



Study Circle: Reclaiming Power

Complete materials for systems understanding and subsidiarity

Innehåll:

- Facilitator Guides
- Session Guides
- Printable Materials

Swedish Subsidiarity • 2026

Facilitator Guides

Complete materials for systems understanding and subsidiarity

Facilitator's Guide: Leading Conversations on Systems Change

Welcome. You are holding the toolkit to start a conversation that society desperately needs. This study circle is not about party politics. It is about **systems literacy**.

Your Role

You are not a teacher. You are a **gardener**. Your task is not to provide the answers, but to ensure that all voices have the space to grow.

Structure (4 Meetings)

1. **The Diagnosis:** Why does everything feel so sluggish and bureaucratic?
2. **The Compass:** Measuring Power, Knowledge, and Vulnerability.
3. **The Solution:** What actually is Subsidiarity (Local Governance)?
4. **The Action:** What can we do right here, right now?

Golden Rules

- **Systems, not People:** If someone complains about "Politician X," redirect to "What incentives drive Politician X?"
 - **Round the Table:** Ensure the quiet voices are heard.
 - **Fika:** The most important technology for Swedish collaboration. Coffee/tea is mandatory.
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Before You Start – A Guide to Hosting

How to invite (without sounding like a cult)

SMS/Email Template:

"Hi [Name]! I'm gathering a few neighbors/colleagues to talk about how we can make our daily lives better—not by complaining, but by thinking differently about how society functions. There will be fika, good company, and no requirements to 'believe in' anything specific. Interested in giving it a try? ^{Today} [Date] at [Time] at [Location]. Let me know if you want to join!"

How to answer common questions:

- "Is this politics?" – "No, it's about understanding systems, not parties."
- "What does it cost?" – "Nothing, except maybe bringing some fika to share."
- "I don't know anything about this..." – "Perfect! Then you have no preconceived notions."

Room Prep (The Swedish Magic)

1. **Chairs in a circle** – no head of the table, no back row.
2. **Fika station** – coffee, tea, something to munch on (shared responsibility works well).
3. **Tools** – flipchart/paper, pens, sticky notes, and a **silence button** (can be a bell or just "raising a hand").
4. **The Temperature** – Swedes function best at 20-22°C, not too hot.

Your First Five Minutes (Exactly What to Say)

"Welcome everyone. Thank you for coming. I've invited you here because I believe we need to start talking in a new way about what isn't working in our daily lives. Not by complaining about individuals or political parties, but by looking at the systems—how decision-making works, where knowledge is located, and how we can become more self-sufficient right here where we live. I don't have the answers. But I have some good questions that I think can lead us somewhere new. And I have coffee. We will meet four times. Today, we start by simply noting what feels off. Next time, we will learn a tool for analysis. The third time, we look at solutions. The fourth time, we decide on something small that we can actually do. The only thing required of you is that you listen and share what you feel comfortable sharing. No one will get homework or be interrogated. Shall we start by everyone saying their name and one word about how it feels to be here tonight?"

For the Circle Leader – The Art of Leading Swedes in Conversation

Time Discipline (Swedish Punctuality is a Superpower)

- **Start:** Exactly on the scheduled time (even if only two people have arrived).
- **The 90-Minute Rhythm:**
- 0-15 min: Check-in + coffee
- 15-40 min: Discussion
- 40-50 min: Exercise/Activity
- 50-85 min: Summary
- 85-90 min: Check-out + next steps
- **End:** Exactly on the scheduled time (people have babysitters, buses to catch).

Handling Classic Swedish Challenges

1. "We already tried this in 1978..."

- **Response:** "I hear that you have experience. Can you tell us what we can learn from that attempt so we don't make the same mistakes?"
- **Transform:** From cynicism to experiential knowledge.

2. "But isn't that the law?" (Rules mindset)

- **Response:** "Absolutely, and laws are important. But tonight, we get to play with the question: *If we could change one rule—which one would it be and why?*"
- **Transform:** From compliance to creativity.

3. Silence is not disinterest

- Swedes think before they speak. Wait 7 seconds after a question.
- **Tip:** "Let's take 30 seconds of silent thinking time before we start sharing."

4. "I don't have an opinion..." (The Law of Jante/Jantelagen)

- **Solution:** Use **sticky notes**—everyone writes down thoughts first, then reads them out anonymously.
- **Phrase:** "There are no stupid answers, only different perspectives."

Four Roles You Play (And None are "The Expert")

1. **The Timekeeper** – "We have 10 minutes left on this point."

2. **The Summarizer** – "So what I'm hearing is that several people are saying..."
3. **The Facilitator** – "Who haven't we heard from yet?"
4. **The Connector** – "What Lars said about the school reminds me of what Anna said about healthcare..."

When It Gets Emotional

- Swedes rarely get loud, but can become silent with anger/grief.
- **Phrase:** "This is an important topic that affects many. Let's take a break and drink some water."
- **Rule:** We discuss systems, not people. If someone mentions "Politician X" – "What system do you think creates incentives for Politician X to act that way?"

The Swedish Consensus Magic

1. **First Round:** Everyone gets to say what they think without discussion.
 2. **Second Round:** "What themes do you hear?"
 3. **Third Round:** "Can we agree that X is a problem we want to address?"
 4. **Conclusion:** "So our shared understanding tonight is..."
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After the Circle – From Conversation to Community

Closing Rituals (For the Swedish Soul)

The Final Meeting:

1. **Review the "Treasure Map"** – see what resources you actually have.
2. **Choose ONE thing** to do within 30 days (small, concrete, possible).
3. **Write a "30-Day Contract"** on a paper that everyone signs.
4. **Set a date for "Meeting 5: Follow-up"** (if you want).
5. **Celebrate with extra fika** (could be semlor, punsch, something festive).

30-Day Contract Template:

"We, the participants of [Group Name], promise that before [Date], we will do the following: [Concrete Action]. We will return on [Date] to share what we have learned. Signed: [Signatures]"

Options for Continued Engagement

Option 1: Continue as a Study Circle

- **Theme:** "Subsidiarity for [your city/district]"
- **Focus:** Go deeper into one area (food, energy, care).
- **Resource:** Request special material from svensksubsidiaritet.se

Option 2: Start a Practical Project

- **Food:** Buying club, allotment garden community, "eat together" evenings.
- **Energy:** Solar panel group-buy, energy savings club.
- **Safety:** Neighborhood watch ring on WhatsApp, "walking bus" for children.
- **Support:** Pattern library at svensksubsidiaritet.se

Option 3: Become Ambassadors

- Invite the municipal councilor/regional politicians to a meeting.
- Write a letter to the editor in the local newspaper.
- Start a circle in the next neighborhood/workplace.

How to Share Your Learning (So Others Can Grow)

1. **Go to svensksubsidiaritet.se**
2. **Click "Share your circle's experience"**

3. Fill in a short form:

- Which area are you from?
- Which system did you focus on?
- What worked well?
- What would you do differently?
- Which action did you choose?

Why this is important: Your experiences become **patterns** in our library. The next group in Kiruna or Malmö can learn from you.

When It Feels Too Big...

Remember:

1. **No one expects you to solve the housing crisis.** A neighborhood cooperation around potatoes is a revolution on its own small scale.
2. **Silence is okay.** The group might sleep for a while and wake up in the spring.
3. **You are not alone.** Thousands of other Swedes have the same questions. Your thoughts feed a larger movement.

The Final Word (To You as Circle Leader)

Thank you. You have done something brave—you have said "maybe there is another way" and created a space for others to explore that together.

Regardless of what happens now: You have planted a seed. It might sprout immediately. It might lie in the soil over the winter. But you have broken the ice.

The Swedish "Folkhemmet" (People's Home) was not built in Stockholm. It was built in rooms exactly like this one, with coffee, silence, and the stubborn belief that doing things together is better.

The material is open to use, change, and share. The only thing we ask is that you tell us what you learn along the way.

More resources, tools, and inspiration can be found at: svensksubsidiaritet.se

Session Guides

Complete materials for systems understanding and subsidiarity

Meeting 1: The Swedish Paradox - The Diagnosis

Goal: Participants should recognize system dysfunction in their own daily lives and understand that the problem is not "stupid politicians" but the system architecture itself.

