

: Programme

Bonn Symposium 2020 Reducing Social Inequality – Strategies at Local Level

Online

5-6 November 2020

Conference languages

German/English (simultaneous interpretation)

Cooperating Partners

Service Agency Communities in One World (SKEW)/Engagement Global gGmbH
Minister for Federal, European and International Affairs of the
State of North Rhine-Westphalia

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#BoSy20

BACKGROUND

The reduction of social inequality is central to the UN's Sustainable Development Agenda. In many countries, extreme inequality in income and wealth distribution is a barrier to economic and social development. This can be offset to some extent by collective investment in education, health care, infrastructure and social security. However, social inequality is not merely a resource problem. It is perpetuated and amplified, often subconsciously, by group-specific discriminatory practices that can deprive people of opportunities and cause them to lose trust in communal institutions.

Local authorities and social initiatives can break this cycle and make a significant contribution to reducing social inequality. This can take place within the framework of urban development or through government mechanisms or citizen engagement. For example, local residents might form a group with the aim of maintaining or enhancing community spaces such as parks or recreation facilities, while child-friendly timetabling of meetings of local assemblies can help to improve women's participation in the political process.

It is essential to think about tomorrow's as well as today's inequality. Strict austerity measures and cuts in public investment are likely to follow the coronavirus pandemic, mainly at the expense of low-income households. Then there are the long-term megatrends, such as digitalisation, which produces winners and losers in the local economy, and climate change, whose impacts are also highly unequal. Which strategies can be applied to prevent these trends from further worsening the discrimination already faced by some neighbourhoods or groups? Which models aimed at countering social inequality and its impacts are being tested in cities and municipalities around the world? How can these approaches be developed further with limited financial resources?

These are the questions that we wish to explore at the Bonn Symposium 2020. We are interested in learning from various regions' experiences and in working together in interactive formats to develop a pathway towards a positive and attainable future for 2030.

: Thursday, 5 November 2020

10.45 hrs Online Check-in

SYMPOSIUM CHAIR

Dr Merjam Wakili

Freelance Moderator, Trainer and Consultant, Bonn

11.00 hrs

WELCOME

Oliver Krauß MdL

Chairperson of the Executive Committee
Development and Peace Foundation (sef:), Bonn

Dr Jens Kreuter

Chief Managing Director
Engagement Global gGmbH – Service for Development Initiatives, Bonn

OPENING

Serap Güler

Secretary of State for Integration
State of North-Rhine Westphalia
Member of the Board of Trustees of the Development and Peace Foundation (sef:)

11.25 hrs

INTRODUCTION

PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIAL INEQUALITY

Inequality takes many forms and can be defined in many different ways. We would like to start the Bonn Symposium 2020 by shedding light on the meaning and dimensions of social inequality. Granted, we all have an intuitive understanding of the problem, generally bound up with our conceptions of justice. But where do the differences lie? At which point on the inequality spectrum do we start to see injustice? How can cities and municipalities link in with the search for social consensus? How do the sources, forms and manifestations of inequality change over time, and what does this mean for cohesion at the local level?

Professor Frances Stewart

Professor Emeritus of Development Economics, Oxford

12.10 hrs

A JOURNEY INTO THE FUTURE

A ROADMAP FOR OUR EVENT

At this year's Bonn Symposium, we cast a glance back to the future from a 2030 perspective – and see diversity of lifestyles and hence some wealth and income inequality in cities and municipalities. What we do not see is a wide gap between rich and poor, as efforts to prevent this have been successful, despite – or perhaps partly because of – digitalisation. We also see that there are no left-behind “bad” neighbourhoods in cities any more. People from a wide range of social and ethnic backgrounds meet in public spaces, local associations and decision-making bodies, and women are found in leadership positions just as often as men. Who and what made these successes possible? Which barriers had to be overcome? We explore these issues in this afternoon's ideas workshop and in the following talks and discussions.

