



# Project Working Group Report

## Workshop Report Document

Contents, instruments and structural patterns of neighbourhood management policies

Inter-regional Project Working Group meetings  
Stockholm, October 2004 and London Haringey, March 2005

Stockholm - London Haringey, July 2005

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## 1 Theme 1: The policies

Within the overall POSEIDON project, theme 1 deals with contents, instruments and structural patterns of neighbourhood management policies. Responsible for this theme is the lead partners London Haringey and Stockholm.

At the theme 1 kick-off PWG meeting in Stockholm in October 2004, all presentations and workshops focused on different aspects of this issue. In the presentations, Stockholm shared its experiences with regards to previous and present initiatives on urban development policies. For example, in the present City District Regeneration Initiative the city has made good use of valuable research done on several previous urban development initiatives and has also taken certain measures to avoid the risk of disappointing local residents and other local actors engaging in the development process. (For a more comprehensive presentation of this example on how to deal with policy issues, see below; headline Building On Past Experiences: Stockholm's City District Regeneration Initiative, and Current Thinking: National Neighbourhood Management Policies in the UK.)

In one of the workshops, a SWOT analysis (the listing of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) was done to establish the national/regional/local organisations (positive or negative) influence on participation from local residents in the development process. In separate workshops, a preliminary draft for a tool-kit on neighbourhood management (NM) was elaborated and the first part of a theme-specific glossary was produced. We have incorporated work already done in London Haringey on a neighbourhood management toolkit into the list of bullet points elsewhere in this report. The common inter-regional glossary on neighbourhood management has already been published on the POSEIDON website. Accordingly, the theme-specific glossary will not be included in this report.

At the subsequent theme-specific PWG in London Haringey we examined policies concerned with creating sustainable neighbourhoods and communities in greater detail, following on from the discussion and presentations at the PWG in Stockholm. The UK government, through the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, defines sustainability thus: "Sustainable communities are places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all."

Delegates visited a new high-density private sector housing development and the site in Tottenham Hale where the UK government has stipulated that a large number of new dwellings will be built. We also visited social and private sector housing in the target areas of Seven Sisters and White Hart Lane. Having been presented with the list of issues at the Somerset Gardens site in White Hart Lane, partners were asked to come up with some possible solutions.

Residents, politicians and other local partners participated in a "Question Time" panel following the visits to the new housing development and to Tottenham Hale. POSEIDON partners put questions to the panel and gained new insights

into UK national and local government policies on sustainability, getting closer to communities and how local residents felt the impact of such policies. There was also discussion on how residents might react when faced with seemingly rigid policies, such as the current UK national government thinking about increasing the amount of high-density housing, both public and private, in towns and cities.

### **1.1 The importance of learning from previous urban development policies**

During the last decade there has been several attempts, both locally and nationwide, at reversing a most problematic downward tendency in the development of certain areas in the larger city regions of Sweden. Extensive research has been made on several of these attempts. In regards to the Swedish government's latest initiative on urban development, starting in 1999, the evaluation done by a large number of researchers agree on the following conclusions.

- Area-based projects should be developed and implemented in connection to other projects and to regular public services. Without this important connection there will be no sustainable change in the area.
- The local organisation that is established in order to plan and implement the project(s) and the overall development policy need to be at the same time visualising the development work being done and maintaining a strong link with the regular public organisation that is in need of improvement. Projects and policies that are too much separated from regular services will not be able to influence the daily work. Too close connection to regular services, on the other hand, may threaten the project or initiative to get lost within the old structures rather than influencing them.
- A powerful support from the head of the city district administration and from the district council is important if the development initiative is to have an overall effect throughout the organisation
- Co-operation between local actors, the municipality, national authorities, trade and industry, leisure organisations and NGOs must be supported and developed on a long term basis.
- Segregation cannot be successfully combated by initiatives which focus solely on certain limited areas that are defined as deprived. In order to get to the core of the problems the focus must be on the relation between the deprived areas and the surrounding society. The local city districts can not be made responsible for turning the downward spiral themselves, because they lack the capacity, the means and the mandate to change the overall structure of the area (i.e. influence, for example, the number of industrial and commercial establishments, the quality of the public transportation to and from the area, the establishment of centres of higher education and the quality of these centres).
- Development work based on knowledge is preferable to temporary projects without any connection or overall plan. The work need to find a balance between the day to day wishes and needs of residents and local actors and the solid knowledge of which types of initiatives will have a more lasting effect on the area.

