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Europeu
del Voluntariat
Barcelona
9, 10 i 11 de novembre de 2011

WORKSHOP 7: Socially Responsible Territory
Socially Responsible Territories: the era of co-responsibility,F. Xavier Agulló

The development of a **Socially Responsible Territory (**SRT) entails the implementation of policies aiming at the enhancement of regional sustainability through collaboration initiatives that are beneficial to all stakeholders (public sector, corporate sector and non-profit organizations). SRTs' objective is to face regional economic, social and environmental challenges. Volunteering is closely linked to SRTs.
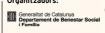
Social Responsibility is not a new concept. Similarly, the ideas on which SRTs are built on are not new. SRTs are somehow linked to the triple helix approach (collaboration between the public sector, the corporate sector and universities) and rural and regional development. Socially responsible territories are often **confused with urban development plans**. Public sector social sections are only part of SRTs social responsibility. Usually, public administrations are the ones in charge of the implementation of SRT projects with the support of other partners.

Besides the three sectors (public, corporate and third sector) other stakeholders are part of SRTs. The education sector, for instances, has a key role in human capital development and values dissemination. Media are the communication platform between social agents and citizens, who can act as ambassadors of other stakeholders Social Responsibility. An empowered and committed citizenship is an essential element of any policy for the development of SRTs and a pre-requisite for its existence.

SRTs are not simply a mere count of each actor's social responsibility. It is rather a synergy resulting from it and the adoption of a regional consensus-based **road map**. This constitutes the first step towards the development of SRTs in which all stakeholders' perspectives and the strategic lines that are going to inspire the process need to be taken into account.

Socially Responsible Territories need to be provided with the necessary management tools such as a **territorial management system** that are based on solid moral principals. The pillar of the system should be regional assets management (key stakeholders and social infrastructures).

Organitzadors:

European Year of Volunteering 2011   Generalitat de Catalunya Departament de Benestar Social i Família   Federació Catalana de Voluntariat Social

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Social Infrastructures are the platform for the development of relationships between regional actors as well as for coordination and collaboration. They also contribute to social cohesion. Volunteering programs are one of the elements that enable a solid network of stakeholders and committed citizens that participate as volunteers from a social approach.

Furthermore**, volunteering** lays the grounds for the establishment of partnerships between citizens and corporations in the framework of Socially Responsible Territories. It is also a useful tool that contributes to boost all stakeholders' social responsibility actions visibility, which enables participation and thus helps bringing new volunteers on board.

Volunteering is a type of **partnership** and as such it is an essential element of a Socially Responsible Territory. Public-private partnerships set a win-win scenario. On one hand, they contribute to achieving social objectives and on the other hand they provide the private sector with an opportunity to share responsibilities and explore new finance and collaboration mechanisms. Public – Third Sector partnerships have a similar role. These partnerships are commonly used as an outsourcing tool; public organizations delegate the provision of certain social services to non-profit organizations with more expertise in the filed. Public – Third Sector partnerships have also proved to be beneficial for both parts.
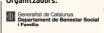
Many **best practices** could be highlighted. The Colombian partnership *Antioquia por la Equidad* (www.alianzaporlaequidad.org.co) is a public-private initiative aiming at reducing inequalities in the Colombian region of Antioquia through the development and implementation of social policies and the promotion of a social change vis-à-vis inequalities and poverty.

Another case is the *Aliança per l'Aigua* (www.alianzaporelagua.org), which is an initiative gathering public administration, water supply companies, research centres, social organizations and citizens from Spain and Central America. The main objective of the alliance is the promotion of the human right to water and sanitation in Central America in the framework of the Millennium Development Goals.

Partnerships can also involve the **participation of several actors**. In this case, they get even closer to the notion of Socially Responsible Territories.
The first step in the development of a Socially Responsible Territory is the elaboration of a road map and an integral development strategy. The management of a socially responsible territory requires of a regional management system based on sound moral principals.

A **management system** is made of the organization's structure, responsibilities, procedures, processes and the resources it devotes to reaching its objectives. A management system is based on the following actions: planning, developing, checking and acting. The excellence of an organization's management system is often conveyed to the region in which it is applied.

The main **objectives** of Socially Responsible Territories are the promotion of alliances between different sectors, raising awareness on regional sustainable development and achieving an optimal resource management through the implementation of regional development plans.

Regional management systems have many pros. Among others, it enables the implementation of a **regional volunteering plan** or of various plans, if necessary.

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