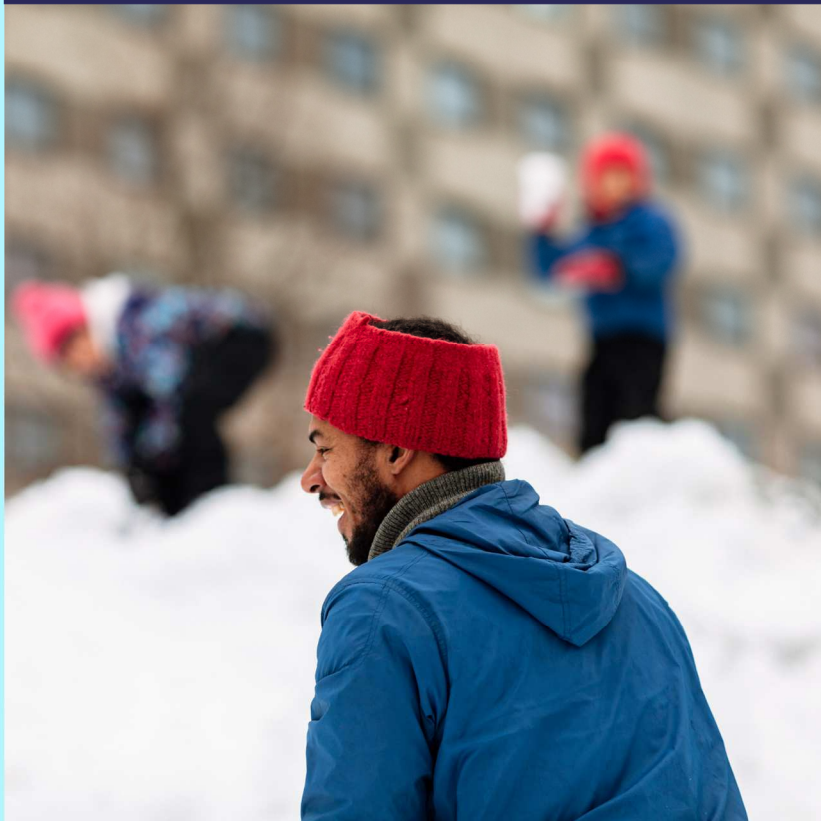




PACT - Partnership Achieving Communities Tackling early school leaving.

Cross-disciplinary approaches to
early school leaving:
A description of the
Community Co-op model
with homework support as a case



Contents

1. Introduction	Feil! Bokmerke er ikke definert.
The challenge	4
2. PACT project	5
Early school leaving	6
3. Theoretical background.....	7
Co-creation	9
4. The Community Co-op model.....	11
5 . Homework support project - the Community Co-op model in practice.....	13
Homework support in Sagene District.....	13
Commencement of the homework support programme.....	14
6. Organisation of homework support through the Community Co-op model.....	14
The role of public sector employees.....	15
Homework support assistant:	15
Politicians and management.....	16
The different stages in the homework support work:	16
7. Experiences with homework support in Sagene District	18
Challenges and the way forward.....	19
Reference list	21

The development of this publication and the PACT- project was funded by the

Erasmus+ program (project number 017-1-NO01-KA201-034200) (<https://www.pactesl.eu/>).



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

A description of the Community Co-Op model with homework support as a case study

1. Introduction

The accumulation of challenging living conditions in areas in and around large cities is a challenge in a number of countries in Europe. Since the 1990s, public authorities in Norway have initiated interdisciplinary programs such as area improvement or area intervention in demarcated, urban areas, where the goal is to reduce social and physical challenges (Barstad, 2008, p4). Some characteristics of these areas may include high levels of child poverty, unemployment and poor physical standards in outdoor areas (Ruud, Barlindhaug, Staver. 2019). Many of the inhabitants of these districts have an immigrant background (Ministries, 2020). The reason for more countries initiating such area improvements is the assumption that the quality of living and the local environment is connected with the opportunity for social mobility and general quality of life (Ruud, Barlindhaug, Staver. 2019 p14).

As (Brattbakk, Andersen, 2017 vii), writes

“The neighbourhood, with its institutions and other social parties (such as friends and other role models) is an arena for learning and communication where social relationships and networks are developed, maintained, expanded or broken. The neighbourhood thus represents an opportunity to develop various forms of capital - social, cultural and economic - that children and young people can either profit from or that can be a hindrance for them.

The challenge

Approximately 45,000 people live in Sagene District and with a circumference of 3.1 km, this represents a very high population density. With 2098 municipal homes, Sagene is the district in Oslo with the highest proportion of municipal housing. There are few large family apartments, both in municipal and private developments (Oslo Municipality, 2020). This makes cramped living a major challenge. Sagene is also a district with large differences in terms of levels of education and levels of income (Public Health Profile, 2020). There has been strong population growth in recent years, linked to more housing construction and high price growth for housing in the district (Oslo Municipality, 2019). The consequences of this are that demographic and socio-economic development is moving in the direction of a divided population, where access to goods is very unevenly distributed. Many of the inhabitants of municipal housing are dependent on social benefits to survive, and as many as 21.3 per cent of the children in the district live in low-income families (SSB, 2020). As the type of housing is of a temporary nature, this is also an unstable form of housing. In 1997, Sagene District received funding from the action programme

for Oslo Inner East, the government and the municipality's joint effort to work on challenging living conditions in the districts in the inner east. The investment was especially aimed at conditions for raising children as well as health and living environment work in the municipal housing developments. At this time, there were major challenges with the living environment in these developments in the district, and the families reported insecurity, substance abuse problems in the stairwells, common areas and a generally poor living environment.

