



Hauptpreisträger des Förderpreises  
„Demokratie leben“  
des Deutschen Bundestages 1997

**Combined European Bureau for Social Development  
TLCD: Training and Learning for Community Development:  
EAC/61/2006 Key Activity 4: Dissemination and Exploitation of Results**

**Report: Relay visit Berlin May 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> 2008**

**Key questions / issues of the relay:**

- The role of training and learning for community Development (diversity – different approaches - broad picture –shared understanding)
- “TLCD for social change!”
- How to use exchange of practice to influence policy in the field of TLCD? (24 – 65 age group)
- How to identify possible multipliers?

**Agenda of the relay**

Monday 13:30 – 16.15	Starting session	Welcome and programme Practical information Reports from other relays Presentation of the Lernhaus Pohlstraße
Monday 17:00 – 19:00	Input and discussion	(TL for ) CD in Germany Prof. Leo Penta / KHSB
Tuesday 9:30 – 12:00	Comparison CD and Community Organizing	Continue discussion started in the relay to Banska Bystrica
Tuesday 13:00 – 15:30	TLCD for policy makers I	Examples of Idébanken and CESAM
Tuesday 16:00 – 18:30	TLCD for policy makers II	Examples of Idébanken and CESAM
Wednesday 9:30 – 12:30	conclusions	Main results and questions of the Berlin Relay What to take to the laboratory? How to identify and involve multipliers? Connections with other projects / networks (presentation of the Leonardo CEST project of Technologie Netzwerk Berlin e.V.)
Wednesday 13:30 – 15:30	Field visit to the SprengeHaus	Presentation and discussion of projects, structure and possible future developments of SprengeHaus

**LOGO Grundtvig**

## Participants and apologies

### **Host organisation:**

Kommunales Forum Wedding e.V., Wiesenstraße 29, 13357 Berlin – [www.alles-in-arbeit.de](http://www.alles-in-arbeit.de)  
Organizer of the relay and at the meeting: Hans – Georg Rennert [komm.forum.rennert@web.de](mailto:komm.forum.rennert@web.de)

### **Participants – representatives of partners of the consortium:**

Chuck Hirt - CKO – Centrum Komunitného Organizovania - [www.cko.sk](http://www.cko.sk) - [chuck@cko.sk](mailto:chuck@cko.sk)  
Kirsten Paaby – Stiftelsen Idébanken - [www.idebanken.no](http://www.idebanken.no) - [kirsten@idebanken.no](mailto:kirsten@idebanken.no)

### **apologies by the following partners of the consortium:**

ARDC –Asocietia Roman de Dezvoltare Comunitara - [www.ardc.ro](http://www.ardc.ro) – (Christina Vlad)  
CESAM – Stiftelsen Centrum för samhällsarbete och mobilisering - [www.cesam.swe](http://www.cesam.swe) – (Hans Andersson)

### **Participants – from Berlin** from different organizations connected to the

Landesnetzwerk für Gemeinwesenarbeit und soziale Stadtteilentwicklung Berlin:

Claudia Schwarz – Kommunales Forum Wedding e.V. – [cl-schwarz@t-online.de](mailto:cl-schwarz@t-online.de)

Dr. Günther Lorenz – Technologie Netzwerk Berlin e.V. – [g.lorenz@technet-berlin.de](mailto:g.lorenz@technet-berlin.de) –

[www.technet-berlin.de](http://www.technet-berlin.de)

Prof. Leo Penta – Katholische Hochschule für Sozialwesen Berlin – [penta@khsb-berlin.de](mailto:penta@khsb-berlin.de) –

[www.dico-berlin.de](http://www.dico-berlin.de)

Monika Götz – Gruppe unabhängige Bürger in der Bürgerplattform Wedding / Moabit (im Aufbau) –

[moni@our.school.com](mailto:moni@our.school.com); [www.dico-berlin.de](http://www.dico-berlin.de)

Sabine Weskott – SOS Familienzentrum Berlin – [sabine.weskott@sos-kinderdorf.de](mailto:sabine.weskott@sos-kinderdorf.de);

[www.sos.familienzentrum-berlin.de](http://www.sos.familienzentrum-berlin.de)

### **Hosts in the Lernhaus Pohlstraße**

Herbert Teichmann – Volkshochschule Berlin Mitte – [info@lernhaus.net](mailto:info@lernhaus.net) – [www.lernhaus.net](http://www.lernhaus.net)

Robin Bodenaupt – contra medienwerkstatt e.V. – [info@contravision.de](mailto:info@contravision.de) – [www.contravision.de](http://www.contravision.de)

Akinola Famson – BDB – Alliance against ethnic discrimination in Germany – [bdb@bdb-germany.de](mailto:bdb@bdb-germany.de)

– [www.bde-germany.de](http://www.bde-germany.de)

### **Hosts of field visit to the „Sprenghaus – intercultural community centre with health care”**

Andrea Delitz- Gemeinsam im Stadtteil e.V. – [info@gisev.de](mailto:info@gisev.de); [www.gisev.de](http://www.gisev.de)

Monika Hartwig – Kommunales Forum Wedding e.V. – Projekt Arbeit und Nachbarschaft

Willy Achter – Stadtteilgenossenschaft Wedding eG und Kommunales Forum Wedding e.V. –

[info@stadtteilgenossenschaft-wedding.de](mailto:info@stadtteilgenossenschaft-wedding.de), [www.stadtteilgenossenschaft-wedding.de](http://www.stadtteilgenossenschaft-wedding.de)

