



Together
Foundation

Best Practices Database

Subscriber: Vervoorn, IHS

Subscription Expires: 31-DEC-09



Local Government Policy for Sustainable Urban Development, Sofia *Bulgaria*

Good Practice

New for 2002

Categories:

Technology, Tools and Methods:

- appropriate technologies
- hardware
- information and communications technology and systems
- infrastructure technology
- management tools and systems
- networking
- planning tools and techniques
- research and development
- software
- technology transfer
- training and capacity building

Use of Information in Decision Making:

- improved participation
- policy making
- research

Urban Governance:

- monitoring and evaluation
- partnership development
- public administration and management
- resource mobilization

Level of Activity: National

Ecosystem: Continental

Summary

The project Global Urban Observatory (GUO) of UNCHS aims at capacity building for application of urban Indicators, to monitor progress in implementing the Habitat Agenda (Istanbul 1996), to build an infrastructure of local and national urban observatories capable of collecting, managing, analysing and presenting urban indicators data for policy-making purposes. In Bulgaria during 2000 were established a National Urban Observatory (NUO) and 4 Local Urban Observatories (LUOs). SWF organised this process and provided training for more than 20 technicians, about 15 decision-makers at national and local training workshops organised by it. With methodological guidance of SWF the LUOs filled in toolkit software with country indicators data and analyses, and prepared State of the City reports. The second year 2001 the goal was strengthening of what was generated - further institutionalization of LUOs and NUO. Technical support was provided by SWF to the LUOs in integrating the use of indicators in local decision-making and planning processes and in their efforts to engage in analysis of the data that was collected.

SWF and the NUO produced a Bulgarian training material. It was posted on the web site of the NUO together with an empty toolkit for those cities, who would like to start working with it. Additional training session for new cities interested in GUO was held by SWF and the NUO. Web sites of the LUOs and the NUO were made, containing city reports, toolkits, good practices. The beginning of a web network, is widely accessible now to other cities, willing to join GUO is now in place. Good practices for policy development, which resulted from the indicatorsâ€™ information were described by the cities. Project sustainability is proved by the fact that Sofia municipality and the Ministry of Regional Development provided local funding for the further work on the project. Please, see the web sites of each city (in addresses) for the results above mentioned.

Narrative

Indicators results were not targeted towards urban development policy improvement. A lot of unorganized information was available at the local institutions, which was available for decision-makers. The decision-makers lacked tools and well-organized data for easy formulation and improvement of local policies. Some indicators were not systematically monitored and their importance was not appreciated.

For indicators for each city â€“ please open the web sites of the cities (see addresses), where toolkits with indicators are enclosed.

Establishment of Priorities

Major priorities for SWF were:

- to get political support from the mayors of the 4 cities and the Ministry of Regional Development for the NUO. Next was SWFâ€™ lobbying for provision of local funding for Sofia LUO and the NUO.
- to motivate through information dissemination the local authorities to mobilize local resources and involve local stakeholders to assist the project.
- to stimulate elaboration and introduction of local specific indicators in order to make applicable and effective the project implementation.
- to disseminate results to enhance the work and involve new cities.
- to assist LUOs in identification of practical results - policy changes.

Formulation of Objectives and Strategies [100 words]

Provide a summary of the main objectives and strategies of the initiative, how they were established and by whom. Describe policies and strategies adopted for city-wide development, where applicable.

The project objectives were:

Institutionalisation of NUO and LUOs

Training on indicators, analysis, policy making

Dissemination of results through city reports

Establishment of self-sustaining networks of cities interested to compare and improve their achievements

Creation of a national policy-oriented urban indicators database, sets of adapted national and local specific indicators

Good practices description - an information base of good policies, plans of action and legislation

The goals were established by UNCHS and made more specific by ICLEI.

The NUO made its own strategy for future sustainability.

Apart - in Bulgaria each of the cities related its own city development strategies to the project results, as they were recognised as being important.

Mobilisation of Resources

SWF was contracted and funded by the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives

(ICLEI) to implement the GUO project locally in Bulgaria. UNCHS and World Bank had provided the resources.

The staff of SWF provided training and translated in Bulgarian the training material of UNCHS, assisted the work of the cities and guided methodologically the whole work.

Technical and human resources were used from the local authorities (4-5 people trained and implemented the project in each city), Universities and NGOs. The National Statistics Institute provided precious recommendations .

Bulgarian National Association of Municipalities supported further expansion of GUO and enlargement of the city network in their newsletter and by posting information about the GUO on their web site.

The Ministry of Regional Development provided funding for the NUO to work in Phase II.

The Mayor of Sofia approved funding for the SOFIA LUO for the second phase. The project results were recognized as being important for both the developments of the Sofia City Development Strategy and the city's master plan.

Process

Insufficient initial funding provided for the LUOs was a problem.

Technical equipment was crucial for the project success, when necessary - it was provided through the project.

As many of the GUO indicators do not reflect current concerns and are of limited value for urban policy analysis - there is a need for further development of local indicators that reflect specific local priorities.

