



**Our island in the city of Hamburg:
Ten years experience with citizens involvement
“MITwirken”ⁱ in rehabilitation and restructuring of
Wilhelmsburg island –
a basis for social inclusion in integrated urban water
management?**



A case study on social inclusion for SWITCH

(May 2008)

Peter J. Bury¹, Christine A Sijbesma², Jochen Eckart²,

¹ IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre bury@irc.nl and Sijbesma@irc.nl

² Hafencity Universität Hamburg switch@hcu-harburg.de

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Abstract	3
1. Introduction and methodology	4
2. Presenting the context	4
3. The SWITCH demonstration site	6
3.1. The participation and social inclusion process	10
3.2. Financial resources	13
3.3. Outcomes and results.....	14
3.4. Reflection and outlook by stakeholders.....	15
4. Tentative lessons and emerging questions	17
4.1. Did the “MITwirken” process address social inclusion?	17
4.2. Constraints with gender-equitable participation and integration of migrants.....	19
4.3. Implications for SWITCH LA work.....	19
4.4. Social Inclusion calls for other participatory approaches	20
5. Conclusion	20
References	22

Abstract

This case study on citizen participation programme MITwirken on Wilhelmsburg island describes the partnership of local citizens, the local and central city authorities, NGOs, and the commercial private sector in developing a vision and plan for the integrated development of an island area in the river Elbe as part of the overall city development policy and strategy. The island is located almost in the centre of the city of Hamburg, a fast-growing city with a population of around 2 million in northern Germany. The largest group of residents consists of lower income, increasingly foreign residents that live in the least attractive parts of the island.

As a partner in the SWITCH programme, which aims for enhanced Integrated Urban Water Management (IUWM), Hamburg has chosen Wilhelmsburg as its demonstration site, intending to also address social inclusion in the development process. The future of Wilhelmsburg, which in the past housed harbour, industries and agriculture, is currently the focus of various planning initiatives. The island is to provide recreational and residential space and more employment opportunities for a relatively young population of almost 50,000 people with very different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds and of at least 130 different national origins, and also benefit the city population at large.

This paper documents the participation process, organization, initial experiences and tentative lessons learned from the main formal involvement of island inhabitants in planning and management, referred to as the “MITwirken” initiative. Lessons are taken up by the SWITCH programme to address social inclusion in activities up to early 2011. The case study presents lessons learned on participation, social inclusion and public-private-civic partnerships among SWITCH partners in the other 14 cities of the SWITCH programme³.

For more information please contact: Carmen Dasilva (dasilva@irc.nl) or Joep Verhagen (verhagen@irc.nl) who leads the SWITCH Work Package on Social Inclusion.

SWITCH (Sustainable Water Management Improves Tomorrow's Cities' Health) is a research partnership supported by the European Community (Framework 6 Programme) and its partners www.switchurbanwater.eu/learningalliances

³ More on SWITCH on www.switchurbanwater.eu

1. Introduction and methodology

This case study concentrates on the citizens participation process „MITwirken“ on Wilhelmsburg Island in the city of Hamburg and the related District Urban Development Committee (DUDC). Many more initiatives and projects on social integration have been and are being implemented on the island. There are, e.g., the Wilhelmsburg Turkish Association, the International Garden Show Wilhelmsburg, the Citizens Initiatives by Foreign Employees, the Elbinsel.net, Promotion of Students Housing and the International Urban Development Expo. These (ongoing) experiences with participation and integration of citizen groups have not been looked at in this case study.

This case study is primarily based on a desk study relying on available information (a) from various the internet sources (b) interviews with a broad representation of actors involved in the MITwirken process and (c) workshop reflecting on the results and lessons learned so far in terms of citizens participation and inclusion efforts of those with a lesser voice on the island.

2. Presenting the context

The municipality of Hamburg, located at the mouth of the river Elbe in the northern part of Germany, is one of the fastest growing cities in Germany. Its population was 1.8 Million in 2007 with an annual growth rate close to 9%.

In 2006 the SWITCH project started collaboration with the municipality of Hamburg. When activities began to focus on the island of Wilhelmsburg, a learning alliance was developed to include several core members representing key local stakeholders from the island. Potential members of the learning alliance were identified through a stakeholder analysis and interviews. Non-governmental organisations engaged in the social, cultural and ecological improvement of the island play a particularly active role and the learning alliance builds upon existing structures for citizen and stakeholder engagement, described in this document.

This case study describes the processes of public-private-civic partnership and multi-stakeholder participation to arrive at a shared vision, strategy, plans and projects for the integrated development of the island. Special attention is paid to the participation of women and men from marginal groups and organizations representing the interests of these groups. Box 1 gives a definition of social inclusion in the SWITCH project.

Wilhelmsburg is a neighbourhood in the city district Hamburg Mitte. Area wise, it is the largest of the 104 neighbourhoods of Hamburg city and it has the sixth largest population. Hamburg city itself is situated in the Elbe river basin, where the river divides into two large river arms. Wilhelmsburg and the neighbourhoods Steinwerder, Kleiner Grasbrook, Hohe Schaar, Neuhoff and Veddel are situated between the two river arms of the Northern and Southern Elbe. Each of them is an island in itself as they were diked separately. But mostly they are understood as one island: the river island of Wilhelmsburg (‘Elbinsel Wilhelmsburg’) which is the biggest river island in the whole of Europe. The area between Northern und Southern Elbe measures about 50 km². With about 35 km², the neighbourhood of Wilhelmsburg is the biggest location. The longest distance from the southeast (Bunthaeuser Spitze) to the northwest (Koehlbrandhoeft) is

Social Inclusion case study Hamburg

about 13 km. Geographically, the river island is situated in the centre of the municipality of Hamburg. Only separated by the river arm Northern Elbe, Wilhelmsburg adjoins the city centre. Wilhelmsburg is originally a marshland characterised by wet meadows and an artificial drainage system (Baumann & Ackermann, 1995; Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg, 1983; Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg, 1996).

