

**Public interventions, awareness raising and dialogue
on decolonisation and sustainable development**

Overview Paper¹

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¹ This overview paper is an abridged, anonymised and updated version of a project report produced by the MSP Institute in July 2022 with the support of a grant from the Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf district office of Berlin. The aim of the cooperation was (1) to sensitise citizens to the connections and continuities between colonial history and the implementation of the SDGs; (2) to support the decolonisation of Berlin's urban space; and (3) to develop concrete project ideas for constructive, low-threshold interventions for short-term implementation by the district office.

The core of the cooperation was the present overview paper on topics, actors, places and approaches for possible interventions in public spaces and other awareness-raising and dialogue measures. Within the framework of the cooperation, five ideas for concrete project activities were developed. A total of 25 interviews with key actors and other relevant stakeholders were conducted.

1. Background

The Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf district office has committed itself to the municipal implementation of the **17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** by initiating and supporting sustainability initiatives, educational projects and events. Through the Education for Sustainable Development Unit (SBNE), the district office organises exchange, support, action, information, networking and joint project development with many actors on sustainable issues.

While **decolonising federal, state and local level** spaces and institutions, it is becoming clear that there are many connections between colonial history and current challenges in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Colonialism is at the root of unequal distribution of resources and power and is one of the causes of wars and racism. Colonial inequality and exclusion continue to have an impact: those who do not know about colonialism will not be able to overcome injustices, neither in Berlin nor in the world.

The state of Berlin bears a special responsibility for coming to terms with German colonialism. For it was here that the key event of modern colonialism, the **Africa Conference**, took place in 1884, through which the African continent was divided up among the great European powers and arbitrary borders were drawn. In Berlin, many places still bear witness to the glorification of the colonial era without people knowing about it. This also applies to the district of Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf, through which, for example, Bismarckstrasse runs as a central axis named after the host of the Africa Conference.

The **effects of colonial rule** on the developing countries are complex and can be seen in dysfunctional structures of rule, corruption, dependence on the export of raw materials, modern forms of slavery and other aspects of the "externalisation society". The costs of our prosperity are outsourced to the global South. An unaddressed colonial history is an obstacle to development in overcoming these problems and stands in the way of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals as a whole, here and there.

Achieving the SDGs is a global task for which Western consumer societies are also responsible. This can be seen in **SDG 12 for responsible consumption and production patterns**, which puts responsibility also on consumers. The SDGs can also be realised through responsible consumer behaviour in Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf. In this respect, raising awareness of current North-South exploitation and its roots in colonial history is also part of the development policy mandate at the municipal level.

This paper provides an overview of topics, actors, places and approaches for possible interventions in public space and other measures for awareness-raising and dialogue in Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf.

2. Actors

In August 2019, the Berlin House of Representatives decided to develop a city-wide reappraisal and remembrance concept on the history and consequences of colonialism in the state of Berlin. The aim of the corresponding motion of the SPD, Die Linken and Bündnis 90/Die Grünen parliamentary groups entitled "Berlin takes responsibility for its colonial past" was to "intensify the social debate on the history of colonialism associated with Berlin, to anchor the topic in science and education, to contribute to reconciliation and to develop dignified forms of remembrance". In addition, "the traces and after-effects left by the colonial past in Berlin and in the former

German colonies are to be taken into account up to the present.²

In this context, a coordination office for **a city-wide concept for coming to terms with Berlin's colonial past ("Coordination Office")** was established. It is run by the association Decolonize Berlin, which was founded in 2019 by a civil society network of Black, Afro-diasporic, postcolonial and development initiatives, associations and individual activists. Since May 2020, the coordination office has organised a public participation process for a city-wide reappraisal concept, which has a pilot character for other cities. At the end of 2021, the coordination office published a catalogue of demands and measures in the areas of post-colonial legal practice, colonial knowledge production, coloniality in the cultural sphere, decolonial remembrance culture and municipal development cooperation.³

It is in line with these developments that many of the Berlin-based actors currently dealing with issues of colonialism or decolonisation are federal or state institutions or actors whose sphere of activity extends across the district. At the federal level, these institutions include the Federal Foreign Office, the State Minister for Culture and the Media, the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation and the Contact Point for Collections from Colonial Contexts in Germany. At the state level, the Senate Department for Culture and Europe and for Education, Youth, Family; the State Agency for Development Cooperation, the Berlin universities and the City Museum are among the institutions that should be mentioned. Various non-governmental organisations such as Berlin Postcolonial, Initiative Schwarze Menschen in Deutschland, Each One Teach One, AfricAvenir or the Berliner Entwicklungspolitische Ratschlag (Berlin Development Policy Council) and the Entwicklungspolitische Bildungs- und Informationszentrum (Development Education and Information Centre) also work across the district.

