

WHERE IS THE RURAL TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT GOING? REFLECTIONS ON THE THEORY AND PRACTICE

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Summary

This paper presents the results of broad analyses of current situations in the field of rural development in Bavaria and the Federal Republic of Germany. It focuses on programs and European Union legal and financial frameworks in the years 2014–2020. The author proposes many ideas or approaches that can be applicable to all rural development actors, such as politicians, local governments administrators, scientists and local communities. In addition, the author presents own experiences as a former Head of Department and Director General of the Bavarian Administration of Rural Development in the Bavarian State Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Forestry. Also, the author's experience as a university professor is invaluable. Its conclusions evoke further research and implementation for projects in the field of rural development, for both research and teaching institutions and administration at all levels – from European Union to the municipal level.

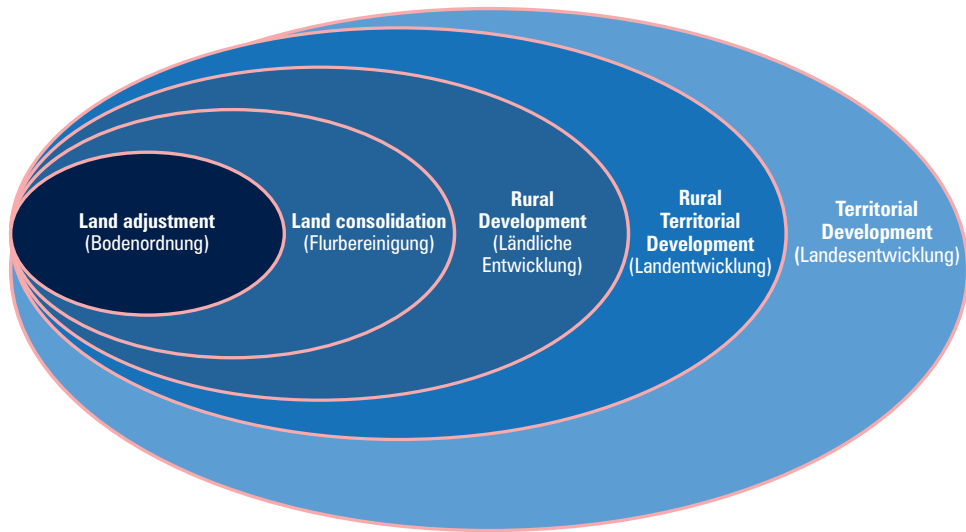
Keywords

land consolidation • land management • rural development • rural territorial development • territorial development

1. Towards understanding relevant German terminologies

On my desk, whether in the Bavarian Ministry of Agriculture or at the Technische Universität München (TUM), I have always had different notes, including cautions of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. From him, I gained a lifetime advice that I still use today – whether as a professor at the university or as an adviser in other countries. “Explain terms first, before you talk, exchange ideas on whether they can work together”. In Germany, we have a different terminology for some of the concepts used in English. For instance, the following terms have their German equivalents: rural territorial development (*Landentwicklung*); rural development (*ländliche Entwicklung*). Other terminologies include development of rural areas (*Entwicklung des ländlichen Raumes*); a new order of rural areas (*ländliche Neuordnung*) and land consolidation (*Flurbereinigung*). What does each of these terms mean? Do we speak about the same thing, or not? It is usually difficult for my students at Technische Universität München (TUM) to find the

right answers to this question. Most of them are only capable of answering this question correctly only after they have learned and understood the application of these terms and their contents. In this regard, it is important to cite the famous “onion” (Figure 1), which was first presented by Prof. Joachim Thomas, former head of the rural development administration in North Rhine-Westphalia (Figure 1).



Source: Adapted from Thomas (2006)

Fig. 1. The territorial development “Onion”

In the beginning, some terms may be difficult for outsiders to understand. As a result, I present in the following sub-sections explanations necessary for understanding some terms that, in many respects, should be considered as basic.

1.1. *Bodenordnung*

This means authoritative or private land adjustment. After the formation of the so-called urban land readjustment in the building areas (exchange of building land) could be defined as rural land readjustment.

