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for development

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF A GLOBALLY FAIR REGION

A PRACTICAL GUIDEBOOK



The development of a globally fair Region

A practical Guidebook

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FOREWORD

Faire Welt – Bucklige Welt – Wechselland

The LEADER-Region Bucklige Welt – Wechselland is located in the southeast-ern part of Lower Austria on the border to Styria and Burgenland. It includes 32 communities in a total range of 830 km² and about 50.000 citizens. 23 communities belong to the “Kleinregion” Bucklige Welt and nine to “Kleinregion” Wechselland. The region Bucklige Welt – Wechselland has been one of the most famous recreation areas in Austria since the 1920ies. The hilly landscape between Gloggnitz und Kirchschlag reaches in the North until the mountains of Rosaliengebirge and in the South until Hochwechsel (1743m). The main topics of our LEADER region are culinary art, wellness, renewable energy, economy, agriculture and forestry.

The Region Bucklige Welt – Wechsel-land has a long tradition in the realiza-tion of sustainable projects. The region is a climate model-region. There are initiatives for sustainable supply of elec-tricity as well as alternative concepts of mobility.

For many years also Fair Trade has been a crucial topic in the region. Many people are actively engaged in it on a voluntary basis. Through the creation of the project “Faire Welt – Bucklige Welt Wechselland” in the frame of the LEAD-ER Programme many concrete actions have been realized in the communities and schools.

Since 2013 our region is the first Fair-Trade Region in Lower Austria and therefore a role model for other regions in Lower Austria and in Europe.

We invite all interested individuals, initi-atives, organizations, communities and regions to start such a process. Feel free to use the experiences, good practices and ideas which shaped the FairTrade Region “Bucklige Welt – Wechselland”.

As FairTrade Region we will continuous-ly work on the topic to strengthen the network, support educational projects, widen our public relations work and hopefully implement many fair and sus-tainable projects.

DI Friedrich Trimmel
*Chairman of the LEADER Region
Bucklige Welt – Wechselland*

Introduction to this Guidebook

The LEADER Region "Bucklige Welt – Wechselland" was awarded as first "FAIRTRADE Region" in Lower Austria. Südwind NÖ Süd coordinated this process, which was not always easy, but always interesting and intense. It would not have been possible without the engagement of many motivated and idealistic individuals along the way until now. With this guidebook we want to tell you a story about these people in our region and all over the planet ...

Fair Trade

Each single person in this World has the same rights for his needs to be fulfilled and for self-realisation. But only a small part of the World Population can claim these rights and make use of them. In many countries of the global south workers for products such as coffee, cocoa or bananas have to work and live in circumstances often unimaginable for people in so called "developed countries". Through engagement for fair

trade in our regions we can increase the chances for humane living and working conditions globally. The "Fair-Trade-Towns"-Campaign is a set frame for this engagement involving communities, towns and regions, which aim to realize activities for fair trade.

The beginning of the Fair-Trade-Towns Movement

The idea of the Fair-Trade-Towns has its origins in England, when the city of Garstang in Lancashire entitled itself as first Fair-Trade-Town. Together with the FAIRTRADE Foundation five objectives for a Fair-Trade-Town were defined which allowed other cities to follow the example of Garstang. Currently more than 1.600 Fair-Trade-Towns exist globally – many of them part of motivated Fair-Trade-Regions!

About this Guidebook

In this manual we want to offer you the following:

- An introduction, how Südwind NÖ Süd and our local partners coordinated the process in the FAIRTRADE Region “Bucklige Welt – Wechselland”.
- Concrete hints for your actions and strategies how to develop your community, town and region.
- Readymade description of methods e.g. for a conference of regional stakeholders, which can be a proper beginning for the process of a community or region.
- In this handbook you find the perspectives of Südwind NÖ Süd as coordinating NGO, of representatives of the region and of a national FAIR-TRADE Organisation.

The region “Bucklige Welt – Wechselland” was awarded by FAIRTRADE Austria as FAIRTRADE Region. It is useful to involve your national FAIRTRADE organisation in this process (find the contact

in the chapter “Links” in this manual). In this guidebook we use the term “FAIR-TRADE Region”, sometimes also “fair region”, sometimes even other terms. What we want to express with each of these terms is the following aim:

A region committing itself for the movement and engagement for fair global trade as well as for the use of regionally and sustainably produced products.