The district museums play an important role at the **district level**, including the Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf District Museum ("Villa Oppenheim"). The museums meet at a round table every three to four months to discuss the critical reappraisal of the district's colonial history, its mediation and the networking of corresponding activities of the participating museums. Since 2021, exhibitions on various aspects of the colonial theme have been held in individual district museums with funding from the Senate and the Federal Cultural Foundation. The Treptow Museum made a start with its exhibition "zu-rückGESCHAUT" and set standards.⁴ In October 2022, the Kreuzberg-Friedrichshain Museum followed with its exhibition "Despite Everything: Migration in the Colonial Metropolis of Berlin".⁵ The Villa Oppenheim is currently planning another major exhibition on the subject in 2023. This exhibition is to involve cooperation with the Prussian Palaces and Gardens Foundation Berlin-Brandenburg and will deal, among other things, with the portrayal of dark-skinned people in courtly paintings.⁶

Dealing with the colonial past is also a topic at various departments of the TU Berlin, most prominently Prof. Dr. Benedicte Savoy at the Institute of Art History and Historical Urban Studies. Furthermore, various schools in the district, especially the Nelson Mandela School, address colonialism and related issues.⁷

² Berliner Abgeordnetenhaus, print 18/1788, 26.03.2019, see: <https://www.parlament-berlin.de/ad0s/18/IIIPlen/vorgang/d18-1788.pdf>

³ Coordination Office at Decolonize Berlin, Annual Report 2021, December 2021, see: <https://decolonize-berlin.de/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Jahresbericht-der-Koordinierungsstelle-2021.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.berlin.de/museum-treptow-koepenick/ausstellungen/artikel.649851.php>

⁵ <https://www.fhxb-museum.de/index.php?id=29>

⁶ Interview, 12.05.2022.

⁷ E.g. the middle school project of the Nelson Mandela School "On the trail of abducted artworks. Kingdom of Benin", see <https://www.nelson-mandela-schule.net/de/1870-auf-den-spuren-verschleppter-kunstwerke-koenigreich-benin-on-the-trail-of-abducted-works-of-art-kingdom-of-benin.html>. Furthermore, the school currently offers a Black

3. Places in the District

Berlin was the capital of the German Empire, where the Africa Conference was held in 1884/85 and the Colonial Exhibition with its "Völkerschau" (ethnic show) in Treptower Park in 1896. Berlin was also the capital of Brandenburg-Prussia, which established colonial settlements in what is now Ghana from 1682 to 1711 and traded ivory, gold and slaves from there. The German colonies were annexed, administered and governed from Berlin. To this day, many colonial traces can still be found on street signs, monuments or in former buildings that glorify the colonial era. In addition, some 500,000 objects and almost 10,000 human remains from former colonies are stored in the depots of the National Museums in Berlin and in the Charité Hospital, which are not accessible to the public.

Senate funds are currently being used to carry out research projects on places significant in colonial history. These include the project "Mapping Berlin as a Postcolonial City", which was carried out by the Initiative Schwarze Menschen, Berlin Post-Kolonial and the practical research project "erinnerungsorte" at the TU Berlin.^{8 9}

The map shows that most of the relevant places are in the Mitte district (incl. Tiergarten and Wedding). In Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf, the map contains only three sites:

- Equestrian statue of the Great Elector in front of Charlottenburg Palace¹⁰
- Monuments to Frederick I and Sophie Charlottenburg (Charlottenburg Gate)¹¹
- Ethnic shows at Berlin Zoo¹²

In 2016, the Berlin Development Policy Council compiled a **dossier on colonial and racist street names in Berlin**. The only street in the district that was found to be in acute need of renaming is Wissmannstrasse. However, the report also mentions that there are many other streets named

History Class for its upper school, i.e. study days on the topic of German colonialism, see <https://www.nelson-mandela-schule.net/de/1898-black-history-class-continues-as-federal-model-project-until-the-end-of-school-year-22-23.html>

⁸ <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=9fb2779479e44fe3918089636970029d>

⁹ Another, more recent mapping project is currently being carried out and continuously updated by Dekoloniale. It shows the global connections and uses a biographical approach that focuses on narratives of resistance and/or victim biographies. Within this framework, there are also local allocations, but without differentiating down to the district level, see: <https://www.dekoloniale.de/de/map?kind=stories>

¹⁰ According to the attached statement, the Great Elector provided ships and money for initial expeditions to the African continent, founded the Electorate of Brandenburg's navy and, in 1682, the Brandenburg African Company. The primary founding motivation and main source of income had been the trade in enslaved people from the African continent.

