



From North-South to Global

Towards a municipal global policy



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This publication is the work of many people. The think-tank that was set up in 2013 to reflect on the future of municipal development cooperation, lies at the origin of this publication. The think-tank analysed current trends in the sector of municipal development cooperation, which led to a clear vision about municipal policy on international solidarity and cooperation. VVSG International took the initiative to convert that vision into this publication. It became a vision on the 'municipal global policy'.

Our ex colleague Jan Verschueren started the very first outline of the vision – thank you, Jan. We also want to thank all members of the think-tank for their thoughts, their feedback on this text – which we needed several times – and their translation of this vision into practice. Special thanks goes out to the 11.11.11-'municipal global policy' team which was involved in the entire thinking process. They especially highlighted the importance of participation and the role of civil society. The authors of the previous VVSG publications on municipal development cooperation have also been a source of inspiration. Furthermore, we wish to thank the readers of the last draft for their review and suggestions. Finally, we are very grateful to our own colleagues in the team 'VVSG International', they kept an eye on our work and provided regular moments of reflection and focus which helped us to stay on the right track.

Thank you everyone!

Karliën & Ashley, VVSG International

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GLOBAL GOALS
LOCAL FOCUS



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Introduction	5
Reading instructions	7
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PART 1: THE 'MUNICIPAL GLOBAL POLICY'	7
1. Why a 'municipal global policy'?	9
1.1 Why a global policy in municipalities?	9
1.2 From North-South to Global	11
1.2.1 The 'rich North' and the 'poor South'	11
1.2.2 Traditional development cooperation under fire	12
1.2.3 Global trends	12
1.2.4 A new global framework: the Sustainable Development Goal	14
1.2.5 Consequences for the municipal North-South policy	16
2. What is 'municipal global policy'?	17
2.1 'Municipal global policy' and international frameworks	17
2.2 International justice	18
2.3 The action areas of 'municipal global policy'	19
2.3.1 Global policy choices	20
2.3.2 Global citizenship	21
2.3.3 Global cooperation	22
2.3.4 Overlaps	23
2.4 Principles of 'municipal global policy'	24
2.4.1 Link with sustainability	24
2.4.2 Transversal theme	25
2.4.3 Interdisciplinary cooperation	26
2.4.4 The role of the global deputy mayor, civil servant and advisory council	27
<hr/>	
PART 2: IN PRACTICE	29
1 Global policy choices	29
1.1 Internal support	29
1.2 Policy and organisation level	30
2 Global citizenship	34
2.1 Inform	35
2.2 Action	36
2.3 Multipliers	38
2.4 Financial stimulants	39
2.5 Platform	39
3 Global cooperation	41
3.1 As an actor	41
3.2 As facilitator	41
3.3 As a supervising force	42
4 Transversal action	43
4.1 Top-down	43
4.1.1 Policy content	43
4.1.2 Organisational structure and processes	43
4.2 Bottom-up	44
4.2.1 Inform	44
4.2.2 Awareness raising	45
4.2.3 Activation	45



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Introduction

'Municipal global policy', say what? This is a publication that will tell you more about this concept. It is not an entirely new concept, as a deputy mayor or civil servant you have undoubtedly put certain aspects into practice. It does present a vision on the municipal policy for development cooperation adjusted to today's reality. It is a vision of how cities and municipalities can express the feeling of solidarity and how they, together with civil society organisations and citizens, can contribute to the eradication of injustice from this world. The approval of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the United Nations arrived at the right time, because these goals are a perfect frame that can serve as a support for a global policy in municipalities.

The concept of 'municipal global policy' originated from the think-tank for municipal development cooperation. This is a group of North-South civil servants who have been thinking about the future of this policy domain since 2013, together with 11.11.11 and VVSG. Through their policy of municipal development cooperation they wanted to anticipate on and take into account global trends, which may also affect local authorities. The result is set out in this publication.

Obviously, every municipality is different and every administration deals with this differently. So feel free to be critical about the vision of 'municipal global policy' the way it is presented here. We would like to invite you to actively work with it and pick out the points that you think are valuable and important for your administration. We hope this publication can inspire you! ●



Sref De Belder Krimis

Reading instructions

What does this publication contain?

In the first chapter we will familiarise you with the concept of 'municipal global policy'. What does it mean and what principles is it based on? In the second part of this publication we supply actual ideas that you can try out in your own context. Based on examples we give an idea of how 'municipal global policy' could be organised concretely within a local administration. Many administrations are already in the process of implementing this policy.

This publication, which is translated into English, only contains the first two chapters of the original Dutch version, so not the third and fourth chapter which are aimed at the specific context of Flemish local administrations.

This publication does not pretend to be a blueprint of how 'municipal global policy' should be organised locally. It is a policy theme which continues to evolve and which will be further developed in practice. A few examples, definitions and concepts are repeated several times in this publication. This was a conscious choice, because we want readers to get the most out of it, even without reading the publication entirely.

Who is this publication intended for?

It is aimed in the first place to North-South or development cooperation, hence 'global policy' deputy mayors, their respective staff and advisory councils, the board of mayor and deputy mayors and the other civil servants involved in the municipal international policy. However, we invite everyone involved in the 'municipal global policy' to read it.

A few concepts

In this publication the concepts 'local administration', 'municipal authorities', 'municipality' are used as synonyms. Because the target group of this publication is in the first place deputy mayors, civil servants and advisory councils, we always refer to the administrative aspects with these terms. When we want to use the municipality as a broader concept, including companies, schools, citizens, etc. we speak of the 'municipal territory'. ●



VVSG internationaal

The ‘municipal global policy’

1. Why a ‘municipal global policy’?

1.1 Why a global policy in municipalities?

Our city or town in the global society

Our world is constantly in motion. We live in a globalised world, now more than ever. What happens on the other side of the world can increasingly be felt on our side and vice versa. This contact with the world presents us with opportunities, just think of social media for example, culinary explorations, faraway travels, new sales markets for our apples and the influences of other musical genres. On the other hand, globalisation also presents a challenge. Climate change does not stop at the border, migration is a phenomenon in every society, the financial crisis keeps the whole world in its grip, etc. This proves that our municipality is not isolated from the outside world and that we feel the consequences of events occurring on the other side of the world at a local level.

We call this a ‘**global society**’ which interweaves our municipality, our country, our continent, in a complexity of relations with other parts of the world. This means that the behaviour or policy of other countries also affects us. The low wages in some countries attract companies from our regions, often resulting in reorganisations and closing down of businesses in our city or town. The other way around we can have an impact on other regions with our own behaviour and policy. For example by choosing products with a fair price we can stimulate fair trade rules. The global society is actually a **system**, in which changes or modifications happening in one part inevitably have an impact on other parts.

This global society creates **opportunities and challenges** which must be seized and coped with by different people and groups. The same applies for local administrations. A local authority can obviously not mitigate the tensions caused by migration all on its own, leave alone solve the financial crisis. Together with players from different policy domains within the municipal organisation, but also outside of it - advisory councils, civil organisations, citizen initiatives, other

government levels, international institutions - it can actually support solutions. By means of its competences and resources the local administration can have an impact on the global society through behaviour or policy adjustments. This is how it adopts *its (partial) responsibility for global problems that affect all of us*.

Conducting a 'municipal global policy' remains a **municipality's political choice**. The municipal council and the board of mayor and deputy mayors can steer this policy in a certain direction. The civil servants, advisory councils, citizen organisations and citizens will (usually) strengthen and/or implement this policy. This is how all these players help the local authority to take its responsibility for a global society.

My town is not an island!

- Technological innovations and internet offer lots of opportunities and possibilities to network, facilitate access to information and make communication faster. Social media brings Flemish people in contact with people on the other side of the world, but also help terrorist group IS to recruit youngsters from our local towns.
- The strategy of large companies to move to low-wage countries has an impact on unemployment figures in our regions.
- Massive deforestations of tropical forests, increased methane emissions from industrial cattle-breeding and carbon dioxide emissions from the transport sector today increase the temperature on earth and result in an irreversible climate change, which can also be felt in our municipalities.
- More and more Belgians go abroad for their professional life. People from other continents also migrate to Europe in the hope of finding peace or economic security. Newcomers in our municipalities bring talents, insights and workforce which may be important to counter the ageing population in Europe in the long term. However, some challenges are involved, just think of accommodation and integration.
- A crisis on the housing market in the United States (2006) soon expanded into a worldwide financial crisis. Our economy also sputtered, which reduced the tax income of the municipalities, for example, while the expenses of the public centers for social well-being (OCMW) for all kinds of support rose.

The municipality has a mission!