The focus areas required that we work in interdisciplinary and holistic way and that organisation was flexible and able to organise working groups on issues. There were political guidelines that we should work with the **residents** to create positive changes in the living environment. Working with these issues on the residents' terms meant that the district's employees had to find new ways of working. The service locations in the district had to develop systems and structures to work across disciplines and with new partners than those had previous experience with. The district established residential and local environment teams where the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration, the housing office's living environment team, Boligbygg, Ungdomstiltakene, the Unit for culture and the local Environment, the schools, SALTO and the district police collaborated to improve the living environment in the district.

After the initiative ended, the district continued this way of working within ordinary budget frameworks, and by applying for public grants for individual projects and working groups. An approach to social work was therefore developed in the wake of this area initiative, where the residents' resources, initiative, motivation and commitment are an important prerequisite for the development of measures and projects. This report is a description of a form of cooperation based on practical work that has been carried out by several of the preventive services in Sagene District over the past 20 years. The district calls this working method the *Community Co-Op model*. One of the measures that was developed in this work was parent-driven homework support.

2. PACT project

Sagene District and Nordpolen school participate in the EU project Partnership Achieving Communities Tackling early school leaving (PACT) together with the cities of Rotterdam and Riga. Through PACT, the three applicant cities will describe different methods that can prevent early school leaving. All three approaches aim to strengthen the student's sense of belonging to the school.

The purpose of the Sagene District project is to *strengthen community interventions* which can promote and reduce early school leaving by coordination between schools, homes, public services and the local community. We applied for this project because we wanted to share our experiences with the Community Co-op model, as a way to increase participation and mobilisation of resources in a neighbourhood. In the PACT project, Sagene District collaborates with Nordpolen school in the sub-district of Torshov, which is one of the areas with the most municipal housing in the district. A large proportion of children who live in these developments have parents with an immigrant background.

Nordpolen school is a primary and secondary school with 670 students. The school is an important institution in the local community, as this is where children spend most of their time. It is also one of the few statutory services with which all families have a connection to over time. Nordpolen school has therefore been an important partner in the district's work with families exposed to challenging living conditions. Working with social equalization and the improvement of living conditions requires an interdisciplinary approach and the opportunity to work on a long-term basis, as the reasons for the challenging living conditions challenges are complex. With our participation in the PACT project, we want to show an example of how strengthening the role of the local community in the school can have positive ripple effects. We will describe an approach where we have collaborated with parent groups in the municipal housing developments in the district to develop provisions and services. In this report, the district wishes to describe a working practice and the prerequisites for working in this way. This includes what it takes to use the Community Co-op model, the situations in which it is suitable and what is required of the various parties in the collaboration. The Community Co-op model and its effects and benefits are illustrated through homework support as a case.

Early school leaving

Early school leaving is a challenge throughout Europe, and there is broad agreement that there are both individual and structural reasons why young people do not complete schooling, and that initiatives should be directed at several focus areas. The EU has several strategies related to the prevention of early school leaving. In recent years, there has been a focus on how school can become a more *open arena*, a method called the *Whole school approach*. The motivation for this has been the idea that the child's general well-being is an important starting point for learning, and that the school must include and be open to participation from the local community and parents and work purposefully with families with challenging living conditions. This means that it is the system that must adapt to a heterogeneous parent group, and that it is the school's role to reach all groups. (Downes, Nairz-Wirth, Rusinaitė, 2017). It has also been documented that some of the language used in the school system makes it easier for some parent groups to settle in than others; this applies especially to parents with higher education. (Hornby & Lafaele (2011: p. 41). El-Hadioui (2011) also argues that children with multicultural backgrounds and parents with little or no education are more likely to experience different expectations from, school, home and the street and that divergent expectations can create challenges for the child's sense of belonging to the school, as they constantly have to adapt to different norms.

The EU has a goal of reducing early school leaving to less than ten per cent. There are large differences in the early school leaving rate internally in Europe (Downes, Nairz-Wirth, Rusinaitė, 2017). Sagene District also has completion and passing as one of its most important strategic goals; approximately 31 per cent of the young people in the district do not complete upper secondary school over a five-year period (Public Health Profile, 2020). The risk factors for early school leaving on a national level are the same as they are locally in the district, where results in primary school are the variables that are most important. There is also a direct correlation between low grades in primary school and the level of education of the parents. The consequences of not completing and passing are greater than they were before, as there are fewer unskilled jobs and there is a greater chance of a weaker connection to working life if you

do not complete upper secondary school (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2019).

