in that area, and this in turn means we feel we're in a position to actively pursue the discussion and ask how things are going. We all learn from one another."

«People must find it attractive, a source of satisfaction, rather than a dogma to be blindly followed.»

Your role as a leader in the gender mainstreaming process

The top manager is crucial to the success of a development process such as gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming is no different from any other development process in this respect. The attention and active participation of the top executive when strategy decisions are taken sends a message to the organisation that she or he expects results.

Strategic decisions on what course an operation is to take has a decisive impact on staff. When they get the message concerning management's vision, decisions and commitment, they realise they will have to revise their work methods based on the new development strategies.

The actual presence of the senior manager is also important. You can write as many cleverly worded documents and statements of objectives as you like – but if you do not show by your actions that you support the gender mainstreaming drive, there is a danger that your staff will accord the matter less priority. You will be helping the cause considerably if you attend important meetings, training courses and conferences in person.

Clear and unambiguous steering documents – ensuring that the organisation knows how to proceed and how the work will be evaluated – are a vital part of all change processes, and the top manager should make a point of signing them where gender mainstreaming is concerned as well. Insistence on follow-up and reporting shows that management expects results, that something is to be done and reported. It is often argued that employees don't do what the boss says but

only that which can be measured and evaluated.

If you as the top manager ensure that the framework is in place, middle management will be better able to get staff to address the matter in their day-to-day activities. Studies have shown that middle managers are often the main stumbling block when gender is to be mainstreamed into an organisation. They are the ones who decide which issues are to be allotted time and which are to be given low priority in everyday work. In practice, it is they who decide how much room for manoeuvre the gender equality strategist and the line staff have in this matter.

Choose the right person

The gender mainstreaming process is a wide-ranging one and the idea is for it to improve activities on an ongoing basis. If it is to be sustainable, patient and long-term efforts will be required on the part of everyone in the organisation.

One of the most important tasks of the top manager, therefore, is to choose the right person to lead the work. The assignment is a highly demanding one. In our experience, the ability to urge people on, to liaise, to move things forward and, not least, to act in a consultative capacity are the qualities that have produced the best results.

The person who is given the task of leading the work may not have all these qualities, but should have a broad range of skills all the same. And any skills that are lacking can perhaps be acquired along the way.

Also, the gender equality strategist should not have to work alone. A working

group whose members represent the most important units in the organisation is virtually essential if the work is to gain a proper foothold.

The gender equality strategist needs a mandate issued by you as the top manager and by the management group. If the work is to succeed, the appointee must be both strategic and credible, both as a person and in the position he or she occupies in the organisation. This individual must be given both a clearly defined mandate to lead the change process and resources that correspond to the measures planned and the outcomes foreseen.

Gender equality strategists should work specifically as strategic planners and not assume operative duties, such as producing gender analyses. That task should be performed in the line. They must, however, be good at consultative work and act as an inspirational coach to others.

To get the analytical process under way out in the organisation, gender equality strategists must see to it that strategies and decisions are widely supported and endorsed in the organisation. And that the management group and the strategist work together closely. A gender equality strategist, therefore, should be a person who is familiar with the organisation. Here, it is a case of being able to see the overall picture and of making the gender equality perspective a natural part of the regular operation. To this end, the person concerned must take an integrated approach based on his or her familiarity with all aspects of the organisation. Also, of course, she or he must have a sound knowledge of Swedish gender equality policy and gender theory in order to do the job properly.

The gender equality strategist may perhaps be required to take part in the evaluation process out in the field, in which case the person concerned will need to have a

good grasp of the agency's management and follow-up system.

Also, your gender equality strategist will doubtless initiate training courses and perhaps organise seminars and coaching sessions personally. So it is a good idea if she or he has teaching skills and is able to adapt methods and methodology to various operational needs. In other words, the person in charge of the gender mainstreaming process will be a key figure in developing the organisation's activities.

Time and money

No doubt there will be plenty of resistance along the way. By making yourself available to the gender equality strategist, by insisting on reports in the course of the work and by calling in the results of various undertakings, you personally can help carry the work forward. Remember, too, that gender mainstreaming is a type of work that sometimes arouses strong feelings, and that abusive treatment and other counter-productive behaviour are not uncommon in connection with the change process. Such matters should be taken seriously.

Besides a strategist to coordinate efforts, your organisation needs resources for the work, not least in terms of time allocation. It takes both time and money to train staff, for instance. Such investments signal that the work has priority.

As the leader, you might also like to consider how you yourself are to summon the strength and energy to push through the necessary changes. Gender mainstreaming is a process that must be continuously maintained now and in the future and which may sometimes feel like heavy going – just like all change work. Whose support can you count on? Can you build up a network among other agency heads who are also working actively with gender mainstreaming?

Success factors and obstacles to change

– INTERVIEW WITH JOHAN QUIST, RESEARCHER, SERVICE RESEARCH CENTRE

Gender mainstreaming involves an extensive, wide-ranging development effort that places heavy demands on management. Actually achieving results in a change process is far from easy, as many leaders have discovered. Things do not always turn out as planned, and this may be due to a number of different factors.

Johan Quist, an organisational theorist and researcher at the Service Research Centre in Karlstad, knows a great deal about success factors and obstacles to change. He has studied many different aspects of change work in the public sector, and has specialised in effective management. Amongst other activities, he has produced a management programme for leaders in central government, and has been heading it for the past few years.

Each organisation is unique
“You have to remember that each organisation is unique, and that what proves successful for one will not necessarily succeed for another,” he says. “One important success factor, however, would seem to be the ability to adapt trends and ideas to one’s own operation.”

Leaders often encounter large consultancy firms that offer them highly seduc-

tive trends and solutions, notes Johan Quist. You are told that by adopting special methods and models, you can speed up your case processing, improve citizen relations and streamline your activities in general.

“These are solutions that public organisations tend to buy all too easily,” he says. “But things are not that simple. You can’t just take over a concept and trust that everything will be better. To start with, you have to know why you’re taking a new idea on board. Often, there are management trends involved. The Director General wants to be a legitimate player and not be the only one who isn’t talking about processes, for instance. Suddenly everyone is supposed to be working in a ‘process-oriented’ way. To follow the same trend as others then becomes a way of enhancing your legitimacy as a leader. And buying ready-made package solutions is easy. It gives you something to show in your annual report. ‘We have been following the project and have achieved this and that.’”

Proceed from one’s own needs
This is not a good basis for change, says Johan Quist. Instead, the agency should proceed from a specific need to improve

«You have to remember that each organisation is unique, and that what proves successful for one will not necessarily succeed for another.»

the way it works. It may, for instance, want to reduce processing periods from 24 to 12 days.

“If you know what you want to achieve, you can choose a model that suits your purposes. But if the change project is to succeed, the Director General must also be able to adapt the model to the agency’s own activities. You need to consider beforehand what problems you may encounter, and which words or concepts may not work in the model you’ve chosen. Otherwise, the new project will lose credibility. If a model constantly refers to ‘customers’ instead of citizens or users, you may lose 25 per cent of the staff. Their reaction might be: ‘What a pathetic model – our boss doesn’t understand what we’re doing here’. That’s how good ideas get lost along the way.

“There is also an assumption that new models have ‘good intentions’, that they will automatically be good for the operation. But what exactly are we seeking to achieve when we start using, say, ‘balanced scorecards’ here at the agency? If you can get your staff to understand this, you may succeed.”

Locate key figures

Then comes the next step: getting all the innovations to work and making sure that they lead to real change. How is this to be done?

“It’s difficult to generalise about this, too,” says Johan Quist, “but if I were the Director General I’d try to find people with ideas – visionaries, innovators – and with a good reputation in the organisation. You also need to remember that

«It takes time and resources to invest in long-term development, but that approach is more likely to succeed.»

change creates uncertainty. You shouldn’t carp at the old when trying to introduce the new, but show respect for the organisation’s history. Otherwise, your change process will have too many negative connotations.”

The Director General’s personal commitment is also crucial, he says. You must be sure in your heart that what you are doing is right.

“The staff are talented people. They can see whether the boss means what she or he says, and this determines the extent to which they are prepared to listen and to change something. I also think it’s important that you consider from the start how you intend following up the change process, so that the system measures the right things.”

Describing obstacles is more problematic, says Johan Quist.

“Why aren’t we getting more change, and faster? I think this is partly down to human nature. We have to get used to change. I also believe that the short-term approach tends to take precedence over the long-term approach. It takes time and resources to invest in long-term development, but that approach is more likely to succeed. It gives people a chance to adapt.”

Stand up and be counted!

– INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR GENERAL ULF WESTERBERG

Ulf Westerberg, Director General of the National Board of Forensic Medicine, has battled long and hard to ensure that all citizens have access to public services according to needs rather than gender. He began working with gender mainstreaming before the term had entered the vocabulary and makes no secret of the fact that he has experienced both widespread opposition and personal ridicule over the years.

“As a man, it’s not always easy getting involved in gender equality matters,” he says. “I accept the argument that there is a gender order, a pattern evident in most areas of society whereby women are in a subordinate position and men in a superior one. But that argument is not always easy to deal with. What is true at the general level is often misleading at the individual level. If we take the easy way out and view all women as victims and all men as oppressors, I’m not happy at being lumped together with any obnoxious old male chauvinist you’d care to name. That’s why it feels good to be involved in what we now call gender mainstreaming. Everyone, women and men alike, can contribute in a positive and straightforward way to improving our operation and making sure

it works well for both sexes.”

