



UN-Habitat Best Practices Programme



THE CITIES AGENCY

More than half the world's population live in cities. Cities are cultural centres, nodes of communication and provide opportunities for people to move up the social ladder. They are the venues for social movement. Cities generate energy for society but at the same time the use up far more natural resources than they produce.

Cities the world over are faced with similar problems. Far more so than the diversity of architectural design would let us assume. Each has its rich quarters along with poor ones which are receptacles for new migrants. Each produces too much waste and uses too much water. Supplying cities with the basic needs of everyday life entails problems of transportation. Concentrating businesses and industry in the cities puts a toll on the environment.

UN-HABITAT was established by the United Nations in the 1970ies with the aim to monitor urban development, support city administrations in their efforts to solve problems and intervene in case of emergency by affording international solidarity.



SOLUTIONS - BEST PRACTICES

At the same time cities the world over are seeking to develop solution strategies. Examples include neighbourhood centres which pull their weight to have parks erected, women's organisations which open up economic opportunities by awarding micro credits, businesses which develop new social and ecological models in cooperation with their employees, as well as city administrations which pass laws with a view to the future to protect their cities' natural foundations.

All of these practical experiences are built on the knowledge and competence of individuals and institutions and the objective of UN-HABITAT is to document these and make them available to municipalities in search of solutions. This is why UN-HABITAT has been carrying out a Best Practices Programme since 1996.

We, the Heads of State or Government and the official delegations of countries assembled at the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in Istanbul, Turkey from 3 to 14 June 1996, take this opportunity to endorse the universal goal of ensuring adequate shelter for all and making human settlements safer, healthier and more livable, equitable, sustainable and productive. Our deliberations on the two major themes of the Conference - adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world - have been inspired by the Charter of the United Nations and are aimed at reaffirming existing and forging new partnerships for action at the international, national and local levels to improve our living environment. We commit ourselves to the objectives, principles and recommendations contained in the Habitat Agenda and pledge our mutual support for its implementation.

UN-HABITAT Best Practices

Best Practices as defined by UN-HABITAT are programmes developed to help solve the problems arising in cities.

Best Practices have to meet the following five criteria (Good Practices have to comply with three only)

- They must be carried out by several organisations - rule of partnership
- They must be innovative in their local context - innovation
- They must take into consideration socially disadvantaged groups - social inclusion
- They must prove to have caused a positive change - impact
- They must be sustainable - sustainability

Best Practices can be run by small NGOs or entire city administrations. They may include projects requiring little funding as well as projects supported by budgets worth billions. What they all have in common, though, is to have successfully found new ways of improving the living standards of the people concerned.

THE BEST PRACTICES PROGRAMME

- Innovative programmes are documented and collected
- 100 of these are recognized as Best Practices every two years
- 10 exceptional initiatives are granted the Dubai Award every two years
- To convey and transfer experiences conferences and seminars are organised, an objective further supported by workshops, newspapers and electronic newsletters published regularly

The Best Practices Programme consists of a network of renowned institutions selected by UN-HABITAT to act as competence centres. Each of the six UN regions has its own Regional Centre. In addition there are Theme-oriented Centres offering specialized knowledge and competences. The city of Vienna has been selected one of these UN-HABITAT Best Practices Centres.

THE BEST PRACTICES DATABASE

The Best Practices database is the largest collection of city initiatives worldwide. All the knowledge collected from regional and theme-oriented centres is brought together in the database. It currently includes data on more than 1,600 evaluated programmes as well as on the experts responsible for them.



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Best Practices of the City of Vienna

Best Practices proposed by UN-HABITAT are defined as programmes which strive for sustainability by working in partnership with others and promoting concrete, tangible changes.

SINCE 1996 FOURTEEN URBAN PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES OF THE CITY OF VIENNA HAVE BEEN RECOGNISED AS BEST PRACTICES BY UN-HABITAT.

These programmes range from housing to environmental issues, from technical hardware to gender approaches. They are based on the experience and expertise by many experts and institutions connected to the City of Vienna.



Sustainable Urban Renewal Best Practice UN-Habitat 1998/2000/2002

In Vienna, as in many cities, the greatest urban problems are concentrated in those city districts which are most in need of modernisation. The City of Vienna decided both against demolition and construction of new urban areas, and against the displacement or compulsory re-housing of those living in such areas. The areas were instead improved by applying the methodology of user-friendly housing redevelopment. Complete restoration of the base of buildings is the most important strategy in this process, involving as it does the division of responsibility between owners and residents, co-determination according to the wishes of those renting, offers to convert and subsidise. Until today 4,700 residential buildings, with 201,000 apartments – and a total investment of approx. 4 billion Euros – have been approved.