Materials you need:

- Fika (coffee, tea, something to eat)
 - Large index cards (A5) and pens for everyone
 - Flipchart or large paper for the wall
 - Optional: Printout of "System Barometer" (see below)
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0-10 min: Welcome and Check-in

What you say (exactly):

"Welcome, everyone. Thank you for coming. I am [your name] and I will be your host during these four meetings. I have invited you here because I believe we need to talk in a new way about why things feel so difficult in our society. Not by complaining about politicians or parties, but by looking at the systems themselves—how decisions are made, where knowledge is located, who has power. I don't have ready-made answers. But I have some good questions and some tools to understand better. And I have coffee. We will meet four times. Today: diagnosis—what feels wrong? Next time: an analysis tool. The third time: solutions that actually work. The fourth time: something small we can do here and now. The only requirement is that you listen and share what you are comfortable sharing. No pressure. No one gets homework. We start exactly on time and end exactly on time—out of respect for your babysitters and bus schedules. Before we get started, let's go around the circle. Say your name and one word for how it feels to be here tonight. I'll start: [your name], and I feel... curious."

Facilitation tips:

- After each person, say "Thank you, [name]"—this acknowledges them and creates a rhythm.
 - If someone says more than one word, let it flow—the first time is nervous.
 - If there is silence: wait 7 seconds before moving on to the next person.
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10-25 min: Shared Reading + Concept Introduction

What you say:

"Thank you for your check-in. Now we are going to read a little together. I will read aloud from a short manifesto that explains why centralized systems—which worked well in the 20th century—have become our problem in the 21st century. While I read, think about if anything feels familiar."

Read aloud (5 minutes):

Choose 2-3 paragraphs from your manifesto text or use this shortened version:

"Sweden has built the world's most impressive systems. Healthcare for everyone. School for everyone. Care for everyone. But somewhere along the way, something happened: the systems became so large and complex that they no longer see the people. It is called centralization. The idea was good: if we gather experts in Stockholm, we get better decisions. If we standardize processes, it becomes fair. If we do everything the same everywhere, it becomes efficient. But that only worked as long as the problems were simple and identical. Today, reality is more complicated. Your daily life in Kiruna is not the same as someone's daily life in Malmö. Your family is not identical to your neighbor's. Your health does not follow the manual. And yet, the systems treat us as if we were identical. The same healthcare queues. The same curriculum. The same benefit rules. We have optimized for efficiency but forgotten the human."

Key concepts to explain:

1. **Centralization:** "When decisions are made at the national or regional level instead of locally. Example: The Transport Administration in Borlänge decides about your village bus."
2. **Monoculture:** "When you do everything the same everywhere. Efficient but vulnerable—like when all potatoes are the same variety and a disease wipes out the whole crop."
3. **System Architecture:** "How something is built from the ground up. Not who governs but *how* power and knowledge are distributed in the structure itself."

Write on flipchart:

- CENTRALIZATION = Decisions are made far away
- MONOCULTURE = The same solution everywhere
- SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE = How power is built

25-35 min: System Barometer (Individual Exercise)

What you say:

"Now we are going to do a quick exercise. You will each get a paper with a list of Swedish systems you have probably encountered recently. I want you to mark how it feels when you encounter them. There is no right or wrong—only your experience."

Hand out cards with this table (or draw on flipchart if you are few):

System	Feel seen	Feel like a number
Health Center (Vårdcentral)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Insurance Agency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grocery Store (ICA/Coop)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Municipality Website	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Bank	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Police	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public Transport (SL/etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Give 5 minutes of quiet time.

After 5 minutes, say:

"Okay, we won't go through all your answers individually—that takes too long. But I want you to look at your own answers. Is there a pattern? Which systems get more checks in the 'like a number' column? Raise your hand if at least half of your checks ended up in the 'like a number' column."

Count hands, say:

"Interesting. [X] of you feel more often like a number than like a person when you meet Swedish systems. It's not because the people working there are mean. It's because the systems are built to handle 10 million Swedes with the same process. And then you become mathematics, not a human."

35-60 min: Group Discussion - The System Swamp in Daily Life

What you say:

"Now we are going to talk together. I have three questions and we will take them in order. We go one round around the circle for each question. You can pass if you want, but try to share something small if you can. Remember: we are criticizing systems, not the people who work in them."

Question 1 (15 min): Where do you meet the "system"?

Facilitation:

- Start yourself with an example: "I tried to change my address last month and it required five different authorities..."
- Go around the circle.
- If someone mentions a person: "Thank you, and what system do you think put that person in that situation?"
- If someone takes too long (>2 min): "Thank you [name], that was a good example. Shall we move on so everyone gets space?"

Write down on flipchart: Which systems are mentioned most? (Social Insurance Agency, healthcare, school usually top the list).

Question 2 (10 min): Near or far away?

"Next question: Think about the latest decision that affected your daily life—perhaps a school change, a bus that stops running, a healthcare rule. Do you feel that decision was made close to you or far away? Why do you think that?"

Facilitation:

- Less formal round—people can build on each other's answers.
- Listen for: "Stockholm", "The Region", "EU" vs. "Our principal", "The neighbor".
- Summarize: "I hear many examples of decisions made far from your daily life. Do you agree that this is a pattern?"

Question 3 (10 min): When standard doesn't work

"Last question for today: Has anyone encountered a situation where the 'standard solution' didn't fit your unique situation? Perhaps a form that didn't have an option for you, or a rule that didn't see your reality?"

Facilitation:

- This often becomes emotional—allow pauses, validate feelings.
- If someone gets angry at "bureaucrats": "I hear your frustration. What do you think it is in the system that made it so that bureaucrat couldn't help you?"
- Summarize: "The pattern I hear is: the rules are built for the 'average Swede' and when you deviate, the system becomes blind."

60-75 min: Intro to Next Meeting + Homework

What you say:

"We have talked a lot about problems today. Good. Diagnosis first. But next time we are going to learn to analyze why the systems work this way. We will use a tool called 'The Proximity Compass'—it helps us see where power sits, whose knowledge counts, and how vulnerable something is. Until next time, you have a small task, if you want: Bring an example of a local resource that the system misses. It could be:

- A person with a skill (someone who can fix, grow, build, translate)
- A place (an empty room, a piece of land, a storage shed)
- A knowledge (something you know about your area that experts in Stockholm don't know)

Write it down on a note and bring it next time. We are going to build a 'treasure map' together."

Hand out small notes and pens.

75-85 min: Summary + Next Steps

What you say:

"Before we finish, let me summarize what we learned today:

1. Swedish systems are built for standardization—good for efficiency, bad for unique humans.
2. Many of you feel like numbers more often than like persons when you meet these systems.
3. Decisions that affect you are often made far away by people who don't know your reality.

This is not because politicians or officials are stupid. It is because the architecture—the way it is built—is wrong for today's complex reality. Next time, [date and time], we take the next step: we learn to diagnose where power and knowledge sit. Feel free to invite a neighbor or colleague—the more perspectives, the better."

Practicalities:

- "Can everyone come next time? [Look around.]"
- "Does anyone need a ride or help with childcare? [Solve practically.]"
- "Contact info—should we have a WhatsApp group? [If the group wants.]"

85-90 min: Check-out

What you say:

"Last time around the circle for today: one word for how you feel now, after this conversation. I'll start: [your word - e.g., 'hopeful', 'tired', 'curious']."

Go one round.

Closing:

"Thank you for coming and for daring to share. See you on [date]!"

If Something Goes Wrong - Troubleshooting

No one talks:

- "Let's take 30 seconds individually and write down a thought first, then we share."

One person dominates:

- "Thank you [name], that was valuable. Now I would really like to hear from [someone else]."

Political debate starts:

- "I hear that many have strong feelings about party politics. But today we are focusing on the system *behind* the politics. Next question..."

Someone becomes emotional:

- "This is an important topic that affects us. Let's take a short break. Coffee?"

Time runs out:

- Skip question 3, go directly to summary at 75 min. Better to end on time than to stress.
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Handout to distribute (summary)

Meeting 1 - Summary

What we learned:

- Centralization = decisions are made far away from you
- Monoculture = the same solution everywhere (efficient but vulnerable)
- System Architecture = how power is *built*, not who holds it

Next time: We learn "The Proximity Compass"—a tool to diagnose where power and knowledge sit.