A recent research project financed by EU has produced a manual on successful local development work made public in the spring of 2003. The manual underlines the following determining factors:

- Organisation – the work must be done in close co-operation between different levels in the overall administration, where the responsibility of every single level is clearly stated. This vertical co-operation need to be combined with an equally visible horizontal co-operation between different local actors. All parties must be equally responsible for the overall development initiative.
- The present situation – needs and potentials – must be clearly defined and analysed, as a foundation for the development process. The analyses need to be performed by experts as well as local actors and residents.
- A local development programme need to be elaborated. The programme should not only be a list of projects but should describe a cohesive plan regarding the area's further development (i.e. the overall goal of the separate projects and activities).
- In order to be successful the development initiative must be strongly supported by councillors at both local and central level in the city.
- The local decision-making level should be most influential with regard to the funding available within the initiative. The funding need to be long term. If the local level is forced to spend a lot of time looking for uncertain funding from different sources this will have a bad influence on the stability and the sustainability of the local development work.

### **1.1.1 Building on past experiences: Stockholm's City District Regeneration Initiative**

This part of the report is written in some detail since the theme 1 lead partners believe that the urban development policy described may offer some valuable suggestions and tools in regards to the elaboration of the overall POSEIDON output, the "Practical Experience Guide on Neighbourhood Management". The experiences so far regarding the Stockholm initiative have also been put to good use in the preliminary draft version of the guidelines to policy makers on policy solutions and minimum standards delivered as part of this report.

In September 2003 the City Council of Stockholm decided on a large scale initiative on the social and physical regeneration of some of the more deprived districts throughout the city. The programme is called The City District Regeneration Initiative and runs until the end of 2006. A total of EUR 65 millions will be spent during the whole period. Half of the funding is put up and spent by the public housing corporations, after agreements with local residents and in co-operation with the City District Councils. The other half has been divided among the nine city districts involved in the programme and will be used on social activities and physical improvements that has been suggested and elaborated by all kinds of local actors (for example residents, entrepreneurs, faith based organisations and NGOs) and public servants in co-operation. The City District Councils decide which of the suggested activities to pursue.

Leading up to the final decision in the City Council there was a period of intense work on the guidelines and regulations for the programme. Residents, public servants, local councillors, local entrepreneurs, public corporations and others who had been involved in previous initiatives were invited to meetings, both at the City Hall and in the local areas that were considered for the programme, and were asked to give their opinions and to share their experiences on the possibility of participating in the development of local areas. All meetings were led by the vice mayor in charge of the initiative, Ms Teres Lindberg. This effort at a very broad participation in the early stages of the planning process was considered by the vice mayor as vital when it came to insuring the success of the upcoming work within the actual programme.

Drafting the guidelines for the new development policy the city administrators also looked to the experiences from previous urban development programmes, both local and nationwide, and to all the research done on them. Some of the more important leads and key issues that influenced the guidelines for the new development programme can be found in the previous chapter (see 1.1 Lessons learned from previous urban development policies).

In order to achieve the important aspect of vertical co-operation in the development of the local areas the initiative involves not only some of the larger municipal corporations and the nine City District Councils but also some of the major municipal councils, such as The Education Committee, The City Planning Committee, The Real Estate and Traffic Committee, The Culture Committee, The Sports Committee and The Environment and Health Committee. Many different sectors of the public administration can and must contribute if there is to be a positive and sustainable development in deprived local areas.

In order to achieve the equally important horizontal co-operation among local actors and different departments within the local public administration, the guidelines put great emphasis on the need to involve all public services in the development work. City District Councils and local administrations are also told to support the establishment of local partnerships and close co-operation between the administration and other local actors.

