

### Changing peoples attitudes – Capacity building for local sustainable development.

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„FIG recognises that professions  
play an important role  
in implementing sustainable development.“

*“In spite of conferences and declarations,  
in many parts of the world  
the developments have been for the worse.*

*The need for a change in attitudes  
towards sustainable development  
is greater than ever before”*

### Contents:

- Local Agenda 21: Not always regarded as an effective tool to achieve sustainability goals
- „Good Practice Municipalities“: What can be learned from them?
- Demand for a new understanding of local policy: Good Governance, Civil Society and Land Management
- Need for capacity building: experts' consultancy and practitioners' networking

### Evaluation of Local Agenda 21 (LA21) processes in Bavaria

- More than 50 % of all 2.056 local authorities took part in a detailed mail questionnaire survey
- ⇒ More than 1/3rd of the municipalities are engaged in LA21
- ⇒ But they regard Agenda 21 not always as an effective instrument to achieve sustainability goals – it is too optional.
- ⇒ On the other hand there are best practice examples of municipalities who took the demands seriously.
- ⇒ Which lessons can be learned by „21 Good Practice-Municipalities“?

### 21 Good Practice-Municipalities for Sustainable Development

- The 21 selected municipalities were recommended by several experts because of their outstanding efforts for sustainability in the fields of
  - energy, climate change,
  - settlement, land use,
  - transport, mobility,
  - natural resources, health,
  - social actions,
  - economy or
  - policy-making, participation

### 21 Good Practice-Municipalities for Sustainable Development

- E.g. *Furth bei Landshut* set itself the goal “100 % renewable energy”. This small village of 3.000 inhabitants is one of the leading towns in Germany in the field of renewable energy: Along with many other projects it built the first heating station run with wood chips and developed the idea of civil solar power systems.



## Capacity building for Local Sustainable Development

### 21 Good Practice-Municipalities for Sustainable Development

- e.g. *Neumarkt in der Oberpfalz* (40.000 inhabitants) has developed a Local Sustainability Strategy which is linked to the urban development concept. More than 5.000 citizens took part in the "day of visions" where they were invited to develop ideas. Another 400 citizens participated in the development of the strategy together with the municipality in several working groups.



## Capacity building for Local Sustainable Development

### 21 Good Practice-Municipalities for Sustainable Development. Process

- The 21 municipalities were organized in seven thematic working groups called *quality circles* (each comprising three municipalities).

## Capacity building for Local Sustainable Development

### 21 Good Practice-Municipalities for Sustainable Development

- The idea of the quality circles is (cf. Depple 1992) that colleagues with a common base of experience come together voluntarily in order to analyse a shared subject in moderated working groups and find solutions together



## Capacity building for Local Sustainable Development

### 21 Good Practice-Municipalities for Sustainable Development. Process

- They were asked with which projects they had good experience in achieving sustainability or where they had to scale down their expectations.
- The descriptions were supposed to give a closer insight into the scope of sustainability and to tell e.g. which technical, financial or legal aspects set limits.
- But to the opinion of these practitioners, these are not the (only) crucial points for sustainability.
- There are enough project ideas and guidelines.

## Capacity building for Local Sustainable Development

### 21 Good Practice-Municipalities for Sustainable Development.

#### Results

- Irrespective of this, they were very interested to learn from each other about the specific experiences how to motivate civic commitment, how to hold on a once jointly established vision, how to argue against self-interest, scepticism or killer-arguments.
- This means: The top priority was about the need to **change people's attitudes towards principles that are demanded in the "global trias Good Governance, Sustainability, Civil Society"** (Magel, Jahnke 2001).

## Capacity building for Local Sustainable Development

### Results – Capacity building: Questioning paradigms

- Therefore capacity building means to learn to pose the right questions. With the example of *Weyarn* these are e.g.:
  - What is our **distinctive feature** and what do we have to do in order to protect it (e.g. "rural" village)?
  - Which kind of development is **wanted** and which kind is **not wanted** (e.g. becoming a suburban area)?
  - Is the designation of building land really "a must" or is this a too long unquestioned **paradigm**?
  - Do we liberalise the real estate market, allowing speculation or do we **regulate actively**?
  - Where and how do we spend our **financial resources**? Who will benefit from it? Which consequential costs will arise?
  - Which **challenges and perspectives** will the ongoing demographic and economic change bring forth?
  - Which new possibilities does **inter-communal cooperation** offer?

