



Networking in the fight against homelessness

Summer 2003

FINLAND

QUESTIONNAIRE ON CO-OPERATION AND NETWORKING TO FIGHT HOMELESSNESS

Preface

The aim of the report is to give a short overview on the organisation, the actors involved and the co-operational work that has been done at different levels concerning the reduction of Homelessness in Finland during the last years. The Principles of the Finnish social welfare system, responsible authorities and the funding are described in chapter 1 and some examples of co-operation in chapter 2. The examples are mainly concerning projects since the documentation of the co-operation has been focused on projects. Some examples of co-operation and some statements are also based on personal experiences. Chapter 3 functions as a summary.

1. General framework

The Finnish constitution guarantees all residents in Finland basic social security and social and health services throughout their lives. Finland has a *residence-based social security system*.

The responsibility for the implementation of housing and social welfare policy in Finland lies with the local authorities; this includes care of the homeless and the people outside the working force. Both the social security benefits and the services are financed by taxes paid to the state and to the municipalities. The government passes the legislation providing the framework within which the local authorities operate and grants funds obtained in the form of taxes as state aid, loans and subsidies. The local authorities are responsible for the planning and implementation of measures. (Kärkkäinen 1996, 28-32. Mikkonen & Kärkkäinen 2002, 7.)

The three basic elements of the Finnish social protection system are: preventive social and health policy, social and health care services and social insurance. The core of social protection aims at securing livelihood through comprehensive basic security and income related benefits that guarantee the possibility to maintain a reasonable level of subsistence in different situations of risk. An important element of the Finnish social protection system is its comprehensive social and health services. The social protection system is the result of measures that have taken decades to implement. It is characterised by a *universality of benefits*. (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Brochures 1999:3eng)

1.a. Responsible public authorities

At a national level the Finnish government takes responsibility for social welfare issues among other things through legislation, the Government Programme and appropriate funding.

Since 1995 the Finnish Constitution Section 15 a, paragraph 4 states: It shall be the task of public authorities to promote the right of everyone to a dwelling and support the efforts of persons to provide their own housing.

Although the legislation will not guarantee the right to a dwelling as a subjective right, it calls the local authorities for a moral task to provide some sort of housing also for homeless people.

Homelessness and housing are issues dealt with mainly in the Ministry of the Environment and in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

The Ministry of the Environment promotes sustainable development. The objective is to ensure a good, safe living environment and biological diversity, to prevent environmental damage and to improve housing conditions. The main objective of Finnish housing policy is to guarantee everyone the chance to obtain reasonable accommodation based on price and quality.

The mission of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is to ensure the Finnish people a healthy living environment, their good health and well-being, adequate living and social security in all phases of life. The Ministry directs and guides the development and functioning of policy on social security, social welfare and health care. It defines the main objectives of social and health policy, prepares legislation and key reforms and supervises their implementation. The Ministry also handles the necessary links with the political decision-making process. (www.valtioneuvosto.fi, www.ymparisto.fi)

Finland is divided into six Provinces. The State Provincial Offices in the provinces act as the joint regional authority for seven ministries. One of these ministries is the Ministry of Social affairs and Health. At a regional level the State Provincial offices insures that all residents in the province have access to welfare services of high standard no matter in which city or municipality they live. The State Provincial Offices guides and supervises the responsible authorities in the provinces in social- and health care and health protection issues. The State Provincial Offices ensures that nationally and regionally important strategic goals are achieved at a local level and they analyse the quality of the services in cities and municipalities. Due to their supervisory task the State Provincial Offices also receive and investigate residents complaints concerning social- and health care matters. (www.laaninhallitus.fi)

There are altogether 446 cities and municipalities in Finland. The basic responsibility for the planning and implementation of housing, social welfare policy and service provision lies with the local authorities in these cities and municipalities. The local authorities are organised together in the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities (Kuntaliitto). The government passes the laws and appropriates funds to the local authorities for various purposes and the central administration issues the

instructions necessary to put the policy into practice. As already mentioned all residents are eligible for the basic benefits independent of their working career. This is an important prerequisite especially for homeless people (Kärkkäinen, Hannikainen & Heikkilä 1998, 1.) .