An analysis of the early school leaving statistics in the Sagene district shows that the risk factors for early school leaving in the district are:

- Poor school performance when completing upper secondary school
- Students who have parents without formal education
- Students who have Norwegian as a second language

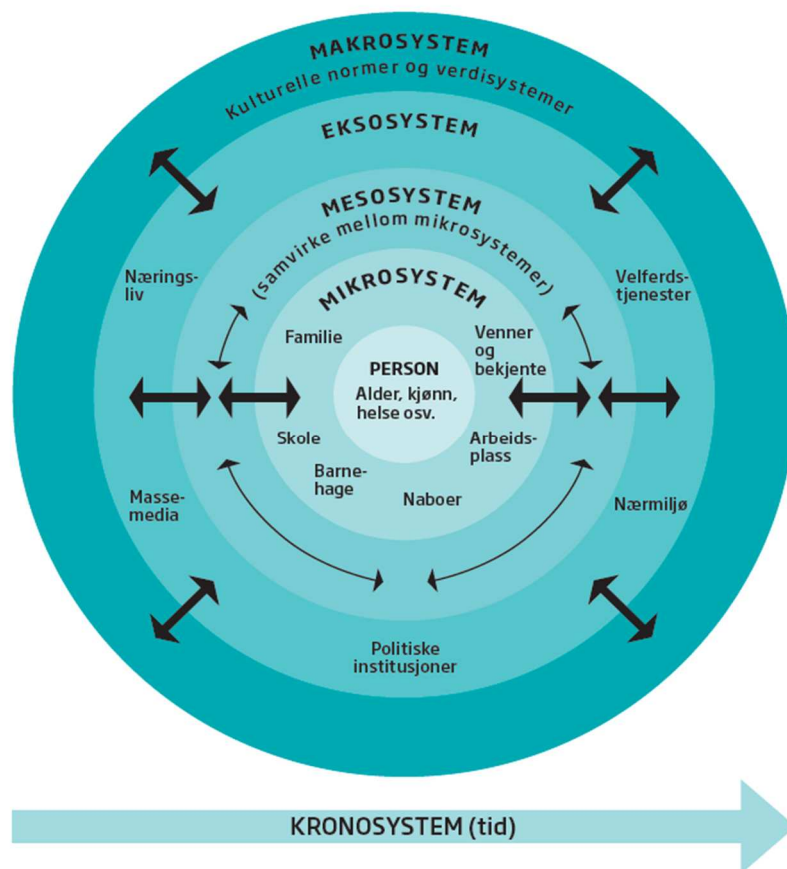
It is well documented that children who grow up in low-income families have less chance of completing upper secondary school (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2019).

3. Theoretical background

In the work with the Community Co-op model, the resources in the local community and the strengthening of neighbourhoods have been the motives for the work. A residential area can affect young people's opportunities later in life. In the report *The significance of the place of upbringing for children and young people* (2017), researchers have discussed whether children who grow up in areas with a high degree of resources bring these advantages into adulthood.

Here they write:

“... young people from poor and vulnerable families are in a particularly vulnerable position, and qualities in arenas outside the home can conceivably be more decisive for their potential for opportunity. The secondary socialisation arenas - such as schools and neighbourhoods - can potentially have greater significance in both positive and negative directions, and thus potentially play a stronger compensatory role (Brattbakk, Andersen, p. 2, 2017).



Circular diagram:

Starting at inner ring, reading clockwise on each ring

INDIVIDUAL, age, sex health etc.

MICROSYSTEM, friends and acquaintances, workplace, neighbours, school, family

MESOSYSTEM (cooperation between microsystems)

EXOSYSTEM, social services, neighbours, local environment, political institutions, mass media, industry

MACROSYSTEM, cultural norms and ideologies

Figure 1: Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of development (Bronfenbrenner, 2005, Norwegian Directorate of Health, 2015)

When the district has worked on the local environment and living environment, it is precisely the neighbourhood's compensatory role that we have been concerned with. In the work on the Community Co-op model, we have also relied on Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of development on how the arenas the child moves between affect the child's development, and why the interaction between these is important. In these models, the focus is on the child and not just the student, and that the child's development is society's responsibility. The arenas the child is found in on a daily basis are in the innermost circle, the Microsystem, these are places such as the neighbourhood, leisure activities, family and school; the second circle, the Mesosystem, is the interaction between the various arenas. Laws, rules and the framework of a society constitute the outermost circles. In ecological development theory, children and young

people are more likely to acquire behaviour if the same norms apply to several developmental areas in life, for example in the home, school and street, which then represent the Micro and Mesosystem (Norwegian Directorate of Health 2015). Later in the text, we will explain how the Community Co-op model and the homework support program can contribute to the distance between the various arenas.

Co-creation

In the preparation of public services, the literature refers to various paradigms concerning the degree of *public involvement, roles and decision-making authority*. There are three paradigms in particular that are described. The Danes describe these as municipality 1.0, municipality 2.0 and municipality 3.0. The characteristics of municipality 1.0 are a system in which the public sector acts as the highest authority, and provisions and services have already been defined. The population is defined as clients and users. The second paradigm, municipality 2.0, involves thinking of the residents as customers, service recipients and that one must ensure that the municipality delivers the best service. Employees must be service-minded and deliver what the residents need (Guribye 2016). Municipality 3.0 is about using the resources outside the municipality and looking at the residents as equals. The public sector and inhabitants define challenges and solutions together. It is the community that is important. Municipality 3.0 then involves a form of co-creation of services together with the residents.

Co-creation can be defined in many ways, but what all the definitions have in common is that there is value creation between the one offering a service/provision and users/residents (Guribye, 2016).