Every Flemish municipality has a mission which is described in the Municipal Decree. Article 2 states as follows:

The municipalities aim to contribute to the well-being of the citizens and to the sustainable development of the municipal territory.

The contribution to sustainable development is related to the own territory. However, this can never be seen separately from the global society which the municipality belongs to.

The local council is the government body that is closest to the population. By propagating sustainable development, a local administration sets an example to its inhabitants, companies, schools and associations. When the municipal authority conducts a global policy, it actually encourages its citizens to look beyond the borders of the municipality. Citizens are made aware that they can personally make contributions to tackle global challenges. The civil society forms an essential partner and companies can also adopt an important role. In addition, the local council must work inclusively. Sustainable development can only be reached if all inhabitants, regardless of age, social class or origin can fully develop themselves. Involving people of different origin in the local policy promotes the social cohesion on the municipal territory.

1.2 From North-South to Global

With the 'municipal global policy' we aim to make a transition from a traditional north-south model to 'global' thinking. Some shifts have resulted in the fact that the traditional division between North and South is no longer tenable and relevant.

1.2.1 The 'rich North' and the 'poor South'

Elegant buildings, an efficient social security system, a booming economy and growing well-being is still often associated with countries in the North. In sharp contrast with the poor South where economic stagnation reigns, the population is cast down by poverty and education is below standards. However, this image and this division is no longer up-to-date.

Several countries from the '**South**' like China, India, Brazil have made a **tremendous economic leap forward*** in the course of twenty years, while several countries from the '**North**' have had to give up some growth, like some South European countries. Development funds are not only going from Portugal to the former colony Brazil. This south European country which was affected by the crisis is also receiving Brazilian development support now. Besides, emerging

Commonly known emerging countries are the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South-Africa) and the MINT countries (Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria and Turkey).

countries like China, South-Africa and Turkey are increasingly setting up their own South-South cooperation and no longer accept being pushed in the 'poor South' corner.

The economic gap between different countries may have been reduced over the last decades (even though there are still large differences between countries), **the domestic inequality** – and not in the least in the aforementioned emerging countries – has increased worldwide. Large cities like New York, Paris, Sydney, but also Bangkok, Johannesburg and São Paulo have both very rich and very poor areas.

1.2.2 Traditional development cooperation under fire

A lot has been said and written about development aid, but also about development cooperation, local North-South policy and international cooperation. The concepts are sometimes under attack; they evolve and adjust to the context and climate of their time.

Research* shows that the support for development cooperation in Belgium is under pressure. A critical attitude among the Belgian population often questions the relevance and effectiveness of the current development projects and programmes. What is the actual impact of more than fifty years of development cooperation? Do the funds for development end up with the right people? Is the impact of projects not compromised by our own bureaucracy?

HIVA – K.U.Leuven.
Discussion note
on support for
development
cooperation,
7 March 2013.

A lot has changed over the last decades. Many initiators have abandoned the old-fashioned concept of development aid and the donor role of the North, which emphasised the transfer of money, infrastructure and material in the context of short-term projects. In the meantime, a whole evolution has taken place. Structural changes in view of sustainable development is what we are aiming for today. In the South long-term programmes are set up, aimed to enhance capacity and processes based on the principles of Paris, like ownership and alignment. The financial reality, however, requires the traditional donor countries to save on their expenses. Due to these savings the budgets for development cooperation are reduced. The focus shifts to what international cooperation generates for Belgium and our municipal territory. We evolve towards a global cooperation which must yield benefits for all parties involved.

1.2.3 Global trends

As mentioned before we are increasingly dealing with global trends. This offers us in the first place new chances and opportunities. Due to the new forms of communication, like social media, the governments can communicate directly

with their citizens and companies are also able to address their customers directly. Countries with fast-growing economies like Brazil or India harbour economic opportunities for our companies. Other global trends are proving to be quite challenging. Examples include climate change, the financial crisis, migration flows, terrorism, scarcity of raw materials and the management of public goods like drinkable water.

What are the characteristics of global trends?

- The impact of global opportunities and challenges can be felt **worldwide**. Not only in the South, but also here. In our own country and in our own municipal territory we feel the impact of climate change, economic poverty, the financial crisis, migration, etc.
- Global opportunities and challenges show **that one side of the world is connected with the other side**. What started as a stagnating real estate market in the United States ended in a worldwide financial crisis. The demand for biodiesel in Western Europe causes more deforestation in Indonesia for new palm oil plantations and more CO₂ that is released into the atmosphere. The low wages for textile workers in Bangladesh incited European companies to set up business there, to make bigger profits. These 'global connections' show that an event in one region has consequences for another region in the world. Regions, countries, continents are interrelated. This is what we call ***interdependence between continents***.
- **Several actors** are involved in global opportunities and challenges:
 - **Several types of actors:** governments, civil society organisations (non-profit), self-employed persons and companies (profit), banks, service institutions (schools, hospitals, universities...) etc. If we take the example of migration, a whole range of actors are involved: the government of the country of origin, a regulating government in the country of arrival, the United Nations, human traffickers, shelters, etc.
 - Actors on **different levels:** in the example of migration the local entities that are involved include local authorities, shelters and schools, and also national governments (in the country of origin, in the receiving country), the civil society (e.g. advisory councils), supranational governments and organisations (the Africa-Europe-Partnership, the European Union for a European migration policy, the United Nations to safeguard human rights, the International Organisation for Migration, etc.).
 - **Several disciplines or policy domains:** still in the same migration example economic factors play a role (e.g. unemployment, human traffickers, European well-being), but also ecological factors (e.g. long-term draughts in agriculture, desertification, more hurricanes and floods), policy factors (regulations in receiving country, war, violation of human rights, corruption

and illegal use of public resources in the country of origin), medical and social-cultural factors (social security) etc.

- Actors **geographically spread over the entire globe** are involved: in the migration example people, organisations, governments, etc. from different corners of the world are involved (e.g. Country of origin, transit countries, arrival countries, but also other regions which also lie at the basis of the reasons why a stream of migration started in the first place).
- A global opportunity or challenge cannot be taken on or tackled, neither at one level, nor within one discipline, one policy domain or one location. A global challenge requires 'global action' and is therefore a **shared responsibility**. It requires a contribution of different initiators in the field of politics, administration, citizens and civil society, the service industry and the profit industry, both on a local, regional, national and international level, and in different disciplines.

1.2.4 A new global framework: the Sustainable Development Goal

Looking back – In 2000 the United Nations formulated eight 'millennium goals' (Millennium Development Goals, MDGs) which were supposed to be achieved by 2015. However, it did not work out quite as they had expected and the results are unequally divided over the regions, although progress has been made.

The millennium goals provided a framework for all actors operating in Asia, Africa, Latin-America and had a strong mobilising and encouraging effect on governments, development organisations and many other players to contribute to a fairer world. The declaration was much more organised -- the goals could be counted on two hands - and understandable, it was about essential human needs and could be converted in measurable indicators. The emphasis of the millennium goals was mainly on social challenges in developing countries. Industrialised or developed countries were hardly in the picture. They were also defined by international experts and consultants without broader consultation of all entities involved.

The global framework – In September 2005 the United Nations adopted the sequence to the millennium goals, i.e. the Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs. These goals combine different global agendas, including the social agenda for development cooperation, the agenda Rio+20 for sustainable development and the environmental agenda. A few months later the Climate Conference in Paris reinforced these goals by signing an agreement which intended to restrict global warming.





The Sustainable Development Goals have to be attained by 2030. There are not 8 but 17 goals, divided in 169 so-called targets or sub-goals. Other than the millennium goals they were developed through an open and intergovernmental consultation process with great involvement from the civil society. They look beyond the symptoms of poverty, and also relate to peace, stability, human rights, climate, equality, migration and good governance. The emphasis lies on global challenges which do not only affect African, South-American and Asian countries, but also apply to developed countries. Where the work area of the millennium goals were restricted to the 'developing countries', the Sustainable Development Goals are universal. By signing these goals, just like 192 other countries, Belgian policy makers committed to make efforts to attain this global agenda.

Task for our municipalities – Our local administrations will also have to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals. Several goals are overlapping and contributions are already being made. For example, the OCMW's (public centres for social well-being) which fight poverty at local level every day (goal 1), the covenant of mayors was signed by more than 200 Flemish local authorities (goal 13), the increasing number of cycle lanes on our roads (goal 9) and the growing transition initiatives which are supported by the local administrations (goal 12). The idea is to acknowledge, strengthen and expand these initiatives.