Ulf Westerberg has been head of the National Board of Forensic Medicine for seven and a half years, but has taken an interest in equal rights for women and men ever since the late 1960s.

“Originally, my interest was political in nature,” he says, “but when I became head of the Swedish Working Life Fund the gender aspect grew to be a natural part of my work. One of the aims of the fund was to finance workplace programmes that sought to improve the working environment and work organisation and to reduce absenteeism. In their applications, employers often referred to problems that affected women, but the bulk of the money they asked for was to be used to redress traditional problems mainly affecting men. This made us realise that a gender-neutral approach on our part would often place women at a disadvantage.

Funding unevenly distributed

In response, Ulf Westerberg and his colleagues began introducing a gender equality perspective into their work, constantly asking whether a given measure or action would benefit both women and men.

«It feels good to be involved in what we now call gender mainstreaming. Everyone, women and men alike, can contribute in a positive and straightforward way to improving our operation and making sure it works well for both sexes.»

“Often, we discovered, funding for women and men differed, although the same resources were required.”

After his years at the Working Life Fund, Ulf Westerberg promised himself never to forget the lessons he had learned and the insights he had gained concerning the differing needs of women and men.

He has stuck to his convictions, but adopting such a stance has not always made him popular; he has encountered severe obstacles, and still does. It appears that gender mainstreaming as a concept is not always easy for people to absorb.

Where are the biggest obstacles to be found?

“Both in myself and in others,” says Ulf Westerberg. “We’re used to certain patterns and boundaries in society, and men are not the only ones that help maintain them. Changing them is the responsibility of all, but as a manager you’re better placed to do something about it and you have a greater responsibility to take action. Everyone stands to gain when we adopt a new approach to our work. The operation improves, we get a better society, and our daughters – and sons – are given better opportunities in life.”

Encountered resistance

In some quarters, this kind of outlook is considered provocative, despite coming from someone in such a senior position as Ulf Westerberg.

“You may be a director general, but people still make jokes about you behind your back when you fight for gender equality,” he says. “I’ve also been accused of being an opportunist, intent on furthering my own career, of ingratiating myself with female managers in the organisation.”

He has encountered other kinds of opposition elsewhere, and in practice it is sometimes hard to be consistent in your response, he says.

“You have to be prepared to deal with it both in the sauna and in the management group, but you’re not always able to withstand the pressure. All men have been immature kids and some remain so all their lives. Especially in the sauna. Sometimes I’ve voiced my objections and sometimes I’ve been ashamed to find myself joining in the laughter when someone makes a derogatory joke about women.”

People resist progress towards gender equality for different reasons, and many senior managers probably feel they are doing a good job, says Ulf Westerberg.

“They think it’s enough just to adopt a neutral approach to their work, until they analyse the situation properly and find that their approach has consequences that are not in fact neutral as they affect women and men differently.”

The National Board of Forensic Medicine, he concedes, may not be at the cutting edge of gender mainstreaming.

«Everyone stands to gain when we adopt a new approach to our work. The operation improves, we get a better society, and our daughters – and sons – are given better opportunities in life.»

«Gender mainstreaming improves the organisation's activities and frees resources. People get more for their tax money when you adopt a gender perspective. Which director general can afford to pass up such a chance?»

“You need a degree of maturity in an organisation before you can start working with these issues, and it is only now that we've been able to launch the process properly,” says Ulf Westerberg. “We've appointed gender agents and have begun analysing our operation.”

New procedures for dealing
with domestic violence

“In our field, we already have a good example of how work with women's needs and legal security can be organised in a better way,” he adds. “Under a trial programme run jointly by the forensic medicine department at Uppsala University and the public prosecution office in Västerås, medical certificates for all crimes of violence towards close relatives are now issued by the National Board of Forensic Medicine. As a result, criminal proceedings have increased in volume by 40 per cent. Before, the lack of proper documentation meant that few cases actually

reached the courts. We've also begun collaborating with the National Centre for Battered and Raped Women in Uppsala so that women can get their injuries documented even if they don't want to report the man involved to the police. If they change their minds later, perhaps after further assaults, the documentation is there.

“I still have a burning interest in these issues, and I believe my experience here means other agency heads listen when I discuss things with them. I know the facts. Every year, the Government imposes new demands in its appropriation directions, and it's almost impossible to find time for them all. Nor do we have the resources to embark on a new venture. I'm aware of this, but I also know that gender mainstreaming improves the organisation's activities and frees resources. People get more for their tax money when you adopt a gender perspective. Which director general can afford to pass up such a chance?”

What others have done

There are many different ways of pursuing gender mainstreaming. Below are four examples. The common denominator here is an explicit focus on the role of top management.

‘Time to act’ for managers in Kronoberg

The county administrative board in Kronoberg County is taking its task very seriously. The Government’s appropriation directions clearly state that the agency’s role is to coordinate national policy. The board is required to provide guidance and support in promoting local development, and gender mainstreaming is one of the foremost issues.

To get the gender mainstreaming effort under way, the county governor and the management group chose to contact the key actors in the region directly – i.e. public authorities and municipalities – with a view to establishing a management development programme.

“All experience shows that strategically, the active support of management is the most important success factor in the gender mainstreaming process,” says Andreas Liljenrud, director of gender equality affairs in Kronoberg and the man in charge of development work there. “We called a meeting and invited the heads of municipalities, government agencies and organisations in the region.”

The response was overwhelming. Some 80-odd top executives and members of management groups received invitations and over 90 turned up.

“The county governor and our own management group at the county administrative board attended as a matter of course,”

says Andreas Liljenrud. “People’s reactions afterwards were very favourable.”

Each management group appointed a representative to a steering group whose task was to formulate a management development programme with gender mainstreaming as its theme. The final programme comprised four seminars and ‘homework’ for the management groups in between. The title, ‘Time to Act’, shows the approach taken, and the three main subjects were Swedish gender equality policy, gender theory and strategy.

This initiative, too, met with a huge response. Some 80 municipal directors and commissioners, county council directors, agency heads and management group representatives took part.

At the end of the programme, the participants identified three ‘strong’, specific courses of action that management groups could take to further the work in their respective organisations.

“A year has now passed since the programme ended, and we are seeing a great need of support out in the field. I’ve been to almost all the municipalities and agencies in the region to take part in skills acquisition courses for staff. The management groups have drawn up action plans, and the time has now come to move things a step further and produce gender analyses of the various operations. That part tends to take the form of customised solutions commissioned by each respective management group. We only accept commissions from senior management.”

In practice, this second phase has targeted middle management. In Tingsryd in the south of the county, for example, Andreas Liljenrud took part in a special

training programme directed at all managers in the municipality.

There were a number of reasons why the development programme itself was such a success, says Andreas Liljenrud. The steering group, for instance, played a very important strategic role.

“They tailored each day of the programme to the participants’ needs,” he says. “And after each daily session, the various management groups evaluated the proceedings. This meant that we always stayed on course and raised issues that the participants themselves were anxious to discuss. This in turn, I think, created a certain level of commitment, and no-one dropped out. We also made a point of sending out the invitations from the county governor himself. This was of great symbolic importance.”

Andreas Liljenrud also stresses the importance of focusing on the right objectives. Gender mainstreaming work is not about providing support to discriminated groups.

“Public authorities are required to proceed from a human rights perspective,” he says. “Consequently, we must make absolutely sure that in exercising our authority we treat women and men equally. This is a development issue.”

Nutek incorporated gender equality into its management system

When the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (Nutek) began work on introducing an environmental and quality management system into its entire operation, gender equality issues were included on the agenda. Today, they are in the process of becoming a natural part of the system, both in the agency’s internal work and in its external activities.

“Four years ago, we decided to develop an environmental management system for

the whole Nutek operation,” says Bo Stenviken, Director of Planning at the agency. “At the same time, we decided to strengthen the gender equality aspect in all regional development work. In our operation, we require gender equality, diversity and a healthy environment to be integrated simultaneously and at all times.”

The agency had as its objective the certification of its management system in accordance with the international ISO standard for environmental and quality work. A systematic approach is a fundamental requirement, and an ISO-certified organisation is regularly assessed on the basis of its stated objectives and the quality requirements that apply.

“The issues involved are pretty basic, like having realistic goals and measuring and evaluating the work at regular intervals,” says Stefan Nordin, who acted as project leader for the agency’s development effort. “The important thing is systematic application and using ISO-certified management systems as an aid to development.”

As yet, no formal criteria have been established for the ISO certification of gender equality work. At Nutek, however, gender equality issues are subject to the same systematic processes as other types of environmental and quality work.

“We haven’t built up parallel systems. Instead, we’ve made gender equality and diversity a part of our regular system of control and follow-up. The systematic aspect has brought the greatest benefits as regards gender equality work,” says Stefan Nordin. “As a result, we now include gender equality requirements in our external activities, too, for instance when dealing with project applications of various kinds.”

The process required a major effort on Nutek’s part.

“We surveyed attitudes in the workforce and had a big ‘kick-off’ to inspire the staff,” says Stefan Nordin. “We’ve also provided each member of staff with extensive training, and done a lot of work on visions and policy that we then translated into activities.”

Today, Nutek works systematically with such things as proposals for improvement. The agency has a database where everyone can enter their thoughts and ideas and suggest improvements, which may range from how working groups are composed to how to choose the right images for agency publications or how to formulate a project.