In literature studies on co-creation, concepts such as co-production are used, as well as radical or conservative. Whether projects and initiatives are defined as one or the other depends on the point at which residents are involved in the process and the kind of role they have (Voorberg, Tummers, Bekkers, 2014). The public sector can play many different roles in this type of collaboration. In this text we argue that the Community Co-op model is close to what is called co-production, as it is about entering into an equal partnership with civil society and creating something together. Co-production is considered a more radical form of co-creation, as residents, teams and associations are involved in the whole process; they can be both initiators and partners (Røiseland, Lo, 2019)

Figure 1. *Characteristics of the distinction between co-creation and co-production* (KS, Kobro, 2018, 13)

Co-creation	Co-production
	Equal and continuous cooperation to develop, implement and evaluate welfare benefits in a single chain or spiral movement

Residents are invited as active and authoritative partners, together with public authorities and/or private actors	that is repeated and which is either carried out one-to-one, or as several to several people and actors together
A dialogue across differences that creates greater insight, understanding and learning in situations characterised by equality	A permanent time perspective, without extraordinary project character
Often ad hoc where partners are invited into different phases of development work	Can be implemented at individual, organisational and societal level
Addresses and converts power and control to a minor extent.	Addresses power and governance and will often redefine roles and relationships
With roots in research on business development, marketing and communication strategy where consumers/customers are transformed from passive to active co-creators of products and services	Is a form of production, more than a form of "Hearing" With roots in sociology and research on networks and civil society/voluntary sector

As the overview shows, co-production is more extensive, as it is often a matter of permanent collaboration with residents. This requires both a systematic change and a change in the understanding of roles for employees. The difference is that it is a form of production, and suitable for use on initiatives that are to be permanent, and not just projects. It is then far more than a form of collaboration, and requires both willingness and ability for a municipality to take on a new role, which can be demanding (Kobro, 2018)

Different rational and explanatory models are used as a basis in theory on the public sector's motivation for citizen participation. One of these explanatory models is that the involvement of residents leads to the users receiving more adapted services, which in turn creates a more *efficient* public sector. In addition to the issue of efficiency, increased democratisation is also an explanation that has become more prevalent in the last decade. Here, participation and the

desire to *mobilise more residents* are highlighted as important perspectives. The goal here is not just reduced expenses, but solutions that take more account of the diversity of the population (Guribye, 2016). Solutions like this can lead to innovation.

“Co-creative social innovation is about inviting to equal collaborative partnerships where people who have unaddressed social problems, people who are close to them (relatives), and people who have different practical perspectives on working with the problem, can make independent contributions to define, design, introduce, and drive solutions together with professionals, administrative bodies and political authorities”.

Research shows that there are some key factors that influence co-creation projects with residents, and whether these projects are successful, some of these factors are:

- **residents' ownership and affiliation**
- **the degree of trust between the actors in the co-creation project**
- **residents' willingness to participate in the project (Voorberg, Bekkers, Tummers, 2015 p. 17).**

With regard to the municipality and the public sector, the following factors are pointed out as essential for the implementation of co-creation as a form of governance:

- **The organisation's risk aversion**
- **employees' attitudes towards other types of expertise, such as experiential expertise**
- **structures and organisation**
- **management's control signals (Voorberg, Bekkers, Tummers, 2015).**

According to Kobro (2019), some of the challenges with co-creation are that the responsibility of roles can be unclear and that the real transaction costs become high as the development of projects can be time-consuming and lack foundation.

4. The Community Co-op model

Sagene District has worked with the *Community Co-op* model as a working method for many years, especially within social housing work. Political and administrative guidelines for creating services with residents have given employees room to develop methods for interaction with residents. This is stated in the district's strategic platform. With the work of the living environment staff, the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration office has been in the driver's seat in this regard, but other services like Youth services in the district have followed.

The *Community Co-op model* is based on a fundamental attitude that all the residents of the district have resources, and that these resources are important for creating a good living and local environment in the district. The diversity of parents and the characteristics of the local community are used to develop initiatives in a local community. When working groups have used the *Community Co-op model* in the district, the starting point has therefore been that we should

use the expertise that already exists in the local community. At the core of the Community Co-op model is the idea of reverse participation, namely, to change the traditional way of thinking that the residents should contribute to the municipality's processes, so that it is the district that will play a role in the residents' initiatives and practices.

The public sector does not have all the answers, and we have a lot to learn from the residents of the district. The diversity and expertise of the parties is therefore seen as a strength. An important part of the work is to facilitate that there is a flat structure, and that projects and initiatives are not begun without proper processes. The Community Co-op model involves having a close dialogue with the residents, and requires that public employees have a regular dialogue with the residents and relevant actors in the local community. The municipality's role is to inform, facilitate and administer processes for participation, by setting aside time and resources for this collaboration. Trust is an important dimension in this. When working with the Community Co-op model, the first step is to spend time getting to know the local community and establishing trust between the parties.

The residents have a great deal of influence over which initiatives are established in the local community. Everyone gets a role in the implementation and participates together in evaluations and defines the next steps. The residents help to define both the process and the solutions. This is dynamic work where the process is as important as the result, and the motivation to work in this way is not only to ensure co-determination, but the belief that the best and most effective solutions are reached together with the residents.