To ensure continuation and long-term positive effects the guidelines state that all activities being performed within the programme must be connected in a comprehensible way to a cohesive plan regarding the area's further development. In order to develop and implement this plan, local support structures should be established within the regular administrations (i.e. a neighbourhood manager or development co-ordinator who has easy access to the different departments of the administration). It has become common practise for the head of the district administration to supervise the ongoing development work through regular meetings with the development co-ordinators and with the administration's steering group (which usually is made up of the heads of the different departments of the district administration).

The development co-ordinators are also vital when it comes to ensuring the participation of residents and a wide variety of local actors in the development work. Public meetings are held on a regular basis in order to discuss suggested activities as well as long-term development issues. Smaller groups of residents and public servants are formed in order to further develop the activities

suggested at the public meetings. All activities need to have the support of the local residents before they are put to the District Council for final decision.

It was decided very early in the process that the focus of the programme needed to be on the positive aspects of the target areas rather than on the negative. For researchers and the city alike, it has been one of the more important learning experiences from previous initiatives that a too strong emphasis on the different aspects of deprivation runs the risk of being detrimental and stigmatizing the areas instead of strengthening them. Thus, the guidelines even avoid using the very word "deprived", focusing instead on the capacity of young people, especially in the multi-ethnic and multicultural environments of the suburbs, of being inventive, innovative and entrepreneurial. In order to be successful, development initiatives should focus on empowerment and capacity building.

The progress of the City District Regeneration Initiative is being monitored regularly by the city's central administration and by the City Executive Board. In addition to this, the initiative is being evaluated by external researchers, commissioned by the city for this specific task.

### **1.1.2 Current thinking: National Neighbourhood Management Policies in the UK**

Following several years of different national regeneration initiatives such as City Challenge, the Single Regeneration Budget, the Pathfinder Programme and the New Deal for Communities, the UK government, under the auspices of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, published three significant documents in January 2005. These are "Smarter Delivery, Better Neighbourhoods", "Citizen Engagement and Public Services: why Neighbourhoods matter", and "Vibrant Local Leadership". These publications are in effect the current blueprint for Neighbourhood Management and Neighbourhood Renewal in the UK, and were published alongside the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's five year plan, "People, Places and Prosperity". The three documents were given to partners at the PWG in Haringey in March 2005.

Following the 1997 General Election, the new Labour government published a White Paper, "Modern Local Government: In Touch With The People". This document spoke of the need to modernise local government in the UK, both in terms of its democratic processes and the way in which it engaged with local residents. Most local authorities in England and Wales did away with what were perceived to be old-fashioned and bureaucratic committee structures, the majority of which the public could attend. However, these were formal bodies which did not lend themselves to meaningful public participation. These were replaced, in the main, by fewer committees but other functions, such as scrutiny and review of decisions taken by local politicians, were added, along with local area forums.

The role of the "back bench" politicians (those who are not Lead Members, or Chairs, of major areas such as Education and Social Services) changed significantly to that of advocates for the communities they represented. Central government was also very concerned about turnout at both general and local elections; if local people were encouraged to get more involved in what was

going on in their neighbourhoods, perhaps political awareness and participation would increase.

In London Haringey the local forums are called Area Assemblies and have been running for six years. They provide a platform for local people to discuss issues which are of concern to them with key partners and decision-makers. Changes in the way in which decisions are made often result from concerns raised by residents at the Assemblies, which carry the strap line "You Talk, We Listen". There are also several Neighbourhood Boards or Steering Groups in the priority areas for renewal in Haringey. Residents feature on all Boards and Steering Groups and are integral to driving forward the changes in their areas, working in partnership with the Council and other agencies.

This thinking paved the way for Neighbourhood Management in the UK, although there had been some experiments in decentralisation with Neighbourhood Offices in districts of London such as Islington and Tower Hamlets in the 1980s, with varying degrees of success.

The UK government also established Policy Action Teams which travelled around the country to identify the most deprived areas. They drew up proposals for comprehensive neighbourhood renewal. The Action Teams identified 88 wards, or districts, in England and Wales which had significant problems, such as low educational achievement, poor determinants of health, crime and anti-social behaviour and poor housing. The Neighbourhood Renewal Fund was created and Councils containing the 88 most deprived wards were invited to bid for the money. The NRF was due to cease in 2006 but has now been extended until 2008. Both Seven Sisters and White Hart Lane, the target areas in POSEIDON, benefit from this funding.