## Introduction of the participants:

Claudia Schwarz	originally landscape planner; since 1989 in local (community) development, social economy, “Planning for Real”; at the moment studies on adult education – Euro Net
Chuck Hirt	came to Slovakia in 1996 in order to find, train and hire Slovaks to be community organizers- CEEN Central and eastern European Citizens’ Network
Kirsten Paaby	a Norwegian Dane; teacher for literature and drama Action research to develop future workshops (Zukunftswerkstätten) Since 1995 Idebanken – creativity and sustainability – CEBSD executive
Monika Götz	originally phyio therapist; actively involved in setting up the first hospiz in Berlin; as member of “independent citizens” group actively involved in the development of the “Bürgerplattform Wedding / Moabit”
Hans – Georg Rennert	originally landscape planner; since 1989 in local (community) development, social economy –co-ordinator of the Landesnetzwerk Gemeinwesenarbeit und soziale Stadtteilentwicklung Berlin – member of board of the “European Network of Cities and Regions in the Social Economy REVES)

Günther Lorenz, Leo Penta and Sabine Weskott took each part for one session only

**Presentation of the venue of the relay:**

**The „Lernhaus Pohlstrasse” - – an open house for (lifelong) Learning**

In 2001 the adult education centre (Volkshochschule Berlin Mitte) set up the Lernhaus Pohlstraße as a centre with a new and comprehensive range of services around (lifelong) learning and advice in the neighbourhood for the neighbourhood. Premises in an old school building that had been not used for a while were refurbished and adapted for these purposes. Now, 15 rooms for classes and seminars and some special rooms for specific use are being run by the Volkshochschule Berlin Mitte in co-operation with NGOs. The classes and courses of the VHS - such like ‘German as a foreign language’ - are being supplemented by courses and services of NGOs in the Lernhaus such as the “Computersalon” or advice on inclusion for migrants. This way the Volkshochschule Berlin Mitte created an open house for (lifelong) learning which is unique in Berlin or even Germany.

Herbert Teichmann of the Volkshochschule presented the Lernhaus and explained some of the different courses and services ‘on offer’ on a tour through the Lernhaus: “Schule in der Volkshochschule” – a course for young adults who for whatever reason left school without certificate during which they are being prepared for the secondary school exam (Mittlerer Schulabschluss) and the Eltern - Mediencafé where parents with migrant background are being introduced into the use of IT and the German language while their children are at school. The contra Medienwerkstatt introduces young adults to techniques to produce videos and raises a critical awareness towards mass media. The Alliance for anti-discrimination and education in Germany BDB e.V. offers training on intercultural competencies and advice for victims of discrimination.

Contact names and addresses to be found on the first page of the report.

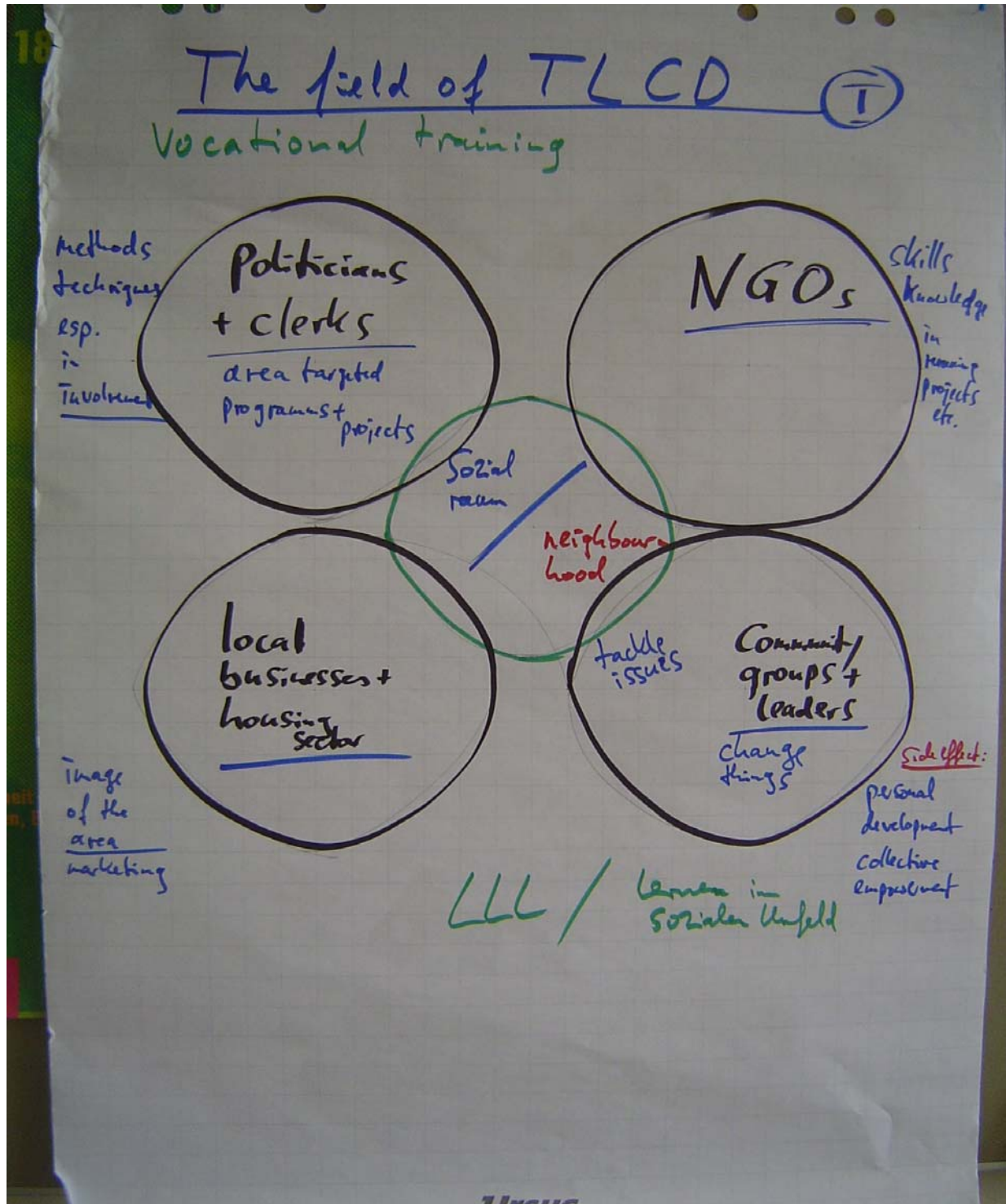
[Photos.](#)