Your homework (optional): Write down a local resource that "the system" doesn't see:

- A person's skill
- A place
- A knowledge

Read more: svensksubsidiaritet.se/systemanalys

Facilitator Checklist (for you):

Before the meeting:

- Coffee, tea, fika
- Notes and pens
- Flipchart or large paper
- Printouts of "System Barometer"
- Chairs in a circle
- Confirmed time and place to everyone

During the meeting:

- Start exactly on time
- Check-in
- Reading aloud

- System Barometer
- Three questions
- Homework
- Check-out
- End exactly on time

After the meeting:

- Write down insights (what worked? What to change?)
- Remind the group about the next meeting (sms/email 2 days before)

Meeting 2: The Proximity Compass - The Tool for Diagnosis

Goal: Participants should be able to use the Proximity Compass to analyze WHERE power sits, WHOSE knowledge counts, and HOW vulnerable the system is.

Materials you need:

- Fika
 - Printed compass templates (one per person + a large one on the flipchart)
 - Markers or pens in three colors
 - Notes from last time (local resources)
 - Optional: Post-it notes in three colors
-

0-10 min: Welcome Back + Check-in

What you say:

"Welcome back! Great to see you again. For those of you who are new today: we are in meeting 2 of 4 where we learn to understand systems instead of just complaining about them. Last time we talked about the problem—that Swedish systems feel bureaucratic and impersonal. Today we are going to learn a tool to understand why. But first: check-in. One round around the circle. Say your name and: What local resource did you think of since last time? A person, a place, or knowledge that 'the system' misses. I'll start: [your name], and I thought of [example - e.g., 'my neighbor who can fix anything' or 'that empty space by the square']."

Facilitation tips:

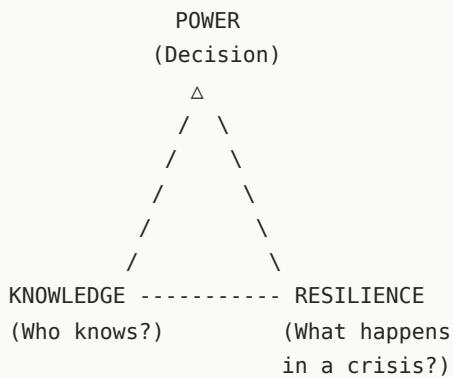
- Collect the physical notes in a pile in the middle of the circle—"Our treasure map is growing!"
 - If someone forgot: "No worries, you can add it later."
 - If someone new arrived: "Welcome! We start every time with a check-in so everyone gets warmed up."
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10-30 min: Introduction to The Proximity Compass

What you say:

*"Thank you for your check-in. Now we are going to learn today's tool: **The Proximity Compass**. It is a triangle with three corners that helps us understand how power and knowledge are distributed in a system. Why a triangle? Because these three things hang together. If you change one, you affect the others. Let me show you."*

Draw a large triangle on the flipchart with these three corners:



Explain each corner (5 min per corner):

1. POWER (Decision) - From where is the decision made?

"This isn't about who is mean or kind. It is about: at what level are decisions made? Example: School food in Kiruna.

- Is the decision made by the school kitchen? (Local = close to you)
- Is it made by the municipality? (Regional = fairly close)
- Is it made by the National Agency for Education in Stockholm? (National = far away)
- Or by EU directives? (Supranational = very far away)

The further away the decision is made, the less it can be adapted to YOUR school's specific needs."

2. KNOWLEDGE (Who knows?) - Whose expertise counts?

"Every system has different types of knowledge. Sometimes they are valued differently. Example: Healthcare.

- The doctor's medical education (Formal expertise)
- The nurse's experience from 20 years on the ward (Practical expertise)
- The patient's knowledge of their own body (Lived experience)

Often only the first one counts. But without the other two, you miss important things. Whose knowledge does the system listen to?"

3. RESILIENCE (What happens in a crisis?) - How vulnerable is the system?

"This is about: If something goes wrong, will we cope? Example: Food supply.

- If Sweden imports 50% of food: What happens if borders close?
- If everything is controlled digitally: What happens if the internet goes down?
- If only ICA (major grocery chain) exists: What happens if they go bankrupt?

A robust system has redundancy—several ways to achieve the same thing. A vulnerable system has one solution. If that fails, everything fails."

Write on flipchart:

POWER:	Central (Stockholm/EU)	↔	Local (Here)
KNOWLEDGE:	Expert (Certificate)	↔	Local (Experience)
RESILIENCE:	Vulnerable (One way)	↔	Robust (Many ways)

30-35 min: Demonstration Example (We do one together)

What you say:

"Now we will test the compass on an example together before you do your own. We'll take something everyone knows: **Systembolaget** (The state alcohol monopoly). Or if you prefer: a bus line, a health center, school food—vote!"

Let the group choose. Use their choice. I will demonstrate with Systembolaget:

Hand out empty compass templates to everyone.

"Okay, Systembolaget. Let's fill in the compass together. **POWER:** Who decides on Systembolaget's opening hours, assortment, prices? [Let the group answer. Correct answer: The Swedish state via monopoly, Parliament, Systembolaget AB]

- Local influence? Almost none. You cannot start your own shop.
- Mark furthest out towards 'Central' on the scale."

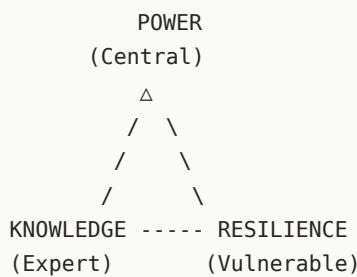
KNOWLEDGE: Whose knowledge is valued? [Let the group answer]

- Sommeliers? Systembolaget's buyers? Yes.
- Your local vineyard that wants to sell directly? No, must go through the system.
- Mark: Expert knowledge counts, local does not."

RESILIENCE: If Systembolaget closes, can you get alcohol legally in Sweden another way? [Let the group answer: No (except restaurants)]

- Very vulnerable—only ONE channel.
- Mark: Low resilience."

Show the finished compass:



"See, a pointy triangle tilting upwards and right. That means: Power far away, only expert knowledge counts, vulnerable system. That is typical for centralized monopolies."

35-65 min: Group Exercise - Map a Local Problem

What you say:

"Now it's your turn. You will choose a local problem and map it using the compass. Work in small groups of 2-4 people. Choose one of these (or suggest your own):

- The school food in [your municipality]
- Bus line [X] that stopped running
- Wait times at the health center
- Elderly care home in your area

You have 30 minutes. Fill in the compass and be prepared to present."

Divide into groups (if >6 people).

Hand out:

- 1 large compass template per group
- Colored markers
- Paper for notes

Guidance while they work (5 min per group, rotate):

Walk around and help the groups:

If they get stuck on **POWER**:

- "Start with a concrete question: Who decides the budget?"
- "If you don't know, guess! We can check later."

If they get stuck on **KNOWLEDGE**:

- "What kind of knowledge is required to do the job?"
- "Whose voice does the system *not* listen to?"

If they get stuck on **RESILIENCE**:

- "Think: If this system stops working tomorrow, what happens?"
- "Are there alternatives?"

After 20 min, give a 10-minute warning.

After 30 min:

"Okay, pens down! Now every group gets 3 minutes to present their compass. Show your triangle and briefly explain why it looks the way it does."

Each group presents (3-4 min per group):

- Which problem did you choose?
- What does your compass look like?
- What surprised you?

After each presentation:

- "Thank you! Questions from anyone else? [Max 1 question]"
- Hang their compass up on the wall.

65-80 min: Joint Reflection - Patterns We See

What you say:

"Thank you for your presentations. Now let's step back and look at all the compasses we created. Look at the wall. Do you see any patterns?"

Silent observation for 30 seconds.

Ask these questions, one at a time:

Question 1 (5 min): Shape patterns

"What do most triangles look like? Pointy upwards (centralized) or wide downwards (local)?"

[Let the group answer. Likely: Most are pointy.]

"Exactly. Most Swedish systems today are built with power centrally, expert knowledge dominant, and low resilience. It's not a coincidence—it is 20th-century architecture."

Question 2 (5 min): The Knowledge Gap

"Whose knowledge is ignored in these systems? Raise your hand if you see an example where local experience doesn't count."

[Many hands, probably.]

"This is the core of the problem. The system thinks expert knowledge in Stockholm is enough. But expert-at-a-distance can never replace knowledge-in-context."

Question 3 (5 min): Resilience Vulnerability

"Which systems feel most vulnerable? If they break, do we have backup?"