The local services concerning social welfare and housing are usually divided into a different Social and welfare department and a Housing Affairs Division. In the largest cities in Finland where homelessness is a bigger problem, the local authorities might provide social- and housing services for homeless people in offices with specialised personnel (Helsinki and Turku). The basic services are the same as for other residents in the city but these offices can provide temporary or supported housing rapidly and the employees are better prepared and trained to tackle homelessness.

1.b. Funding

According to the nordic welfare model social housing and social- and welfare costs are funded mainly by the state and the municipalities.

In the social welfare and health care field Finland's Slot Machine Association plays an important role as funder of voluntary organizations. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland also plays a significant role at a local level.

The state funding of Finnish social housing is carried out by The Housing Fund of Finland, which was established in the beginning of 1990. The Housing Fund acts as a housing finance management body for the government, but functions outside the budget. The Fund is supervised by the Ministry of the Environment and it finances and administers all State subsidies for housing, except housing allowances. This includes State housing loans, interest subsidies for bank housing loans, direct grants, State guarantees for bank housing loans, housing allowances and tax relief. Housing subsidies are targeted especially at young people and the elderly, families with children and low-income households, and are also aimed at reducing homelessness and improving inadequate housing conditions. The Fund's essential functions also include guidance on quality and control of building costs in State-subsidised projects, both new build and renovation.

To help low-income households with their housing costs, The Social Insurance Institution of Finland (KELA) pays a general housing allowance to households directly. Students without dependants can get a housing supplement and pensioners a special housing allowance. (www.ymparisto.fi, www.kela.fi)

Two-thirds of Finland's housing stock consists of owner-occupied homes and about 30 % of the housing stock is rented. Half of Finland's rental housing is State-subsidised while the rest is financed on the free market. Local authorities are the largest owners of rental housing, either directly or through non-profit companies. They also provide land, infrastructure and other services in housing areas. The municipalities have a key role in the housing sector. Local authorities select the housing projects entitled to State subsidies, and some municipalities provide limited housing subsidies of their own. (www.ymparisto.fi)

Finland's Slot Machine Association (RAY) support voluntary organizations in Finland. It was established in 1938 to raise funds through gaming operations to support Finnish health and welfare organizations. RAY's organisation is stated in the Decree of the Slot Machine Association from 2001. RAY is an association with 99 member organizations at present. These NGO:s work in the health and social welfare field and they are represented at the General Meeting, which is RAY's supreme decision-making body. According to the Lottery Act the Ministry of the Interior supervises lottery activities in Finland. RAY's funding activities are continuously supervised by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. RAY and the Ministry also annually agree on funding assistance targets, which are written into the national budget. (Kärkkäinen 1996, 52, www.ray.fi)

In 2003 more than EUR 400 million of RAY's revenues will be used to promote health and social welfare, setting a new record. Of this total, EUR 302.8 million will be distributed in funding assistance to non-profit organizations. One of the central areas of focus in the 2003 funding proposal is support for institutional homes and independent living. Almost one third of the total funding distribution, or almost EUR 92 million, is being used for supported and service housing as well as support for independent living and home carers. (www.ray.fi)

The Evangelical Lutheran Church and its 600 parishes operating at the local level with 1200 employees trained in social welfare and health work make an important contribution in form of support to people with financial difficulties as well as mental and intoxicant problems. The Church works supplements services provided by other bodies. (National action plan against poverty and social exclusion, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2001:12) The Church can among other things support people with temporary problems to pay their rent and thus prevent homelessness.

2. Co-operation

2.a Housing

At the time being co-operation between the public sector and the NGO sector has been carried out both at a higher level in the form of planning and at a local level in the form of selecting and supporting homeless people in dwellings and different kinds of supported housing. This often happens informally with or without written agreements.

A plan to reduce homelessness was presented to the former Housing Minister Suvi-Anne Siimes at the 8th February 2001. The memorandum was prepared by a working party convened by the Ministry of the Environment in consultation with the parties who have had the most influence in the reduction of homelessness. The working party had been set up in September 2000 and it included both representants for the public sector, such as Ministries, non-profit housing organizations and local authorities, as well as NGO:s, The Finnish Mental Health Society, the Y-Foundation and the A-clinic Foundation (Press release: Programme suggestion for reducing homelessness in Finland, 2001). In this way the Ministry of the Environment included representatives of NGO:s in the planning process.

