

Introductory Report Workshop 3: Arena of Interests

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Workshop Focus

This workshop provides a wonderful survey of strategic projects in our world. It shows very different approaches of collaboration and the ways real estate developments are managed and realized. The following questions will be answered:

1. What is the meaning of the development in a larger context?
2. Which participants collaborate in the project?
3. Do the users and social institutions get sufficient attention?
4. What is the importance of power and money in the processes?
5. Which experiences have been obtained during the development and what is the eventual effect after realization?

General Findings

An extensive array of examples is presented, which continuously leads to new surprising conclusions. Some processes lead to results which have been chosen in advance, for example the Mexico Airport project and the redevelopment area in Bloemfontein. Some others focus on prestige, like the power of politicians or developers, for example the large scale projects in Tokyo or the Chinese examples in Guangzhou City and Shanghai, which does not imply that these developments will not have political effects in the future. A large number of projects is created out of the notion that the right opportunity and the right moment to start renewal, improvement and total reconstruction using public-private collaboration has arrived. Examples of these projects are the reconstruction of the Guayaquil harbour, the strategies for Alexandria and Jeddah and the urban transformation of Belgrade. In almost every example the emphasis is laid upon the quality of the public space, architecture and urbanism and to a certain extent collaboration is sought with other stakeholders.

Sometimes large-scale projects are created out of specific circumstances, such as the development of dwellings for the Olympics in Beijing, which is based upon a model in which Chinese and western cultures are mingled. Another example is the Ecocity project in six Indian temple cities, in which, supported by German expertise, nature, culture, tourism and networks are integral aims. Expo candidate Izmir also intends to organize urban area development by using new ways of collaboration. Toronto's Clean and Beautiful City PPP creates a whole new dimension of urban development. Especially the rearrangement of public space in combination with small-scale projects creates a surprising new framework based upon interviews with visitors and users. Research from Gent and Montreal also proves that smaller PPPs often yield a better win-win situation than large-scale developments that are mostly profitable for private investors. Building for the poor is another issue, especially in developing countries. The Tan Hoa – Lo Com project, located in the extremely polluted city in the Mekong Delta in Vietnam, intended to find, in collaboration with a Belgian team, an experimental dwelling standard. In the end the implementation of this idea in a bigger urban



concept proved to be essential. In countries like this, support appears to be very important, because often there is a lack of capital to build the necessary infrastructure. Collaboration with foreign organizations, together with the involvement of the local population often yields an optimal effect. Trinidad Port of Spain will show us three projects of which the experiences and lessons, also out of the informal circuit, are presented. Zurich and Basel show us how predominantly industrial areas build up a cooperative collaboration with the government to stimulate a mixed use. These are examples of sustainable strategic developments in which powerplay between politicians, proprietors, developers, population and authorities takes place. In the USA and Canada, it is fascinating to see how the strategic planning of megaprojects is working and how private developments lead to communal collaboration, which in its turn leads to wide support and sustainability. Examples are Los Angeles, New Haven, St. Louis, Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal. In California - Sacramento Region - public organizations are responsible for the long-term planning in which, however, private parties also participate by using PPP-structures. In collaboration a manual and design documents are created, that can be used by the stakeholders afterwards. In the Netherlands, megaprojects on a regional scale, like Blauwe Stad, Meerstad and Wieringerrandmeer are managed by superlocal authorities (provinces) in collaboration with developers. Dutch experiences with the redevelopment of old residential districts in cities show the importance of consulting housing associations, health care institutions, societies in the neighbourhoods and developers. This adds huge value to new development strategies. However, precise agreements between public and private parties can go too far which makes private individuals feel uncomfortable with the plans becoming too formal. Finally, it is and remains remarkable that a well-furnished public space can be a wonderful instrument to stimulate sustainable developments everywhere.

With every project, enough questions remain to be asked and experiences can be exchanged. In my opinion, these questions are the most important ones: What will be the final effect of a project for the local and regional population on social, economical and perceptible levels? Which lessons can be learnt and in which ways can processes be changed and improved? I wish all of you a wonderful workshop.