

## International Training on: Local Government and Civil Society's Role in Local Sustainable Development

Conducted by the Weitz Center for Development Studies within the framework of MASHAV  
September 18 - October 12, 2011



The process of globalization increasingly influences the socio-economic and environmental structures of countries and regions. While globalization provides new opportunities for economic development for countries, regions and localities; it is also accompanied by growing inequalities, economic exclusion and environmental and social vulnerabilities.

UNDP's 2010 Human Development Report (HDR) identifies substantial progress in many aspects of human development in the past two decades; but at the same time increasing inequalities within and across countries. The HDR highlights the importance of new policies and tools to promote sustainable development which benefit people; and the increasing need to anchor development policies in local context and sound overarching principles.

For the past two decades we have witnessed rapid progress in localizing international development agenda: Local Economic Development as an alternative to economic growth, the efforts to localize the MDGs, local sustainable development initiatives and local climate change initiatives are just a few examples. Nowadays, it is well acknowledged that the implementation of the international agenda is highly dependant on local actors and their capacities. The international experience gained during the last two decades proves that locally designed initiatives can provide a more effective, inclusive and cost-efficient way to achieve local, national, and global sustainable development. But one of the main challenges remains the capacities of local actors, notably local governments and civil society, to implement these initiatives.

Promoting local sustainable development requires a shift in the role of the various actors, especially of those closest to the local level – local authorities and civil society. Local actors are required to take responsibility not only in order to adapt development strategies to local needs and promote locally appropriate approaches, but also to develop partnerships and assist governmental institutions and private sector to act together.



The key for linkage between local authorities, Civil Society and sustainable development lies in capitalizing their expertise and taking a pro-active role to ensure effective cooperation

between the various actors and in the adaptation of policies and strategies to local conditions.

Local sustainability in Israel is being promoted collaboratively by The Ministry of Environmental Protection, local governments and civil society organizations. Through these actors, new policies, regulations and actions have been promoted at the national level. Furthermore, urban and rural municipalities have developed and implemented local sustainable development plans, and numerous initiatives in various areas have been promoted. These include: water and wastewater management, renewable energy, urban biodiversity, agro-tourism, education for sustainability, open spaces protection and reclamation and more. This shift experienced by civil society organizations from acting as protesters against development initiatives to becoming partners promoting sustainable development significantly contributed to these achievements.

The 25-day training is designed to provide practical tools for local government and civil society professionals and decision makers to promote local sustainable development. It aims at increasing the participants' awareness to a wide perspective of multi-dimensional processes which shape the local development arena; creating a platform for sharing knowledge and experience; and acquiring practical tools for the design and implementation of innovative sustainable development initiatives. To this end the participants will benefit from the practical experience gathered by the various partners to this training, representing central and local governments and civil society. Specifically, participants of the seminar will benefit from Israeli and international experience in:

- Building partnerships between national and local level and among local actors for sustainable development
- Developing the capacities of local authorities and civil society organizations
- Practical experience developed in specific areas and its integration into effective local sustainable development strategies.

The training course involves presentations, workshops, discussions, field trips and meetings with professionals and decision makers, as well as personal assignments and formulation of small scale planning projects in groups. International and Israeli cases and practices will be discussed and exercised throughout the program.

The program covers the following main areas:

- Introductory sessions – review of approaches for local development, global processes and their implications, the shift in local government's role and the emergence of civil society
- Building partnerships for local sustainable development – strategies, roles of various actors, challenges and lessons from the Israeli experience
- Promoting local sustainable development – introducing local sustainable development planning into rural and urban local authorities, roles of local and national actors and lessons learned
- The Israeli experience in specific areas, such as: irrigation and water management, sustainable municipal planning and management, biodiversity, renewable energy, waste management, open spaces and urban management, sustainable agriculture, education for sustainability and more

## **Who may apply?**

The seminar targets:

- Planners, environmentalists, economists, community workers, administrators and other professionals working in local and national civil society organizations and in local authorities
- Professionals and decision makers in central government institutions that are working with civil society and local government in promoting local sustainable development initiatives and programs
- Policy makers in civil society organizations and local government
- All should be personally involved in local sustainable development programs.
- Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and Pacific Region, Latin America and South-East Europe countries' residents are eligible.