Lino Zeddies

Self-employed activist and author, Berlin

12.45 hrs

Lunch break

14.00 hrs

IDEAS WORKSHOP - BREAKOUT SESSIONS

SOCIAL INEQUALITY IN 2030

Our starting point for the workshop is the ideal scenario for 2030 outlined above. During this session, various aspects of public life in cities and municipalities – from the design of streets and public spaces to the local economy and policy-making bodies – will be explored in parallel break-out groups. Where do we still find inequality, and how have we managed to address the problems associated with it? The outcomes of the discussions will be noted down and developed in more detail with reference to other thematic inputs.

14.45 hrs

Coffee break

15.00 hrs

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE IDEA WORKSHOP

Dr Merjam Wakili

Freelance Moderator, Trainer and Consultant, Bonn

15.30 hrs

INTERVIEWS

TURNING PUBLIC SPACES INTO SHARED SPACES

The lockdown measures imposed worldwide to control the coronavirus pandemic have sharpened our awareness of the vital importance of public spaces and institutions for social equality. Children from poorer backgrounds have suffered particularly during lockdown and the closure of schools, parks, playgrounds, etc. The sharp contrast between public and private space in the societies of the Global South is particularly striking: here, many affluent gated communities and poor districts are next-door neighbours. How did this happen? What can be done to halt the shrinking of public spaces that can be observed worldwide, albeit in differing forms? Which strategies and initiatives aimed at creating new community spaces are being piloted worldwide?

Professor Astrid Ley

Urban Planning Institute
University of Stuttgart

Sieghard Lücke

Executive Director
Urban Housing Association Bremerhaven

Kirsten Wilkins

Managing Director
Open Streets, Cape Town

16.30 hrs

Coffee break

16.45 hrs

HEAD-TO-HEAD

THE PLATFORM ECONOMY – TOWARDS A MORE PRECARIOUS LOCAL ECONOMY OR FAIRER OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL?

In the debate about worsening social inequality, the platform economy is a controversial issue. The coronavirus pandemic has fed into this, as it has highlighted the major health risks and often minimal social protection facing many service providers worldwide. Will local employment become more precarious due to digital platforms for service providers in the mobility, cleaning and food services sectors? Should local authorities respond by introducing new rules and providing targeted support for the remaining independent companies? Or do platforms make for a fairer and more transparent local economy? Do they create new opportunities, especially for rural areas? In this session, we are keen to facilitate a constructive head-to-head about the best mechanisms for governance of online service platforms.

Klemens Himpele

Chief Information Officer
City of Vienna

Tola Odeyemi

Head of Public Policy West Africa
Uber Technologies

Gregory Randolph

Executive Vice President
JustJobs Network, Washington/New Delhi

17.45 hrs

PRESENTATION

USE - URBAN SUSTAINABILITY EXCHANGE PLATFORM

Thomas Honeck

Division for International Relations
Berlin Senate Chancellery

EVENING PROGRAMME

18.00 hrs

Welcome address

Katja Dörner

Mayor of the City of Bonn

18.05 hrs

Poetic interpretation of the conference theme

Ella Anschein

Poetry Slammer, Bad Honnef

18.20 hrs

End of Day 1

: Friday, 6 November 2020

09.10 hrs

Online Check-in

SYMPOSIUM CHAIR

Dr Merjam Wakili

Freelance Moderator, Trainer and Consultant, Bonn

09.15 hrs

SHORT PRESENTATION

CLIMATE CHANGE AND AIR POLLUTION – THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT AND INEQUALITY

The effects of climate change can be felt all over the world. However, its impacts on some countries and municipalities and even some neighbourhoods are particularly severe. Some groups are also more exposed to other environmental problems: as an example, communities located along major roads in urban areas live with high levels of nitrogen oxide air pollution, whereas other neighbourhoods are minimally affected. People living in cramped, crowded or unhygienic conditions – in the slums of megacities, for example – face a much higher risk in pandemics. What can be done to mitigate and reduce these unequal vulnerabilities? How can local communities show more solidarity in their response to these risks?