1.2. *Flurbereinigung*

This means statutorily rooted land consolidation. It has a long tradition in many European countries, although they have partially different names. It can be mentioned here that, for instance, in Austria, Slovenia and Serbia it is called *commassatio*. Land consolidation is based on the central task – that is, land readjustment – meaning exchange of the ownership of land and property and their uses. It includes a lot more

than a mere exchange of land parcels. For example, planning and construction of roads, waterways, biotopes, etc. Its high point is the inclusion of new state of ownerships in the cadastre and land register to ensure the necessary legal security, which has the term of secure land tenure globally the highest political priority. Due to the prevalence of agricultural land ownership around the world, land consolidations still have more or less “agrarian” nature. Globally, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) refer to it as land consolidation. Many authors have rightly pointed out that the concept originated as a result of the quest to create improved or new order of rural areas (*Ländliche Neuordnung*).

1.3. *Ländliche Entwicklung*

This term is relatively new in Europe, but not in the international context. It means rural development. This is the European Union term, but unfortunately, is defined by the content related to a support for more or less agriculture. This term is not at all widespread, as it is sometimes believed, certainly not in the sense of a comprehensive development of rural areas. Also in the new EU program for 2014–2020 [Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013], it is not presented with a broader focus. Perhaps this is due to some appropriate changes, in particular concerning the necessity of the need to create additional non-agricultural jobs. Rural development programs in the EU include at least the possibility of using land consolidation and village renewal (*Dorferneuerung*). Within the framework of international cooperation for development, rural development is quite ambiguously used and implemented. Often it includes only the construction of wells or support of agricultural products marketization and structures, among others.

1.4. *Förderung der Landentwicklung*

By definition, this term is much wider than it is usually used. It was used for the first time in the Federal Land Consolidation Act of 1976 [Flurbereinigungsgesetz 1976] to mean the “promotion of rural territorial development”. Friedrich Quadflieg, the creator of the Act, presented in his then famous commentary an unforgettable definition and explanation which in this generation gives credence to a new era of land consolidation. Quadflieg [1978] explained:

“Rural territorial development is a part of spatial or territorial planning, which integrates and implements the planning and development strategies for rural areas. They include planning, preparation and execution of *all activities which are appropriate* to preserve and improve the housing, economic and leisure functions, in particular in rural areas, so that in long-term they support and improve living conditions outside urban areas”.

The statement “all activities which are appropriate” points to the fact that the Act refers to only support of or promotion of rural territorial development. It is to some extent, a kind of order of cooperation for all institutions acting in rural areas – because to some degree, all of them are rural territorial developers.

Quadflieg provides another important methodological explanations. This implies that the promotion of rural territorial development should always include both traditional tasks of land consolidation. Such tasks may include measures for improving agricultural production and work conditions in agriculture and forestry; and support of sustainable land use (*Landeskultur*). For this reason, in Germany one speaks now about threefold mission of land consolidation, which leads visibly to the term rural territorial development (*Landentwicklung*). Unfortunately, this term does not occur in the professional language of the EU. This makes the roots of today's rural development or integrated rural development (*integrierte ländliche Entwicklung*) not clear enough for the present generation, politicians and experts in other specialties.

It would be necessary to know to what extent the term, rural territorial development (*Landentwicklung*) is understood in Poland or other European countries, and what are its historical roots there. In Germany, as was mentioned earlier, the term is still ubiquitous. At the Chair of Land Management in TUM, we still refer to it in its German version as *Bodenordnung und Landentwicklung* – that is, Land Readjustment and Complex Rural Areas Development. The union of all the German land consolidation administrations is called the Working Group for Landentwicklung (such as the European Working Group ARGE Landentwicklung und Dorferneuerung). Its publications, such as guidelines or expertise in flood protection, renewable energy sources or cooperation with town planning, always use the title and term, rural territorial development (*Landentwicklung*). Some Polish and other European colleagues know the names of Bavarian schools of rural territorial development and village renewal in Thierhaupten and Plankstetten. Unfortunately, the Bavarian land consolidation administration was not allowed to decide for the new name *Landentwicklung*. Having been a witness and an active participant, I want to assure that our ministry proposed this in 1992. However, we had to give in as a result of disputes on matters of competence and naming. The most opposing to this was the Ministry of Territorial Development (*Ministerium für Landesentwicklung*). The Prime Minister, who was previously the minister of territorial development, successfully intervened at the prime minister. They were afraid of mixing terms of territorial development (*Landesentwicklung*) and rural territorial development (*Landentwicklung*). So as a compromise an entirely new name, rural development (*ländliche Entwicklung*) was created. This was the time when European funding programs and the so-called second pillar had not yet discovered this term! This happened in the years 1999–2000.