## Capacity building for Local Sustainable Development

### Results – Capacity building: *Integration in instruments*

- Weyarn (3.160 inhabitants) set itself the goal to stay a rural village and not to become a suburbia of Greater Munich. Therefore primarily inhabitants get success to building land. In order to help young families, the municipality developed a hereditary lease model that allows them to build a house on low property costs.



## Capacity building for Local Sustainable Development

### Results – Capacity building: *Integration in instruments*

- The aim of *Pfaffenhofen an der Ilm* (22.000 inhabitants) is to set limits to land utilization. For this they take building sites out of their preparatory land use plan. With the help of a cadastre of derelict urban land they learned e.g. that they could develop up to 42 accommodation units on 1 ha ground within the inner city, once belonging to a firm. This would save them at least 3 ha residential area in the „open countryside“.



## Capacity building for Local Sustainable Development

### Results – Capacity building: *Strengthening Civil Society*

- These questions have to do with a sense of right and wrong and should not be answered by municipal government alone. The municipalities need their citizens as partners.
- Strengthening the government-citizen-relationship offers a relief to administrative work, because they bring their personal experiences, competence and willingness for joint responsibility.



## Capacity building for Local Sustainable Development

### Results – Capacity building: *Strengthening Civil Society*

- There is no field in which the opinion of the citizens should not play a role:
- The different target groups like riparian owners, road users, consumers or seniors, adolescents and families know best what their needs are.
- This is why municipal authorities of *Barbing* first asked its inhabitants about their point of view and ideas, when they had to reconstruct their roads. They jointly set up goals and only then asked professional planners to develop a plan based on their results. Local authorities as well as the planners have been surprised how good and reasonable the ideas of the citizens are.



## Capacity building for Local Sustainable Development

### Results – Capacity building: *Learning by Networking*

- The 21 good-practice-municipalities suggested to establish a network of „excellent municipalities for sustainable development“.
- The network would deal with future topics (e.g. demographic change), innovative projects and new methods (in planning, management, marketing).
- This network is thought to work on high standards. Therefore they would create criteria for new members. Each senior would first „adopt“ junior partners before they become integrated.
- In doing so, the best-practice-municipalities would obtain their leading role and take along newcomers.

## Capacity building for Local Sustainable Development

### Results – Capacity building: *Training*

- The network should be aided by means of impulses from professional consultants, moderators, planning experts.
- Today development of municipalities has to be regarded and practiced as a strategic and highly professional process. Local politicians and government have to meet these challenges in an offensive manner.
- According to the best-practice-municipalities therefore a training is needed.

## Capacity building for Local Sustainable Development

### Results – Capacity building: *Training*

- The training should comprise
  - shaping opinion due to the principles of the municipal code and the philosophy of good governance and civil society,
  - discussion of values,
  - competences in the means of Good Governance (e.g. participation: fair culture of communication and cooperation),
  - project and process management,
  - expertise

## Capacity building for Local Sustainable Development

### 21 Good Practice-Municipalities for Sustainable Development. Results – Capacity building: *Land management*

- **Expertise is of great importance especially in the field of land management**, i.e. in all activities dealing with the development of rural and urban areas.

## Capacity building for Local Sustainable Development

### Results - *Land management*

- Providing a “quadrophonie of **activating, consulting, planning, arrangement and construction**” (Magel 2004) land management can be used as a tool for sustainability.



## Capacity building for Local Sustainable Development

### 21 Good Practice-Municipalities for Sustainable Development. *Conclusion*

- **Capacity building is first of all an open dynamic learning process in which attitudes are questioned** and in which the understanding of “sustainable” or “non-sustainable” and “government” or “governance” is carried out in joint discussions.
- **Quality circles are a good tool to improve awareness and understanding.** The participants exchange ideas and positive (as well as negative) examples. They are able to compare different attitudes, different solutions for similar problems and reveal opportunities for further development.

## Capacity building for Local Sustainable Development

### 21 Good Practice-Municipalities for Sustainable Development. *Conclusion*

- **Instruments, especially in the field of land management, include a potential for sustainable development.** They can be used as steering tool for sustainability – provided they are combined with a clear mission statement.
- **Municipalities need an increased awareness of future challenges.** The term municipality is at the same time to be understood as a holistic system: Local authorities, local government and citizens are equal partners. They share responsibility for common welfare and quality of life.
- **The consulting part of planners has to incorporate this new understanding.**

## Capacity building for Local Sustainable Development

### 21 Good Practice-Municipalities for Sustainable Development. *Conclusion*

- Sustainable development is a vision. Capacity building for local sustainable development means to **make this vision a strategic one**: Sustainability should not happen by chance.
- Shaping the change – it’s up to us!