The eleventh Sustainable Development Goal is also perfect for implementation by local administrations: 'Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.' The emphasis on cities has never been this important. Half of the world population is currently living in cities and by 2050 this will even be two thirds. Whether we will attain other objectives like reducing poverty, equality, climate solutions and well-being must be seen in connection with goal 11. The cities will co-decide whether we can reach inclusive, sustain-

able economic growth and succeed in reducing the inequality. People will have to search and find training opportunities and work in the cities. The success of goal 11 is crucial for the achievement of many other goals.

In short, the Sustainable Development Goals are an opportunity for all municipalities, large and small, to build a sustainable world with more justice and equality, together with the civil society, the population, companies and associations, the administration and politicians.

1.2.5 Consequences for the municipal North-South policy

We can conclude from the above that there is no use in hanging on to the traditional North-South division. Developing and developed countries are faced with the same global trends. Several stakeholders worldwide have a responsibility to solve these problems. The municipalities also have to take their responsibility to the extent of their own resources and competences, and many of them already do so. This publication will consider what can be done with these global trends on the basis of a feeling of solidarity. We call it the '*municipal global policy*'.

The North-South policy shifts to a global policy, that is why we refer to a global department with a global deputy mayor and a global civil servant further on in this publication. This is not just another word, the tasks of a global department will undergo significant changes. Later on in this publication we will tell you more about the tasks of the global deputy mayor and official. This evolution will obviously take time. The global policy will be formed step-by-step within the municipality and the global deputy mayor and civil servant will adjust their role within the municipal authority accordingly.

2. What is ‘municipal global policy’?

Many Flemish municipalities have worked on a North-South policy, a policy for development cooperation or on international solidarity for years. With the ‘municipal global policy’ we want to redirect all these efforts and policies, while taking into account the trends described in the previous chapter.

‘Municipal global policy’ is a coherent, transversal and municipality-wide policy which contributes to more international justice through global policy choices, global citizenship and global cooperation.

As mentioned before, this is more than just a different name. It is about a vision of how we, and our local authority, can contribute to increasing international justice. This is not a static concept. The development cooperation sector is in constant motion and our municipal policy evolves with it. Some stakeholders will identify with this global policy, while for others it seems a long way off. As actors, the local administrations will also further define the reorganisation of development cooperation into a global local policy, just like advisory councils, civil society and other actors involved.

2.1 ‘Municipal global policy’ and international frameworks

New working standards are usually developed and implemented over our heads. The United Nations, for example, adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, with the gruesome world war in mind. The rights and freedoms set out therein also apply to our municipalities. At the end of the eighties the focus shifted to sustainable development, e.g. with the UN Brundtland* commission. This development does not compromise the future of the next generations and aims for a balance between ecological, economic and social interests. After several other global initiatives (including Rio, Rio+, the millennium goals) the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by all members of the UN, including – obviously – Belgium, in 2015. They formed a new framework which wants to define the policy for the next couple of years. These goals are set out for every citizen, association, institution, company or government. Belgium made a strong commitment by word of the prime minister. In the speech he delivered in New York he stated that all institutional parts of Belgium are captivated by this agreement. Local authorities are therefore also contributing to this international framework. Through their own mechanisms of participation and co-creation they involved the wider population, as well as any bottom-up initiatives.

The Brundtland report is the name by which the *Our Common Future* report of 1987 became known. The main conclusion of the report was that the main global environmental problems were the result of the poverty in one part of the world and the non-sustainable consumption and production of the other part of the world. The report was the first call for sustainable development.

The 'municipal global policy' we present in this publication constitutes a vision or ideal picture of a local authority contributing to international justice. International frameworks, in which the Sustainable Development Goals are playing a leading role, provide support in the aim for this global policy. The Sustainable Development Goals are one of the pathways which may contribute to more international justice.

2.2 International justice

The 'municipal global policy' is based on the realisation that there are huge inequalities between countries and also within individual countries and that the world today is still very unjust. The municipal authority must be aware that everything is globally interconnected. Because the municipal authority realises that its attitude, policy and actions may have an impact elsewhere in the world, it can be adjusted accordingly to contribute to a more just world.

The 'municipal global policy' aims for more international justice based on an attitude of solidarity with countries, communities and people.

This list of perspectives is not complete, and just includes some.

International justice and solidarity can be seen from **different perspectives***

- **social-economic justice:** e.g. with a far-reaching fairtrade purchase policy the municipality shows that it aims for fair trade rules worldwide.
- **(social-)ecological justice:** e.g. by using sustainable construction materials the municipality contributes to the maintenance or repair of ecosystems elsewhere in the world.
- **political justice:** e.g. the municipality acknowledges and supports proposals and initiatives of citizens and the civil society in its own municipality but also in the cooperation with partner towns.
- **cultural justice:** e.g. by means of a cultural exchange with partner towns the ethnic-cultural diversity will be more appreciated both in the own municipality and in the region.

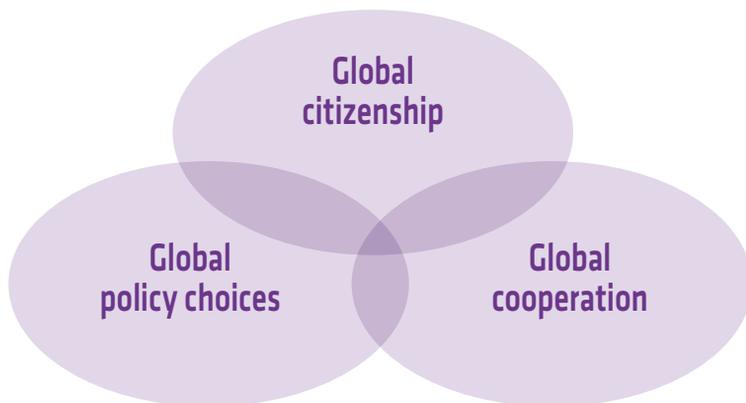
Careful: not all international aspects of a municipal policy are automatically within the scope of the 'municipal global policy'. When the municipality's own interest prevails and no specific aim for international justice can be identified, it is not 'global policy' as we define it. When, for example, international economic deals or certain partnerships between port cities are only aimed at financial benefits and do not take into account any social, ethical and ecological criteria, they do not form part of the 'municipal global policy'. Municipalities that imple-

ment a global policy will put internationally fair and sustainable goals first when it comes to commercial or financial transactions.

The **geographical focus** of ‘municipal global policy’ on traditional ‘developing countries’ seems to become less relevant in the future to determine whether a certain method or action is part of a global policy or not. If we really want to let go of the North-South division and we want to take an unambiguous step towards a global policy which will allow municipalities to make an international contribution to global challenges, a strict list with partner countries will lose its value. The result is that e.g. intra-European solidarity actions can also become part of the ‘municipal global policy’, provided that these actions also contribute to international justice. However, this decision can only be made by the municipality.

2.3 The action areas of ‘municipal global policy’

The three circles on the figure alongside represent the three action areas where municipal authorities can take action in the context of their ‘municipal global policy’. Municipal actions to strengthen international justice can be broken down as global policy choices, global citizenship and global cooperation. Some municipal initiatives can be classified under more than one action area. That is why the circles overlap. In the paragraphs below we will study the three action areas in more detail.



2.3.1 Global policy choices

Global policy choices are coherent policy choices of a municipal authority which contribute to international justice.

Municipalities making global policy choices specifically have the **international dimension** of their policy choices in mind. Such local governments are aware of their impact on events on the other side of the world, seize global opportunities and take responsibility in dealing with global challenges. They systematically integrate economic, environmental and social considerations into the overall policy.

A local authority that contributes to international justice makes specific choices which are related to its internal organisation. It can adjust its **internal procedures** (e.g. make the purchase policy more sustainable or conduct an internal climate policy), integrate the Sustainable Development Goals as underlying framework in the different targets of the management and policy cycle, include international justice in the municipal vision and mission, etc. Through its dedication to international justice the administration sets the example for employees, politicians, inhabitants and civil society organisations. Global policy choices relate to the internal organisation structure. However, they are also affected and shaped by different players in the municipal territory, like the advisory councils.

Ideally, a municipal authority consistently checks out whether the policy choices it makes for the different policy areas contribute to international justice. It will then conduct a **coherent** 'municipal global policy'. Because all the policy areas are viewed from an international justice perspective, policy choices can be better aligned or will no longer be thwarted. Let's take the example of a municipality investing on the one hand in a partnership with an African city in a conflict area and, on the other hand, placing investments with a large bank that invests in the weapon industry. A coherent 'municipal global policy' means that the municipality will switch to ethical banking and investing. That is how the municipality indirectly strengthens its investment in the relationships with other cities. In this case the 'municipal global policy' is not only implemented by the global civil servant, the financial manager also plays an important role.