We wish you interesting moments with this handbook. We hope you can take inspiration, motivation and concrete next steps for the development of your town and your region.

*Wiener Neustadt, Austria,
September 2015*

*Ingrid Schwarz and Matthias Haberl
Südwind NÖ Süd*

NGO Strategy for developing a Fairtrade Region

Ingrid Schwarz, *Südwind NÖ Süd*
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In a process of developing a region to a globally fair and responsible one, NGOs can operate as a coordinator as well as a catalyst. There are various challenges in the process, but with appropriate knowhow, right partners and a bit of insistence one can make real progress. Here you receive an outline of our experience in the FAIRTRADE Region Bucklige Welt-Wechselland.

Resources in the region: engagement of people locally

At the very beginning the evident question about the resources in a region arises. At the beginning we are not talking so much about financial resources, but about ideas, initiatives and often **long-term engagement of people for development policy and global responsibility**. These are often small groups in parishes or women's networks, who over

the years gave support to fair trade in informal structures. Each of these initiatives should be highly appreciated and made visible to the wider public.

These are multiannual and traditional "bazaars". People go far distances to buy fair traded products, pack them in their trunk and organize open stalls in their parishes, communities and schools.

During the FAIRTRADE award celebration in a small community in the south of Lower Austria a senior woman approached me saying: "Already 25 years ago we started to sell fair traded coffee in the parish." My answer was: "Yes, and without you we would not be as far as we are today."

This stakeholder analysis was very useful for us. The aim is to identify and incorporate the above-mentioned active initiatives and important actors. Among them there are political representatives (mayors, councilors of environmental issues), responsible individuals in par-

ishes, regions (e.g. “Leader” region), principals and teachers and trendsetters in the economic field.

The fair regional process combines these numerous individual initiatives to a greater whole.

Fair Weeks each year

The “Fair Weeks” are a concrete example for it. These are annual action weeks in April and May. Each community, association, school and each group may and shall actively participate in the programme through specific fair actions and events.

All of these single events together make an impressive overall action with a high visibility in the region.

The annual fixed date provides a high and long-term planning reliability. Everyone can be involved and brainstorm about ideas and actions for the upcoming year. It also allows mutual inspiration through creative ideas and actions. For example, a “grandmoth-

er-grandfather-breakfast” that was arranged in one community, might also take place in other communities next year.

Connection between schools and communities

Fair Trade also shows a high relevance for the schools’ and municipalities’ educational work. The subject of economic education is to be found in many curriculums, especially in such classes as geography and economics.

Topics such as distributive justice, fair prices, fair labor conditions, a global and regional fair economy are topics for schools from the first grade of elementary school up to the final grades.

Eventually educational work about Fair Trade also begins earlier, because already preschoolers can be involved in this topic through songs, pictures, degustation or tales. Südwind offers its own Toolkit for kindergarten teachers.

Interesting didactical materials for teachers are also available for secondary education, for example toolkits for “Global Action Schools”. Certain steps for the schools’ educational work are described in this international school network in accordance with the structure Learn-Research-Act.

Teachers can put these contents and methods easily into practice. Moreover successful school projects are also represented as Good Practice Models, which can be reproduced. Thus many pupils organize Global Action Schools FAIRTRADE Points – open stalls selling fair traded products during breaks. These open stalls are organized in co-operation with local fair trade shops. Pupils pick up the goods from these shops, do all logistics and calculations by themselves and thereby learn action-oriented economics. Teachers support and consult pupils, but they mainly “just” accompany the process.

It is a special experience for many children and adolescents when schools and

communities work on the same topic. They see that mayors pursue the same goals through support of Fair Trade as they do. It is an extraordinary form of political education, if pupils can discuss their project about Fair Trade with policymakers.

One of the requirements to be rewarded as “FAIRTRADE community” is the work in the educational field. Therefore policymakers take an active part in workshops, exhibitions, podium discussions dedicated to the subject of Fair Trade. Our organisation offers various thematic topics such as for instance chocolate, cotton, coffee and bananas.

Pupils present the results of their school projects and invite policymakers. Such open exchange and participative approaches encourage pupils in their engagement for Fair Trade and a globally just World.

