

## CHAPTER 16

# INTEGRATION: YOUTH WELFARE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN SWITZERLAND

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“If we were not looked after in our first years, we would not be able to survive – and if we were not looked after humanly, we would resemble a human being only from the outside. ... It is part of the humanity of the human being, that at first it must become what it already is. To be a human being is to become a human being!”

*Hans Saner, Philosopher, Basel, Switzerland*

**Abstract.** In Switzerland with its 7.3 million inhabitants, about 200,000 people are working in the agricultural sector managing 66,000 farms. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of agricultural employees shrunk by 50,000 and more than 22,000 agrarian businesses were abandoned – mostly small-scale farms with less than 3 ha.

The Emmental region is a part of Switzerland characterized by a high share of agriculture. Compared to other regions the proportion of rural inhabitants is still relatively high, the decline of farms is therefore below the figures of the rest of Switzerland. Nevertheless, as an effect of the structural change also in rural regions, the remaining farmers depend more and more on additional incomes and are looking for extra work in different branches. Although the Emmental region is one of the economically poor marginal regions of Switzerland, it has a multitude of strengths: besides the intact landscape and numerous natural resources the inhabitants have a strong liaison to their culture and traditions. The family structures are essentially still in good order and the social network is functioning. Based on these strengths, the project INTEGRATION aims at three main targets:

- Providing space for living and developing on a qualified farm with system-therapeutic and social-pedagogic support for socially deprived children and adolescents from urban centres such as Berne, Basel and Lucerne.
- Offering places of care creates innovative and sustainable supplementary earnings for the farming families in an economically unfavourable mountain area.
- At the political level, a new quality of the relation between ‘city’ and ‘country’ evolves by bringing together different cultures and exchanging ideas and experiences.

INTEGRATION is a social youth-welfare project with a strong liaison with the economic sector. The well-being of the involved children, adolescents and partner families comes first but with its connections to economic and ecological aspects INTEGRATION has also become a typical project in the field of sustainable rural development. This may have led to the invitation of the representatives of the project to participate in the preparatory workshop in Vorden (The Netherlands), April 2004. They had the opportunity to present and discuss the philosophy of the project INTEGRATION and its results during the last eight years. As an innovative project in the field of social youth welfare in Switzerland,

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INTEGRATION was also asked for a contribution to the publication 'Farming for Health'. Although there are quite a lot of activities in this field, the term 'Farming for Health' is neither widely known nor used in Switzerland yet. After the preparatory workshop, the project team discussed an appropriate translation into (Swiss) German: the best working title was found in 'Landwirtschaft und soziale Wohlfahrt'. It will be a challenge for the future to determine a term that meets most of the requirements of the then involved organizations.

The first part of this contribution gives a short overall description of activities in Switzerland, while the project INTEGRATION with its targets, activities and results is described in the second part.

**Keywords:** community and regional development; partner families; community tolerance; school compatibility; family compatibility; systemic therapy; children and youth psychiatry; therapeutic pedagogy; social pedagogy; urban and rural cooperation; qualified additional income; protection of children and minors; UNO convention on the rights of the child

#### 'FARMING FOR HEALTH' ACTIVITIES IN SWITZERLAND: AN OVERALL DESCRIPTION

In Switzerland, Farming for Health (FH) activities have grown into an important factor in the care, education, support and schooling/teaching of children, adolescents, senior citizens and physically and/or mentally handicapped people. Especially during the last 10 years, more and more services have been created by and for farmers to give them the possibility of raising their income. Although the additional family income is most welcome, it is only one of numerous reasons for their engagement: having children of their own and a multifaceted agricultural enterprise, they can afford to provide their personal qualities and their structures for a particularly demanding social assignment. Qualities as human kindness, empathy and patience always come first. On the farms clients are not only integrated in the family structures but they are also involved in the daily working process. Depending on their requisites and their skills, the clients are taking on various responsibilities. For example, they can be involved in horticultural tasks or they can be assigned the care of animals. In Switzerland there are numerous farms for different target groups: children, adolescents, drug addicts, handicapped and elderly people.

As a result of the many good experiences of clients, farmers and placement organizations, the resources of a farm (family structure with more than one generation, environment, animals) are in the meantime respected and demanded by the authorities and the public as an important alternative to placements in homes. What started in small steps between one farmer and maybe one client or social worker, has now grown into a 'market' of which it is more and more difficult to keep the overview. The requirements for a placement are governed by public law. The 'Pflegekinderverordnung' (by-law for foster children) is the legal instrument for the authorities to guarantee fair care systems. With regard to the social welfare of the clients it is indispensable that the persons in charge are sufficiently qualified and can count on supervision by experts. Farmer families within the structures of INTEGRATION for example have to pass a further education in systemic health care and can claim a 24-hour service from the therapists.

