

The Swedish model of crime prevention

its development in the last two decades
and its future challenges

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Disposition

- Some milestones in Swedish crime prevention policy
- Development of local crime prevention
- Citizen dialogue - some successful examples
- Future challenges
- Links

”Our Collective Responsibility”

- In the 1990s, many grassroots organizations to prevent crime started: young women’s crisis hotlines, feminist self-defense, Exit helping former racist extremists to defect, KRIS for former criminals, etc
- 1996: *Our Collective Responsibility*, the national crime prevention strategy
- Local problems – local solutions
- Focus on everyday crime: theft, vandalism, violence against women
- Cooperation between police, social services, schools, local nonprofit organizations, local business and trade, et al
- Involve citizens on a grassroots level

Strategic Crime Prevention by the Police

- **Phase 1: Specialist era, -1994**
 - Special projects by a few officers. Meeting youth in schools etc
- **Phase 2: Problem-oriented policing, 1994-2005**
 - More preventive work instead of simple repression
 - Definition of Crime Prevention became wider
 - More knowledge-based work. Both social and situational measures
 - Reform to Community Policing
- **Phase 3: Intelligence-led policing, 2005-**
 - All police work to be intelligence-led
 - Definition too wide: nearly all police work can be "crime prevention"

Public crime victim support

- Increased focus on crime victim issues
 - Initiated by NGO's
 - Since the 1990's a growing part of state policy on crime prevention
- Two state authorities
 - 1994 Swedish Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority
 - 2006 National Centre for Knowledge on Men's Violence Against Women

Violence Against Women Act of 1998

- New crime: Gross Violation of a Woman's Integrity
- Covers repeated crimes by the same intimate partner: many big and small crimes forming a pattern, with intent to harm the victim's integrity
- A law designed to reflect the female victim's perspective
- Funds to educate police, prosecutors, social workers etc.
- Development of inter-authority cooperation
- National Council for Women's Peace 2000-2003: writings and campaigns
- 2002: murder of Fadime S brings honor-related violence to public attention
- 2004 evaluation showed authorities did not sufficiently implement laws

Men's Violence Against Women: 2008

- 2006: Social Services Act amended: it shall (not should) support women victims of violence, and their children
- 2006: Increased state funding to women's shelters
- 2008: Action Plan to Prevent Men's Violence against Women, Honor-related Violence and Oppression, and Violence in Same-sex Relationships
- Major increase in funding for investigation and victim support
- Focus on skills development for, and supervision of, authorities
- Implementation is ongoing. A hoped-for short-term goal is an increase in reported crimes, since many are never reported

Purchase of a sexual service

- Part of the Violence Against Women act of 1998
- Law criminalizes the purchase of a sexual service, but not the sale
- Declares that a woman's body is not a commodity
- Focuses on the demand for sexual services, the buyer's act
- Combined with education for judiciary and increased funds for social support to prostituted persons
- 2008: Action Plan against Prostitution and Trafficking in Human Beings for Sexual Purposes
- 2010 evaluation shows the law to be a success. It prevents trafficking in human beings by suppressing the local demand market

Governing local work in Sweden

- Swedish Local Authorities (social services, schools, physical environment etc) have a great deal of autonomy
- State authorities can govern them by:
 - Enacting laws and supervising their implementation
 - Offering financial support for doing certain measures
 - Offering methodological support
- Police are a state authority and somewhat centrally governed. A reform is underway, making police increasingly centralized
- Brå offers financial and methodological support to the judiciary and other authorities and organizations

Development of Local Crime Prevention

- 1996 National strategy *Our Collective Responsibility* called for the formation of Local Crime Prevention Councils
- By 2000, about half of local authorities had a local council, with a local coordinator. Mostly police, social services and schools
- 1998: Brå:s Unit for Local Crime Prevention. Their task:
 - Spreading knowledge on preventive methods
 - Financial support to local councils and projects
 - Increasing knowledge of what works by evaluations of projects
- Start-up support for local councils, financial and methodological. Conferences, handbooks and funds for local projects.
- Increased our demands for projects to evaluate effects of their work