1.5. *Landesentwicklung*

As a consequence, *Landesentwicklung* – meaning territorial development – was born. The term is considered superior to all other terms. This also applies to rural territorial development and more than ever, rural development. It is used as a synonym for spatial development within the federal state. It entails the overall effort to ensure equivalent conditions of life and work throughout a whole region and as a result in cities and rural areas. About the term, *landmanagement* will be discussed at the end of this article.

2. Rural territorial development (*Landentwicklung*) requires theoretical and methodological foundations

The science and practice of land consolidation support sustainable rural territorial development to achieve equivalent living and working conditions in rural areas. The objective is not just about farming or agriculture. It is very clear that the tasks of rural territorial development must extend to all aspects of life, work, housing, leisure or communication in given rural areas (area of operations). This implies that it extends to all basic functions of human existence. Therefore, the rural municipalities should serve as key partners for all actors implementing rural territorial development. That is, according to the EU, using an adequate approach focused on a particular place (called place-based) and not only sectoral oriented. It also involves taking into account all historical, cultural and socio-economic ties, etc. As well as enhancing linkages between small and medium-sized urban centers in rural areas –together with their interrelationships with larger agglomerations. If this is not done, cooperation between urban centers and rural areas; and between town and country will not work. This requires a suitable spiritual-mental conditions and fair spatial enablement of all entities. Through our studies at the Chair of land management (*Lehrstuhl für Bodenordnung und Landentwicklung*) of the TUM, we have come to know that achieving these objectives cannot be limited to the financial support. It has far-reaching professional consequences due to some specialist and methodological questions that usually arise. Some of these critical questions relate to the development of the term, separation of space, determination of the cooperating entities (not forgetting about the economy and small and medium-sized enterprises). Others include organizational structures, management processes, processes of participation and decision-making processes. It also has implications for the proper use of the instruments of land readjustment and conflict resolution, as well as support to raise funds from all possible directions. Above all, it requires competence based on the education and training of staff and various professional partners –such as architects, planners, but also municipal officials and other experts. Who can say that he is a born moderator or even a mediator? Nobody! For this reason, a system for conflict resolution is necessary concerning of education, training and research. The persons responsible for rural territorial development (*Landentwicklung*) must be broadly educated at the university level, not just as mere technicians. It is all about the education of graduates as “well-grounded specialized generalists”.

