



SEgroup Bulletin III/2010

Systemic Excellence Group

Independent Think Tank for Leading Practice



Editorial

Dear friend of SEgroup,

Change management remains our business. And radical self-deployment had always been a characteristic of SEgroup. The 2009 crisis held a few challenges, also for us. As a result, we had to re-focus and to change ourselves. Bringing in consultants supporting our change felt singular, but it was the right thing to do. We were successful and undertook an intensive investment in global research on social, cultural, and political complexity.

The inaugural research prize of the International Center for Complex Project Management (ICCPM) was an outstanding reward for this. Another success story for research based support was our engagement with Amnesty International to successfully facilitate major change in the German section. Prior to this, we had invested in a comprehensive study on organisational capabilities and the performance of NGO's and NPO's in co-operation with the Humboldt-Viadrina School of Governance. Last, but not least: our co-operation with Studio TekTao in Shanghai comforted us about meeting challenges on a global scale.

You will find more information in this edition of the SEgroup Bulletin. You will notice that we changed the style a bit. We asked a professional journalist to interview us and produce some news about SEgroup. We like the results which you can find on our [website](#) and read about in the SEgroup Bulletin III/2010 at hand. Enjoy the read and do not hesitate to contact us if you like to follow up on any idea, question or project.

Thank you for being such a supportive friend of SEgroup.

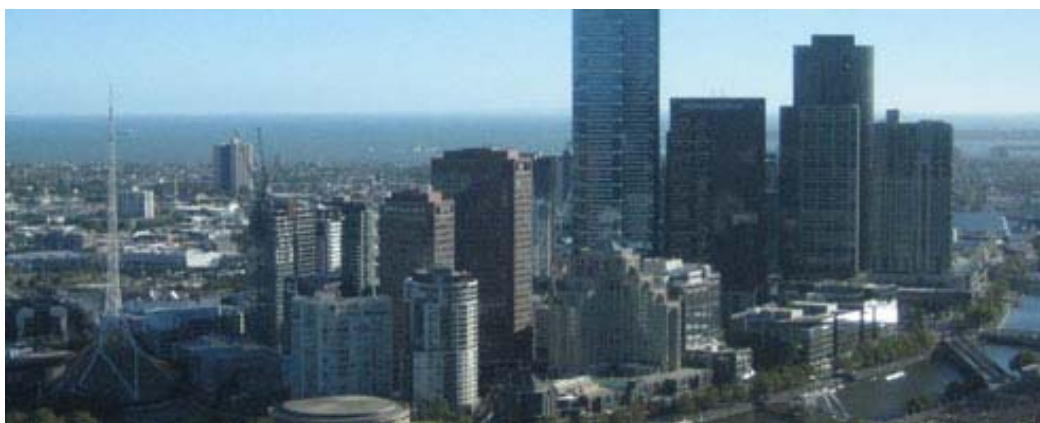
Dr. Louis Klein

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Louis Klein". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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First findings of CCCPM presented at APRPM Conference in Melbourne



Going to the other side: CCCPM in Melbourne

The CCCPM, a knowledge project of the SEgroup presented its first findings during the session of the APRPM (Asia Pacific Research Conference on Project Management) in Melbourne, Australia, from February 24th through 26th.

The emphasis of CCCPM's research is on understanding the importance of social and cultural complexity for successful project management.

Most studies prove that projects rarely fail due to technical complexity. More often, management of social and cultural complexity is a critical success factor for complex projects. Research in this field becomes the base of knowledge to respond properly to handling global challenges such as changes in demographics, AIDS, climate, and overheating financial systems.

As Dr. Louis Klein, Managing Director of the SEgroup and Research Director of the CCCPM puts it: "That is research beyond engineering. The ability to manage diversity as a critical success factor requires virtually "going to the other side". Both as agenda setting and as substantial research work, CCCPM is enabling project managers to act upon science and knowledge in uncharted waters."

A client with a Nobel Prize: Improving the organisational capacity of Amnesty International in Germany



Campaign for the freedom of speech in Belarus. Amnesty International Press kit

Sometimes the efficiency of an organisation is a matter of life and death. Not in a technical sense, where the life of customers may sometimes depend on the reliability of a consumer product, but literally here, when it comes to the efficiency of organisations that fight capital punishment and generate actions to stop grave abuses of human rights.