Data is generally not available in the format needed for urban policy monitoring. To overcome this - important recommendations for data collection were made Bulgarian LUOs to allow data collection in the future.

Valuable partnerships were initiated at the national and regional levels with municipal departments, statistical offices, non-governmental organisations, banks, environmental protection institutions, research institutions, and local leaders. Established was an integrated, self-sustaining network for the development and application of indicators for the formulation of urban policy.

Local stakeholder groups, including NGOs, were established and assisted in data gathering and later contributed to urban policy analysis. Multi-stake holder involvement, under the coordination of the LUO, could lead to a better division of the workload.

The National Statistics Institute actively participated and provided advice throughout the project implementation, especially in terms of recommending how to avoid typical errors in data collection.

Tools used during the project was a software "toolkit" , which was provided by UNCHS for the participating cities. It helped for indicators data to be well organized and easily accessible at the cities and for the broader public via Internet.

Methodology for data collection and analysis was provided by SWF initially at the training.

Discussions at expert level took place about the methods of providing of new " nationally and locally specific indicators. In an annex are described those new indicators, together with good practices. They show the progress made by each LOU in policy development and implementation, after the indicators information.

Later on the NUO and the Statistical Institute added new approaches and further developed with practical advice the process of data collection. After the LUOs developed their own skills " they continued with data analyzing and policy making.

GUO provided opportunity for LUOs to compare themselves locally and internationally with other cities. There is a need to complement GUO indicators with sets of nationally and regionally appropriate indicators.

The decision-makers and municipal councils of the LUOs benefited from the information aggregated during the project.

Results Achieved

SWF provided training for more than 20 technicians, about 15 decision-makers at national and local

training workshops organised by it.

With methodological guidance of SWF the LUOs filled in toolkit software with country indicators data and analyses, and prepared State of the City reports.

In the second year technical support was provided by SWF to the LUOs in integrating the use of indicators in local decision-making and planning processes.

SWF and the NUO produced a Bulgarian training material. It was posted on the web site of the NUO together with an empty toolkit for those cities, who would like to start working with it.

Web sites of the LUOs and the NUO were made, containing city reports, toolkits, good practices. The beginning of a web network, is widely accessible now to other cities, willing to join GUO is now in place.

Please, see the web sites of each city (in addresses) for the results above mentioned.

Project sustainability is proved by the fact that Sofia municipality and the Ministry of Regional Development provided local funding for the further work on the project.

Good practices for policy development, which resulted from the indicatorsâ€™ information, were described by the cities:

Troyan

Sixteen initiatives in Troyan were identified by July 2001, which were in part stimulated by the results from trends revealed in the GUO data:

- ĩ· Replaced is part of the water supply network and the work on it continues (identified as priority in the first phase)
- ĩ· updated is the digital cadastral map and regulation plan of the city
- ĩ· updated is the school equipment
- ĩ· established an information center for services for the citizens
- ĩ· improved are the conditions at the municipal hospital
- ĩ· introduced is a system for temporary employment for unemployed who can get
- ĩ· prepared project for gas conversion in the city
- ĩ· started operation the solid waste depot
- ĩ· experimented is separated waste collection
- ĩ· the city tourism bureau makes contacts with international organizations for promotion of tourism, exchanges people for qualification, develops programs for tourism and enhance opportunities for new investment in this sector, searches investors to development of priority projects

A great asset in this city is the existence of a citizens forum, which provides complementary support in the institutionalization of stakeholders interaction and common decision-making/consensus reaching in setting of priorities

Sofia

One team of consultants work on Sofia Master Plan and the GUO. The same staff provides consultation to the World Bank team working on the city development strategy for Sofia and provides the basic information for its development. That means that the GUO results are directly used in two important planning initiatives and its impact is significant. Priorities of the Sofia strategy are:

- ĩ· increase of the gross domestic product on capital level
- ĩ· efficiency of the city management at municipal level
- ĩ· increase if the interaction between NGOs and private in the capital development
- ĩ· improvement of the spatial structure physical planning - more precise zoning as a prerequisite for realization of the long term goals of the strategy and ecological conditions of the city

The assessment of the situation in all aspects was taken from the GUO data. The data gathered during the GUO fist phase was used as a ground for the conclusions and the directives. Meanwhile some other indicators were collected and used.

The city is highly motivated to develop the strategy, as is that it is well appreciated by foreign investors who can seriously help in the city development (e.g., in the transport sector - expected is funding for the finalization of the metro from Japan.)

Veliko Tirnovo

The indicators selected will turn into a device that is used by:

Local politicians - they could use the indexes in the decision making process about region's future

development.

Municipal administration - in the process of working out Municipality's development strategy for the period 2000-2006 and defining its main priorities.

Created was ecological inspection on voluntary public principles.

Another result is an instruction for municipal environment and ecological protection.

Sustainability

There is trained and skilful staff in the 4 LUOs, who will be able to train other staff and continue on its own the future indicators updating and policy development.

