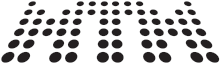
STRATEGY DOCUMENT



Child and Young Adult Strategy

for MTM 2015-2017



**Child and Young Strategy for MTM 2015-2017**

**1.1 Introduction**

This strategy indicates the direction for integrating a child and young adult perspective into the activities of the Swedish Agency for Accessible Media (MTM) during 2015-2017.

The strategy consists of three parts: the strategy document, the internal action plan and the activity list. The strategy document's overall objective and interim objectives are concretised in the action plan.

The activity list contains activity proposals that can be linked to MTM's annual operational plans.

The strategy must be followed up annually by reviewing the action plan and activity list documents.

**1.2 General starting points**

MTM's vision is a society where all forms of media are accessible.

Our mission, as established in the *Ordinance (2010:769) with instructions for the Swedish Agency for Accessible Media*, is to integrate an equality, diversity and child perspective into our activities

Children with reading disabilities must be given the same opportunities to access children's literature as other children. This applies to everyone, regardless of the child's age, gender, language, religion, nationality, ethnic or social background.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the norms, values and principles expressed therein, lays the foundation for MTM's work with accessible media for children and adults, as does MTM's goal which is formulated in their appropriation directions and ordinance.

The entire convention must be applied, but the following articles may be highlighted as especially relevant as they concern MTM's mission:

Article 3: In all actions concerning children /…/, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

Article 4: State Parties shall undertake all appropriate, legislative, administrative, and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention. /…/

Article 12: State Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child. /…/

Article 17: State Parties recognize the important function performed by the mass media and shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health.

Article 23: State Parties recognize that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full decent life. /…/

The work with accessible media for children and young adults is also founded on the Swedish Library Act (2013:801) where persons with disabilities represent a prioritised group (§4). The Act also points out that public libraries have a responsibility to promote children and young adults as a prioritised group (§8).

**2. Current situation**

**2.1 Target group and users**

MTM's target group is people with a disability an impairment that makes it hard for them to read printed text. In consultation with the Swedish Language Council, MTM uses “reading disabilities” as a general term.

In April of 2015, MTM had 40,429 registered users under the age of 18 in Legimus. In addition to this, there are users of MTM's media and services that are not registered.

When MTM assumed the state’s responsibility for easy-to- read in January 2015 the target group expanded. Through the easy-to-read publishing house, LL förlaget, and the easy-to-read newspaper 8 sidor [8 pages], MTM also has young users who are weak readers but who are not entitled to talking books.

**2.2 Media**

MTM has talking books, talking books with text, reading practice books (2 reading speeds) and Braille books with varying degrees of difficulty in its media portfolio for children and young people. Different kinds of Braille and tactile picture books are produced for younger children. MTM also makes a few picture books as talking books with text.

There are also original easy-to-read books for adolescents (not retold books) that are published by LL-förlaget. Around 5-10 titles geared to young readers are produced each year. In addition, the classic books, published by LL-förlaget, are frequently read and discussed in schools.

MTM annually acquires titles for children and young adults in languages other than Swedish, from RNIB (UK), Celia (Finland) and via the international collaboration TIGAR. MTM also obtains titles from the National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools, SPSM, in the form of e-textbooks.

According to MTM's guidelines, around 25 per cent of the talking books acquired annually should be for children and young adults. For Braille books, the corresponding figure is 50 per cent. These quotas are planned and followed up via MTM's media plan. 26 per cent out of the total number of acquired talking books in 2014 were books for children and adults. For Braille books, the percentage of titles for children and adults was 46 per cent.

MTM produces two talking magazines for children and young adults: Popcorn and Bubbel. MTM also produces the Braille magazine Knottret for young adults. In addition, there are a few issues of the children's magazine Kamratposten that are made available in Braille.

8 sidor is an easy-to-read newspaper in Swedish. It is not aimed specifically at young readers, but is read and used in teaching in schools. Via 8 sidor, MTM has a goal to support schools in their work with teaching children to evaluate information and sources. MTM is responsible for publishing 8 sidor, and the newspaper operates independently.

**2.3 Services**

During 2014, the number of registered users of the service *Egen nedladdning* [personal download service] who are under 18 increased by 82 per cent. Thus, at the end of 2014/ beginning of 2015, 54 per cent of our registered users were children and young adults.

The app Legimus has been successful in reaching young users. It is now possible to search for and download the book straight to the app. Several functions that target young users are currently being developed. In April 2015, 40,423 children below the age of 18 were registered as downloaders in Legimus.se .

The children's web at legimus.se contains information about our media and services in texts that are adapted for children. There is a catalogue search engine and reading tips that are organised by subject. Under the tab “Ask us”, children are able to send their questions via mail or post.

The Braille case (Punktväskan) and the Braille bag (Punktkassen) are services that are meant for future Braille readers who are at preschool age and their parents.

The Braille club (Punktklubben) is a reading club for children aged 5-12. The club members are Braille readers (or future Braille readers) and receive a few parcels a year with books, games, recipes or tactile pictures.

MTM's Braille services also target children and young adults.

MTM’s children’s librarians offer support to intermediaries, in accordance with the Swedish Talking Book Model. This is done through outreach activities and through MTM's answers and suggestions box.