[Discussion.]

"I hear: [summarize]. The Swedish welfare society has efficiency but not redundancy. We put all our eggs in one basket because it was cheaper. Now we are vulnerable."

80-85 min: Future Vision + Next Meeting

What you say:

"Great work today! You can now diagnose systems. You see where power sits, whose knowledge counts, how vulnerable it is. But diagnosis is only step one. Next time we will talk about: **What is the solution?** Spoiler alert: It is called subsidiarity. In Swedish: närläge (proximity rule). Or even simpler: moving power closer to the people affected. Until next time: Take your compass and think of a system you yourself want to change. Not just understand—but actually do differently. We will start building solutions. [Date and time for next meeting]."

85-90 min: Check-out

What you say:

"Last round: One word for how you feel now, after learning the compass. I'll start: [your word - e.g., 'clearer', 'angry', 'hopeful']."

Closing:

"Thank you for coming and for thinking so sharply. Take your compass templates home if you want. See you next time!"

Handout to distribute

Meeting 2 - Summary: The Proximity Compass

The three corners:

1. **POWER:** From where are decisions made?
 - Central (Stockholm/EU/Region) or Local (Here)?
2. **KNOWLEDGE:** Whose expertise counts?
 - Formal (certificates, education) or Local (experience, context)?
3. **RESILIENCE:** How vulnerable is the system?
 - One solution (vulnerable) or Multiple alternatives (robust)?

How to use the compass:

1. Choose a system (school food, bus, healthcare, etc.).
2. Ask for each corner: Where are we on the scale?
3. Draw the triangle.
4. Interpret the shape:

- Pointy upwards = Centralized.
- Wide downwards = Local.

Next time: We learn *subsidiarity*—how to move power closer to people.

Read more: svensksubsidiaritet.se/systemanalys

Facilitator Checklist

Before the meeting:

- Coffee, fika
- Printouts of compass templates (at least 10)
- Large compass on flipchart
- Colored pens/markers
- Notes from the previous meeting
- Tape to hang up group compasses

During the meeting:

- Check-in with local resources
- Explain the three corners
- Demo with Systembolaget (or other)
- Group exercise
- Presentations
- Joint reflection
- Check-out

After the meeting:

- Photograph all compasses (documentation)
- Remind about next meeting
- Prepare Meeting 3 material (subsidiarity)

Troubleshooting Meeting 2

Groups don't understand the compass:

- Go back to the Systembolaget example.
- Draw clearer: "Central" at the very top, "Local" at the very bottom.

They want to talk politics instead of systems:

- "Good point, but let's keep focus on the structure, not the parties. Whose system wins the election matters less if the system itself is built wrong."

All compasses look the same:

- "Exactly! Most Swedish systems have the same shape. What does that say about our society?"

Someone says 'But centralization IS good!':

- "Absolutely, it can be—for certain things. The question is: for what? Defense? Yes. Your school food? Maybe not."

Meeting 3: Subsidiarity - The Solution Has a Name

Goal: Participants should understand what subsidiarity (proximity rule) means and be able to see concrete examples of how it works in practice.

Materials you need:

- Fika
 - Printed example cards (see below)
 - Large papers for brainstorming
 - Flipchart with compasses from previous meetings put up
 - Optional: Pictures of working examples (can be shown on phone/computer)
-

0-10 min: Welcome + Recap-check-in

What you say:

"Welcome to meeting three! We are halfway through now. Today will be more hopeful than before—we are talking about solutions, not just problems. But first: quick recap. What do you remember from last time? What was the name of the tool we learned?"

[Let someone answer: "The Proximity Compass"]

"Exactly! The compass with power, knowledge, resilience. And what did we see when we mapped Swedish systems?"

[Let the group answer: "Pointy triangles, centralized, vulnerable"]

"Precisely. Today we are going to talk about the opposite: systems that are wide—where power sits close, local knowledge counts, and there are backup plans. Check-in: One round. Name a system you yourself would like to see work differently. Not necessarily fix—just do differently. I'll start..."

Write down the systems they mention—you will return to them later.

10-30 min: The Concept of Subsidiarity

What you say:

"Okay, now comes a tricky word: **subsidiarity**. It sounds like something from EU bureaucrats, but it is actually much simpler than that. Subsidiarity means: **No power should lie higher up than necessary**. Or in plain Swedish: **Närstyre (Proximity rule)**. Or even simpler: **What can be done locally, should be done locally.**"

Draw this pyramid on flipchart:



"Today power usually goes top-down: EU decides, then the region, then the municipality, then YOU have to comply. Subsidiarity flips that: You and your neighbors decide. If you can't handle it, the neighborhood helps. If the neighborhood can't handle it, the municipality helps. And so on upwards. Thus: start from the bottom, go upwards only if necessary."

Example (5 minutes):

"Take school food. Subsidiarity would mean:

- **Can the school kitchen decide?** Yes? Then they should be allowed to do so.
- **Do they need help with procurement?** Okay, the municipality can fix that.
- **Does it need national safety requirements?** Sure, the National Agency for Education can set minimum standards.

But IT STARTS FROM THE BOTTOM. Not from the top. Today it starts with the National Agency for Education writing rules, then the municipality procuring, then the kitchen executing. It is upside-down."

Write on flipchart:

TODAY: EU → Region → Municipality → You
SUBSIDIARITY: You → Neighborhood → Municipality → Region → EU
(start locally, go up if necessary)

Why this is important (5 minutes):

"Why would this be better? Three reasons: **1. LOCAL KNOWLEDGE:** Those who live in a system know things that remote experts never learn. Example: The kitchen knows which children are allergic, what food is actually eaten up. **2. SPEED:** Decisions on site are faster than waiting for a regional meeting. Example: If delivery fails, the kitchen can call local farmers directly. **3. RESPONSIBILITY:** When you see the effect of your decisions every day, you become more responsible. Example: The school kitchen sees the children eat (or not eat). Regional politicians see Excel sheets."

30-60 min: Concrete Examples - "This is what it can look like"

What you say:

"Now we are going to look at real examples where subsidiarity actually works. Not hypothetically—but here and now, in Sweden or our neighboring countries. I have made cards with five examples. We divide into small groups. Each group gets a card, reads it, and discusses: Could this work here with us? You have 15 minutes. Then you present to the others."

Example cards (print out or read aloud):

CARD 1: FOOD GUILDS (Borlänge, Sweden)

What: 50 households join together and buy food directly from local farmers. Every week "food bags" are delivered to a central point. Members share the cost.

How it works:

- A group of 3-5 people organizes procurement and logistics.
- Farmers get paid better (no middlemen).
- Consumers save 20-30% compared to grocery stores.
- Everything is seasonal and local.

Subsidiarity principle:

- Power: With the members (they decide what is bought).
- Knowledge: The farmer knows what is in season, members know what they want.
- Resilience: If the grocery store closes, alternatives exist; several local farmers instead of one central warehouse.

Question to the group: Are there local farmers here you could contact? Does anyone of you know someone?

CARD 2: NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE (Vivalla, Örebro)

What: A neighborhood has a common "storage" where everyone can borrow tools, lawnmowers, toys, skis, etc. Instead of 50 families owning 50 drills, they own 3 together.

How it works:

- The association rents a basement space.
- Members contribute things they don't use often.
- Digital booking calendar (or just a list on the door).
- Annual fee: 500 SEK/family.

Subsidiarity principle:

- Power: With the neighbors (they decide rules and what can be there).
- Knowledge: Someone who can fix stuff becomes "storage host".
- Resilience: Less dependent on stores; can borrow from neighbors.

Question to the group: Is there an empty space or basement in your area? What would you like to share?

CARD 3: SAFETY RINGS (Rinkeby, Stockholm)

What: 80 neighbors in a block have a WhatsApp group and a rotating "safety shift". Different people walk a round at 21:00 every evening, make sure everything is okay, greet people.

How it works:

- No weapons, no power to arrest—only *presence*.
- If something is wrong, they call the police.
- People feel safer because they see familiar faces.
- Youths feel seen (not chased).

Subsidiarity principle:

- Power: With the neighborhood (they decide schedule and rules).
- Knowledge: They recognize who lives there and who doesn't.
- Resilience: If the police can't come, neighbors are still there.

Question to the group: Would you feel safer with more known faces out in the evening? would you walk a round yourselves?

