

*Strengthening the Capacity
of Local Public Administration
to Adopt and Implement
Development Policies*

Statement for introducing
the Local Development Agent function

*Policy study elaborated by
the Rural Development Consortium*

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Strengthening the capacity of local public administration to adopt and implement development policies

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Szávics Mária

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Foreword

The present study was elaborated by the experts of the partner organizations within the Rural Development Consortium – as part of the project initiated by these and entitled Local Development Agent.

The present work is a synthesis of the following studies of substantiation:

- The analyses of the relations within sectors – carried out by Sergiu Bălașa (Economical Development Agency Timiș);
- The analysis of the legal frame and also of the possibilities to include the function of Local Development Agent in the structure of the local public administration – carried out by Corina Dragomirescu (Academy of Advocacy);
- The comparative analysis of similar models – carried out by Ioan Hosu (Civitas Foundation for Civil Society);
- The analysis of the opportunities regarding the adoption of the function – carried out by Veronica Juncan (Department of Public Administration of „Babes-Bolyai“ University);
- The analysis of the relations within the sectors – carried out by Daniel Pop (Public Policy Centre);

The publication contains the policy research study which synthesizes the results of the above mentioned studies alongside with two presentations of the pilot projects which are the basis of the concept of the Local Development Agent. These presentations were drafted by Claudia Novac (Local Promoter, Local Development Agent) and Pavel Alexandru (Local Development Officer). At the end we included an empirical investigation regarding the results of the pilot program, in which our colleagues Ioan Hosu and Dan Luceș had an important role.

The achievement of this material is due to the generous support offered by the Open Society Institute and the German Marshall Fund for which we express our gratitude and we thank for their trust and support.

Balogh Márton and Claudia Novac carried out the co-ordination of the expert team from Cluj and Timișoara.

In the end we want to thank to all those who were involved in the implementation of the project, namely: Local Development Agents, the implementation team and the representatives of the authorities of the local administration from the target counties of the project.

Cluj-Napoca, 2005

*„The public administration in territorial-administrative units shall be based on the principles of decentralization, local autonomy, and deconcentration of public services.“
(The Constitution of Romania, Article 120, point 1).*

Summary

In this policy study the authors propose to draw the attention of policy stakeholders on the importance of the institutional reform of the local public administration, a reform that has to be in accordance with the opportunities offered by the European accession, in the field of local development policies. By this, the study proposes to contribute to the process of institutional change, through which the local authorities from Romania are currently involved. The study assesses the various ways in which the Local Development Agent (LDA) might be implemented into the structure of the Romanian local public administration.

In the study, a special attention is given to the two initiatives of adopt the function of Local Development Agent. The two endeavours were the pilot programs implemented, starting with 1999, in Bistrița – Năsăud, Cluj and Timiș Counties.

The identified policy alternatives refer, first of all, to the identification and the description of the Local Development Agent's different tasks, then to the different possibilities to institutionalize the function, to the identification of the relations between the LDA's and the different public and private institutions, as well as to the possible financing sources of the function of Local Development Agent.

In the first part of the work we will briefly present the actual institutionalization of the functions specific for the local development policies. In the second part we will discuss about the existing options for introducing an organizational structure at the local level, with the specific tasks of local development. The last part includes the evaluation of the costs and benefits of the different options and the recommendations based on the results of the

analysis. In the annexes the two pilot programs are presented, programs that were the stepping stones for the Local Development Agent (Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer in Bistrița-Năsăud and Cluj counties, and Local Promoter – in Timiș County), as well the evaluation of community development models.

The results of the study point to the fact that the adoption of the function of the Local Development Agent is possible in the frame of the present legislative context. Additionally, the approach of the setting up of this function can take into consideration the different institutional relations which exist at the level of the local authorities. As a result, in order to assure a maximum efficiency, we propose the adoption of the function under different institutional forms, followed by the choice of the most suitable model for the specific conditions at local level for each administration.

To finance the function of the LDA we proposed the creation of a national fund, called The National Fund for Local Development, which will take over the function of co-financing the projects of local development.

We consider that this decentralized system has the advantage of generating local competitiveness at the level of local authorities from Romania, a process needed to have an attractive area for investors and for absorbing the European Structural Funds in an efficient and effective way.

Introduction

Romania's accession to the European Union in the near future does not necessarily guarantee the long expected economic growth and social development and neither the convergence towards the average of European Union in this respect. It could happen that the developmental disparity between our country and the European average can be reduced only marginally, or not at all in the immediately following periods of our accession in the EU structures.

This scenario is possible due to the structural discrepancies that exist between Romania and the economies of the Member States, and also to the reduced capacity of the Romanian society to build a competitive economy. This inefficiency has its origin in the weak development and rigid institutional structures at local level, a fact that creates policy ineffectiveness and inefficiency at local levels. For example, the income per resident in Romania, expressed in purchasing power parity, is less than one third of the European average. The occupation rate of the active population has decreased in the last years. Thus, if in 1999 some 68.7% of the active labour force was occupied, in 2003 it lowered to 62.4%. In contrast, in year 2003 in the EU15 the occupation rate was 70.0%, while in the new Member States it was 65.5%. Moreover, the occupational structure on branches shows other significant differences. Thus, in Romania the occupation rate in agriculture was of 35.7% in year 2003. In comparison in the EU15 the average occupation in the agricultural sector was 4.0% and in the new Member States the average was 12.3%. In Romania the human development index was 0.778 in 2002, under the level achieved by Bulgaria (0.778) for instance, Slovakia (0.842), Poland (0.8) or The Czech Republic (0.868). These data points out that Romania will join the European Union with low performances both in terms of economic adjustment the structure of the European economy and also from the perspective of social development.

Starting with the 2007 budgetary year Romania, as a member state of the European Union, will have to contribute to the Union's budget with approximately one thousand million of Euros each year. If we take into consideration all the other obligations, which will be a result of the contributions to different European institution, then the sum will raise annually, at around 3% of the

GDP of Romania. The obligatory character of these payments create an important pressure upon the state's budget, the more so as only a reduced part of the Structural Funds will be destined to the state budget.

Romania's capacity to gain benefits from the advantages conferred by its membership in the European Union depends on the absorption rate of the available Structural Funds. For example, the absorption rate, as in the case of the pre-accession funds, depends on the success of the elaborating and implementing specific actions based on the programming of the projects by the national institutions and organizations. This is decisive, since the allocated funds for Romania between 2007 and 2009 are, mostly, sums which will be delivered to the addressed through financing projects. As a result, to temper the structural shocks owed to the costs of EU membership depends on the capacity of our country to absorb Structural and Cohesion Funds, accessible for Romania after the accession to the European Union.

Local authorities have an important role in absorbing Structural and Cohesion Funds. These will have the role to enhance the institutional capacities to plan, to implement and to evaluate actions for local development, with the task to offer coherence and concentration in adopting strategic programs for economical development at the level of each territorial administrative unit. As a result, the transformation of the local public administration needs to become the key priority of the institutional reform for the precursory period of the effective accession to the European Union.

1. The Description of the Problem

The aim of this public policy study is to identify and present policy alternatives possibly leading to the improvement of the quality of local governance in Romania. The identified instruments are mostly focused on enhancing the capacity of public administrative units to undertake the responsibilities of local policy development. Through this approach we answer to the need existing at local public administration level – in the sense of the capacity of institutional development -, to take over and fulfil associated functions with the local development and to elaborate projects. In Romania, after 1989, the process of transition and the social economical and political reform, and the decentralizing process of the local public administration put into evidence that:

- the assuming of responsibility in the development of local economy is not entirely understood and assumed by the local public administration;
- there are no adequate instruments for developing and promoting local economic development (legislative, financial, institutional, programmed strategic visions and approaches).

Though a series of laws were adopted, as for example the Law of Local Public Administration (Law 215/2001) and The Statute of Public Servants (Law 188/1999 – re-published), which introduce some decentralization and de-concentration of public services to local public administrations, we can still observe that the process of formulating public policies at local level and that of strategic planning are still limited. The actual legal system establishes the system of coercion and opportunities in which the local authorities carry out the activities connected to local development policies. We consider that this fact is owed, at least partially, to the lack of local initiative in using the opportunities offered by the new legislation and the lack of sustaining its implementation with complementary measures.