In the foreword of the "Citizen Engagement" document, John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, states: "We believe that by action at the neighbourhood level people everywhere can make a significant difference to the quality of our country's public services. In this way, local people can play their part in creating sustainable communities where it is good to live and work.

There can be no "one size fits all" approach, and that's why we are proposing a framework for neighbourhood arrangements that works with what people are doing already. We are proposing a neighbourhoods charter, a menu of options for action at the neighbourhood level, and key principles for neighbourhood engagement."

The Neighbourhoods Charter comes from another document, "Firm Foundations: The (UK) Government's Framework for Community Capacity Building", published in 2004. The thinking is that a Charter would set out what people can expect in their neighbourhood from central government, local government and other service providers. At present the Charter is a proposal, but one can see that this is likely to be required to be adopted by central and local government for neighbourhoods in the near future.

In terms of how this approach is meant to work in practice, the government is proposing five key principles for "neighbourhood arrangements".



These are:

- i) All Councils, in partnership with other service providers, should provide opportunities and support for neighbourhood engagement through appropriate arrangements so that they can respond to the needs and priorities of neighbourhood communities.
- ii) Neighbourhood arrangements must be capable of making a real difference to the everyday lives of citizens.
- iii) The nature of neighbourhood arrangements must be appropriate to local circumstances, be flexible to changing circumstances over time and be responsive to the needs and diversity of the community and its organisations.
- iv) Neighbourhood arrangements must be consistent with local representative democracy which gives legitimacy to governmental institutions, and places elected councillors as the leading advocates for their communities, and with the requirements of local democratic accountability.
- v) Neighbourhood arrangements must be balanced with the demands of efficiency and proportionality.

However, as for the City of Stockholm, it is important to view this current thinking in the light of previous initiatives. In the UK local Councils are clearly being urged to “go local” by central government, whereas in the past regeneration initiatives often occurred without significant resident involvement, particularly where physical improvement and rebuilding were concerned. This led to disillusionment from local residents and a growing lack of trust in central and local government.

So in terms of lessons learned from the past, what must we now be mindful of? These principles underpinning the role of communities in service delivery are common to all POSEIDON partners:

- Know and understand the communities using the service
- Help to build the confidence of the community
- Take active steps to involve the community as widely as possible
- Ensure no sector or group dominates
- Make sure procedures for ensuring representation are transparent
- Provide practical assistance
- Demonstrate positive support for community engagement

Similar concepts were expressed by partners at the PWG in Stockholm during both the SWOT Analysis and Neighbourhood Management Toolkit workshops. These are sound principles, but the “how” of implementing them is absolutely key: *how* will you gain knowledge and understanding of the communities in your neighbourhood? *What methods* might you use to build the confidence of the wider community?

Our Neighbourhood Management activities in London Haringey are closely monitored. Formal monitoring of spend and completion of projects in areas such as the New Deal for Communities is carried out both centrally and locally, as is

monitoring of projects in other neighbourhoods such as White Hart Lane. In terms of accountability what we are doing is also closely monitored by local residents. If they do not see their views being taken on board and if their neighbourhood does not appear to be improving, despite their involvement, all the policies in the world will mean very little to them. The challenge for all of us is to make policy meaningful by using it to drive positive change in our neighbourhoods, all of which have their own special characteristics.

## **1.2 Organisations and participation – easier said than done?**

A SWOT analysis (the listing of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) was produced by partners at the PWG in Stockholm in order to establish the national/regional/local organisation's (positive or negative) influence on participation from local residents in the development process. The discussions focused on the following questions.

- Does the (national/regional/local) organisation allow (promote) effective participation from local people?
- What influence (positive/negative) does the (national/regional/local) organisation have on the participation of local people from the neighbourhood? Identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that are important for/in your own organisation concerning structural patterns of neighbourhood management.

The conclusions of the SWOT analysis can be summarised as follows.