The background of this initiative can be found in the Government Programme and housing strategy of the Lipponen 2 Government. According to its agenda, the government furthered co-operation between various sectors of the administration to solve problems relating to subsistence, work, education, housing, structure of the community, environment and general needs of the citizens. Measures intended to reduce homelessness were carried out, and special emphasis was to be put into the prevention of social exclusion. (Programme for reducing Homelessness in Finland 2001-2003)

The final programme contains statistical data about homelessness in different cities in Finland 1987 - 2000 and it points out various reasons for the slight rise in numbers as regards the Southern part of the country. The main part of the programme consists of suggestions how homelessness could be reduced. It contains suggestions concerning both land allocation, building and buying of houses and dwellings that could be addressed to homeless people. It also suggested that the reduction of homelessness was to be taken up in the Finnish national action plan against poverty and social exclusion for 2001-2003. Later on goals to reduce homelessness was included in the NAP as a government decision to raise the amount of own-capital support for the new construction or acquisition of housing intended for the homeless and refugees and increased Housing support for persons with low incomes. It also states a government decision concerning joint action by the state, the greater Helsinki area and surrounding municipalities in order to render more effective co-operation between municipal social welfare and health authorities and the third sector in order to reduce homelessness. (Programme for reducing Homelessness in Finland 2001-2003, 2001, The Finnish national action plan against poverty and social exclusion, 2001) The decision about the joint action in the greater Helsinki area resulted in a specific joint action contract which representants of the state and the local authorities signed in February 2003. The programme to reduce homelessness has been prolonged until 2005. (www.ymparisto.fi)

NGO:s role as consults and experts is also frequently used in co-operation with the public sector at the local level in the primary work. With a population of only five million people Finland has several hundred voluntary organisations operating at both local and national level for people faced with problems of homelessness, mental health, substance abuse and drugs. Some of the organisations work as ideological platforms while others can provide services for special groups. The service providing voluntary organisations often sell their services to the local authorities. (Kärkkäinen 1996, 51)

The local housing and social welfare authorities select tenants for State-subsidised rental housing according to specific criteria, such as housing need, financial status and the income of the applicant household. Citizens organisations and other NGO:s can help the applicants with the applications and by clarifying the situation of the applicant to the selection authority and by adding information concerning the overall situation of the applicant. This can help the local authorities choose the right kind of housing for the applicant. The NGO:s might also be an important complementary resource in form of support for the applicant to get started in his dwelling. This kind of co-operation is either informal or formal with written contracts. Informal co-operation in the communities are taking place to a various extent. The level of co-operation is dependent on the size of the city or municipality, the organisation of its

local housing and social welfare authorities and to which extent the authorities and the local NGOs manage to agree about goals and methods.

Since 1994 the Y-foundation, The Finnish association for mental health, local associations for mental health and local authorities continuously work to arrange support and housing for homeless people with mental disorders. At the time being the co-operation is carried out with these actors in 7 municipalities in the Southern part of the country. The Y-foundation arranges dwellings with funding from the Housing Fund, the Slot Machine association and the local authorities. The Finnish association for mental health and its local associations provides the support mainly by selecting and training voluntary individuals in the area to support the homeless people moving into the dwellings. The local social welfare- and housing authorities provides services for the homeless people in form of co-ordination at a practical level and they also pay an annual fee to the Finnish association for mental health per supported homeless person. Written contracts where each actors responsibilities are mentioned are made at an annual basis. In spring 2003 approximately 100 persons living in apartments owned by the Y-foundation received support through the arrangement. The amount of municipalities will probably increase by 2 during the year 2003. (The Finnish association for mental health & Y-foundation, working paper, 26.2.2003)

The Y-Foundation also carries out similar activity in the cities Turku, Tampere and Helsinki with other actors responsible for the support arrangements. In Turku the Turku City Mission is providing the support by training suitable voluntaries and the amount of supported persons which can be 20-30 at a time are chosen together with the local social authorities. In Tampere the local Settlement Association provides the support arranged either by voluntary personnel or professional social workers. The supported persons are chosen by the local housing- and social welfare authorities. In Helsinki the Settlement association as well provides the support by training voluntaries or by professional workers and the supported persons are chosen together with the local social welfare authorities. These support activities in Turku, Tampere and Helsinki are focused at young homeless people who often suffer of intoxicant or mental problems. In Helsinki all the supported persons are homeless clients of the Special social welfare bureau which serve homeless people in Helsinki. The local authorities pay an annual fee per person for the professional housing support received from the Settlement association. The voluntary support is provided without fees.