Development of Local Crime Prevention

- In the mid-00s, the formation of local councils reached a peak and leveled. In 2009, 88% of municipalities and city districts had a council
- 2005 and 2009 studies both show the local councils:
 - have grown in size
 - are more active in several different areas
 - are more often chaired by policial or official leadership
 - consist of a wider range of members:
 - Police are the most common member in councils, but
 - 71 % of members represent some part of Local Authorities
 - representatives from e.g. city planning are more frequent than before

Development of Local Crime Prevention

- Councils commonly focus on:
 - Alcohol, smoking and drug prevention
 - Youth at risk
 - Crime prevention in schools
 - Safety and security
- Also, 2009 study shows 100+ councils use the methods:
 - Camera surveillance
 - Outdoor/street lighting
 - Neighborhood watch
 - Neighborhood security survey

Development of Local Crime Prevention

- 2006 study on *success factors* in local crime prevention emphasized:
 - Support from one's top leadership
 - Support from research evidence
- New 2006 center-right government wanted more evidence-based work
- Local coordinators in councils also want more research-based methods
- Brå increase our demands on funded projects to evaluate their effects
- 2008: task for Brå to make research-based methods available and useful for local stakeholders.
 - Regional conferences, fact sheets etc
 - Purpose to adapt scientific knowledge to be useful in practical work, and to give a knowledge base for choosing the right methods for their problems

Cooperation Police and Local Authorities

- 2008 Commission to police: sign Cooperation Agreements at top level between police and local authorities
- Model developed by Brå, Nat. Police Board and Nat. Organization for Local Authorities, published in the 2010 handbook *Cooperation*.
- Structured crime prevention work:
 - Mapping
 - Defining the problem
 - Analyzing the causes
 - Taking measures
 - Following up / evaluating

Cooperation Police and Local Authorities

- Structured *cooperation* in prevention:
 - Initiate cooperation
 - Prepare within one's own organization: map and analyze problems
 - Prepare in cooperation: create a common understanding of the problem
 - Take measures
- The model starts by facing obstacles to cooperation:
 - Different goals (e.g., to prosecute offenders and protect the public, and to support both victims and offenders)
 - Different organizational structures (geographical, budget, decision-making)
 - Different organizational cultures

Cooperation Police and Local Authorities

- About 85 per cent of the 290 municipalities in Sweden now have a signed cooperation with the police.
- A recent study from Brå on the cooperation agreements shows:
 - Agreements have led to improvements in the preventive work.
 - Often, the partners are working in a problem-oriented and self-reflective way
 - However, often the cooperation work is focused on issues the partners were already cooperating on, rather than new issues
 - It is difficult for practitioners to analyze causes of the problem and to choose measures based on the cause analysis

Trend: from project to process

- Development of local crime prevention work, from local coordinators' point of view:
- Phase 1: establishing local councils and basic work.
 - Circa 1996-2006 on national level
 - New councils often start as small-scale and weak, but tend to stabilize
 - Coordinators are project leaders who do the work personally
- Phase 2: increasingly structured and long-term strategic work
 - Circa 2006-ongoing on national level
 - As councils develop, they become more structured and strategic
 - Crime prevention to be integrated as a perspective in all relevant processes
 - Coordinators take on the role to coordinate and integrate crime prevention in the organization as a whole

Trend: evidence and/or experience-based

- Increasing demand for evidence-based methods during 00's
- Experience-based methods are "tried and true" but not scientifically evaluated
- Pro's and con's of evidence:
 - Support from research lends legitimacy to one's work
 - Evaluation research takes funds and time. Hence, many locally developed experience-based methods are not scientifically evaluated
 - Methods that benefit profit-making companies may get more research funding
 - If we *only* use evidence-based methods, we exclude many smaller promising new methods
- Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare: "evidence-based = the best currently available knowledge"

Building, planning and citizen dialogue

- National Board of Housing, Building and Planning has published reports on building- and planning-oriented measures against crime and insecurity.
- 2008 government task: to strengthen safety in urban environments from a gender perspective
 - Workshops, regional conferences, funding for projects, and two handbooks on neighborhood security surveys.
- Public housing companies work to prevent crime in some socio-economically marginalized areas.
- Crime-preventive methods based on citizen dialogue, two examples;
 - Neighborhood watch
 - Neighborhood security survey

Neighborhood watch

- Has existed for around 40 years
- In 2008, a metaanalytic review showed neighborhood watch to be a very successful method
- Nat. Council for Crime Prevention initiated a project to adapt and spread this knowledge to local stakeholders (police, housing companies etc) through regional conferences, fact sheets and media
- National steering committee consisting of Brå, Police, insurance companies, housing companies, landlords and tenants' associations