CARD 4: ENERGY COOPERATIVE (Klinte, Gotland)

What: 25 households joined together and bought solar panels together. They produce more electricity than they need and sell the surplus back to the grid.

How it works:

- Group purchase gave 40% discount on the panels.
- The cooperative owns the facility jointly.
- Profit is distributed or reinvested.
- If the grid goes down, they can still have electricity locally (with battery).

Subsidiarity principle:

- Power: With the members (they decide how profit is used).
- Knowledge: Local technician installs and maintains.
- Resilience: Not dependent on Vattenfall; own production.

Question to the group: Do you have roofs that could have solar panels? Do you know anyone who knows installation?

CARD 5: COHOUSING (Färdknäppen, Stockholm)

What: 50 apartments with common dining room, laundry room, workshop, children's room. People eat together 3 times a week (if they want). Children play together. Elderly get company.

How it works:

- Everyone has their own apartment but large common areas.
- Cooking rotates (everyone cooks for 50 people 2-3 times/year instead of cooking for 3 people 365 times/year).
- Childcare shares responsibility—"it takes a village".
- Elderly don't become lonely—always people to talk to.

Subsidiarity principle:

- Power: With the housing association (they decide rules).
- Knowledge: Those who live there know what is needed.
- Resilience: Less vulnerable to loneliness, isolation, childcare crisis.

Question to the group: Would you like to eat dinner with neighbors sometimes? Or is it too much?

Divide into groups, hand out cards.

15 minutes discussion.

Walk around and listen:

- If they say "but that won't work here": "Why not? What would be needed?"
- If they say "it sounds good but...": "Okay, what is the 'but'? What stops you?"

After 15 min:

"Okay, let's hear. Each group gets 3 minutes to tell:

1. Which example you got.
2. Could it work here?
3. If yes—what would be required? If no—what is the obstacle?"

Each group presents.

After each group:

- "Thank you! Anyone else want to comment?"
 - Write down on flipchart: "WOULD WORK" and "OBSTACLES"—gather insights.
-

60-75 min: "But what about...?" - Common Objections

What you say:

"I hear that several of you are both attracted and skeptical. That is healthy. Let's talk about the most common objections to subsidiarity."

Go through these (3 min per objection):

Objection 1: "But lagom then? Swedes don't want to stand out!"

Answer:

"Lagom is not the same as passivity. Lagom is balance. And right now the balance is disturbed—way too much power lies too far away. Besides: when YOU and your neighbors decide, NO ONE stands out. You do it together. That is actually lagom."

Objection 2: "But some people must decide! Otherwise it will be chaos!"

Answer:

"Absolutely! Subsidiarity doesn't mean that no one decides. It means that the right level decides. Defense? Yes, the state should handle that. Nuclear power? Maybe at national level. But school food? Why must Stockholm decide that?"

Objection 3: "It sounds like work. I don't have time!"

Answer:

"Fair point. And here is the beauty: not everyone needs to do everything. In food guilds: 3-5 people handle logistics, 45 others just pick up their bags. In the safety ring: you walk a round one evening per month, the rest of the time you get safety for free. It is less work than always fixing everything yourself AND paying others to do it."

Objection 4: "But there is a reason we centralized!"

Answer:

"YES! Absolutely! In the 20th century centralization worked because:

- Problems were identical everywhere (same diseases, same needs).
- Information was expensive and slow.
- Only experts had knowledge.

But now:

- Problems are unique (your family ≠ my family).
- Information is fast and free (we have internet).
- Knowledge is distributed (YouTube can teach you to fix taps).

The world has changed. Our systems haven't kept up."

75-85 min: Future Vision + Next Steps

What you say:

"Good discussions! Now you know what subsidiarity means and you have seen five working examples. Next time—our last joint meeting—we are going to do something real: **Decide ONE concrete thing you are going to do here, within 30 days.** Not talk about. Not plan. Do. Until then: think about these examples. Which felt most exciting? Which most possible? Which would make the biggest difference for your daily life? Feel free to write down thoughts on a note and bring next time. We are going to build an action plan together."

Date and time for meeting 4.

85-90 min: Check-out

"Last round: One word for how you feel now. More hopeful, less hopeful, confused, inspired—whatever it is. I'll start..."

Closing:

"Thank you for coming and for daring to think that something else is possible. That is the first step. See you for the last time next [day]!"

Handout to distribute

Meeting 3 - Summary: Subsidiarity

What is subsidiarity? "No power should lie higher up than necessary." = Proximity rule = What can be done locally, SHOULD be done locally.

Why?

1. Local knowledge—those living in the system know more than remote experts.
2. Speed—decisions on site are fast.
3. Responsibility—you see the effect of your choices every day.

Five working examples:

1. Food Guilds (Borlänge) - directly from the farmer
2. Neighborhood House (Vivalla) - share tools and stuff
3. Safety Rings (Rinkeby) - neighbors who care
4. Energy Cooperative (Gotland) - own electricity, together
5. Cohousing (Färdknäppen) - share life, not just the roof

Next time: We choose ONE thing to actually do. Bring ideas!

Read more: svensksubsidiaritet.se/systemanalys

Facilitator Checklist

Before the meeting:

- Fika
- Printouts of 5 example cards
- Flipchart with the pyramid
- Previous meetings' material put up
- Optional pictures of examples

During the meeting:

- Recap-check-in
- Explain subsidiarity (pyramid)
- Hand out example cards
- Group presentations
- Handle objections
- Preview of meeting 4
- Check-out

After the meeting:

- Write down which examples attracted most interest

- Prepare meeting 4: Treasure map template
- Remind group about the last meeting

Troubleshooting Meeting 3

"But that's communism/libertarianism/[political ideology]!":

- "Subsidiarity is not a party. It is used by the Catholic church, EU, and libertarians. It is not right or left—it is 'closer is better'."

"Who is going to pay for this?" :

- "Good question! Many examples are *cheaper* than current systems. Food guilds save money. Neighborhood houses save money. But yes, some things need start-up capital."

"I don't want responsibility for my neighbor's safety!" :

- "You don't have to! Safety rings mean more eyes see, not that you become police. You can still call 112."

"Sounds too complicated!" :

- "Fair. But compare with current hassle: four authorities to change address? Wait 6 months for doctor? Choose your hassle."

Meeting 4: From Words to Action - What Do We Do Now?

Goal: The group shall decide on ONE concrete action to execute within 30 days and know exactly who does what.

Materials you need:

- Fika (extra good, it's the last time!)
 - Large "Treasure Map" template (see below)
 - Action plan template to fill in
 - Post-it notes in three colors
 - 30-day contract to sign
 - Optional: Camera to take a photo of your group
-

0-10 min: Final Check-in + Recap

What you say:

"Welcome to our last joint meeting! We have met four times. That deserves a round of applause."

[Applause for yourselves.]

"Let's remember the road here:

- *Meeting 1: We saw the problem—centralization that created bureaucracy.*
- *Meeting 2: We learned the tool—The Proximity Compass.*
- *Meeting 3: We saw the solution—subsidiarity and working examples.*
- *Today: We choose something to actually DO.*

Check-in: One round. Name and: Have you thought of something since last time? An example that stuck? An idea that nagged at you? I'll start..."

Write down what people say—some things will return later.

10-40 min: Treasure Map - Our Local Assets

What you say:

"Before we decide what to do, we need to know what we have. We are going to map our local resources—treasures that the system doesn't see. We are making a 'Treasure Map' of our area. I have divided it into three categories."

Hang up a large template on the wall (or flipchart) with three columns:

HANDS	PLACES	HEARTS
(What can people do?)	(What is here?)	(What are we passionate about?)
_____	_____	_____

Column 1: HANDS (15 min)

"First column: HANDS. What skills exist in this room? And not just 'I work as...' but also 'I can...' Examples:

- Someone who can carpenter, sew, fix things?
- Someone who can grow, bake, cook for many?
- Someone who knows law, economics, writing?
- Someone who can organize, coordinate, call people?

Write on a post-it what YOU can do, and stick it up."

Hand out post-its (yellow color).

Give 5 minutes.

Then:

"Okay, let's read through what we have. I'll read aloud, you listen."

Read aloud all post-its while putting them up.

After review:

"WOW. Look at all the skills we have in this room! And this is just [X] people. Imagine 50 people, 100 people..."