Today, most of the farmers with social assignments are linked with institutions that work on a professional basis in the placement of clients with special needs. Although not the rule, in Switzerland it is basically possible that farmers themselves find clients. Since this can lead to difficulties, the partner families of

INTEGRATION are carefully selected, qualified and seriously prepared for their challenging functions. Most organizations are responsible for a certain quality standard of a placement and for the support and supervision of farmers and clients. One important role of the placing institution is to guarantee that neither farmers nor clients burn out due to a false placement or inadequate treatment. False placements can result from a lack of information about the circumstances that lead to a placement and about the physical and/or mental condition of the client.

The placement institutions can be organized on a private or public judicial basis. In either case the communal authorities are responsible for the supervision and control of the placements for which they nominate specifically trained persons who visit the clients and the host families at least once a year. They also report to the communal and cantonal authorities about their visits.

The following organizations are well known for their activities in social welfare (no comprehensive list):

- Schweizerische Pflegekinderaktion: experts in fostering (<http://www.pflegekinder.ch>)
- Bruggeboge: situations of crisis (<http://www.bruggeboge.ch>)
- Passaggio: social-pedagogic interventions
- Schulheim Effingen: approved school, home (<http://www.schulheim-effingen.ch>)
- Caritas Schweiz: time-out in the calmness of the mountains (<http://www.caritas.ch>)
- Familienplatzierungen OGG: placements in families (<http://www.ogg.ch>)
- Verein INTEGRATION: youth welfare and sustainable development of rural areas (<http://www.integration-eggiwil.ch>)
- Trial: youth welfare and family placements (<http://www.trial-interventionen.ch>)

#### FINANCIAL STRUCTURE

The economic situation of a farm in Swiss rural regions is challenging. The prices for dairy products have been decreasing for years, whereas the costs of living have been increasing. Due to the hilly topography and the demanding climatic situation, farmers are limited in their actions and possibilities. In most cases they are depending on an additional income, which they can find in nearby local industries or through specialized home work. It is a strategy of the federation and of the cantons as well, to support the local population to stay in their familiar surroundings and simultaneously to care for the landscape.

The placement of children and adolescents in families is regulated by national law in the 'Pflegekinderverordnung'. In addition, the cantons have their individual regulations concerning the financial aspects, e.g. costs of care and education, costs of food and housing, etc. The placement of other target groups like elderly or disabled people is not yet regulated in detail. There are different public or private organizations like OGG (economic non-profit association of the canton Berne) or trial interventions (Thun) which organize placements of either children or adults with farmer families. The requirements to be met by the attending farmer of course depend on the client. The definition of quality standards as well as guidelines for the

financial structure for the different target groups in Switzerland are still in the early stages!

The costs for a placement in a partner family are to be paid by the community in which the child or young person lives with his birth family. These costs are to be paid out of the normal community budget, i.e., the budget for social welfare. The costs vary according to the needs of the clients and according to the circumstances of a placement. Placements that involve specialized organizations generally have higher costs than placements without support of specialists.

Compared to the costs of placements in homes, the costs of placement in families is between 30% and 50% lower, while giving the same level of quality and achievement. These figures are based on experience and still have to be substantiated by further studies and research activities.

Economically, the attendance of a foster child means that the farmer family earns an additional income. Within the structures of INTEGRATION this additional income can reach the level of a 50% job. It is a basic principle of INTEGRATION that only families with a secure existence are authorized to accept a foster child. Otherwise the financial dependency would be too strong, which could lead to misconduct.

#### THE ROLE OF THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

The placement of children, adolescents and adults in homes or families comes under the legal competence and responsibility of the Ministry of Social Welfare and the Ministry of Justice; this means that the Ministry of Agriculture is not involved directly. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Agriculture ('Bundesamt für Landwirtschaft', BLW) is very much interested in new and innovative cooperation between farming and social welfare. The BLW supports projects at non-material level. It recognizes that the cooperation between rural and urban regions can, under certain circumstances, be an initiative for a sustainable development with profit for both sides.