In the following a small sample out of many interesting projects shall be mentioned:

- „Fair fashion shows“ in cooperation with Fairtrade-shops and their range of clothes from fair trade
- Upcycling-Projects where a new product is designed from old clothes
- Fair football matches where the mayor contributes a FAIRTRADE-football to the kickoff
- Creative competition of the package design for FAIRTRADE-chocolate
- Participation in a marathon with fair traded sports ware
- Topic related Theatre- and Performance-Projects
- Cookbooks of dishes with fair traded ingredients and specific use in the cooking workshops and in school kitchens

In cooperation of schools and communities public awareness about the subject and the topic are important. That is why the projects shall be presented to the local public on the webpages of

the school and the city and in the local newspapers.

Regional processes become stronger through school projects, where schools cooperate with each other and multiple communities take responsibility for schools. So the process evolves from a local to a regional one.

Schools also play a primary role as an economic factor. Once an owner of a restaurant wanted to use fair traded products and asked us about it. After more precise enquiries she told us about a school project about suppliers for fair traded food. They connected and in the end the restaurant integrated fair traded products in its work.

Ambassadors in the region

Every region has individuals of whom people are proud of. At first sight these individuals often have no real connection with the issue of Fair Trade. I

once saw a TV report of a cyclist from “our” FAIRTRADE region Bucklige Welt – Wechselland. This athlete often goes on world tours by bicycle and in the TV show she reported about her cycle-trip in Africa from Egypt to South Africa. She mentioned that she started in North Africa and ended in South Africa with a completely new mindset. This message was decisive for me to approach her if she wants to support the project of the FAIRTRADE region as a FAIRTRADE ambassador. She agreed instantly and boosted the visibility of the FAIRTRADE Region a lot.

Another example is a former professional football player who was part of the Austrian national team. In our first meetings about fair traded footballs he mentioned that until then he never had wondered about how and where the footballs are actually produced. Afterwards he supported the topic of fair traded football in many school workshops, talked with pupils about his career and particularly he told us how big

his concern was when he heard about production conditions of football sewers in Pakistan.

Often people beside the political mainstream achieve a precious public visibility for the topic of Fair Trade.

Regional and fair products: cooperation with regional producers

At the beginning of such a process fair traded products are often seen as competitor to regional products by the local producers. To tackle this particular criticism we provided information about fair traded products and in the end it became a win-win situation as well for local farmers and producers and for fair traded products.

An ice cream producer in the region had an important role in combining regional and fair traded products. He produces the fresh ice cream next to his cowshed.

He gets the milk from his most important employees, his own cows. Other ingredients he receives from local farmers. The ice producer approached us for information about FAIRTRADE-chocolate and FAIRTRADE-bananas for his ice cream. The ice cream is now known not only in the region but over wide parts of Austria for its high quality standards and of course its excellent taste. The ice cream is also well known for its long queues in front of the stores. Everybody wants to enjoy biological, regional and fair traded ice cream.

Initial fears of competition between regional and fair traded products were eliminated through the special initiative of fair trade shops as regional products are also offered there.

As a special offer for customers baskets with regional and fair traded products are combined. This offer has wide popularity as well as it is a win-win situation for everyone: Fairtrade shops expand their product range

and possible customers while regional producers have another attractive selling floor and showroom for their offers. Due to a good visibility work in print media and TV reports the popularity of the region, of the regional producers and also of Fair Trade engagement increased.

As a result regional products and fair trade global products do not compete with each other but are complementary and create added value.

Financial resources

One of the most difficult questions in the fair regional process is an acquisition of funding. It takes ongoing and long-term support. The regional process has to be accompanied with experts, projects must be professionally implemented – exhibitions, workshops and

seminars must happen. For this work both volunteers and main staff members are needed. Furthermore well-grounded project management, clear milestones, a project goal and steps for implementation with a high involvement of the local population in the region requires solid project financing. Communities barely manage this alone and support from the county governments, from state ministries and also from the European Union is needed. Patience and insistence are often necessary, but the common successes in this regional process are worth the time, funds and staff invested.