Working with the Community Co-op model and development of the local environment means viewing the district and the municipality as a physical place, i.e. a community, and not just an administrative organisation (Kobro, 2018). The prerequisite for working with civil society and creating services together with resource organisations in society is that the organisation is flexible and can work across disciplines. As described in the introduction, the Community Co-op model is a practice that was developed when Sagene District was to work on the living environment in municipal apartment buildings. Over a few years, this practice has led us to gain some experience in the Community Co-op model and the prerequisites for working in this way in a public organisation. These can be summarized as follows.

- Employees must be present where the target group is located, spend time and get an overview of the underlying challenges in the local community,
- The enterprise must be willing to give up defining power
- Employees must be delegated trust and responsibility to make decisions in meetings with the local population, it is important that the planning of initiatives and provisions can start quickly, while the residents are motivated
- Continuity - Employees must be able to spend time maintaining contact with key institutions and residents
- There must be flexible bureaucratic structures, so that participation is facilitated
- Anchoring in management - The organisation, and especially management, emphasises co-creation and collaboration with residents
- There must be volunteers in the neighbourhood who have the opportunity to work as volunteers

- The projects/initiatives that are developed must have ownership and internal anchoring in the organisation, so that they are sustainable over time
- The organisation must have low risk aversion, which allows for trial and error around new solutions and new, innovative ways of working

5. Homework support project - the Community Co-op model in practice

School and home collaboration is important for a child's learning process. Studies show that if parents have a positive attitude towards school, it strengthens the child's motivation, which makes the child more receptive to learning. There are three factors that are considered important when it comes to the role parents can play in their children's schooling and learning:

- Parents' education and socio-economic background
- The direct collaboration between school and home
- Parental involvement (Drugli, Nordahl, 2016, p. 10)

Voluntary organisations and individual schools have offered homework support since the nineties, but it only became a statutory right in 2010 for pupils in grades 1-4, which means that all pupils at this level are entitled to schools offering at least one hour of homework support a week. (Seeberg, Seland and Hassan, 2012). This was again changed in 2014, when the Education Act now states that schools must offer eight hours of homework support to pupils for all grades at primary school level, but that the municipalities are free to organise and distribute this (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2014).

Homework support has been established throughout Norway over the past decade in order to be able to provide more adapted training and academic support to students who, for various reasons, do not have the opportunity to receive such help at home. Most primary and lower secondary schools in Norway offer some form of homework support either at school, via AKS or through collaboration agreements with voluntary organisations such as the Norwegian Red Cross or Norwegian People's Aid (Dahl, Buland, Molden, 2007).

Research on homework support shows that part of the challenge with homework support is the goal of being for everyone, in other words a universal initiative, at the same time as it is referred to as a tool for lifting up the students who need the most support. It must therefore be a universal offer, but the prerequisite for it to contribute to social equalisation is that the students you want to reach actually participate (Seeberg, Seland and Hassan, 2014). It is in this connection that the Community Co-op model can contribute to reaching more groups, by facilitating more participation.

Homework support in Sagene District

This chapter is based on group discussions and interviews with the actors in the homework support program in Torshov, where Nordpolen school is located. In addition, the content is based on a number of articles as well as participatory observation on homework support, evaluation

meetings and a local experience conference, where the experiences with the Community Co-op model were summarised and discussions conducted on how the work with this model can be systematised and further developed.

Commencement of the homework support programme

After several large families with children moved into the municipal housing developments, there was a need for new provisions, in addition to traditional living environment work. Homework support at Torshov started in 2015 following an urgent request from parents - primarily with a Somali background. They stated that they did not have sufficient resources to help their children with their homework - something they found *difficult*. The parents felt that they needed more academic support than the homework support at school could offer, and wanted to help start, develop and run a local homework support programme. These needs were met by, among others, the leader of the housing and local environment team at the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration, who now acts as a contact person for the homework support programme on behalf of the district. In addition, a request was made by from the school.

The parents' cooperation committee, FAU, at Nordpolen school was also heavily involved. The school found that many children needed additional support for learning, and that conditions outside the school, such as overcrowding and unrest in the stairwells in some of the municipal apartment buildings, created challenges for the children's learning. Employees from Nordpolen school say that they wanted to participate and get involved in the homework support programme, as such a measure will be positive for the children's upbringing environment, in addition to the schools still having the equalisation of social differences as an important mandate. It was natural that the parents had a central role, as it was their initiative, while the district's role was to support the initiative and contribute through coordination. NAV supported the measure with some start-up funds. The district recruited homework support assistants, mainly students and pensioners, to offer academic support. In the beginning, the homework support was provided twice a week and each homework support session lasted for two hours.

Many of the retired volunteers had a background in the education sector. We also recruited students with relevant academic backgrounds. Deichman Library at Torshov provided premises free of charge, and two classrooms at Nordpolen school were also used. Two members of a local parent group were given a central role in the day-to-day operation, both in terms of facilitation and presence as well as contact with families with children, especially in the Somali environment. A teacher from Nordpolen school was given the responsibility of visiting the homework support programme annually and talking about the school and learning goals.

The homework support programme developed into a collaboration between parents in the municipal housing development, Deichman Sandaker, Nordpolen School, the FAU at Nordpolen school and Sagene District. Twice a year, all actors meet for evaluation meetings.