MTM operates as a knowledge centre and support for school staff and other people who work with easy-to-read literature for children and young adults. In the teachers’ room on the LL website, there is educational material such as lesson plans and supervision material which can be used by teachers to introduce children/young adults to the easy-to-read literature. The newspaper 8 sidor supports the teaching in schools and at schools for pupils with learning disabilities.

**2.4 Coordination Group for a child perspective**

The Coordination Group for a child perspective consists of representatives from all of MTM's departments/units. They identify problems and issues in each respective department to discuss within the Coordination Group. The children's librarians bring these matters up with the relevant manager for approval.

The members of the Coordination Group are in charge of ensuring that a child perspective is present in each respective unit. The department and the unit managers are responsible for integrating a child perspective into their operations and daily activities. The Coordination Group's representatives follow up the work regarding a child perspective in each unit for an annual assessment of the strategy, and to contribute with data for the annual report.

**3. Strategic objectives and interim objectives**

The overall objective of the Child and Young Strategy is to integrate a child perspective and the children's own perspective into MTM's activities.

MTM makes a distinction between a child perspective, which involves working in the child's best interest, and the children's own perspective, in which the children's own ideas and wishes are met.

During the period 2015-2017 the strategic work will focus on the following interim objectives: participation, reading promotion and implementation.

**Participation**

Aims to increase the awareness of the users' needs and wishes, and children's right to express their opinions in matters that affect children. Participation also contributes to developing a qualitative selection for our media portfolio that reflects our users' needs and interests, as well as user-friendly services.

**Reading promotion**

Aims to stimulate reading and market our portfolio of accessible media. This will help MTM reach more people, new groups, with increased awareness of accessible media.

**Implementation**

Aims to integrate a child perspective into all parts of our organisation and to analyse the consequences of making decisions from a child perspective. For example, production quotas, the development of new media formats and services.

**Action Plan**

This action plan constitutes a concretisation of the interim objectives of the Child and Young Adult Strategy and suggests how MTM can work during 2015-2017 to realise these objectives. The action plan consists, in part, of activities which are already in progress.

**Interim objective 1: Participation**

**1.1** Children's points of views and preferences are necessary in order to further develop a good service and give the users what they require in terms of MTM's media. It is a prerequisite for developing the quality of our portfolio, while also taking into account the children's right to be heard in matters that affect them.

Therefore, MTM will carry out more extensive user surveys and collect information regarding the needs and requests of our users who are under 18 years old on a more ongoing basis.

**1.2** To encourage and inspire children to participate more, MTM will create surveys that enable children to express themselves about their reading and our media via legimus.se. Furthermore, this aims to contribute towards increasing the number of suggestions for books for children and adults.

**1.3** It shall be easy for children to find information on legimus.se and on the Legimus app. Printed materials and profiles should be adapted and accessible to children.

**1.4**  MTM shall comply with the children's wishes as far possible and shall address and treat them with care.

**1.5** All children shall be given the opportunity to feel a desire to read and experience the joy of reading. MTM shall make literature available via LL-förlaget that will continue its work to offer age-appropriate easy-to-read literature for the older children. Children with reading disabilities and children who are weak readers shall be able to access easy-to-read books that are equally as appealing as those that other children of their age read.

**1.6** LL-förlaget's publication of easy-to-read literature for young adults shall continue to contain titles that children have participated in creating, both at the conceptual stage and during the script writing process. The subject choices should be up-to-date and reflect the children's surroundings.

**1.7** The newspaper 8 sidor is an important part of making the schools' work with media and information literacy and source criticism accessible. The platforms “Alla väljare” [All voters] and “Kommentarsfält för alla” [Comment fields for all] shall continue to give everyone the chance to participate in democratic conversations.

**Interim objective 2: Reading promotion**

**2.2** The children's site legimus.se shall be easy to use and have appealing features. Therefore,

MTM shall also create a site on legimus.se for young users who are 12 years old and above.

**2.2** MTM shall work to highlight all types of books available at Legimus through book recommendations and feature articles in order to spread the love of reading. Reading tips in various forms shall be available: written, spoken and filmed.

**2.3** MTM shall encourage interactivity at legimus.se to inspire young people to read and talk about reading.

**2.4** MTM shall promote access to Braille and tactile illustrated books for children with disabilities through producing and marketing tactile forms of media.

**2.5** MTM shall work to actively participate in Nordic collaborations to jointly produce tactile picture books and measures to promote reading.

**2.6** MTM shall support intermediaries by organising outreach activities during teacher's seminars, in various networks and at schools. MTM shall also operate as a national knowledge centre for accessible media. The newspaper 8 sidor shall continue to offer accessible information, news and reading stimuli to school for pupils with learning disabilities.

**Interim objective 3: Implementation**

**3.1** To implement a child perspective within the organisation means integrating and raising consciousness about this matter in all groups' work and processes.

**3.2** It also involves analysing what consequences planned activities have on accessible media for children and young adults. When making a decision, a child perspective shall be taken into account.

**3.3** MTM's children's librarians shall monitor the progress made in terms of children with reading disabilities and oversee the accessible children's literature. They shall also spread knowledge internally, externally and in cooperation with other relevant authorities and organisations.