A strategy of the responsible persons for the sustainable development of rural regions is to provide the farmer families with some sort of additional income. When the economic structure of a farm is intact, the inhabitants can stay in their native surroundings and are able to maintain the landscape. The importance of their role as landscape developers is growing but the implementation of this strategy depends on additional sources of income that are competitive and attractive enough to bind the families to the rural sites. But all in all, there is also a wide range of advantages in rural life: an intact environment, pure water, fresh air and a lot of natural resources, as well as intact family structures, traditions and important values. The project INTEGRATION is based on these traditional structures and uses them in an innovative way.

## NETWORKING

Generally, networking is not yet very strongly developed, but the different partners and players in this 'market' have recognized the advantages and necessity of networking and are making progress. It will be a challenge for the future to activate communication between the different providers within the widespread projects all over Switzerland. The scheme 'Farming for Health' in this regard can become a catalyst.

The project INTEGRATION has created a network with the 'Juvenat der Franziskaner' (Franciscans), an institution for boys between 12 and 15 years of age with its own school. The boys of the Juvenat der Franziskaner spend weekends and holidays within the farming families of INTEGRATION. The families also are at their service in case of crisis in the form of so-called 'time-outs'. During these time-outs the boys can recover themselves and return to the asylum school and group again.

The project INTEGRATION also sustains a network with the ZSB (Zentrum für systemische Therapie und Beratung Bern – Centre for systemic therapy and advice Berne), which is given the task of education and further training of the partner families.

## RESEARCH

Research activities in Switzerland in the field of social innovations are manifold. Different programmes and institutions either from universities and colleges or from private organizations provide qualified basic principles for alternative methods concerning the liaison between agriculture and social welfare and/or therapy. Research activities concerning the success of integrated persons on active farms are still in the early stages. Within the INTEGRATION project, a first study has identified twelve effect factors that can be referred to as success factors (see the last chapter of this paper). The results are based on experience but also include scientifically based elements.

Important addresses of organizations involved in research are, e.g.:

- Swiss Research programme 'Ageing' (<http://www.snf.ch>)
- National Research Programme 45 'Future Problems of the Welfare State' (<http://www.sozialstaat.ch>)
- Büro für Arbeits- und Sozialpolitische Strukturen (<http://www.buerobass.ch>)
- Switzerland: Towards the Future (<http://www.swiss-science.org>)
- Social Science Information Centre (<http://www.gesis.org>)

The INTEGRATION project includes a 'research section' with specialized experts. They work out studies concerning the forces and effects of the project activities, depending on current questions. The central interest of these studies is not scientific completeness but pragmatic results in the sense of quality development (see also the section about effect factors at the end of this paper). Coordination between the different institutions that carry out studies is still insufficient and has to be approved in the years ahead.

## AN EXAMPLE: THE PROJECT INTEGRATION – VISIONS AND TARGETS

INTEGRATION is primarily a project in the field of youth-welfare service. It was set up in the period 1994 – 1998 on the initiative of Urs Kaltenrieder und Susanne Frutig from 'Atelier ASPOS' in Dielsdorf, Zurich, in cooperation with the authorities of a small village in the Emmental region, Eggiwil. The basis of the project is a network of qualified farmer families. They take care of psychosocially deprived children and adolescents from urban areas of Switzerland. The children and adolescents are attended and educated on a short-term or long-term basis. Depending on their ability to work in groups, they attend the schools of the village or get individual teaching or are educated in small groups. The latest development is that adolescents can also visit a pedagogic school within the project structures. The family places are also available for pupils of the systemic school and therapy centre 'Juvenat', who can spend weekends, holidays or time-outs on the farms in Eggiwil. The project founders as well as the psychiatrist work on a systemic basis, they are trained in systemic therapy and advice. The partner families are permanently accompanied and supervised. Furthermore, they have to undergo a curriculum in systemic competence.

INTEGRATION is not only an institution in the field of youth welfare in a conventional sense. It tries to make an important contribution to the economic development of one of the most underprivileged regions in Switzerland.

The INTEGRATION project has been offering qualified places of care for psychosocially deprived children and adolescents since 1998. At the same time, a process of development was initiated in a region that is strongly affected by changes in the economic structure. This process is called 'systemic community and regional development'. During the years, numerous activities have evolved, all of which build on the principles and theory of sustainable development.

The reasons for allocating children and adolescents to external farming families reach from overstrained parents right to physical abuse. The INTEGRATION project offers the adolescents a surrounding which allows growing up in dignity and trust. Instead of being sent to homes, the children and adolescents are allocated to qualified places of care with partner families in a rural area.

