

English summary

To improve the Norwegian State Housing Bank's (NSHB) interaction with local governments, the Housing Bank's Regional Office East initiated a Social housing development program aiming to reach 16 local governments over the period 2009-2017.

This report is one of two preliminary reports from a process oriented evaluation of the program. Møreforsking has followed the start of the program and the work so far within the first four communes. The report focuses on organization and mobilisation in the local governments in addition to overall experiences from the program.

Experiences within the communes

- The Social housing development program is implemented in different local contexts, but some of the challenges in the communes are similar. Examples of this are providing enough housing and fragmented administrative organization in this policy area.
- All communes have chosen to organize the program in a project group and a steering group. However the program coordinator is connected to strategic units of the organization in only two of the communes, and the orientation of the program coordinator's work differs. These differences can ultimately also influence the output and outcome of the program.
- All communes include top management in their steering groups and thus there is a good chance of administrative support for the program.
- No politicians are included in the program organization and we are not convinced that the political support for the program is strong enough to implement expensive initiatives in the future, even though participation in the program has been decided by the politicians.
- Stakeholders outside the local government have hardly participated in the program so far. We believe there is unexploited potential in this relation in the implementation phase.

About the program

- The informants in the communes expect the program to have effects both on the commune's social housing policies, for people in need of help connected to housing, as well as on national policies in this field.
- Overall, the communes are satisfied with NSHB's work in the program. They emphasize that the participation of the NSHB in the program and learning from other communes are useful.
- It has been important for the NSHB to point out a methodological difference between the program and the project as working methods. This has created some confusion and uncertainty in the communes, and has partially delayed the work. There are also other sources of confusion in the start up phase.

Challenges

- Important challenges regarding the continuation of the program are: 1. How to secure support from, and cooperation with external actors 2. Stronger mobilization and support among local politicians. 3. How to solve the organizational challenges in the communes 4. Continued adjustment of the program to local contexts. 5. Learning connected to implementation.