City of Vienna / Municipal Department 50 / Housing Promotion, Housing Rehabilitation and Improvement, Supervision of Non-profit Building Associations

Ecological Block – Renewal Best Practice UN-Habitat 2002

The ecological block renewal programme was introduced with the aim to improve entire blocks of streets. Houses are owned by more than one person, were raised at different times in history and are usually interspersed with undeveloped property. The challenge is to motivate and coordinate property and building owners and tenants to consolidate the city, improve buildings from the ecological point of view and turn individual inner courts into common park area partly open to the public. Ecological improvements, the transfer of responsibility to citizens, new transport plans and energy saving projects are all positive effects of block redevelopment.

City of Vienna / Vienna Land Procurement and Urban Renewal Fund (WBSF)



THEWOSAN – Thermal Rehabilitation for Residential Buildings Best Practice UN-Habitat 2002

Many of the post-war housing estates built after 1945 need to be re-installed. The municipality of Vienna was able to provide one third of the costs for this from its climate protection programme (KUP). The co-operation of the tenants was secured by an intensive information campaign showing the benefits of thermal rehabilitation. A total of 28,000 housing units covering a floor space of 1.9 million square meters have since been improved. 50,000 tons of carbon dioxide are now saved each year. The project has had the additional valuable effect of generating jobs with an income volume of more than 1 billion Euro.

City of Vienna / Vienna Land Procurement and Urban Renewal Fund (WBSF)

Biowaste Management – Organic Farming Best Practice UN-Habitat 1998 / 2002

Vienna was the first big town in Austria, where the separate collection of biowaste had been introduced. In the meantime nearly all communities know this kind of waste management. The biggest achievement of the Project and also the biggest and most important difference to the others is the continuous co-operation with the research institutes and the Viennese farmers and the guarantee for a long term application of compost and for developing of organic farming in Vienna.

City of Vienna / Municipal Department 48 / Waste Management, Road Cleaning, Transport



The Spittelau Waste Incineration Plant
Best Practice UN-Habitat 1998

The Spittelau waste incineration plant forms part of the city's waste management plan. The fundamental aim is to prevent the creation of waste. For the residual waste, the waste incineration plant represents the realisation of a plan which conforms to the latest standards. The district heating plant at Spittelau generated 54,400 MWh of electricity in one year from 263,200 m³ waste deliveries, and heated 190,000 homes and 4,200 public buildings, including Vienna's largest hospital. Continuous checks and innovations in the waste gas purification plant are setting standards for the emission of pollutants. Due to the design of the plant by Viennese artist Friedensreich Hundertwasser the plant has become a tourist attraction and a development incentive for the whole area.

Fernwärme Wien GmbH



EcoBusinessPlan Vienna Best Practice UN-Habitat 2002

EcoBusinessPlan Vienna has developed a special programme which provides tailor-made consulting modules made to fit the structure of businesses in Vienna. The more than 420 prize-winning Viennese businesses to date have managed to save 7 Mio. km of transport trips and 57 Mio. kWh of energy. A total of more than 7,000 Viennese projects are now registered on the Net. A number of other cities have begun to learn from the Viennese model (Győr/Hungary, Athens/Greece, Chennai/India).

City of Vienna / Municipal Department 22 / Environmental Protection

HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE



ÖkoKauf Wien – Vienna Buys Ecologically Best Practice UN-Habitat 2002

Every year, the City of Vienna buys a vast range of products, goods and services of all kinds, with a value of over 5 billion Euros. The purchase of such large volumes of goods creates the possibility of exerting significantly more influence over the quality and condition of products than the individual consumer is able to do. ÖkoKauf Wien set up working groups at the administration to compile catalogues of criteria for all products and services procured by the City of Vienna, including floor coverings, water meters, lamps, furniture, as well as office material, food and the organising of events. Following these criteria the City has switched to buying ecologically. Just one example: Every year the City of Vienna procures 164,701 pens, 71,743 letter files, 49,029 document covers and 69,121 cardboard folders, taking into account the ecological criteria defined in the catalogue.

City of Vienna / Municipal Department 22 / Environmental Protection / Coordination Ecoprocurement

Jobchance Best Practice UN-Habitat 2002

City of Vienna / Vienna Employment Promotion Fund



Jobchance provides mediation and follow-up care during the first year in a new placement to effectively reduce the number of dismissals at short notice with (previously) long-term unemployed persons. It is also a measure employed to save money both on the job-seeking and the social assistance side. Furthermore, it is a guarantee for businesses and a way to reduce their expenses when seeking staff.

