

REFLECTIONS ABOUT THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Especially after the integration of Romania in the European Union the possibilities of recuperation of the fallbacks of our rural areas in the process of a durable development have been diversified. The primary actors involved in creating and funding the programmes are the people which put into action the programme and the local authorities. Along side them we consider that the civil society must be a catalyst for the programmes and help the local community absorb the funds given to it and help it multiply the results. The involvement of the civil society in the formation of certain conducts , in promoting the universal values , in harnessing the local resources , in talking and helping each individual ,etc. are just some suggestions to go on. The projects which aimed to help the rural areas by encouraging initiative and raise the awareness of local resources have reduced results because of the Romanian peasant's feeling that everything he already has is enough and his is satisfied with himself. The role of civil society should be to help the people understand that they must not settle for a little and that they should work so that they can help themselves and they're community. The conclusions of this study, based on the projects build on European funding in the North-Eastern region concerning the development of peoples awareness of they're own resources in the rural areas, are that certain financial solutions must be found and that certain procedures are needed so that the civil society can take part in the long term development of these areas. The civil society could represent a link between the local communities and the economical experts.

Key words: civil society, public authorities, juridical persons, rural development, conduct

INTRODUCTION

The fact analysis that contribute to the rural progress showed that the public authorities and the economical representatives play an important part in the growing wellfair of the local community.

The role of the administrative teritorial units is represented by : the ensurance of a complex infrastructure (the utility ensurance, the culturale and educational spaces ensurance, the ensurance of a better transport network etc.)[1];the maintenance of great conditions destined to the drawing in of investors by the offering of emplacements, imposit deductions etc.;the continuous information given to the colectivities members of the existing developping opportunities; the drawing in of new financing sources through different projects and programs of rural developping in every existing activity domain.

The role of comercial societies is a primordial economical one (of offering incomes to the employees but also to the local authorities through taxes and imposit), but to this one it should be added a technological one (the obligation of inducing the technical progress,mostly in what regards the environment protection) and a social role for the creation of a healthy social environment.

The question we have always asked ourselves is if those two actors are enough (the state and the economical companies) for the ensurance of a right rythm for the rural developpment? Are there any other factors that should be involved? The answer is surley affirmative and it regards the civil society.

METHOD AND MATERIAL

This examination used the statistical data offered by the firms that have implemented the projects[4] regarding the entrepreunering

developing in the rural medium generalizing their conclusions. Even more, there were used informations that came from the city halls of the townships, especially from the developing Region from North-East.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Although in these past five years there have been many programs of entrepreneuring education, especially in the rural environment, the results are not very decisive. The number of the new opened firms is the one imposed by the financiers, the firms that already existed did not significantly improved the level of profitability, but in our opinion the most nocive aspect was represented by the people's perception regarding risc and private initiative. Even more, the perception of those who did not participate to these kind of projects, even though no one forbidden them the access, considered that the ones that are interested are part of the „people that know other people” category. All those who are not interested in participating in an economical activitie settle with what they have and think that money is „the devil's eye” and that's why he won't participate in the development of his community. They consider that the state should take care of everything, because they're poor and they can not.

This kind of thinking not only doesn't help the community but it also amkes the gap between the rural and urban areas so much more greater. That's why we consider that for supporting the economical developmen we need to give great attention the the psychological „traning” of the people which live in rural areas and make them understand that change isn't necessarily a bad thing.

Anyone who would come from outside this area of semi-closure and tried to help the community won't be able to get through to the people because they consider that only their problems are important and only they can understand them. That's why every community need a couple a persons that the people trust and that are open to change, that would be the civil society.

The civil society is, in our opinion, an engine of the rural development which is not

used to it's potential. This opinion is sustained by the role the civil society has:

- it promotes universal values
- it help use the financel, turist and other resources
- it help with the human resources of the community
- consults and advises anyone who wants to build a busyness or expend one.
- the creation of certain work procedures through with experience can be exchanged and through which people could be helped on other levels not just the economical one.
- encouraging the protection of the environment, respecting each other person and respecting the work you do.

None the less, to succeed in these goals is very hard because of the small communities where the civil society is very small and as a consequence has small possibilities. The lack of local newspapers, radio stations, televisions and financial support are just a couple of the difficulties of the romanian villages.

The exchange of experience is twice as succesful if it works together with the civil society. The big difference is that people would be more confident if they had the certainty that the things presented to them are real and it would be a very good guideline for them. This is the only way we can change that neutral state and make people realize they can trully do something great for themselves and their community. The positive attitudes concerning change spred a lot more faster is the civil society gets involved.

The role of the civil society is that more important as the average age of the people is quite high. Even if you can't do a lot of fizical work, if you do a thing and you do it right, if you have a positive attitude about work and respect the people who have studied a lot, you can make a difference. Furthermore you should teach your children to apply by these „rules” because this is the only way we can really make a difference.

Even if, we can say that the civil spirit is better in the rural area than in the cities, this attitude isn't used to it's full potential. that's why we think that too much respect is not that good and the civil society should be more agresive.

A change is possible here only with the intervention of the local authorities. The involvement of the city hall of town hall in as many projects as possible would be a great help for the civil society. Unfortunately, the law does say that the city hall must participate at the law also doesn't say that the city hall doesn't have to, so it's all up to us. In the latest years such „partnerships” have been encouraged so that we may change the rural mentality and succeed in truly developing the rural area. Financing non-governmental organizations out of the local budget is only present in the urban area because in the rural areas there are never funds for such kinds of projects, which makes the civil society almost non-existent.

A solution for this problem would be the help of the District Council. These institutions have the resources to get these programmes going and help the civil society become an active factor in promoting the long-term development. Although we can't say exactly how much the civil society will help the economy or how long it will take we consider it to be very important because it gives as an example of a normal and healthy social and economical life.

We don't have to finance such activities all the time. If the civil society becomes more and more „popular” it can finance itself without needing funds from the local budget. We also have to add that these investments can be seen as long-term investments in human resources. The benefits

of these actions will be seen in the medium and long term.

CONCLUSIONS

Studying the results of more programmes of business development, especially from the North-Eastern area, has shown that progress can be achieved in the rural areas through responsibility and taking a chance with an idea, with a business. We believe that with the civil society we could sustain this progress and build on it. Its main objectives are to mobilize the creative sparks in every person and encourage them in order to help the people and help the community.

Last, but not least, we consider that a programme of finance through European or budgetary funds is necessary, which would have as main objectives the development of the civil society and integrating it in the life of the community, especially in the small communities.

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