Column 2: PLACES (10 min)

"Next column: PLACES. What physical resources do we have in our area? Examples:

- Empty premises (basements, shops that closed)?
- Garden land (allotments, yards, roof gardens)?
- Gathering places (association rooms, churches, schools after closing)?
- Common spaces (parking lots, parks, squares)?

Even if you don't own the place—if it exists, it counts. Write it down!"

Hand out post-its (blue color).

Give 5 minutes, read aloud, put up.

"Okay, so we actually have places. Maybe not all available yet, but they exist."

Column 3: HEARTS (10 min)

"Last column: HEARTS. What are you passionate about together? What would make your daily life better? Examples:

- Children's safety on the way to school?
- Better food, cheaper food?
- Less loneliness among the elderly?
- More greenery, nature?
- Own energy?

Nothing is too small or too big. Write it down!"

Hand out post-its (pink color).

Give 5 minutes, read aloud, put up.

"Good! Now we see what we have and what we want. Next step: choose ONE thing."

40-60 min: Decision Making - What do we do?

What you say:

"Now comes the hard part: choosing. We can't do everything at once. We must choose ONE thing we can do within 30 days. Why 30 days? Because if it takes longer, there is a risk it never happens. We use a method called 'dot-voting'. You get two votes each."

Prepare flipchart with ideas from Meeting 3 + new ones from the hearts column.

Write up as options (example):

1. Start food guild (directly from farmers)
2. Create neighborhood house (share tools)
3. Safety ring on WhatsApp
4. Energy cooperative (solar panels)
5. Walking bus for children to school
6. [Something they suggested themselves]

"You get two stickers (or marks with a pen). Put them on what you think is most important. You can put both on the same thing if you really burn for it."

Hand out stickers/markers.

Let everyone vote (5 min).

Count the votes.

"Okay! Most votes went to: [X]. Is everyone comfortable with us focusing on that? If anyone is strongly against, say so now."

Give 30 seconds of silence for objections.

If no objections:

"Great! Then we go with [X]."

If objection:

"Okay, [name], what is the problem with [X]?" [Listen. Try to find a compromise or choose number two on the list.]

60-75 min: Action Plan - Who does what, when?

What you say:

"Now we have decided what. Now we need to decide how, who, and when. We fill in an action plan together."

Hang up action plan template:

OUR ACTION: [What we decided]

STEP 1: [First concrete step]

WHO: [Name]

WHEN: [Date]

STEP 2: [Next step]

WHO: [Name]

WHEN: [Date]

STEP 3: [Third step]

WHO: [Name]

WHEN: [Date]

NEXT MEETING: [Date in 30 days]

WHERE: [Place]

PURPOSE: Share what we learned

Facilitate by asking:

For each step (15 min total):

Step 1:

"Okay, if we are going to [food guild/neighborhood house/etc], what is the VERY first thing we must do? Not everything at once —just the first step."

[Example for food guild: "Find local farmers"]

"Good. Who can do that? Who has time and interest?"

[Let someone volunteer. If no one: "Can we split it up? Maybe two people together?"]

"When should it be done?"

[Set date—not "soon" but actual date.]

Step 2 and 3: Same process.

Important:

- Every step should have a NAME (not "someone" but actual person).
 - Every step should have a DATE (not "within a few weeks").
 - Steps should be CONCRETE (not "investigate possibilities" but "call three farmers").
-

75-80 min: 30-Day Contract - The Pledge

What you say:

"Good job! Now we have a plan. But plans can be forgotten. So we are going to do something a little solemn: we are going to write a contract with each other. Not legally binding—just a promise to yourselves."

Hand out pre-filled contract template (or write on flipchart):

30-DAY CONTRACT

We, the participants of [Group Name or Place],
promise to execute the following before [Date in 30 days]:

[Our decided action]

We will return on [Date] at [Place]
to share what we have learned.

Signatures:

"I fill in what we decided. Then we go around and everyone who wants to can sign. If you don't want to sign, no pressure—but then you can't complain later!"

[Small laugh.]

Let everyone sign.

Photograph the contract (for documentation).

80-85 min: Next Steps + Continuation

What you say:

"So! We have done it. From talking about problems to actually deciding on an action. That is big. What happens now? Three options:

Option 1: We meet in 30 days to share lessons, then we stop.

Option 2: We continue as a study circle and go deeper into [one of your systems].

Option 3: We become an active group that actually runs the [food guild/neighborhood house/etc] forward.

You don't need to choose now. But think about it. And regardless of what: go to svensksubsidiaritet.se and share your experience. It helps other groups all over Sweden to learn from you. You are not alone. Thousands of Swedes are making the same journey. Your thoughts and actions become patterns that others can copy."

85-90 min: Closing Check-out + Celebration

What you say:

"Last check-out. But this time you shall say two words:

1. How you feel now.
2. A thank you to someone else in the group.

I'll start: I feel... [hopeful]. And thank you to [name] for daring to share your skepticism—it made the conversation richer."

Go one round.

After the last person:

"Thank you. Thank you for coming, four times. Thank you for sharing thoughts, doubts, hope. Thank you for choosing action instead of just words. The Swedish 'Folkhemmet' (People's Home) was not built in Stockholm. It was built in rooms exactly like this one. With coffee, silence, and stubborn people who said: maybe there is another way. You are part of something bigger now. Good luck with your 30 days. See you soon!"

Extra fika! Celebrate yourselves.

Post-Meeting: Documentation

Do this immediately after (5 min):

1. Photograph:

- The Treasure Map
- The Action Plan
- The Contract
- The Group (if they want)

2. Write down:

- What worked well?
- What would you have done differently?
- Surprises?

3. Share back:

- Go to svensksubsidiaritet.se
- Click "Share your circle's experience"
- Fill in form (5 min)

This helps the next circle do it better!

Handout to distribute

Meeting 4 - Summary: Our Action

What we have done: ✓ Mapped our local assets (hands, places, hearts) ✓ Decided on ONE action to do within 30 days ✓ Split up responsibility (who does what, when) ✓ Signed a promise to each other

Our action: [Write in what the group decided]

Next meeting: Date: [X] Place: [X] Purpose: Share lessons

Share forward: Go to svensksubsidiaritet.se and tell about your circle!

Resources:

- Pattern library (see how others did)
- Deeper analyses of systems
- Contact info for other circles

Facilitator Checklist

Before the meeting:

- Coffee + extra good fika
- Treasure Map template (large)
- Action plan template
- Post-its in three colors
- 30-day contract pre-filled
- Camera/phone for documentation
- Optional: Flowers or small thank you to participants

During the meeting:

- Check-in with recap
- Treasure Map (hands, places, hearts)
- Dot-voting decision
- Action plan with names and dates
- Contract signing
- Future options
- Closing check-out
- Celebration!

After the meeting:

- Photograph everything
 - Document lessons
 - Share on [svensksubsidiaritet.se](#)
 - Set reminder for 30-day follow-up
 - Send thank-you SMS to all participants
-

Troubleshooting Meeting 4

No one wants to take responsibility for steps:

- "Okay, we can split it up. Can two people do it together? Easier that way."

They choose something too big (like 'solving the housing crisis'):

- "Very important goal! But for 30 days—what is the SMALLEST step towards that? Maybe: map empty premises, or invite the municipal councilor?"

Discussion becomes too long:

- "Good points! But we have 5 minutes left. Can we make the decision now and refine later?"

Someone says 'this will never work':

- "Fair to be skeptical. But can we test for 30 days? If it doesn't work, we have learned something. If it works, we have something amazing."

They want to keep talking instead of acting:

- "I hear you want to talk more. But talk rarely leads to change—action does. Can we decide ONE thing today?"
-

Thank you for leading this circle. You have planted a seed.

Don't forget: Share your experiences on svensksubsidiaritet.se so others can learn!

Printable Materials

Complete materials for systems understanding and subsidiarity

Instructions

Mark how you feel when you encounter these Swedish systems. There are no right or wrong answers - only your experience.

System	Feel Seen	Feel Like a Number
Healthcare Center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Insurance Agency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grocery Store (ICA/Coop)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Municipal Website	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bank	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public Transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tax Agency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pharmacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reflection

Look at your answers. Is there a pattern? Which systems get more checks in "like a number"?

Your notes:

System we are analyzing

Write which system you chose:

The Three Corners

1. POWER (Where are decisions made?)

Scale: Central (Stockholm/EU) ← → Local (here)

- Who decides the budget?
- Who decides the rules?
- At which level are decisions made?