The dwellings owned by the Y-Foundation are mainly situated in buildings with owner-occupied housing. The aim of the foundation has been to avoid segregation, concentration of social problems and differences between city areas by buying dwellings from different parts of the cities. Owner-occupied houses can in most cases provide peaceful living conditions for the supported persons. However it is here necessary to point out the importance of correct criteria selecting the persons to live independently. According to experiences too much should not be expected from the voluntary support. It works best as a complementary measure and it can not compensate for institutional care. People suffering from acute and severe drug problems or mental diseases are not to be placed in normal dwellings without a preceding period of treatment in hospital, drug-clinic or professionally and more intensive supported accommodation. Wrong selections can lead to unfortunate

situations for both the supported persons as well as for the neighbours. Finally, the support can naturally also be reduced if the situation of the person is stable and if the support is not needed in the present situation. The goal is that those who wish to and are capable to live independently can do so.

The co-operation and the function of the support system in the mentioned arrangements are always controlled by a follow-up committee in which a representant for each contract-actor is represented. The follow-up committee meets at least twice a year and more often if needed. The group members or some of them often also communicate by phone or e-mail concerning practical matters when needed.

2. b Health care

The local authorities are responsible also for the Finnish health care. All residents in the country are entitled to free health care. One example of co-operation in Helsinki is the earlier mentioned voluntary supported housing system between the Y-foundation, The Finnish Association for Mental Health and the local authorities. The support and the housing in this particular local arrangement is targeted at people with mental disorders and the supported persons are chosen from clients of the out - patient treatment section of a mental hospital of a certain district of the city. The co-operation is followed up by a committee with several members from the participating organisations. The follow-up committee meet at least twice a year.

2.c Employment

On September 1, 2001 The Act on Rehabilitating Work Experience (189/2001) came into force. The Act brings new possibilities for clients who have been unemployed for a long time. It obliges the municipalities and employment offices to co-operate in order to create a suitable service entity for each client. In addition to this the Act obliges the municipalities to arrange rehabilitating work experience for long-term unemployed clients receiving labour market support or income support, who fulfil certain requirements specified in the act. Practically, the act obliges the representant for the employment office, the social worker and the client to come together to make an activation plan for the client. The aim with the act has also been to take into consideration the needs of other sectors that are involved in organising rehabilitation work experience (foundations, associations, religious congregations as well as government offices). (Kuntouttavan työtoiminnan käsikirja (Handbook on Rehabilitating Work Experience) Handboks of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2001. www.mol.fi)

The Finnish Association for Mental Health set up a project together with the local employment authorities in 4 cities under 1998 - 2001. Some aims of the project was to prevent social exclusion and improve rehabilitation, working skills and access to

work among the participants. The number of participants were 124 and the project was funded by the Ministry of Labour and by Finland's Slot Machine association through a combination unemployment support aimed especially for NGO:s to employ an unemployed person for maximally 12 months. In Salo, a city with approximately 25 000 citizens, a secondary goal of the project was to enhance the co-operation between the local authorities and the NGO:s. 20 unemployed persons with mental disorders and dependent on supported accomodation took part in the project. 71% of the participants worked with customer service duties and the rest with office- or real estate work. The formal employer was the Finnish Association for Mental Health. A survey made among the participants in Salo 2001 after the project was finished, showed that 86% had got access to new work, 7% took part in education and 7% were unemployed and looking for work. The high percent participants managing to find work afterwards can to a certain extent be explained by the good working situation in Salo at that time. According to the evaluation of the project it was among other things important to have skilful working team leaders and paralel education for the participants during the project. The evaluation also stated that this kind of supported work can be a shortcut back to society. (Aaltonen 2002, 11-15,58,134,154)

Finally, the summary report of nine national projects on the subject of "Empowerment of the excluded" in the Finnish component of the Employment Integra programme states that good practices for social rehabilitation and the strengthening of a participants' social capacity requires

- the development of recruitment methods that are oriented to target groups.
- the development of active rehabilitative approaches, particularly those that are based on employment
- the modelling of rehabilitation processes; and
- opportunities to integrate social enterprise and social rehabilitation. (Järvelä&Laukkanen 2000)

