

The 'Socially Integrative City' – Strategic Re-orientation of the Berlin Neighborhood Management Procedures

Neighborhood Management is successful and, based on its integrative and resident-oriented approach, essentially suited to systematically improve disadvantaged urban areas. These are the findings of investigations that have accompanied the Neighborhood Management approach from the beginning. Thus, Neighborhood Management remains a central instrument for overcoming potentially disparate living opportunities as well as spatial disparities concerning the quality of life in the urban neighborhoods of Berlin. Accompanying research was also aimed at determining whether the implemented procedure within the scope of social urban development has to be developed further and changed.

The current re-evaluation and extension of the setting of the 'Socially Integrative City' was based on the Berlin-wide "Monitoring of Social Urban Development 2004" of the Senate Department of Urban Development and prepared in close cooperation with the districts affected by the extension. Besides those areas which are newly added to the current selection of the 'Socially Integrative City' areas – based on their particularly prominent socio-economic problems – other areas with medium-level problems are integrated into the stabilization and improvement program 'The Socially Integrative City'. In these areas, henceforth called "Prevention Areas", the beginning of problematic social development is becoming apparent. Prompt action and appropriate measures are intended to prevent a "downward spiral".

The re-orientation of the procedures of the 'Socially Integrative City' is predominantly targeted at improving the living opportunities within the disadvantaged areas and focused on the operational fields of **Integration, Education and Employment**. Accompanying construction efforts are a major contribution to the improvement of the affected areas. An important prerequisite for the development of a stable public community is the continuous integration of the local inhabitants into the upgrading and development process. They must be empowered to shape the community responsibly ("empowerment").

Organisations and initiatives with a "natural" interest in the positive development of a neighborhood are integrated in order to efficiently utilize existing networks and resources. Therefore "**strong partners**" will play a crucial role within the framework of the future Neighborhood Management procedures. These can be housing companies, existing neighborhood centres, schools or local businesses and entrepreneurs. Jointly with these strong partners essential synergetic effects can be created.

Experience with the practical implementation of the Neighborhood Management program during recent years has shown that interdepartmental action of all administrative levels is a basic requirement for successful neighborhood development as is the external management support by professional neighborhood managers.

Thus the procedures and methods implemented in the new areas of the 'Socially Integrative City' will be strongly oriented towards the procedures tested in the existing Neighborhood Management areas.

Principles of re-orientation

In the future, the following guidelines will form the obligatory framework of action in the new intervention areas as well as in the new prevention areas.

1. Neighborhood agent with central management role in the area

Experience from implementing the Neighborhood Management program has shown that it is reasonable and effective to establish an external agent with a local office within the area. Thus local players can be interconnected, residents can be addressed and, on the basis of special knowledge of the area, projects focused on the local problems and on the area can be initiated together with the inhabitants. The neighborhood agents (Neighborhood Management teams) are assigned the role of Neighborhood Management based on contractual procedures.

2. Spectrum and definition of objectives of integrated area improvement

Only by applying a broad interdepartmental perspective of the complex problems within the areas can these problems be tackled. By regionally analyzing the weaknesses and potentials, differentiated goals are defined and corresponding specific priorities for each area are set.

3. Developing integrated action and development concepts

The area-oriented Integrated Action Plans, created by the districts with the aid of the neighborhood managers, provide the concrete framework differentiated into separate operative or political fields. They present the development guidelines for the individual area in which concrete, individual projects and measures are integrated. The district departments, local projects, initiatives, associations, and the inhabitants are closely integrated into the development and conception of these Integrated Action Plans.

4. Activating and enabling of the inhabitants

Activating the local residents to participate in the development process of their area is an important objective of the Neighborhood Management process. It is crucial to reach those whose living conditions are supposed to improve sustainably through the local stabilizing and upgrading process. They must be enabled to help build their local neighborhood community ("Empowerment"). Migrants especially and their locally active organizations must be included. Projects and measures financed by means of the Neighborhood fund (cf. 5.) are made public to increase the motivation of the local population to be part of the amelioration process, and to achieve utmost transparency.

5. Establishing a neighborhood fund

Within the scope of the 'Socially Integrative City' program / Neighborhood Management the launching of a fund has proven successful as an instrument that activates the local inhabitants to assume responsibility, its funds being granted by an elected committee of local inhabitants. This committee consists primarily of local inhabitants and is supplemented by local protagonists, such as institutions and initiatives operating in the area, and the appointed Neighborhood Management team. Projects that have been approved of by the inhabitants can be financed with this fund.

6. Interdepartmental action and networking of the administrative levels involved

In order to effectively face the multi-layered problems within an area it is necessary to interconnect the different policymaking and administrative departments, and to oblige them to undertake interdepartmental action. This interdepartmental networking must take place between the participating Senate administrations (among others, by means of the already existing state secretary's steering committee 'The Socially Integrative City') and among the specialized departments on the district level (for example, by means of interdepartmental steering and coordinating committees).

7. Cooperation with the districts

Due to the complex nature of the problems arising in the affected areas, close interdepartmental cooperation is needed between the Senate Department of Urban Development, which is in charge of the Neighborhood Management program, and the district authorities who are responsible for carrying out the actual projects. From the very beginning, the affected districts will take part in the implementation of the Neighborhood Management procedures (together with the neighborhood managers). These procedures consist in steering the neighborhood managers, energizing public participation and activation, creating Integrated Action Plans, developing and accounting for projects, as well as implementing interdepartmental workgroups and steering committees on the district level.

