

# CSEND DIALOGUE FORUM



**Monday, the 8<sup>th</sup> of December 2008 from 6.00 to 8.00 pm**

## **IDEALISTS, REFORMERS OR REBELS? The role of participatory approaches in civic change processes**



Over the last years, participatory processes have become a widely used tool in national, regional and communal policy-making to enhance the quality of life. Quality of life implies, amongst other things, that each individual and his/her descendants has the right to evolve and lead his/her life in ways that satisfy basic needs (nutrition, work, housing, education, healthy environments and leisure time) as well as social and cultural requirements.

Reform agendas aiming for improved and more sustainable livelihood contribute to a general awareness about the complexity today's civil society. They also provide guided opportunities for all citizens and local actors to negotiate space and co-existence amongst citizens who at times differ strongly in regard to life style preferences and development goals of the communities they live in.

Several Swiss cities are confronted today with growing debts, questions of identity, integration, social tensions and environmental problems. At the same time, they have to meet the aim of offering a better quality of life (city marketing) for their inhabitants and vital infrastructure in order to ensure and increase their economic potential.

Participatory reform methods aiming for sustainable socio-economic development allow different actors (e.g. authorities, lobby groups, citizens) to come together and jointly develop new visions, strategies and measures for the future of their communities.

Four Swiss cities have decided to tackle these questions through the utilization of a broad participatory approach by consulting, integrating and collaborating with different actors within these urban agglomerations. The aim of these multistakeholders processes is to jointly create visions, priorities and values for the future of these cities and their inhabitants.

The speaker will describe the experience of these four cities and will assess the strength and weaknesses of the participatory change method, which was used in all of the cities and finally will outline the potential for future application and development of this unique social science change method.

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## **Speaker:**

**Christine Ziegler** is an expert for participatory processes, in particular within the field of sustainable development and of communal and regional change procedures. She is a biologist by education with professional experience in the ecology of agricultural systems and subsequently specialised in communication, dialogue processes and mediation with many years of experience in urban reform and renewal projects in Switzerland and abroad.

## **Dialogue Partner/Discussant: Implications to Social Systems and Change:**

**Professor Raymond Saner** is the Professor for Organisation and International Management at Basle University. Professor Saner is an expert in international negotiations. He wrote books and articles on dialogue and participation among state and non-state actors. He currently teaches international negotiations at the University of Basle.

Subsequent to Mrs Ziegler presentation, Professor Saner will dialogue with Mrs Ziegler on the managing tools for addressing complex and conflictual processes.

## **Organisers:**

Prof. Lichia Yiu, President, Centre for Socio-Eco-Nomic Development (CSEND)

Prof. Beat Bürgenmeier, Political Economy Department, the University of Geneva

Nicolas Velebit, MA in I.R., HEI and associate researcher at CSEND

**Free of Charge**

**Uni-Mail, Room M S030**

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