¹¹ The ruling couple was listed in view of the colony of Großfriedrichsburg operated during their reign. The colony served as a central transshipment point for the slave trade of the time.

¹² The explanation on the card states: "In 1874, the Hamburg animal trader Carl Hagenbeck, a member of the "Berlin Society for Anthropology, Ethnology and Prehistory", had the following idea: he wanted to bring a family from Lapland to Germany to "exhibit" them in Hamburg, Berlin and Leipzig. At Carl Hagenbeck's first "Völkerschau", which was attended by thousands of people, the public cheered because they were told that they had the opportunity to see these people in the villages "as if they were in Africa".

The scientists (especially from anthropology) were also very excited because they were allowed to examine and measure the "brought" people. The scientists were enthusiastic and approved of this form of displaying human bodies. This way they could regularly collect new "data" without having to travel themselves.

After Hagenbeck's great success at the end of the 19th century, he put together new "Völkerschauen", which were to represent all colonies or climatic zones.

These shows of people for amusement and entertainment took place all over Europe and North America between 1870 and 1930. On 1 August 1844, such a performance was also held in the Zoological Garden in Berlin, the oldest zoo in Germany. In 1878, 62,000 onlookers came to Berlin Zoo on a Sunday to watch the humans Carl Hagenbeck put on display as "Nubians".

after or honouring intellectual and political leaders of colonialism. These streets should be considered in the context of the city-wide concept of critical reappraisal of colonialism.¹³

In addition to the above-mentioned places included in the postcolonial mapping, at least three other streets or squares in the district with a colonial-historical connection can thus be named:

- Wissmannstrasse
- Bismarckstrasse
- Adenauerplatz

Another place is the Stahnsdorf cemetery belonging to the district, where there is a mausoleum of the entrepreneur Kurt Hoffmann, who earned his wealth with plantations in the colony of German East Africa.¹⁴

The Coordination Office assumes that further sites of colonial historical significance will be discovered in Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf.¹⁵ These would mainly be places where activists or victims or those affected by colonial history lived or worked. It is likely that such places will be identified by experts who are working on the concept of the above-mentioned exhibition of the Museum Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf in 2023. The more research was done, the more places and people relevant to colonial history would be found. In this respect, the mapping is a "work in progress".

Public interventions can be carried out at **places in the district** that have a direct connection to colonial history either through their name (e.g. Bismarckstrasse) or a monument (e.g. in the Charlottenburg Palace courtyard). They can also be carried out in places that are suitable for interventions due to their local conditions or factual contexts. Possible exhibition spaces in new buildings in the district should also be considered.

The district has various locations with opportunities for public interventions or awareness-raising measures using artistic and creative means. These include:

- Mierendorff Island:
Opportunities in connection with the redesign and revitalisation of the riverside circular walk; inclusion of the diverse neighbourhood with a high proportion of migrants
- Hardenbergplatz:
Opportunities in the redesign of the square in front of the Zoological Garden; thematic context of the ethnological shows and/or biodiversity.

¹³ Berlin Development Policy Council (ed.), *Stadt neu lesen: Dossier on Colonial and Racist Street Names in Berlin*, 2016, p. 8. The report states that:

"These are people such as Otto von Bismarck (1815-1898), who as Imperial Chancellor invited the major European powers and the USA to the Africa Conference, at which the division of Africa among the European colonial powers was negotiated, and who himself was responsible for the colonisation of Togo, Cameroon, "German Southwest Africa" (today's Namibia), "German East Africa" (today's Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi), "Kaiser Wilhelm Land" (today's New Guinea) and the Bismarck Archipelago. Konrad Adenauer should also be mentioned here, as he was vice-president of the German Colonial Society from 1931 to 1933.