[Lernhaus Poster](#)

[Flipchart agenda](#)

**The field of TLCD**

Hans – Georg Rennert presented a sketch / graphic on “The field of Training and Learning for Community Development” as an orientation for the discussion and work on the topic. It is meant to simplify and visualize different approaches and perspectives to TLCD. This sketch is a product of CEBSD’s seminar in Budapest within the thematic seminar on TLCD 2006.



## **Introduction on the TLCD project**

Kirsten Paaby gave an introduction on the TLCD project of CEBSD which is only summed up very briefly here:

- Budapest Declaration 2004 has got some paragraphs on TLCD and Adult Education
- the “Thematic Seminar” on TLCD was set up by CEBSD in order to develop these ideas further and put them into a framework: “Developing Guidelines on Training and learning for community Development”
- the content of the Guidelines and the development process of the Guidelines which involved more than 30 organisations from 17 countries are the foundation for the TLCD Key 4 activities and
- the nucleus for a broader network: the consortium comprises 16 partner organisations; the dissemination activities will bring in a number of more multipliers in order to possibly create
- a broader network which will be based on exchange of practice

## **TLCD relay visits – main issues of previous relays**

(in the view of the Berlin participants based on the reports)

Brussels:

- Assessed the need for TLCD especially or in depth for professionals (persons who get paid to do community development work),
- but also for grass – root –activists and for elected representatives

Hungary:

- The participants mainly dealt with the question “How to combine specified vocational training with non-formal education for CD?”; other issues were
- The Importance of getting to know each other’s national and professional contexts and history in order to acknowledge diversity and to develop a shared understanding from this basis
- The growing recognition of the importance of ACTION

UK:

- CD is getting more and more in integral part of area regeneration policies and political frameworks (White Paper on CD; “local strategic partnerships” and “community empowerment networks”
- Voluntary (?) sector organisations part of this and focussing on service delivery
- Dilemma: it’s more and more about “Managing Community Development” and service delivery and less and less about community development work

Slovakia

- Almost no profession Community Development work
- NGOs and citizens’ movement with focus on civil society (campaigns on the importance of voting) slowly emerge the view onto community (and local development)
- Very limited resources do exist in the neighbourhoods (no infrastructure such as community centres), but so far hardly any residential segregation
- The introduction of methodologies and the action connected to this opened up space for community development (a learning experience for activists)
- Watch out when using terms “citizen” (Staatsbürger) and “active citizenship”- who has got the status and the legal rights as citizen – and who has not? (migrants etc.)

## **Notes on the Presentation of Leo Penta and the discussion on: Training and learning for Community Development in Germany**

(The presentation developed into a vivid and intensive discussion – the ‘reporter’ tries to give the main thoughts and the context and highlights some of the strong phrases used - HGR)

Leo Penta’s first experience with Community Organizing was in Brooklyn as catholic priest Since 1996 he has been in Germany at the Catholic University of Applied Sciences Berlin (KHSB): Professor of Community Development / Community Economic Development and head of the „Deutsches Institut für Community Organizing“ or DICO ([www.dico-berlin.de](http://www.dico-berlin.de)) which was set up by the KHSB in order to promote and support the development of community organizing in Germany

Best starting point: look at where people are acting together  
There is a lot of action but not a lot of **collective public action and reflection**  
And there is not a broad space (or: tradition) for civil society in Germany

Community development work (Gemeinwesenarbeit = GWA) was introduced into Germany in the 1950s (seeds in the Marshall funds staff)  
Some key persons for the introduction of GWA were inspired in the US and in Canada (C.W. Müller und Dieter Oelschlägel)  
But general attitude / reception of CD: nice in the US but in Germany we have got the local state which has to provide the things / services

In the 70ies and 80ies in the context of conflicts connected to urban regeneration (active citizens and key persons against demolition and gentrification): the second wave of the reception of GWA / CD and the foundation of a lot of NGOs in the field of local development such as e.g. in Berlin: SO 36, Stadtteilverein Tiergarten e.V., Moabiter Ratschlag e.V., Fabrik Osloer Straße e.V. – often these association run community centers  
(HGR: Third wave at the end of the 90ies in the context of the programme “Soziale Stadt” – urban social development – [www.sozialestadt.de](http://www.sozialestadt.de)) – the programmatic texts describe (parts of) Community Development work – without using the term CD or GWA)

One should not forget the 1989 democratic revolution in the GDR which has influenced the discussion on civil society in Germany

**The discussions on GWA are often about service delivery – they lack the discussion (and the living of) a democratic culture**

This is / would mean:  
How do people come together and start acting together on the basis of democratic values?  
How do you encourage collective public action?

**“Participatory processes are messy”** – they are about contradictions and conflicts – the question is how to handle these conflicts – **the first issue is about respect** / recognition as a partner

The importance of Hannah Arendt’s work and idea (for Leo Penta looking at these processes):

- the practical context in which these processes take place
  - around personal self interest – connected to common needs
  - using the framework of the democratic society as a basic force
- (Collective) action as the most human of activities for Hannah Arendt

Leo Penta: ein **“handlungsfähiges Wir”** – (create an) WE that is able to act

Democratic culture: it means to reverse the whole usual pattern / attitudes:

Service delivery (by local state or NGOs)

We fund projects and establish something for (the sake of) the people

We have got it – and we expect them to come!