Dr Isabell Kempf

Head of Bonn Office & Senior Research Coordinator
UNRISD, Bonn

09.45 hrs

DISCUSSION SESSION

**STRENGTHENING SOCIAL PARTICIPATION –
INCREASING DIVERSITY IN LOCAL POLITICS**

Besides individual factors such as parental status and income, group-specific discrimination and disadvantages are key sources and amplifiers of social inequality. A glance at many local councils or the leadership of local clubs and associations reveals that women and people with a migration background in particular are underrepresented. The less educated also find it more difficult to gain access. This is both a symptom and an amplifier of inequality, since personal networks are important in gaining a hearing and exerting influence, particularly at local level. How can change happen here? Which best practices can be implemented to reach underrepresented groups and increase their participation in politics and society?

Sami Dzemailovski

Founder and Chairman
Carmen Society, Düsseldorf

Ana Ferreira

Head of Cabinet of the Mayor of Braga

Maria Macher

Project Manager District Mothers Berlin

Dr Marta Mazurek

Councillor of Poznan City
Chair of Equality and Diversity Policy Team in the City of Poznan

10.30 hrs

Coffee break

11.00 hrs

SHORT PRESENTATION

**ANTI-BIAS TRAINING AS A RESOURCE AGAINST
GROUP-SPECIFIC DISCRIMINATION**

Reducing social inequality begins in the mind. The topic of inequality is therefore firmly embedded in many schools and universities, and many educators invest considerable energy in raising awareness of its causes and impacts. Shared reflection and efforts to find non-discriminatory language that dismantles barriers and creates spaces are particularly important. Role-plays and similar interactive educational techniques are often used in this context. The purpose of this short presentation and the following workshop is therefore to familiarise us with opportunities to apply these or other strategies in adult education, e.g. through anti-bias training in government, civil society and the workplace.

Dr Prasad Reddy

Founder and Executive Director
Centre for Social Inclusion, Migration and Participation, Bonn

11.15 hrs

INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION IN PARALLEL FORA

In Group B to E, we revisit the contributions to the earlier plenary sessions and explore them in more depth. The plenary speakers are available as resource persons. The aim is to use the participants' diversity of experience to draft recommendations for practical action.

Forum A – German

Anti-Bias-Training

Chair: Dr Prasad Reddy

Forum B – German

Climate Change and Air Pollution

Chair: Livia Pichorner

Forum C – German/English

Strengthening Social Participation

Chair: Dr Till Winkelmann

Forum D – German

Public Spaces

Chair: Alexander Wagner

Forum E – English

Platform Economy

Chair: Gregory Randolph

12.30 hrs

Lunch break

13.15 hrs

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE FORA

Dr Merjam Wakili

Freelance Moderator, Trainer and Consultant, Bonn

13.45 hrs

SPOTLIGHT

IT'S NOT ABOUT MONEY...

Measures against inequality have the reputation of being costly and causing a lot of bureaucracy. However, the corona crisis has placed a heavy burden on local budgets. Are measures to reduce inequality a "luxury product" that only rich communities can afford? Scientists at the University of Rotterdam do not believe so. They recommend a paradigm shift in reducing inequality and poverty. The focus is on unconventional and small-scale interventions with often astonishing effects.

Professor Derk Loorbach

Professor of Socio-economic Transitions
Erasmus University Rotterdam

14.00 hrs

CLOSING SESSION

REDUCING SOCIAL INEQUALITY – CAPACITATING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

In the final session, we look again at our ideal scenario for the future. Are we heading in the right direction? Where does the roadmap need urgent adjustment? Which ideas and initiatives can we use to speed up transformation processes at critical junctures?

Outlook

Matthew Klein

Executive Director

Mayor's Office for Economic Opportunity

New York City

Roundtable Discussion

Matthew Klein

Executive Director

Mayor's Office for Economic Opportunity

New York City

Anne Pinnow

Laboratory for New Economic Ideas, Leipzig

Lino Zeddies

Self-employed activist and author, Berlin

15.00 hrs

Wrap-Up

Dr Michèle Roth

Executive Director

Development and Peace Foundation (sef:), Bonn

Dr Till Winkelmann

Project Manager Municipalities for Global Sustainability

Service Agency Communities in One World (SKEW) / Engagement Global gGmbH,

Bonn

15.10 hrs

Symposium ends