2.3.2 Global citizenship

Global citizenship is about knowledge, attitude and behaviour befitting a joint responsibility to implement changes, here and elsewhere in the world, which contribute to international justice.

A global citizen feels involved in society and in the world. This citizen is aware that everything is strongly interrelated in the global society we live in. He also realises that by adjusting his own attitude and behaviour contributions can be made to a fairer international community.

Behaviour is a central aspect of global citizenship. Behaviour that takes into account what is happening on the other side of the world and contributes to international justice. Behaviour that supports the economic, ecological and social sustainability of society.

Global citizenship is **everyone's** business. That is why the municipal authority stimulates behaviour befitting global citizenship. It increases the global awareness of its citizens, organisations, staff, companies, youth movements, schools, policy makers, shopkeepers, etc. By informing them, raising the awareness, inciting them to take action or support their initiatives.

An important aspect of all this is the consumption pattern of all these groups and individuals. Municipal authorities can take and/or support initiatives, incite the actors to select products which were produced respecting a 'fair' price, the environment, social protection at work, etc. Municipal authorities that are setting the right example inspire and stimulate citizens, companies, schools and others. This can be with food, clothes and building materials, but also mobile phones or sustainable cash investments deserve our attention.

As far as companies are concerned, it is not just about fair consumption, but also about fair trading their own products, with respect for international justice. The principles of corporate social responsibility (CSR)* can be a guideline in this respect.

Finally, it is also about participation and involvement in the policy. A global citizen feels involved in the development of the community, here and elsewhere in the world. He is a partner of the local administration, everywhere in the world, whose voice and commitment help shape local sustainable development.

Corporate social responsibility is a process in which companies do not only integrate economic, but also environmental and social considerations in their business. Corporate social responsible companies aim for sustainable development which is based on three pillars: economy, environment and society. In order to accept this responsibility it is important that they work together with their stakeholders. More information on mvvlaanderen.be.

2.3.3 Global cooperation

Global cooperation of a local administration is a form of international cooperation aimed to contribute as partners to more international justice.

Global cooperation does not start with a help reflex, but sees globalisation as a chance for people and institutions (like municipal authorities) to consult at a worldwide equality basis, to learn from each other and work together. We abandoned a donor logic and evolved to an actor logic based on **exchanging and learning**.

When it comes to global cooperation partnerships with international actors are set up, aimed at international justice.

The 'global' municipality of the future will also scrutinise its own operations. That is why **cooperation projects in relation to global topics** are entered into together with partners (poverty, urbanisation, fair trade, climate, migration, etc.). They look for solutions together. This is how municipalities also work on global challenges through international cooperation on their own territory.

A local authority can support international cooperation in several ways:

- As an initiator: Local authorities can contact each other worldwide and exchange experiences to strengthen their own and each other's management authority. This applies to both the political side of things, the administration and the civil society. They exchange information like colleagues, based on the same practice. This can be done in several ways, for example:
 - Through a 1-on-1 relation in **city-to-city partnerships**;
 - in a **network of municipalities** which exchange information and learn from each other about a policy theme;
 - Through a **consortium of different types of actors from across the world** – academics, municipalities, national governments, organisation from civil society, coordinating bodies of the private sector, etc. – the municipality can provide or gain expertise, establish strong relations, defend certain interests or set up and implement widely supported projects together with these players.
- As a facilitator: Local authorities can support international cooperation between organisation (e.g. diaspora organisations, hospitals, schools) by offering a platform where these organisations meet. In that case the municipality plays the role of '**facilitator**' to stimulate contacts, knowledge sharing, networking or cooperation between the organisations.

- As a steering force: Municipal authorities can steer international cooperation towards a sustainable initiative, for example by setting certain conditions for the financial support of associations, like the mandatory contribution to certain Sustainable Development Goals, attending a training or organising an awareness raising activity in Belgium about a global theme.

2.3.4 Overlaps

Many activities implemented by a municipality in the context of its 'municipal global policy' cannot be classified unambiguously under one action area. For example, FairTradeGemeente (FairTrade Town) is an action model which can be seen as either part of 'global citizenship' or 'global policy choices': on the one hand the local authority, as well as the civil society, encourages citizens to buy fairtrade products (thereby stimulating a citizenship which takes into account global challenges), on the other hand it directs its own purchase policy towards fair and sustainable products (a policy choice). If direct cooperation with partners in the South is established in that context (e.g. twinned towns where both partners towns want to work on their own fairtrade purchase policy), this action can also be seen as 'global cooperation'. Another example are the 'school twinnings' which may be part of either 'global citizenship' or 'global cooperation' projects.

It is not necessary to dedicate the same efforts to all three action areas. A municipal authority may decide to mainly use resources to achieve a policy on sustainable public procurement in their own organisation and promote global citizenship towards its population. It may work less on 'global cooperation' and may not, for example, set up town twinnings, but restricts itself to subsidising associations or NGOs with projects elsewhere in the world which aim for structural change.

2.4 Principles of ‘municipal global policy’

Ideally, the ‘municipal global policy’ is transversally integrated within the structure of the municipal authority and one works with it in an interdisciplinary way. It is important for a municipal authority to also look outside its confines and involve the right initiators, like civil society organisations, active citizens, or companies. The dividing walls between the municipal departments and working methods fade away and there is increasing cross-sector cooperation with partners from all over the world.

2.4.1 Link with sustainability

In our opinion ‘municipal global policy’ with attention for international justice is a part of sustainable development.

Sustainable development goes global. In 1987 the definition was set out in the Brundtland report: ‘Sustainable development is development which meets the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.’ It intends to create well-being and well-being for all of us, but in a way that later generations can also enjoy it, here and elsewhere on earth.

Sustainable development is often narrowed down to environmental policy, but it actually involves the sustainable combination of economic, social and ecological factors.

The seventeen Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations are also conceived as an interplay of five Ps of sustainable development:

- **People:** human beings, social aspects, dignity and equality;
- **Prosperity:** prosperous and fulfilling lives in harmony with nature;
- **Planet:** protect the natural resources of our planet and climate for future generations;
- **Peace:** promote peace, justice and inclusive communities;
- **Partnership:** achieve sustainable development through global cooperation and partnership.



With its ‘municipal global policy’ a local authority creates constant attention for international justice within this broader vision on sustainable development.

2.4.2 Transversal theme

'Municipal global policy' and our aim for more international justice can be approached from different policy areas. The 'global' deputy mayor, civil servant and advisory council will not just sit on an island to outline the global policy. They involve colleagues from other policy areas in the development and implementation. This allows 'municipal global policy' to be included transversally in the local authority's policy.



Colleague deputy mayors, officials and their advisory councils will ideally develop a reflex to look at their specific work area with an eye for international justice. Social, environmental, cultural, youth or agricultural policy contributions also present an opportunity to make contributions to international justice. Youth policy may for example work on raising awareness about global themes, the public procurement department may systematically include sustainable criteria in its specification and the mobility civil servant can take into account the impact on the environment. By looking at different policy areas from an international justice perspective the policy coherence will increase and the 'municipal global policy' will have a larger impact.

In order to contain this global reflex transversally into the municipal structure, there are two possible working methods. On the one hand the vision can be defined by the board of deputy mayors and the management team, a commitment can be expressed, transversal themes can be determined and all actions of the municipality can fit into this frame, while enabling cross-sector facilities, etc. International justice is, for example, included in the analysis for all policy domains. On the other hand the 'global' deputy mayor, civil servant and advisory council can make efforts based on their own position, to propagate the global perspective and integrate it among colleagues. The Sustainable Development

Goals are a useful framework in this respect for both the top-down management of the board of mayor and deputy mayors, the council and the management team, and for the global civil servant, other civil servants and advisory councils, to see overlaps between the different policy teams and international justice.

This is not new, by the way. For many years attempts have been made to launch cross-policy initiatives. However, these efforts can be intensified and we can make sure that this is guaranteed in the future.

2.4.3 Interdisciplinary cooperation

Municipalities increasingly try to deal with social challenges by means of an **interdisciplinary** approach. Deputy mayors and municipal departments, each from their own policy area and discipline, **work together** and with civil society

organisations and citizens to set up a joint coherent strategy. The economic, social, environmental, cultural, financial (and 'global' or development cooperation) department each delivers a contribution to a social challenge on the basis of its own policy area. A municipality that wishes to develop a sustainable food strategy, for example, will stimulate cooperation between the departments and the advisory councils of agriculture (promotion organic farming), local economy (stimulate companies to use sustainable food), education (schools as a market), international cooperation (fair trade), environment (ecological agricultural techniques and transport), etc.