The INTEGRATION project has three main targets:

- Providing space for living and developing on a qualified farm with system-therapeutic and social-pedagogic support for socially deprived children and adolescents from urban centres such as Berne, Basel and Lucerne.
- Offering places of care creates innovative and sustainable supplementary earnings for the farming families in an economically unfavourable affected mountain area.
- At the political level, a new quality of the relation between 'city' and 'country' evolves by bringing together different cultures and exchanging ideas and experiences.

Usually, the adolescents attend the public school. Together with the teachers they agree upon individual objectives and progress is checked periodically. The cooperation between school and partner family is supported by professional advisors. Regular meetings and supervisions guarantee professional quality

management. In addition, the children and adolescents are accompanied by a medical practitioner and a psychiatrist. An important part of qualifying as a partner family is the assessment, right at the beginning of the contact. Interested family members have to pass a qualifying process in the form of structured interviews. If the discussions are successful for both sides, the future project partners have to attend a further education programme, which prepares them for their challenging duties. After a successful placement, the partner families can count on permanent supervision by the therapists and they can ask for crisis interventions. The children and adolescents follow a schedule in which their duties and spare time are arranged. Of course they are involved in the daily working processes of the farm. Depending on their abilities they can, e.g., be made responsible for the care of animals or for preparing firewood. Work on a farm in the Emmental region never stops!



*Figure 1. Eggiwil is a village in central Switzerland with 2,600 inhabitants, who live on an area of 60 km<sup>2</sup>*

### *Geography*

Eggiwil is a village with 2 600 inhabitants, who live on an area of 60 km<sup>2</sup>. Despite collapsing structures in the farming sector, there are still 240 farms scattered over the total area of the community. Due to the hilly topography, the development of all these farms requires very strong efforts and claims a high financial input. Another factor contributing to the challenging rural life is the number of schools: in Eggiwil, the children are educated at nine different locations, scattered across the whole area. Eggiwil is part of the famous Emmental region, which lends its name from the Emme river. The Emmental is a scenic landscape with a high percentage of forest. Grass is the main crop grown between the forests, which presents the basis for the also famous Emmentaler cheese. Although the region is one of the most beautiful cultural landscapes of Switzerland, it is among the economically poorest areas in the country.

### *Partner families*

In this context, the project INTEGRATION with its possibilities to earn some additional income is very welcome in these areas. But not every family or every locality is suitable to meet the demanding prerequisites of INTEGRATION. The welfare of the young person must always be the central objective, and it is therefore very important to guarantee a high level of quality within the partner families.

The important prerequisites for qualifying as a partner family are:

- the parents of the partner family must have children of their own
- the requirements of the World Health Organization for a sane family must be met
- sufficient room
- domestic animals that are kept according to the natural needs of the species
- the economic existence of the farm must be secure
- interest and motivation in permanent further education

Depending on their age and physical possibilities, the children and adolescents must also work on the farm. The therapist defines, together with foster parents and client, a timetable with daily tasks which correspond with the possibilities and limits of the client. Of course, the adolescents usually also attend the public school. If this is not possible, they are educated within smaller groups in a special small school (therapeutic pedagogy).

There is a strong cooperation between either the teacher of the public school or the private teacher and the partner families. The adolescents are also coached by various experts within the project: therapist, psychiatrist, physician, etc. From the side of the therapist, there are individual objectives for every youth, which are evaluated on the occasion of regular meetings and supervision hours.

For adolescents who are permanently integrated in a farmer's family, the project team later arranges practical training or apprenticeship places. There is a wide choice of places in industry, trade and services in the Emmental region.

### *Assignments*

The INTEGRATION project makes use of three forms of allocations:

- a. Medium- and long-term allocations in families: the children and adolescents are – based on orders of public authorities – placed permanently in a partner family and attend the public school.
- b. System-therapeutic supplementary arrangements: the children and adolescents from a home for systemic schooling and therapy (Juvenat) spend weekends, school holidays or time-out stays with partner families of INTEGRATION.
- c. Specialized evaluation and observation activities and long-term therapy programmes: children and adolescents with prominent developmental deficits receive stationary care and treatment in natural surroundings. This allows adolescents who do not yet fit into a group to acquire stability and social competence in a small and graspable environment.

Target groups for the different forms of allocations are children and adolescents of both sexes from 2 to 14 years of age.