Box 1: Why SWITCH addresses social inclusion and how it is understood

Ensuring that decision-making institutions and processes, including research and innovation processes, are socially inclusive is a priority for the SWITCH project, because it is essential if the project outcomes are to be socially sustainable and equitable. Securing the meaningful participation of the most deprived can be difficult, however. A lack of assets, confidence and voice can lead to such groups being left out of decision-making processes and development interventions can sometimes make them even more marginalised and disempowered. There are three main dimensions of social exclusion. People can be excluded because of:

- *what they have* (or what they do not have) in the way of resources, also termed 'economic deprivation';
- *where they live* (spatial deprivation, such as the stigma from living in the 'wrong part of town' which may prevent otherwise good candidates from getting a job);
- simply because of *who they are* (identity-based discrimination including gender).

This paper sets out the conceptual underpinnings of social inclusion and exclusion and explains why it is relevant to urban water management.

Source: <http://www.switchurbanwater.eu/page/2367>

New city development policy and strategy

In the past, the Elbe delta area housed the Hamburg harbour and harbour-related industries. The abandonment of the old docking area and the closure or departure of the old industries initially led to the economic and social decline of the area, with negative impacts on the original local population and the low-income immigrants that had settled there. Increasing social disturbances in the eighties and early nineties led to the adoption of a citizens' participation policy for urban development.

In the second half of the 1990s, Hamburg gradually began to discover the attractive potential of its waterfronts. The "Leap across the Elbe" from the inner city across the "Harbour City", the Grasbrook, the Veddel and Wilhelmsburg towards the community of Harburg on the southern side of the Elbe river (Figure 1), is the core of the city's vision entitled "Hamburg Metropolis – a growing city". Hamburg city adopted the framework concept "Leap across the Elbe" on 8 December 2005. In the geographic centre of this city of the future, an opportunity exists to gradually cater for this growth in a qualitative way in an area that was previously seen as a burden. Next to prestige projects, the opportunity should also be used to implement projects of diversity (of cultures) on the island. City renewal / rehabilitation sits at the centre of this approach to address both emigration and immigration patterns in a socially stabilizing way.

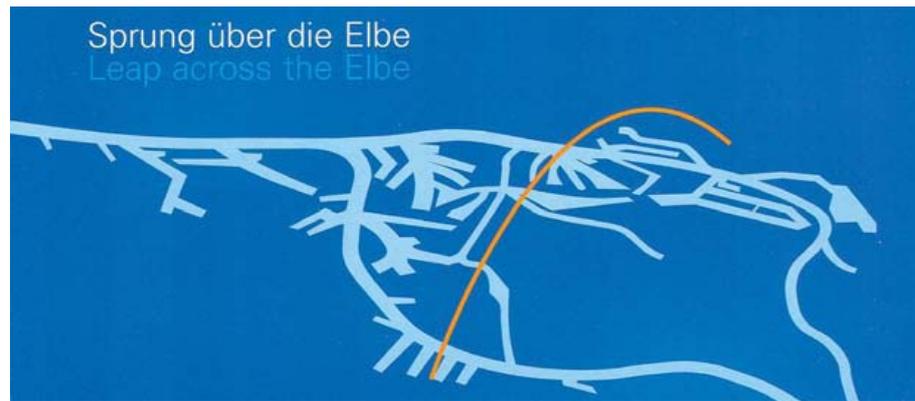


Figure 1: Future "Leap across the Elbe"

The citizen's participation mechanism "MITwirken in Wilhelmsburg" is part of the larger Hamburg municipal urban development programme. This programme promotes the improvement of livelihoods in parts of the city with particular needs. On the island, the central body is the formal District Urban Development Committee (DUDC). The DUDC met for the first time in Wilhelmsburg on 25 November 1996.

Hamburg SWITCH Learning Alliance

Since end 2006, the Hamburg city coordinators of the SWITCH project are promoting the setting up of a learning alliance to address integrated urban water management (IUWM) issues. The coordinating partner in Hamburg is the newly created Hafen (=Harbour) City University of Hamburg, in particular its City Planning department. The SWITCH Learning Alliance Hamburg (Hamburg LA) facilitates the joint action oriented learning and sharing between practitioners and research and enables practice focussed research. The LA members include stakeholder groups from research institutes (the Hafen City University Hamburg and the Technical University Hamburg-Harburg), various relevant city administration agencies, the IBA⁴ and the IGS⁵, Hamburg harbour and water companies, and various civil society organizations (including the Wilhelmsburg DUDC). The Hamburg LA focus on IUWM implies attention for social inclusion measures, for which the project will build on the "MITwirken" experience.

The Hamburg LA decided to focus its activities on the island of Wilhelmsburg to synergize with the IBA and IGS initiatives there and to build on the citizen's participation experiences on the island. The thematic focus is the development of the "Integrated Urban Water Management Plan 2030".

3. The SWITCH demonstration site

The local context described

Almost in the heart of the city of Hamburg lies the originally marshy Elbe river-island of Wilhelmsburg (Figure 2). With its 3.500 hectare of land, it is the biggest city district.

4 IBA = Internationale Bau Ausstellung (International Building Exposition)

5 IGS = Internationale Garten Show (International Garden Show)



Figure 2: Wilhelmsburg Island in the river Elbe, just south of the heart of Hamburg

The island consists of six ‘Viertels’, which are quarters or neighbourhoods (Figure 3):

1. Reihentrieviertel or Alt (=old) Wilhelmshaven;
2. Bahnhofsviertel (=railway station quarter);
3. Georgswerder;
4. Kirchdorf (= Church village);
5. Kirchdorf Süd (=South);
6. Moorwerder.