### **STRENGTHS**

- Organisation: The fact that Local Neighbourhood Management (LNM) exists; Flexibility within partnerships; Co-ordination between municipality and district government; Local elections and bylaw; Informal constellations; Many different actors. Regeneration initiatives
- Mobilisation: The mandate of councillors/local politicians – communicating with residents; Strong community lobbying; Actively seeking opinions, Focus Groups; Capacity building, workshops; LNM makes it possible to involve Hard-to-reach groups.
- Participation: Residents' participation in decision making boards; Making projects more meaningful; Citizens can make suggestions to local councillors

### **WEAKNESSES**

- Weak communities: Weakness in the local community structure – hard to reach; Low rate of participation at local level; Hard to reach groups; Difficult to organise immigrants; Those who speak the loudest are most influential; Focus mostly on crime and rubbish; Traditional model for democracy. New approach needed in democratic system.

- ❑ Organisation, bureaucracy: Bureaucratic barriers; Traditional structures; Mainstream services very slow to change; Participation from residents is over-regulated; Structures supposed to encourage people to participate can be discriminatory; The organisation works from inside, not from demand outside; Lack of integration between departments; Links missing in partnerships; Too much bureaucracy; No regulation on participation procedures; Tradition of top-down; The system does not allow people to participate.
- ❑ Resources: Limitations of small project budgets; Decisions on finances are made at City Hall; Lack of common budget; Expectations (unrealistic??); Money is not going in the right direction; Neighbourhood managers are "lone rangers"
- ❑ Lack of know-how: Lack of (cultural) knowledge of how to approach and involve people; Participation a new experience, learning new methods

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

- ❑ Empowerment: Empowerment and development of civic society; Exploring and creating new networks; Organisation positive to community participation; Mobilising local resources; Influence from residents association and business organisations; Associations and networks of inhabitants; Participation of young people; Participatory approach in different types of areas
- ❑ Visible results: Visual evidence, more funding to deprived areas as a result of successful residents' involvement; Successful Pilot Projects influence City and District levels; Small projects, good democratic practice;
- ❑ Organisation: Organisational willingness for more community participation; Organisations will be more flexible as a result of LNM; Diversity of partnerships, funds, expertise; Co-operation between City Districts and Specialist Committees;
- ❑ Resources: POSEIDON; External funding of pilot projects influencing and changing mainstream services; Better conditions for people in deprived areas; Lack of resources forcing co-operation; Streamlining existing resources;
- ❑ A learning process: Learning from experience; LNM a learning process, new possibilities.
- ❑ Politics: Political interest in participation as such; New elections, younger councillors

## **THREATS**

- ❑ Unstable political base: Political changes; Special programmes could be cut; Lack of sustainability of funding; Initiatives time-limited; Lack of national resources; Lack of trust in the political process; Change of focus every 4<sup>th</sup> year due to change of ruling political parties;
- ❑ Conflicts, low interest from residents: Conflict of interests between local people and local government; NIMBYism (Not In My Back Yard); Only "the usual suspects" participating, positive and negative; Little interest from people to meet (no time, no money, no specific interest)

- ❑ Expectations: Too high expectations (residents, staff, councillors); Frustration, changes take a lot of time; High expectations – bad image; Long decision-making procedures, different expectations from councillors, staff and residents;
- ❑ Resources: Unfulfilled basic needs – no participation; Lack of funding; Local authorities do not want to invest in participation.
- ❑ Approach/method: Focusing too much on the physical environment; If you always do what you always do, you always get what you always get; Long planning process, short time actions; Too many programmes without connection; Clarify what participation needs; Focus on problems, not opportunities; Non-flexible processes; No preparation, improvisation

### **1.3 Neighbourhood management tool kit**

A preliminary draft for a tool kit on neighbourhood management has been elaborated. The kit needs further development and we also need to analyse how we define the tools.