Type of arrangement	Form of allocation		
	A	B	C
Social environment oriented, therapeutic care of children and adolescents on farms by qualified and trained partner families	*	*	*
Systemic-/social-environment-oriented therapeutic support and care of the partner families and the original family by an interdisciplinary team of professionals	*	*	*
24-hour emergency service by an interdisciplinary team of professionals	*	*	*
Medical care by medical practitioner of trust	*	*	*
Specialized psychological examination of children and adolescents by specialists in psychiatry and psychotherapy including original family and partner family	*		*
Individual and small-group tuition according to individual schedules in society-owned private school		*	*
Individual, family and group therapies	*		*
Local school of Eggiwil, if necessary with individual supporting tuition	*		
External leisure activities such as local societies, etc.	*		*
Vocational follow-up programmes with apprenticeships in partner firms	*		*

#### *Experiences, successes and results*

It is important that the placement of children, adolescents, senior citizens, etc. is done within certain rules that consider the possibilities and limits of a community or a region (communal compatibility). The community of Eggiwil, which is involved in the INTEGRATION project, e.g., decided that the number of children that can be placed in families and visit the local school should not exceed 12. The reason is that the local school should still be able to integrate these children without being affected by their problems and different social and cultural backgrounds (school compatibility).

Since 1998, about 50 psycho-socially periled children and adolescents have been allocated to 17 farming families. The therapeutic success rate is high; a future study will compare the results of the family placement system with stays in asylums. The net value added of the INTEGRATION project has reached 5 million Swiss Francs (approx. 3.3 million Euros) since 1998. Taking over care assignments is a great challenge for the partner families. But it also provides them with a considerable supplementary income.

In relation to the INTEGRATION project, a number of further activities and jobs have developed which are welcome contributions to the economy of the region. Thanks to the INTEGRATION project the village of Eggiwil and the Emmental

region could improve their image as an innovative community and region in connection with sustainable development.

INTEGRATION was accepted after thorough examination as a full member of the Swiss Association for Social-Therapeutic-Pedagogics (Integras) in 2002.

### *Regional development*

In 1998, the 'Eggiwil Symposium' with the focal point 'New partnerships between city and country' was initiated in connection with the successful development of INTEGRATION. Since then, the symposium takes place every year and is attended by people from Switzerland and abroad. In 2000, the 'Eggiwil Institute for Systemic Community and Regional Development' was founded. The supporting society consists of private companies and various regional organizations.

A current pilot project 'Geld + Geist' (money and mind) is an answer to the structural adaptations in marginal areas. As a consequence of the cuts in public spending, the tendency of migration to the centres grows. 'Geld + Geist' wants to support investments in local development and innovations in rural areas by transparent investments for private persons. This means that not only traditional knowledge is freshly used but it also enables an innovative handling of natural resources. The Eggiwil Institute determines the respective criteria for social, ecological and economic compatibility of the project ideas.

Since the demand for allocations in farming families exceeds the availability of places, the INTEGRATION society wants to extend the number of places in the medium term. In the regions around the Napf mountain a potential of 80 to 100 places in families can be estimated, which meets the requirements for participating in the INTEGRATION network (Napf is the dominant mountain within the Emmental region). An extension of the project could substantially contribute to diminishing migration from the Napf area with its scattered settlement structure.

The care of psycho-socially periled children in farming families is not a cheap way of conserving agricultural structures. The requirements on the farmer families are very high, the compulsory basic and further education are demanding. During the pilot phase of the project, the society had to prove that the offered care meets the requirements for professional work. The INTEGRATION project, starting from a social problem, has developed into a typical project connected with sustainable development and local agenda processes (LA 21 as an important outcome of the world conference in Rio de Janeiro 1992).

Federal and cantonal authorities accept the INTEGRATION project nowadays as an extraordinary, but very well suited form of a modern policy of regional development. The Swiss confederation has been supporting the extension of INTEGRATION since the end of 2003. Especially the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (<http://www.seco.admin.ch>) is very interested and involved in the process of sustainable development of rural and marginal regions.

*Future*

The projected development of INTEGRATION is emphatically supported by the canton of Berne: "... the further steps to develop the project INTEGRATION are very much acclaimed. The project guarantees a high professional quality and the so far achieved activities are highly valued".

Since the positive social results the economic added value is remarkable, INTEGRATION can be marked as a project in the sense of sustainable development. Especially the fact that parts of the population and the authorities develop a new comprehension of their role in the region leads to innovations. Slowly, Emmental evolves from a beneficiary to a provider region and also to a nationally and internationally approved partner for rural and urban development.