An interdisciplinary perspective does not only require cooperation between policy areas within a municipality, it can also involve other actors locally, supra-locally, and even internationally. In the above sustainable food strategy the administration can work together with organic farmers or call on civil society organisations for awareness-raising actions. It eliminates the 'dividing walls' and tackles problems as opportunities of cooperation between the different policy areas, departments, advisory councils, organisations, associations, etc.

2.4.4 The role of the 'global' deputy mayor, civil servant and advisory council

Behind an interdisciplinary and transversal 'municipal global policy' there is a strong 'global' deputy mayor, civil servant and advisory council. The global reflex is transversally integrated within the local authority and the advisory coun-



cil, but enough time and resources have to be additionally released to set up a separate global policy domain. A few tasks to be adopted by the administration on that basis (both at the level of politics and administration, and on the level of civil society):

- The **transversal, comprehensive embedding** of the 'municipal global policy' in the municipal authority and the advisory councils;
- Monitor a continued transversal and comprehensive adoption of the 'municipal global policy' by colleagues;
- Monitor the perspective of international justice when the municipality works **project-based** and with an **interdisciplinary approach**;
- Set up specific activities in the context of the **action areas** (see above) of the 'municipal global policy';
- Connect actors with the aim of international justice. The transversal and interdisciplinary strategy exceeds the level of deputy mayors, civil servants and advisory councils. The 'municipal global policy' does not only require the contribution of and cooperation with other municipal services and disciplines, but also of and with organisations and stakeholders outside the municipal authority. As a **connecting force** the global civil servant will join this network of actors to contribute to international justice. He will, for example, stimulate the 'global' advisory council to find overlaps with other relevant advisory councils (e.g. for the environment, youth, culture, local economy) and, whenever possible, to work together or establish contacts between the colleagues of the education department and the world citizenship organisations.



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In practice

This part illustrates the concept of ‘municipal global policy’ with concrete examples. We present an idea of what global policy can be on a local level and which actions the municipal authority can take to contribute to more international justice.

1 Global policy choices

Global policy choices are coherent policy choices of a municipal authority which contribute to international justice

Global policy choices relate to the internal organisation of the local authority and to the policy developed by the administration for the municipal territory. A local authority which is prepared to conduct a global policy is first of all prepared to have a look in the mirror. Its own internal organisation can be adjusted to make sure that all policy domains are involved in the aim for social justice. The Sustainable Development Goals can be a help as a framework to set priorities. This will allow the municipality to conduct a coherent ‘municipal global policy’.

1.1 Internal support

The mayor, deputy mayors, councillors, municipal staff and advisory councils are all indispensable to develop a full ‘municipal global policy’. However, it can only be propagated if every one of them takes into account the perspective of international justice. Therefore, the first step is to increase their **knowledge and awareness** about the global society, the challenges and the importance of international justice. It will make local politicians and civil servants aware of the dimension of international justice, allowing them to take it into account in their policy choices. A few examples (more concrete ideas are listed under the heading ‘transversal action”):

- training about Sustainable Development Goals or about systems thinking for local politicians, municipal staff and the advisory councils;
- analysis of the existing policy in view of the Sustainable Development Goals together with the management team and the sustainability civil servant;
- a lunch session in which a global challenge is discussed or a series of lunches in which one Sustainable Development Goal is put in the spotlights - in cooperation with the deputy mayor, civil servant and/or external partners of the policy domain in question (e.g. Sustainable Development Goal 12: ensure sustainable

- consumption and production patterns, in cooperation with the environmental, agricultural department, local economy, Food teams, Vredeseilanden, etc.);
- a fairtrade breakfast for staff with a quiz about fair trade;
 - posters with Sustainable Development Goals within the town hall and the administrative buildings;
 - an 'international justice' interpretation of the annual personnel day (fair breakfast, world trade game, fair sports day,...) for example about the Sustainable Development Goals;
 - an immersion trip for local politicians and civil servants in the partner city, with a final moment to reflect upon each participants' contribution – within his authority – to more international justice;
 - 'global' deputy mayor and civil servant discuss matters with colleagues to explain the overlaps between their policy domain and the 'municipal global policy' and/or the Sustainable Development Goals.

1.2 Policy and organisation level

A municipal authority can make choices which contribute to international justice for its internal organisation and for its entire policy for the municipal territory.

Policy statement, vision, commitment from the top

By signing and publishing a policy statement which shows that there is a vision and a political basis aimed at taking account of international justice, the administration can launch initiatives within the entire organisation. A few examples:

- a prominent place for working on international justice, global sustainable development or Sustainable Development Goals in the policy statement at the start of the legislative period;
- signing a specific policy statement with regard to the Sustainable Development Goals;
- signing the mayors covenant on climate;
- signing a policy statement with regard to the title of FairTrade Town;
- a place for international justice in the vision and mission of the municipality, which comes about with all stakeholders (politicians, civil servants, advisory councils).

Multiannual plan

The local authority's **multiannual plan** systematically specifies the objectives and actions which can contribute to (an aspect of) international justice, and which allows the municipality to concretise its vision and mission. A few examples:

- when preparing the multiannual plan (in the objectives, activities and indicators) actively integrating several policy domains which contribute to international justice;
- fine-tune the current annual plans in view of international justice or in view of the Sustainable Development Goals (how are we already contributing? How can we contribute even more?);
- embed the Sustainable Development Goals in the entire multiannual plan.*

Time and resources

The municipal authority releases **time and resources** for global policy at an **official level**. This will give international justice permanent attention while specific contributing actions are set up. The deployment of a 'global' civil servant, supported by a 'global' deputy mayor at political level is, for example, a very clear sign. In addition, a growth path for the resources that are made available can be outlined.

In Genk the sustainability civil servant was given the mandate, and therefore the time and resources, to investigate in a participatory way and through a multiannual process what sustainable development means for the city.

Procedures and rules

The municipal authority issues **procedures and rules** with respect for international justice. A few examples:

- The entire policy on public procurement should be gradually made more sustainable by systematically integrating sustainability criteria in the specifications:
 - consumption of fair trade products (e.g. with fairtrade label);
 - procurement of fair working clothes for municipal staff. The municipality of Hooglede bought 'fair' summer clothes for a range of municipal services (landscaping department, cleaning service, after-school child care, etc.) through the procurement department;
 - the procurement department could automatically request the opinion of different civil servants, so that each one of them can make sure, for their own domain, that the purchase is fair (sustainability civil servant for the ecological perspective, the global civil servant for the perspective of social justice, etc.);
 - request (free) assistance from the Steunpunt Duurzame Lokale Overheidsopdrachten* (Sustainable Local Public Contract support service) to make the municipality's procurement policy more sustainable.
- Municipal resources are ethically managed and invested. To this end organisations like Fairfin* or Ethibel can be addressed to inform the administration and train the (financial) staff.
- The local authority conducts an internal climate policy and undertakes the necessary steps to reduce its own CO₂ emission. This means, among other things:

A commitment statement, an information brochure and an action plan describing the different steps to embed the Sustainable Development Goals in the multiannual plans etc. can be found on our webpage www.vvsg.be > button international > Noord-Zuid > De duurzame ontwikkelingsdoelstellingen

Steunpunt Duurzame Lokale Overheidsopdrachten (Sustainable Local Public Contract support point) is an initiative of the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities and supports local administrations in terms of sustainable public contracts. www.vvsg.be

FairFin conducts campaigns which inform Belgian banks and the public to deal with money differently. To this end the organisation conducts research into unjustified or harmful investments of Belgian banks and provides an overview of sustainable bank products. www.fairfin.be

- making all buildings low-energy;
 - grant subsidies which strengthen the subsidy policy of the Flemish and federal governments;
 - use energy-efficient street lights;
 - make the entire municipal car fleet more sustainable;
 - make the municipal vehicles available for car sharing initiatives after office hours;
 - develop the local mobility plan in view of CO₂ reduction (including bicycle policy, etc.);
 - stimulate short chain economy in, for example, food production and consumption.
- Reconsider the municipal trade relations in view of international justice. Trade partners will have to be checked in terms of social-economic and ecological criteria. Handle cooperation agreements and programmes of global sustainable development.