Tradition and innovation are closely interlinked on Wilhelmsburg. Kirchdorf is the old Church Village, an agricultural settlement, which has been engulfed by city development. Through gradual damming of the small river-islands since 1333, the nowadays big Wilhelmsburg island emerged. In the 19th century rapid industrialization and growth of the Hamburg harbour transformed the original agriculture use of the land. Increased demand for labour made citizens settle on the island. Old, often small settler’s homes, container cranes and high-rise residential buildings now lie amidst industrial land, abandoned heavy industry areas and wide green areas. The island is intersected by three important traffic lanes: the old national Wilhelmsburg highway, the railway and the modern interstate highway A1.

After the Second World War the disastrous flooding of 1962 – in which more than 300 people perished - brought an end to the building boom. Further residential building was stopped in the western part of the island. The eventual degradation of residential buildings led to an influx of “Gastarbeiter” (cheap foreign labour, typically from Turkey)

looking for low rent housing. In the sixties and seventies large low-rent social housing blocks were built in Kirchdorf South (Figure 3).



Figure 3 Boundaries of the SWITCH demonstration site of Wilhelmsburg

In the 1980s, under the new urban policy, urban rehabilitation aimed for improved living quality in various parts of the island. Citizen's participation was introduced in 1994, but still many long-time inhabitants left the district. At the same time there was an influx of lower income groups, in particular of foreign "Gastarbeiter". In 2001, the city of Hamburg initiated the ideas of an International Urban Development Exposition (IBA) and an International Garden Show (IGS) on the island in 2013. Both projects were initiated under the above described City Senate vision of "Hamburg Metropole – a growing city" and the "Leap across the Elbe" aiming for a sustained enhancement of Wilhelmsburg and city expansion towards the south.

In 2004, Wilhelmsburg counted 48.322 inhabitants. Table 1 below gives its characteristics in comparison with the city district of Harburg on the southern side of the river and with Hamburg City as a whole. The table shows that the percentage of children and youth is well above the citywide average. In contrast, the percentage of elderly people is lower. The island population is therefore relatively younger and lives in a growing city district. A good 34% of the island's population is of foreign origin. Also rates of unemployment are significantly higher than either District Harburg, of which it forms part, or even the wider city of Hamburg. Similar figures can be found for low cost social housing.

Social Inclusion case study Hamburg

Table 1: Wilhelmsburg profile 2005

	Sub-District Wilhelmsburg	District Harburg(*)	Hamburg
Population (2004)			
Population	48 322	200 092	1 715 225
Younger than 18 years	10 935	38 476	273 088
% population	22,6	19,2	15,9
Older than 65 years	6 827	35 861	311 598
% population	14,1	17,9	18,2
German	31 812	159 762	1 460 158
Foreign	16 510	40 330	255 067
% population	34,2	20,2	14,9
Surface in km ²	35,3	160,6	755,2
Population density / km ²	1 371	1 246	2 271
Social structure			
Formal employed “social security beneficiaries” (2004)	13 404	59 611	554 448
% 15-65 age	41,4	44,9	47,1
Of which women	5 355	25 862	267 250
% 15-65 age women	35,8	40,5	45,5
Of which men	8 049	33 749	287 198
% 15-65 age men	46,2	49	48,8
Jobless (December 2004)	3 539	11 584	81 518
% 15-65 age	10,9	8,7	6,9
Jobless youth	438	1 299	6 981
% 15-25 age	6,8	5,1	3,7
Jobless elder people	370	1 327	10 001
% 55-65 age	6,9	5,8	4,8
On social security pay (2004)	6 821	20 305	122 908
% population	14,1	10,1	7,2
Housing			
Average housing size in m ²	67,2	70,4	71,5
Per inhabitant in m ²	28,5	32,5	36,4
Social housing (June 2005)	7 591	20 627	130 365
% of total	37,0	22,4	14,9
Infrastructure			
School going (2004)	5 657	22 434	166 156
Of which foreigners	2 695	5 859	29 742
% of school going	47,6	26,1	17,9
Traffic			
Cars / 1000 inhabitants	289	347	370
Crime (2004)			
Total	8 021	27 515	261 268
Per 1000 inhabitants	167	138	152
Violent crime	369	1 220	9 108
Per 1000 inhabitants	8	6	5
Theft	3 596	13 820	128 575
Per 1000 inhabitants	75	69	75

(*) In 2008, Wilhelmsburg became part of the Hamburg Mitte and hence is not part of Harburg anymore.
Source: Hamburg municipality

3.1. The participation and social inclusion process

Involved Committees

Wilhelmsburg District Urban Development Committee (DUDC)

This long standing committee advises the district council on neighbourhood and district development. It manages and decides about smaller district projects funded by the “Verfügungsfonds” (Discretionary fund). The committee has 36 members consisting of residents and local organizations. There are 18 representatives from the neighbourhoods, nine representing thematic fields and 27 deputies. There is an executive committee with three elected chairpersons (the chair and two vice-chairs) and six representatives (one chair and a deputy) of the three geographic areas of the island (West, Middle and East). The committee meets six times per year. The overall management is done by Büro d*ing Planung, the external consultant.



Since 2006, the DUDC committee consists of three new working groups: East, West and education/integration. The chair or vice-chairs of the groups present the outcomes of their group’s sessions on the identified needs and the proposed actions to the plenary DUDC session for approval. The then committee decides in close consultation with the district council on the allocation of funds from the “Discretionary Fund” to the approved projects. The fund is meant to finance smaller time bound measures, in particular in the field of self-help; strengthening of integrating neighbourhoods and; the promotion of district culture and neighbourhood encounters.