Besides the horizontal allocation of authority it is important to consider also the ways in which the different responsibilities of the local administration are organized. This has a particular impact upon the quality of local development policy. Without any doubt, to assure a sustained pace of local economic development is a part of the most important desideratum of Romania in the process of

European integration. The Law of Local Public Administration, for instance, does not restrict the adoption of local development policies. Though this does not specify the nature of these initiatives of local development and not even which could be the general principles in the domain of the promotion of local development. As a result, the majority of the local public administrations did not develop, planned, implemented, and evaluated any actions that will ensure the coherence and the concentration of measures of local development policies based on strategic programs of the territorial administrative units.

In order to create a structure of local administration able to answer to the problems of local development in a European context, it is necessary to enhance institutional capacities and to ensure the necessary financial resources for their use at local level. In these aspects there are still many measures which must be undertaken in order to ensure the functionality of the local autonomy, as it is stipulated in the legislation.

Furthermore we also propose the adoption of the function of the Local Development Agent (LDA) as a possible solution for the problems regarding the support and implementation of the local development policies.

2. The Presentation of the LDA Model

The model of the Local Development Agent is a result of two pilot programs which aimed to introduce the function of the Local Promoter, respectively Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer, at the level of rural and small urban communities from Bistrița, Cluj and Timiș Counties. The two programs' objective was to contribute to the institutional development of the local administration. The lessons learned point to the value of the LDA model and the social benefits at national level of all the local administrations from the country. The name LDA covers or incorporates both the function of Local Promoter and that of the Facilitator Comunitar – Pilot project.

2.1. Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer- Pilot Project

The initiative entitled „Community Facilitator – pilot project in Cluj and Bistrița Năsăud counties“, the first stage of the program with the same name, was implemented by Civitas Foundation in partnership with the County Councils from Cluj and Bistrița Năsăud, in the period between November 2002 and October 2003. The aim of the initiative was the promotion and the facilitation of the local development efforts through the strengthening of the institutional and professional capacity of the local public administration. In accordance with the above mentioned it was considered that the human resource is the basis of these processes, through the capacity to determine and turn to good account the other resources of the community. As a result, the Community Facilitator – Pilot project has been oriented first of all towards the human resources involved in the process of development. In this respect the role of the Community Facilitator was defined as persons with a specific training, people be found at local level or those who will travel to the communities and will fulfil there a series of functions, in order to prepare the community for a certain future action.

In this respect, a body of 10 community facilitator (pilot project) were trained and instructed, and in the second stage of the initiative were distributed to the County Town Halls mentioned

before, based on some initial co-operation agreements between Civitas Foundation and the City Town halls.

The results obtained from the implementation of the activities as follows below, show that the initiative is a variable and adaptable one on a large scale, on the level of public administration institutions from Romania, especially those in the rural areas.

Results:

- The existence of a Web page for each partner commune;
- More than 100 projects in different domains (public administration, environment, social services and the development of multi-ethnic communities) submitted for financing;
- Development strategies elaborated for all the ten partner communes;
- Extra-budgetary funds drawn to the communities through financing programs amounting approximately Euro 170 000;
- Local associations already constituted or in constitution in all the ten communes involved.

2.2 Local Promoter

The Local Promoter's are the people with a specific training and background, employed by the Local Public Administrations (town halls) in order to identify community problems hindering the local development and to develop adequate projects according to the existing needs.

The concept of Local Promoter was developed during 5 years of experience, being initiated by the Economical Development Agency Timiș (ADETIM) in the field of local and regional economical development.

The Open Society Foundation (OSF) considered existing model promoted by ADETIM as a suitable one for improving the performances of the local public administration from the Timiș County communes. Thus, the OSF branch from Timișoara supported this local initiative in the frame of an operational program – the development of the concept of Local Promoter – financed through a pilot project which had as objective the implementation of the function of Local Promoter in 20 establishments from Timiș County (16 communes and 4 small towns).

In January 2000, the Center for Rural Assistance (CAR) took over the coordination and the financing of the Local Promoter program.

Starting with 2000 the number of Local Promoter was extended in three stages:

1. From April 2000 to January 2001: extension of the Local promoter in 10 more town halls at Timiș County level;
2. From February 2001 until November 2003: consolidation of the concept in 30 communities;
3. From December 2003 to August 2004: implementation at 24 more communes from Timiș County, as a result of the project Local Promoter -Local Development Agent.

All the town halls which set up the position of Local Promoter Local Development Agents were endowed with performing computers and printers.

Results:

- 35 projects elaborated by the Local Promoter were financed;
- Setting up of Local Initiative Groups (GIL) which coordinated 15 projects funded by the Center for Rural Assistance;
- Inclusion in the the National Competition „100 projects for Romania“ where the Local Promoter project was situated among the first 10;
- Inclusion in th the County Competition „The Reform belongs to you“ carried out by the Prefect's Office of Timiș County, in partnership with the County Council where 2 projects developed by Local Promoter were present among the first 10;
- Setting up of 4 community associations
- Developing 15 local strategies for administrative-territorial units.

Analyzing the results and the experiences of previous projects, the Local Development Agent must have high communication abilities, must be a good observer, must know the roles and attributions of the local actors who participate in the local development, must have the capacity of synthesizing, must elaborate initiatives and moderate groups with different interests, must have managerial capacities to co-ordinate a diversity of activities, projects and human resources, with a good understanding of the private sector in general, and of the enterprisers in particular. This person must offer specific counselling to any person interested from the local private sector, must synthesize the species, record them, must analyze and identify them as a specific problem, must give arguments,

identify solutions, sketch projects, adjust financing and co-financing sources to local needs, evaluate the results and the impacts of the process.

3. The Implementation of the Function of the Local Development Agent

The most common objectives of local development policies are the improvement of local competitiveness and the enhancement of living standards. These objectives become realizable only if local authorities adopt measures for the enhancement of local organizational capacities leading to the elaboration and support of some effective and efficient local development policies. Through improving the organizational capacities of the local administration to promote and sustain local development policies we understand the setting up of some institutional structures which can take over and fulfil the specific functions of the local development. The proposed objectives within the processes of community development can be achieved if the following steps are crossed:

- The members of the community become more responsible with regard to the existing situation or problems of the community this meaning involvement, participation, and to assume some responsibilities;
- The growth of the capacity to organize and plan on the level of the community.

Both pilot programs aimed to realize simultaneously these two objectives.

In conformity with the Law of Local Public Administration (Law 215/2001), the main attributions and responsibilities of the local public administration specific for the policies of local development from the perspective of the Local Development Agent include:

- the adoption of strategies, prognosis and the programs of socio-economical development in different domains;
- to provide public services;
- to establish and monitor the way how the projects of organization and territorial arrangements are carried out, as well as the general urban development projects and
- the construction, maintenance and modernization of local public roads.

A durable development on local level presumes the reform of the local public administration centred on the elaboration of some competitive and efficient policies for strengthening the governing

capacity at local level. Among these measures we mention:

- To improve the system of providing the decentralized public services;
- To clear up the competences of the different public and private institutions in the field of local development;
- To reduce the local fiscal rigidity by strengthening the local financial autonomy;
- To strengthen the institutional capacities of the local public administration to develop and implement local development policies and strategies;
- To develop the institutional procedures of planning and administrating the structural funds.

The improvement of the policy capacity on local level in the field of local development policies implies support to the process of formulation and implementation of policies by adopting measures like:

- The creation of the standard procedures of elaboration and implementation of local public policies;
- The development of the methodology of establishing the priorities of local development;
- The adoption of the protocol of coordination of local development policies, monitoring the implementation of local development policies;
- The identification of the criteria and methodologies of evaluation in realizing the objectives of development.

On the basis of the accumulated experiences as part of the two pilot programs the costs associated with the application of the adoption of the function of Local Development Agent were about 120 million ROL in the first year.