There is goodwill on the part of both the NUO and the national government to make the project sustainable over the long term. A strategy for the future sustainability of the NUO was developed considering that there is a need - of further expansion of the LUO network, to be discussed and adapted some of the indicators at national level to be proposed new indicators (national specific); to be identified the problems in the national statistical data and involvement of the territorial statistical offices for improving data collection and processing; to be organized training seminars for new LUOs; to further collaborate with other institutions (NAMRB, the National Commission for Sustainable Development) are envisaged.

Apart from the institutionalization solution mentioned above Sofia LUO drew its conclusions for priorities in policy changes for sustainability:

ĩ, increase of the gross domestic product on capital level

ĩ, efficiency of the city management at municipal level

ĩ, improvement of the spatial structure physical planning

More practical are the results achieved in Trojan as a follow up of the indicators work:

ĩ, Replaced is part of the water supply network and the work on it continues (identified as priority in the first phase)

ĩ, updated is the digital cadastral map and regulation plan of the city

ĩ, established an information center for services for the citizens

ĩ, improved are the conditions at the municipal hospital

ĩ, introduced is a system for temporary employment for unemployed who can get

ĩ, prepared project for gas conversion in the city

ĩ, started operation the solid waste depot

ĩ, experimented is separated waste collection

ĩ, the city tourism bureau makes contacts with international organisations for promotion of tourism, exchanges people for qualification, develops programs for tourism and enhance opportunities for new investment in this sector, searches investors to development of priority projects

Lessons Learned

The cities do not have enough own funding to participate in the GUO project. External funding is crucially needed at least for initiation of the process.

Data gathering is a difficult process as information is not available in the format of the indicator toolkits proposed by UNCHS. When thinking of introduction of new indicators, the experts had pragmatic approach "to aim estimation of indicators for with data is easy available.

There are other international projects dealing with indicators. Coordination is needed in order to be better used the resources. Comparison with other indicator projects was very interesting and inspiring. New ideas were generated for applicable and useful indicators.

The project implementation revealed different models for organization and institutionalizing. In some LUOs only municipal staff was involved, in others "consultants or NGO were supporting the work. The models with mixed structure were more efficient, as NGOs can attract additional funding for the project development.

Transferability

Provide examples and/or means used for sharing/transferring knowledge, expertise and experience. Describe how your initiative has benefited from the experience or expertise of other practices. Describe how your initiative has been or is being replicated/adapted elsewhere, where and by whom? Describe what you would do differently or avoid doing if you were to help others in replicating your experience.

During the GUO project implementation SWF exchanged experience with the ICLEI colleagues from Poland, Latin America and Africa. Valuable Internet discussion took place, regularly were distributed progress reports, which helped the process.

SWF examined indicator projects from European Commission, Germany and local projects of other donors. Good practices were disseminated to the LUOs to inspire them how to improve policies.

Replication of the achievements in the first 4 cities will follow soon if funding is found for the new five cities, willing to join the initiative.

In a next training for new LUOS the experienced old LUOs will be invited to share their problems and expertise.

Key Dates

April 2000 – SWF makes a National workshop for GUO presentation, training, discussion of opportunities

October 2000 – Indicator toolkits and city reports ready, SWF organises meeting for discussion of results, methodology, exchange of experience among the project participants from the I-st phase

2001 May – National workshop for second project phase, training on policy making and implications of indicators, need of good practices

July 2001 – SWF and NUO make a project presentation and dissemination of the results of the Ist phase for 5 new cities willing to join the project

September 2001 – web sites of 4 LUOs and NUO ready

Contact

Antoaneta Yoveva, architect, urban planner
SWF
22 Alabin street, Sofia 1000,
Bulgaria,
Europe

Tel./fax: 00 359 2 980 15 40,
Mobile: 00359 88 73 93 42
Email: ayoveva@aster.net

Type of Organization: Non-governmental organisation (NGO)

Partners

Sofia Municipality
Lijdmil Sergej Mihaylovich, Head project coordinator
Ogp - Sofproject
Zona B-5, bl.7, fl.18
1305 Sofia

359 2 20 68 62
359 2 920 18 51
So-ogp@techno-link.com

,Municipality of Bourgas
Miglena Peeva, Computer Specialist
26 Alexandrovska Str.
8000 Bourgas
Bulgaria

+359 56 84-09-15/16/17-19
+359 56 84-13-14
Magy@obstinab.bse.bg
Greenbs@unacs.bg
<http://www.bourgas.net/local/Municipality/report.htm>

Municipality of Veliko Turnovo
Rozalia Stefanova, Director Of Administration
2 Maika Bulgaria Squire
Veliko Turnovo 5000
Bulgaria

++359 62 / 38810 ; 2651 EXT. 213
++359 62 / 27997
<http://www.veliko-turnovo.com/guo>

Financial Profile

Year	Total Budget (US\$)	SWF (% of the budget)	National Center (% of the budget)	Sofia (% of the budget) Veliko Tirnov
2000	21 354	1250	1150	900

2001	8495	4000*	2500*	350
------	------	-------	-------	-----



Email questions or problems to help@bestpractices.org.

Copyright © 1996-2002 [The Together Foundation](#) and [UNCHS](#). All Rights Reserved.