Neighborhood watch

- Brå developed the method specifically for public housing and multi-family houses
- We published a handbook for Neighborhood watch in public housing, in Swedish and English
- Neighborhood watch projects in two municipalities, Halmstad and Varberg, have been scientifically evaluated.
 - In Varberg, everyday crime decreased by circa 37 % and in Halmstad by 26 %. Both were projects in multi-family house areas.
 - In Halmstad, the area was marginalized with gang criminality. It was one of 20 poor local areas in Sweden that were the focus of special government measures. But crime has now dropped so much that it no longer counts as one of the 20 focus areas.

Neighborhood security survey

- Method developed by local crime prevention council of Gothenburg in the early 2000s
- A way to get those living and working in the area involved in making the area a more secure and pleasant place
- Mutual exchange of ideas and viewpoints
- Opportunity to disseminate information and discuss constructive ideas
- The dialogue between residents and those responsible is as important as the physical changes that the survey can lead to

Neighborhood security survey

- The first national manual was produced in 2010 by A More Secure and More Humane Gothenburg, The National Board of Housing Building and Planning and Brå
 - Manual for those arranging a neighborhood security survey
 - Booklet for the tenants etc participating in the survey
- Both have an emphasized gender perspective. It is vital to include different people: women and men, young and old, disabled etc.
- The method has been maintained by Gothenburg, but due to organisational changes, it has been handed over to Brå

Future challenge: Cooperation with different goals

- Work within Cooperation Agreements often focuses on issues the partners were already cooperating on, rather than new issues.
- Cooperation is more difficult where the goals or methods of the parties diverge, or where they have the same ultimate goal but different methods or short-term goals. Examples:
 - A problematic tenant in a house. Police have the task of protecting the tenants of a house against this person, whereas social services have the task of supporting the offender to reintegrate
 - Preventing recidivism. Judiciary's goal is to investigate/prosecute and to protect the public, whereas social service goal is to support the client's reintegration

Future challenge: Defining police crime prevention

- Definition of Police crime prevention is too wide: nearly all police work can be "crime prevention"
- Future challenge: To find a workable definition of police crime prevention
- Brå and the Nat. Police Board are currently testing a new definition: work with a *primary purpose* to prevent crime

Future challenge: Centralization

- The Swedish Police (as well as the County Administrative boards) are undergoing a centralization reform
- Meanwhile, experts agree that crime prevention must be based on *local* knowledge about problems
- This could lead to:
 - Increased problems where central leadership tells everyone to focus on the same problems, regardless of local priorities and problems
 - The lack of a middle-level leadership could become an opportunity for central leadership to give local decision-makers a clear mandate to base their work on local knowledge
- When geographical areas of cooperating parties don't overlap, cooperation will be more difficult

Lessons learned

- Legitimacy is a success factor
 - A clear mandate and support from ones leadership
 - The actions that are taken are knowledge-based
- Cooperation is necessary for success
 - for example with public housing companies, insurance companies, churches, women shelters, local business and trade, relevant state authorities, local authorities, police and of course.....the local citizens
- Cooperation must be based on long-term planning
- The organisations must dare to face the obstacles to cooperation
- Preparation is very important and must be allowed to take the time needed – it may even need to take longer than the measures themselves
- Don't forget to have fun when you work together!





Links

National Council for Crime Prevention <http://www.bra.se/bra/bra-in-english/home.html>

Swedish Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority <http://brom.se/eng>

National Centre for Knowledge on Men's Violence Against Women:
<http://nck.uu.se/en/>

Neighbourhood watch in multiple family dwellings: <http://www.bra.se/bra/bra-in-english/home/publications/archive/publications/2012-12-21-neighbourhood-watch-in-multiple-family-dwellings.html>

Neighbourhood security survey:

<http://www.bra.se/bra/bra-in-english/home/publications/archive/publications/2011-02-24-neighbourhood-security-survey-%E2%80%93-thoughts-along-the-way.html>

<http://www.bra.se/bra/bra-in-english/home/publications/archive/publications/2011-02-24-neighbourhood-security-survey-%E2%80%93-a-guide.html>