Policy decisions

The local authority **takes and implements concrete decisions** which actively contribute to international justice:

- conduct a fair public procurement policy;
- conduct a constructive integration policy for newcomers (together with other local actors);
- proactively support diaspora associations and involve them in the municipal policy;
- sign the (European) mayors' covenant. This commits municipalities to increase the use of sustainable sources of energy at their territory by means of an action plan and to reduce the CO₂ emission with 20% by 2020;
- develop a climate plan for the local authority and its territory;
- develop a local sustainable food strategy to stimulate urban agriculture, local ecological farming, short chain and avoiding food loss. The local authorities of Ghent, Bruges and Kortrijk are already doing this. The Bruges Food Lab, for example, is doing so in the context of the climate plan for the city of Bruges.

Participation

The municipality will encourage all population groups to actively take part in the municipal policy. Due to the nature of participation itself, a wide range of formulas is available to do so. A few examples:

- the administration can support and encourage several advisory councils to think (together) about global themes. The town of Herent organised the event 'InspirHerent', where the advisory councils of mobility, leisure, well-being, development cooperation, environment and work met to give the local authority their advice with regard to sustainability and to coordinate actions.

- the administration can also involve ethnic-cultural organisations in the development of policies or in activities. The municipality of Waregem set up the 'Cocina del Mundo': a guided walk by ethnic-cultural and social organisations to explore different kitchens and eating cultures.
- the local administration can facilitate meeting days for actors of international solidarity. By organising a meeting day for all actors of international solidarity at different Brussels municipalities, a stronger sense of community was created and policy advice for different municipalities in and around Brussels was formulated.
- the administration can support and bring together organisations from civil society and can integrate their advice into policy. 'Zet je op de kaart!' is a network in Leuven which brings together all organisations that are somehow working on or with global themes. During the first meeting organisations got to know each other and the outlines for Leuven's policy for development cooperation were set out.

Consultation structures

The municipality considers the challenges to solve on its territory from an interdisciplinary point of view which takes into account all dimensions of international justice. Several consultation structures can be set up for this purpose:

- consultation between heads of department involved in the migration theme;
- consultation between advisory councils about climate change;
- work group of several deputy mayors and civil servants to develop a sustainable food strategy;
- project group to prepare a municipality-wide event (e.g. an annual fair or festival) with cooperation between different departments ('global' department, youth, culture, environment, etc.) and other (external) partners.

2 Global citizenship

Global citizenship is about knowledge, attitude and behaviour befitting a joint responsibility to implement changes here and elsewhere in the world which contribute to international justice.

A local authority dedicated to global citizenship stimulates individuals and organisations to take into account ecological, economic and social international justice in their thinking, attitude (e.g. against immigrants) and behaviour (e.g. purchase behaviour, consumption behaviour). A local authority can stimulate the behaviour of inhabitants, their own staff and the institutions, companies and organisations on its territory in all kinds of ways. It can do so by means of regulations and taxes, subsidies, promotion campaigns, projects, etc. Ideally, a local authority propagates global citizenship from all policy domains towards different partners and target groups: culture, youth, sports, environment, well-being, local economy, etc. To this end the local authority can rely on external organisations who built up knowledge on stimulating sustainability and global citizenship from different policy perspectives, like Kleur Bekennen, Studio Globo, Globelink and VVOB (education), but also, for example, MVO Vlaanderen, Cifal Flanders and The Shift (economy)*.

- **Kleur Bekennen** stimulates, inspires and supports teachers to work with a number of global citizenship perspectives in class. www.kleurbekennen.be
- **Studio Globo** is an organisation for global and intercultural learning in primary, secondary and higher education. www.studioglobob.be
- **Jeugdendienst Globelink** is a national youth service which set up projects based on a global, sustainable perspective together with youths in their free time. www.globelink.be
- **The Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance (VVOB)** is a programme organisation specialised in quality improvement of education systems. www.vvob.be
- Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a process in which companies do not only integrate economic, but also environmental and social considerations in their business. Corporate social responsible companies aim for sustainable development which is based on three pillars: economy, environment and society. www.mvovlaanderen.be
- **CIFAL** wants to develop the capacities of individuals, organisations and institutions to strengthen the global decision making and supports actions at a national level which contribute to a better future. www.cifal-flanders.org
- **The Shift** is the collection point for sustainability in Belgium. Together with the members and partners it wants to achieve the transition to a sustainable society and economy. www.theshift.be

2.1 Inform

Behaviour can usually not easily be changed, especially not in our critical society. People have to be able to understand why they should be doing it. Stimulating global citizenship also involves sharing information, making sure people and organisations become aware of the global relations in our society. **Information campaigns** and focusing on **good practices** may help with this. A few examples and ideas:

- Inform citizens about the Sustainable Development Goals:
 - poster campaign about Sustainable Development Goals in the buildings of the local authority to inform visitors and colleagues about the international agenda;
 - organise a debate about the Sustainable Development Goals;
 - focus on Sustainable Development Goals in the municipal information brochure. For example by explaining a different Sustainable Development Goal each month and tell inhabitants how the municipality is already contributing and plans to contribute in the future (see multiannual plan); each article in the magazine could also be accompanied by the relevant SDG-icon(s), so readers may get familiar with the sustainable development goals;
 - highlight the actions of specific companies and non-profit organisations which contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (through contests, posters in these companies and organisations, etc.);
 - theme the annual 'world festival' on the Sustainable Development Goals. In Leuven the annual world festival was given a new zest by actively involving civil society actors (the advisory council, NGOs and fourth pillar organisations) in the festival's year theme, the Sustainable Development Goals, and by organising debates about SDG-themes..
- Participate in:
 - existing campaigns: use campaign material, use existing campaign manuals (e.g. campaigns by 11.11.11*, Schone Kleren campaign*, Oxfam fair trade shops, Fairtrade Belgium, Vredeseilanden, Broederlijk Delen...);
 - use international theme days to create awareness, for example International Woman's Day on March 8 (in cooperation with local women's organisations), Children's Rights day on 20 November or the World Water Day on March 22.
- Working on the basis of a specific policy domain, for a specific target group:
 - Culture: Organisation of a film series about global challenges with the local cinema (e.g. about raw materials, climate), set up a project within the art school to attract artists from other cultures, consider some global themes in the programme of the cultural centre in presentations, organise a film festival, etc. In Sint-Niklaas, for example, the MOOOV film festival was organised;
 - Youth: the youth department organises a grabbelpas (children's activities)

11.11.11 launches a yearly/two-yearly campaign about a specific social theme. www.11.be

Schone Kleren Campaign is a group that campaigns to improve the labour conditions in the clothes industry. www.schonekleren.be

KRAS is a Globelink project in which participants of the third cycle are immersed in a global theme in their free time. www.globelink.be/kras

day about sustainable development, a thematic week on sustainable food in the out-of-school activities;

- Education: support the Globelink student parliament (KRAS)* for secondary schools in the municipality;
 - Population department: New-borns (and their parents) and newcomers in the municipality receive a fair trade gift. In Hooglede all new-borns get a T-shirt that is made under safe labour conditions and for a fair pay. New-comers get a voucher to buy fairtrade products;
 - Economy: Organise information sessions, create a website, promote the value of corporate social responsibility among companies;
 - Lunch causeries for municipal staff: regularly invite colleagues to a (fair) lunch which focuses on global themes (city-to-city partnership, Sustainable Development Goals, World Water Day);
 - Environment: support advisory councils to work together on environmental and sustainability themes. In Izegem the advisory councils for Agriculture, Nature & Environment organised a debate for their audience about whether or not products from local agriculture should be allowed in the fairtrade breakfast.
- Inform a wide audience:
 - through a specific 'world festival' or a cross-organisation festival with room for raising awareness among citizens about global themes.
 - through a cycling tour or city walk. Etterbeek informs walkers about poverty and social justice in their 'Solidarity Walk'.
 - through an exhibition. An interactive fairtrade exhibition in Bruges shows how we are involved in food from fair trade.

2.2 Action

Besides sharing information the '**behavioural change**' can best be stimulated through behaviour itself. This implies stimulating people or organisations 'in action'. Some ideas:

- Fair trade and **sustainable food**:
 - Fairtrade and organic **breakfasts** at the town hall, in schools, in coffee bars and on the market place.
 - A **fairtrade cooking book or calendar**. Seven municipalities of the Pajottenland and Zennevalei region promote fair trade together. By launching a fair trade cooking book and a fair trade calendar they want to support both small-scale farmers in the South and sustainable farmers in the North.
 - A **guide** promoting varied and **sustainable shopping**. The Ecowijzer guide is the product of cooperation between the towns of Essen, Brecht, Kalmthout, Wuustwezel. Both consumers and the catering business are warmed to

the benefits of local, organic, fair and other sustainable products through a useful shopping guide. Similar examples are available from Ecoplan in Gent* and Mechelen Fair and Veggie*.