Mark: Central Local

2. KNOWLEDGE (Whose expertise counts?)

Scale: Expert (certificate) ← → Local (experience)

- Whose knowledge does the system listen to?
- Whose voice doesn't count?
- What type of knowledge is required?

Mark: Expert Local

3. RESILIENCE (How fragile is the system?)

Scale: Fragile (one solution) ← → Robust (many solutions)

- If this stops working, what happens?
- Are there alternatives?
- How dependent are we?

Mark: Fragile Robust

Draw Your Compass



What Does the Shape Tell You?

Analyze your compass:

- **Pointed upward** = Centralized (power is far away, expert knowledge dominates, system is fragile)
- **Broad downward** = Local/distributed (power is near, local knowledge counts, many alternatives exist)

Your notes:

SUBSIDIARITY EXAMPLES - Discussion Cards

CARD 1: FOOD GUILDS (Borlänge, Sweden)

What it is:

50 households join together and buy food directly from local farmers. Every week "food bags" are delivered to a central point. The members share the cost.

How it works:

- **Organization:** 3-5 people handle procurement and logistics.
- **For the farmers:** Better pay (no middlemen).
- **For the consumers:** Save 20-30% compared to the grocery store (ICA).
- **Content:** Everything is seasonal and local.

Subsidiarity Principle:

- **POWER:** With the members (they decide what is bought).
- **KNOWLEDGE:** The farmer knows what is in season, the members know what they need.
- **RESILIENCE:** If the grocery store closes, alternatives exist; several local farmers instead of a central warehouse.

Discussion Questions:

1. Are there local farmers here you could contact?
 2. Does anyone of you know someone who grows or produces food?
 3. Would you be willing to eat more seasonally to get cheaper food?
-

CARD 2: NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE (Vivalla, Örebro)

What it is:

A neighborhood has a common "storage" where everyone can borrow tools, lawnmowers, toys, skis, etc. Instead of 50 families owning 50 drills, they own 3 together.

How it works:

- **Premises:** The association rents a basement space.
- **Content:** Members contribute things they don't use often.
- **Booking:** Digital calendar or a list on the door.
- **Cost:** Annual fee approx. 500 SEK/family.

Subsidiarity Principle:

- **POWER:** With the neighbors (they decide rules and what is allowed there).
- **KNOWLEDGE:** Someone who can fix stuff becomes "storage host".
- **RESILIENCE:** Less dependent on stores; can borrow from neighbors.

Discussion Questions:

1. Is there an empty room or basement in your area?
 2. What would you like to share instead of everyone owning it?
 3. What things do you own that you use less than 10 times a year?
-

CARD 3: SAFETY RINGS (Rinkeby, Stockholm)

What it is:

80 neighbors in a block have a WhatsApp group and a rotating "safety shift". Different people walk a round at 21:00 every evening, making sure everything is okay, greeting people.

How it works:

- **No weapons:** No power to arrest—only *presence*.
- **Reporting:** If something is wrong, they call the police.
- **Effect:** People feel safer because they see familiar faces.
- **Youths:** Feel seen (not chased).

Subsidiarity Principle:

- **POWER:** With the neighborhood (they decide the schedule and rules).
- **KNOWLEDGE:** They recognize who lives there and who doesn't.
- **RESILIENCE:** If the police can't come, there are still neighbors who care.

Discussion Questions:

1. Would you feel safer with more known faces out in the evening?
 2. Would you walk a round once a month yourselves?
 3. Are there places in your area where "more eyes" would help?
-

CARD 4: ENERGY COOPERATIVE (Klinte, Gotland)

What it is:

25 households joined together and bought solar panels together. They produce more electricity than they need and sell the surplus back to the grid.

How it works:

- **Group purchase:** 40% discount on the panels.
- **Ownership:** The cooperative owns the facility jointly.
- **Profit:** Distributed or reinvested.
- **Backup:** With a battery, they can have electricity even if the grid goes down.

Subsidiarity Principle:

- **POWER:** With the members (they decide how profit is used).
- **KNOWLEDGE:** Local technician installs and maintains.
- **RESILIENCE:** Not dependent on Vattenfall (major utility); own production.

Discussion Questions:

1. Do you have roofs that could have solar panels?
 2. Do you know anyone who knows installation or maintenance?
 3. Would you be willing to invest 50,000 SEK together to save 20,000 SEK/year?
-

CARD 5: COHOUSING (Färdknäppen, Stockholm)

What it is:

50 apartments with a common dining room, laundry room, workshop, children's room. People eat together 3 times a week (voluntarily). Children play together. Elderly get company.

How it works:

- **Private + Common:** Everyone has their own apartment but large common areas.
- **Cooking:** Rotates (everyone cooks for 50 people 2-3 times/year instead of cooking for 3 people 365 times/year).
- **Childcare:** Sharing responsibility—"it takes a village".
- **Elderly:** Don't become lonely—always people to talk to.

Subsidiarity Principle:

- **POWER:** With the housing association (they decide rules).
- **KNOWLEDGE:** Those who live there know what is needed.
- **RESILIENCE:** Less vulnerable to loneliness, isolation, childcare crisis.

Discussion Questions:

1. Would you like to eat dinner with neighbors a few times a week?
 2. What would be difficult about sharing spaces?
 3. Would it solve any of your everyday problems (loneliness, childcare, finances)?
-

Instruction to facilitator: Hand out one card per group. Give 15 minutes for discussion. Ask each group to present for 3 minutes.

TREASURE MAP - Our Local Assets

Instruction: Map the resources in your area. Use post-it notes or write directly.

HANDS (What can people do?)

What skills exist in our area?

Examples:

- Carpentry, sewing, fixing things
- Growing, baking, cooking for many
- Law, economics, writing
- Organizing, coordinating, calling people
- Teaching, caring, comforting
- Technical skills (IT, electrical, plumbing)

What can YOU do?

What can others near you do?

HANDS :

PLACES (What is here?)

What physical resources do we have?

Examples:

- Empty premises (basements, shops that have closed)
- Garden land (allotments, yards, roof gardens)
- Gathering places (association rooms, churches, schools)
- Common spaces (parking lots, parks, squares)
- Infrastructure (workshops, laundry rooms)

Even if you don't own the place - if it EXISTS, it counts!

PLACES:

HEARTS (What are we passionate about?)

What would make your everyday life better?

Examples:

- Children's safety on the way to school
- Better food, cheaper food
- Less loneliness among the elderly
- More greenery, nature
- Own energy
- Community and belonging

Nothing is too small or too big!

HEARTS:

Next step: Use the treasure map to choose which action you want to take.

Material from Study Circle on Subsidiarity | svensksubsidiaritet.se

ACTION PLAN - From Words to Action

Our group: _____

Date: _____

OUR DECIDED ACTION:

What shall we do?

Why this?

CONCRETE STEPS:

STEP 1: _____

What exactly shall be done?

WHO is responsible? Name: _____

WHEN shall it be done? Date: _____

Is help needed from someone else?

STEP 2: _____

What exactly shall be done?

WHO is responsible? Name: _____

WHEN shall it be done? Date: _____

Is help needed from someone else?

STEP 3: _____

What exactly shall be done?

WHO is responsible? Name: _____

WHEN shall it be done? Date: _____

Is help needed from someone else?

FOLLOW-UP:

Next meeting:

- Date: _____
- Time: _____
- Place: _____

Purpose: Share what we have learned and decide the next step

IMPORTANT CONTACTS:

Name	Role	Phone	E-mail

Remember:

- Every step should have a NAME (not "someone").
- Every step should have a DATE (not "soon").
- Steps should be CONCRETE (not "investigate" but "call three farmers").

Material from Study Circle on Subsidiarity | svensksubsidiaritet.se

30-DAY CONTRACT

WE PROMISE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

We, the participants of the study circle:

[Group name or place]: _____

promise to execute the following action before:

[Date in 30 days]: _____

OUR ACTION:

OUR PLEDGE:

We commit to:

- Do our best to execute the action
 - Support each other along the way
 - Share what we learn with others
 - Come back for follow-up
-

FOLLOW-UP MEETING:

Date: _____

Time: _____

Place: _____

Purpose: Share what we learned - what worked, what didn't work, what do we do next?

SIGNATURES:

This is not a legally binding contract, but a promise to ourselves and each other.