Parallel to the launching of new projects, the awareness of the locally available resources increases. Considering the natural and traditional resources, the Emmental region is a rich region: pure water, fresh air, woods, varied landscapes. But compared to urban surroundings, the social structures are healthy as well. On this basis lots of new and innovative projects can still grow and contribute to the added value of the region.

Within the project structures, the further education of the partner families has a special significance. By an instruction course over three years the farmer families are qualified in systemic methods and obtain the opportunity to exchange their experiences with other families and with professional therapists. As a result they are provided with a diploma and become experts themselves in the field of social care. After some years of experience, they can extend their range of social 'products' and gain other target groups as older people, drug addicts and managers. Other target groups also mean that the farmers again have to pass a special assessment that is designed for the demands of this new client group.

#### THE NETWORK INTEGRATION IN THE VIEW OF THE PROVIDER ORGANIZATIONS

*Introduction*

The managing team wanted to know how the cooperation in this innovative project of youth welfare was rated in the view of the providers and therefore commissioned an inquiry.

During the six years of the existence of the named institution of youth welfare, children and adolescents from a total of 18 providers were placed in the project INTEGRATION for care and education. A questionnaire was sent to the specialists in charge, which was to be answered anonymously.

## RESULTS

Ten of the eighteen questionnaires were returned.

*Professional identity*

There were four questions concerning the professional identity of the interviewed persons:

- What is the objective of your institution? – Youth welfare was mentioned four times, e.g. organizations for child and youth protection or advice bureaus for youths and families, communal council of guardianship was mentioned twice, officially appointed guardian once, social services twice, penal authority for young delinquents once (multiple answers possible).
- What is your position in the institution (profession)? – Six respondents are social workers, one of them in a leading position, one person calls himself a social advisor, also in a leading position, two persons act as presidents of a communal council.
- What is your basic training? – Five persons were trained as social workers, two as social pedagogues, usually in a higher professional school. Also mentioned as basic training were primary-school teacher, business woman/librarian.
- Have you been trained in systemic therapy (family therapy) and advice? If yes, where and by whom? – Five persons answered yes, concerning training and further education in institutions in Switzerland. Four persons have not attended any of these courses.

*Answers concerning the cooperation and efficiency of the offered services of the project INTEGRATION*

The first five questions could be answered by ticking the appropriate box out of a scale of five (between ‘excellent’ and ‘bad’, between ‘absolutely’ and ‘not at all’), the further questions were formulated as open questions. Each question also offered the heading ‘your comment’.

Aspects	Excellent / absolutely	Good / to a large extent	Partly / not good	Not at all / bad
Offered services <sup>1</sup>	5	5	0	0
Professional competence of specialists involved	4	6	0	0
Cooperation with relevant persons	7	3	0	0
Expectations fulfilled? <sup>2</sup>	4	5	1	0
Systemic work <sup>3</sup>	4	5	1	0

<sup>1</sup> In most cases, the question was not commented any further. One comment read shortly and concisely: “sound, committed, client-oriented”.

<sup>2</sup> Remark with one answer: “The placement had to be terminated prematurely for financial reasons”.

<sup>3</sup> One person answering with ‘absolutely’ (n = 4) added: “View of a non-specialist woman”. Another person answering ‘to a large extent’ (n = 5) remarks somewhat vaguely: “The existing system often does not allow systemic work”. A more comprehensive and at the same time precise statement on the term ‘systemic’ comes from a provider who has answered the question on the systemic way of working with ‘to a large extent’: ‘Systemic’ has become a term for many things. Today, nobody would dare to say about him- or herself not to work systemically. Everybody sums up something slightly different under this term”.

#### *Other questions*

##### *1. What do you think of the community-related concept with partner families in Eggiwil?*

The answers to this open question were quite varied. Some comments:

- Very good solution for the development of children and adolescents.
- In any case, makes sense because of the cooperation, efficiency and continuity.
- Good. Not applicable in every case; difficult if parents do not support it.
- Useful and valuable institution that covers the needs and requirements of all parties involved.
- Two birds with one stone: Help for children and adolescents in need and strengthening of regional development.

##### *2. Does the project INTEGRATION offer services with therapeutic character from your point of view?*

If yes, what does it consist of? Some comments:

- Every placement has a therapeutic character in a wider sense. Therefore, the project INTEGRATION also offers measures that help to rectify misguided developments or compensate for instable, missing or resource-deficient familiar or social surroundings of children and adolescents.