Property Developers' Competition Best Practice UN-Habitat 1998

The City of Vienna organizes since 1995 developers' competitions to improve planning and ecological qualities in subsidized housing development. The competition approach aims to reduce production costs, as well as user costs, whilst at the same time raising the build quality in terms of planning, environmental technology and ecology. In total, the volume of housing involved in assessed projects amounts to around 05,000 units of accommodation. In all cases, a so-called "Low Energy Standard" ("Niedrigenergiestandard") has been achieved, with individual water meters for each flat and solar and thermal energy being used. The energy requirement for the building as a whole has been reduced to 50-60% as a result of this "Low Energy Standard".

City of Vienna / Municipal Department 50 / Housing Promotion, Housing Rehabilitation and Improvement, Supervision of Non-profit Building Associations



Housing Information System for Disadvantaged Population Segments

Wohndrehscheibe (housing roundabout) was established in 1997 with the aim to improve the Viennese housing market for refugees and migrants in lower income brackets. Wohndrehscheibe offers a variety of different services as needed, from pure information on the housing market in Vienna, specific advice with issues related to house seeking, intensive guidance for the illiterate and individuals with mental problems or other disabilities in search of housing, to mediation during conflict situations. A series of recommendations were established for improving the situation of the target group based on statistical assessments of client data, most of which have since been implemented with the amendments to rental legislation.

People's Aid Vienna / Housing Roundabout

FAWOS – Prevention of Homelessness Best Practice UN-Habitat 1998 – Best Practice UN-Habitat 2002

The NGO FAWOS (specialist office for housing assurance) is a central contact office for all people renting property in Vienna who are threatened with eviction. On the basis of the current legal position, FAWOS is notified by the district courts of enforcement orders and eviction dates which concern housing areas. FAWOS offers to provide advice, from a social work and rental law perspective, regarding the options which still exist for delaying the threatened notice to quit or the eviction. The strategy is highly successful. In 2003 4,428 individuals (among them 2,390 children) would have lost their homes without the help of FAWOS.

FAWOS / People's Aid Vienna / Centre for Secure Tenancy



inter-face, International Education Centre Best Practice UN-Habitat 2002

The international youth, culture and education centre inter-face was created as one of the activities of the Vienna Integration Fund. It was to act as a rapid measure that would open up cultural and educational opportunities for young people of non-Austrian origin. The basic idea was to offer an open house where young people could develop their own ideas on education and leisure time. Projects were initiated to enhance youngsters' keen interest in the media, data processing and the arts. Yet the main concern with all of the activities was to show young people what opportunities they had in connection with their backgrounds, e.g. multilingualism, to assist them with legal and other issues and to offer language courses. inter-face exchange initiatives also focus on the international facet as young people at the centre are networked with similar initiatives in Europe and beyond.

City of Vienna / former Vienna Integration Fund / Innow Municipal Department 17



New approach to mobile youth work in two Viennese districts – Back on Stage

Mobile youth work is an initiative geared towards the actual life experience of young people. It seeks to identify and to support young people at risk at any early stage. Street work, providing advice to young people on the streets, is the basis of this work. Back on Stage's low key policies have proved their worth. Many young people have enormous difficulties seeking in-patient counselling. Back on Stage has managed to reach out to these individuals and improve their lives.

Back on Stage / Mobile Youth Work

PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT GENDER AND MAINSTREAMING

TRANSPARENT ADMINISTRATION

ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT

BEST Practices Hub Vienna

BEST PRACTICES VIENNA 1996-2002

Best Practices HUB Vienna

Showing what works with sustainable development



In 1999 UN-HABITAT and the mayor of Vienna signed a memorandum of understanding with the common objective to establish the Best Practices Hub Vienna. The Best Practices Hub Vienna is the regional centre for Central and Eastern Europe. The Best Practices Hub Vienna is theme oriented towards urban environmental technologies.



Urban environmental technologies

The Best Practices Hub Vienna collects and documents sustainable urban environmental technologies which have proved valuable Best Practices solutions.

These constitute exceptional technical solutions developed with the participation of local residents taking into account the interdependence of social, economic and ecological factors.

Best Practices solutions are transferable. The Practices Hub Vienna works in cooperation with the operators involved to point out what is universally valid with these projects and to adapt them to municipalities faced with similar problems.

The city of Vienna acts as information exchange for the competencies, experience and expertise provided by the Best Practices solutions distinguished by UN-HABITAT.

The Best Practices Hub - Vienna is a joint initiative of the City of Vienna

MUNICIPAL DIRECTORATE
City Planners Office
Planning Group

MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT 18
Urban Development and Planning
City Councilor Department for
Environment of Vienna

MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT 50
Housing Promotion
Housing Rehabilitation and Improvement
Supervision of Non-profit Building Associations

WKA - WienKanal
Abwassertechnologien GesmbH & Co KG

VIENNA BUSINESS AGENCY

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Best Practices in Central and Eastern Europe

UN-HABITAT Best Practice in 2002

When Ciechanow was made a provincial capital, it was faced with a new situation which called for a sustainable planning concept. A committee was set up with members from all walks of life who were put in charge of creating the concept, raising the necessary funds and ultimately implementing the idea. The success to date includes a new purification plant, a state-of-the-art thermal power station, as well as a circle of friends of literature.