These include the investment costs in the labour substructure for a Local Development Agent, the wages and the minimal functioning costs for the services offered by the LDAs.

Adopting the function of the LDAs answers local developmental needs as shown by the experience of the two pilot programs, made possible due to the improvement of the strategies of development and to the implementation of these at local level. For all that, adopting this management model of development policies involves the definition of this function as part of the public administration in Romania.

3.1. The Tasks of the Local Development Agents

Local development policy involves the following stages: informing and collecting data, identifying local development priorities, elaborating development strategies, implementing the strategies and evaluating the policies.

For the moment, the organisation of local administrations and the lack of clarity regarding the horizontal and vertical responsibilities in the domain of development policies, make difficult the process of elaboration and implementation of such policies.

At the same time the lack or insufficient development criteria to adopt local public development policies make considerably more difficult the identification and formulation of some competitive policies of local development.

The law defines the notion of the community facilitator for the first time in the Romanian legislation, as: „the facilitator is a selected natural or a juridical person, who assumes the obligation to help a poor rural community, a disadvantaged group, a productive group or an other social category appointed as eligible, coming from urban communities, commune or village communities, in each case, to organize him(her)self, to identify his(her) own necessities, to form them on the hierarchical system, to elaborate a project, to pass beyond the organizational and communicational problems which occur during the settlement of the project, to participate at the durable development of the community also after the Fund stops the financing“.

The specific prerogatives of the model of Local Development Agent were traced as being the following:

1. the identification and mobilization of the resources from the community;
2. the supporting and stimulating the creation of work to start up initiatives of development which come from the community, in the field of community development and planning of the strategic development;
3. the coordination of the most important activities mentioned in a project, as part of the project management;
4. the identification of the leaders and the forming of local initiative groups;
5. the identification of community problems;

6. the mediation between interest groups and the cooperation between local and international institutions;
7. the constant information and communication towards the community regarding different opportunities (e.g. business);
8. the assistance given to local actors in their local and regional development activity, respectively the assistance in the marketing and the promotion of the locality;
9. the accession of funding sources for the proposed projects;
10. and other responsibilities if needed.

The experience of the two pilot programs show that by adopting the function of the Local Development Agent, the administration can become an efficient institution at local level by:

- identifying the specific problems which hinder the community socio-economical development;
- initiating adequate solutions to solve them;
- developing action strategies;
- identifying efficient measures which bring the expected results and implement the projects;

In the following chapters we will discuss the public policy options in order to adopt the function of the Local Development Agent, presenting the possible advantages or disadvantages which can result from its adoption.

3.2. The Institutionalization of the Function of the Local Development Agent

Enhancing the process of local governance in order to increase the local competitiveness and to improve the living standards depends, mostly, on the specific institutional constraints of the different local administrations. Thus we mention the existence of some significant discrepancies between the urban and rural authorities depending on:

- the number of inhabitants;
- the surface of the managed administrative territory;
- the structure of incomes;
- the employment structure of the labour force and the structure of the local economy;
- the rural inhabitants' mentality and
- the access level to the substructures of communication, etc.

These discrepancies define to a great extent the type and the acuteness of the problems of development that the different local

authorities confront.

In consequence the form of institutionalizing the Local Development Agent function needs to take into consideration these differences between the local authorities.

The extent at which local development strategies are successful depend on the way in which different policy stakeholders are directly or indirectly included in the process of local development, and are involved in the planning and adopting of the policies of development. Thus, for instance, we distinguish among the following actors:

- The State and the different public intuitions – local, regional, national, respectively European public institutions;
- Private sector – all juridical forms which carry out productive activities;
- Civil Society – consisting of non-profit formal or informal organizations with activities of common interest.

As a result, institutionalizing the function of Local Development Agent must offer these groups the possibility of being involved in the adoption and implementation of the local development policies. Next, we present three possible forms of institutionalizing the function of the Local Development Agent which have to respect these criteria.

3.2.1. Local Development Agent as Part of the Local Public Administration

Depending on the institutional capability of the local public administrations there is a possibility to create some specialized units so that the function of the Local Development Agent is adopted at:

- The level of local public administration, such as, on the level of the commune or of the town;
- The level of more communes, for example around a pole of development, or by setting up and organizing a common strategy;
- The County level, through the setting up of a public institution of County interest for example.

All the three models presented are based on the Law of Local Public Administration (Law 215/2001) and The Statute of Public Servant (Law 188/1999 – republished)

Local Development Agent at the level of local administration. If the need of introducing the function of Local Development Agent is identified, the town hall will present for approval the modification of the organizational structure and the rearrangement of the posts within the organization to the Local Council in order that the Local Development Agent position is found inside the organizational structure.

The Statute of Public Servants offers the possibility for the Local Development Agent to be taken over in the structure of public office servants. As the public functions are classified, the Local Development Agent can be placed in the category of executive public servant, at present position 13: expert, counsellor, inspector, legal advisor, and listener.

In the body of the law we can find two structures, which have in view the improvement, the protection and the introduction of some functions based on the new prerogatives of the public servants. These are the following:

a) The National Agency of the Public Servant

The prerogatives conferred by law to this new organism offers the possibility that the Local Development Agent becomes a distinct executive function as part of the structure of public servant. Analyzing more attentively the functioning regulation of this structure, we can find the possibility through which it can confer itself the role and can be the link of contact in accomplishing all the necessary steps to introduce the new functions in the Romanian Occupational Code at the category of public servants, as soon as they were accepted and noticed.

b) The National Institute of Administration:

Its main prerogative is to train and prepare professionals in the domain of local public administration. In consequence there is an educational structure which, based on a well defined curriculum, can prepare, through its network, professionals in local development and which confers the possibility to this „professional invention“ to have a mass character.

The main benefit of this system consists in the development of some specific management capacities of the local development policies at the level of each community. The main disadvantage consists in the reduced capacity of the small local public administrations to support such specialized institutions.

Local Development Agent at the level of more communes. In order to contract the high expenses to maintain the function of the Local Development Agent is possible that some local administration will associate for supporting such a public service. The present legislation allows this, but the stimuli for implementing it are limited or inexistent.

In the case of the Local Development Agent at the level of local public administration or at the level of association of more local administrations the advantages of the institutionalization include:

- Rapid contracts with other local public administrations;
 - The direct utilization of the available data in the local public administration;
 - The collaboration with the specialized workers of other offices;
 - Smaller functioning costs;
 - An easier applicability of the function of initiator;
 - Approach the political and administrative decedent;
- Among the possible disadvantages we can mention:
- More reduced flexibility;
 - More bureaucracy;
 - A negative image and problems with acceptance;
 - Long ways of proceeding;
 - Rigid form of organization.

Local Development Agent at the level of County Council

As the County Councils can set up public institutions and can offer public services of County interest, in the terms of law they can initiate an institution dedicated to the local development at the level of the County. This can offer its specialists in local development the statute of public servant. In this case, the Local Development Agent belongs to the newly created institution and is detached by the Local Councils from the territory.

In order to define the function of the Local Development Agent in this type of structure the advantages offered by the Statute of Public Servants can be utilized, as these were exposed.

This model involves the County Council as agent of the change and it depends on the level of reform, of modernization, and of the vision of each country forum. Its propagation on national level can be a long process. The adoption of this model has the advantage of co-ordination and correlation of the strategies of local development at the County level. The information, the improvements, the

projection of concepts of community development belongs to a body of specialists who are closely linked to the local realities.

Advantages:

- The adequate position for the interface function between the Local Development Agent and the private sector;
- A good specialization and distribution of the tasks of the Local Development Agent;
- Relationship with the authorities and economical agents due to a large informational base;
- A greater flexibility than in the case of public services integrated in the structure of local public administration;
- A good speed of turning to account the existing opportunities;
- Own organizational identity and the identification of the personnel at the culture of their own organizations;
- A good professional motivation for the employees and collaborators which is a result of the increased professional capacity and performance;
- Financial: free budget; advantages regarding taxes; relatively motivating remuneration.