The service delivery and public funding cycle can lead to “political pornography” (Saul Alinsky), or more elegantly the dilemma of the welfare state as enunciated by J. Habermas

BUT: voting every so often is not enough (and by the way: Who has got voting rights and who doesn't?)

A strong civil society is the opposite side needed for a strong democratic culture and an accountable democratic state

Often there is participatory language in many programs (e.g. Neighborhoods Management /Quartiersmanagement) but: where is the punch? How real is it?

Is it only playing at democracy? Is it used only within a limited frameworks of programmes and projects? Are these about keeping control?

**“Participatory processes are messy”** – they are “off the leash” . There is also a question of respect for participants and recognition of their interests

Act and reflect: **collective public action as a learning experience** – mainly for the citizen leaders who are not paid to carry out these actions (non – professionals) as well as for the professional organizers.

“My main concern is not the politicians – it is the people, the ordinary citizens”

“I don't want to convince them (the politicians) any more – I want to do it!”

There is a great need in current society for professionals who are able to do this **relational work**: making contact with the potential actors, potential leaders (non – professionals) and work them and connect them into a “handlungsfähiges Wir”

**The best learning environment for the future professionals is / would be to do this work in an accompanied environment**: doing – mentoring / coaching - reflecting

That's why the KHSB set up the “Deutsches Institut für Community Organizing” DICO and why Leo Penta practices community organizing in Germany

**“Collective Public Action and Active Citizenship for Social Change” -**

A Comparison of the Community Development and the Community Organizing approach in order to open the eyes for the role of Training and learning in these approaches – and NOT aimed at dividing these approaches

	<b>Community Development</b>	<b>Community Organizing</b>
Relation to each other	Can find too disconnected to citizens as result of intermediary role  Can lead to CO	Complementary to CD but important to keep separate  Can lead to CDwork
Values	Including excluded Sustainability participation	Relationship building Change balance of power People experience own power
<b>Role of staff and training</b>	Intermediary Facilitator Sometimes leader Community development worker often sees him/herself in the centre (intermediary position)	Organizer organises community groups and supports / trains activists  “Don’t do what others can do themselves!”
<b>Role of citizens and training</b>	Capacity building and empowerment but HOW?  Often no visible role of training of citizens / non professionals	Provide leadership and participate in action  Training of activists integral part of CO
<b>Accountability (to whom?)</b>	Primarily to citizens  But also NGOs, local authorities and local businesses	Only to citizens
<b>Main activities / basic tasks</b>	Analysis Build partnerships Variety of methodologies	Listen (RELATIONS!) Research ACTION Build organisation
<b>Desired outcome</b>	Improvement of living conditions New solutions sustainability	Strong multi – issue citizens’ organisation  Problems solved
<b>Options for funding</b>	Often oriented towards public funding	Almost a rule not to seek public funding – oriented towards other sources
<b>Attitude towards (own) power</b>	Not discussed so much  Power balance “shared power”	Fundamental focus on power  Alter balance of power “Citizens at table”

**Community economical development** as a third (complement) column to CD and CO:  
The importance of local social economy / social enterprises as a part of the citizens’ power

The participants agreed to add descriptions of some concrete examples as a supplement for the comparison of CD with CO which is based on generalisations. We agreed on the

- “Bürgerplattform Wedding / Moabit” (im Aufbau) – Monika
- Podlavice občianska iniciativa - Chuck
- Sagene community centre - Kirsten

These descriptions can be found as a supplement at the end of this report

## **TLCD for Policy makers**

### **Example from the Ideas Bank, presentation by Kirsten Paaby**

In the discussion related to Leo Penta’s presentation one issue was the ambiguity and contradictions between organising and development, the participation from bottom-up and the critical question around “managing participation” (in some situation this means keeping control). As well we talked about all the words and definitions that are used to describe participation. One question was “From all the participatory language - where is the beef?” One key issue that Leo stated was related to the concepts of “respect” and “recognition” – this again was related to the question about the importance of relational work. In many ways the Ideas Bank in its work tries to work in and with this contradiction and ambiguity. We are working with and training both those that “manage” participation and make policy for democratic participation as well as citizens’ group. Related to the discussion on the concepts of Community Development and Community Organising we are in focused on the intermediary role.

The Ideas Bank works with renewing of the democracy and development of methods for participation as a cornerstone of our work for sustainable development and the Local Agenda 21. In many ways the UN summits have been one of the biggest international democratic consensus processes. The UN summit on environment and development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 was the first to put *both* environmental challenges *and* global injustices squarely on the agenda, and thus to challenge the consumption patterns of the affluent minority. The Rio summit resulted in a document, Agenda 21, which consists of four main parts. The final part is about financing and implementation, but the headings of the remaining three sent an important signal to world society. Part 1 is about global inequalities, Part 2 about the environmental and resource challenges and Part 3 about the ***need for all major groups in society to contribute*** if the problems described in Parts 1 and 2 were to be solved. In other words the heads of government assembled in Rio recognized that the problems could not be solved “top down”. A **broad democratic mobilization was needed**, in which businesses, trades unions, local government, NGOs, women’s organizations, youth and ethnic minorities must participate. The need for *better knowledge* about the global challenges and an increase in the *exchange of experience with solutions* were also emphasized.