- Working together with several neighbouring towns to map out **cycle routes** along sustainable initiatives (e.g. fairtrade ecocycli in the province of Antwerp).
- A **festival** which actively invites participants to produce less food waste in different ways (e.g. the Nothing-is-lost festival* in Ghent).
- The local authority decides in the context of its sustainable purchase policy to use sustainable and fairtrade food products in all industrial kitchens of the municipal schools, public centres for social well-being and their associated care centres.
- Let children at **school** be immersed in certain global challenges:
 - Immerse students every year in the **global educational project** Fête Afrique or Fiesta Latina (in cooperation with Djapo). This project will make them acquainted with the living environment of people their same age elsewhere in the world (see Mortsel).
 - Develop a **global game** for schools. In Antwerp a multimedia game was developed for schools in cooperation with the port services and Museum aan de Stroom.
 - The organisation of a world event of several days where students can learn about global themes for several days/weeks by means of an interactive website, a debate, film, world market (see Brasschaat).
 - Check out the broad offer of global citizenship educational organisations at the website of Kleur Bekennen.
- **Sustainability** in all its diversity:
 - Organise several initiatives (workshops in schools, climate day, debate) to raise awareness among citizens with regard to climate problems (see 'Rumst for a better climate').
 - Organise a 'Nothing is Lost' festival*. In Merelbeke several municipal departments together organised the Fair-Share-Repair Festival including a repair café, clothes exchange, fairtrade bar and compost mobile.
 - Set up a sustainable industrial site and make existing industrial sites more sustainable. The municipality of Nevele set up a sustainable industrial site, where sustainable entrepreneurship comes first. The site consists of neutral and passive buildings, fits into the landscape (due to the green buffer that was provided) and the companies buy fairtrade drinks which are offered to personnel and customers.
 - Organising a competition and trophy for the best fairtrade catering business or the most sustainable company also inspires and encourages others.
- Fairtrade clothes
 - Set up initiatives to increase the demand and supply of fair fashion. In Ghent

The Ecoplan shows you around addresses in Ghent where you can fund fairtrade or organic products, recycled materials or products from your own region, but also everything to do with ecology or social employment. This Ecoplan exists both on paper and in the form of a phone app.

Mechelen Fair and Veggie is a practical brochure containing more information about Fair Trade, FairTrade Town, sustainable points of sale and organisations.

Niets is verloren festival (Nothing is Lost festival)

the supply side is conducting a market study and companies are assisted to find a sustainable chain. To increase the demand, the Fair Fashion Fest is organised, a fairtrade walk is outlined and an ecolplan is distributed.

- Inform citizens through websites about sustainable products. Heusden-Zolder lets website visitors get acquainted with the local offer of sustainable products, including baby and wedding clothes.
- **A city-to-city partnership** offers many opportunities to promote global citizenship.
 - An exchange can be set up between schools in your municipality and schools elsewhere in the world.
 - The administration can organise an immersion trip to the partner city for local politicians, municipal staff and/or involved citizens.
 - An tool box with fun information about the partner city can be used in schools (cfr. Zoersel).
 - Students can do their internship with the partner city.
 - Youth from the partner municipalities can participate in the exchange. Young people from Zoersel are leaving for the Benin partner town to work in four social projects (psychiatric centres, playground, construction camp, hip-hop project). This results in more awareness and knowledge about what goes on in the world and incites them to display more conscious behaviour; taking into account others in the world.
 - Of course this does not mean that municipalities without city-to-city partnerships cannot use this concept. These examples can also be developed by means of fourth pillar projects*, NGOs or international cooperation relations.

Fourth pillar projects are organised by local groups - citizens, organisations, youths, diaspora associations - who set to work with their own initiative for development in the South.

2.3 Multipliers

Through training, support and guidance of institutes or organisations which stimulate their own supporters (**multipliers**), the local authority can reach a wide range of persons. The main thing is to convince heads of department, teachers/schools, SME coordinating organisations, youth work guides, diaspora associations to convert their own target group into global citizens with their support.

- Coach companies to set up a sustainable purchase policy, together with the coordinating body for entrepreneurs, in order to promote among a wider range of companies.
- By supporting teachers in twinned school projects students are also immersed (see Antwerp in appendix).

2.4 Financial stimulants

By setting certain conditions when giving subsidies, reduced taxes... global citizenship can be propagated and stimulated.

- A municipality can act as a facilitator by leading families, companies and schools towards financially beneficial sustainable initiatives. In this way many municipalities in Antwerp have warmed their citizens to the provincial group purchase of green power.
- When the municipality itself gives subsidies to fourth pillar organisations, it can set certain conditions to stimulate global citizenship, for example, linking subsidy to the obligation of holding an information evening, taking part in the annual fair, speaking in schools or at companies.

2.5 Platform

Finally, municipalities can stimulate global citizenship by supporting a learning **platform** where several organisations can meet and help each other to take action. The municipality acts as (financial, thematic, logistic) facilitator for a platform:

- Municipalities create a meeting place for the **demand** (consumers) and **supply** (producers) of local, ecological and/or fairtrade products (food, clothes, ICT...).
- Municipalities facilitate **consultation of school management** and put global themes on the agenda, for example by presenting the offer of global citizenship organisations for schools. Waregem created an online platform that brings together all educational offers on different topics (environment, migration, road traffic, etc.) for the Waregem schools.
- Municipalities create a platform where **companies** meet to discuss sustainability themes, allowing them to set up common relations with sustainable suppliers.
- Municipalities organise a platform with all kinds of **organisations** in the municipality that are working on **North-South themes** or show an interest in it. It is important for them to get in contact and exchange, but maybe also to undertake joint actions to inform citizens and raise awareness, as well as to shape the local policy (see Leuven).
- Municipalities can create a platform with different **advisory councils** who think together about global themes (sustainability, migration, local food strategy...).
- Municipalities support a platform where **diaspora associations** can enter into alliances with specific actors (business associations, schools, healthcare centres, own local administration) to contribute to more well-being for citizens in the country of origin and to work on more social cohesion in their own territory (see Antwerp).
- Municipalities support and stimulate the advisory council to work with different **external partners** on a global theme. In Beernem the advisory council works

with different partners on solidarity, both internationally and locally, with a focus on refugees, second-hand clothes, local fair trade, etc. The FairTradeTown initiator group in Kortrijk brought together all initiators in relation to sustainable food projects together (vegetarian, urban gardening, organic, etc.). This network gives a clear sign to the city council that food has to be dealt with in a more strategic way. In Ghent a steering group of North-South associations identifies and contacts possible partner associations to set up Belmundo, an annual activities series with a changing theme.

3 Global cooperation

Global cooperation by a local authority is a form of international cooperation aimed to contribute as partners to more international justice.

Global cooperation involves making contributions to international justice together with an international partner. Municipalities can hereby play the role of actor, facilitator or supervisor of the cooperation.

3.1 As an actor

The municipality itself is an active partner in the international cooperation:

- Municipalities can set up a **city-to-city partnership** with a focus on strengthening local governance. Oostende, for example, works with the Gambian city of Banjul in relation to ICT and waste management.
- Municipalities can take part in a **network**.
 - Participating in a network offers opportunities to municipalities to set up new cooperation projects with other local authorities pursuing a similar goal. A network for certain Sustainable Development Goals is also on the cards. This is what happens in Germany with the so-called climate alliances, where German and African and Latin-American cities share their knowledge and experiences on climate policy.
 - Participating in an existing network is also an option. Bruges and Ghent take part in the European Food Smart Cities for Development network which works on a local food strategy.
- Through a **consortium of different types of actors from across the world** – academics, municipalities, national governments, civil society organisations, coordinating bodies in the private sector, etc. – the municipality can provide or gain expertise, establish strong relations, set up projects with several initiators or help defend certain interests. The EU subsidised thematic programme EN-RTP* gives European municipalities for example the chance to become part of a forest management programme in Indonesia and make their expertise available.
- Municipalities can enter into **alliances**, for example a climate alliance.

Thematic Programme
'Environment
and Sustainable
Management of
Natural Resources
including Energy'

3.2 As facilitator

Local authorities can support the international cooperation between organisation (e.g. diaspora organisations, hospitals, schools) by offering a **platform** where these organisations can meet. In this case the municipality will play the role of '**facilitator**', stimulating contacts, sharing knowledge, networking or cooperation between the organisations.