2.d The immigration sector

Finland has until now had small numbers of asylym seekers, refugees and immigrants. Possible reasons can be the isolated location, strict immigration and refugee policy, long asylum and family reunification procedures, difficult language and the absence of former colonies. There are also quite few illegal immigrants in Finland. According to the Frontier Guard, there are about 10 000 illegal immigrants in Finland. Finland however is one of some ten countries in the world that receive quota refugees. In 2002, the quota was 750. (Mikkonen & Kärkkäinen 2002, 15-16. Sorainen, 2002, 17-18)

The municipalities provide refugees first home as a part of the reception system once they have been granted a residence permit. The quota refugees are housed in municipal social housing or in a dwelling purchased jointly by municipal authorities and the Y-Foundation with special state loans for the purchase of refugee housing. Persons coming to work or study or for other reasons have to organise their housing themselves. Secondary migration of refugees in Finland causes a concentration of immigrants in the metropolitan region and the number of homeless immigrants has increased during the past decade, especially in Helsinki and other cities and in 2001,

about 9% of the immigrants in Helsinki did not have a fixed adobe. (Mikkonen & Kärkkäinen 2002, 23&29)

Continuous activity to help homeless immigrants are made by the Finnish Red Cross in emergency shelters for young people in five cities in Finland, such NGO:s as Folkhälsans International children´s home, Children of the station and Ehjä ry. According to their experiences many homeless young immigrants need lots of support in their everyday lives to develop the skills needed for independent living. (Mikkonen & Kärkkäinen 2002, 39 - 40, www.redcross.fi, www.folkhalsan.fi, www.asemanlapset.fi and www.ehja.org)

Significant for homelessness among immigrants seem to be that the lack of support networks makes homelessness to a bigger problem than it is for finns. (Reiman 1999, 12)

2.e The Judicial system

In Finland prison and probation services belong to the administrative sector of the Ministry of Justice. The Criminal Policy Department of the Ministry of Justice draws up the strategic guide-lines.

The Criminal Sanctions Agency is a national administrative board under the Criminal Policy Department of the Ministry of Justice. It started its operations 1.8.2001 and it is in charge of the direction and development of the enforcement of community sanctions and prison sentences. The Criminal Sanctions Agency is divided into four units. The Prison Service is in charge of the enforcement of prison sentences and conversion of fines. The Probation Service is in charge of community sanctions: supervision of conditionally sentenced young offenders, community service, juvenile punishment and supervision of conditionally released prisoners (parolees). The Judicial Unit is in charge of the enforcement of prison sentences and community sanctions. The Administrative Unit is in charge of the joint administration of the Prison and Probation Services. (www.rikosseuraamus.fi)

According to statistics from the Probation administration almost 45 % of the prisoners are residents in the Southern Province of the country and approximately 400-500 prisoners per year are homeless when leaving prison. (The statistics of Prison administration and Probation administration of Finland, 2002, Asunnottomuuden Vähentämishjelma 2001-2003 2001, s.20)

Support for prisoners about to be released is continuously arranged by the Finnish Red Cross in form of voluntary workers; "prison-visitors", group therapy and meetings outside prison. Such activities are arranged in co-operation with the staff of the Prison Service. During 2002 it was carried out in 13 prisons. The Silta - Training centre in Tampere arranges training for prisoners starting during the prison term and continuing after the prisoner is liberated. During 2002 the number of participants was 23. In Helsinki a rehabilitation programme is arranged for prisoners with intoxicant problems resident in Helsinki (KuVa). The programme is carried out by the local authorities and the Criminal Sanctions Agency. The programme focuses on prisoners who have problems with getting access to housing and work after leaving prison. The prisoners begin the program 4-5 month before leaving prison. They participate in

intoxicant treatment and work therapy or education in prison. After liberation the prisoners are guaranteed housing, work try-out and intoxicant treatment by the Social Welfare department of Helsinki. The annual number of participants is 12 and a written contract is made between the social worker of the programme and the participant. Some of the participants are gradually moving to dwellings owned by the city or the Y-Foundation. The experiences of this programme are very promising.