I illustrated my presentation with two requisites: A miniature of the Earth, a globe formed as a ball and a pair of small baby boots as symbols of the global threats that we have to solve. Our unsustainable consumption needs to be changed. If everybody consumed as the average citizen in Oslo we should have three Earths, we have only one. The baby boots is a symbol of necessity of having the future perspective in both the local and the global sustainable community development and they as well - compared with Kirsten's own big boots - is an illustration of what is called the *ecological footprint*, which "is a resource management tool that measures how much land and water area a human population requires to produce the resources it consumes and to absorb its wastes under prevailing technology."<sup>1</sup>

The Ideas Bank works primarily at the national level. The learners we are reaching represent administrators in municipalities, politicians, different educational institutions both formal and non-formal, citizens and different organisations in the civil society. The main objectives are:

1. Pedagogical presentations of *the concept of sustainable community development* in the broad perspective which involves each side of the triangle: the ecological, economical and social dimension

2. *Methods for democratic dialogues* and participation

3. *Collecting and disseminating of good examples* of projects that can earn high interest in the shape of a better and more sustainable future. We have over years developed a database with examples that represents best practices in resource conservation, global responsibility and developing of vibrant local communities. We focus as well at

4. *Dissemination* of the best practice examples through website, new letters, articles and publications as well as different democratic and participatory methods and processes, such as the so-called Dialogue-workshop. Through this work we intend to influence the policy and the public debate and stimulate the discussion of a more sustainable future.

A part of our training and learning activities around democratic participation in a sustainable community development takes place in the field of life long learning with a focus on strengthening the capacity and competence in taking action towards sustainability. We work actively in different levels with the UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development. Together with partners in Sweden and Denmark we initiated the Nordic Campaign "The Balancing Act" ([www.balanseakten.no](http://www.balanseakten.no)) March 2006. Nordic institutions of education - both formal and non-formal - are invited to join and work practically with the challenges stated by the UN Summit Meeting in Johannesburg 2002: Education is a key to sustainable development and essential to improve people's ability to solve environmental and development problems, education for sustainable development is an issue for all people in all phases of their life. In the first phase of this project the invitation was directed towards the folk high schools and associations for adult learning. In this field we will find a big part of the multipliers for the TLCD project.

The headline for my presentation was meant to be "*TLCD for policymakers*".

Since 2007 and during the coming 3 years we have assisted and will be assisting the programme "Liveable Communities" with the above mentioned objectives. (The programme is supported by the Ministry of Environmental Affairs and is led by The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities.) Among 100 municipalities are at the moment taking part in the programme and work together in thematically networks. The target groups are local elected politicians, heads of the municipality administrations and professionals from the municipality administration. One "red thread" through the programme is the role of the municipality as community developer in co-operation with the private sector and the civil society. We have developed 3 training modules towards the program, based on the Ideas Banks main objectives mentioned above.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information look at <http://www.footprintnetwork.org/>

I have been responsible of the module “Methods for dialogue and partnership in a sustainable community development”. The module is based on the hypothesis that:

- Participative democracy is a precondition for sustainable community development.
- That implementation of participation in the local communities need to be anchored in a long-term political process
- The participatory processes have to thematize central dilemmas of a sustainable community development: How we act, live and plan today has an influence on the lives of those not yet born an influence on the nature resources and the balance between the rich and the poor part of the world (I refer to the “requisites”)

Through the training sessions the participants in the programme are practising different participatory methods to make their work concrete and through this learning in the second hand to get to know - through “the hands on work” - how the methods can be used in participatory processes with the citizens, organisations, the private sector in their local communities as a part of the community-developer role.

My experience is that it is possible “to convince politicians” – and that it is of vital importance to include policymakers as a target group when it comes to training and learning for community development. As described in the attached article about the Sagene Agenda 21 Centre the local elected in this district of Oslo wanted to experiment with and renew their role as politicians. Could this and other similar examples contribute to a fruitful discussion, development and change? Could it give inspiration and practical guidance to how to work with the above mentioned ambiguity – in training sessions with politicians and citizens at the same table?



## **CEST – Innovation Transfer** (founded within the Leonardo programme)

### **Project presentation by Dr. Günther Lorenz, Technologie – Netzwerk Berlin e.V.**

Further Training in the area of Local Social Economy is not very much mainstreamed so far; its quality could be improved either. The objective of this project is to transfer an already successfully tested curriculum (CEST) in a way that multipliers individually can apply, assess and monitor it. National relay stations in Germany, Italy, Poland and the United Kingdom shall secure the transfer of the curriculum and the outcome of successful results. Finally, this approach will benefit such disadvantaged people who search for and carry out good work in social economy organisations. Theories, methodologies and instruments will be transmitted to potential multipliers in the mentioned countries to identify the conditions of transfer and to mainstream them in an intermediate process. Outputs of the projects will be a handbook and an international conference on this subject through which other interested users can participate. On the one hand the fragmentation of further training in the Local Social Economy will be overcome, on the other hand, sustainable structures of transmission will be institutionalised. The partner organisations of the project are experts of further training for social enterprises and local development; they are already networking for a long time. By identifying the conditions of transfer and the individual adaptation of the curriculum to the individual conditions in the countries and regions of our partners we promote the mainstreaming of good practice in this innovative area. We also want to optimise the work of multipliers and by that achieve the improvement of life and work of people who were excluded from economic and social participation of society so far. At the end of the day, an intermediate learning infrastructure which facilitates successful enterprise development will be available and at the same time an improved integration of people into the economy and society will be achieved. Further information: [www.CEST-Transfer.de](http://www.CEST-Transfer.de))

The four general topics or headlines for the transfer workshops are: the future of economy – the future of work – **community development** – social enterprise culture

Günther Lorenz states that the partners are interested in making links to the TLCD project.

## **Field visit to the intercultural community centre with health care:**

### **SprengelHaus**

The SprengelHaus has got three strands of origins which led to its foundation:

- The community development work of Kommunales Forum Wedding e.V.(KFW) in the “Sprengelkiez” since 1993 – for a long time without funding and without programmes or policies supporting these activities
- The Nachbarschaftsladen “Aktiv im Kiez” which originally had been set up by KFW; later the running of the small neighbourhood centre had been taken over by the groups and persons who mostly used it
- The “Quartiersmanagement Sparrplatz” – ‘neighbourhood management’ – based on a federal and regional programme on urban social development in Germany (Soziale Stadt – look at [www.sozialestadt.de](http://www.sozialestadt.de) with information in English also) – which provided start – up – founding to refurbish the premises in the Sprengelstraße 15 and for the initial phase of the SprengelHaus.