The selected participants are required to submit prior to the seminar:

- A short presentation on sustainable development policies and strategies in their respective countries/local areas
- A case of local sustainable development they are personally involved in
- Further instructions will be sent to the selected participants.

## **Application Process**

Candidates must complete the appropriate application forms (including health certificate, declaration etc.) available at the Israeli diplomatic mission in their country, or through the Internet <http://mashav.mfa.gov.il>, [www.weitz-center.org](http://www.weitz-center.org). The completed forms should be submitted at the Israeli mission in your area and sent to our office ([ronitshp@netvision.net.il](mailto:ronitshp@netvision.net.il)) not later August 18<sup>th</sup> 2011 .

## **Arrival and transportation**

A Taxi Company called "MONI SITON TOURS" will transport the participants to "Reisfeld Residence" of the Faculty of Agriculture, Rehovot, Israel, where the students will stay during the seminar. Transportation will be free of charge only by this company.

The MONI SITON TOURS counter is located after the customs, at the gallery of floor 1 of Arriving Passengers' hall, near gate 2.

## **Responsibilities during the stay**

MASHAV will assume responsibility of the participants for the duration of the seminar. The medical insurance will benefit the participants during their stay in Israel, except for dental treatments, pregnancy, eyeglasses, and chronic illnesses.

## **Insurance of personal belongings**

MASHAV, Weitz Center and the "Reisfeld Residence" are not responsible in case of lost or stolen personal belongings.

## **About MASHAV**

MASHAV – Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation - at Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs was founded in late 1957, and is responsible for the design, coordination and implementation of the State of Israel's development cooperation programs. MASHAV concentrates on human and institutional capacity building by sharing Israel's own development experience and expertise, imparting know-how and transferring innovative

technologies and tested methodologies adaptable to developing country needs. MASHAV's approach is to ensure social, economic and environmental sustainable development, joining the international community's efforts to implement the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. In events of natural disasters, MASHAV also provides humanitarian assistance and participates in reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts.

### **About Weitz Center**

The Weitz Center for Development Studies is a leader in capacity building for sustainable development. Our work is dedicated to enhancing the efforts of international agencies, governments, communities, civil society and private sector organizations to achieve positive social and economic change worldwide. Towards this end, we offer high quality training and consulting services, highlighting our practical, assets-based and integrated approach to development. To consult our Website: <http://www.weitz-center.org>

### **About Heschel Center Local Sustainability Center**

The Heschel Center is dedicated to building a sustainable future for Israeli society - environmentally, socially and economically - through education and reflective activism. Our strategies include leadership development, education, working with government and non-government organizations, and fostering activism and community-based projects across all sectors of Israeli society. The vision of the Heschel Center is to propel Israeli society towards social-environmental sustainability, through capacity-building, leadership development and model projects. The Heschel Center's key initiatives are: Environmental Fellows Program, Green Schools Network, GreenChange (online social network), Local Sustainability Center (see below)

### **About the Center Local Sustainability**

The Center for Local Sustainability aims to advance the capacity for sustainability in Israeli local government by raising awareness and providing training, tools, and support networks for local government officials, advocates, architects, planners and mayors, to develop pilot projects in their communities, by: Recruiting, training and networking advocates, municipal professionals and mayors, to engage a critical mass of local governments in sustainable development; Developing state-of-the-art tools for local sustainability in municipal planning, management and legislation; Creating a support network by linking Israeli Sustainable Development initiatives and connecting them to similar initiatives in other countries. The Center's key initiatives are: Cities for Climate Protection in Israel; Zero Waste Initiative; Local Economy Initiative; Sustainable Communities Initiative.

### **Additional Information**

Any additional information is available at:

**Weitz Center for Development Studies**  
**Division of Training and International Cooperation**  
**P.O.Box 12**  
**Rehovot 76100, Israel**  
**Tel: 972-8-9474373**  
**Fax: 972-8-9475884**  
**Cell Phone: 972-54-6655233 (Mrs. Ronit Shpindel)**  
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