

RESEARCH PROJECT: Extended families in dialogical collaboration in response with deployed family-members

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In this action research study participants of extended families became invited to participate in individual interviews and network meetings with their family members. The participants narrated and explored their experiences of having a deployed family member and/or being a deployed family member. Focus was on how family members collaborate and manage house and family, supporting the soldier in his/her commission and vice versa. In focus was also need of support from the outside of the family system and if so what, how and what else they had asked for.

The research project is directed, by means of a dialogical participation action research method, towards the discovery of the appropriate tools that can serve military individuals, their families and network, and act as a buffer in the challenges they face. It may also guide professionals in social services, education and health care and voluntaries in networks in the quest to reduce distress experienced and promote individual and family resilience.

The study includes 186 interviews with all together 128 participants. The researcher has also participated in several meetings and gatherings organised by the Swedish Armed Forces (SAF). The participants in the study are children, spouses, siblings, parents, grandparents and other concerned relatives as well as soldiers and veterans.

Depending on perspective or position hold in the extended family, results imply differences in lived experiences and responses. For example the result show different views on family gatherings organised by SAF most of all appreciated by the parents of the soldiers.