Each proposal is addressed to a specific person, who is then required to take a position on it. Otherwise, constant reminders arrive by e-mail. Also, any measures taken are entered into the database.

“Over the past two years, we’ve dealt with 130 proposals in this way, a third of which were about gender equality,” says Stefan Nordin.

Since that project, attitudes to the gender equality issue have changed, he adds.

“Now, the issue keeps coming up in our discussions, and that’s real progress. We’re seeing a greater commitment on the part of staff. Much remains to be done, and it’s taking longer than we’d planned to map the processes. Also, we’ve given a lot of thought to the question of how we should measure and follow up quality aspects and gender equality. But we’re on the right path.”

Clearly defined goals in the Östsam Regional Development Council. The county administrative board in Östergötland County has coordinated gender equality work in the region in a project entitled ‘Equal Action’. One of the

participants is the Östsam Regional Development Council.

This is a joint body bringing together the thirteen municipalities in the region and the county council, under a political leadership. Its principal task is to pursue region-wide strategic issues, such as sustainable economic, social, ecological and cultural development. The gender equality perspective, too, is now to be included in all areas of activity, and to ensure that this is the case the Development Council has produced an action plan for the period 2007–2010.

The basic aim is to mainstream gender into all decision-making. Both the Development Council’s own activities and its dealings with other actors are to incorporate a gender equality perspective.

«The basic aim is to mainstream gender into all decision-making.»

The strategy being applied is METS, which involves dividing subgoals and measures into four principal areas, i.e. management and objectives, education and training, tools and procedures, and support and coordination. The strategy also calls for clearly defined intermediate goals.

One of the objectives is to bring a gender equality perspective into all areas of decision-making and all policy documents. Such a perspective is also to be included when the Development Council takes decisions on projects, both internal and external. On completion of the project, all practical input is to be summed up and analysed. An intermediate goal may for instance be to ensure that policy documents, three-year plans and annual bud-

gets contain at least one specific type of input per area of operation, or that all decisions relating to regional assignments outsourced to an external provider in 2008 are to include a gender equality perspective.

Also, 90 per cent of the Development Council staff are to have received some form of gender equality training by the end of 2008, and half of the external providers are to have been offered such training, along with all of the agency's executive committee members and spokespersons. A further goal is for half of the agency's staff to feel sufficiently skilled to undertake a well-defined gender analysis.

One of the intermediate goals in the method/analysis section is that 60 per cent of all investigatory studies and analyses initiated during the period are to include an objectively based gender equality perspective. Also, each area of operation will be required to have undertaken at least one exhaustive gender analysis during the period. The action plan specifies which concrete steps are to be taken in the various areas.

The actual follow-up will take place in conjunction with work on the agency's annual report. Ongoing follow-up is the duty of the controller.

Norrbottnen makes clear its intentions. No-one can doubt what Per-Ola Eriksson, County Governor of Norrbotten, is after. Throughout his term as governor, he has been emphasising that gender equality is one of the most important strategic issues in the region. He made this clear from day one.

As a result, the gender equality issue enjoys considerable status in this northern county.

"Now that the county governor has made clear how important the issue is, senior officials, both women and men, turn up

whenever gender equality is high on the agenda," says Britt-Marie Lugnet-Häggberg, Director of Gender Equality Affairs in Norrbotten. "The fact that men in executive positions turn up of their own accord is particularly interesting. We've never had so many men at our gender equality activities before."

The high attendance is perhaps not so strange in light of the explicit priority given to the issue by the county leadership.

In 2005, the county administrative board's executive committee adopted a gender equality action plan that clearly specified who was responsible for what.

To assure quality in the management system, the county executive has issued a directive for operational planning specifying how work should proceed, although actual content may differ from policy area to policy area.

The directive lays down certain principles, including the requirement that the agency is to work with gender mainstreaming. This means that all operations for which the agency is responsible are to analyse how their activities affect women and men respectively. They are also required to show how the work is progressing, what impact it has had during the period, and so forth.

"In practice, this means we've managed to incorporate the gender perspective requirement into all areas of our regular work," says Britt-Marie Lugnet-Häggberg. "By first creating an action plan describing how the gender mainstreaming work is to be organised and then including it in the directive as well, we've created a situation in which this perspective could be said to inform the entire agency operation.

The evaluation process takes time

– INTERVIEW WITH COUNTY POLICE COMMISSIONER GUNNO GUNNMO

Most people who become involved in the practical work of mainstreaming gender into their activities learn that it takes time. Many, too, discover that in the final analysis it is a matter of changing people's values and attitudes in the organisation. One person who has experienced this is County Police Commissioner Gunno Gunnmo, who has analysed the work of the police and prosecution authorities from a gender equality viewpoint.

“In the case of male violence against women,” he says, “we've looked at the way women are treated when their cases are investigated. But the question also concerns what status such cases have, and the fact that murder investigations and the like tend to be given greater priority. The most important thing, therefore, is to bring about a change of values in the organisation.”

An exceptionally good process
Gunno Gunnmo previously worked as the County Police Commissioner of Stockholm, and was known for his readiness to pursue gender equality issues in day-to-day police work. It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that he was chosen for the task of conducting an initial gender analy-

sis within the Ministry of Justice's area of responsibility. Together with a ministerial working group, he analysed the situation with the aid of the JämKAS Bas method developed by the JämStöd committee at the Government Offices (and described later in the book.)

“It was an exceptionally good process,” says Gunno Gunnmo, “both in terms of how we were to proceed with the actual analysis and in terms of the training provided. We were given a free hand, and senior management at the ministry subsequently came out in support of our conclusions.”

To make the assignment more manageable, the analysis was specifically confined to the operational area of investigation and criminal proceedings, i.e. the duties of police and prosecutors.

“In an endeavour like this, you have to look outwards, look at how the external work is conducted, but you end up focusing on the employees all the same, as it is their attitudes that decide how women and men are treated in the operation,” he says.

Gunno Gunnmo and the rest of the working group concluded that values and attitudes are vitally important if police

«In an endeavour like this, you have to look outwards, look at how the external work is conducted, but you end up focusing on the employees all the same, as it is their attitudes that decide how women and men are treated in the operation.»

and prosecutors are to deal equally with women and men in their external activities.

This is not just a matter of how people are treated, or the status accorded different types of offences. It is also about the preconceptions people have about crime victims and perpetrators, due among other things to a lack of awareness.

“Men who beat women are said to be found at all levels of society, but there are no studies of offenders to show whether there is a common denominator. Also, many rape cases go unreported. The degree to which people are known may be a decisive factor in this respect. What social price do you pay for reporting a rape if, say, you are a woman living in a small town where everyone knows everyone else?”

People’s values are crucial

Gunno Gunnmo’s gender analysis includes a number of practical proposals for change, but he himself views people’s values as the most important issue. How, then, is one to bring about a change of attitude?

“We’ve compiled a list of success factors in our analysis,” he says. “The support and commitment of senior management is the most important prerequisite. Also, the gender equality perspective has to be

incorporated into policy documents, and the implementation of changes needs to take place in existing structures, not in separate projects. Other important aims are to give managers strategic training, to enable people to exchange views and experience, and to ensure follow-up. If you neglect these aspects, nothing will happen.”

To others working with gender mainstreaming, both managers and gender equality experts, Gunno Gunnmo offers the following advice:

- Make sure management is actively backing you.
- Make sure everyone receives training.
- Keep known success factors in mind when planning change.
- Choose courses of action that have an impact, otherwise results will be negligible. This means focusing on the operation as a whole and not just on individual measures.
- Don’t avoid difficult issues. If you want to effect change, you will have to take matters to a deeper level and attack prevailing values.

Confronting obstacles

To work with gender mainstreaming is to radically change the way an agency operates. It takes time and it challenges both the organisation's current values and methods and the individual's self-esteem at work. Aren't I good enough at my job – has everything I've done been wasted?

Sooner or later, therefore, both you as the senior manager and the people you have put in charge of the practical mainstreaming work will run into obstacles. These will differ in character. Some are described in the interviews above and in the fact boxes in this book. Others have arisen in our contact with managers and gender equality strategists.

All change is a challenge

Not all of these obstacles will affect you and your staff, but if you encounter opposition – or find out that your colleagues are doing so – it is worth bearing in mind that others have undergone the same experience before you. It is due not to you personally or to your staff but to the fact that major changes in an organisation are always a challenge.

Those working with gender mainstreaming are sometimes met by comments that show how little importance some people attach to the issue and to the need to deal with it in a structured way in the organisation. You hear comments such

as “Are all men supposed to be like women now?” or “I don't see why I need to attend a course. We're all familiar with such matters. I do the washing up and bake bread – we don't need to learn more about this sort of thing.” Or “We've got other things to do. Let's concentrate on our core activity”, or “Surely this is a matter for the staff department?”, or “But we're supposed to be objective in our work. Gender equality is ideology and should be left to the politicians.”