6. Organisation of homework support through the Community Co-op model

In this part of the text, we describe the organisation of the homework support, the framework and what the different roles in the service entail:



Parents of children participating in homework support:

The parents organise and implement activities around homework support, such as arranging the room and catering. They are involved in managing the operation and many also accompany their own children for homework support.

The role of public sector employees

Employees in the district follow up enquiries, organise network meetings and clarify budget frameworks. They detail other relevant actors, resources that can contribute to a local environment and help support the relevant initiative. Collaboration with the library in connection with homework support was important in order to gain access to good, free premises. Schools must be willing to cooperate with actors outside the education system, in order to be able to focus their efforts on the vulnerability factors that lie outside the school.

There is a regular exchange of information which means that municipal employees receive relevant information about the local environment from the residents, which in turn is relevant for the development of new accurately targeted services and provisions.

Homework support assistant:

The district recruits homework support assistants through advertising at teacher institutions and through the media. In addition to supporting and helping children and young people who

come and want help with their homework, the homework support assistants help to support the parents who are unsure of how they can help their children. The homework support workers are mainly recruited by employees in the district, but as the service has become better known, the teachers also recruit each other. One of the volunteer teachers who has been there since the start has a coordinating responsibility for the volunteers.

Politicians and management:

Administration and management give employees room to work in this way. What made work on the Community Co-op model possible is the framework that was set by the politicians, both centrally and locally, with a mandate to work actively on citizen participation.

The different stages in the homework support work:

Phases	Activity	Purpose
Documenting potential collaborative actors	The initiators make contact with relevant actors in the local community; these can be passionate people in the neighbourhood, public actors, voluntary organisations and others who may be relevant with regard to issues involved	Get an overview of resources, needs and wishes in the local community.
Collection of information	Information is sent to actors that are deemed to want to contribute. Invitations are also sent for open information meetings.	Get an overview of different interests, wishes and whether these apply to more people.
Mobilisation	Look for volunteers, help to document different actors, need for infrastructure such as premises, etc.	Get an overview of the resources available.
Exercise and practice	Design the network, create systems for the recruitment of volunteer teachers/assistants, create systems for evaluation and planning. Create shift	Create clear areas of responsibility and sustainable systems.

	schedules and practical routines and systems for operation. It is important that it is done jointly and everyone agrees on areas of responsibility	
Celebration	The school, the student and the parents invite guests to an annual graduation, where all the children receive a diploma. Employees from the district are also invited.	To create motivation among the children, and thank all the volunteers for their commitment.
Evaluation	Everyone gathers for an evaluation meeting, which follows a format created by the working groups. These summaries are given to the schools and management, this is undertaken to identify challenges and is used as a basis for reporting.	To gain a common understanding of the results and identify any challenges in the collaboration.

Methods used within the Community Co-op model

The district has found that in order to work in this way, employees must work on how to create good processes and build relationships with the residents in the district. We have used procedures such as:

- group gatherings with café dialogue
- general meetings
- planning meetings with parents
- organisation of joint events together with residents
- meetings with smaller working groups based on specific topics
- workshops designed for children and young people, so that their voices are heard
- Individual interviews - for example to recruit new volunteers

7. Homework support programme - more than just academic support for children and young people

By supporting the initiatives of the families in the district, we have experienced several positive changes in the local community. Since we started with homework support in Torshov five years ago, the relevant parent group has become more active by, among other things, planning activities for children and families together with our leisure clubs. Parents from the municipal housing developments have also worked as volunteers for many of the holiday and weekend activities for children and young people. The leaders of the leisure clubs in the district say that including the parents in the planning work is important for the participation of the children. By having established a relationship of trust between families with children and employees in the district, the district has established co-determination in practice. There are now more families who send their children to the leisure activities in the district than there were before the district started working with the Community Co-op model. Many of the parents have also established activity groups and their own forums.

Social sustainability is about creating systems that facilitate the experience of belonging to a society (National Institute of Public Health, 2020). In conversations with parents, they say that the homework support has led to them getting to know other parents. The homework support works as an open and safe place where they can ask the teachers what they are wondering about. Some of the parents say this has become important, as they have little family in Norway. Several parents find that their children have benefitted academically and that homework support has motivated the parents to start adult education.

6. Experiences with homework support in Sagene District

The volunteer teachers, many of whom are retirees, also say that they get a lot out of the homework support in Sagene District. Some of the volunteers say that they get involved in homework support because it gives them a feeling that society still needs them. The volunteers also say that one of the most important things they help with is how to understand what the exercise entails - how to solve the exercise. And that this is the cornerstone for how to continue working with schoolwork.

There are several homework support programmes in the inner city that are run by various voluntary organisations, such as the Red Cross. The special thing about the homework support programmes in Sagene District is the active role the parents have in the implementation of the initiative, and the ripple effects it has had so far such as:

- *increased awareness about the school*
- better network and
- more parental involvement

The head teachers at both Bjølsen and Nordpolen schools, which are schools with many children who participate in homework support, believe that homework support has become an important arena that reinforces the image that education and school are important. One of the head teachers finds that attendance at parent meetings and parent participation in school activities has increased since the initiative started.

Homework support began with a service for younger children, but it quickly became clear that several groups had a need for homework support. Today, there is a programme for students from first grade and until they complete upper secondary school. A total of five homework support programmes are offered each week. There are also adults who attend adult education who make use of homework support. Each year approximately 150 people are involved in homework support in addition to 30 volunteer teachers and 20 parents. On average, the district has used approximately a 20-50 per cent position for facilitating homework support in recent years.

