

## **URBAN21 - Youth Pre-Meeting Outcome**

### **Youth Contribution on Sustainable Development and Youth Participation**

During the Preparatory Youth Meeting which was held on 2-3 July 2000 in Berlin with the partnership of Youth Initiative, Foundation for the Rights of Future Generations and The Secretariat of Youth for Habitat International Network, young people from all of the continents came together before the actual youth forum of **URBAN21**. The outcomes of the pre-meeting and the youth forum are as follows:

#### ***Definition of a sustainable urban development:***

One of the issues was to find a common sense of our understanding of "sustainable urban development". Our revised definition is based on the Brutland's definition:

*"Improving the quality of life in a city, including ecological, cultural, political, institutional, social and economic components without leaving a burden on the future generations. A burden, which is the result of a reduced natural capital and an excessive local debt. The flow principle, that is based on an equilibrium of material and energy and also financial input/output, plays a crucial role in all future decisions upon the development of urban areas."*

#### ***Youth Participation***

The second issue with regards to sustainable urban development was youth participation in decision-making processes. The questions of "Why and how?" participate were deliberated:

#### ***Why participation?***

1. because youth has the energy to mobilize the related groups with a vision of good governance,
2. because young people are the ones who best know what their requirements are,
3. because young people will be the ones dwelling in the cities of the future,

#### ***How participation?***

1. through local participatory mechanisms, such as youth councils or youth parliaments,
2. with the creation of space for young people, especially by bringing together diverse groups,
3. by revitalizing the related provisions of the Habitat Agenda and Agenda 21, bearing in mind the progress achieved by youth on the way to Istanbul+5.

We do not only demand participation, but also want to show with the following suggestions that we are able to make contributions.

#### ***Education, education, education***

One of the most important outcomes of the youth forum is that education for sustainable (urban) development is crucial. Special attention should be paid to young women.

#### ***Improving living conditions in urban areas***

The first part of our definition is about the improvement of the living conditions of the present generations. The following recommendations are the outcomes:

1. Providing education on/for sustainable urban development, beginning from very early ages and updating the school curricula accordingly.

2. Raising awareness about not leaving ecological footprints for the future generations.
3. Providing more opportunities for education of young women, such as on family planning.
4. Creating common platforms for interactions with the seniors.

***New future ethics: implementation of sustainability principles***

The second part of our definition includes: 'Not living at the expense of the future generations.'

For this aim we suggest:

- to use economic instruments/incentives for reducing the material and energy input as well as for reducing or to abandon the emission of harmful substances into the environment,
- to revise the existing (local) taxes in view of the effects on the environment and also consider this while implementing new ones, such as the suggested "property tax with market value", which supports suburbanisation processes and therefore should include ecological components.
- to create tax incentives for environmental friendly behaviour,
- to lower the local debt to zero, by reducing consumption expenses, fostering environmentally compatible investments and improving the existing infrastructure.

Looking forward to bending the trend all together!!