Gibes and disparaging remarks

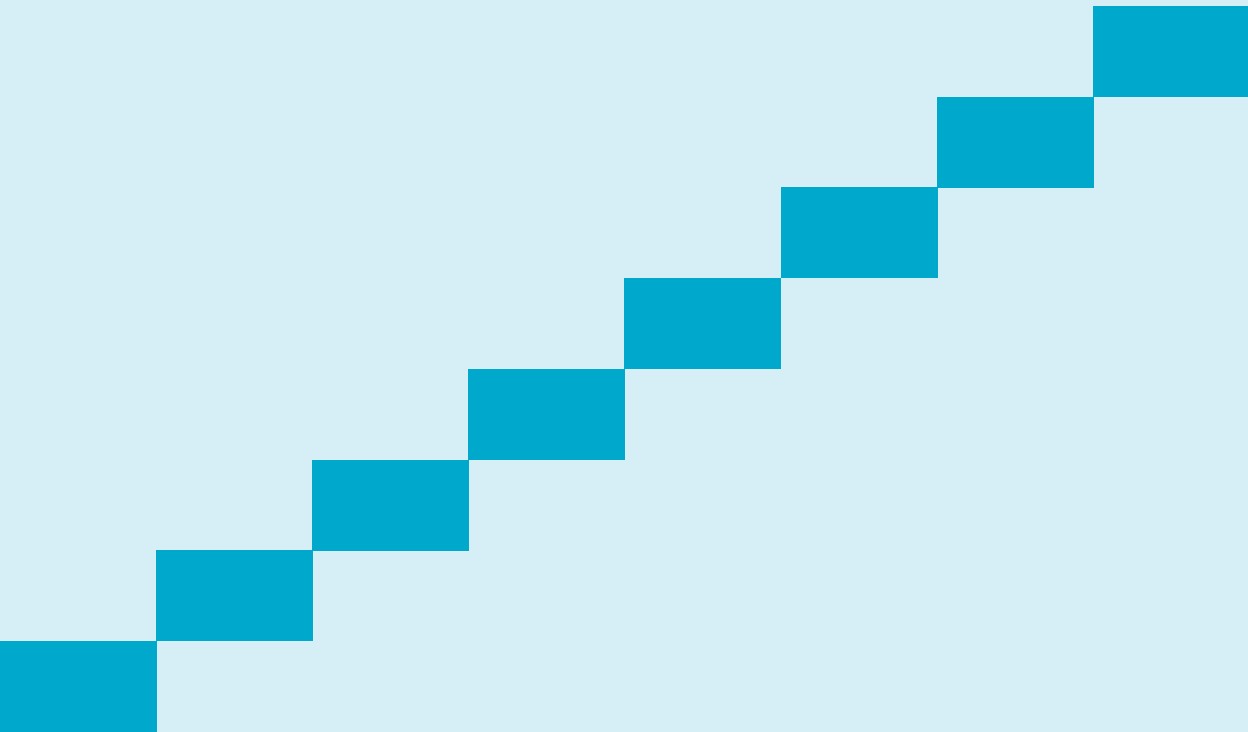
Both senior managers and gender equality strategists may also find themselves subjected to personal gibes and disparaging remarks, as noted by Ulf Westerberg earlier in the book. This does not always happen, of course, but it may be a good idea to be prepared for the fact that change processes tend to arouse strong feelings.

Managers may also encounter resistance of another kind. Employees may be exceedingly reluctant to change the values and methods that prevail in an organisation. Such reluctance may take the form of passive resistance to whatever changes are decided upon. In many cases, this is due to a lack of awareness about the implications of gender mainstreaming and/or a failure to understand what the change process involves.

The tasks of gender equality strategists

As a gender equality strategist, your job is to preside over a change process, and this is no small task. It will make heavy demands on you and require the active participation of senior management. The top manager and the management group must issue with you full authorisation to act, in the form of a mandate. When the person at the top calls for results and reports, things happen in the organisation. When she or he accords the issue its proper priority and allocates time and resources to the work, you are nearing your goal.

In this section, we describe what other gender equality strategists have learnt in the course of their work, and we also outline strategies and approaches that have proved successful.



Keep the task within limits!

– INTERVIEW WITH SABINA PETERSSON,
MINISTERIAL COORDINATING OFFICER FOR GENDER EQUALITY

When you begin analysing the activities of a large organisation as a prelude to mainstreaming gender into it, you soon realise there is a tremendous amount that needs doing. So you need to restrict yourself to certain specific issues. It is better to tackle a small part of the operation than to have to fight on all fronts at once – that means nothing gets done.

This is the advice of Sabina Petersson, who coordinates gender mainstreaming work at the Swedish Social Insurance Agency's department for sickness benefits.

She knows what she is talking about. The agency has some 16 000 employees, and the operation is huge compared with those of other public authorities. Also, the agency administers a large part of the social insurance system in Sweden, and the actions of its staff have a very definite impact on the lives of individuals.

When the Social Insurance Agency was assigned two years ago to survey and analyse its activities on the basis of their impact on women and men respectively, a series of questions arose:

- Are laws and regulations neutral and are women and men assessed equally? Are the agency's decisions influenced by the norms and values that exist concerning women and men?
- Are women and men given equal support and assistance by the agency?
- Is as much money invested in measures targeting women and men respectively and do such measures benefit them equally?

“We analysed three policy areas: compensation in the event of incapacity for work, financial family policy – which includes parental benefit, child allowance and maintenance support – and financial policy for the elderly, in other words pensions,” says Sabina Petersson. “I myself worked with social insurance. We looked at the available statistics and analysed the laws and regulations that govern our operation. We also looked at how we apply the rules and what kinds of problems arise in our dealings with the community in general. What employers say and how medical certificates are framed, for instance, affect the assessments we make at the Social Insurance Agency, as do our case officers' differing expectations concerning women and men.”

General analyses

After initial training, three groups of experts embarked on a general analysis of their respective areas of operation. Sabina Petersson analysed sickness benefits.

“We found that our laws and regulations were largely gender-neutral, which was good to see,” she says. “But there were a couple of exceptions. Take sickness and activity compensation, for instance: when assessing whether someone is entitled to such compensation, everything the person does is supposed to be counted, including work in the home. The law is very clear on this point. It turned out, however, that case officers tended to ask women a lot of questions about how much they worked in the home – although this is not supposed to be a major consideration – while the men were asked about their job situations.

“Consequently, there is a risk that women’s work capacity will be deemed greater than men’s. After all, she can still clean and Hoover.”

Values may influence decisions

Something happens when the Social Insurance Agency’s case officers meet women and men, says Sabina Petersson. When the right to compensation is assessed on an individual basis, the person’s overall situation is considered. As a result, there is a risk that the case officers’ personal views on what women and men are like and what they need may have an impact on decisions. The survey showed, for instance, that women are granted rehabilitation measures less readily than men and that the measures chosen are less costly. It was already known that women tend to receive sickness benefit more often, while men are granted work injury annuities or work aids.

The survey that Sabina Petersson participated in led to a new assignment, targeting the sickness benefit department at the agency’s head offices.

“The Government immediately commissioned us to produce an action plan for dealing with the gender disparities in the sickness benefit field, and my task now is to implement this plan,” she says.

The action plan draws on the work previously undertaken by the Social Insurance Agency on the theme of gender, and the analysis led to a strategy focusing

on four areas of action. Under the government mandate, the report was to include proposals for ensuring that the Social Insurance Agency dealt with cases and customers in a ‘uniform and legally secure’ manner, regardless of the person’s sex.

Compulsory training

“Management’s first decision was to organise a compulsory training and skills enhancement day for all employees and managers in the department,” says Sabina Petersson. “There was a presentation of the Government’s gender equality policy and strategy, and we also had three workshops – one to teach the JämKas Plus method of analysis, one for the people who work with standardisation and who put together examples for our guidelines, and a third for the managers. In 2007, we’ll have a similar training course for newcomers to the department.

“The second step was to appoint a coordinator whose task would be to carry forward work on the action plan. It’s well known that such an appointment is a success factor, and my role is to act as an ‘engine’ in the process without necessarily doing all the work myself.”

Training is tremendously important, says Sabina Petersson, both for heightening awareness about the gender equality policy goals and in helping people to understand them. It also gives the staff a proper grasp of the problems involved in society as a whole.

«Under the government mandate, the report was to include proposals for ensuring that the Social Insurance Agency dealt with cases and customers in a ‘uniform and legally secure’ manner, regardless of the person’s sex.»

Throughout, the action plan emphasises the need to introduce a gender equality perspective into all aspects of the Social Insurance Agency's work on ill-health, from the collection and analysis of statistics to systematic work on method evaluations, attitudes and approaches at all levels of the organisation. Training courses for county employees wishing to learn more about the rules governing case processing give them an opportunity to discuss how such rules affect women and men respectively.

Modified an information campaign
“Then are many small activities involved,” says Sabina Petersson. “For instance, I've had a say in the design of an information campaign on health insurance that was launched in the autumn, and I've helped to develop guidelines for the procurement of services. We sometimes purchase personal reports when assessing work capacity, and it's important for women and men to be treated on the basis of their needs and capabilities in these studies.

“The action plan also talks specifically about the need for leadership and control and the introduction of a gender equality perspective at all levels, not least in our objectives and indicators relating to ill-health. Gender-specific statistics are already an established feature at the Social Insurance Agency, but they need to be more clearly defined,” she says.

“Preferably, I'd like the agency's operational objectives to make clear that women's and men's ill-health differ. Today, the objectives are framed in a gender-neutral way, so follow-up is also gender neutral. When the objectives on our scorecards reflect the fact that the situations of women and men differ, we'll have made some headway in the gender mainstreaming process.”

Paths to success

The success of a given gender equality strategy depends on many different factors, says Sabina Petersson.