Name	Signature	Date

"The Swedish 'Folkhemmet' (People's Home) was not built in Stockholm. It was built in rooms like these, by people who dared to say: 'Maybe there is another way.'"

Material from Study Circle on Subsidiarity | svenskasubsidiaritet.se

HANDOUT - SUMMARIES FOR PARTICIPANTS

MEETING 1: THE SWEDISH PARADOX

What we learned:

Centralization = Decisions are made far away from you

- Example: The Transport Administration in Borlänge decides about your village bus.

Monoculture = The same solution everywhere

- Efficient but vulnerable.
- Like when all potatoes are the same variety and a disease wipes out the whole crop.

System Architecture = How power is *built*, not who holds it

- The problem is not people but the structure.

Next time:

We learn "The Proximity Compass"—a tool to diagnose where power and knowledge sit.

Your homework (optional):

Write down a local resource that "the system" doesn't see:

- A person's skill
- A place
- A knowledge

Read more:

svensksubsidiaritet.se/systemanalys

MEETING 2: THE PROXIMITY COMPASS

The three corners:

1. POWER: From where are decisions made?

- Central (Stockholm/EU/Region) or Local (here)?

2. KNOWLEDGE: Whose expertise counts?

- Formal (certificate, education) or Local (experience, context)?

3. RESILIENCE: How vulnerable is the system?

- One solution (vulnerable) or Multiple alternatives (robust)?

How to use the compass:

1. Choose a system (school food, bus, healthcare, etc.).
2. Ask for each corner: Where are we on the scale?
3. Draw the triangle.
4. Interpret the shape:
 - Pointy upwards = Centralized.
 - Wide downwards = Local.

Next time:

We learn *subsidiarity*—how to move power closer to people.

Read more:

svensksubsidiaritet.se/systemanalys

MEETING 3: SUBSIDIARITY

What is subsidiarity?

"No power should lie higher up than necessary." = **Närstyre (Proximity rule)** = **What can be done locally, SHOULD be done locally.**

Why this is better:

1. LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

- Those who live in a system know things that remote experts never learn.

2. SPEED

- Decisions on site are faster than waiting for a regional meeting.

3. RESPONSIBILITY

- When you see the effect of your decisions every day, you become more responsible.

Five working examples:

1. **Food Guilds** (Borlänge) - 50 households buy directly from the farmer.
2. **Neighborhood House** (Vivalla) - share tools instead of everyone owning them.
3. **Safety Rings** (Rinkeby) - neighbors who walk rounds.
4. **Energy Cooperative** (Gotland) - own solar electricity together.
5. **Cohousing** (Färdknäppen) - share life, not just the roof.

Next time:

We choose ONE thing to actually do within 30 days. Bring ideas!

Read more:

svensksubsidiaritet.se/systemanalys

MEETING 4: FROM WORDS TO ACTION

What we have done:

- ✓ Mapped our local assets (hands, places, hearts)
- ✓ Decided on ONE action to do within 30 days
- ✓ Split up responsibility (who does what, when)
- ✓ Signed a promise to each other

Our action:

Next meeting:

Date: _____ **Place:** _____ **Purpose:** Share lessons and decide next step

Share forward:

Go to **svensksubsidiaritet.se** and tell about your circle!

- Helps other groups to learn from you.
- Become part of a larger network.
- Gain access to more resources.

Resources on the website:

- Pattern library (see how others did).
- Deeper analyses of systems.
- Contact with other circles.
- Material for continuation.

"The Swedish 'Folkhemmet' (People's Home) was not built in Stockholm. It was built in rooms like these, by people like you."

Material from Study Circle on Subsidiarity | svensksubsidiaritet.se

For the facilitator: Cut out and copy these handouts for participants to take home.

FACILITATOR'S MATERIAL CHECKLIST

What you need to print and prepare for each meeting

MEETING 1: THE SWEDISH PARADOX

To print:

- **System Barometer** (1 per participant)
- File: `material-systemkanslometer.md`
- Format: A4
- Quantity: Number of participants + 2 extra
- **Handout Meeting 1** (1 per participant)
- File: `material-handouts-alla.md` (cut out Meeting 1 part)
- Format: A4 or A5
- Quantity: Number of participants + 2 extra
- **Small notes for homework**
- Empty A6 cards or post-its
- Quantity: Number of participants

To have at home:

- Coffee, tea, fika
 - Flipchart or large paper
 - Thick markers for flipchart
 - Chairs in a circle (no head of the table!)
 - Optional: Clock or timer
-

MEETING 2: THE PROXIMITY COMPASS

To print:

- **The Proximity Compass - individual template** (1 per participant)
- File: `material-narhetskompassen-mall.md`
- Format: A4
- Quantity: Number of participants + 5 extra (for exercises)

- **The Proximity Compass - large template** (1-2 pcs)
 - File: `material-narhetskompassen-mall.md`
 - Format: A3 or larger (for groups to fill in together)
 - Quantity: Number of small groups (approx. 1 per 3-4 people)
- **Handout Meeting 2** (1 per participant)
 - File: `material-handouts-allा.md` (cut out Meeting 2 part)
 - Format: A4 or A5
 - Quantity: Number of participants + 2 extra

To have at home:

- Coffee, tea, fika
 - Flipchart with large compass pre-drawn
 - Colored pens or markers (3 colors)
 - Tape to hang up group compasses
 - The notes from Meeting 1 (local resources)
-

MEETING 3: SUBSIDIARITY

To print:

- **Subsidiarity Examples - 5 cards**
 - File: `material-subsidiaritetsexempel.md`
 - Format: A4 (cut apart into 5 separate cards)
 - Quantity: 1 set (5 cards total)
 - Tip: Print on thicker paper or laminate
- **Handout Meeting 3** (1 per participant)
 - File: `material-handouts-allा.md` (cut out Meeting 3 part)
 - Format: A4 or A5
 - Quantity: Number of participants + 2 extra

To have at home:

- Coffee, tea, fika
 - Flipchart with the pyramid prepared
 - Previous meetings' material put up (visual continuity)
 - Optional: Phone/laptop to show pictures of examples
-

MEETING 4: FROM WORDS TO ACTION

To print:

- **Treasure Map** (1 large)
 - File: `material-skattkarta.md`
 - Format: A3 or larger
 - Quantity: 1 (for the group to fill in together)
- **Action Plan** (1 per group + 1 for archive)
 - File: `material-handlingsplan.md`
 - Format: A4
 - Quantity: 2
- **30-Day Contract** (1 per group + 1 for archive)
 - File: `material-30-dagarskontrakt.md`
 - Format: A4
 - Quantity: 2
- Tip: Print on nicer paper, it is to be signed!
- **Handout Meeting 4** (1 per participant)
 - File: `material-handouts-alla.md` (cut out Meeting 4 part)
 - Format: A4 or A5
 - Quantity: Number of participants + 2 extra

To have at home:

- Coffee, tea, EXTRA GOOD FIKA (it's the last time!)
 - Post-it notes in three colors (yellow, blue, pink)
 - Stickers for dot-voting (or just pens)
 - Camera/phone for documentation
 - Optional: Small flowers or thank-you cards for participants
-

GENERAL TIPS:

Print quality:

- Use at least 80g paper.
- Contracts and important templates: use 100-120g paper.
- Consider laminating the 5 example cards (used again).

Backup material:

- Always have 2-3 extra of everything.
- Blank A4 paper for notes.
- Extra pens.

After each meeting:

- Photograph everything created (compasses, treasure maps, etc.).
- Save all materials—can be used next time.
- Document lessons for the next circle.

Final preparations:

- Read through all meeting guides the day before.
 - Practice drawing the compass and pyramid on the flipchart.
 - Prepare your opening and closing phrase.
-

DIGITAL BACKUP:

If you have access to a projector/screen, some things can be shown digitally:

- The Compass (instead of flipchart).
- The Examples from Meeting 3 (instead of printouts).
- Pictures of working projects.

But **printouts are always better** for engagement!

TOTAL NUMBER OF PRINTOUTS:

For a group of 8 people:

Meeting 1: ~10 pages **Meeting 2:** ~25 pages **Meeting 3:** ~15 pages **Meeting 4:** ~15 pages

Total: ~65 pages for the whole circle (approx. 16 pages per person)

Material from Study Circle on Subsidiarity | svensksubsidiaritet.se

Good luck with your circle!