Needs of the region

Mag. Christian Zettl, chairman of the association "Our Earth-one Family", of the Fairtrade Shop and a member of the Fairtrade Group in Lanzenkirchen

One thing in advance: To raise awareness and interest about Fair Trade in a rural region that leads to concrete actions it is necessary to have patience, a good team, the right contacts and a clear vision where the region should move to. If you make efforts to support global fair trade in your region, then an enriching way lies ahead of you where you will get to know many interesting, brave and visionary people.

This is my experience as chairman of an association, which has been constantly engaged for more than 23 years to make Fair Trade and global responsibility a part of our identity in the rural community of Lanzenkirchen (close to Vienna, app. 3800 citizens) and our region "Bucklige Welt".

The first steps

The initiative often starts with individuals, who are particularly concerned through a certain encounter, an event or experience in a country of the South and in whom special awareness of global coherences was developed. This individual feels in a particular way responsible to make a contribution to a just connection between the countries of the North and the South.

The next step is to find potential partners: Contact people individually, who share your own concern and enthusiasm, invite them to the first gatherings. Interested persons might be found in schools, kindergartens, parishes, youth organizations, etc. It is worth to contact already existing institutions such as the Climate Alliance or former development workers and volunteers. It can also be useful to establish contacts with mayors, pastors and committees of the community or parish and to inform them about the formation of a Fair Trade group.

NEEDS OF THE REGION

Newsletter and regional newsletters might be useful for your public relations.

You might want to use the saying “Tackle the problem of the others”.

Because parishes want to do good things and we give them the opportunity to do so. Communities want to develop sustainably and have positive public relations, and fair trade groups give them the opportunity to do so. Shops want to sell special products and Fair Trade gives them the opportunity to do so.

These are only a few examples how fair trade contributes to the advantage of many stakeholders.

When a group is founded – no matter if it is in an institution like a parish or as an independent association – many questions arise:

- What exactly do we want?
- Strengthen Fair Trade, make products available, encourage the use of fair products in a community, parish, offices, associations or in gastronomy?
- Do educational work and establish public relations?
- Lobbying for the framework of a fair global economy? For the implementation of fundamental human rights? For certain decisions in the political responsible committees such as local governments?
- Support projects in the countries of the South?
- Establishment of a partnership with another community or parish?

I suggest to keep records of the visions and goals in a written form (e.g. statute) and to present them to the wider public (booklet, homepage, social networks).

Our initiative was started by the members of the “World-Church and parish development”-committee 23 years ago. Four brave and determined women

took the first steps which led to the foundation of the independent association "Our Earth – one Family". The primary goals were: permanent access to fair traded products (we founded a Fairtrade shop), to build public awareness (through workshops, exhibitions...), build relationships with people from the South and support development projects (encounters and meetings with guests from the South, cultural events, project partnerships with Nigeria and Tanzania).

From idea to action

Some concrete, doable activities create public awareness and rise the motivation of the own group. Such activities are for instance to connect with other Fairtrade shops and organize vending bazaars or to develop projects, exhibitions and workshops (in schools) with NGOs working in the field. For sure there are many actors in your surroundings who already support the issue of a fairer World.

Good opportunities for effective actions and networking in the region offer campaigns or topic related focus week such as the "Fair Weeks" (annually in April/ May), the World Fairtrade Day (2nd Saturday in May), European Action Week for Sustainable Development (May/ June) or the Sunday of churches worldwide (October). It is also important to use possible project funding for developmental educational work. Thus in the years 2003 and 2004 we could implement the project "Fair World – Bucklige Welt – Wechselland", which for the first time made Fair Trade visible to the wider public in our region. These were important milestones to what later became the so called "Fairtrade Region" in the year 2013. The establishment of the Fair Trade Shop in Kirchschlag was a direct consequence of this project. The local actors, who were isolated at the beginning, got connected, they were motivated in their activity and encouraged for new actions.

On the way to fair communities

After the first steps of your work you can expect a certain degree of public awareness for your topic. Then you can create a stable official frame for Fair-Trade in your community.

In 2005 on the occasion of the World Fairtrade Day against child labor, Fair Trade Shops called on communities and local persons in charge in whole Austria to use fair traded products in public institutions. In collaboration with the churchly NGO "Welthaus" we used the campaign to lobby for a local government decision for Fair Trade in our town "Lanzenkirchen". The local governments were interviewed regarding Fair Trade and invited to a biological and fair lunch. Thereby the aims of the campaign were presented, signed by 100 community members and a request for the respective decision of the local was emphasized. The campaign was successful and the official decision to consider Fair Trade in public procurements and public relations was

passed in March 2006. The start was to use fair traded presents on anniversaries and birthdays of senior citizens.