“You need a clear-cut mandate, a commission from the top, otherwise the organisation is not ready for change. Preferably, the mandate should describe what is to be done, point by point. If there is no managerial mandate, don't undertake the assignment.

“There must be a realistic level of ambition. Be selective and give priority to tasks that enable you to show results quickly. Tangible results help move the work forward, but you won't have time for everything.

“You should have a firm grasp of the way the organisation works,” she adds. “If you are familiar with the decision-making procedures, both formal and informal, you can make sure you're in the right place at the right time, and can influence things at an early stage. Where are strategic decisions taken and where are they prepared? This is particularly important in the case of the organisation's activity plan.

“Make sure you have a mentor or a network to support you. If you work alone, you'll quickly feel lonely. Perhaps you can share the assignment with someone else.

“Be 'proactive' if a decision is taken to reorganise the operation. Make sure your project and your activity are given an adequate place in the new setup.

“Set yourself reasonable goals and be satisfied with what you achieve.

“Don't let others use you as their expert. Support them but don't do the work for them,” says Sabina Petersson.

Your role as a gender mainstreaming strategist

People often expect a lot from you as a gender equality strategist. Introducing a gender equality perspective into an organisation's ongoing work is a major task requiring strategic action on the part of both you and senior management.

For a start, you must have a good, well-defined commission from the top, showing what you are authorised to do as a gender equality strategist and making clear that your work is an expression of managerial intent. This mandate must be formally expressed in policy documents and action plans. If there is no proper mandate, it is better to wait until you are provided with one. Otherwise, who are representing?

Core position essential

Since a gender equality strategist works at a broad, general level, it is important for you to have a position at the heart of the organisation so that you are close to the executive and can be present when development matters are discussed. Otherwise, you will be little more than a guest allowed to say the odd word about gender equality now and then.

Broadly speaking, the task of the gender equality strategist is to lead the organisation through a development process that

involves a new approach to work incorporating the gender equality perspective as a natural part of all analyses and decisions in day-to-day activities.

We advise you as a strategist to gather a working group around you whose members represent different parts of the organisation. This group will be an important partner capable of providing you with a basis for your planning and implementation work.

Later in this book you can read about how to develop a strategy for the work involved, but it is important to have the right focus from the outset. It is not up to you personally to carry out all the work in the mainstreaming process. Rather, your role as a strategist is to be a coach, a support resource, a trainer and a strategy expert, i.e. the person who introduces the issues within the organisation, who draws up the plans and who makes available the requisite tools and methods so that the organisation can work in a new way. Various analytical methods and models are described later in the book.

Raise awareness

Training is the key to this type of development work. As a gender equality strategist, therefore, you will need to devote much

«It is not up to you personally to carry out all the work in the mainstreaming process. Rather, your role as a strategist is to be a coach, a support resource, a trainer and a strategy expert.»

time and energy to measures that raise people's awareness and enhance their skills. A general grasp of the gender issue will be needed so that those whose task is to develop the operation understand why gender is relevant in the first place. Also, staff need to learn about the Government's gender equality policy and its implications for the agency's operation. Subsequently, as the change process moves into the practical phase, it will involve using structured methods to analyse the operation so as to identify issues requiring further effort.

To a great extent, gender mainstreaming is about carrying out analyses and drawing conclusions. Another success factor is the ability to enlist support for strategies and decisions throughout the organisation, not least in the management group and among middle managers. The latter represent a key target group if you want to gain a foothold in the organisation. They are the ones who decide how much scope to allow individual employees out in the various units and departments.

«Another success factor is the ability to enlist support for strategies and decisions throughout the organisation, not least in the management group and among middle managers.»

Make demands on management

– INTERVIEW WITH EVA MARK (PH.D.), GÖTEBORG UNIVERSITY

It's easy to become an employer's 'alibi' when working with gender mainstreaming. In appointing a gender equality strategist or a gender equality expert, the organisation may think it has fulfilled its obligations. The actual need for change may rarely find its way onto the agenda.

"Therefore, if you're to do the job well and if you expect your work to bring about change, you must make sure you have the proper mandate and the right prerequisites for your task," says Eva Mark, PhD.

As an experienced consultant on gender mainstreaming issues (and an expert on theoretical philosophy), she emphasises the importance of strong support from the top. This is crucial to the success of a change process, and she herself makes a point of turning down commissions unless they stem from a clear decision on the part of senior management.

A natural part of the work
With a strong executive decision to back you up, as a gender equality strategist you do not need to become embroiled in discussions about whether or not the gender equality perspective is important to the operation in the first place, says Eva Mark. The work is regarded as self-evident since

it has been decided at the top, and you can devote more of your time to changing and developing work processes so that gender mainstreaming becomes a natural part of the organisation's ongoing activities.

"Organisational changes are complex processes with different dimensions – those that conserve the system and those that improve it," says Eva Mark. "Gender mainstreaming alters the way activities and work procedures are analysed, and you cannot embark on such a course of action without the full and unequivocal support of senior management."

More than just managerial support
Many managers fail to understand how crucial the position they themselves adopt is to the success of a change process in the organisation, she says. Even staff who are dubious about change or opposed to it often accept what management says. It should be kept in mind, however, that gender mainstreaming requires much more than managerial support to succeed.

Eva Mark emphasises that in the mainstreaming process it is the managers at various levels who are responsible for ensuring implementation and the staff who actually put the changes into prac-

«Gender mainstreaming alters the way activities and work procedures are analysed, and you cannot embark on such a course of action without the full and unequivocal support of senior management.»

tice. Initially, and for a limited period, they will need expert assistance in the form of ‘coaching’.

The task of the gender equality expert is to supervise the staff in their efforts to incorporate the gender equality perspective into their regular activities. This alters the agenda. Gender equality work is then no longer primarily about changing attitudes but becomes increasingly rooted in operational analyses and analyses of work processes.

There is a danger that gender equality experts assume too great a responsibility for the implementation of mainstreaming work, and are expected to do so, she adds. But they should bear in mind that it is the managers and the employees who carry out the work, while they themselves are to act as a resource in the process.

“The employees themselves know their particular areas of work best and know

«It’s better if the practical mainstreaming of a work process is initiated and designed awkwardly by a member of staff than brilliantly by an outside expert.»

what structures prevail there,” says Eva Mark. “And that knowledge should provide the basis for gender mainstreaming. It’s better if the practical mainstreaming of a work process is initiated and designed awkwardly by a member of staff than brilliantly by an outside expert. Only then can you bring the new perspective into the operation.”

Making people feel secure

What is to be done if senior management fails to lend its full support to the gender mainstreaming process?

“In that case, you should concentrate on management and press it to back the mainstreaming decision,” says Eva Mark. “You shouldn’t allow yourself to become the management’s alibi by starting work regardless. The management must take responsibility for its own show of will or lack of will.”

One of the most important tasks of a gender equality strategist, says Eva Mark, is to make people feel secure in the change process. There must be open discussion of the issues, and all views and opinions must be respected. No-one needs to be politically correct.

“You can’t force staff as private individuals to share the management’s view, but everyone at a workplace must follow current policy during working hours,” she says. “That contract is inviolable.”

Don't take opposition personally

As a gender equality strategist you may encounter obstacles and resistance. These tend to take different forms. Change can be scaring and people are not always happy about it. You will be altering power structures and perhaps exposing prejudices, and sooner or later you will meet opposition and protest, at various levels.

But don't take this personally. Opposition is not due to you or your colleagues as individuals but rather to the fact that major changes tend to be viewed as provocative, particularly where gender equality is involved.

Some people may dispute the need for gender mainstreaming in the first place, and in the course of your practical work you may run into passive resistance in one form or another. Managers and staff attend training, then nothing happens. To

make your job easier, try drawing attention to your mandate from the top, and make sure you have the executive behind you. You can only go as far as management allows you to.

You may also be subjected to personal gibes or encounter obstacles of a more general kind, both in the management group and out in the field. Sometimes, more deeply-held values may surface and create uncertainty as to what actually applies, as when a member of a management group expressed himself in the following terms: "You know, the top manager is a woman, her two deputies are women and the gender equality coordinator is a woman. And we men, we don't listen to women. But I think this gender mainstreaming thing is really important."

«Opposition is not due to you or your colleagues as individuals but rather to the fact that major changes tend to be viewed as provocative, particularly where gender equality is involved.»

Invest in training

Education and training are vital when the aim is to challenge prevailing norms. For you, perhaps, the terms are familiar, but it is not always easy for others in the organisation to understand what gender mainstreaming is about. Shared words, phrases and perspectives are required. People must, for instance, learn how to see and discuss the existing power structure, and they need the knowledge and skill to detect inequalities. They also need the right tools with which to perform analyses. Not until the operation has been examined in a structured way do manifest distortions and imbalances emerge.

Training is particularly important since gender equality is an issue that stirs the emotions. Many people have ideas, beliefs and values in relation to it. Also, misconceptions and prejudices need to be brought into the open.

This is why we believe in training that provides a forum for discussion, where the participants have the opportunity to talk over the issues and test their ideas. For this to happen, sufficient time must be allocated. Change processes and work on values both take time.

In the examples below, we show how different public agencies have met their training needs.

Extensive training at the Government Offices

In seeking to mainstream gender into their activities, the Government Offices have placed considerable emphasis on training. In 2004–2005, some 120 gender analyses were carried out, embracing all policy areas and aiming to formulate better gender equality objectives for government agencies.