Figure 4: DCUD organisational chart from the neighbourhoods up

Beirat Veddel (= local council advisory body)

This specific platform operates in the Veddel neighbourhood only. It deals with neighbourhood development and projects funded from the “Discretionary Fund”. It consists of 15 members: selected residents, political factions, local organizations and landowners, who meet monthly. Management is done by neighbourhood development staff.

Eight thematic fields

Themes that have emerged from the participatory planning process and are being addressed to include structural urban development issues and concrete measures for

improved livelihoods and quality of life. Not only special-construction development, but also economic, social and cultural developments are being addressed. The participatory process and structure described above led to the identification of problems and actions in the following thematic areas:

1. Integration und Co-habitation
2. Cleanliness and district care
3. Work and education
4. Children and youth
5. Living and housing
6. Traffic and transport (?)
7. Nature preservation and development
8. Image of the area

The development themes are decided through the local consultation and decision making process they vary over time, the more so since they typically encompass smaller community based projects, at times of limited duration. None of them can be considered of having particular interest in integrated urban water management issues. By 2005 some 115 small community projects had been implemented.

The history of a participatory planning process

Implementation of the new city policy for community participation, mentioned in the introduction, started in Wilhelmsburg in 1994. The „MITwirken in Wilhelmsburg“ process was generated by the general social unrest in the area at the end of the 1980s and in the early 1990s. The specific reason was the discussion around the location of a waste-incinerator for the island. The City authorities asked staff of the City Planning Department of the Technical University of Hamburg Harburg (TUHH) to conceptualize and coordinate the participatory approach in the locality.

In October 1994, the TUHH City Planning Department and a private consultancy Büro d*Ing Planung were contracted to develop, in several annual phases, a systematic form of citizens' participation with representation of the various stakeholders living on the island. The participation mechanisms should shape new ways of addressing specific urban development issues on the island. For this, a special District advisory Urban Development Committee (DUDC) was created (Figure 5) as detailed under Phase II below.

Phase I (starting up, 1994-1995)

The socio-economic and technical urban planning consultants in charge started its approach with the creation of the Wilhelmsburg Working Group (1994-95). The group was formed through a stakeholder analysis and a series of meetings. The Working Group met for the first time on 25 November 1996. Its members were voluntarily identified among the participants of those meetings. The Working Group conducted a series of island consultation meetings, made an inventory of problems and formulated objectives.

Phase II (consolidation, 1996-2001?)

A District Council advisory Urban Development Committee CDUC was set up in 1996. Its working groups (see Phase III below) still play a major role in the urban planning process. The Hamburg City Council nominates the committee members of the CDUD on

a yearly basis. Candidates are proposed by the island's residents or come forward themselves. Between 1996 and 2005, at least 162 Wilhelmsburgers have participated as members of this committee. Though efforts were made to have a fairly representative composition, women, unemployed and foreign citizens were numerically underrepresented.



Figure 5: The DUDC in 2002: "Together for a better Wilhelmsburg"

The DUDC acts as advisory body to the district council of Wilhelmsburg and as an interface between citizens, political parties and administration. It deals with structural urban development issues and concrete measures to improve the livelihood on the island. Projects are managed by three geographical working groups (East, Centre and West), in which many residents participate actively. The day-to-day management is done by Büro d*Ing Planung. It prepares meetings, facilitates them, provides documentation and coordinates implementation in close collaboration with the district and city council.

The objectives and tasks of the DUDC are regulated by a "terms of reference". The committee elects its chairperson and two deputies. The committee tables neighbourhood and (sub)-district themes and discusses problems and solutions. It develops project proposals and advises the district council. Together with speakers of working groups they form the board, which guides the work of the committee.

Phase III (from island to city strategy, 2001-2008)

Project identification and decision-making takes place in public meetings of thematic and geographic (East, Centre and West) working groups (). Until 2002, up to seven working groups were operational, for (1) labour and education; (2) children and youth; (3) traffic; (4) Wilhelmsburg East; (5) Wilhelmsburg West; (6) housing and living; and (7) living together (of different classes and ethnic groups/cultures).

At the end of 2007, the citizen participation 'MITwirken' was terminated. This was based on a political decision of the responsible committee itself. The majority opinion was that at present several other committees for citizens' engagement had emerged on the island, so that 'MITwirken' had become superfluous. With the participation of the International Building Exhibition and the International Horticultural Exhibition, and three advisory councils for special redevelopment areas there are adequate possibilities for the engagement of citizens. After two extensions of the process now the function of the citizen participation project is over. A critical minority opinion worries however that the International Building Exhibition only focuses on special projects and does not cover the

Social Inclusion case study Hamburg

whole island. 'MITwirken' covered the whole island and enabled a successful cooperation with citizens from different social ranks (see Box 2 on p 12).

Termination of the DUDC and plans for a new committee

In 2007, the municipality reduced the DUDC's budget from €80.000 to €10.000 per year. Due to this budget cut, the facilitation contract with Büro D*Ing Planung could not be maintained. Also the discretionary fund of €20.000 per year was not available anymore. Committee work is done on a voluntary basis, but up to now operational costs could be covered. Under these circumstances the committee lost its appetite to continue its tedious work. At its own initiative the committee decided to dissolve itself. Inhabitants of the island have expressed their dissatisfaction. Some feel that also with little funds the committee could continue to play an important role (see Box 2).