The design and implementation of the homework support programme in Torshov is also an example of how to work on implementing two key strategies/political initiatives in the district: namely, that all students should complete and pass and that residents should be in activity, education or work. These objectives coincide with recommendations in the EU framework for a holistic approach to school and education, where strengthening the family's level of education so that they can both lift themselves up, but also have the opportunity to support children's schooling, count as important protective factors to prevent early school leaving (Downes, Nairz-Wirth, Russia, 2017)

Challenges and the way forward

When the participants have to summarise some of the challenges with the Community Co-op model and homework support, a lot of feedback relates to improving the systems for communication. The actors want better contact between the school and the homework support programme and generally a better structure for sharing information. There is also a demand for better systems for evaluation and quality assurance of the initiative with both quantitative and qualitative indicators.

The experience with homework support is that we reach many children with Norwegian as a second language and who live in municipal housing, but mostly it is girls who participate and mostly mothers who are volunteers. There is therefore a need to work more strategically to reach more of the boys. If the aim is to work preventively on early school leaving, there are also more boys than girls who do not complete upper secondary school (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2019).

In the initial phase, the Community Co-Op model may require a lot of time for informal contact and relationship building, and our experience is that it can be demanding to start with this method if a good process is not planned. We believe that building a solid network with a common goal is essential for working in this way. This finding also corresponds with the literature on co-creation (Kobro, 2018). This working method does not necessarily apply if the goal is to quickly establish an initiative. Another challenge of working in this way is that responsibilities can become unclear when there are several partners. It is therefore essential that the services which are developed are deeply rooted in residents and management and are reflected in plans and budgets.

Relationships and trust between the participants in the Community Co-op model are important when collaborating on initiatives. The residents we have worked with have had many ideas and plans for various local environment measures, and our job has been to find ways to support these initiatives. The homework support programme was set up by several different groups working together. Would the initiative have worked if it had not been volunteers who gave their time to help with homework? What if there had been no money from the government for fruit, coffee and organisation? Or what if the mothers had not contributed to preparation and organisation, or had not brought the children into the initiative at all? Had a single part of the Community Co-op model been removed, the initiative would have ceased to exist. This initiative works because the motivation of the various actors is so strong. This also coincides with the literature on co-creation projects that the actors' willingness over time is essential for success.

The homework support programme has been running in the district for five years, and has become a sustainable project because of this. To work on co-creation is to change attitudes, roles and bring new actors on board. It involves a human view that everyone wants to contribute to a good life for themselves, their family and their local environment. Combining the local community's resources in an equal collaboration between public services, schools, parents and other actors facilitates the promotion of well-being and participation in society. The public employees' job is to create systems that enable them to realise this. The municipality must not be in the driver's seat

The EU's action plan to create a more inclusive school points to the inclusion of the local community and facilitation for all parent groups as an important protective factor for working preventively against early school leaving.

As Kobro (2020 p.2 writes:

“Experiencing that one can influence the living environment and welfare development locally with relevance to one's own (or one's relatives') life, can provide both dignity and motivation for further participation.”

Several parents themselves say that the homework support programme helped them to support their children, which in turn strengthened their faith in mastery. Through running the homework support programme they also gained more influence over the local community. But does this arena have a measurable effect on the users and their schooling? Can it help users reach new heights, motivate them to stay in school? This is not something this experience summary can measure, but feedback from users and volunteers suggests that it makes a difference, and that this arena helps users stay motivated in their schoolwork.



Reference list

Barstad, A (2008) *Områdesatsinger: målinger av effekter*. Husbanken East

Available from:

http://biblioteket.husbanken.no/arkiv/dok/3187/omradesatsinger_effekter.pdf

Brattbakk, I & Andersen, B. (2017). Oppvekststedets betydning for barn og unge. Nabolaget som ressurs og utfordring.

Retrieved from:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/319101878_Oppvekststedets_betydning_for_barn_og_unge_Nabolaget_som_ressurs_og_utfordring

Brattbakk, I. & Wessel, T. (2017) Nabolagets effekt: hva er problematisk med geografisk ulikhet? I Ljunggren, J. (red): Oslo – ulikhetenes by. Oslo: Cappelen Damm Akademisk

Dahl, T., Buland, T. and Hugaas Molden, T. (2007). Kartlegging av utbredelse av leksehjelp i norsk skole, Trondheim: SINTEF Teknologi og samfunn, Gruppe for skole- og utdanningsforskning.

Departmentene (2020) Like muligheter i Oppveksten: Regjeringens samarbeidsstrategi for barn og ungdom i lavinntektsfamilier (2020–2023)

Retrieved from:

https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/bb45eed3479549719fb14c78eba35bd4/strategi-mot-barnefattigdom_web.pdf

Downes, P.; Nairz-Wirth, E.; Rusinaitė, V., Structural Indicators for Inclusive Systems in and around Schools, NESET II report, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2017. Doi: 10.2766/200506.