Likewise, the Prussian philosophers Immanuel Kant and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel were intellectual enablers of colonialism because they justified enslavement and colonialism with their racist positions. This group also includes scientists such as Rudolf Virchow, who was responsible for the appropriation of numerous human bones in the colonies, which he used for racist anthropological research, or Robert Koch, who carried out inhuman medical studies in the colonies. These include people who, like Alexander von Humboldt, contributed to increasing the colonisers' knowledge of the colonised and their resources through research and grave robbing as part of expeditions, thus enabling their systematic exploitation."

¹⁴ See the dialogue event organised by the SBNE on March 24, 2021: <https://www.berlin.de/ba-charlottenburg-wilmersdorf/aktuelles/pressemitteilungen/2021/pressemitteilung.1067174.php>

¹⁵ Interview, 12.05.2022.

- Ernst-Reuter-Platz:
Possible use for large-scale poster exhibitions in cooperation with Bauhaus Re-Use; thematic references to colonial pioneers of modernity or re-cycling themes.
- Steinplatz:
Possible use as exhibition space for artworks in cooperation with University of the Arts.
- Schloßstrasse:
Possible use for large-scale poster exhibitions; possible references to the equestrian monument of the Great Elector (slave trade)
- Olympic Stadium:
Possible use for large-scale poster/poster exhibitions; possible references to racist/colonialist aspects of the 1936 Olympics
- Fair:
Possible opportunities for cooperation with regard to sustainable products, fair world trade and existing colonial continuities in international economic relations
- TU Berlin Campus:
Possible exhibitions in the TU showroom UNI_VERSUM in preparation of the project "Pavilion and Knowledge Paths" to disseminate university knowledge to the public; various topics relevant to colonial history conceivable
- Villa Oppenheim:
Possibly use of areas of the district museum for special exhibitions on topics relevant to colonial history
- Berlin Municipal Gallery:
Possibly use of exhibition space for "locally produced" art exhibitions in connection with art competitions or international exchange programmes on colonial themes

4. Topics

The **term decolonisation** goes back to the political scientist Moritz Julius Bonn, who understood "decolonisation" to mean the processes of detachment leading to the end of colonial rule, as well as the social, economic and cultural developments following the attainment of state independence.¹⁶ While the term primarily refers to the processes of detachment and developments within (former) colonies, it is now also understood with regard to dealing with colonial continuities within the former colonial powers.

The civil society alliance Decolonize Berlin understands decolonisation "as a process of dismantling current racist power and domination relations, contents and structures and an accompanying necessary confrontation with the past. It is about sharing power and authority - both over the meaning of cultural institutions and over who these institutions are supposed to serve. It is about the need to create space for multiple perspectives and to show the different contexts that determine how culture or issues are viewed."¹⁷

In the interviews, interviewees stated that decolonisation aims to make visible the link between Germany and its colonial history, and that in this context it is above all those affected or formerly marginalised voices who should be heard. Questions of inclusion, empowerment and social justice

¹⁶ Moritz Julius Bonn: Economics and Politics. Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1932.

¹⁷ Coordination Office at Decolonize Berlin, Annual Report 2021, p. 40. See: <https://decolonize-berlin.de/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Jahresbericht-der-Koordinierungsstelle-2021.pdf>

were part of the discussion. Decolonisation includes broadening perspectives, critical reflection and struggle against oppression.¹⁸ It is important to take a comprehensive view of colonial history that covers all areas of society and includes questions of sustainable development and current North-South asymmetries.¹⁹

At the end of 2020, the Coordination Office presented an interim report according to which colonial continuities would show up above all in institutional and structural racism, social inequality and economic exploitation.²⁰ In the report, the theme was presented in four sub-areas, i.e. of education and science, art and culture, memory and urban society, and municipal international cooperation.

The interviewees criticised that the public discussion currently focused too narrowly on those issues that are related to culture and education. The debate had begun with a focus on the re-naming of street names, the opening of the Humboldt Forum, as well as the restitution of cultural assets and human gifts, and was now being extended to other areas of culture and science.²¹ In urban space, street names, monuments and memorials were of particular importance because they manifest the "cognitive violence" of the prevailing political system and reflect power relations.²²

"Hard" issues of colonial continuities such as international trade relations, development cooperation or migration/refugees were not sufficiently addressed or placed in the context of decolonisation. It was assumed that these topics were too difficult to solve because substantial material interests were involved. This is different with the topics of culture and education, which cost "nothing" and are well suited for public dialogue.²³ They may also be more complex and difficult to communicate than cultural or educational issues.