3. Integrated rural development (IRD) as a universal remedy – overrated or not?

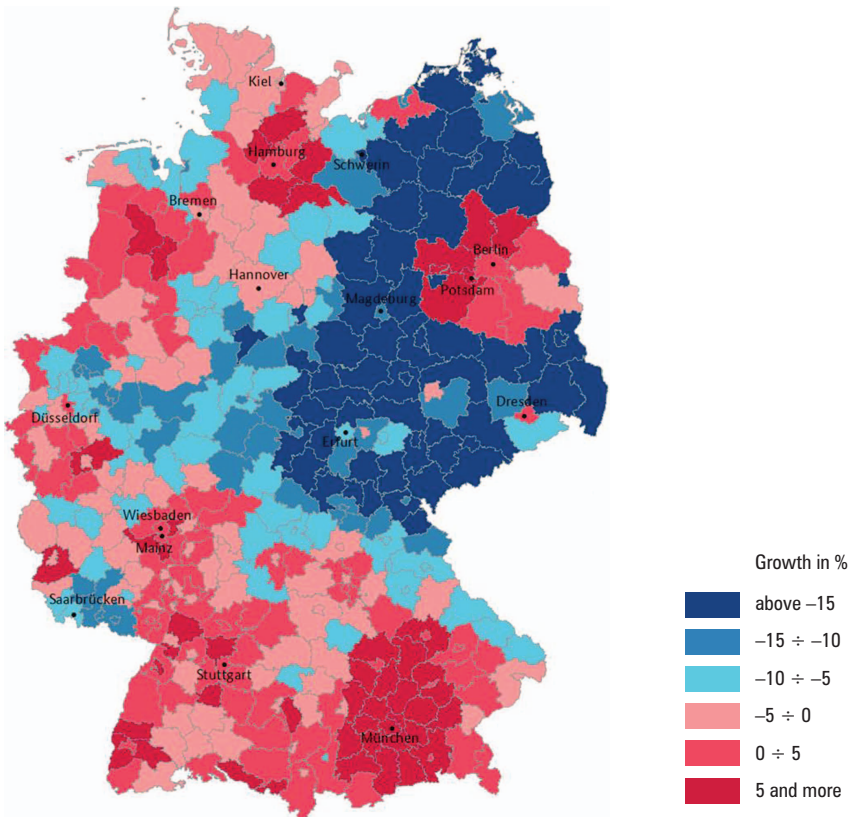
At some point, it became apparent (due to the financial support and requirements of the EU) that the level of the villages and the municipalities are not enough for effective structural changes in rural areas. From then onwards, it became necessary that new areas of action created by a number of municipalities (areas or regions) must be activated. In other words, it depends on the so-called geometric variables. This is

particularly necessary for the face of globalization and continentalization, increasing local competition, demographic and climate challenges, etc. This instrument is called in Germany, Integrated Rural Development (IRD), and it lies within the competence of the land consolidation administration but focuses on municipalities and body of participants according to Land Consolidation Act. However, there are other integrated terms and spaces of action or support within the competence of other ministries and programs. This leads to some confusion and partial overlapping of competences. This is how it is. In any case, this excess of competencies speaks for communication and collaboration in horizontal and vertical ways. This is urgently needed because within the framework of IRD are opportunities for rendering or receiving assistance and support from other ministries, primarily to support regional economic development, urban planning, etc. Otherwise, the desired rural territorial development made possible by the use of IRD Concepts – followed by the individual instruments of land readjustment, village renewal, and infrastructure and so on – would be fragmentary. Then it will be possible to solve individual conflicts realistically to enable respect in uses and ownership pertaining to the implementation of flood protection, construction of power stations and improvement of the agrarian structure and so on. This would not provide any broad impact on the entire area covered by the IRD and the population living there – especially the young population – which should be kept in rural areas. It is well noted in the publication, “The new rural paradigm”, that broader approach and closer cooperation are necessary (The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 2006). That means – authorities, municipalities; economy and all actors should cooperate in the process.

Land consolidation works are carried out in this manner of cooperation with other authorities for years on a statutory basis. They have never been a single player. The Land Consolidation Act repeatedly points to the need for coordination and cooperation, which leads to combining multiple planning studies into one coherent task. In the era of the IRD being in force, land consolidation can be used due to its tested practice, which involves broad experiences in cooperation and comprehensive thinking. Additionally, this should lead to a better coexistence of the three European Structural Funds [Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013]. This has so far been achieved with limited success. In each of them the management rules are too complicated. In Germany, the experiment on a State scale including the *Länder* was abandoned. That was, of course, a fatal error. Equally disastrous is when the EU is critical of the traditional strength of activating German land consolidation administration, and ignores the warrant to shape their area by body of participants according to Land Consolidation Act. These bodies of participants have existed in Bavaria for nearly 100 years. That is long before the creation of the LEADER program. According to the idea of subsidiarity, they have vigorously implemented grassroots initiatives of people and landowners, which conflict with EU guidelines, because EU requires prior attachment to everything. In some cases, the bodies of participants somehow lost their influence in shaping their territories. As a consequence, Bavaria has to consider its application of EU rules, which have in some cases been seen as strangulation.