The analytical work was extensive, with numerous people involved, and in the space of six months some 400 members of staff attended a total of more than 90 training sessions as part of the process.

All ministries were given special training and supervision in how to perform analyses in their respective policy areas. This included:

- Basic training – a half-day for all staff charged with performing analyses.
- Training in the JämKas Bas method for those who were to perform the analyses.
- Personal supervision on five occasions for those responsible for performing the analyses. They were required to undertake a couple of the steps at home before joining the supervised sessions to get feedback and then moving on to the next few stages in the process. These sessions were based on a model that involved the participants scrutinising and commenting on one another's analyses. Thus all were brought into the learning process, and gave and received feedback that focused on the specific issues in hand.

All ministerial management groups were offered training. Several accepted and were given a brief spell of basic training with the emphasis on strategic work.

Training in 2006 focused primarily on methodology as a prelude to agency outcome evaluations, on feedback on the agencies' annual reports, on the writing of appropriation directions and on the formulation of committee terms of refer-

ence. Also, ministries provided training adapted to their own special needs.

The courses primarily targeted the agencies' administrative officers, and in many cases the methods developed for the purpose emphasised a systematic approach rather than formal methodology. Many people welcomed the fact that this gave them a systematic work tool.

'Selling' the gender equality message

When the county administrative board in Blekinge decided to invest in gender mainstreaming, training was given a key role. In practice, it became a means of 'selling the message' within the organisation. Also, it provided a base from which the agency could proceed later when working practically with gender equality issues in its operation, says Ylva Särnmark, who headed the change process.

The mainstreaming of gender into central government activities is hardly a new concept, she notes. It has been incorporated into agencies' appropriation directions for years. Core activities are to be conducted in such a way as to ensure that women and men receive the same level of service and that decisions do not place either sex at a disadvantage.

"Many people think they are already working with this in mind, but when they take the time to look more closely at their operation and to analyse it, they learn differently," says Ylva Särnmark, describing the process at her own workplace.

She and her colleague Frida Berglund persuaded the county administrative board in Blekinge to launch a development effort throughout the organisation, focusing specifically on gender mainstreaming.

"We began by discussing and planning a project, and saw to it that our ideas had the support of management," says Ylva

«Clear-cut managerial decisions are really important – everyone then understands that the work has priority.»

Särnmark. "Clear-cut managerial decisions are really important – everyone then understands that the work has priority. It also helped enormously that we received funding from the European Social Fund (Objective 3) for the development programme as a whole. This meant we could bring in experts from outside, and they helped us find methods and procedures that worked for us."

Despite the support of the executive, it took time to get the ball rolling.

"The difficulty was finding time for people to work with the issue. Here, we encountered opposition from some of the managers. A frequent reaction was: 'We have our regular work to do, how are we supposed to find time for this?'"

Gender mainstreaming takes time, she admits, but in her view it is a development activity, part of the regular operation.

In the event, the employees were given little chance to opt out when the actual work finally began.

"The county governor called together all staff for an initial half-day session, and the invitation made clear that attendance was mandatory. We then appointed eleven gender mainstreaming development officers from our various areas of responsibility, most of whom were the managers in charge, and they were given extra training. They attended six seminars over a 12-month period. In between, they were

ADVICE FROM THE FIELD

In the course of its work, the JämStöd committee has interviewed a number of gender equality strategists about their practical work with gender mainstreaming. Below is the advice they offer to others involved in the same task.

Management

- Make sure management takes the initiative and actively pursues the issues.
- Incorporate gender equality into the management system's policy documents.
- Make sure that top management expressly supports the work and requires the organisation to take part.
- Don't start work until you have sufficient expertise and the backing of management.
- Make sure the individual managers assume their share of the responsibility for gender equality issues in the organisation's ongoing work.
- If you have not been issued with a clear mandate by top management, try to obtain one.

The process

- Use a sound educational approach, with many credible examples and good practices. That makes people interested!
- Build up a support organisation for the work.
- Draw up a good plan with measurable/quantifiable goals.
- Training is essential. Use your gender equality experts.
- Set aside resources in the form of time, money and people.
- Work on attitudes.
- Take small steps that constantly improve the situation.
- Begin by analysing a limited part of the operation. That makes the task more manageable.
- Make sure that everyone is involved in the process.
- Create scope for discussion – most people appreciate that.
- Document what you do, so that your work leaves a mark and does not simply remain a pleasant exchange of views.
- Make sure your working group possesses the right skills for the job in hand.
- Draw on your own and others' gender equality experts for assistance.
- Make sure everyone gets the same basic training, so that no-one 'owns' the issue more than anyone else. Then choose a starting point for the work that feels important, and let the change process take time. People need to think things through.
- Initiate training and forums for discussion for both managers and other staff.

given homework to do together with their staff group.”

Getting the message across to the man-

agers was essential, she says, which meant the seminars had to be of high quality. If the managers were not favourably dis-

Your own role

- Make sure you have a clear and realistic idea of what is to be achieved.
- Be objective and take a practical view. Things don't always work out as planned, but often work fairly well nevertheless.
- Don't fall into the trap of trying to change the whole world. Build on the mandate you have been given and do your best. Don't give up when the going gets tough.
- See to it that you receive training yourself, and bring values out into the open – both your own and those found in the organisation.
- Dare to focus on yourself. Change starts with you.
- Be open to different solutions. No single answer is correct.
- Find out what drives the organisation. What can gender mainstreaming do for your particular agency?
- Don't spend too much time on people who don't want to take part. Instead, focus on those who do.
- Accept that the work never ends – the idea is for it to become part of the agency's everyday activities.
- Make sure you have fun, too. Gender mainstreaming is not boring. Have a 'kick-off' session with a good speaker.
- Don't take opposition personally.

Follow-up

- Remember that the auditors are your best friends. They can establish checkpoints as part of the operational audit, to determine progress.
- Make sure that top management demands results and makes use of them.

Looking ahead

- See to it that gender equality awareness/skills are counted as a qualification when new managers are recruited.
- Share your projects and the lessons you have learned.
- Develop assessment criteria and better tools, and make use of the statistics that will be forthcoming.
- Make sure you document the present situation. Then you will be able to see improvements, even small ones. Be proud of them!

posed and failed to see the point of the project, the work undertaken in their particular area would not go well.

The seminar participants were required to do valuation exercises and learn how to analyse their activities.

Subsequently, when they moved on to their working groups, they focused on a particular area of activity and acquired some totally new insights. Support to businesses, for instance, was largely granted to male entrepreneurs. Homes for substance abusers had environments that seldom suited women. And those who worked with family law came to realise that they gratuitously focused more attention on men.

Today, the work is progressing. The gender equality plan has been revised, and management has produced some important basic principles for work in this field that in practice amount to a strategic policy document.

“No-one disputes the need for a gender equality perspective any more, and it has now become part of our regular operational follow-up,” says Ylva Särnmark.

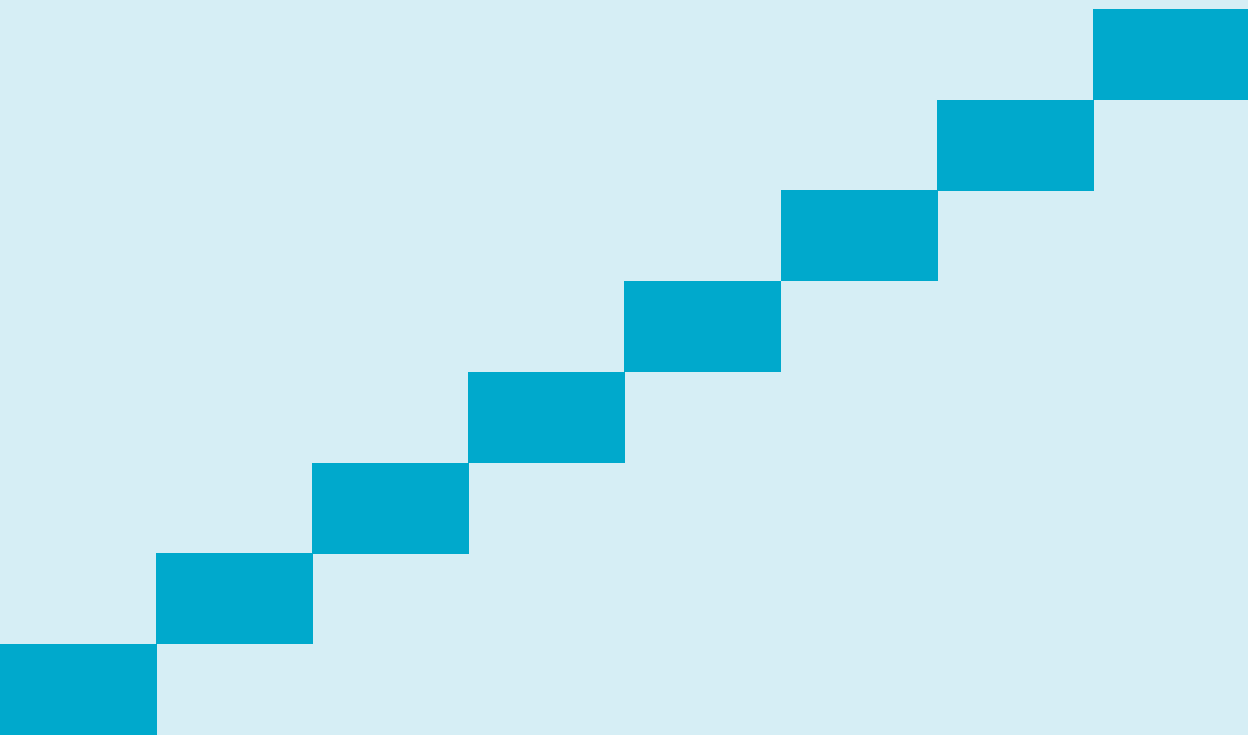
«The seminars had to be of high quality. If the managers were not favourably disposed and failed to see the point of the project, the work undertaken in their particular area would not go well.»