Which relevant **sub-topics of decolonisation** are suitable for public interventions or awareness-raising measures in the district? Five different categories of topics are conceivable that could be presented, classified and communicated by the district:

1. Direct connections between German colonial history and current North-South inequalities;
2. Current topics of sustainable development with a colonial historical reference, even if they have no direct connection to German colonial history;
3. General connections between colonialism and sustainable development;
4. Aspects of German colonial history that are particularly relevant, even if they have no direct connection with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, based on specific places;
5. Questions of colonial history with special relevance for the district.

Without claiming to be exhaustive, the following subtopics can be listed:

1. **Direct links between German colonial history and contemporary North-South inequalities:**
 - Settlement, inequitable land distribution and land reform in Namibia.
 - Child labour and cocoa cultivation in Cameroon

¹⁸ Interview, 03.05.2022.

¹⁹ Interview, 12.05.2022.

²⁰ Coordination Office at Decolonize Berlin, interim report, Dec. 2020, p. 4. See: https://decolonize-berlin.de/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/DB_Zwischenbericht-2020.pdf

²¹ Interview, 12.05.2022.

²² Interview, 03.05.2022.

²³ Interview, 12.05.2022.

- Africa Conference as the Beginning of European “civilisation” and development policy
 - White supremacy, racism and the (post-) colonial gaze (possibly focus on Leni Rieffenthal)
 - Missionisation, liquor sales and colonial continuities in the export business
 - Colonial continuities in the forwarding business
2. **Current topics of sustainable development with a colonial-historical reference without a direct connection to German colonial history:**
- Conflict minerals, raw materials as conflict drivers
 - Child labour in raw materials for energy transition
 - Externalisation society and modern forms of slavery
 - Electronic waste, rubbish dumps in Africa, and recycling
3. **General connections between colonialism and sustainable development:**
- Artificial boundaries and conflicts
 - Exploitative state vs. local/tribal loyalties, clientelism
 - Western legal and administrative systems without consideration of local (legal) traditions (result: dysfunctional state)
 - Extractive industry, corruption and violence
 - Neo-colonial land grabbing
 - Unfair trade regimes, Eurocentrism/colonial external orientation, dependency and debt trap
 - Continuity of slavery and modern forms of exploitation
 - Racism and internalised sense of inferiority, lack of self-confidence
4. **Particularly relevant or “forgotten” aspects of German colonial history not directly related to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda:**
- Genocide in Namibia 1904-1907, reparations negotiations
 - Maji Maji uprising in Tanzania
 - Brandenburg-Prussian slave trade in Ghana
 - Rwanda as a German colony, racism and genocide
 - Colonial Ethnic Shows
 - Coffee, cocoa and rubber as pure colonial goods
 - Gender-based violence, rape, colonial pornography
5. **Questions of colonial historical interest with special reference to the district:**
- Charlottenburg as a beneficiary of colonialism?²⁴
 - Continuity of Brandenburg slave trade with later colonial empire of the Kaiserreich?
 - Different ways of dealing with the colonial past in the FRG and GDR²⁵

²⁴ Charlottenburg was the richest city in the German Empire. If the empire profited from colonialism, this is obvious for Charlottenburg as well. To what extent the colonies were profitable for the public sector is questionable. The German colonial empire lasted a relatively short time, so that the “investment phase” may have been less profitable than was the case with other European colonial powers. It is undisputed that many German companies and private individuals profited from colonialism. These include trading and transport companies, most of which are/were based in Hamburg or Bremen, as well as the settlers in the colonies or protectorates. To what extent did the city of Charlottenburg, its residents or companies based there also make a good business out of colonialism?

²⁵ Ernst-Reuter-Platz could be a connection to the district as an urban counterpoint to Straußberger Platz.

- Dealing with Bismarck (founder of the German Empire, sceptic of colonialism and host of the Africa Conference)²⁶

5. Approaches for Action

Possible action ranges from youth painting campaigns, art competitions, exhibitions and neighbourhood festivals to discussion rounds and citizens' councils. The aim is to work closely with the district's educational institutions and to involve affected population groups and representatives of former colonies. It is also conceivable that concrete measures will be developed on the basis of previous research projects to locate sites of colonial historical significance in the district.