A number of support projects on limited time are arranged for prisoners throughout the country. The ESR-financed Janus project in the Mid - South region arranged network - rehabilitation for 26 participants during 2000-2002. Two thirds of the participants started to study, work or participate in work try-out after the project. The Work Out Project in the Youth prison of Kerava during 2001 - 2003 was managed by the Prison Service aimed at supporting offenders under 26 released from prison to integrate into society. The project includes the major cities in Southern Finland, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Laurea Polytechnic, Järvenpää addiction hospital, The police and the employment authorities.

In the Eastern part of the country, the Polku-project financed by Finland's Slot Machine Association and managed by the Prison Service is carried out during 2001 - 2004. 25 offenders participated in the project during 2002. The project is carried out in co-operation with NGO:s and local authorities. The Duuni-project was carried out by the Helsinki Deaconess Institute during 2000-2002. It was also financed by the Slot Machine Association and it aimed at helping offenders to get access to work after their release. About half of the 100 participants succeeded in getting a work after the project. The successful experiences of the project resulted in that the working model became a part of the working methods of the local authorities later on. (Vuosikertomus 2002, 60-61. Kriminaalihuoltolaitos & Vankeinhoitolaitos)

3. Benefits, Difficulties and Good Practices

Homelessness in Finland is often due to both a shortage of housing and to personal and social problems such as poverty, social exclusion, unemployment, mental problems and intoxicant abuse. The struggle against homelessness is complicated because of the fact that for many homeless persons the problems are not solved only by finding a home of their own. Other forms of support and rehabilitation are often needed as well. (Korhonen 2002, 7.)

Concerning benefits at a planning and strategical level in the work against homelessness, it can be assumed that co-operation between authorities and NGO:s will lead to versatility. A greater variety of questions are probably taken into consideration during the planning process than what would be the case in a working group where only representatives of the public sector participate. This co-operation probably leads to more diversified strategies. Guidelines about how responsibilities should be divided between the different authorities and the NGO:s could also be made up through co-operation on a strategic level. Further, it can be easier to agree on the implementation of the decided policy if the opinions of as many NGO:s as possible are taken into account during the planning process. The working group that

made the plan to reduce homelessness in Finland (mentioned in chapter 2.a) is an example of co-operation at a national planning and strategical level.

Finland's Slot Machine Association is a unique organisation in funding NGO:s working among other things with reducing homelessness. The co-operation between the authorities and the NGO:s in RAY:s deciding bodies is prescribed by the Decree on the Slot Machine Association. The funding of RAY enables NGO:s in Finland to work fulltime with questions concerning social- and welfare issues. The fact that one third of the paid fundings is used to supported- or service housing activities in 2003 speaks for itself.

There are many benefits of local co-operation of which some were mentioned earlier in the text. In short terms a primary benefit can be co-operation in helping a homeless in the process of getting access to housing and continuing the co-operation in order to help the homeless to keep the accomodation. A secondary benefit for the NGO:s, except for the main duty to help the homeless people, can be to get to know the organisation of the local authorities, the people representing the authorities and their working methods. On the other hand the authorities can get extra support resources for their clients through the participation of the NGO:s.

Difficulties in the co-operation on a local level can be of practical nature. Many municipalities struggle with economical problems and they have been forced to reduce the number of employees. This means that the workers of the local authorities simply don't have time enough to participate in meetings concerning co-operation as much as needed since they are forced to use all of their time in order to fulfil their basic duties. This might give the representants of the NGO:s the impression that the local authorities don't care about the problem though it can be as simple as a question of workload. The voluntary nature of many NGO:s can on the other hand give an impression of unprofessionalism and unreliability in the eyes of public servants.

In order to avoid problems in the co-operation between the public sector and NGO:s on the local level it is important to discuss the objectives of different actors. Having recognised that there are common problems and goals the actors have to decide about how to divide the work required to solve the problems and reach these goals. Thirdly a representant of one of the actors should take responsibility for the co-ordination of the co-operation otherwise it is unclear who will call for meetings etc.

In order to be successful the co-operation should be followed up by a group of representants of the actors meeting more or less regularly. Experiences has shown that follow-up committées are very important instruments in avoiding and solving both problems with attitudes and practical ones. Furthermore the follow-up committées ensures the commitment of the different actors towards the co-operation. Decisions about new practices and co-operational methods are seldom made by workers on a grass-root level but the attitudes and the level of commitment of these workers towards the new practices have a great impact on how it is working in reality. The follow-up committées makes it easier for the persons involved to understand each other and to get along.