Disadvantages:

- Eventually a lower transparency towards the exterior;
- Problems in the competence distribution ;
- Collision of interests of the groups of political-administration councils;
- Taking over to a certain extent the effects of the bureaucratic system of the public administration in the actions of the organization;
- Communication-cooperation with the more difficult services of the country councils due to the different organizational culture and the different way of action;
- Limited visibility from the private sector;

*3.2.2. Local Development Agent as an Independent Institution
Associated with the local Public Administration*

The present legislation allows the organization of some local public services in partnership with non-governmental organizations, or granting them to some private firms based on some public-private partnerships. Out of the possible options we mention the followings:

- The setting up of an association with own juridical personality of public interest, to be found in the property of the local administration.
- The association of the local administration with non-governmental organizations which offer public services of local development with the aim to take over the function of the Local Development Agent.
- To conclude some contracts of strategic partnerships with the representatives of the private sector for local development services.

These forms of organization can include:

- a) *Public interest association.* This form of organization of the function of Local Development Agent involves the setting up of a juridical person, having the main activity of organizing and implementing the programs of the local development, by the local authority. These organizations are in the property of the local administration, having their own budget and accountancy, accepted and approved by the Local Council. The financing of these structures can be realized on the basis of some annual budgetary allocations and of some co-financing from programs of ordinary non-refundable financing.
- b) *The contracting of the services.* These forms of organizing public services connected with the policies of local development consist in the contracting of some specific or punctual activities of some profit or non-profit organizations of the structure. These contracts can be on limited term and with a total or partial budgetary support depending on the type of the services offered. The main advantage in the case of this model is the involvement of the enterpriser and of the non governmental associations in the process of public policy in the domain of local development and in offering local public services.

Advantages

- Including private enterprises results in a bigger acceptance;
- The specialization and the distribution of the tasks of the Local Development Agent;
- The connection with the authorities and the economic agents has as a result the creation of a large informational base;
- A better financial endowment which answers a larger action framework;

- Flexibility in establishing the relationship with the possible partners;
- A better image after the separation from the administrative apparatus;
- Flow of information from economy;
- Financial: free budget; to limit the juridical responsibility;
- Project acceleration.

Disadvantages

- The reduced interaction with the administration has as an effect a deficit of information;
- The possible reduction of the transparency level;
- The problem of distributing competences;
- Difficult decisional process through the diversification of the interests;
- The lack of legitimacy and the impossibility of holding responsible;
- Collision of interests of different groups;
- The lack of decisional competence.

3.2.3. Local Development Agent as a private service

The competences and responsibilities of the private agents in the local development are usually considered as being connected only to the productive activities which they undertake, through which they create jobs and generate public incomes through taxation. But the form of private managerial organization can be utilized for implementing the local development policies in the form of organizing economic societies of promotion. Taking over the tasks and the functions of local development in this institutionalized form is possible only in a limited extent. But the advantages of granting some responsibilities to implement the strategies of local development can be easy conceptualized, and the model becomes easy to implement as part of the present legal system. However this way of working involves the existence of some institutional abilities in the public sector capable of collaborating with these private firms in an efficient mode.

An alternative in this sense can be the initiation of a specific law for liberal profession on the model of the magistrates and/or of the other liberal professions. This model, however, involves a series of legislative changes in order for this alternative to become feasible.

Advantages

- Acceptance at the economic sector;
- A better capitalization;
- Competence;
- Motivation;
- Short decisional ways;
- Flexibility.

Disadvantages:

- Contact with the administration;
- The credibility of a higher representation ;
- The lack of control;
- The impossibility of being held responsible;
- Higher costs.

Each model of institutionalizing the function of the Local Development Agent has its advantages and disadvantages. The selection of the model must be realized on the basis of the specific characteristics of each local authority. As a result, we propose that each alternative should be taken into consideration in the moment of the elaboration of local development strategies.

3.3. The Relation of the Local Development Agent versus Diverse Institutions

The analyses of the relations between the function of Local Development Agent and the different categories of public and private institutions, which come into a direct work relation in the process of elaboration and implementation of the local development policies, will be accomplished through the evaluation of the type of the relation.

This can be of subordination, reference, co-ordination and consultancy. Depending on the type of institutionalization, the Local Development Agent comes in direct work relations with:

- The institution of local public administration, which include the Local Council, the town hall, the mayor, the secretary of the town hall, the County Council and the committees of specialty of the County Council.
- The institutions of central administration, which include the different ministries of sectors and the specialized national agencies.
- Institutions of specialized structures, as The Regional

Development Agencies, The County Development Agencies and other agencies

- Private specialized institutions, which include the civil associations, universities and research centres, professional organizations and non-profit organizations.

The description of the possible relations between the Local Development Agent and these institutions is carried out in conformity with the internal functioning norms and the legislation of public administration in force.

3.3.1. The Relations of the Local Development Agent with the Institutions of Public Administration

The first category of institutions the Local Development Agent comes into direct contact are the institutions of public administration. In the following we will present the possible relations which can exist between the Local Development Agent and these institutions (Local Council, town hall, mayor, the secretary of the town hall and the County Council).

Local Council – the Local Development Agent is the local administrative and professional structure which carries out the implementation of the local development plans and who offers expert appraisal in identifying the directions of local development, whenever is necessary. Thus at the solicitation of the Local Council, the Local Development Agent:

- Participates at the meetings and delivers activity reports or technical information from the domain of local development (reports of the project with external financing, for example);
- Supports the reports of necessity for the projects and the actions which imply decisions of the Local Council in its committees of specialty and in plenum.

The institution of the town hall – the Local Development Agent can be part of the town hall personnel as a specialist in the domain of local development. In this case, depending on the size of the institution we can have a person or a department which fulfils the function connected to local development. Therefore we can encounter the following relations:

- Usual relation between employee-employer;
- Inter-disciplinary collaboration with the departments of the town hall;

- The post is occupied either by a person stipulated by contract or by a public servant.

The taking on the staff is made in conformity with the wage system of the institution of local public administration depending on the expert appraisal, on the experience, and on the performance of the Local Development Agent.

Mayor – the Local Development Agent has the role of specialised consultant in the field of local development policies and is subordinate to the mayor. At the same time, the Local Development Agent is in relation of collaboration and consultancy with the secretary of the town hall.

County Council – the Local Development Agent fulfils a series of functions of coordination the programming of local development policies and as a result collaborates with the specialized committees collaborates in planning and elaborating the proposals for the local development programs. Depending on the specificity of the different domains of local development, for example in the case of building roads and bridges, this relation becomes one of giving notice or approval of the local development plans. As a result, the Local Development Agent participates – being given invitation – at the plenum meetings and supports materials in problems of local interest and of country level relevance.

3.3.2. The Relation of the Local Development Agent with the Institutions of Central Public Administration

The Local Development Agent, as a local structure responsible for the realization of the functions of local development, comes into relation with the different institutions of the central public administration as an organism of consultancy in elaborating the sector development plans. In this respect the Local Development Agent:

- Participates at the events, presentations and information of local interest;
- Requests financing for projects of local interest as part of programs administrated by different central institutions;
- Reports the results of the financed project and the discounts;
- Establishes and supports the project proposals of local interest.

The interaction of the Local Development Agent with the representatives of the different institutions of central administration is

realized also in the domain of sector policies. Here the ministries and the national agencies have the role to inform the Local Development Agents about the development plans which have an effect upon their community.

3.3.3. The Relation of the Local Development Agent with Other Specialized Public Institutions

Through their reasonability, the Local Development Agents come in work relations with a series of specialized public institutions in the domain of local development. Among these we mention the Regional Development Agencies and the County Professional Development Agencies.

Regional Development Agencies (ADR) – The Local Development Agent has a bilateral relation of cooperation and consultancy with the RDA in order to realize strategies, programs, and projects which will consolidate, extend and modernizes adequate institutional sub-regional structures.

These relations of coordination – cooperation and consultation are preponderantly realized in order to support activities of planning and implementing in the domain of development of common regional interest.