One more important note: to really help IRD become a success, it is necessary to support – and not just morally – spatial planning and territorial development. They should care about this so that all administrative bodies can at last cooperate and do not play their different games. The cooperation of these bodies can help in making necessary improvements. They can contribute to improving the use of all structural measures, taking into account the proven principle of central place hierarchy and priority of the development of structurally weak areas through clear (local) political signals. Territorial development policy should put emphasis on inter-municipal cooperation and support the relatively new topic of urban-rural partnerships.

Many times it is a completely new approach. Therefore, at full speed the accompanying research are carried out on the principle of learning by doing. If it is not possible to implement a comprehensive development and strengthening of the area, then the countryside will become too unattractive, with deserted villages and decaying infrastructure (see data in Figure 2).



Source: Bundesinstitut für Bau-, Stadt- und Raumforschung; Berechnungen: BiB (geometrische Grundlage: © GeoBasis-DE/BKG 2012)

Fig. 2. Changes in population size in districts of Federal Republic of Germany 2009–2030

The situation will even get worse if IRD is not used in a more consistent way to realize both soft tasks and tackle hard challenges, such as acquisition of land for economic zones and allocation of infrastructure facilities. In the federal land of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, the term “countryside waiting for the wolves” is now commonly read in the newspapers [Schrumpfungsgreisung 2014].

In Bavaria, the issue of growing imbalance between the predominantly urban areas and rural regions is a heated debate. That is why the Bavarian Parliament launched *Enquete-Kommission* (Equivalent living conditions throughout Bavaria) to pay more attention to the needs of implementing the aspirations of the EU Territorial Agenda [TA 2020] in all areas. However, the massive urbanization challenge happening now in Bavaria means that there will be a difficult road ahead in achieving this vision.

4. Today's theory is the practice of tomorrow

The road to rural territorial development, which is as already mentioned much more than the traditional agrarian land consolidation, always had and has to be accompanied and enhanced by theoretical, methodological and educational activities. Prof. Karl Rinner from Austria, known as the one of the last universal geodesists, repeatedly said, “There is nothing more practical than a good theory!” [Magel 2012]. Indeed, regulation of financial support and administrative provisions of the EU will not replace any theory, methodology, or even scientific surveys. Rural territorial development (*Landentwicklung*) is much more than merely clever acquisition, equitable distribution and proper allocation of resources. For this reason, the development engineers (*Landentwicklungingenieure*) need to have access to research institutions, which is e.g. for Bavaria the Chair of Land Management at TUM. Countless research projects on behalf of the administration have helped to create the theoretical and methodological basis for practical action for sustainable rural or regional development. They have also helped in intercommunal cooperation, which is now in demand in the context of integrated rural development. Additionally, they have helped in village renewal, landscape planning and shaping the cultural landscape, the involvement of residents. Also, they have contributed to the practices concerning comprehensive land management -up to the urban-rural partnerships, which is today a boiling topic within academic, professional, and policy debates. Especially beneficial in our case is that the administration as a partner had and still has its department of applied research.

New scientific theories and methodological proposals should then be discussed at the independent ground in the presence of experts. Such a role is handed through the annual conferences at the TUM, entitled “Münchner Tage der Bodenordnung und Landentwicklung”. Other fora for this include the annual rural territorial development conferences at Agricultural University in Kraków or the conferences of German Academies of Rural Areas or their union Arge Ländlicher Raum. Numerous events involving the highest dignitaries and proven experts provide discussions and confirmation of substantive guidelines for improvement of knowledge.

After leaving my position at the Bavarian Ministry of Agriculture for the TUM, I started an international English postgraduate Masters (MSc) program. It is called “Land Management and Land Tenure in Urban and Rural Development” and has its focus on professionals from developing countries. By so doing, I created a second pillar of (international) education at the Chair of Land Management in TUM. The lecturers in the program are particularly encouraged to study definitional issues concerning all the concepts and terms as mentioned earlier. For instance, definitions of land consolidation (*Flurbereinigung*), rural territorial development (*Landentwicklung*), rural development (*ländliche Entwicklung*), land use planning (*Bauleitplanung*) and land management in an international context. They also wrestled with understanding the differences between the various other terms used in the international community.