But it is not enough to have only a decision on paper: It takes continuous awareness-raising through events and actions, in which local celebrities are involved and the population also enjoys to participate. Some of the actions we implemented in Lanzenkirchen were:

- Fair brunch (with fair and regional products)
- Friendly football match with a fair traded football
- Cooking workshops with fair and regional ingredients
- Fair fashion show (in cooperation with schools)

As you can see there are no limits to your creativity. Because of these and other activities Lanzenkirchen received the title of a Fairtrade-Community in 2011.

Since then a working group with the participation of political representatives, farmers, parents, teachers, parish repre-

sentatives and Fair Trade Shops creates and implements actions and connects the group with the wider public, schools, enterprises, associations, cafés and restaurants.

One idea had especially big impact: The annual "Fair Weeks". They combine pedagogical activities at schools and kindergartens with the already traditional Fair-Trade-Shop-Party. They include special offers of local gastronomy (fair-trade and regional meals) and manage a broad range of events around the topic of Fair Trade.

As I said at the beginning: the path is not always easy, but if you take it and follow some hints that are mentioned here and in other parts of the guidebook, then you will be surely rewarded with many enriching moments.

Support by your national Fair Trade Organization

Elke Schaupp, *FAIRTRADE Austria*
www.fairtrade.at

What are Fair-Trade-Towns and Fair-Trade-Regions?

The Fair-Trade-Towns-Initiative is a unique movement stretching across 26 countries worldwide as well as all continents. It follows the motto “do something good and talk about it” and confers on active local communities, cities and regions a title to make the broadening engagement for Fair Trade visible from outside.

Fair-Trade-Towns and Fair-Trade-Regions actively contribute to the improvement of living and working conditions of farmers as well as employees on plantations in the global south. Shops, restaurants and other catering establishments in Fair-Trade-Towns and Fair-Trade-Regions offer Fair-Trade products to their customers, local councils support the process on the political level as well. Communities care for social-fair

procurement, and arrange activities to raise public awareness and sensibility of all inhabitants. Moreover schools, kindergartens, associations and many other institutions can take part in fair actions in their local community or region.

Who confers the title?

„Fair-Trade-Towns“ are declared by national Fair-Trade-Organizations which are member organizations of FAIRTRADE International or the World Fair Trade Organization.

On the international campaign website you can find regional coordination centers for consultation and support regarding the title „Fair-Trade-Town“ and „Fair-Trade-Region“:
www.fairtradetowns.org

If there is no national Fair Trade Organization in your country, please contact

the international coordination center of the Fair Trade Towns campaign! Find the contact information here:

www.fairtradecentre.org

Usually a certain number of already awarded Fair-Trade-Towns in the region are required ahead of declaring the region to be a Fair-Trade-Region. If regions do not aim to be awarded as „Fair-Trade-Region“, the reward of particular communities as “Fair-Trade-Towns” however represents an important and motivating interim stage for active people locally.

Communities, towns and regions will be of course accompanied on the way towards the title and also afterwards by national Fair Trade Organizations. They are available for support on all substantial questions regarding fair trade and they help to plan your specific activities locally, for instance through the joint development of campaign ideas and preparation of information/decoration material.

Simply give your national Fair Trade Organization a call or contact it by e-mail. They gladly inform you and also give feedback on your strategy. The Fair Trade Organizations often know other interested stakeholders in your community or region which you could involve in your planning.

Your Fair Trade Organization can also give you some hints regarding the formation of a working group or send samples of fair trade products in reasonable quantities with which you could search for supporters. All steps to achieve the status of a “Fair-Trade-Town” or a “Fair-Trade-Region” are consistently dependent on a dedicated team. Working in a team offers many advantages. Firstly, in a group you find many complementary competencies, secondly, your network widens, thirdly, dedicated team members can motivate each other. Therefore, this inspirational, but not always easy process of working towards the status of a Fair-Trade-Town or Region will be more fruitful for everybody involved.