Available from:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/313442592_Structural_indicators_for_inclusive_systems_in_and_around_schools

Drugli, M.B & Nordahl, T (2016) Research article: Samarbeidet mellom hjem og skole, En oppsummering av aktuell kunnskap av hva som skaper et godt samarbeid mellom hjem og skole

El Hadioui, I. (2011). *Hoe de straat de school binnendringt. Denken vanuit de pedagogische driehoek van de thuiscultuur, de schoolcultuur en de straatcultuur.*
https://www.scienceguide.nl/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/el-hadioui-i-2011-hoe-de-sstraatde-school-binnendringt_deel2_def.pdf

Norwegian Institute of Public Health(2019) Public Health Profile for Sagene District, 2019 Oslo: Norwegian Institute of Public Health
Available from:
<file:///C:/Users/BSA142~1/AppData/Local/Temp/60/Folkehelseprofil-2019-nb-03-Oslo.pdf>

Norwegian Institute of Public Health (2020) Public Health Profile District Sagene, 2020. Oslo: Norwegian Institute of Public Health
Available from:
<file:///C:/Users/BSA142~1/AppData/Local/Temp/30/Folkehelseprofil-2020-nb-030103-Bydel%20Sagene.pdf>

Norwegian Directorate of Health (2015) Trivsel i skolen, Oslo: Norwegian Directorate of Health
Available from:
https://www.helsedirektoratet.no/rapporter/trivsel-i-skolen/Trivsel%20i%20skolen.pdf/_attachment/inline/9e76ad2b-14eb-4c5f-bf8b-e157f5efcc06:176ea3b766b3d06407dbd9395c3b1776682c5ab7/Trivsel%20i%20skolen.pdf

Hornby, Garry & Lafaele, Rayleen. (2011). Barriers to parental involvement in education: An explanatory model. Educational Review - EDUC REV. 63. 37-52.
10.1080/00131911.2010.488049.
Available from:
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/254249454_Barriers_to_parental_involvement_in_education_An_explanatory_model

Guribye, E(2016) Modeller for samarbeid mellom offentlig og frivillig sektor: Med hjerte for Arendal FoU-rapport nr. 3/2016 Mot 'Kommune 3.0'? Arendal: Agderforskning
Available from:
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5dd15233cf3c9512c32ddf10/t/5dd1a74c48fc02235997c6e8/1574020944751/FoU-rapport-3-2016-endelig.pdf>

Kobro, L (2018) La oss gjøre det sammen! Håndbok i lokal samskapende sosial innovasjon. Notodden: Høgskolen i Sørøst-Norge/Senter for sosialt entreprenørskap og samskapende sosial innovasjon

Kobro, L.(2020) Faglige innspill om nærdemokratiske innspill i Asker. Memorandum. University of Southeast Norway

Available from:

[sesam-notat-om-nardemokratiske-ordninger-juni-2020.pdf \(asker.kommune.no\)](https://www.akerhus.kommune.no/tema/plan-og-utvikling/sesam-notat-om-nardemokratiske-ordninger-juni-2020.pdf)

Ruud, M.E, Barlindhaug, R., Staver, A.B. (2019) Kunnskapsoversikt: områderettet innsats som virkemiddel. Internasjonale eksempler, NIBR-rapport 2019:25. Oslo: By- og regionforskningsinstituttet: NIBR

Available from:

<http://biblioteket.husbanken.no/arkiv/dok/Komp/Kunnskapsoversikt.%20Omraderettet%20innsats%20som%20.pdf>

Epland, J&Nordmann, T.M(2020) Nesten 11000 barn vokser opp med vedvarende lave husholdningsinntekter Oslo: SSB

Available from:

<https://www.ssb.no/inntekt-og-forbruk/artikler-og-publikasjoner/nesten-111-000-barn-vokser-opp-med-vedvarende-lave-husholdningsinntekter>

(Oslo Kommune.(2019) Bydelsfakta

Available from:

<https://bydelsfakta.oslo.kommune.no/bydel/sagene/levekaar>

Seeberg, M. & Seland, I. & Hassan, S. (2012) Litt vanskelig at alle skal med. Rapport 1: Evaluering av leksehjelpen 1.- 4.trinn. NOVA Rapport 3/2012. Oslo: Norsk institutt for forskning om oppvekst, velferd og aldring.

Available from:

<https://www.udir.no/globalassets/filer/tall-og-forskning/rapporter/2012/leksehjelp.pdf>

Seeberg, M. & Seland, I. & Hassan, S. (2014). "Har vi hatt leksehjelp nå?" Sosial utjevning når alle skal med. Sosiologi i dag. 44. 36-56.

Available from:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/311455888_Har_vi_hatt_leksehjelp_na_Sosial_utjevning_nar_alle_skal_med

Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training. (2014) Informasjon om leksehjelp i grunnskolen. Udir- 6- 2010.

Available from:

<https://www.udir.no/regelverkstolkninger/opplaring/Leksehjelp/Informasjon-om-leksehjelp-i-grunnskolen-Udir-6-2010/>

Norwegian Directorate of Education (2019) Utdanningspeilet 2019 Gjennomføring

Available from:

<https://www.udir.no/tall-og-forskning/finn-forskning/tema/utdanningsspeilet-2019/gjennomforing/>

Voorberg, W & Bekkers, V. & Tummers, L. (2014). A Systematic Review of Co-Creation and Co-Production: Embarking on the Social Innovation Journey. Public Management Review. 10.1080/14719037.2014.930505.

Partnership Achieving Communities Tackling early school leaving

2017-1NO01-KA201-034200