- Distance from the city, nature, contact with animals, quietness and professional support in crises.
- Opportunity for, in some cases, heavily encumbered children/adolescents to experience stability, positive values and loving care in an intact family and in natural environments.
- Possibility of retreating, finding peace, far away from the enticements and diversions of the original surroundings, getting to know nature and different family patterns.
- The most important ‘therapeutic’ effect occurs when children and adolescents experience that they are able to do things and that they are valued as persons.
- Yes, by the well-founded professional systemic work with the system child–family–network of support.
- No. In the first place, for my part the project INTEGRATION contains instruction and support in everyday situations.

*3. Do you think the cooperation with a psychiatrist is sensible?*

Some comments:

- The pedagogic framework does not replace the cooperation with a specialist from psychiatry.
- For support and as a branch of knowledge to be called upon in situations of crisis. As an ‘insurance’ against possible allegations of not having acted adequately.
- In ‘my’ specific case the cooperation was very helpful and made sense, because of the medicinal treatment alone, which was in turn not only applied generally but aimed at and adapted to the specific case since the psychiatrist was involved in the whole placement process. Apart from the medication, his professional advice and judgment were helpful for the partner family as well as the whole support system.
- I regard interdisciplinary cooperation in principle to be sensible in every process of placement, if not even a necessary prerequisite for the process to be as successful as ever possible.

*4. Compared to similar services: how does the project INTEGRATION distinguish itself?*

Some comments:

- Very flexible in situations of crisis.
- Individual and ‘tailor-made’ care and support.
- Persistence, highly professional support, efficiency.
- INTEGRATION is different, because regional development is envisaged consciously and in a good manner.
- Decisive difference in the fact that just this interdisciplinary cooperation of the support system (social pedagogue, social worker, teacher, psychiatrist, foster family, project management, parents) is put down in the concept and thereby guarantees commitment and continuity supporting the process.

- Participation of the community.

5. *Criticism, suggestions, wishes*

- The partner family sometimes reaches its limits quickly with very difficult adolescents.
- Problems with the height of the daily rates: possible 'refrain from future placements' for this reason.
- Decreasing costs for long-term placements which work 'well'.
- Institution of a continuous, standardized flow of information concerning the placements and mutations.



## DISCUSSION

The first four questions were almost unanimously answered positively or very positively. There was only one answer 'partly', referring to the question concerning the aims being reached.

The community-related concept with partner families of Eggiwil (question 6) is generally judged as being valuable, sound, helpful and efficient. The implied observation that this concept can only work well if the original family stands behind the placement without reservation is realistic; rivalry between the familial systems has to be taken into account in any case. It appears interesting to us how precisely the (absolutely intended) 'side effect' of the communal and regional development has been perceived in more than one comment.

The question concerning the therapeutic character of the project is answered ambiguously. There is a wide range of answers from the statement that "every placement has a therapeutic character" to the remark that "well-founded professional

systemic work” was done, right to the negative comments (“instruction and support in everyday situations”). In this connection, the question arises what ‘therapeutic’ means. Simply everything that helps? Or that heals? Or can we only talk about therapy if a trained therapist works personally with the client? Helpful and healing is the offered care of the project INTEGRATION in many cases, the latter situation only applies in exceptional situations. The cooperative and well established interaction of all parties involved in the project is considered effective, i.e., the partner as well as (if present) the original families, project management and providers, teachers, psychiatrist, etc.

The cooperation with a psychiatrist in the project INTEGRATION (question 8) is more or less considered sensible without reservations.

When the project INTEGRATION is compared with other institutions of similar objectives, not only the high quality of the service thanks to flexibility, resistance to crises, continuity, professional support, etc. is mentioned, but again the “inclusive set-out of thinking and acting” which confers to the widespread interdisciplinary and rooting of the project in the community and in the region.

There were very few answers to the question regarding points of criticism concerning the way of working in the project. However, one of the few remarks hit an important point, namely the capacity of the farming families in the face of very difficult adolescents. Despite an improvement of this capacity in the course of the project, the project management has drawn its conclusions from the gained experiences and, among other measures, initiated a training course over several years suited to the possibilities of the farming families.

