

Stakeholder Engagement – ecoBUDGET experience in Heidelberg

Basic questions (see: standards, for example AA1000):

- Who are the stakeholders?
- What are the objectives of stakeholder involvement?
- How and when should stakeholders be involved?
- How can stakeholders' suggestions be integrated?

Who are the stakeholders?

According to German ISO 10006 (guideline on quality Management of projects) stakeholders are persons

- who are directly or indirectly affected by the project, or
- who are interested in the project.



Example Heidelberg: Identified stakeholders

- ✓ City Council
- ✓ administration staff
- ✓ local „experts“
- ✓ national experts for EMS
- ✓ the public (only information)



Heidelberg: stakeholders involvement (1)

City Council:

Very important for the local success of the project –
Several presentations and discussions in the
environmental committee of the City Council;
Feedback and decisions/proposals of the Council
directly influenced the development of the local
realization concept.

Advantage: local newspaper reports on all City Council
sessions → project information for the citizens

Disadvantage: different realization concepts in the
4 project municipalities due to political influence.



Heidelberg: stakeholders involvement (2)

Administration staff:

Cooperation important for the „practical“ local success of the project; regular meetings of a core group (project team with ~ 10 members), information of other interested colleagues by e-mail / intranet. Feedback directly influenced the local concept realization.

Advantage: direct adaption of the concept in existing plans and administration processes (ideally).

Disadvantage: internal cooperation also depending on „chemical“ factors ...



Heidelberg: stakeholders involvement (3)

Local experts (university, scientific instituts, LA 21, NGOs):
Several meetings with different groups, discussion rounds,
no regular meetings. Feedback partly influenced the project.

Advantage: Some fruitful discussions, new input, notice on
hindrances at similar projects, networking.

Disadvantage: Level of knowlegde / time for explanation of the
project very different at the discussion rounds; therefore only
useful input by experts – no ideal LA 21 project.



Heidelberg: stakeholders involvement (4)

National experts on EMS:

Founding of a project commission of national experts by ICLEI; regular meetings (2/a), additional information by written project reports, written evaluations of the commission members.

Feedback partly influenced the development of the concept.

Advantage: helpful expert input and project evaluation, good prestige of the project on national level, additional dissemination of the project results via the networks of the commission members.

Disadvantage: Feedback mainly academic, only partly useful for the local concept realization, sometimes fundamental critics due to competing concepts.

Conclusions

- Who is a stakeholder? Broad range of interpretation – involvement based on strategic points of view.
- „Expert“ projects require „expert“ stakeholders – communication to the public or to none-expert groups (for example LA 21 groups) requires „translation“.
- Formalized involvement (regular meetings, standardized feedback mechanisms) only helpful / necessary in case of directly involved stakeholders.