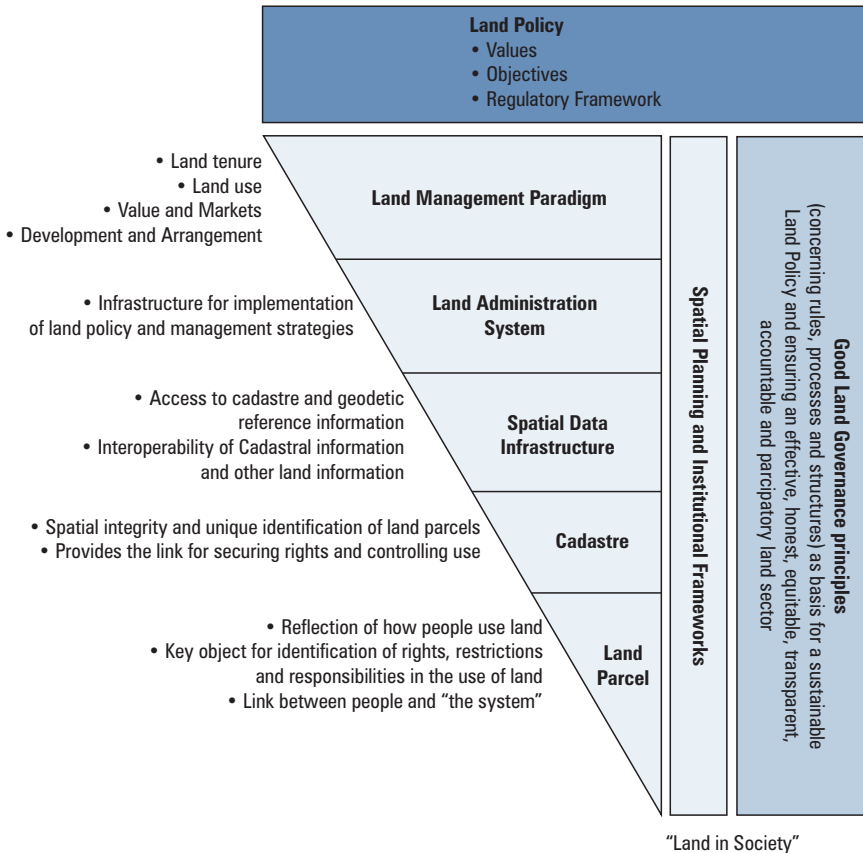
First of all, thanks to my eight-year experience at the head of the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) and thanks to the scientific and didactics works at the TUM. Due to these experiences we were able –and based on the works of UN bodies, the World Bank, and Professors Larsson, Enemark, van der Molen and Williamson to develop two globally understood definitions. They are “The Munich pentaphony of land management,” and above all, “The triad of land management” (see Figure 3). They correspond to the goals mentioned above and objectives of rural territorial development and territorial development (*Landentwicklung and Landesentwicklung*). It was possible due to the geodetic expertise of the authors that relates to five essential components of each *Landentwicklung* (Pentaphony):

- ensuring equivalent living conditions in urban and rural areas,
- activation, consulting and directing,
- surveying, documenting, planning, linking and coordination,
- approval of plans, implementation, and financing,
- land arrangement and conflict resolution (on the ground) and updating cadastre and land registry.

The triad land management is based on the system thinking. It recognizes that the whole is more than the sum of the parts. System thinking is essential for action. We need to understand the land sector as a system, but not as separated or independent components. The term *Landmanagement* (land management) provides that advantage. Although, as an English term, it entered into in the German language or vocabulary a long time ago. Besides multilingual Switzerland, in Germany almost all of the chairs involved in land management have adopted the term. My Chair in TUM uses it in English. Our Institute at the TUM is known, similar to the German Association of Surveying (DVW), for more than ten years as Institut für Geodäsie, GIS und Landmanagement.