Methods and models

The task of tackling and changing core activities will require efficient working models and methods if it is to succeed. Gender mainstreaming is a long-term development process that will not have full effect until it becomes a systematic part of the operation. One of the aims of the JämStöd committee, therefore, has been to develop and test methods that can help in this endeavour.

Below, we present what we believe to be the most useful methods and working models. All have been tested in agency operations and are specifically designed to serve as an aid in conducting gender analyses, developing action programmes and following up activities.

All methods and working models are accompanied by detailed recommendations and advice in the form of a step-by-step guide, set out in a parallel book, *The Gender Mainstreaming Manual* (JämStöds Praktika, SOU 2007:15).



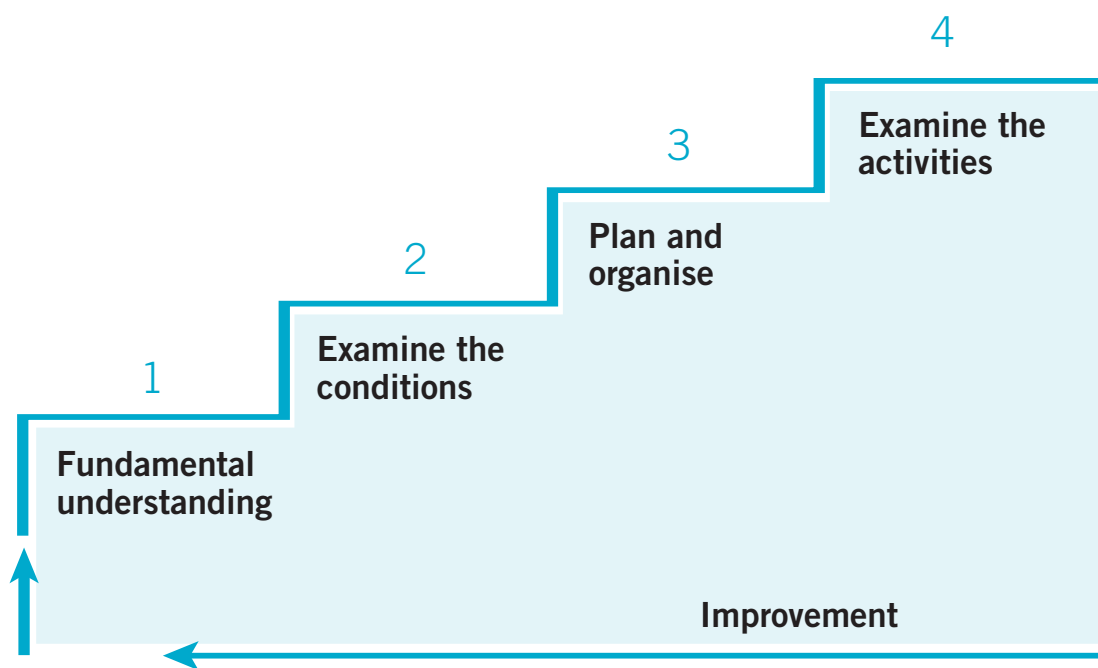
Procedure for sustainable gender mainstreaming – ‘The Ladder’

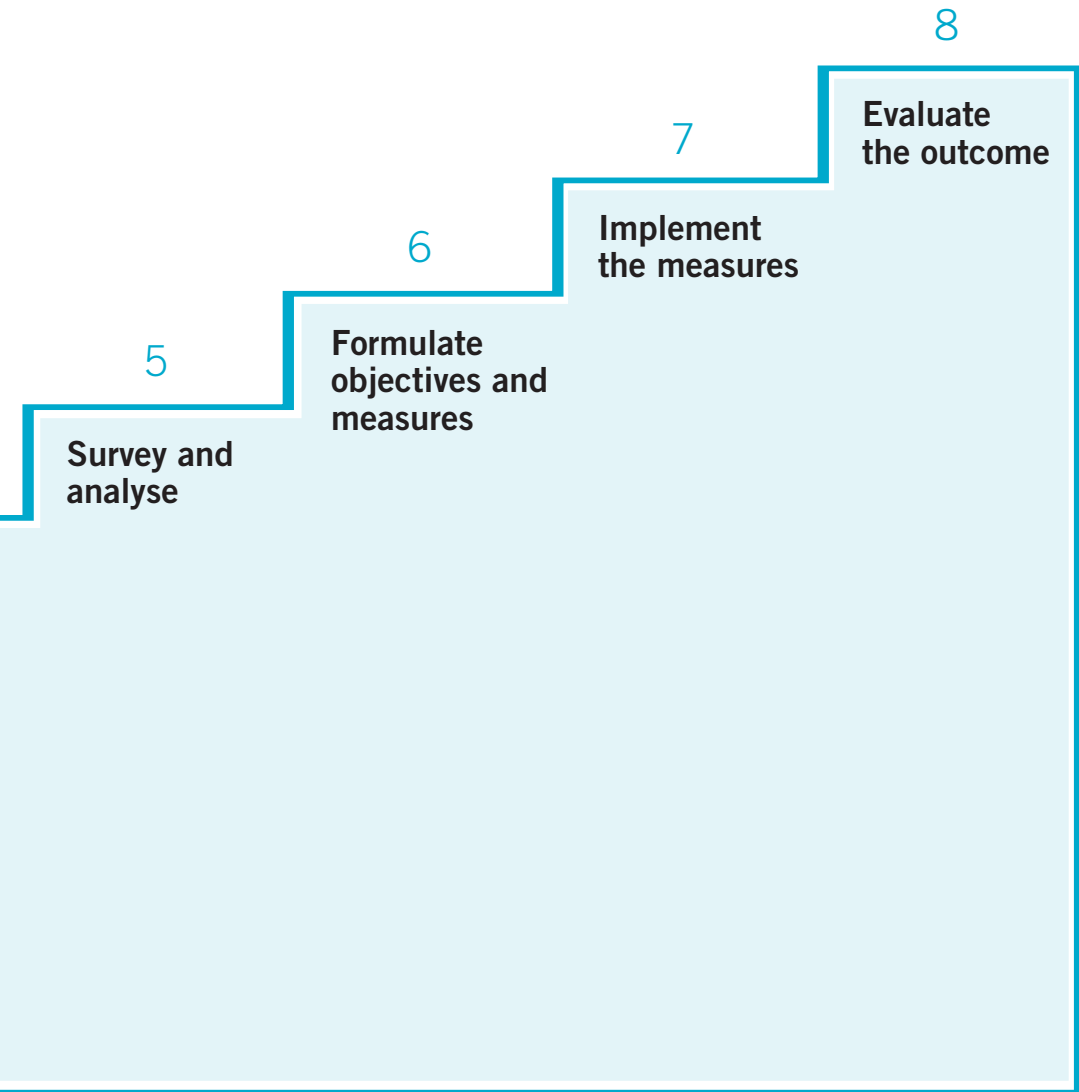
If work on gender mainstreaming is to be sustainable and effective in the long term, it must be systematically integrated into the agency’s regular management system.

We have developed a model for how the work should be organised with this goal in mind. The structure or procedure in-

involved, called ‘The Ladder’, is one that we have found to be effective in the practical mainstreaming process.

Below, we describe the various steps in the Ladder model and also which of JämStöd’s tools are appropriate in each case.





Step **1** 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Fundamental understanding

Before gender mainstreaming work begins, all staff must acquire a basic understanding of Swedish gender equality policy and the gender mainstreaming strategy. The training they receive should encompass gender equality and gender theory, Swedish gender equality policy and the mainstreaming strategy. They will then know more about how the organisation works and this will hopefully lead to a heightened awareness of gender issues and greater interest in them. Management, too, needs to acquire knowledge in this area in order to reach decisions on the future course of the work.

Step 1 **2** 3 4 5 6 7 8

Examine the conditions

In Step 2, the agency will need to look at the conditions for change, the advantages of mainstreaming gender into the operation, and whether the will exists. This can be done by seeking the answers to the following questions.

What characterises a gender-equal operation? What would it be like? Do we share the same picture?

What are the benefits of gender-equal activities? How will gender mainstreaming improve our operation? What do our customers stand to gain? In what ways will it affect our operation? How will it affect our target groups?

Where there's a will there's a way – do staff and management actually want to create a gender-equal operation? What can be of help in this endeavour? What obstacles are there?

The JämStöd tools for Step 2

■ STUDY THE OPERATION

This method allows you to examine the operation from a gender equality perspective. It is brief and straightforward, and a good place to start before you get involved in more advanced, systematic gender analyses.

The method is divided into two parts: a review of previous efforts and a number of check questions concerning the relationship between the organisation and the gender equality objectives.

The method provides:

- a focus on previous gender equality work
- an idea of how the operation can contribute to the goal of greater gender equality.