Most inhabitants on Wilhelmsburg are very positive about the process in the 'MITwirken' foundation, despite some rivalries between 'MITwirken' and other NGOs and CBOs. When 'MITwirken' emerged as a reaction to protest against the planned refuse incinerator plant, citizen participation was first noticed as an instrument to consolidate citizens' views. During the process 'MITwirken' could emancipate itself and was accepted because of its good work for the district Wilhelmsburg. A critique was that 'MITwirken' only focused on local problems (e.g. the campaign for cleanliness) and did not deal with important broader themes like the 'Hafenquerspange' (a planned highway on the island).

See also: www.taz.de/nc/1/archiv/print-archiv/printressorts/digi-artikel/?ressort=ha&dig=2007%2F06%2F01%2Fa0062&src=GI&cHash=28c38fbf3a

Box 2: The role of the "MITwirken" process

Recent administrative changes

Since April 2008, Wilhelmsburg has administratively been removed from the Harburg district and made a part of the Hamburg Central district. This Central district has indicated the intention to reinforce the dialogue between citizens, politics and administration and enhance citizens' participation. Wilhelmsburg and Veddel now form a common sub-district with their own council. While the consensus among citizens and council is evident, a new committee for Wilhelmsburg should be created, but the modalities are not yet known and need to be negotiated.

The committee should include more low threshold projects to ensure involvement of also those citizens who have not been active till now and the modalities negotiated. Based on previous experiences, the general thinking is that:

- The committee has to be elected by all inhabitants (one person, one vote);
- The committee should have a mandate for the whole island;
- The committee should hold regular open plenary meetings;
- The committee should have the right to propose directly to the council for political decision making.

3.2. Financial resources

For the financing of IUDP activities multiple sources of finance have been used:

City Council of Hamburg

Social Inclusion case study Hamburg

Since 1999, the city department for urban development and environment allocated yearly 80.000 Euro for the citizens' participation process "MITwirken", of which 20.000 Euro were earmarked for implementation of small DUDC identified projects. By 2005, 115 projects have been supported. After the international "Leap across the Elbe" workshop, the city council provided an initial start up capital of €1.5 million for the development of Wilhelmsburg. In the following years a further €10 million were allocated for qualifying urban development projects. This decision also includes the financing and implementation of the IBA and hence much larger non-community specific projects.

German national government

National funded programmes like "Stadtumbau West" (e.g. City Reconstruction West Wilhelmsburg) should contribute to mitigate the negative developments of the economic restructuring in the old Wilhelmsburg Reiherstieg neighbourhood (Figure 3) by diversifying the social build up of its inhabitants. Similar measures will be taken around the Berta-Kröger square in the geographic centre of the island.

European Union

A European Union funded project "b-sure" in the context of the Interregional North sea Programme will rehabilitate canal shores on the island for leisure use for the neighbouring residential areas.

The ambitious urban renewal process can only succeed with involvement of and acceptance by the island residents. Citizen's participation, therefore, will also play a central part in future years. The mechanisms put in place continued till end 2006/7

3.3. Outcomes and results

Some of the concrete outcomes of the participatory planning and action process in Wilhelmsburg include:

- Environment: cleaning up of canals by 'Gangway' (a local NGO?) and the Wilhelmsburg water sports club;
- Infrastructure development: development of the intercultural events centre "Deichhaus"; the construction of a mosque; establishment of the preschool 'Bonifatius'
- Leisure and sports: intercultural evenings organized by the committee; establishment of the athletic club 'Wilhelmsburg'; organisation of the annual; Hafen-City-Inline-Marathon;
- Youth: developing free time opportunities for immigrant youth; the "United Colors of Wilhelmsburg" initiative offering cultural exchange events for children and youth;
- Education: provision of opportunities to learn the German language;
- Legal: culture based conflict mediation.

Since the beginning of the process a strong network of participating stakeholders has developed. An indicator for this is the continuously growing database of over 2.500 contacts (2005). In January 2001 the Wilhelmsburger initiative won a nation-wide "Social City 2000" competition. Other developments like on urban renewal (world neighbourhood quarter) have only just started to be implemented.

3.4. Reflection and outlook by stakeholders

The SWITCH Hamburg coordinators participated in April 2008 in a meeting organized by the “Zukunft Elbinsel Verein” (Association Future of the Elbe Island), which is a member of the SWITCH Learning Alliance. The meeting was meant to reflect on past work and do some forward looking with key stakeholders involved in participatory processes on the island. Over 50 citizens, men and women equally represented, but including only 2 immigrants, from the island participated, representing several formal and less formal citizens’ participation bodies, including also the locally represented political parties. The main purpose was to identify the future of the citizens’ participation in the many development activities taking place on Wilhelmsburg.

During the meeting five forms of participation were identified:

1. Elections as a direct form of participation and influence ;
2. Peoples decisions as a way to possibly directly influence policy decision making ;
3. Council Advisory Committees (e.g. DUDC), which has a formal status ;
4. Informal lobby and activity groups ;
5. Campaigns, Events, and various ad-hoc participation opportunities.

These various forms of participation exist parallel to each other and work also complementary, without any competition among them.

These days on Wilhelmsburg many developments are underway that require accompanied citizens involvement :

1. The IBA project in and around Reiherstiegknie ;
2. IBA projects that have been taken out of the programme, e.g. Obergeorgswerder ;
3. The problematic of the container deposit ;
4. The problematic of the customs fence ;
5. The problematic of the acceptability of small industrial development ;
6. Traffic planning issues and the barriers formed by the main island traffic crossings.

