

Designing for systems transformation

A SERIES OF LAB REPORTS FROM OUR WORK
IN PREVENT 2023-2024

LEARNINGS FROM PRACTICE



förnyelselabbet



”What we practise at the small scale sets the patterns for the whole system”

Adrienne Maree Brown, Emergent strategies



Lab report 1-Preventive health

How do we better enable preventive health measures in socio-economically deprived areas? This is what the Prevent Project is currently exploring and this blog series is one way of sensemaking, structuring and learn from our practice.

The project was initiated by Uppsala university and Karolinska institutet as a follow up from the [Smart 2 D project](#) (carried out in Uganda, South Africa and Sweden) as a way to dive deeper into the ways of working with prevention in groups at risk of developing cardiometabolic disease. In the Prevent project there is an ambition to see how community outreach and co design can enhance the prevention work further.

The Prevent project defines, codesign as; “an initiative that positions participants’ needs, expertise and knowledge at its centre”, or from a policy making perspective, as a means to engage different kinds of people and knowledge in public problem solving processes”. (Vargas C, et al. Co-creation, co-design, co-production for public health - a perspective on definition and distinctions. Public Health Res Pract. 2022 Jun 15;32(2):3222211.)

Process

The research team was formed in 2022 and we started thinking of how to turn the application into reality. We agreed on having a first workshop with parts of the stakeholders to co-design our understanding of the challenges facing inhabitants and stakeholders in areas that are socio-economically deprived around Uppsala. We wanted to live by example and co-design the study with people from the field. We invited them to the process and our first “prototype” workshop in one of the areas. Many people turned up, both individuals from the areas, NGOs and public sector officials.

SVID

The participants in PreventLab help co-design the analysis provided by researchers and The participants' own aggregated insights



Workshop 1 on 29th March

Two Phd students, Louise and Amalia had done outreach work amongst inhabitants in the area and one PHd student Hedda had started to interview stakeholders. They presented their findings and the participants were invited to give feedback on this. The workshop was designed to allow the knowledge from the field to be spread to the whole group. The two areas in focus for the project was focal of attention. Where were places for healthy eating and living, recreation, who

were the main stakeholders, individuals and organizations, what other projects were ere ongoing that the Prevent project needed to be aware of. What were tacit knowledge in the group of how to make connection, create mobilization and engage citizens and stakeholders? At the end of the workshop an invitation to the next round of workshops was co-designed as inspiration for the real invitation. It was clear that there was a project fatigue amongst both citizens and stakeholders. The participants suggested to be firm on making plans parallel to the project of long-term funding and structures. There were also interesting insights into what vocabulary to use. The word prevention might need to be adjusted to be widely understood. It was suggested to talk about movement and food for a healthy life in the Prevent project to reach a broad group.



If public health improves in the areas the participants argue that the minimum level for health in the entire region will be raised.

The results from the protoype workshop were then summarized and analyzed. An invitation was crafted and sent out and we met stakeholders again in a wider setting in workshop 2 on 27th April. The focus on this workshop became to look for conditions for stakeholders working in these areas, how physical and digital interventions could work together and simply forming the lab group. The participants were engaged in discussion on, what is it like to work with prevention in these areas, how can we work better together?



We then continued the efforts of relational outreach in the two communities. Jonas Thidevall came in to do interviews with inhabitants in the two areas and Hedda Ottesen continued to interview stakeholders. A lot of focus was put on getting to know individuals in the community in order for stories to carry as much weight as possible. Jonas spent a lot of time walking around in the neighborhoods, visiting organisations, meeting individuals for fika and joining soup lunches to get to know people. The stories that came out of the interviews were compiled and made into narrations delivered in workshop 3 on 12th December. The participants were asked to help co design an analysis with the research group. What did they recognize, what was new information and how could the stories be collectively sensemade and actionable. What were outcome baselines for the project?

In the aftermath of this workshop, the core team was invited to present the project in different municipality contexts. An inspirational day and in a cross departmental team working on prevention on 14th June. The 4th workshop was launched on 29th of May. It was designed to make visible the conditions needed for stakeholders in these areas to make impact. As a check in they were asked about the strengths they need to exhibit daily based on animal metaphors. The metaphors chosen by stakeholder contained having many feet to enable being in many different places and spaces simultaneously. Operating in the dark, under the radar, being patient or having an overview and large ears listening in many different perspectives.



Co design in action-methods used in Prevent

The Prevent project uses codesign as a driving force and reflexive practice amongst the participants in the stake holder lab group. An important ingredient has become stories from the system. Both from the inhabitants perspective but also from stakeholder and policy perspectives. The relational aspects have been elementary in the project. Feeling safe enough to share stories, to make sense of what they entail collectively and to use the insights to sharpen organizational and collective action in the communities. The research project and the trial that has been designed has also been supported with the insights from these workshops.

The codesign part of the project has also included a mindset that the context and the deep knowledge about both the physical space and the relational dynamics are important for impact. Therefore, the workshops have made this knowledge explicit in collectively sharing this kind of information and using it as an important fabric for the project overall design.

Another essential part of the systemic features of the codesign of Prevent has been exploring the dynamics of the system in need of transformation. What are the stakeholders' conditions, what are they longing for, what are keys to succeed? Images have been used, textile fabrics and objects to make these very often subtle and intangible qualities verbalized.

The Prevent project has also been focusing on deepening connections and relations within the lab group through sharing meals, fika and sometimes breakfast. This stemming from a mindset that systemic transformation requires safe spaces and strong relationship to create courage and will to test new more sustainable actions. A hypothesis is that strengthened communities will also enhance the wellbeing of its inhabitants. The sense of coherence and how it affects different layers of the system is core to the Prevent project.

Vad gör aktörerna/praktikerna i området? Ge exempel på era aktiviteter som kan motsvara behoven som finns?