Your Fair-Trade-Organization is also able to assist you with contacts to other working groups, who can support you with useful hints.

Furthermore, there is a fascinating possibility for networking and exchange with people from other communities, towns and regions within the annual [Fair-Trade-Towns-Conference](#).

Maybe your national Fair Trade Organization is able to provide financial support for visiting this conference. Similar conferences often take place at the national level in most participating countries. They create inspiration and motivation and offer substantial knowledge about the impact of fair trade in the countries of global south.

Stakeholder Analysis

Matthias Haberl, *Südwind NÖ Süd*
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Many different individuals and institutions influence the development of a village, a city and of a whole region towards a FairTrade Region. Some of them do it voluntarily; others are simply needed because of their position. Some of them support your initiative; others have doubts or even fears against it. Some of them can push your project a lot whereas others have only low impact on it.

Particularly for a democratic and participatory approach towards the development of a region it is crucial to include as many stakeholders adequately.

The more people having ownership of the project, hence the feeling and the possibility to shape the process, the more

powerful is the movement and the chances for change.

The so called "Stakeholder Analysis" supports your overview over those actors involved in the development of a region. The aim of it is to be able to plan the best possible strategy regarding the various parties involved. This allows you to develop the process towards a FairTrade city or region as smoothly as possible.

A simple and clear Stakeholder Analysis can look as follows:

1) At the beginning you identify possible stakeholders. You know your region and probably you are aware of those who might be important. At the same time it is useful to spend time on doing some research, because you might find new unexpected partners.

2) Collect information about the stakeholders. Some might even have experiences with such processes. Others might be included, because they share your interests. There are probably also those, who still need to be convinced, that the development of a FairTrade Region is a useful and important step. (Please see also the chapter "Strategy as NGO" and "Needs of the Region" in this Guidebook.)

A useful matrix might be the one, where you cluster the stakeholders according to their power and their interest/accordance:

- Powerful actors and those with a positive attitude towards a FairTrade Region shall be close partners.
- Those actors, who are not that powerful but still support you, shall be involved as well, as they might be important multipliers for your aim.
- Those stakeholders, who are powerful but critical towards a FairTrade Region or powerful without any specific interest in your project, shall be

kept satisfied, motivated and in the best case convinced. Otherwise they might block the positive initiative.

- Powerless actors who also do not show bigger interest or who have a negative attitude towards your idea can be monitored and mostly neglected.

You easily find such a "Power-Interest-Grid" online with more detailed explanations.

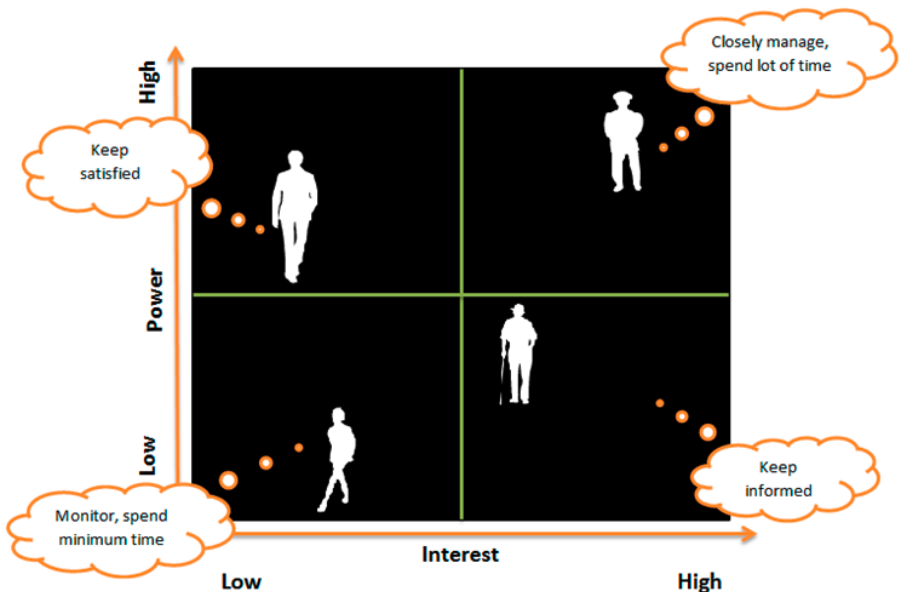
3) After clustering the stakeholders and identifying those, who are important for your idea, it is time to develop a proper strategy how to involve these actors properly. There are many possible ways and you will surely find the ones, which are most suitable for your organisation/initiative and for the various stakeholders. An Option is the Network meeting of the Region. (Please see also the chapter "Network Meeting of a Fair-Trade Region" in this Guidebook.)

