

# Majblomman fights child poverty in Sweden

**Majblomman is Sweden's biggest children's charity. We are working to improve conditions for children and to combat child poverty in Sweden. Our vision is for children in Sweden to be able to share in the community of their friends, in school and during their free time.**

Majblomman is active at several levels in order to serve the child's best interests. The issues that Majblomman pursues originate in the grant applications received by our local associations. When we see problems arising because current legislation is not being followed or interpreted on the basis of the child's best interests, our work on making an impact begins.

Since children's needs are immediate, Majblomman's help works on several levels. Our local associations provide financial aid while we work forming public opinion over the long term. With children's best interests at heart, Majblomman lobbies politicians and other decisionmakers. Our public opinion work is conducted via many different channels, from opinion pieces in the press and appearances on TV chat programmes to network meetings and lectures.

Against this background, Majblomman's priority issues are currently the following:

- Children's right to schooling without fees
- Children's right to meaningful leisure time
- Children's right to holidays on equal terms

Majblomman has a role as knowledge partner and popular educator. Through grant applications to our local Majblomma associations, and through our volunteers' work and experience, we are given a unique, up-to-date picture of children's situations and the opportunity to spread knowledge in various ways, for example through seminars and reports.

## Children's needs are immediate and cannot wait

Working to make an impact is often a slow process, which is why we have to help as many children as possible at the same time. Majblomman leaves no child behind. We give grants that enable them to go on the school outing taking place today! Our view is that it is the responsibility of adults to influence politicians and other decision-makers; children should be allowed to be children without having to take

adult responsibility or having to deal with the consequences of political priorities that have not been analysed on the basis of the Child Convention.

## **Research in order to prevent and alleviate**

Majblomman annually awards research grants to research that makes a difference for children in vulnerable life situations.

## **Voluntary contributions are needed to mitigate everyday powerlessness**

Is it society's responsibility to ensure that all children have a bicycle or get to go on summer holidays? For various reasons, parents may not be able to afford to let their children share such experiences with their friends. Majblomman sees signs of what we call a kind of everyday powerlessness, and we can see that the gaps in society have grown. Often Majblomman is the last resort, when society's resources are not enough. 500 kronor for a bicycle or a birthday party could save the day for a child's sense of community with their friends.

## **A nationwide network**

Majblomman's 600 local associations are part of each child's network in their home community. The local association includes representatives from school, leisure activities, health and medical care, and the social services. Here, there is local knowledge about what public support is available, and in what ways Majblomman can supplement it. Our local associations independently assess and process grant applications from economically distressed families in its local community. Local associations also distribute money from mayflower sales to schools and associations, usually 10 per cent of the school's or association's collection. The tradition of selling paper mayflowers, majblommor, for charity is over a century old in Sweden.

## **Fundraising is an important pedagogic instrument**

Funds are collected through children selling mayflowers for two weeks in spring. These sales cannot be equated with other sales that schoolchildren undertake to collect money for their class funds. The mayflower is proof of a contribution towards fighting child poverty in Sweden. The fundraising is used as a pedagogic instrument in schools to develop children's empathy for other children in their community.

## **Local Majblomman associations**

Majblomman's many local associations give grants to economically vulnerable children in their communities, and distribute mayflower funds to schools and associations. The collection of funds is carried out by children aged 9 to 12, who sell mayflowers during two weeks every spring.

## **Grants from Majblomman**

Children 18 and under living in Sweden can apply for grants from Majblomman. Usually, information about local grants is available from local school nurses or the social welfare office. You are also welcome to contact Majblommans Riksförbund for more information about applications.

Majblomman's fundraising is controlled by Svensk Insamlingskontroll, the foundation for charitable collection control, through postal giro account 90 1907-6.