

Local Hub in Berdychiv District

International Charitable Organisation Information Centre “Green Dossier”

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International Charitable Organisation Information Centre “Green Dossier” has been an active member of BSRESND since its establishment. The activities of the organisation are connected to the field of ESD and sustainable production and consumption starting from 90s. Information Centre “Green Dossier” is a member of ANPED - Northern Alliance for Sustainability, participant of the Pan-European Eco Forum, Carpathian coalitions for SD and ESD. The centre provides a number of related projects at national and international level, including research, campaigning, public discussions, training, a lot of publications and documentaries. Information Centre “Green Dossier” has more than 20 years of experience in working with multiple stakeholder projects at the local level.

Goal and aims of the HUB: The situation in the region selected as a pilot (3 municipalities of Berdychiv District of Zhytomyr oblast, Ukraine) is quite usual for many rural regions in the Ukraine: depressive rural area with poor infrastructure, poorly developed industry, and with the main income from private agriculture and small businesses. Young people do not want to stay in the region; they see their future in cities. Ukrainian government has declared a course of decentralisation that means that all municipalities are looking for new ways of developing now, and thus are ready to listen to innovators and follow SD principles among other new approaches. It is very important and now it is a good time to introduce a tool for SD and engage them in the global movement for a better common future. Having a clear vision about local people’s needs (research part of the project), about possible ways for cooperation and solving the problems (analysing and discussion part of the project) worked out by national and local experts with the involvement of all stakeholders, the local community and authority, will be able to change their policy and life standards. The goal of the hub is to assist the development of a local sustainable developing strategy through education of local stakeholders and to create a team of local innovators that acts as a local ESD centre and cooperates with ESD hubs’ international network.

Activities and achievements of the HUB: The main activities of the hub are the following:

1. Research of the situation that requires agreement with the local partner, distribution of tasks, development of a questionnaire, organisation of a survey in the selected areas, analysis of the obtained data;
2. Working out of methodology and planning of stakeholder discussions that involves defining stakeholders, developing approaches of stakeholders engagement, planning timing and sharing of information, involving relevant experts, preparing necessary materials;
3. Stakeholder round table for distribution of information, inviting participants, arranging logistics, organising a one day meeting in the selected venue. The agenda of the meeting includes the presentation of the research results, discussion about SD principles and real local needs, finding solutions together with experts, defining the most critical or conflicting points, and working out the main outline for further SD strategy;
4. Creation of a local team of innovators who are the promoters of SD principles;
5. Developing of recommendations and a road map for the regional SD strategy/ planning that involves presenting of the results of the stakeholder discussion to the community, and developing recommendations and a road map;

6. Promotional campaign that is based on presentation of the pilot results to the public through a press event and social media, study visit for active participants, and linkage of the local team with international ESD networks.

As a result, the hub initiates the formation of a team of SD innovators and a team of young innovators ready to develop their region and mainstream of SD goals. One of the significant achievements is the development of recommendations and a road map for SD regional strategy to be included into regional development plans.

EXAMPLE: The research demonstrated that there is a huge need to provide an internet service in the villages, so, we invited an IT person (business) who develops internet and radio connection in the region, and he explained how to arrange it. Also, the research highlighted unemployment as a significant problem, while at the same time there is trouble with waste collection; nobody wants to collect it, and nobody is responsible for it. From one side we invited the municipality authority, and from the other side, the director of the district employment service. It was found that the new governmental decentralisation policy allows money to be allocated for such needs from both the municipality and the employment service, hiring unemployed people for particular tasks.

EXAMPLE: we arranged research of the situation in two steps: (1) desk research and (2) survey of local people. Desk research included collecting and investigating official data of the developing district (district passport - official data), researching of regional publications in open sources, and comments/discussions with local experts. The survey questions were worked out based on that research. We invited about 15 - 16 years young people to join the project survey, go to their villages and ask the questions. The questionnaire's aim was to describe the actual life of local people and their main problems (Environment, House holding, Studying, Working, Mobility, Health, Security and Administration, Leisure, Sources of Information), and also how they would like to see this in 20 years. The young researchers interviewed 58 people. The data collected was analysed by both young researchers and Green Dossier experts. Young researchers prepared their own vision and made a presentation at the stakeholders meeting. Also, together with a local partner NGO, they recorded the final pitch and audio-clip with their opinion about the discussion and promises from the responsible participants of the round table.

Target groups of the HUB, structure and collaboration: Target groups are representatives of the local community, administration and authority. The main stakeholders are local NGOs, district/village authorities, local businesses, educators/teachers in the pilot area, young people/students, homeowners. They were selected in accordance with the needs defined by the research. Some of them were interviewed at the research stage; some were invited to the round table discussions. Young people were selected because it is fundamental to focus on the future. Regional media were also involved. With the help of the hub the local team is linked with international networks, and the team of young people develops cooperation with their colleges in other Baltic countries, establishing links between their region/schools and colleges from similar regions of other countries and/or university programmes.

Local, national, global and conceptual context of the HUB:

Link to social innovation: Such common work will assist in finding wise solutions at the local level in close cooperation with all stakeholders. For example, issues such as a lack of clean water or waste management may become issues of developing new jobs and increasing social standards.

Link to the BSRESND strategy: The local team in Berdychiv builds their work with the assistance of Green Dossier experts, national experts are involved and cooperation has been developed internationally. The local team is connected with colleges from other countries in the form of “twin municipalities\vilages”, where cooperation and learning from each other is developed at several levels – administrations, businesses, and most importantly – youth.

Sustainability of the HUB: The initiative group of main stakeholders has created recommendations for local development that have been taken into account by the administration. The initiative group will continue to assist in the local planning process, as well as in the monitoring of implementation.

EXAMPLE: The young researchers were so interested in activities that they created an SD Centre called Heksada (as there are 6 vilages involved), which started to work and were ready to learn more and cooperate with colleges from other regions and countries. We also arranged a study tour for the most active participants to two well-developed vilages in a neighbouring Ukrainian region. The SD Centre “Heksada” has become well known in the region thanks to the regional mass media, video and audio clips recorded and broadcasting. It gives a good opportunity for young people to state their willingness to participate in the decision making process, to learn from other countries’ experience.

Multiplication and publicity of the HUB’s initiatives: Activities organised by the hub have been promoted on the regional TV, radio and in newspapers, on the relevant websites of partners in Ukraine and other countries, the organisation’s FB page and YouTube. Also, the team of innovators has shared the experience with other regions and partner networks.