

Opening speech; Leif Svanström

Challenges for Sustainability of the
International Movement on
Safe Communities

2nd European Conference on

Safe Communities

Reykjavik, Iceland

May 19th-20th, 2010

Safe Communities movement

Roots in *Sweden* and the local injury-prevention programmes, such as in Falköping, Lidköping and Motala, developed during the 1970s and 1980s.

Policy-wise

New Public Health, the World Health Organisation's Health for All strategy, and the Ottawa Charter.

The Swedish programmes were influenced by experiences of community work, and represents a ***population-oriented social-policy*** movement in a broader social arena.

The idea of ***engaging the local community*** (village, municipality, town, city, metropolitan area) in the safety work is essential in the Safe Community movement.

Safety is a much ***wider concept*** than absence of injury, in the same way that health is much wider than absence of disease.

Communities have concentrated mainly on being able to show a decrease in registered injuries treated in health care. Few studies have focused on evaluating the safety-promotion aspect.

Safe Community as a formal concept, closely associated with the World Health Organisation, can be traced back to the first World Conference on Accident and Injury Prevention (***Manifesto for Safe Communities 1989***) and the establishment of a ***WHO Collaborating Centre (on Community Safety Promotion)*** at Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm, *Sweden*.

Six indicators for Safe Communities have been developed to describe the essence of the community actions- later also used as screening tools in the work to designate formally the member communities in the International network. ***Sustainability*** is number one in that set of indicators.

Sustainability is the capacity to endure. In ecology the word describes how biological systems remain diverse and productive over time.

The most widely used *definition* of *sustainable* development is the one coined by the World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Commission): ...

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“forms of progress that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.”

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“All human beings has the right to Health and Safety”
Stockholm Manifesto on Safe Communities 1989

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So the challenge in the World where Safety is a problem and injuries increase the ***challenge*** is to solve problems today...without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.”

I am personally convinced that the reason for the success of the establishment of the International Safe Communities idea is that the Movement offers a sustainable alternative without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

*It took us thirty years to establish the ideas of Safe
Communities*

*It took us twenty years to organize the International Network
with basically no monetary resources*

*I am personally convinced that we now need to formalize
ourselves as a
Non- Governmental Organization*

*We have recently started that process and the first chapter
will be closed at the Next Conference- in Sweden september
2011!*

We wish You all a productive Conference in order to take this movement one step ahead!

We wish to congratulate the S Korean organizers for all the success of planning for us all and provide these excellent preconditions for our work!

See You all in
Falun Municipality, Dalarna,
Sweden
6-9 September 2011
and
Falköping 2012

The prerequisite for sustainability of communities?

Tora, Kata, Magda, Doris, Sonja, Emma, Alva & Malte



October 2009