In addition, these two institutions are in relations of informational support and technical assistance of specialty.

County Professional Development Agencies – the institutional relation between the Local Development Agent and the County Professional Development Agencies is a complementary one in which the two institutions co-ordinates the activities of common County interest in conformity with:

- Strict professional relations of bilateral cooperation and consultation and of networking;
- Relations of coordination – cooperation and consultation for economical promotion and activities of common County interest;
- Relations of international support, transfer of know-how, logistics and technical assistance of specialty;
- Generating projects that will consolidate, extend and develop

the existent functions of the Local Development Agent at local level.

A series of local development programs have effect outside the jurisdiction of the local authorities in which these are organized. In order to reduce as much as possible their negative impact, the coordination of the activities of development is needed among the different local authorities. As a result the development of the interaction protocols of the Local Development Agent is essential with these institutions in order to correlate the implementation of the programs of local development on the level of their region.

3.4. Financing the Function of Local Development Agent

Financing the function of Local Development Agent is essential in order to assure the functionality of the institution and the agent's capacity to fulfil their tasks. The way how the function is financed depends on the way in which this was institutionalized. The main financing sources of the activities of the Local Development Agents can be:

- National or regional public budgetary sources;
- Local public sources;
- External public sources;
- Bank or private credit market loans;
- Private or mixed sources.

A model of financing the function of Local Development Agent, which ensures a maximum institutional flexibility, for the different types of solutions identified by the local authorities is represented by the Romanian Fund of Social Development (FRDS). Through Law no. 129/1988 the establishment, organizing and functioning of the Romanian Fund of Social Development was regulated. This is an organism of public interest, without lucrative targets, which carries out its activity under the authority of the Romanian Government. Thus, we propose the foundation of the National Fund of Local Development (NFLD), which – in a similar way with FRDS – has the main target to ensure the co-financing of the projects of local development through according financing for different communities.

The main difference compared to FRDS is that while this

addresses the poor rural communities and disadvantaged groups, the NFLD addresses all the local communities and the tuning of grants is realized on the basis of strategic local documents of unique County, regional and national programming. If the FRDS finances sub-projects, especially in the domain of small substructures, activities that generate incomes, social community services, as well as projects in the domain of growing the capacity of organization on local level and the support of administrative decentralization, then NFLD also includes projects of community development and the strengthening of the local competitiveness in attracting non-refundable funds (pre-structural and structural).

In a similar way the FRDS, which represents a program of the government, NFLD can also have financing from the local budget, external loans from international financial organisms, and funds accorded by different external and internal donors. In addition, these funds can be completed by similar County funds.

Referring to the way of operation of the LDA, FRDS adopts „The Facilitators Guide“, which can be published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I. as this law provides, in Art. 4, „The Fund adopts its own regulations in the conditions provided by the present law.“ Regarding the consequences, some improvements can be brought to the existent regulation in such a way as the Local Development Agent, to be taken on staff as a distinct entity in the development of the communities with clear and co-related prerogatives and with the destination NFLD. The creation of a similar fund, accessible for all the local authorities as a source of co-financing the projects of local development sustained by structural funds will make possible the generating and ensuring durable local resources, which will ensure the authorities the possibility to support the post as LDA as part of its own structures.

The improvement of the regulation of the FRDS in correlation with the Statute of Public Servant is expected to ensure a stable position of the future position of LDA in the local administration. Thus the legal, flexible frame is realized which allows the operative implementation of some programs proposed by the external financier, including a large category of eligible beneficiaries of the projects. This model has the advantage to obtain in a relatively short time the necessary amendments and has the immediate financing support for the local projects.

The decision is taken by the Prime Minister which is correlated with the functioning regulation of the National Agency of the Public Servants.

The steps which are to be followed would be:

- The analyzes of the functioning regulation of FRDS and the development of the regulation of NFLD;
- To prepare a presentation of the reasons about the advantages of the LDA concept;
- To prepare a study of necessity connected with such a measure;
- A campaign of awareness, on national level, about the advantages of the model;
- The collection of supporting opinions connected to the measure;
- To follow the elaboration of the NFLD regulation;
- The correlation of the steps with the activities of the National Agency of Public Servants.

The system of the National Fund for Local Development offers the institutional structure of co-financing of the local authorities, which have obtained a financial support from the Structural Funds in order to realize the objectives of regional development. These national funds can represent their own contribution in case in which there are no sufficient local resources for the co-financing of these projects.

The structure and the exact functioning of the NFLD must be established by a consolation between local and central authorities in order to identify some acceptable solutions by both sides.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

The proposed instruments to improve the capacity to develop and implement local development policies are:

- The adoption of the function of Local Development Agent in the local administration, and
- The opportunity to create a National Fund for Local Development.

The fundamental features of the function of Local Development Agents, indifferent of its functioning structure, are:

- Fulfilling the tasks to analyze the local situation in order to identify the adequate solutions in the object of resolving the problems which impede the economical development at macro or sector level,
- The implementation of the local development strategies,
- Generating services of information, consultancy, promotion, and regional marketing.

Setting up the National Fund for Local Development is important in order to establish a framework of flexible financing of the implementation of the local development policies in the context that Romania will become a member of the European Union.

In conclusion we found that the specific prerogatives of the LDA are not reduced only to the responsibilities of the local public authorities connected to the local development policies as they are defined by their applicable legislation. LDA fulfils a series of innovating functions which he/she must assume in order to face successfully an external, very dynamic medium, in which he/she will have to operate after Romania's accession to the European Union. Thus, the role of the Local Development Agent is to react efficiently to the changing needs of the local economic and social environment and has the role to inform the political and administrative factors about these needs. The LDA has the role to determine and to help them to answer to these needs in a reasonable time. In order to obtain these desiderata it is essential that the organizational and functional structure and human resources involved can answer these requirements and, very important, they should be given as a task of their job.

As part of this study we have identified a series of alternatives for the implementation of the function of Local Development

Agent. Among these we propose three possibilities of institutionalizations to be discussed. These were selected because of the relatively easy possibility of implementation from a legal point of view and owed to the efficiency in time necessary to put them into application. They are the following:

1. *The function of development agent within the local public administration.*

As part of this model the function of Local Development Agent is placed in the institutional structure of the local public administration as an independent office or as a department. The responsibilities of this office/ department are to coordinate and implement the local development policies.

This model has the advantage that it can be immediately implemented on the basis of the existent legislative framework and can have a character of implementation on national level.

To put into practice this model is necessary to go over the following steps:

- The definition of the prerogatives of the Local Development Agent;
- The definition of the level of grounding and necessary knowledge to get the post;
- To prepare an exposing of reasons in order to assimilate the post in the internal organizational structures of the town halls;
- To prepare an exposing of reasons in order to give notice and include the post in the framework of the public servants with a general character by the National Agency of the Public Servants. This will be accompanied by supporting letters from the Local Councils,;
- To prepare an exposing of reasons and of a theme of professional grounding in order to include this in the educational program of the National Institution of Administration;
- To prepare a financial analyses about the costs which are needed by the founding and maintaining of a post of LDA and/or an LDA office;
- The modification of the internal organizational structure of the local town halls with the aim to found the local development offices, where the LDA will carry out his activity.

The financial resources for supporting the post of the LDA are at hand of the decision of the Local Council (the law of local

administration is permissive); they are taken out from local sources and/or in case that the appointment is made in the structure of the public servants, out from national budgetary sources. The National Fund for Local Development can take over a part of the costs of founding these offices, as part of the reform program of the local public administration.

2. The function of Local Development Agent through the association between the local authorities

As part of the model the foundation of some organizations with independent juridical personality of common interest is foreseen, which are to be found in the common property of the associated local administrations. This model has the advantage to reduce the costs of the adoption of the function of Local Development Agent through the association of the small rural communities in such structures. To put the model into practice presumes:

- To realize the institutional partnership between more local administrations;
- To define the prerogatives of the post of Local Development Agent in common agreement between the participating authorities;
- To prepare an exposing of reasons which will attest the necessity of founding an institutional associative structure;
- To prepare an exposing of reasons in order to give notice and to include the post in the framework of public servants of general character, by the National Agency of the Public Servants. This will be accompanied by supporting letters from the Local Councils.
- To prepare an exposing of reasons and of a theme of professional grounding in order to include this in the educational program of the National Institution of Administration.
- To prepare a financial analyze about the costs which are presumed by the founding and maintaining of a post of LDA and/or an LDA office.
- To obtain the agreement and to be given notice from the National Agency of the Public Servants and from the National Institution of Administration.