The ideas behind the SprengelHaus were / are

- to develop a key element of the social infrastructure in a sustainable way
- to pool resources and combine services for the sake of the disadvantaged area of the ‘Sprengelkiez’ – neighbourhood “under one roof” - or in other words
- to open the premises for the use of a broad variety of individuals, initiatives and organisations

The premises of the SprengelHaus comprise: 1. an open door – area for residents seeking and getting advice and for self – organized groups (130 square metres), 2. a “Bildungsetage” for training and learning of / with unemployed (250 sm) 3. a gym plus sanitary area for active health care (100 sm) plus 4. offices of the association running the Sprengelhaus (Gemeinsam im Stadtteil e.V.) and of the Stadtteilgenossenschaft Wedding eG - the neighbourhood co-operative (40 sm each)

**Conclusions: Main results and questions of the Berlin Relay**  
**What to take to the laboratory**

on the issue of collective public action and Training and Learning for active citizenship

- (focus on) learning experiences for activists / citizens= non professionals (not paid for CO / CD work)
- **BASED ON ACTION** (**‘hands – on learning’**) – learning by doing including reflection
- Not by ‘courses’ but need for new forms of ‘learning experiences’ – where the actions takes place or is being organised
- What are supportive structures for that?
- What is the role of (potential) partners like e.g. CD organisations or Volkshochschulen (= adult education / lifelong learning institutions)?
- Need for exchange of “active citizens’ organisations” (of non – professionals)
- **Watch out when using terms “citizen”** (Staatsbürger) and “active citizenship”- who has got the status and the legal rights as citizen – and who has not? (migrants etc.)
- Then **language becomes an issue** (role of informal communication)
- To work consciously with language barriers is not a problem but a potential and a resource
- This means: development of communication skills as a task and an issue for possible follow – up projects of TLCD
- Work in practice on this with creative approaches already during the laboratory!

BEWARE of the fact.

- Need to find more resources for collective public action as the starting point!

AND:

- What are the links to vocational training for CD / CO professionals?

### **Feed – back on the relay –visit:**

- Learnings and open questions of the Banska Bystrica relay were taken into the Berlin relay – flexibility in adopting the programme
- Participants could grasp the benefits of cumulative content /the growing knowledge from relay to relay
- Advantages of working in a small group (flexibility, discussions in depth)
- Invitation of participants from Berlin worked out
- Visualisation of discussion (flip chart) very useful –especially for those participants who only took part in some sessions
- Kirsten missed the practical use of own creative methods / other ways of communication (and felt too insecure to introduce this) – Monika liked it the way it was, esp. because of advantage of a small group and the honesty and directness between us
- Venue and very helpful staff plus location of hotel in the vicinity were great

DON'T miss the discussion points / issues we put aside! Like:

- The Nordic model (local government / local democracy / local election turn out)
- Who has got voting rights? And what does this mean? (What effects does this have?)
- Strong civil society is the opposite side needed of a strong political society
- Managed participation
- The first issue is respect / recognition as a partner
- Participatory processes are messy – they involve contradictions and conflicts – the question is how you deal with them
- Practice before reflection!

Hgr, 290608

### **Appendixes:**

**Brief descriptions of examples**

**Bürgerplattform Wedding – Moabit, Berlin (by Monika Götz)**

**Podlavice Obcienska Iniciativa in Banska Bystrica (by Chuck Hirt)**

**Sagene Community Centre in Olso (by Kirsten Paaby)**

<b>Monika Götz</b>	<b>Notes on Example:</b> <b>Bürgerplattform Wedding – Moabit, Berlin</b>
<b>Brief Description of project and context</b>  <b>The goal is:</b>	The 'Bürgerplattform' is working toward the establishment of a Citizens' Platform in two contiguous districts of Berlin. The current tasks focus on informing and organizing the local population and networking civil society: the organizations, associations, and activists of the district. The strategic goal is to empower participants - members of civil society - to present their requests to local government officials on the level of equals. This is based on the belief that democracy can only flourish when people, both citizens and resident aliens, feel their recommendations and suggestions for solutions to problems and demands for improvement of the current situations are taken seriously. We seek to increase the efficacy of independent, self-organized individuals at the local level.
<b>Values</b>	Building relationships based on trust among the platform's participants, empowering civil society in the district, and changing the balance of power.
<b>Role of staff and training</b>	The organizer (a paid professional) organizes and informs the different groups, facilitates the networking among them, and organizes meetings, events, actions, and the official foundation of the "platform". A vital part of the process is the training of key members of the civil society for them to be able to take over tasks during the organization of the platform as well as of the actions. Important issues addressed in training seminars are: building trust and relationships; active listening; negotiating; setting aside personal interests and perceived needs for the betterment of the whole; and withstanding setbacks and overcoming obstacles in unity.
<b>Role of citizens and training</b>	Participate in training seminars in order to take over leadership positions in the platform, organize events and actions, and negotiate with local politicians and key members of the business world.
<b>Accountability (to whom?)</b>	The organizer is accountable to no one but the citizens she works with.
<b>Main activities / basic tasks</b>	Building dependable relationships, foundation / building up the platform, research, negotiation with local politics and business, organization of actions and events, and constantly strengthening/enlarging the platform.
<b>Desired outcome</b>	Organized, strong and powerful citizens who care and work for the improvement of their neighborhood and civil society. Problem solving on a local level and support of and networking with other platforms in Germany, possibly followed by actions and problem solving on the national level.
<b>Options for funding</b>	Membership fees, donations from supporters like local companies, housing organisations, foundations, etc. <b>No public funding!</b>
<b>Attitude towards (own) power</b>	Power is a vital element for the platform, and its use is important for changing and keeping the power balance. Civil society and individuals are to be empowered to negotiate as equals with representatives of government and business to solve problems in their neighborhood.