■ THE GENDER-EQUAL OPERATION

'The Gender-Equal Operation' is a method that gives you a collective picture of what an operation emphasising gender equality might look like in your particular case. You might also like to check the extent to which people in the organisation are willing to work with the issue. The method can serve as an initial move aimed at motivating staff to work with gender mainstreaming.

The method provides:

- a common understanding of what a gender-equal operation can be like
- a chance for you to identify both obstacles and what can help the development effort
- a chance for participants to reflect on their personal attitudes to a gender-equal operation.

■ STUDY THE OPERATIONAL PROCESSES

‘Study the Operational Processes’ is a way of examining whether the agency contributes to gender imbalances or inequalities. By processes we mean a task in the overall operation. This method is fast and fairly superficial, centring on the need to identify which processes affect gender equality.

The method provides:

- a quick analysis of an operation process from a gender equality perspective
- an aid in detecting and preventing the risk of inequalities in the operation
- proposals for action to enhance gender equality in the process.

Step 1 2 **3** 4 5 6 7 8

Plan and organise

In Step 3, management takes responsibility for planning and setting objectives for the gender mainstreaming work. This includes providing directives on how the work is to be organised. The success factors described in the METS model can be an aid in this respect.

The JämStöd tools for Step 3

■ CHECKLIST FOR PLANNING AND ORGANISING THE DEVELOPMENT WORK – METS

The checklist represents a model for work organisation. The following question should be asked:

Objectives and other forms of management and control – is there a directive from the

top? Have we set targets for our mainstreaming work? How is the work evaluated? Have we allocated resources? Have we introduced the work into the agency’s follow-up system?

Training – have we planned training in gender theory and gender analysis methodology?

Methods – are methods and procedures in place for our gender mainstreaming work?

Support and coordination – how do we coordinate our gender mainstreaming work? How do we manage strategic development? How do we provide support to our staff?

The METS model contains a checklist and a self-assessment test.

The method provides:

- An overall picture of what is needed to organise the gender mainstreaming work
- A collective picture of the present situation in the organisation and of how the work can be carried forward
- A basis for planning how to lead and organise the gender mainstreaming effort.

Step 1 2 3 **4** 5 6 7 8

Examine the activities

The next step is to survey and compile the organisation’s activities and operational goals as a basis for decisions on what is to be analysed or improved. Which operational decisions affect women and men? How can our activities help fulfil the aims of gender equality policy? The methods in this step are designed to raise awareness about how agency activities can contribute to fulfilment of the gender equality policy objectives.

The JämStöd tools for Step 4

■ JÄMKART

The JämKART (Gender Equality Surveying) method provides a quick picture of how a given operation/activity affects gender equality, and also an assessment of the progress made so far. In addition, it gives people the chance to suggest improvements, which can then be incorporated into an action plan for gender mainstreaming. JämKART can further be used to take stock of the organisation's activities when the time comes to choose and prioritise deeper forms of gender analysis.

The aim is to provide a general picture of which agency activities are of importance for gender equality, the extent to which the operation is already helping to fulfil gender equality policy objectives, and what improvements need to be introduced if these objectives are to be met.

The method provides:

- a general idea of the activity's importance for gender equality
- a brief picture of how the activity affects the gender equality policy objectives
- an assessment of the potential for improving gender equality in the activity concerned
- proposals for improvement.

■ JÄMKAS BAS

The JämKAS Bas method has features that properly belong to Step 4, but since it involves more than just a survey, we have chosen to present it in conjunction with the next step.

PERFORMING A GENDER ANALYSIS

A distinction is usually made between gender analyses and gender impact assessments. Analysing gender impact involves using statistics and other data disaggregated by sex to describe the situations of women and men respectively.

A gender analysis involves examining an operation or activity on the basis of gender-specific statistics and other data placed in relation to gender equality policy objectives. A prerequisite for the performance of such an analysis is a basic understanding of Swedish gender equality policy.

Briefly, the gender analysis process can be described as follows:

Inventory – Taking stock of the present operation/activity.

Survey – The current situation of women and men.

Analysis – How the operation/activity affects women and men respectively.

Objectives – What the position of women and men should be in the future.

Action – What we will be doing to move from the present situation to the desired goal.

Survey and analyse

It is here that the work of surveying and analysing an operation at a deeper level really begins. How are we working at present? What happens if we make a point of considering the needs of both women and men in our decisions? Will there be any difference?

Here, we survey and analyse how the agency conducts its activities from a gender equality viewpoint by answering the following questions.

- Target group – Which are the target groups for our activities?
- Survey – What is their gender distribution? How are resources distributed by gender? Who represents the norm in the operation?
- Analyse – What gender patterns emerge? What are the implications for women and men respectively, as a group?

The JämStöd tools for Step 5

■ JÄMKAS PLUS

JämKAS (Gender Equality Survey–Analysis–Conclusions)

JämKAS Plus is a method that enables you to analyse a specific gender pattern. It can be useful for bringing out the gender equality perspective in connection with a particular issue. Examples of gender patterns that you might want to investigate include the uneven allocation of development funding, the fact that more women than men apply for a particular type of benefit, or the fact that more boys than girls profit from a public measure of some kind.

Using this method, you can examine whether the gender pattern in question rep-

resents a gender equality problem. The method also helps you to choose which measures and initiatives are required to combat and prevent gender inequality.

The method provides:

- an analysis of a gender pattern, based on gender equality principles
- an aid in choosing actions and initiatives that combat and prevent gender inequality
- proposals for measures to enhance gender equality in the operation.

■ THE 4R METHOD

The 4R method is used as an aid in the survey and analysis of a given operation from a gender equality perspective. It provides a general picture of how the operation is run and financed at the present time and of what changes are required to meet the differing needs of women and men. The focus is on female and male representation in the various parts of the operation, and on how agency resources are distributed between the sexes. The survey seeks to answer the question: Who gets what and on what terms? The analysis answers the question: How can we improve matters?

The method provides:

- information about gender patterns in the organisation in terms of representation and resources
- a chance to analyse any gender patterns that may have been detected
- proposals for action.

■ JÄMKAS BAS

JämKAS (Gender Equality Survey–Analysis–Conclusions)

JämKAS Bas is a method for systematically analysing an operation from a gender equality perspective and choosing a strategic area to focus on at a deeper level. The method is divided into different parts: inventory, survey, analysis and action.

JämKAS Bas is our most comprehensive method for analysing an organisation's activities, and is an appropriate tool for pursuing ongoing, systematic gender mainstreaming work.

The method provides:

- an analysis of the operation/activity based on gender equality principles
- a basis for choosing the most relevant area to work with
- proposals for measures to enhance gender equality in the operation.

■ PROCESS MAPPING

This method enables you to analyse parts of the operation from a gender equality perspective. You begin by identifying and listing what you are doing and how you are doing it. You then look at ways in which your processes can help achieve the gender equality policy objectives.

By process we mean a sequence of events, a particular stage in an operation. A process has several different components, such as operational planning or the assessment of applications or cases.

The method is divided into different parts: inventory, the identification of traps and gender patterns, and proposals both for

improvements and for the development of an action plan.

The method provides:

- an analysis of a process from a gender equality perspective
- an aid in detecting and preventing the risk of gender inequalities in the operation
- proposals for action to enhance gender equality in the operation/activity.

Step 1 2 3 4 5 **6** 7 8

Formulate objectives and measures

Once the gender analyses have been completed, it is time to produce an action plan based on them by formulating objectives, indicators and measures for the development of a more gender-equal operation. This will also allow you to assess whether the measures concerned lead to enhanced gender equality.

You can plan improvements by answering the following question:

- Objectives – What do we want to change? Do we need to formulate new objectives? Can we improve the objectives already in place?
- Indicators – How can we effectively measure our actions? Are the indicators of use in evaluating outcomes?
- Action – What should we do? How do we do it? How do we measure progress?

The JämStöd tools for Step 6

The same as for Step 5: JämKAS Plus, The 4R Method, JämKAS Bas and Process Mapping.

Steå 1 2 3 4 5 6 **7** 8

Implement the measures

The agency now goes ahead and implements the measures. Here, management must arrive at a clear decision on what is to be done and by whom. The time has finally come to create a more gender-equal operation.

Step 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **8**

Evaluate the outcome

This step enables management to evaluate progress from a gender equality viewpoint. It makes sure that the results are followed up, and evaluates the outcome by answering questions such as the following:

- Follow-up – Have we achieved our objectives? What were the results of our work? How do we assess the quality of what we did?
- Evaluation – What lessons can we learn? How do we make positive changes last? What can we learn from changes for the worse? What is the next step?
- Disseminate results – How do we disseminate the outcome and the lessons learned throughout the organisation? How do we make the outcome sustainable? How do we celebrate our successes?

The JämStöd tools for Step 8

■ JÄMUR – A METHOD FOR EVALUATING OUTCOMES

JämUR (Gender Equality Outcome Evaluation) helps you evaluate the results of the regular operation from a gender equality perspective. You are then in a position to propose improvements and offer feedback to those undertaking the operation. We recommend that you use this tool when working with JämKAS Bas as well.

The method provides:

- a chance to measure the impact of the operation on women and men respectively
- a chance to link operational costs to women and men respectively
- proposals for improvements aimed at enhancing gender equality in the operation.



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ISBN 91-38-22730-5 ISSN 0375-250X