The aim of this analysis is to identify and connect those stakeholders, who support and push your initiative and to allow an as productive work as possible and to include many different interested actors.

The above presented analysis works with a classical understanding of the term “power”. We want to emphasize

one of the aims of our work, which is to empower those individuals and institutions who seem to be powerless at the first sight. Raji Hunjan and Jethro Pettit widen the idea of “power” in their mind broadening toolkit¹. “Power” does not

¹ Hunjan, Raji; Pettit, Jethro (2011): Power: A practical guide for facilitating social change. <http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/getattachment/f4cd28e9-8518-4d7b-9c9b-119e555d79df/Power---A-Practical-Guide-for-Facilitating-Social-.aspx> , 09.11.2015.



only mean in a local or regional context anymore to have power over resources, people or decisions but to have the ability to be active even in difficult social, economic or political circumstances. This is actually even more difficult and these persons and individuals possess skills, attitudes and abilities which in fact are strong and powerful, but in a different way compared to the classical view on power.

That is why we want to encourage you especially to involve also these types of actors in your Stakeholder Analysis as powerful, who might not seem powerful at the first sight.

Network Meeting of a FairTrade Region

Network Meetings are an important piece in the process to become a FairTrade Region, where the involved persons can share successes, update each other and plan together the next steps. Südwind NÖ Süd has a good practice, which we want to share with you.

The following structure is suitable for 50-100 participants and lasts around three hours.

Aim of the meeting

The main aim is to push forward the FairTrade Process in the region.

This happens on three layers:

1) A successful conference impacts the motivation of all involved persons. Past successes are celebrated, newly engaged persons can join the process and concrete new aims allow coherent work

and take away a possible insecurity of the participants about the progress.

2) A successful conference enables a review of the process. The common reflexion about the aims reached and about common future goals and next steps to reach streamlines the engagement of the participants effectively. All stakeholders are on the same page and can act in concert.

3) The presentation of successful actions and input from external and internal experts regarding FairTrade shows firstly respect for the work done so far and it feeds the participants with new ideas for further steps.

Preparation

Actually it is easy. Create early enough an invitation that looks appealing. Send them through all channels of communication you have. Where needed call important stakeholders (e.g. mayors). And friendly, but surely insist, that these

actors also forward the invitation to their networks.

Set a deadline until when interested people shall inform you, that they are going to join the meeting. This allows you to plan the proper methods, because you know how many people you can expect. Secondly you can invite those participants, who are especially important but have not answered yet again.

Programme of the conference

1) Before the start

“There is always a second chance, except for the first impression”

Prepare the tables for different fields of societal sectors (such as politics, business/gastronomy, education, parishes, FairTrade Shops) and kindly ask your participants to choose a chair at the table which they think is most suitable for them.

Use coloured paper for the signs on the tables, e.g. “politics” on a red paper, “education” on a green one, This allows you to mix the group later again (see below).

At the entrance you hand out name tags. They are important, because it eases the process of the participants to get in touch with each other. Collect the e-mail addresses of the participants, so you can send them the documentation after the conference.

2) Initial Welcome

Welcome at the beginning the VIPs. At least in our region that is the common way. VIPs are mayors, responsible persons for the region, headmasters, It gives all the participants the knowledge, who are the decision-makers in the room and from now on they can also address them directly and also informally during the break.

Try also to involve as many people in the welcome as possible. You can e.g. greet the participants according to the places where they come from, this involves them and again you set a certain, probably useful structure in the group.

3) Sectoral Working Groups

“Please share your experiences, activities, difficulties and projects in the field of FairTrade.”

The participants have 20-30 Minutes on their sectoral tables to share success and questions that happened recently about FairTrade. This is an important first part, because firstly ideas and knowledge are shared and secondly the participants get an overview over the development in their sector.