<b>Chuck Hirt</b>	<b>Podlavice Obcienska</b>	<b>Initiativa</b>
	<b>Community Development</b>	<b>Community Organizing</b>
<b>Relation to each other</b>	The work in the Podlavice neighbourhood started as a community organizing effort but community development became an important contribution several years after starting. A number of different issues were able to be addressed. This part of the work started with community events like St. Nicholas Day and grew into getting a grant to construct children play areas and shortly thereafter, a neighbourhood initiated urban plan which guided future investments.	The work in the Podlavice neighbourhood started as a community organizing effort with a few successful campaigns. It led to an interest to move into a broader development effort where a plan was prepared for the neighbourhood which was initiated by architects from the neighbourhood.
<b>Values</b>	Sustainability Participation Multiple issues	Relationship building Change balance of power People experience own power
<b>Role of staff and training</b>	This role was not played by CKO during this process.  Activists from the neighbourhood took on the role in leading a participatory planning effort which eventually resulted in a number of significant improvements.	A community organizer began the effort by knocking on doors and helping people to come together. They brought activists together to build their own organization starting with helping leaders to prepare for meetings. They offered suggestions on strategies for campaigns and at times agitated people to take actions. After the group had won their first two campaigns, a formal training on community organizing for leaders was offered and the organizer assisted in delivering this training. Training was also offered for other activists on local fund raising. The organizer helped them to set goals and develop their two week effort to go door-to-door.
<b>Role of citizens and training</b>	Citizens also provided leadership in this area as there was no one from the city interested in doing this. Several architects in the neighbourhood took the lead to prepare urban design ideas and the neighbourhood group was able to convince city staff to eventually participate. Not training occurred.	Provided leadership, ran meetings and were active. The organizer provided consultation and discussions with leaders throughout the work. Formal training was provided the organizer but only following several campaigns.

<b>Staff Accountability (to whom?)</b>	Not applicable as there were no staff assigned. But relationships between citizens and city were a critical dimension in this area.	The organizer's accountability was entirely to the citizens of the neighbourhood.
<b>Main activities / basic tasks</b>	Staff did not carry out this activity but leaders agreed to prepare a plan and to work to get the city to eventually finalize and support their plan. An analysis of problems and possible solutions was conducted. Strategies were proposed and modified following citizen comments. City planners were originally uncomfortable working with citizens but eventually found it effective.	The organizer started with listening (going door-to-door) which was fundamentally about building relationships and learning about people's self-interest. The second stage was to do research (or doing homework on the chosen problem). The third stage was to prepare their strategy and to act. This work was primarily focused around building their organisation.
<b>Desired outcome</b>	Plans developed and implemented. A number of problems were addressed through this process.	Strong multi – issue citizens' organisation developed. A number of problems were solved such as getting a post office in the neighbourhood, get city to cut overgrown weeds. Also organized events such as Children's Day and St. Nicholas events which were supported with their own funds.
<b>Options for funding</b>	There was no funding available for the planning. It occurred on a volunteer basis. City funds were used to pay for most improvements but also private investments including a new church and a grocery store with amenities like additional parking and trash collection bins improved can from private sources.	Outside funding (US foundations) supported work to pay for an organizer and limited material costs. Local fund raising carried out which paid for local events.
<b>Attitude towards (own) power</b>	There was no real discussion about power in this process. The primary issue was related to relationship building between the neighbourhood activists and the city – both the planning department and administration.	Fundamental focus on power (e.g. citizens shifted the attitude of the postal service about whether to locate a new site in the neighbourhood). They altered the balance of power as the city began to respect the initiative. After a number of successful campaigns and citizens being active in pre-election activities, city officials agreed to meet with citizens when asked.

## **Sagene community centre: Democracy – not just for the privileged.**

*An article from the Ideas Bank yearbook 2006 “The Room of Possibilities” by Kirsten Paab*

**In October 2005 The Ideas bank Foundation held a seminar about “Democratic renewal” at the Sagene community centre in Oslo. The choice of place for the seminar was not a coincidence. The community centre is the centre for Local Agenda 21 activities in one of Oslo’s neighbourhoods which have Agenda 21 activity as a high priority. The centre is a vibrant meeting place for the local community with as many users in a year as there are people in the neighbourhood. The house is also a certified Eco-lighthouse. A lot of creative work has been done here to revitalise local democratic efforts by focusing especially on reaching out to groups of people that seldom get heard or seen.**

The house has existed since 1979, but got a “new life” in 2001, when the municipality chose to make it the focal point for developing new local democratic processes as important supplements to the representative democracy. Through this commitment, the local district council wanted to gather “hands-on” experience and develop new perspectives on their own role and that of the local community. This was to happen in active partnership with the population. Sagene city district is facing big changes. A great number of people are moving into the area, and at the same time it is the municipality with the highest rate of public housing in Oslo. The area has changed from being a historic industrial, working class area to becoming a modern and multicultural urban neighbourhood. The local politicians actively wanted to focus on this area, where a large group of people with diverse backgrounds are facing poverty and living side by side to big, modern, expensive apartment developments.