The following measures were suggested:

- City walks to places in the district relevant to colonial history
- Film series on topics of sustainable development and colonial continuities
- Art competition on colonial history and/or sustainable development with murals or large-format photos
- Artist residencies in Berlin and Windhoek
- Presentation and story-telling on sustainable products at folk festival or fair
- Travelling memorial sculpture on gender aspects in colonial history
- Continuation of city mapping of places relevant to colonial history
- Citizen-science projects, e.g. interdisciplinary lunch talks
- Youth art actions or project weeks on sustainability topics
- Public artwork initiated by civil society on colonial history
- Guided tours with focus on colonial history through museums and exhibitions
- Theatre festivals, performances, temporary artworks
- Neighbourhood festival on sustainability and/or diversity

On the basis of the interviews, five **concrete project ideas** were developed that cover a certain range or variety of methods and topics and deal with such colonial history topics particularly relevant or opportune in the district. These project ideas are available to the district and can be further developed and implemented in the future.

In the present context, it is desirable that **artistic interventions** or related awareness-raising are complemented by **dialogue or educational components**. Art should not only provide an aesthetic experience, but also explicitly promote exchange and help impart knowledge and awareness. However, art projects can only transfer political-historical or technical knowledge to a limited extent. In some cases, certain contexts cannot be presented within the framework of the chosen art form (e.g. theatre or dance performance). There is also the danger that a political mandate for art may come into conflict with artistic freedom, artistic aesthetics or ambiguity. It can make sense to carry out the artistic part of the overall project in a complementary way, but separately from the dialogue and education components in the narrower sense.²⁷ For the success of such "extended" art projects, it is essential that not only the artwork, but also the discussion events or other knowledge transfer measures are carefully designed and implemented. Ideally, the elements of art and dialogue or knowledge transfer are balanced and complementary.

²⁶ The treatment of Bismarck or the streets or monuments named after him could vary depending on the local context. The Bismarck statue in the port of Hamburg has greater colonial historical significance than Bismarckstrasse in the centre of the capital city.

²⁷ Cf. Leopold von Carlowitz & Prisca Mandimika: "Promoting Dialogue and Raising Awareness: Land Reform and the Arts in Namibia", Paper prepared for 2015 World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty, Washington D.C., March 2015, S. 19, see: <http://the-eis.com/elibrary/sites/default/files/downloads/literature/Land%20reform%20and%20the%20Arts%20in%20Namibia.pdf>

While public dialogue or awareness raising on decolonisation and sustainable development is an element of all the proposals made, some of them are more specialised, focused on specific target groups or designed for specific cultural contexts. A general, **broad citizen dialogue** on the topic can best be achieved in the context of a public dialogue process for a participatory development of an artwork or monument in public space on colonial history or colonial continuities. A multi-stakeholder dialogue or citizens' council could also be conducted to develop a decolonisation strategy for the district.²⁸

Interventions in and dialogue with public space are also at the centre of the demands that the coordination office published in its annual report 2021 in the field of remembrance culture:²⁹

- Development of a central memorial for the recognition, reappraisal and remembrance of German colonial crimes and the genocide of the Overherero and Nama;
- Anchoring the perspectives of the former colonised in the culture of remembrance and presenting anti-colonial resistance in the former colonies and Germany;
- Creation of decentralised and central places of learning and remembrance on German colonial history in Berlin;
- Critical colonial engagement with public space, creation of transparent decision-making processes.

To implement these demands, the Coordination Office proposes the following measures, among others:

- Commenting on monuments and places with colonial references in a way that changes perspectives;
- Introduction of a committee "Colonial-critical examination of public space" with representatives from the district and senate level as well as civil society actors and affected communities;
- Promote decolonial and anti-racist interventions in public space.

Anti-racism, decolonisation and promotion of democracy are also confirmed and demanded as part of **development policy information and education work**.³⁰ The Berlin Development Policy Council has made various suggestions to the Land of Berlin for improving its development policy work.³¹

- Platform for exchange and joint actions;
- Qualification for volunteers and full-time staff in association law, fundraising and application procedures;
- Networking between educational institutions and schools;
- One World Promoters to support development policy engagement;
- Background information and educational work on global contexts in the Land of Berlin;
- Calendar of development policy events and newsletter for those interested in development policy;
- Representation of interests vis-à-vis Berlin politics.