Connected with the question regarding wishes, suggestions or propositions for improvement of the service, the topic of costs is inevitable. Of course, the supporting association and the management of the project INTEGRATION are continuously discussing the relation between supply and demand, investment and return – discussions which increasingly lead to ‘hot heads’ taking into account the current financial situation and policy of the public sector.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The results of the inquiry are very satisfying for all involved in the INTEGRATION project but also raise several questions that have to be answered. The answers will be considered in the new edition of the detailed concept, which is under development at the moment. The terms ‘systemic’ and ‘therapeutic’ need to be defined more precisely within the concept. Some thought should again be given to the words ‘INTEGRATION’ (what or who is integrated = brought together, united, into what or with what?) and ‘partner family’ (partnership between whom?), words that have become current in the meantime but which have been given insufficient thought.



SOCIALIZATION UNDER CHANGED CONDITIONS – THE EFFECT  
FACTORS IN THE NETWORK INTEGRATION

The method of this study is based on empirical social research. What is it that contributes to the positive development of children and adolescents? – Socio-pedagogic and system-therapeutic influencing by:

1. “Encadrement du développement” (Luc Kaufmann): The rural, often multigenerational family offers through its clear, unambiguous and comprehensible structure a frame that communicates a firm hold and possibilities of orientation (transparent patterns of relationships, limits instead of boundlessness, obligation instead of chaos, stability, continuity and reliability) with a generous amount of time, space and care.
2. Maxims of education that support this obligation and limitation by means of clear settlements, agreements, rules of the game as well as limitation of consumption, whereby the families can in most cases rely on the experience from the successful education of their own children. All this not without regarding the preservation of values from the original social surroundings.
3. Reduction of complexity by controlling the consumption of TV, video, cellular phone, personal computer and internet, games, music and entertainment as well as relations instead of a flood of information; furthermore, absolute prohibition of drugs and alcohol and strictly controlled smoking regulations for older adolescents.
4. Proximity to nature offers the possibility of experiencing the basics of life and asks for respect for the creature. It effectuates, together with other factors mentioned here, a sustainable emotional relaxation (Luc Ciompi).
5. Physical work as a corrective to the head-dominated life in the city; daily recurring and successfully fulfilled practical activities give recognition and raise self-esteem.
6. Quietness for growth: Appeasing influence on the behaviour of children and adolescents who were conspicuous by hyper-activity and disturbances of attention by experiencing slowness, successiveness and contemplation of the country life in a place away from centres, in surroundings without strain and irritation compared to the hectic of urban surroundings.
7. Resource-oriented: The partner families appeal more to the capacities of the children than to their deficits, which is supported actively from the specialists’ side.
8. Alternative values: The children and adolescents get to know another way of living, which gives the opportunity of choice for their future life.
9. Semi-professionalism: The partner families experience a permanent socio-pedagogic and system-therapeutic coaching, but also training parallel to work for several years. Therein lies the fundamental difference of this setting from the traditional placing of children in foster families. With this service they offer a manifold social therapy which is meant to entice the children and adolescents to the highest possible self-efficiency.

10. Positive intensification of the commitment of the partner families by close cooperation at events of information and further education as well as in circles for quality management within the INTEGRATION project.
11. Protection and security for both the partner and original family, by the neutral and external professional position of the psychiatrist and system therapist.
12. Additional security and support of all parties involved in the project by close multidisciplinary cooperation and backing through the political authorities of the responsible communities and regions.

#### THE FUTURE OF FARMING FOR HEALTH ACTIVITIES IN SWITZERLAND

The ongoing structural change in the agricultural sector leads to an increasing demand for new employment. In the future, farmer families will depend more and more on patterns of an additional income. FH activities allow the farmers to generate this additional income on the farm itself, which is a big convenience for all. Farm work can be easily combined with social work and other forms of care and support. On the other side the clients can gain insight into systems which for them were weird and unfamiliar before.

Also in Switzerland there is a growing demand for such activities. The structures are not yet available in detail, particularly the network between the many private institutions and the public departments is in early stages only. All the more it is very promising that the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (seco) is supporting a project in the field of FH activities, not only morally but also financially. It will be a challenge and an important task to improve on this networking and to combine all forces around FH. Another important domain is the training and further education of the involved farmer families. It is and will be essential for the quality of FH that caretakers have a broad knowledge of social aspects and that they can rely on professional supervision. Another future task in Switzerland will be to bring together all departments concerned, such as Health, Education, Welfare, Society, Economy, Ecology, Agriculture, Land Use Planning and others. The activities in The Netherlands will act as an important catalyst for the ongoing process in FH in Switzerland!

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