In view of all these developments the vacuum created by the abolishment of the DUDC needs to be addressed urgently. From another point of view this creates the opportunity of offering citizens to get involved in developing new participatory processes:

1. A body that is responsible for all themes on the island;
2. A right for direct proposals by citizens to the Council meetings;
3. Sufficient financial and personnel resources;
4. Regular citizens meetings;
5. Direct elections of advisory committee members from each neighbourhood (as a first step towards municipal voting rights for foreigners);
6. Close links between the committee and the elected political levels;
7. Giving opportunities to implement proposed measures

Reflection on the old situation led to the following critical remarks:

Social Inclusion case study Hamburg

- The Büro D*Ing eventually acquired a monopoly position in the management and facilitation of the process;
- The DUDC gave up too early. They had the option of continuing without the facilitation of Büro D*Ing and could have decided to invest available moneys in agree projects.

This reflection leads to the following expectations of the next advisory committee:

- Wilhelmsburg and Veddel should become one city neighbourhood;
- The committee should be directly elected by citizens;
- Also the major urban development constructions should be supervised by the committee;
- Citizens consultations should become more regular;
- The Council should get the right of proposal and application, such that the Council has a more direct influence on city politics;
- The Council should also implement public services;
- To involve more, currently not involved, citizens' lower threshold mechanisms should be provided.

Opinions about participation by foreigners

Except a few engaged ,quota' foreigners, only very few foreigners have been involved. The causes and possible solutions are not very clear, but the following observations were made:

1. To involve more foreigners, *lower threshold mechanisms* need to be devised. More *informal* mechanisms of consultation and representation seem to be more promising;
2. The participation should start around themes that have the *specific interest* of foreigners groups, for example the building of a mosque;
3. Maybe citizens will participate, when *concrete livelihood issues* are addressed;
4. *New approaches* must be tested;
5. These approaches may need *more time*, some speak about process of 20 years and more;
6. The *legitimacy* of current representatives is put in doubt;
7. Activist *German citizens* should *not* speak on behalf of foreigners;

The issue of giving voting rights to foreigners was also discussed (Box 3):

- The many non-EU foreigners may not participate in *local elections*. Foreigners present emphasize the need to get at least voting rights for local elections;
- Members of the *second and third generation* of foreigners (who have been born in Germany and so hold citizenships) did manage to get elected in local electoral bodies;
- However, the *voting system* cannot be changed locally.
- So *intermediate solutions* are needed, such as elections for advisory bodies.

Box 3: Voting rights of foreigners

The committee has discussed the issue of voting rights for foreigners at great length, even though this is not of its competence.

The many non-EU foreigners are not allowed to participate in local municipal elections. Therefore the voice of the immigrant is not accounted for in local politics. Especially engaged and activist migrants emphasize the need for voting rights at local level, which would provide evidence that their role in society is taken seriously. However the election laws cannot be amended at local level.

The committee therefore is proposing as a first step to allow all local inhabitants on the island, including migrants, to participate in committee elections, since this is not a legal body falling under the German elections legislation. Whether this proposal will be accepted by the municipality is yet unknown. 2nd and 3d generation migrants with full election and representation rights are already represented at various levels of municipal political bodies.

4. Tentative lessons and emerging questions

4.1. Did the “MITwirken” process address social inclusion?

The extent to which the “MITwirken” process contributed to social inclusion – or integration of socially disadvantaged community groups – is looked at from two points of view. One issue is to what extent projects implemented by the DUDC contributed to social integration. The second issue is to what extent were socially disadvantaged groups represented in the DUDC?

Quantitative data are not available. Hence, it is not known to what extent and in what proportion the various socially disadvantaged groups living on the island, such as the various foreigner groups, unemployed, female or male were represented in the DUDC and whether this representation and their active participation (e.g. attending, speaking out, voting) in meetings grew, decreased or remained the same over time. To nevertheless answer the above research questions, we looked at qualitative data from various sources.

In the brochures of the committee as well as in the documentation of the ‘Future Conference Wilhelmsburg’ statements are made about the quality of the participation of social weaker sections of the inhabitants of the island. Since these consist of self-assessments they should be treated with some caution.

In addition, the SWITCH team Hamburg has conducted many interviews with local actors on Wilhelmsburg, in which also social integration was addressed. The outcomes documented here are based on interviews with representatives of the Büro d*ing Planung, chairpersons of the committee; a representative of the International Garden Show, the Türkisch Parents Association, and several, all men and women, Germans and immigrants living on the island.

Four major themes emerge regarding the social integration: (1) the integration of the many migrants living on the island (2) the integration of people with low income and jobless (3) the representation of the two genders (males and females in the different groups often have different areas of knowledge and interests) and (4) the representation by age: the (often different) interests and expertise of the young and the elderly. All these groups partly overlap. The points highlighted here are in particular pertinent regarding the migrants and gender.

Social Inclusion case study Hamburg

Projects to promote 'social inclusion'

The committee itself describes its tasks as to implement concrete projects that improve the living together in the neighbourhood and to reduce constraints to integration. The participation of migrant groups has always been given high priority, as “only, those who talk to each other, can come to jointly carried solutions” (Buro d*Ing Planung, 2006).

A range of projects are cited to illustrate this aim:

- Discussion around the building of a new mosque, which included joint visits to various related cultural associations of parents and sports clubs.
- The organization of ‘intercultural evenings’ to get to know each others interests, culture, conflict management, education and language lessons.
- The creation of leisure time opportunities for youth of returned Germans from the former Soviet Union.
- The production of an information leaflet about ‘Learning German on Wilhelmsburg’.
- Mediation in conflict management about daily prosaic fights about rubbish, noise, rituals, etc.

Next to these bigger undertakings, a lot of smaller measures and events were organised to improve the multi-cultural living together. These include the organization of summer BBQ’s by Turkish migrants and the solving of related problematic rubbish management.