The cooperation between the Senate Department of Urban Development, which is in charge of the new Neighborhood Management procedures for the whole city of Berlin, the particular district, and the "strong partner" to be integrated is specified in a cooperative agreement.

8. "Strong partners" as strategic allies

If the stabilisation and upgrading processes are to have a permanent and sustainable effect, local institutions and businesses must be integrated from the beginning into the neighborhood development process. In view of the common interests in upgrading the area, it is important to mobilize the individual existing financial and human resources targeted at the improvement of the area, and to jointly develop and execute projects and measures by close cooperation.

Strong partners in this respect are, among others, the locally oriented housing companies, the existing area and neighborhood centres, schools and local businesses. Prior to the establishment of the new Neighborhood Management procedures, it was possible to gather experience which can be applied in further areas. Building strong partnerships is a crucial element in neighborhood improvement in intervention as well as prevention areas.

The partners can support the process of neighborhood improvement as follows:

- **Housing companies**

The housing companies are partners with a strong self-interest in socially integrative procedures for improving their housing complexes and for stabilizing community living. Because they are confronted with concrete problems concerning the condition of their housing (vacancy, fluctuation of the renters, vandalism) they are especially sensitive. In part, they have developed their own approach to socially stabilizing their housing complexes. Their readiness and opportunity to intensively and jointly tackle the problems is there; moreover, financial and personnel resources on the part of the housing companies can create strong synergy effects and a lasting impetus when combined with the intended intervention measures.

- **Neighborhood Centres**

With their detailed knowledge of local affairs and their resulting need-oriented offers, and with their experiences in developing civic engagement, neighborhood centres are able to play an important role in the stabilizing and improving of disadvantaged urban areas. As a socio-political approach for ensuring basic social services through a citywide network of locations, they share multiple connecting points with the locally oriented Neighborhood Management approach and its definition of tasks. Early cooperation, coordination and /or assumption of single tasks concerning Neighborhood Management procedures can result in inter-institutional integrated Neighborhood Management efforts – along with resulting relevant synergy effects.

- **Schools**

Due to their locally defined educational task, schools cultivate a direct relationship with the local population. As institutions of education and integration, they present an approach towards groups of inhabitants, especially parents, who are otherwise difficult to reach.

Therefore they must, more effectively than before, be won over as strategic partners for neighborhood development efforts. While implementing the new Neighborhood Management procedures it will be examined whether and how schools can be involved, beyond the existing cooperative connections, in creating common procedures and projects, especially in the operational fields of education, training and labor.

- **Local Economy**

Local businesses and shops are important partners within the scope of stabilizing the urban areas. Local businesses, on the one hand, secure the local supply of goods. On the other hand, they can do their share in improving vocational training, professional qualification and employment of local inhabitants. Close cooperation can thus enhance the improvement of the area, which is of mutual interest. This can include projects and measures that support the local economy, but also particular companies supplying training and employment opportunities.

"Strong partners" are not only defined by their strong self-interest in being integrated into Neighborhood Management procedures, they also directly profit from the stabilization and amelioration measures within the areas.

The initiation of the new Neighborhood Management procedures provides a crucial step towards the systematic and continual struggle against spatial segregation processes in the city of Berlin. It is intended to initiate these new Neighborhood Management procedures and to implement the urgently needed stabilizing and upgrading schemes in the particular new areas of the "Socially Integrative City" within the next two months.

Table: Inhabitants of areas with new Neighborhood Management (NM) procedures and of extended NM areas

Category	District	Area	Inhabitants (as of 31. December 2004)
Extension of existing Category I	Friedrichshain-	Zentrum Kreuzberg / Oranienstraße 4.414 EW) additionally:	5,439
	Mitte	Beusselstraße (Up to present: 12,2 additionally:	7,611

Installation of new Category I	Neukölln	Richardplatz-Süd	11,183
Installation of new Category II (Intervention)	Friedrichshain-	Mariannenplatz	5,828
	Friedrichshain-	Werner-Düttmann-Siedlung (Housing Co-ops)	3,068
	Neukölln	Körnerpark	10,580
	Mitte	Brunnenstraße	12,159
	Mitte	Ackerstraße	8,013
Installation of new Category III (Prevention)	Spandau	Falkenhagener Feld - Ost	11,166
	Spandau	Falkenhagener Feld-West	8,356
	Spandau	Heerstraße	17,277
	Neukölln	Weißer Siedlung (White Housing Co-ops)	3,460
	Neukölln	Lipschitzallee / Gropiusstadt	24,046
	Neukölln	Flughafenstraße	7,787
	Friedrichshain-	Mehringplatz	5,241
	Friedrichshain-	Wassertorplatz	7,842
	Marzahn-Hellersdorf	Mehrower Allee	5,060
	Marzahn-Hellersdorf	Hellersdorfer Promenade	5,155

Extensions	Extension of 2 existing NM areas	13,050
New areas	16 new NM areas	146,221
Extensions and new areas	Total	159,271

for information only:

Existing NM areas (since 1999 / 2001)	17 areas	226,328
---	-----------------	----------------