This option has the main advantage to permit the integration of the local development plans within an administrative space which comprises more local administrations, and to rationalize some costs through the operation in common of the function of LDA.

3. The Function of Local Development Agent as independent institution is association with the local administration

The involvement of the different local actors in the process of local public policy for local development creates the possibility of some transparent and efficient policies. Thus the invitation of the private societies of economic promotion and the non-profit associations to take part in the implementation of the strategies of development has the task to reduce the bureaucratic processes and the costs connected to the implementation of these policies. To put this model into practice the following steps are to be followed:

- the definition of the specific prerogatives of the function of the Local Development Agent;
- the definition of the grade of grounding and of necessary knowledge for the partners to carry out the services;
- to prepare to the solicitations of service offers specific for the function of Local Development Agent for the private firms and for the civil associations, with the aim to support the development of the community;
- to prepare an exposing of reasons to assure the functioning resources of the organization contracting services and protocols of control and evaluation of their performances;
- to make the post a part of the public servants with general character by the National Agency of Public Servants;
- to include the profession of Local Development Agent in the program of training of the National Institution of Administration.

The recommendation of policies for the strengthening of the capacity of the local administration to adopt and implement the local development policies include:

At national level:

- The creation of stimuli for the development of the capacity of the local administrations to support the local public development policies by creating the National Fund for Local Development;
- The clearing up of the distribution of the horizontal responsibilities of public policy in the domain of local development;
- The programmed co-financing of the local development projects from the National Fund for Local Development;
- The introduction of the profession of Local Development Agent in the Romanian Occupational Code;

At local level

- The adoption of the function of Local Development Agent under the closest institutionalized form for the particular case of the local administration in discussion;
- The clear definition of the tasks and responsibilities of the Local Development Agents;
- To assure an institutional flexibility of the function so that Local Development Agents can carry out their tasks and responsibilities;
- The allocation of some adequate financial resources for establishing and functioning of the agents or offices of local development;
- The selection of the Local Development Agents and their protection against the negative effect of the political cycles.

Annex 1

Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer pilot project in Cluj and Bistrița-Năsăud counties

Presentation

Context

The process of local development from Romania involves a series of factors and measures in the period of transition we are crossing, both of them essential for its success. These measures are imposed by the existent necessities and compulsions within the local community, containing, at the same time, the grade of efficiency and the durability of the process of development. Thus, we can affirm that the ensuring of a sustained rhythm of the process of development is determined not only by taking over an application of some specific methods and techniques, but first of all, by the adequate grounding of human resources for implementing the measures regarding the community development.

In the sense of continuing the assumed policies and missions, namely the assistance of the local authorities and communities in the process of local development, Civitas Foundation for Civil Society started a program addressed to local public administration and for the communities from rural environment the program of „Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer (pilot project)“ represents the transposition into practice of a theoretical model developed by the Civitas Foundation, for the implementation and the devotion of this function on the level of the Romanian local public administration.

The Program Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer (pilot project)

The program has several stages. Initially, in the period 2001-2002 was the phase of conceiving, a period in which they tried the elab-

oration of a model, through which the Foundation could better fulfil the assumed mission, namely that of initiating and supporting a durable local development in the Romanian rural environment. The experimentation stage follows, pilot program „Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer“ – pilot program in Cluj and Bistrița-Năsăud counties, completed in 10 communes of the two counties between the 15th of November 2002 and 31st of October 2003 through which the viability of the chosen model was tested. This was the most difficult stage of the project, because it coincides with the laying of the basis and the building of a complex network made up of the institutions of the LPA, staff and Civitas collaborators, Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer (pilot project).

Because of the success recorded through the pilot program, it was natural to continue the extension of the model. The partnership with other organizations interested in the local development public policy, the reform of the local administration, etc., represented in this way a basic condition in ensuring a raised impact of this extension. Thus, the Consortium for Rural Development was born, whose founders are Civitas Foundation for a Civil Society – Cluj and the Centre for Rural Assistance (CAR) – Timiș, having as partners the Public Policy Centre (CENPO), the Faculty of Political Sciences of the „Babeș-Bolyai“ University and the Economical Development Agency – Timiș (ADETIM). Combining the two models – Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer (pilot project) (Civitas) and Local Promoter (CAR) the concept of Local Development Agent was born. This initiative was supported by the Local Government Institute from Budapest and by the German Marshall Fund. In this respect the enlarged partnership will promote and implement, on national level, a model of development of the community, based on the two models of development from Timiș, respectively Cluj and Bistrița-Năsăud, which will respond the local needs.

In this context, in accordance with the model Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer (pilot project), The Civitas Foundation implements a project in Satu Mare County, through which 6 Local Development Agents were selected, they benefit some courses of specialization and were distributed to town halls of 6 communes of the County.

Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer Project (*pilot project*)

As an integrant part of the Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer Local Development Agent (pilot project) program, the project „Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer“ – pilot program in Cluj and Bistrița-Năsăud counties, proposed to itself the efficient and applicable testing of the model and the creation of an optimum framework for the promotion and the extension of this, as a viable solution addressed to the existent necessities especially in the rural environment. Therefore, this project was constituted as a pilot stage, in which the model was experimented in 10 rural communities from two counties of Transylvania.

The project was completed in the interval of November 1st, 2002 – October 31st, 2003 in 10 rural communities from Cluj and Bistrița-Năsăud counties, in partnership with the County Councils of the two counties, marking in this way the launching of a new initiative of amplexity in the support of public administrations from the rural environment, a viable model of assistance and support in the process of reform and modernization. This benefits the financial support of The Open Society Institute from Budapest and the European Union through the PHARE Program 2000 – Economic and Social Cohesion, having a budget with a total value of 51,260 EURO.

Thus, the basis of a supporting system of the rural environment development process was laid, having at its basis the human resources, the capable one in our opinion, to determine and mobilize the other resources of the community.

The aim of the project

In concordance with the mission of the Civitas Foundation the aim of the project was to promote and facilitate the local development through strengthening the institutional and professional capacity of the local public administration, in the view of raising the living standard from the rural area. The project of Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer (pilot project) is oriented first of all upon improving the quality of the human resources involved in the process of development. In this sense, we accom-

plished the training and formation of a body of 10 Community Facilitator / Local Development Officers (pilot project) who, in the second stage of the project, were distributed in the framework of the town hall apparatus from the counties mentioned before, on the basis of some protocols of collaboration concluded between the Civitas Foundation and the town halls.

Objective

In meeting the existent necessities and constrains in the rural environment, regarding the functioning and the institutional capacity of the local public administration, the project of the Civitas Foundation proposes to itself as a general objective the implementation of the function of Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer (pilot project) on the level of public administration in the rural environment. Corresponding with this objective, we aim at the establishing of a new system to support the local communities and at the same time to form a body of specialists who contribute to its implementation and extension.

Activities

The project was structured on two important stages. The first of these was the training and formation of the 10 Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer (pilot project) selected among university graduates and those enrolled for a master's degree, or among those in the last year of their studies from the faculties of profile, as well as from Political and Administrative Sciences, Sociology, Economic Sciences. The same stage included the creation within the Civitas Foundation of a centre of assistance and documentation, with the aim to support the training process and also the ulterior activities of the Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer s (pilot project).

In the second stage, the Community Facilitator / Local Development Officers (pilot project) were distributed in the framework of the town hall apparatus of ten town halls of the counties mentioned before, on the basis of some protocols of collaboration concluded between the Civitas Foundation and the town halls, being financially supported from the budget of the project. At the end of the 8th month in which the Community

Facilitator / Local Development Officer s (pilot project) worked within the town halls, being remunerated from the budget of the project, on the basis of the ordinances of the Local Councils, 9 out of them were employed by these institutions.