In Finland homelessness has got a great deal of publicity in the last few years. This has partly been a result of the former Government Programme. The Programme to reduce homelessness 2001 - 2003 was a valuable result of the planning process and the need of co-operation between the public sector and NGO:s. In order for the improvements to be carried out it is important that the information about the proposed measures and strategies are given sufficiently to people in deciding position as well as to workers at the grass root level. Carried out properly co-operation can increase mutual understanding between the authorities and the NGO:s.

References

Aaltonen, Katriina (2002). Kiva sanaa että on töissä. Suomen Mielenterveysseuran Vuoden työmaa - projektin arviointitutkimus.

Asunnottomuuden vähentämishjelma 2001 - 2003. Ympäristöministeriön moniste 73. Helsinki 2001. To be found at: www.vyh.fi

Järvelä, Sampo & Laukkanen, Maija (2000). Perspectives on empowerment. Report on Employment Integra thematic work project. Employment publications No 22. Ministry of Labour.

Korhonen, Erkki (2002). Asunnottomuus Helsingissä. Helsingin kaupungin tietokeskus. 2002:4. City of Helsinki Urban Facts. Research Series. Helsinki.

Kuntouttavan työtoiminnan käsikirja (Handbook on Rehabilitating Work Experience). Lindqvist, Tuija; Oksala, Ilkka & Pihlman, Marja - Riitta (eds.) Helsinki 2001. (Handboks of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, ISSN 1236 - 116X; 2001:8.) ISBN 952 - 00 - 1019

Kärkkäinen, Sirkka-Liisa; Hannikainen, Katri & Heikkilä, Iiris (1998). Services for Homeless People. The Policy Context from 1960s until Present Day and Two Examples of Innovative Services. Themes 2/1998. Stakes. National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health, Helsinki.

Kärkkäinen, Sirkka-Liisa (ed.) (1996). Homelessness in Finland. National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health (Stakes), Feantsa group in Finland, Housing Fund of Finland (Asuntorahasto), Y-Foundation (YSäätio).

Mikkonen, Anna & Kärkkäinen, Sirkka-Liisa (2002) Homeless Immigrants in Finland. European Observatory on Homelessness, National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health (Stakes), Y-Foundation (Y-Säätio). To be found at: www.feantsa.org

Ministry of Social and Health Affairs and Health (Sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö ja sen hallinnonala 2001). (Sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö). Brochures 1999:3 ISBN 952 - 0 - 0586 - 2. To be found at: www.stm.fi

National Action Plan Against Poverty and Social Exclusion. Välimäki, Kari& Saari, Juho& Salonen, Mirja& Seppelin, Markus. I Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (2001). ISBN 952-00-0989-2 To be found at: www.stm.fi

Programme for reducing Homelessness in Finland, Press Release, The Finnish Ministry of The Environment, 8th February 2001.

Reiman, Tuula (1999). Seudullisen monikulttuurisuuden kehittämishankkeen loppuraportti. Uudenmaan työvoima- ja elinkeinokeskus. Työvoimatoimiston julkaisuja 2/1999.

Sorainen, Olli (2002). Finland. OECD Sopemi. Trends in International Migration, 2001 Edition. The Ministry of Labour, Helsinki. To be found at: www.mol.fi

Vankeinhoidon ja Kriminaalihuollon tilastoja 2002 (2003). (The Statistics of Prison Administration and Probation Administration of Finland in 2002).

Rikosseuraamusvirasto.

Kriminaalihuoltolaitoksen ja Vankeinhoitolaitoksen Vuosikertomus 2002.

Rikosseuraamusvirasto (2003).

www.asemanlapset.fi

www.ehja.org

www.folkhalsan.fi

www.kela.fi

www.laaninhallitus.fi

www.ray.fi

www.redcross.fi

www.rikosseuraamus.fi

www.valtioneuvosto.fi

www.ymparisto.fi

Unpublished references

Finnish association for Mental Health&Y - Foundation. 26th February 2003. Working paper.

Puttonen, Hannu (2003) Seminar lecture on Homelessness held in Edinburgh 2003.

Prepared for FEANTSA by:

The Y-Foundation

Marcus Weckström

July 2003