These examples make clear that the committee aimed for concrete solutions for arising problems and conflicts. Next to these concrete measures, also low threshold projects to promote communication among various cultures were initiated. Participants overwhelmingly rate these as positive. Nevertheless many living together and integration problems could not yet be solved.

There was also no special strategy to involve women of different ethnic origins and age groups in these activities and their degree of participation was not monitored. It seems participation of women was mainly in their traditional roles, such as preparing culture specific food.

‘Social Inclusion’ in Wilhelmsburg committee’s work

In this section we look at how migrants were involved in the work of the committee itself.

The committee had as an objective the integration and collaboration with migrants. In this context, many migrant organisations were contacted and efforts made to make them participate. In 2000 there were 28 cultural and three mosque associations. A second method was through the meetings in the three sub-areas (West, Middle and East Wilhelmsburg, Figure 4). As a result, some migrants have become member of the committee. Even though no statistics of their membership and participation by ethnicity, gender and age exist, the migrants were always underrepresented. Testimonies of involved stakeholders assess the participation of these migrants in the committee’s activities as follows:

By and large the participation can be seen as a failure, since apart from some ‘quota foreigners’ only very few migrants got involved. The feeling is that compared to the

efforts of integration made, the success of integration has been very limited. The question remains open why migrants haven't made more use of the opening offered. The migrants that do participate are very positive about the involvement (statement by two middle aged Turkish immigrants). Appreciation is expressed about the opportunity given to neighbourhoods to cooperate even if not all themes were of interest. Some migrants feel that their participation rights are not sufficient (in particular regarding voting rights). One hears however that many migrants active in cultural associations, don't feel involved by the committee, reasons are not mentioned (unconfirmed sources).

Two points of view exist about the under-representation of migrants in the committee. Some reason that migrants, despite involvement being offered, simply are not interested in participation, and that a higher level of participation can not be imposed. Another view is however that the low involvement indicates that up to now the right methods and forms of participation have not been found. Therefore new attempts, using other methods, should be made to approach migrant organisations to discuss how they could be better represented and participate more actively in the development processes on the island.

4.2. Constraints with gender-equitable participation and integration of migrants

The following summarizes various discussions held about migrant's integration on the island:

- Migrants come with very different views about and experiences with participatory processes. Often their definition of what participation is not based on the concept of equal rights of representation for all citizens; participation is often indirect via (male) family or clan heads. The latter also involves gender constraints: immigrant men state that they do not consider it needed and proper that women and youth represent their interests by themselves.
- This is also why some of the 'quota migrant' participants in the committee are not recognized as true representatives in their own circles. The feeling is that integration is a very long term cultural transformation process.
- Another issue is the language barrier, also among migrants that have been in Germany since many years. The committee work is a very formal and structured process. Although low threshold measures have been taken, the work itself in the committee is burdensome for most migrants involved. Participation is clearly higher whenever the committee deals with themes that are of high interest of migrant groups, in related concrete projects migrant involvement is very high.
- The participation of some migrants in the committee is not free of conflict. It has occurred that police suspected some of them to be active in radical Islamic groups, and hence these members had to withdraw from the committee.

4.3. Implications for SWITCH LA work

When creating the SWITCH Learning Alliance on Wilhelmsburg, early contact was made with Büro d*Ing Planung, who had managed the DUDC since years. Through this contact stakeholders on Wilhelmsburg were identified, who were supposed to be interested in the SWITCH theme or integrated urban water management. Among the stakeholders contacted this was only the Turkish Parents Association. No other migrant association on the island are known to have some kind of an interest in water related topics. Even the parents association indicated to have only a limited interest in water related themes.

Migrant organisations are primarily interested in themes that directly benefit their education chances, the finding of jobs, improvement of language skills, maintenance of their own cultural expressions, foreigners voting rights, etc. Migrants see the SWITCH thematic about water, water quality, environment and high water risks as ‘luxury problems. The whole visioning, scenario building and planning process of SWITCH is experienced as a highly abstract intellectual exercise that has little to do with the day-to-day realities of the migrants. Furthermore, migrants do not feel competent to participate in water management related work. The only exception is possibly ‘awareness raising about water issues’. The Turkish Parents Association mentioned the possibility of doing something about this with schools.

As a result of the differences in interests and approaches, SWITCH work on Wilhelmsburg is therefore dominated by German citizens involved in mainly environmental associations.

4.4. Social Inclusion calls for other participatory approaches

Migrants are currently only very marginally involved in the SWITCH process. To make them participate more would require specific participatory approaches and methods that would require heavy investments that are currently beyond the means of the SWITCH programme. Anyway it is questionable whether the low interest of migrants in water management issues, which is related to their other, more pressing priorities, would warrant such heavy investments in their participation. Even if initiatives, like the former DUDC, invest in participatory and integrative work with migrants, the results till now have not been very promising. SWITCH has therefore agreed with the migrant associations contacted to limit their interaction to keeping each other informed about activities and progress.

5. Conclusion

In north-western Europe, experiences like “MITwirken” (collaboration) – the German experience - or “Inspraak” (a right to have a say) – the Dutch experience of citizen’s participation - have been initiated since the early seventies. They are positive developments that allow citizens to gain insight, make inputs and have influence in decision-making and implementation processes that influences their livelihood. However these forms of citizen’s participation do not warrant *per sé* that those with “less or no voice” in society get a real chance to be involved in processes affecting their lives.

On the basis of the definition provided on ‘social inclusion’, this case study shows relatively little experience with social inclusion or addressing it in an explicit way. Also in terms of gender, the programme followed a very gender-neutral or even gender-blind approach, or at least did not explicitly address gender issues. This conclusion is further compounded by the lack of ‘hard – gender disaggregated – data’ on participation of socially excluded groups.