Having access to the adequate technical substructure (preferment computers and access to the Internet) and the deriving advantage from the assistance of the Foundation, the Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer s (pilot project) built a virtual network on the yahoo groups – facilitator_civitas@yahogroups.ro – which facilitates the change of information and permanent communication between these and the Foundation, contributing in this way to the raising of the level of success of the project and the fulfilment of its objectives.

The role and the prerogatives of the Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer's (pilot project)

The role of the Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer (pilot project) was to promote and facilitate the local development by strengthening the institutional and professional capacity of the local public administration with the aim of raising the living standard in the rural area. More than that, an important prerogative of the Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer (pilot project) was that to make the rural economy efficient. Obtaining this was possible, not only through the identification and attraction of some external resources, but mostly, through the turning to account and through the best exploitation of the existent human, material and natural resources.

Among the prerogatives of the Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer (pilot project) we mention:

- The elaboration of a strategic study of local development for each partner commune;
- The ensuring of the management for the implementation of the strategy;
- The elaboration of programs for financing;
- The assistance of the Local Council in preparing the decisions regarding the initiation of some programs and projects of development;
- Assistance for local enterprisers, agricultures, NGO-s, etc;
- The facilitation of communication between the local public

administration, private medium and the non-governmental sector in order to realize some viable partnerships;

- The promotion of the image of the communes through the realization of their WEB pages.

Stages

Determinant for the constitution of the team was the process of selection, the collaboration with the aimed councils and finally the training session of the Community Facilitator / Local Development Officers (pilot project). Out of the quality of the obtained results of these activities depend on the mode in which the ulterior activities were implemented.

In the ulterior phase of the selection of the 10 future facilitators, these attend a training within the Civitas Foundation, participating to a module of 7 courses of specialization in the domains of: administrative law, management of the local communities, communication in institutional management, community development, project management, strategic management, PC operation for improving the theoretical knowledge of the 10 selected persons in order to fulfil with success the assumed mission in the project. In the same period, with the assistance of the Civitas Foundation, the 10 selected persons started to gather data from the respective communities' for evaluating them.

Based on the gathered data, a SWOT analysis of the community was realized and in the end a local development strategy was elaborated. A great part of the gathered data was utilized for the realization of a website for each commune, so that at present, each commune has its own site which can be downloaded from the portal of the rural community from Romania <http://www.rural-portal.ro>. The consequence of this fact was the growth of visibility and accessibility of the respective communes.

In the strategy of local development, elaborated on the basis of the gathered data, a list of priorities could be inventoried. At the very moment these priorities were formed on the hierarchical system, the Community Facilitator / Local Development Officers (pilot project) started to write numerous local projects in order to be financed, either from EU funds or from governmental funds or other private or public sources. These projects had to meet the local problems identified in the SWOT analyze and contributed to

the putting into application of the elaborated local strategy.

Knowing the fact that a durable development involves a good collaboration between the local public administration, the private sector, and the non-governmental sector – the so called Public – Private Partnership – the Community Facilitator / Local Development Officers (pilot project) supported the development of some local NGO-s because these were almost inexistent in the Romanian rural environment. Non-governmental organizations were established specialized in environmental problems, in community development or commune and micro regional associations.

As we mentioned above, still in the first year, the Community Facilitator / Local Development Officers (pilot project) wrote a significant number of applications for financing – about 100 – the financial resources attracted to the local budgets were 176,000 EURO in the first year. In the following period November 2003 – June 2005, the value of the successful projects obtained by the Community Facilitator / Local Development Officers (pilot project) was of 900,000 EURO. Beside this, a large number of projects are waiting the results of the evaluation process. We can say that up to now supplementary funds, approximately in the value of 1,050,000 EURO, were attracted to the communes in which the Community Facilitator / Local Development Officers (pilot project) activated. In this way funds for the solution of the problems of substructure, environment, disadvantaged groups, minorities, education etc. were attracted.

To all these results mentioned above we can add the fact that the Community Facilitator / Local Development Officers (pilot project) represented some agents of real change for the respective town halls.

We say this because it is well known that the conservatism and the fear of the servants of local administration from changes, mostly of the rural ones, to which we can add the lack of qualified personnel (with academic studies), the lack of the knowledge how to use a computer, of a foreign language in international circulation, etc.

In this respect, the Community Facilitator / Local Development Officers (pilot project) were those, owed to their qualifications (graduates with academic studies of public administration, sociology, economy) and to the fact that they hadn't worked in public administration before, who initiated and sup-

ported a process of change. They initiated their colleagues in the use of computers and presented them a series of absolutely necessary theoretic concepts in order to make the local public administration efficient and adapted to the wants of the citizens and that of accession to the European Union.

Trying to sum up the results of the „Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer“ project – a pilot program in Cluj and Bistrița-Năsăud counties, for the period of November 2002 – April 2005, we should say that, using all the resources at our disposal (Civitas staff, Community Facilitator / Local Development Officers (pilot project), logistics, communicational substructures etc.). The following results were obtained:

- The existence of a web page for each partner commune;
- Over 150 projects in different domains (public administration, environment, social services, multi-ethnic etc.) were handed in to be financed;
- Strategies of development elaborated for all the ten partner communes;
- Extra-budgetary funds attracted in the communities through financing programs, approximately 1,050,000 EURO;
- Local associations already constituted or in course of constitution in all ten involved communes.

Besides the enumerated results we can say that through the project we created a functional system which efficiency is visible in the present moment. We generated a process, evidently one of long duration, and we identified resources and means through which it can be supported. We convinced the local authorities about the necessity to experiment at least the solutions to the apparently insoluble problems.

Annex 2

Local Promoter

It was found that at the level of communes and small towns there are no established tasks and prerogatives of the executive personnel of the local administration for the promotion and stimulation of the socio-economic development. There are no concepts and adapted approaches to the socio-economic and actual legislative changes which should try to solve the problems through their own means.

Apparently the lack of the financial means seem to be the cause of no socio-economic development of the localities, but we can establish that funds of different financing programs do exist and which cannot be accessed and consumed because of the lack of experience of the local administration personnel, in identifying these and in sustaining the financial applications.

Taking into consideration the element presented above, we considered that the improvement of the public administration structures can take place through the creation of the post of Local Promoter. Within this, he is a stimulating element, responsible for the stirring up of the economic – social development of the localities and for the introduction of methodologies and modern concepts of planning.

The local promoter represents the result of a concept of modernization of the local public administration, a concept developed in Timiș County starting with September 1999, within the partnership between the Center for Rural Assistance (CAR) and Economic Development Agency Timiș (ADETIM).

In the present stage of development of the Local Promoter, appreciated as being a basic instrument of the local public administration for the economic development of the localities from Timiș County, a particular role had the partnership between CAR ADETIM and the Timiș County Council, The Prefect's Office of Timiș County, Chamber of Industry and Agriculture from Timișoara, institutions which supported the activity of the Local Promoter in their communities ever since the initiation of the project.

The Local Promoter is a new type of specialist capable to identify and to solve correctly the diverse problems at local level, con-

tributing in this way to the development of the community which he/she represents.

Younger or experienced person, the local promoter must cumulatively fulfil the following requirements and qualities:

- To have the necessary grounding or to attend a program of professional training for the post of local promoter (in conformity with the recommended curricula);
- To be dynamic, tenacious, ambitious, creative, 100% dedicated, to have university studies, to be able to self-motivate himself/herself, and to be result oriented.