Probably the most respected and influential pressure group among the many organisations that lobby human rights is [Amnesty International](#). This organisation supports defendants worldwide and petitions heads of states in cases of unfair trials especially if the death penalty is imminent. As a non-governmental organisation, Amnesty International's resources are scarce, even with more than 100,000 supporters in the German section alone.

The contact between Amnesty International and Systemic Excellence Group was established in 2008 when a team of researchers from SEgroup conducted a study on NGOs with focus on social, political and public affairs called "Next Practice NGO".

SEgroup has a renowned expertise in supporting NGO's to improve their organisational capacities. Consequentially, the German section of Amnesty International decided to benefit from this expertise to prepare itself for the future, thus becoming SEgroup's first client awarded with a Nobel Peace Prize.

The original team was comprised of Nils Diederichsen, Fabian Hoffmann, former SEgroup Consortial Partner Claas Wenzlik, and Alexander Kiehne as supervisor. In 2009 the extensive project started with a systemic evaluation. The objective of the evaluation was a closer look inside the organisation to have a better impact outside.

As Fabian Hoffmann puts it: "The traditional approach would have been an

organisational realignment as a means of strategic development but in this case, we decided together with our client to have a close look at structures and procedures inside the daily work: to lobby for human rights.”

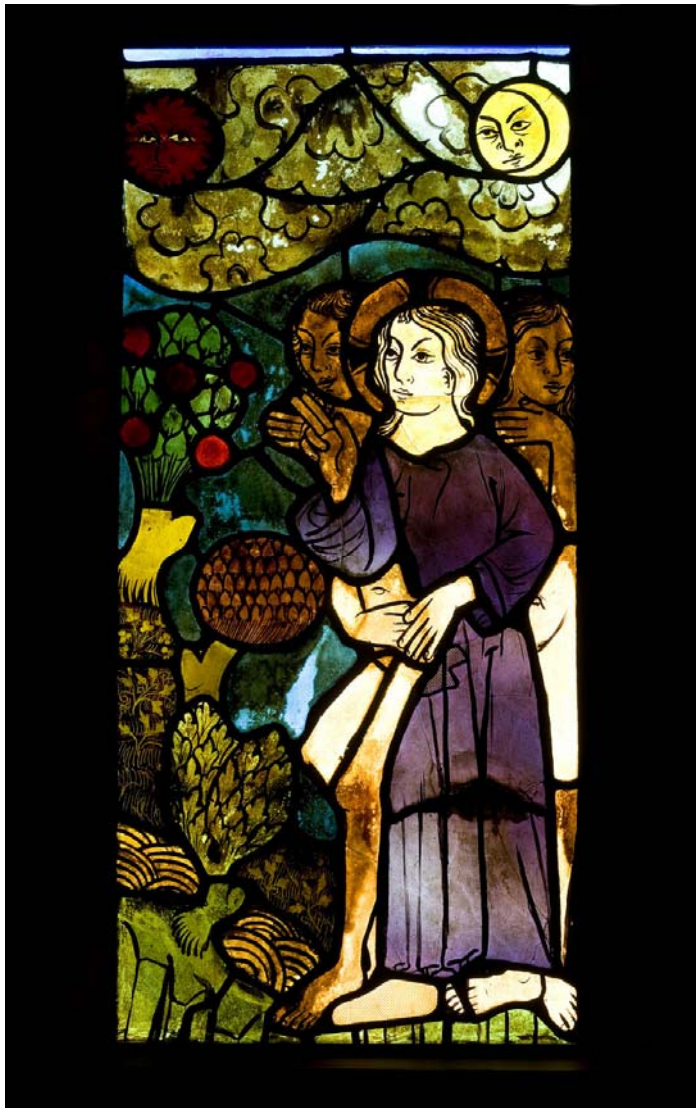
A second sub-project was deducting measurements from the evaluation projects for re-organisation. Among the central issues were the future organisational structure, prospective processes, and how cooperation and communication can be enhanced in order to reach the prime objective more effectively: doing human rights work.

As Monika Lüke, General Secretary of the German section approved the plan, the experts of SEgroup co-created job descriptions for the 52 professionals, developed team structures and created an elaborated draft for the organisation body in close collaboration with the client.

“That was something I appreciated during the project,” says Fabian Hofmann, “we developed nothing behind closed doors, but did everything together with our client. That is a typical strength of the systemic approach and being close to the organisation during the process is something that benefits the organisation.”

The project for Amnesty International in Germany still goes on.