The highest scientific body, the German Geodetic Commission of the Bavarian Academy of Sciences decided for the new name Land and Real Estate Management. The advantage of the new English name is to improve its international profile. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that European countries remain the birthplace of the

original land management and brought it into international discourse. Land management (*Landmanagement*) should be based on the key benefits of *Landentwicklung* and Land readjustment and in accordance with established goals and plans for the creation of equivalent living conditions in the city and the countryside.



Source: Magel et al. (2009)

Fig. 3. Triad Land Management

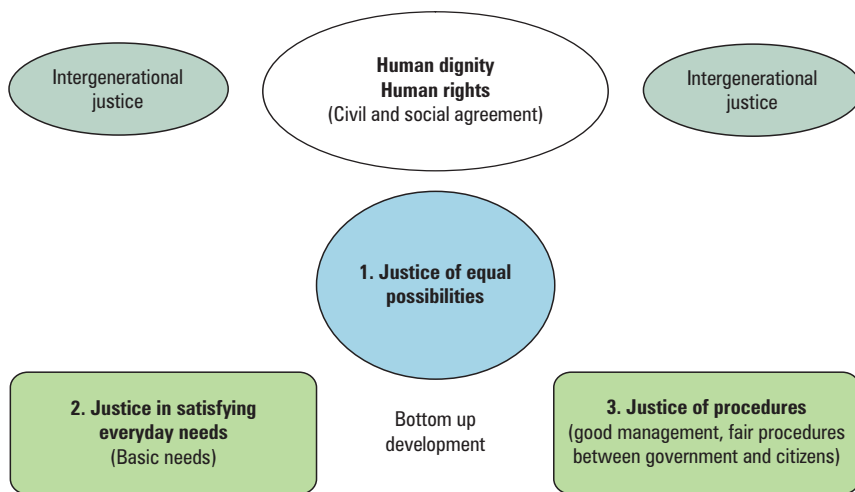
5. It is all about human dignity and justice

Landentwicklung is in my opinion – without putting it in a scientific language – a matter of the heart. Those who do not like people, villages and the countryside should not handle the task of developing them – whether as rural experts or developers. The experts and developers of rural areas should be those who recognize the dignity of people (especially weaker rural populations) and their rights. This precondition for handling rural tasks is important because rural experts must be people who can ultimately act justly.

That is why I refer to my other ethical-moral compass that has always guided me. It is captured in the main messages of a magazine called “Global aber gerecht” – meaning “Global but fair”. The Magazine is a combined publication of Misereor, the College of the Jesuits in Munich, Potsdam Institute for Climate Change Consequences Research and the well-known Munich Re. In the name of human dignity and human rights – the observance of which recently President of the Republic of Poland, Mr Bronisław Komorowski, described in a speech to the German parliament as a pillar of democratic Europe. The message is that it should be always and everywhere about:

- justice and opportunities for people to develop their potentials and the perception of emerging opportunities,
- justice in meeting everyday needs for a fair share of daily needed goods and infrastructure of daily living (basic needs),
- justice in the procedures for the recognition of people as partners for full participation in the process of discussion and decision-making – the keyword here is “good governance” [Lotze-Campen et al. 2010].

Neither the EU nor its member countries can have these justices, manage and regulate them by means of administrative rules. The experts who deal with rural territorial development (*Landentwicklung*) need to feel a positive addiction to these qualities in themselves. They should live these qualities and pursue them in their private and professional lives. In everyday life, it is something more beautiful, more satisfying and liberating to be involved in this thing every day!



Source: Adapted from Lotze-Campen et al. [2010]

Fig. 4. Three kinds of justices

When we talk about equivalent living conditions in towns and villages, we must speak of the human dignity and human rights. For this reason, adhere to the three kinds of justice (see Figure 4). So where is *Landentwicklung* going to? Towards human, sustainable, just and comprehensive development of rural areas! We are still on the way – I am glad that Bavaria and Poland are united in this journey with joint projects.

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