Ciechanow – Sustainable Town
Ciechanow, Poland



UN-HABITAT Best Practice in 2002

Information Centres as New Social Institutes for the Empowerment of Women

Moscow, Russia



The ICWF is an umbrella organisation, setting up information centres all over Russia as training institutes, to support regional women's organisations and grassroots groups. By organising trainings, supplying the centres with libraries, publishing newsletters and political lobbying the ICWF aims to bring to light the social problems women have to grapple with and to co-ordinate measures to relieve such problems.

Award Winning, 2004

Poverty reduction among women through vocational training and micro-credit

Uzbekistan

In Uzbekistan the level of female unemployment is much higher than that of the males (62%). Women are concentrated in the lower paying sector and earn 70% of typical male wages. The low level of self-employment is caused by lack of necessary skills and knowledge, limited access to credit for women (15%) and low participation in establishment of new enterprises. To improve the situation the Business Woman's Association, a non-governmental organisation (NGO) launched the Integrated Program on Poverty reduction among women through vocational training and micro financing programs in rural areas in Uzbekistan. The initiative impacted positively on the economic situation of the country; raised women's economic role and status, overcoming gender barriers; provided them equal access to financial sources through a micro credit program.



UN-HABITAT Best Practice in 2000

Green Crown of the City

Lviv, Ukraine



After 1945, the city of Lviv quickly grew to become an industrial conglomerate; the population increased to 1 million inhabitants and very soon the city was faced with the problems typically incurred by such expanding structures. Unique rural areas slowly had to give way to urban expansion and what used to be a green belt became a grey one. A model for restructuring public spatial planning initiated by residents was extended to include decision makers at the city administration. Once responsibilities had been delegated the project got under way. One additional objective was to sharpen people's awareness of environment-related matters.

THERE ARE CURRENTLY 120 GOOD AND BEST PRACTICES EXAMPLES FROM CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE IN THE UN-HABITAT BEST PRACTICES DATABASE.

THREE OF THE PROJECTS, FROM POLAND, TURKEY AND UZBEKISTAN, HAVE BEEN AWARDED WITH THE DUBAI INTERNATIONAL AWARD FOR BEST PRACTICES IN IMPROVING THE LIVING ENVIRONMENT IN RECENT YEARS.

The Best Practices Hub Vienna is the regional UN-HABITAT Best Practices centre for Central and Eastern Europe.

UN-HABITAT Best Practice in 2002

Community Based Economic Development in the Town of Nagykat

Nagykat, Hungary



Cooperation was the key to making a single initiative successful. The mayor of Nagykat in Hungary, with the help of a comprehensive democratic process, was able to draw up an urban development plan which has already won international recognition. As a result, many major companies have settled in the area and unemployment has been reduced from 25% to 5%.

UN-HABITAT Good Practice in 2000

Water Supply Strategy for the Municipality of Targoviste

Targoviste, Romania

In Targoviste, Romania, both the pumping technology and the computing system for water supply were seriously outdated. Energy costs for water distribution were far from adequate and more than half of the water never reached its destination. Based on an information campaign and extensive advance calculations the water board prepared a concept in cooperation with the town hall, the media, and residents. With government and university support it was able to prove that long-term savings would more than compensate the necessary investments.



UN-HABITAT Best Practice in 2002

The Foundation for the Support of Women's Work

Istanbul, Turkey



FSWW is a nonprofit organization developing community-based childcare/education services and income-generation opportunities for women in the poor neighborhoods around Istanbul. The women-led approach to community development, use of mutual learning as an organizing principle, and success in negotiating strategic partnerships, especially with municipalities, are unique in Turkey. FSWW works with community women as equal partners, providing a platform for them to come together and improve their lives. Through such collaboration four alternative Childcare and Women's Centers and two marketing facilities were developed, and several innovative, including microcredit, programs were initiated.

There are currently 120 Good and Best Practices Examples from Central and Eastern Europe in the UN-HABITAT Best Practices database.

Three of the projects, from Poland, Turkey and Uzbekistan, have been awarded with the Dubai International Award for Best Practices in Improving the Living environment in recent years.

Many countries in the region have undergone enormous social changes in recent years. This is also reflected by their Best Practices. A number of programmes were carried out in the course of adapting standards to those of the European Union.

The Best Practices Hub – Vienna collects and documents Best Practices from the region. It assists in contacting local experts and accompanies programme transfers. This makes Vienna the hub of a network of committed and innovative municipalities.

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