The politics of culture: Alexander Kiehne facilitates dialogue about cultural planning in Frankfurt (Oder)



Baum der Erkenntnis (tree of knowledge), restored stained-glass window of the Marienkirche. Press kit Stadt Frankfurt (Oder)

Culture is about surprise. Like a theatre-play, a night at the opera or a video festival, we have a certain amount of met expectations, but we also expect an element of surprise. Culture itself on the other hand needs a certain element of reliability. Wages, royalties and a lot more have to be planned before the curtain rises the first time. In short, money is the interface between culture and politics. The bi-annual Cultural Development Plan (in German: Kulturentwicklungsplan) in Frankfurt (Oder) addresses the topic.

As the times are, upcoming culture development plans are not allocated higher funds. Instead, due to a shrinking budget, culture has to manage with less

funds than in the last years. A community such as Hamburg with its steep cuts for the Schauspielhaus is a good example. Savings are simply decreed by the powers that be and due to this, highly controversial cutbacks are being made.

The mayor of Frankfurt (Oder) instead chose another approach: to include stakeholders and concerned parties right from the start and to have the process

facilitated by external experts. Therefore from the beginning, Frankfurt (Oder) relied on local resources and expertise. Thus the mayor chose the well-known University, Europa-Universität Viadrina for its research work in culture. Janine Nuyken, Vice president of the Viadrina then included SEgroup Consortial Partner Alexander Kiehne in this facilitation process.

The city focused on asking the stakeholders themselves to deal with necessary cutbacks instead of predetermined percentages. Among the possible solutions are cooperations between theatres to reducing costs without cutting programs or quality.

Alexander Kiehne is positive that the process will be finished successfully in due time for the deciding city council meeting in November. “So far the good results justify the process”, states Mr. Kiehne.

“Beside the political parameters, it was interesting to facilitate outside of a master-design, but with ad-hoc designs after each step. So it was less of a co-moderation for me, but a co-processing facilitation.”

He was especially impressed with the negotiation processes of different mindsets and action-guiding paradigms inside culture, arts, administration and politics. “It was interesting to see that people with very different interests managed to develop a keen sense for other perspectives towards culture and it’s financing beyond their organisational and personal points of views.”

It seems that when stakeholders are involved right from the start, even cutbacks can be discussed surprisingly matter-of-factly.

Public-Private partnership model to improve youth welfare in Ukraine



“Where some kind of family life is possible”: Our Kids in Kiev

Our Kids is about transforming Ukraine’s traditional vast foster homes towards small living groups. Offering some kind of family life for children who already suffered from dysfunctional families and a lack of emotional warmth and feeling of security was made possible thanks to the “German-Polish-Ukrainian society”, a Berlin-based charity. In collaboration with the Humboldt – Viadrina School of Governance (HVSG), the SEgroup supervised pilot projects of this Public Private partnership in Ukraine’s capital Kiev.

Part of the supervision team was Dr. Louis Klein, Managing Director of the SEgroup: “We see this as a chance to bring change and an equalisation of standards to the European level of youth care by implementing these pilot projects.”

The transformation initially meant a steep cultural change for the involved civil servants and Dr. Klein says he was “amazed to see the level of passion and commitment, not only among the European partners and the President of the Ukraine and other leaders who sponsored the project, but as well inside the rank and file of the national and local institutions of Ukraine’s public sector.”

SEgroup reaches out for Scandinavia



Empty: Scandinavian beach before 4 pm

Along with a new major client in Denmark, come new insights into different organisational cultures. “It’s a very different, but healthy approach. You start at 7 am and at 4 pm the desks are empty”, says Brigitte Bauder, lead consultant of SEgroup within the change management project. What she likes about it? “If you have to get things done inside a given daily time-frame, you start to cut off unnecessary tasks. With a hard-close, one is somewhat forced to be more focused. Our client has the highest expectations about the quality of his products. Being focused and delivering high quality to customers go together pretty well. Beside that, a reliable time-table helps for healthy work-life balance“.

The Scandinavian colleagues were brought in something new. For the first time, the fresh format “SoYouKnow” went live in a consulting project. The new workshop format, short for Socialise Your Knowledge, was developed by senior members of the SEgroup during the first half of 2009. As protocols of SEgroup demand it, SoYouKnow was first tested inside the SEgroup’s organisation and afterwards on different conferences in an academic context. Only then, it became the format introduced for the first time during a workshop with the complete quality department of our client.

As Brigitte Bauder puts it: “The excellent results of the format show that our approach to develop new systemic formats in due time and under the supervision and with the collaboration of the systemic scientific and professional community is the right way.”