²⁸ On citizens' councils, see: <https://www.buergerrat.de/ueber-buergerraete/was-ist-ein-buergerrat/>

²⁹ Coordination Office at Decolonize Berlin, Annual Report 2021, p. 52-53. See: <https://decolonize-berlin.de/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Jahresbericht-der-Koordinierungsstelle-2021.pdf>

³⁰ „Impulses for globally responsible, solidary and sustainable development information and education work”, position paper by 28 authors, Entwicklungspolitischer Ratschlag, Newsletter, March 2022. See: https://eineweltstadt.berlin/wp-content/uploads/2022_Diskussionspapier_epol_Inlandsarbeit.pdf

³¹ Berlin Development Policy Council, One World City Berlin, Information Brochure.

Development policy and international relations are also the subject of the work of the Coordination Office, which makes the following political demands:³²

- Strengthen decolonial perspectives in economic cooperation and economic promotion;
- Break up neo-colonial structures against the Global South at all political levels;
- Address and promote decolonisation processes in all city partnerships at state and district level;
- Implement sustainable procurement practices;
- Pay reparations for (neo)colonial injustice to former German colonised societies;
- Decolonise development policy.

Even though this primarily addresses federal and state policy, these changes also have a certain relevance for the work and orientation of the SBNE (district Education for Sustainable Development Unit).

6. Process Proposal

The following **principles** of partnership-based, mutual learning cooperation with actors should guide the further development and implementation of concrete project activities of the district office:

"Participation breeds ownership": the active participation of actors (and citizens) and cooperation at eye level is a prerequisite for successful participation and perceived shared responsibility. This applies to all phases of a project, including the development of initial ideas in a co-creative process. Therefore, the outlined project ideas should definitely be further developed together with potential partners.³³

Diversity is worthwhile: Bringing different actors together takes time and resources, but it forms the nucleus of what one wants to achieve overall with a partnership project: in particular, more dialogue, mutual understanding and learning from each other, and in the long run, more social cohesion in the district and beyond.

The district as a role model and as a learner: By proactively addressing the topic of colonial history and placing it in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals, the district can act as a role model. There may well be unanswered questions - the district also learns how to deal with the issues in the most fruitful way.

The following **steps** are recommended:

- Start with the most **important, easiest, or most opportune** project: all project ideas could be integrated into an overarching strategy - in which case key actors should be invited to accompany the development and implementation of the strategy and/or participate in an advisory or steering group.

However, it may be just as good, and possibly easier, to seize opportunities to pursue individual project ideas in the coming months and years. The latter is described below.

- **Meeting with selected key actors**: as soon as a project idea can / should be implemented, key

³² Coordination Office at Decolonize Berlin, Annual Report 2021, p. 57-60. See: <https://decolonize-berlin.de/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Jahresbericht-der-Koordinierungsstelle-2021.pdf>

³³ Several interviewees confirmed this point. For example, the success of the exhibition "zurückGESCHAUT" at the Treptow Museum is also due to the early and consistent involvement of (post-)colonial experts. The Rwanda Smallholder Speciality Coffee Company has a German-Rwandan co-governance structure, which is seen as a key to the success of the cooperative.

actors, especially potential project partners, should be invited to a meeting with the district office. On the one hand, the district office should communicate the goals and conditions of a desired cooperation (finances, capacities) as well as the wishes of the actors. On the other hand, the goals, conditions and expectations of the actors should be discussed.

- **Co-creation:** The aim of further consultation(s) should be to jointly develop the proposed activities, including additions and deletions of ideas. The joint development should be as co-creative and open-ended as possible (within the framework of the communicated possibilities).

In the course of further development, other relevant actors are usually identified and the partners can jointly develop and implement an engagement strategy on how to engage these actors as partners.

In the course of joint development, a **core group** should be formed if necessary: Key actors from different stakeholder groups who have time and resources to contribute. This also avoids the need to coordinate the cooperation in a group that is too large.

The core group should also be involved in the **concrete project planning and its implementation**, depending on the constellation and possibilities in an advisory, jointly implementing and/or steering function. The group can also develop an external communication strategy together with the district office.

- **Monitoring and learning:** Each project should include a strategy for evaluating its learning processes and new insights - both with regard to the content-related engagement with colonial history and SDGs, as well as with regard to the cooperation with each other and with the district. Joint internal reflection is just as important for the compilation of learning experiences as external observations.

Furthermore, the district could organise a **competition for ideas** inviting actors to submit their proposals for projects that promote decolonisation and SDGs in the district. Such a call could be linked to the criterion of giving priority to cooperation among several actors, preferably from different stakeholder groups. This would be another possibility explore the needs and ideas of the respective actors, to promote their communication and cooperation among each other, and to identify possible elements and partners for a decolonisation strategy of the district.