You can conclude this phase by getting short summaries from each of the groups in the plenary. But take care that it is really short (1-2 minutes), because this is “just” an overview for the others.

4) Good Practice Examples/ Speeches

We always involve speakers from the region who did useful things recently. These speeches take place in the plenary and shall not exceed 10 minutes (sometimes you need to be strict with the time). We had overall even seven speakers, which was really much but good, because they kept their talks straight to the point.

We did not discuss their speeches to keep it short. In case some things were presented in an unclear way it is your task as moderator to ask for clarification. If you want to involve the audience here we suggest to limit the number of possible questions. Because of course we support an intense dialogue at the meeting. We limit the conversations here as there is a lot of space for exchange in other parts of the programme. If you have 5-7 speakers we suggest to calculate with 90 minutes for this phase.

5) Cross-sectoral Planning

For a holistic strategy it is important to plan future steps in a cross-sectoral way. For this purpose we mingle the group again, which is also a useful motion after the phase of speeches, cause the participants change their seats and tables.

For sure you know some methods how to mix groups. We often use the following one, as it is quick, clear, the participants like it and it is easily possible for a larger amount of persons.

The tables are still marked with coloured signs (with the name of the sectors for phase 3 "sectoral working groups"). Before the event started, we tagged small coloured papers to the chair legs. Now we draw the participants' attention to those and kindly ask them to change the tables according to the colours of the paper and the coloured signs on the tables.

This phase's task for the participants is to create ideas for the further development of the FairTrade Region. They shall be as concrete and realistic as possible and the time frame for the development is 30 minutes. At the end one person presents the ideas to the plenary and we also keep these results and ideas as base for the further work in the region.

6) End of the Conference

Thank your participants again for their participation. Remind them about upcoming events or activities in the region. Invite them to stay longer to chat and enjoy the buffet.

If you have not done it until now, take a group photo.

Postprocessing

After the conference you send the protocols, presentations, ... to your participants. Remind them in the Email again about their ideas for the next steps and also other planned activities.

Frame of the Meeting

Only rarely discussed but still important of such a conference is the concrete frame.

We suggest to plan enough breaks for informal exchange. This allows your participants to get in touch and to reflect upon the formal part of the meeting. Organise a catering made of fair traded and regional products. Everything else would be a wrong sign and not consequent.

We hope, this short introduction is useful for you. Our experience showed, that a successful conference can be a strong driver for the development of a Fair-Trade Region.

Matthias Haberl, *Südwind NÖ Süd*
www.suedwind-noesued.at

Links and Contact

The last page of the guidebook is the first page in the internet ...

Südwind NÖ Süd

Since around 30 years educational work and research in the field of development policy. Big network in Lower Austria, close cooperation with schools and communities. Publishing of toolkits, guidebooks. Coordinating partner in the development of the LEADER Region "Bucklige Welt – Wechselland" to the first FAIR-TRADE Region in Lower Austria.

www.suedwind-noesued.at

LEADER Region Bucklige Welt – Wechselland

First FAIRTRADE Region of Lower Austria. The connection of regional, seasonal and fair traded products is strengthened. A general acknowledgement of and awareness for the importance of sustainable consumption increases not only the living conditions in the region but is of crucial interest for the regional economy as well as for the producers in the countries of the South.

www.buckligewelt-wechselland.at

FAIRTRADE International

Fair trade is an alternative approach to conventional trade based on a partnership between producers and traders, businesses and consumers. The international Fairtrade system – made up of Fairtrade International and its member organizations – represents the world's largest and most recognized fair trade system.

www.fairtrade.net

CONCORD

CONCORD is the European confederation of Relief and Development NGOs. It consists of member organisations: 28 national associations, 20 international networks and 3 associate members that represent over 2,600 NGOs, supported by millions of citizens across Europe. The main interlocutor with the EU institutions on development policy. Coordinator of the funds supporting this guidebook.

www.concordeurope.org

CONTACT

Others say it, we mean it: If you have any questions regarding this handbook, if you want to ask for feedback for your regional strategy, if you want to share your successes regarding fair trade, if you want to get connected, if you “just” want to exchange, you are always more than welcome to contact us.

**We gladly share our
knowledge and experience
and learn from and with
you.**

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our dignity
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