SEgroup collaborates with TekTao during Expo 2010 in Shanghai



“Design as a catalyst for sustainable living”. Chongming Eco-presskit

Chongming, an Island north of Shanghai is a part of Greater Shanghai and the second largest island of the People’s Republic. It was chosen by Chinese authorities to be transformed into a “Green zone” in the course of the Shanghai Expo. The aim is to develop sustainable ways for agriculture, producing organic food and to serve as a starting point for incoming eco-friendly tourism. Furthermore, Chongming is designated as a hub for medical tourism and to become a showcase of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM).

Studio TAO, the design consulting branch of TEKTAO – a Chinese research group, was selected to design and implement parts of the major plan. The approach is to use design as a catalyst for sustainable living in rural-urban contexts, bridging traditional values with new opportunities for socioeconomic change.

As a part of the wider collaboration between Studio TAO and the SEgroup, senior members of SEgroup’s knowledge project SocialDesignSite were asked to facilitate a workshop and give advice about the impact of social design. Now, in time with the Shanghai Expo, a book has been published about the “Chongming Sustainable Community Project” by TEKTAO, including a contribution from editors of SocialDesignSite.

“This exceptional project has great potential”, says Suk-Han Tang, Consortial Partner within the SEgroup and responsible for the SocialDesignSite, “Exploring social design for such an ambitious project, enables to uncover and reveal the great potential it holds and is certainly the way to enable true sustainability. We really hope to see this project realised”.

Design Harvests - Chongming Xianqiao, Sustainable Community Design Research Project
ISBN: 978 – 0747595823 – 3

In brief

Dr. Louis Klein awarded with the inaugural Research Prize of ICCPM



Radical re-thinking of PM: “Dare to do more than we do today”

The International Centre for Complex Project Management (ICCPM) announced that the inaugural Research Prize would be awarded to a team of three scholars from Germany for an interdisciplinary group submission on the theme “Mastering Complex Projects by radical Rethinking of PM”.

The ICCPM, a non-profit initiative of government bodies and corporate partners in Australia, the UK and the US, honours Manfred Saynisch, Thomas Baumann and Dr. Louis Klein (Managing Director of the SEgroup) for scientific progress in the field of complex project management.

The focus of Dr. Klein was the insight that social and cultural complexity is ever more becoming a critical success factor in managing complex projects. As Dr. Klein puts it: “We could do much more exciting and progressive things in complex project management, if we would just dare.” Dr. Klein finds it “especially rewarding, that the award honours the work of the newest development inside the SEgroup – the knowledge project CCCPM (Cross Cultural Complex Project Management)”.

Brigitte Bauder new acting Vice President of Finance



Aims on higher transparency: Brigitte Bauder

Some things are best done by external experts. The systemic consultants of the SEgroup, whose success heavily depends on the advantages of external observations, are the first to admit that. On the other hand, some critical standard processes can be done in-house. That includes figures and numbers. From April on, says Brigitte Bauder, the new acting Vice President of Finance, “SEgroup aims on higher transparency in financial matters. Therefore we switch to cost centre accounting, change our tax consulting office and do a lot of what we have outsourced in the past from now on in-house.” Most of the change was achieved 1rst of July.



Outlook

SEgroup FEST

Change is a complex process and experiences differ greatly from organisations and individuals. Thus, we want to provide a place to exchange stories, explore ideas, and bridge anyone interested in the field. Beginning of next year, we are planning to invite our clients, colleagues, partners, and friends to meet in a loungy and pleasant location outside office walls in Berlin. If you are interested, please let us know already by sending us an email with subject “SEgroup FEST” to Office@SEgroup.de.

Upcoming publications

At SEgroup, we are working hard on research and while we are now exploring the topic of resilience, our diagnosis tool the Systemic Inquiry is currently being reviewed and will be published in the coming weeks in the [library](#) section of our website. In the course of the years, we saw the need to sharpen our experience on team development and this will be soon reflected on a reworked version of the GRPI paper: Mobilising Team.

Cooperation model revealed

Topics of co-creation, participation and transparency are not only being said but lived fully at SEgroup. Our cooperation model has always been an intriguing and exciting topic, nurturing many conversations over the past years. We are now working on making this cooperation model transparent, describing our roles and processes within our offices, and towards our partners. Known as the SEgroup Charter, this document is fundamental for anyone interested in partnering with us, and will be found shortly on our [website](#).

Suk-Han Tang

Head of SEgroup Communication

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