- **School twinning projects** are stimulated between schools on the municipal territory and schools elsewhere in the world. VVOB offers support in this respect.
- Use the city-to-city partnership to give students in higher education the chance to do an **internship** in a local organisation in the partner town, both contributing to capacity building in the organisations in question and sharpening the international awareness among students (see Oostende).
- Through a platform of several actors (ethnic-cultural minority associations, university colleges, local administrations in countries of origin, business life, etc.) support development projects in the countries of origin of minorities in the municipality. The municipality will intervene as a coach, matchmaker and co-financer (see Antwerp).

3.3 As a supervising force

Local authorities can steer existing international cooperation towards a sustainable initiative by means of subsidies, procedures, etc.

- When all kinds of initiatives and organisations are supported financially a local authority can set conditions including mandatory training according to the fourth pillar or organise an awareness-raising activity in Belgium.
- Existing forms of international cooperation can redirect the local authority towards putting international justice first (e.g. checking existing international suppliers in terms of sustainability criteria).

4 Transversal action

'Municipal global policy' is in the first place a coherent policy. Policy coherence for international justice will not happen unless the global policy is transversally and comprehensively integrated into the municipality. Each policy domain and theme will keep an eye on international justice. This global reflex shall ideally be supported from the top down (political level, management team) and stimulated from the bottom up ('global' civil servant, colleague civil servants).

4.1 Top-down

The political administration, the municipal secretary and the management team can make decisions 'at the top' which stimulate the transversal integration of 'municipal global policy'.

4.1.1 Policy content

- The local administration can include international justice in the vision and mission of the municipality.
- By making a choice at political level and assigning a budget to a 'global' civil servant or department the administration reveals that it is concerned about international justice.
- The municipality can integrate the perspective of international justice in the development of a new multiannual plan.
- The matching Sustainable Development Goals can be linked to every activity or objective of the different policy domains, also in the management and policy cycle.
- The board of mayor and deputy mayors can sign a declaration in which the municipality expresses its intention to accept the responsibility for global challenges (e.g. mayors' covenant, FairTradeTown, statement about Sustainable Development Goals).
- The board of mayor and deputy mayors can take the political decision to make the policy on public procurement, or a part at least, more sustainable (e.g. sustainable working clothes).

4.1.2 Organisational structure and processes

- It may be useful to assign a different position in the organisational chart to the 'global' department/civil servant to ensure that links with other policy domains can be established easier. The municipality of Jette manages global policy and sustainable development in one department, in one cabinet and by one deputy mayor. This means sustainable development is no longer only considered from an ecological point of view, but from all perspectives (social, economic, ecological), including from the international justice perspective.

- As a top-down measure an administration can set up a platform of heads of department where sustainability and global themes are systematically discussed.
- Within the local administration a transversal sustainability work group can be set up (see Genk).

4.2 Bottom-up

Transversal action for international justice usually starts under impetus of the 'global' civil servant, his department or the advisory council. They are the initiators of a process that requires time and dedication. That is why the 'global' civil servant, in consultation with the deputy mayor, advisory council and other stakeholders, sets the priorities while the right persons and teams are gradually invited to participate.

The initiators start to inform colleagues about global themes, while raising their awareness and starting to look for allies who will support them: colleagues at the departments of sustainability, integration, education, the municipal manager, the board of mayor and deputy mayors, the management team, the different advisory councils (local economy, well-being, culture, etc.)?

Some departments will be involved to take the first steps towards a global policy. This may imply informing, training and assisting deputy mayors and personnel to help them acquire insights in the 'global relations'. For example in how their policies and activities may have a positive or negative impact on international justice and international sustainable development, and what they can change in order to start acting with 'global responsibility'.

4.2.1 Inform

Information is the basis of knowledge, awareness and to change behaviour. It is necessary to continue to inform colleague-civil servants and politicians about global themes at regular times.

- Training about Sustainable Development Goals for municipal politicians and staff: A playful lunch session or highlighting one Sustainable Development Goal every so many weeks or months.
- A fairtrade breakfast or lunch for employees, possibly complemented with an informative session (see Sint-Niklaas).
- Distribute posters about Sustainable Development Goals within the town hall and the administrative buildings.
- Focus on a Sustainable Development Goal in the internal newsletter each month.

4.2.2 Awareness raising

Raising awareness is one step beyond purely informing people. People will become aware of the contribution they can personally make to global challenges or the Sustainable Development Goals. They learn the practical side of things.

- The 'global' civil servant can organise an interactive session of 'systems thinking' for colleague-civil servants (see Genk).
- The 'global' civil servant can proactively consult with colleagues about their work and look where links can be established with the 'municipal global policy'. The Sustainable Development Goals are a good start in this context.
 - When outlining the **multiannual** plans, the global civil servant or department can meet with colleagues to set out specific goals which may boost international justice.
 - Involving colleagues in the city-to-city partnership is a strength. They can come along on a work visit (and exchange with colleagues in the partner town) or immersion trip. This does not only strengthen the capacity of the partner town, but also the professional and intercultural competence of its own municipal staff and their insight in global relations.
- The different municipal advisory councils can discuss global themes together (climate, migration, sustainable food systems, etc.).
- Give an international justice touch to the annual personnel day. In Balen the traditional fairtrade breakfast was converted into a world trade game and also the sports activities had a global touch.

4.2.3 Activation

It does not stop at thinking and talking about it. We act. Together we are stronger. **Cooperation** with other departments and initiators for 'global' themes is a first step.

- Work together with several departments and advisory councils to organise activities (e.g. a festival), raising awareness among citizens in terms of sustainability and international justice in a global perspective.
- Working together with the international cooperation ('global') department, integration department, volunteers (including people of foreign origin) and socio-cultural organisations for the organisation of a culinary walk 'around the globe' (see Waregem, Cocina del Mundo).
- Set up cooperation with museums, companies... to develop an educational game for schools about global themes (see Antwerp).
- Take the initiative to think about a sustainable local food strategy, together with different departments (including the 'global' department) (see Bruges).
- Cooperation between several municipal departments (global, environment, culture, youth, library, council work) and external organisations (e.g. Vormingplus) to organise a transition festival (see Evergem).

- Cooperation between different advisory councils, municipal services and organisations to raise the awareness of citizens for climate change (see Rumst).
- Open up existing initiatives on global themes, to ensure involvement of other policy areas. On initiative of the deputy mayor for development cooperation from Etterbeek the 'week of international solidarity' was converted into the 'week of solidarity'. Now many other departments and policy domains are involved and it is not just a matter of the 'global' department.
- Use the town partnership or citizens' South initiatives to provide new educational material in schools and libraries. Based on the partnership with Bohicon (Benin) the library in Zoersel now offers audio books and books for schools in Zoersel on the culture in Benin and Bohicon.
- Look at public procurement from different angles. In Kortrijk the sustainability civil servant is involved in meetings about procurement to ensure that ecological and sustainable criteria are considered. By contributing this expertise in the procurement department the communication about procurement decisions is also enhanced.
- The 'global' deputy mayor and civil servant can suggest to select one or more Sustainable Development Goals to give priority to during (half) a legislative period. This can be worked on in a step-by-step process together with other municipal departments and external partners. Two examples: priority to goal 12 on sustainable production and consumer patterns in food, when the municipality is dedicated to a sustainable local food strategy; or priority to goal 16, peaceful and inclusive society, when the municipality wants to pay more attention to the integration of minorities in the local society and policy.



Stef De Belder Krimms



VVSG internationaal

WHAT IS VVSG?

The local authorities require information, advice and consultation. The Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities (Vereniging van Vlaamse Steden en Gemeenten, VVSG) provides this support and defends the interests of the local authorities with other authorities and institutions.

VVSG is the representative member organization of all Flemish municipalities, the public centres for social welfare (OCMWs, the administratively autonomous social services) and about fifty intermunicipal cooperations. It represents the interests of both local elected politicians and municipal employees.

Mission Statement

The association's first aim is to promote strong local authorities. Therefore it develops and supports initiatives which enhance the quality of local policy, both through increasing the scope of municipal policy-making and through refining local democracy.

The association promotes sustainable development at the local level and worldwide.

Pro-active in many policy areas

The VVSG has more than 100 motivated employees. They work in teams focusing on a wide range of policy areas that exist at the level of the local authorities.

- Team Economy and Employment
- Team European and International Cooperation
- Team Environment, including Waste Policy
- Team Leisure Policy, including measures of Supportive Education
- Team Social Policy
- Team Welfare Services
- Team Police, Safety and Civil Protection
- Team Management and Organisation (finance, personnel, ICT, legislation, ...)

Alongside these teams, VVSG has consulting, training and communication units.

The VVSG team European and International Cooperation supports cities and communes in their work on development cooperation, European cooperation, and awareness raising of citizens about global topics.

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