### **Community development**

- The foundation for the way we work is what the Dalai Lama calls “a policy of kindness” with a focus on a common good: - *I am because WE are*, says project leader Susan M. Guerra. She speaks enthusiastically about the work that takes place in the house with a touch of an American accent. – *The approach to our work is community development, something that I have long experience with both from Texas and Oslo. We do not have a word for this in the Norwegian language, but I am trying to bring the concept to the house through establishing a “living web” amongst all the different networks that we meet. We use a social anthropological approach in our work. We make ourselves accessible, listen and analyse. I have many one-to-one conversations, walk around in the neighbourhood and talk to those I meet about how it is living here. I ask them what their concerns are and how they may want to contribute. It is important to make topics simple and close to people’s everyday life. What we did when we made this house a centre for Local Agenda 21, was to literally open the doors in all senses of the word, and facilitate dialogue from day one*, she says.

### **Creative dialogue as a tool**

There have been many types of dialogues with the community, and more is being planned. There have been big public meetings that have taken the form of café dialogues, future workshops, art projects and other creative approaches. Guerra describes how they have initiated a project for further development of the area. Here the Local Agenda 21 forum has had a leading and independent role in cooperating with politicians and administration: - *We created an interest for the public meeting by printing a newspaper with visions from the future. In text and words we described how it was in the area around the community centre in the future. On the last page there was an invitation to a public meeting. This really got people thinking! People read it as a normal newspaper. 150 people came to the meeting. They were active at the meeting, and their involvement has continued. A lot of the suggestions that came up are still being worked with*, Susan says with a satisfied glint in the eye.

### **Local Agenda 21 forum**

The Local Agenda 21 forum is an independent citizen's forum. It has representatives from different groups and organisations in the local community. One member from the local district council is attending, but a conscious choice has been made so that it is not the politicians who are leading the work of this forum. What is interesting from a political point of view is that the Forum can present their plans directly to the politicians. There is a focus on using the role of the different participants to achieve their goals. - It is crucial that the forum is autonomous. *Our challenge has been to be aware of our role: Not to take control and act like experts, but use our skills in a constructive way. The Forum has worked under the right type of conditions – independence both in relation to their funds and how they use them. We are secretaries and pose as the link to the administration. Right now we are discussing if the forum is going to establish itself as a foundation, so that they can enter as a partner in the management partnership that we have started, Guerra says.*

### **Mural project**

Guerra and her colleagues have focused a lot on communication in the broad sense while facilitating the activities in the centre. - *We are constantly searching for alternative ways of communication that we can use in our work. How can we find mutual expressions for all the different opinions and experiences that exist among the multitude of people that are using this house? This was some of the driving force behind of Mural project, were we wanted to use the wall to signal "This is a place you can come in!" We were inspired by the muralist movement in Mexico City in the 1930s, who gave a voice to groups in the population that were not being heard, Susan Guerra says.* The Local Agenda 21 group formed the centre point of this project. In addition, the neighbours of the community centre were invited to six workshops held throughout the time span of a year. Here the participants learned what the Mexicans did more than 60 years ago. Then they produced drawings and sketches based upon their own individual experience of their local community and their wishes for the future. - An artist and an architect from the neighbourhood signed up to gather all the impressions from the workshops. This work was done voluntarily for the most part. The environmental aspect was included by reusing old cups and plates together with a contribution from the local tile centre. The Local Agenda 21 forum wanted to include as many people from the neighbourhood as possible in their work and had an open workshop at the annual environmental fair that is a part of the community day, where 100 white tiles were available for people to draw their own images. When it was time to start working directly on the wall it became a meeting place for learning. *Passers-by stopped and shared their opinions, tells Susan.*

### **Permacultural sculptures**

The community centre has also focused on different ways to learn from the South. One of the important cooperation partners for the house is the organisation Change the World. They gave an innovative contribution to the development of the local park area in the form of permacultural sculptures. With their guidance, and inspired by a visit to an Eco village east in Norway, local youth made pyramids, spirals and, circular and horseshoe shaped planting beds. They planted a mix of vegetables, flowers, fruits, medicinal plants, herbs, berries and climbers. To create this, they utilized recycled materials as car tyres, waste from building sites, cardboard and organic waste. Innovative techniques and concepts within sustainable design were used to show that it is possible to transform the city's green areas to be more productive, functional, aesthetic and areas for learning.

The running of the project received great attention and resulted in interesting meetings and conversations between the youth and curious residents in the area. There were many that wanted to make something similar and others volunteered to water the plants and herbs when

they heard that all were welcomed to harvest from the sculptural beds. - *This is a practical way to work with lifelong learning that has inspired us and that we want to develop further in cooperation with Change the World and other parts of the local administration, tells Guerra.*

### **What next?**

There is a steady increase in activity in the community centre. In 2005 the number of visitors has increased from 24.000 to 28.000 in 2003. There have been 511 events and the activity has generated around 4221 hours of voluntary work. Co-ownership has been the fundamental principle for the running of the centre. Some very interesting models for cooperation between public authorities, businesses and voluntary organisations have been developed, where the social capital is playing an important part as an additional resource. One of the biggest challenges is to develop an economically sustainable way to run the centre that ensures that the community centre continues to be an arena and meeting place for a living local democracy also after the project period, which ends in 2006.

- *It is going to be very important to achieve a political understanding that working with sustainability is to focus on the big picture and see the interconnection between the different disciplines. Up until now we are a project which receives our funding from the Community Action Programme for Inner City Oslo East”, she finishes off and takes the opportunity to praise the local politicians for their willingness to continue the support for the house in spite of cuts in other parts of the budget.*

### **Why is Sagene community centre an example for the Ideas bank?**

Sagene community centre and the municipality are increasingly living according to the Ideas banks criteria to become a good example in our database: The work is innovative and surprising. It covers the full width of sustainability, both the ecological, economic and social dimension, and there is extensive cooperation between different groups. The local municipality has participated in several of the projects of the Ideas bank. One of these was the Frontrunner programmes in Local Agenda 21. Here the community centre was a partner in one of our European projects about how to combat social exclusion.