

## The Action Programme

### **Munich Environment and Health Action (Munich)**

This is a project in a residential quarter characterised by a poor socio-economic structure, high traffic density and pollution levels, infrastructure deficits and few green areas. Its aim is to raise residents' awareness of environmental health issues and to involve people in activities to shape their quarter, e.g. through a district map for kids. The main topics are air-borne pollution, noise, and exposure to electromagnetic fields (mobile communication). As regards individual risk behaviour, the model project focuses on nutrition and on toxins in the domestic environment.

### **Manual "Local Agenda 21 - Environment and Health"**

Agenda 21 is a global programme of action. "21" stands for the 21st century. Its goal is to achieve sustainable development, meaning such development that leaves environmental, social and economic structures intact for our children and grandchildren. As one of 178 nations, Germany committed itself to this model in 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

Environmental and health risks are particularly evident at the local level. The participation of local authorities is a key factor for the implementation of sustainable development. Together with citizens, local organisations and the private sector, they are developing their "Local Agenda 21".

## Local Activities

The planned manual on "Local Agenda 21 - Environment and Health" seeks to give local decision-makers recommendations for concrete actions to promote population health through environmental protection measures. It offers guidance to local authorities on how to better link environment and health policies and how to integrate them more strongly into other sectoral policies, as a horizontal task.

Emphasis is placed on the participation of non-governmental organisations, citizens action groups and the population in developing and implementing local environment and health objectives. Using existing situations as examples, the manual will highlight ways to solve environmental and health problems "together with" citizens instead of "for" them.



### **Action Programme Environment and Health Germany**

## Local Activities

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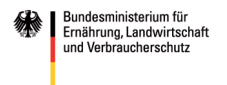
For further information on the Action Programme Environment and Health, visit the APUG website at [www.apug.de](http://www.apug.de) or contact the APUG-Secretariat directly.

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Streets with heavy traffic, polluted air, a lack of play grounds and exercise: Today, it is hardly possible for children to move freely, safe from health hazards and accidents in their normal surroundings. The Action Programme Environment and Health aims to help create healthy living conditions and child-friendly residential areas in cities.

Since the framework conditions differ from one city or region to another, local model projects help clarify how environmental health objectives can be implemented at the local level. Five model projects in different German cities are exploring how a healthy residential environment for children and adolescents can be achieved in the framework of urban planning. The projects promote healthy housing conditions and involve residents in shaping their residential areas. The model projects are supported by Germany's Federal Ministry of Health and Social Security and carried out in cooperation with authorities, associations, action groups, and teaching and research institutions.

Environmental health protection must start directly in the community, and this is a task for the Länder, towns and municipalities. At the local level, there is a particular need for action to develop a health-compatible environment, such as healthy housing conditions, adequate recreational areas and play areas for children, and reduction of traffic and noise.

A manual on "Local Agenda 21 - Environment and Health" intends to help link environmental and health activities. The project is supported by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety.

In June 1999, Germany's Federal Environment Ministry and Federal Health Ministry presented their joint **Action Programme Environment and Health** (German acronym: APUG) to the public. The Federal Consumer Protection Ministry joined the Programme in autumn of 2002.

## Local Activities

### Learning to live healthily (Braunschweig)

Contaminated food, solvent-containing paints or building materials in the home, a lack of physical activity may all pose a health risk. The Braunschweig project wants to demonstrate the risks coming from the environment. District parties are organised in cooperation with environmental associations and health service providers. Kids can create their own cookbook with healthy recipes as well as a brochure on the subject of "what makes us healthy, what makes us ill". On health walks, they track down things in their district that "make people ill". The aim is to create an environmental health office for the district. The project wants to strengthen the concept of self-help through information and advice on environmental health issues.

### Being a child in Marzahn-Hellersdorf (Berlin)

This Berlin project has organised a forum on the topic of "Marzahn-Hellersdorf as an activity area for children". The aim is to support a variety of activities dealing with children and health. The project is also exploring how children and adolescents can be involved on a long-term basis in decision-making in schools, day-care centers and local administration in order to make this a child-friendly district with healthy living and environmental conditions.

The Action Programme Environment and Health aims to strengthen the links between environmental and health protection in order to offer better protection of human health against adverse environmental impacts. It emphasises the protection of children and adolescents.

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### Moving Kids (Hamburg)

Physical activity prevents health damage such as postural anomalies and cardiovascular problems and supports children's independence, agility and self-confidence. Focusing on day-care centers, the Hamburg project supports the development of areas for play and physical activity that offer kids a variety of choices. Activities in this project include the (re-)designing of playgrounds, clay-building projects, and new forms of parents&children gymnastics. Potential project partners are parks and roads departments, town and district developers, and landscape architects.

### District Network „Social economy for children, environment and health“ (Berlin)

This Berlin project initiates and links environmentally and socially oriented projects to help create a healthy living environment for children, adolescents and families. Kitchen projects in childcare institutions are to promote food awareness, winter playgrounds are to motivate children to be physically active even during winter, and forest excursions are organised to show how relaxing a peaceful environment can be. Residents' awareness of a healthy lifestyle is to be raised through a range of projects such as a waste collection campaign, environmental detectives, toy rental, family gardens and local anti-smoking and anti-alcohol campaigns.

The Action Programme Environment and Health is supported by the superior federal authorities Federal Office for Radiation Protection, Federal Institute for Risk Assessment, Robert Koch-Institute and Federal Environmental Agency. The APUG-Secretariat is based at the Federal Environmental Agency.