The MITwirken approach while very positive in terms of attempting participation of all citizens on the island, achieved little – in its own words – in terms of integration of migrants or even the poorer strata and the jobless people on the island. This is particularly true in terms of actively involving these groups in formal platforms such as the District Urban Development Committee.

Social Inclusion case study Hamburg

However at very concrete small community implementation projects level, it seems that those projects that focused on their needs or on problems between groups did contribute to social inclusion and social interaction among otherwise dissociated groups. This mobilisation and organization around common interests and concerns may form the seeds for future further integration.

As indicated by stakeholders themselves, further experimentation and professional support are needed, along with the use of other methods and approaches that may be more effective in promoting integration and social inclusion. The overall lesson learned is the realisation that different cultures require different approaches and processes to social inclusion. More specific lessons are that:

- different disadvantaged groups in terms of ethnicity, employment, age and gender need to be approached on their specific interests and concerns and with practical actions related to them;
- linkages between these interests and concerns and integrated urban water management must be clearly apparent or otherwise clarified if interest in IUWM is to emerge;
- social inclusion requires the formulation clear objectives, strategies and activities on social inclusion, which recognise differences of young, adult and older women and men with different ethnicity and life situations (e.g. employed/jobless) and in different geographic locations;
- organisation within geographic areas and around specific interests of the different groups with specific actions are a stepping stone towards representation of the interests of the different groups at the group, neighbourhood and district levels;
- disaggregated quantitative and qualitative monitoring of participation in meetings, organizations, projects and decision-making (e.g., by sex, class, ethnicity and age) is needed to get a clearer overview of situations and developments, analyse trends and learn what works best when, where and why.

SWITCH Wilhelmsburg primary focuses is on developing the IUWM plan 2030 for the island. An IUWM planning process should indeed enable social inclusion of those who risk to be marginalised in the upgrading of Wilhelmsburg and when the island gets more developed and becomes more fashionable even risk to be pushed out, because of 'where they live', 'what they have (not)', and 'who they are'. SWITCH will certainly benefit from the MITwirken experience, but should be more explicit on social inclusion when fostering stakeholders participation. It will be interesting to monitor this process and to document the experience to see what progress on social inclusion will have been made till the end of SWITCH early 2011.

The lessons learned from the above case study make clear that it will be a big challenge for the five-year SWITCH programme, with limited dedicated resources, to make the first steps towards clearer and disaggregated objectives, more effective approaches and monitored progress and results on social inclusion in integrated urban water management.

References

Baumann & Ackermann (1995), *Principles of Drainage in the City of Hamburg, use of infiltration and open drainage systems instead of stormwater canalization*. Hydropolis, the role of water in urban planning, proceedings of the international UNESCO IHP workshop, Leiden 1995

Buro d*ing Planung (2006), *10 years citizens participation on Wilhelmsburg Island, a report (in German)* www.ding-planung.de/web-content/pdf/10%20Jahre%20Wilhelmsburg.pdf accessed on July 7, 2008

Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg (1983), *Fachplan Wasserversorgung Hamburg*, Hamburg 1983

Hafencity Universität Hamburg (2008), *SWITCH project coordination agency*, www.tu-harburg.de/sb3/ag5/ **Not clear?**

Hamburg municipality (2008), *Hamburg city municipal website search results for 'Wilhelmsburg'* www.hamburg.de/suche.do?geo=hamburg&schnellsuche=Wilhelmsburg: **You have to add which of the resources have been used.**

IBA, (2007), *leaflet Weltquartier ("global village" in German) project on Wilhelmsburg*, http://www.iba-hamburg.de/2007/seiteninhalte/mediathek/projektdownloads/weltquartier/broschuere_weltquartier.pdf **No longer available!**

IBA Hamburg (2008), *Citizens participation platforms (in German)* http://www.iba-hamburg.de/de/02_gemeinsam/3_beteiligung/beteiligung_gremium.php accessed on July 7, 2008.

IBA Hamburg (2008), *Overview of Wilhelmsburg projects (in German)* http://www.iba-hamburg.de/de/01_entwuerfe/6_projekte/projekte_startseite.php accessed on July 7, 2008.

Nelson, V., Martin A., Sutherland, A., Casella, D., Verhagen J. (2007), *Social inclusion and integrated urban water management, a concept paper*, NRI/GU & IRC, SWITCH programme www.switchurbanwater.eu/page/2367 accessed on July 7, 2008

Soziale Stadt (2006), *MITWirken in Wilhelmsburg, Bürgerbeteiligung und Revitalisierung (in German)* <http://www.sozialestadt.de/praxisdatenbank/suche/ausgabe.php?id=127&> accessed on July 7, 2008

Social Inclusion case study Hamburg

SWITCH (2008), *Hamburg SWITCH webpages*,
www.switchurbanwater.eu/hamburg accessed on July 7, 2008.

Taz.de (2007), *Ende für eind Stadsteilbeirat* (The end of the DUDC)
<http://www.taz.de/nc/1/archiv/print-archiv/printressorts/digi-artikel/?ressort=ha&dig=2007%2F06%2F01%2Fa0062&src=GI&cHash=28c38bf3a>
accessed on July 7, 2008

i MITwirken is German for "collaboration" or "working WITH". The "MITwirken in Wilhelmsburg" process is meant to strengthen the link between citizens participation and existing municipal structures. For this the Wilhelmsburg council appoints yearly an advisory District Urban Development Committee (DUDC), which implements in close consultation a number of own projects. The 60 committee members and many other male and female citizens (about 300 by now) engage themselves in 8 working groups on agreed themes.