#### **1. Funding**

- Bending mainstream funding
- Approach for sustainable funding
- Project budget
- Knowing where the money is, and understanding it

#### **2. Neighbourhood management**

- A strong neighbourhood manager; enabler, facilitator
- Strategies that link to each other
- Knowledge about all (sectorial) development regarding the area
- Skills in solving conflicts
- Making things happen
- Making other people do things to drive change
- Having a good overview and sharing good practice

#### **3. Partnership/communication**

- Dialogue, not monologue
- Co-operation with different professional groups and authorities
- Communication all levels; government, local authority, citizens, elected members
- Meetings – what are they for and how can we/should we manage them
- Co-operation over the departmental structure
- Partnership; from all relevant sectors, local authority, social institutions, citizens and local businessmen
- Horizontal co-ordination; integration of the different physical and social sectors
- Communication and Public Relations – very important to continually communicate good news and achievements

#### **4. Strategic focus**

- Link with other strategies and policies
- Broad strategic approach, but practical

- Simultaneous and composed interventions
- Targeted interventions; area, groups
- Local action plans
- Project continuity
- Shared strategic focus on the future of the neighbourhood
- Balance of expectations and realism from all involved

## **5. Results**

- Short term/long term gains
- Short term projects followed up by longer term initiatives

## **6. Local community involvement**

- Know-how; methods for participation
- Make clear when participation is realistic
- Regular contact with local communities, different methods
- Flexible participation objects – mobilise local practical knowledge
- Development councils

## **7. Monitoring and evaluation**

- Evaluation
- Methods to show results regarding improvement of the area

## **8. Transparent rules and structures**

- Neighbourhood forum, time to listen; Steering group to follow plans and implementation
- Accountable and transparent process; people know where they are
- Strong local management structure and community participation structures
- Clear rules for participation
- Variety of methods for citizens consultation/participation
- Clearly defined relation LNM/central city administration
- Clearly defined aim/purpose

## **9. Attitude**

- Involvement of people, lifestyles, cross border thinking
- Thinking laterally – having a problem-solving mindset
- Hold on to what has gone wrong and remember to learn from mistakes
- Flexibility in LNM, also versus administration
- Commitment
- New administrative organisation, working from outside
- Time
- Risk taking, focus on innovative initiatives as a way towards better solutions
- Building on tradition and further development, openness on all levels
- Quality project design with focus on local communities
- Sharing knowledge and power – understanding power

## **10. Political**

- LNM must be part of a distinct policy
- Need to have good political skills and understanding of the local/national scene
- Small p and large P politics, both locally and nationally
- Mandate for the project manager
- Commitment of local politicians
- Policy making with dialogue

- Policy framework, government/local authority

#### **11. Capacity building – empowerment**

- Capacity building, excluded, voluntary groups and residents
- Empowerment possibilities, development among residents

### **1.4 Theme-specific template to describe and assess pilot projects**

During the second POSEIDON phase a draft version of a common template for describing the pilot projects in relation to theme 1 has been produced by the responsible partner couple. The draft template has been suggested to the other lead partners but the final decision to use the template as a common tool has yet to be made.

The draft template springs from one of the discussions during the theme-specific kick-off meeting in Stockholm in October 2004, where a structure of the content of theme 1 was elaborated. Similar issues have also been raised earlier in the process, at the Exchange of Experience Event in London Haringey in June 2004.

The following headings and questions are proposed.

#### **□ Type and character of strategy**

Describe how this pilot project relates to the strategy for improvement of the neighbourhood.

#### **□ Vertical integration (or co-operation)**

Is development of vertical integration a purpose or component of this pilot project? If so, describe how.

#### **□ Horizontal integration (or co-operation)**

Is development of horizontal integration a purpose or component of this pilot project? If so, describe how.

#### **□ Development partnerships**

Is formation of partnerships (type and character) and the balance between partners a purpose or component of this pilot project? If so, describe how.

#### **□ Decentralisation**

Is decentralisation/localisation a purpose or component of this pilot project? If so, describe how.

#### **□ Top-down / bottom-up**

Is participation a purpose or component of this pilot project? If so, describe how.

The responsible lead partners propose that the characteristics (or criteria) presented above is worked into the assessment task list that will be elaborated during the upcoming autumn, in order to be used during the evaluation of all the pilot projects during next spring.

In addition to this, the list of criteria may also serve as a functional model for approaching issues regarding contents, instruments and structural patterns when

developing new or reconsidering present neighbourhood management policies. Accordingly, it has been included and further developed in the preliminary draft version of the guidelines to policy makers on policy solutions and minimum standards delivered as part of this report.