

CASE STUDY:Two million Marks for Da-Di – Saved by schoolchildren

SECTOR: Energy
COUNTRY: Germany

BACKGROUND

A new dishwasher had been overdue for a long time. The old one used up any amount of electricity and untold litres of water. Now the school kitchens at the Justin-Wagner comprehensive school in Rossdorf/Hesse will be able to buy a new one. The leaking fittings in the sports hall shower rooms also had to be changed. "And we'd also like overhead projectors, grammar books and teaching software", says the director, Heinz Mainusch. This will now be possible for this comprehensive school, due to a premium of more than 32,500 Marks, which the Darmstadt-Dieburg district has ready for them "on call".



DaDi-Management - this is what the secret of success of Da(rmstadt)-Di(eburg) is called – has been monitoring water and electricity consumption and also heating and waste disposal costs for the district's 80 schools since the beginning of 1999. They were chosen for the

Kreisagenda 21 Project because their approximately 400 buildings form the

largest stock of public buildings. Another reason were the 32,000 pupils, that is, the very large number of people of different ages meeting on a daily basis, since Da-Di is also interested in the participation and qualification of participating teachers and caretakers. Participation also means, though, having a share in the expenses saved and therefore cash for the school's coffers. All participants agreed that 30 percent of the money saved should go to the district council's budget and 70 percent to the schools.

57 percent of that have to be reinvested for specific purposes for the protection of resources and 43 percent can be freely spent.

Nobody really thought that the whole thing would be worth it. But after a year and a half, in June 2000, the first figures were available and left no one in any doubt at all: the ancillary costs of the 80 schools had dropped by almost two million Marks. Expenditure for heating, electricity, water and waste disposal had been reduced by well over 17 percent, when compared with earlier years - in spite of eco tax and new buildings. In other words: the amount of water saved was the equivalent of over 60,000 baths, carbon dioxide not emitted the equivalent of 180 railway tank wagons and the reduced number of kilowatt hours could keep 530 single family houses heated for a year. "A fantastic success", says *Vize-Landrätin* Celine Fries, the rural district's deputy chief administration officer, who helped to conceive and initiate the project.

Based on these successes the district council decided also to make

available its own 30 percent to schools for building measures. "This gives them a larger amount to invest and in a certain way is also a form of reward", this is how Gerrit Poth, the district council's energy adviser, justifies the decision.

There are several reasons for this success: apart from a reward system for targeted saving and the corresponding attitudes and conduct of pupils and teachers, school management and caretakers were informed of the new project at the very beginning. Additional information events were organized by the Da-Di-Team non-centrally at between five to six schools in each case. Invited were school management, teachers, parent/teacher associations and so-called Eco-Check-Teams, a group of a maximum of ten pupils at each school.

The most important working basis is the so-called Building Pass, a form of inventory for each school building. It lists heated areas as well as existing insulation, heating system and occupancy. It also contains an estimate of the energy and electricity consumption to be expected and therefore makes it possible to calculate investment and redevelopment requirements.

Da-Di-Management goes hand in hand with eliminating weaknesses within the administration. For example: competencies of a similar nature, until then spread across several departments or offices, were combined in one place and existing contracts with the energy supply companies renegotiated. In plain language: instead of individual contracts with each school which had been usual before, the district council now insisted on framework contracts for several schools together. This made it possible to make use of special conditions and

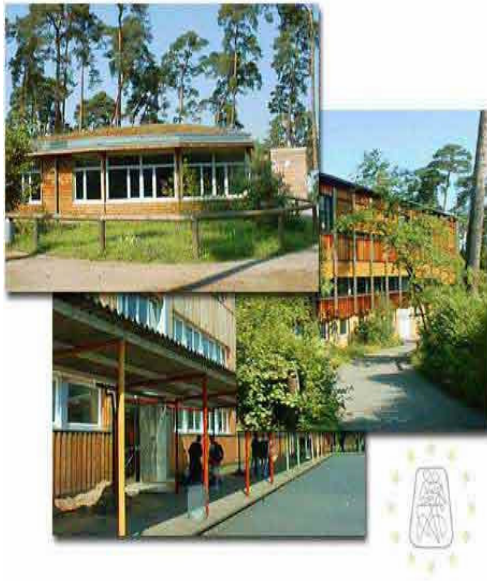
rebates for larger customers. It also has by now become administrative routine to monitor and report on the measures implemented.

Advice and assistance by district council members of staff is a further component of this success. "They are regular companions on the new path towards daily protection of the environment", emphasizes Celine Fries. For Gerrit Poth the key to success is "certainly the contact with the schools, especially with the 64 caretakers". As they are the connecting link, so to speak, with the users - the teachers and pupils. Experience has shown that due to their work alone a reduction in energy consumption by up to 20 percent was possible. Every year caretakers make an energy inspection tour of their school accompanied by energy advisors and school management and explain what has been done to date and what still needs to be done. So that they are able to keep track of technical requirements they themselves have to go to school twice a year. Their training is in 'protection of resources'. Many caretakers appreciate this form of working together: "In earlier days we had the feeling that we were being left on our own, as far as problems were concerned. Today there is someone to contact."

Particularly successful were the Lichtenberg school in Ober-Ramstadt, the relatively small (260 pupils) Gutenberg school in Dieburg and the School Village Bergstraße in Seeheim-Jugenheim. They saved the highest amount of costs within the first 18 months of Da-Di-Management and since the middle of last year have been able to call up between 32,900 and 34,900 Marks from the district council.

t's the mixture that does it! This is how the experiences in *Landkreis Hesse* can be summarized. And it means specific offers for different target groups and co-operation in a targeted and results-orientated manner. Leading to participation and success.

Landkreis Darmstadt-Dieburg (Hesse),
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283,000 inhabitants



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