The local promoter is necessary because:

- The local public administration confronts new problems and has new tasks;
- For the new problems and tasks jobs with new responsibilities and people with adequate expert appraisal are necessary;
- Others already opted for LDA and have a much better situation than those who DIDN'T;
- Because you need to access the EU funds and these cannot be obtained only with good projects;
- Because you need someone who is constantly preoccupied by the professional promotion of the locality, by the assistance of the business sector and the economic development of the locality;

In the record of the post the following responsibilities are included:

- The strategic planning of the local development process, respectively the ensuring of the process and methodology necessary for the realization of the strategic program;
- To initiate, substantiate, and prepare the documentation for accessing financing sources for the projects of local community interest;
- Specialized project management and assistance for the project implementation with EU financing;
- Business information and consultancy for the contracting sector;
- Marketing and the promotion of the locality;
- Inter-institutional cooperation at local and international level;

History

The partnership between the Foundation for an Open Society and the Economic Development Agency Timis.

The concept of Local Promoter was realized on the basis of five years of experience, accumulated until the date of the initiation of the project by the Economical Development Agency Timis (ADETIM), in the domain of local and regional economic development and promotion. ADETIM being – on the date of its constitution in 1995- the product of an approximately similar important concept from the German Land Renania of North Westfalia, under the assistance of GfW-NRW (Economic promotion Agency from the German Land Renania of North Westfalia).

The Open Society Foundation (OSF) considered the experience of the model of development proposed by ADETIM as being a utile one, in forger to improve the performances of the local public administration in the communes of Timiș County. Thus the branch of OSF from Timișoara supported this local initiative, and in September 1999 in partnership with ADETIM started, within an operational program financed by OSF, the development of the concept of Local Promoter, through a pilot program which had as an objective the implementation of the post of local promoter in 20 localities from Timiș County. In this stage OSF had the role of financing¹ and coordinating the operational program and ADETIM that of the promoter of the model, the ensuring of the professional services of consultancy, training, and the implementation of the pilot project. The first stage of the pilot program was carried out in 20 communities from Timiș County (16 communes and 4 small towns).

The Partnership between the Center for Rural Assistance and Economic Development Agency Timiș

In January 2000 OSF founded the Center of Rural Assistance (CAR) in Timișoara. The coordination and the financing of the Local Promoter program were taken over by CAR.

The second stage of the program followed, April 2000- January 2001) when the concept of the Local Promoter was extended to

¹ OSF financed the pilot program with the sum of 67,960 USD

other 10 communes from Timiș County as a result of the interest of involvement manifested by these.

The coordination and the financing of this stage were realized by CAR², and the consultancy both by ADETIM and by CAR.

The next stage (February 2001-November 2003) was that of maturation and consolidation of the concept in 30 communities. In this period the Local Promoter developed projects for the local needs, respectively they participated at the activities and projects initiated by CAR and ADETIM:

- Change of experience the local promoter from Timiș County and Békés County from Hungary;
- The improvement of the Local Promoter by offering consultancy for the European programs, respectively according specific consultancy;
- Change of experience and relevant information between the Local Promoters during the monthly meetings;
- Participating in international events (e.g.: three of the Local Promoters were part of the delegation participant in an International workshop regarding the assistance in agriculture held in Raratov, Russia);
- Collaboration in writing projects, in order to solve specific sub-structural rural problems;
- To make the info-communication and the data base for the promotion of the localities from Timiș County and their opportunities of cooperation and business operational;
- Collaboration for the integration of the strategic plans of development of the localities from the County into the strategic County programs of development;

The fourth stage (December 2003- August 2004) is that in which the concept extended in other 24 communes from Timiș County as a result of the PHARE project Local Promoter-Local Development Agent. The project Local Promoter – Local Development Agent is financed by the European Union, PHARE Program: RO 0104.03/2.2 Component 2: Development of the NGO³ Sector. We must remark the fact that, this time, there is a significant financial contribution from the County Council⁴, respectively ADETIM⁵. In addition, the partnership between CAR

2 CAR, out from OSF resources financed this stage of the development of the Local Promoter concept with the sum of 62,423 USD

3 The value of the financing raises up to 74,883 Euro

and ADETIM was enlarged through the support of the concept by Timiș County Prefect's Office and by the Civitas Foundation for Civil Society.

The local promoter of the program-pilot, stage respectively those from this last stage, participated in a series of courses of specialization, organized in collaboration with the Regional Centre for Continuous Formation for Local Public Administration from Timișoara. Additionally, 20 Local Promoters were prepared for providing information and to offer consultancy regarding the EU programs, through a project implemented by CAR in partnership with CCIAT.

There was a change of experience between the Local Promoters from Timiș County and Community Facilitator / Local Development Officers (pilot project) from Cluj and Bistrița Counties.

During the four stages all the town halls which set up the post of Local Promoter were endowed with performant computers, adequate software and printers. These equipments facilitated the creation of a virtual network (with the help of a yahoo group promoterlocal@yahoo.com) which offers technical assistance, information regarding active financing and training opportunities, organization of seminars and conferences in the domain of local development, etc. The Centre for Rural Assistance offers contacts as well with the local and international institutions and organizations, which can support the activity of the Local Promoters.

Consortium for Rural Development (CRD)

CAR and Civitas Foundation for a Civil Society⁶ signed a partnership agreement for the development of a concept of local development generically named Local Development Agent at national level.

Within this national partnership, the local partners of the two organizations are included, respectively ADETIM, CENPO, and

4 CCT co-financed this stage with 20,000 Euro for the acquisition of computers for the Local Promoters

5 EDATIM co-financed this stage with 18,741 Euro

6 Non-governmental organization which developed the concept of Local Development Agent (pilot project) in 10 communes from Cluj and Bistrița Counties, a similar concept with that from Timiș.

the „Babeş-Bolyai“ University.

The members of CRD agreed to cooperate in the following domains:

- The promotion of the concept of local development and of the good practices of the local development;
- Lobby and advocacy activities for the communities they take action in and for the CRD members;
- The development and implementation of the programs based on the concept of complementarity, by according technical assistance and training, with an accent on local development projects, as well as when it is necessary;
- Frame projects „Local Development Agent-LDA“ will be elaborated and implemented by the Civitas Foundation and CAR, with the involvement of the partner organizations;
- Change of relevant information regarding the programs, activities, events, existent or potential financing sources, in the domain of socio-economic development;
- The dissemination and promotion of relevant information about each member in the booklets, informative bulletins, web pages of the members.

The enlarged partnership will promote and implement, in this respect, at national level a model of community development based on the two models developed in Timiș, respectively in Cluj and Bistrița, which will be able to answer the local needs.

Thus the Local Development Agent will become either an employee of the town hall as a referent of specialty with a view to the development of the community, or will be contracted by the town hall as an independent consultant, for a given length of time, in order to solve the problems of local development.

The contracting modality will be chosen by the town hall, depending on the statute which is advantageous for it.

Motivation for the extension:

- The positive results obtained in the stage of the pilot program and the interest manifested by other town halls and County Councils from the country;
- We all have responsibilities which exceed the limits of the territorial administration unit from our localities;
- International competition and the principle of sustaining the performances at superior level, in order to be able to benefit subsequently more and easier results;

- The adhesion of the LDA into a future professional structure will consolidate the already implemented concept;
- The possibility of a future regional and national cooperation in the professional network of local and regional economic promotion and development;
- A large recognition of the success of a sustained work and its turning into good account in the future;

Results

During the five year of activity of the Local Promoter carried out within the town halls and communities which they attend, they obtained a series of notable results. First of all there were 60 posts created in Timiș County, 14 in Arad County, and 1 in Caraș-Severin County.

At the initiative of the Local Promoter team from the social domain and with the collaboration of the Social Bureau from the County Council Timiș, the Center for Rural Assistance elaborated a study about the situation of social services of the public administration in Timiș County. Following the analyzes of the data of the 53 questionnaires got from the town halls of the communes and towns of Timiș County, some courses of actions were drawn up for stimulating the development of social services in the rural environment, which were presented to the Committee of Health and Social Protection of the County Council. As a result of this study the three editions of the County Conference of social assistance in the rural environment was organized.

Up to the present over 50 projects, elaborated by them were financed, their approximate value being the following:

- For substructure – 3,500,000 Euro
- For social purposes – 800,000 Euro
- For environment – 2,000 Euro
- For culture – 10,000 Euro
- For public administration – 250,000 Euro

Other activities initiated and realized by the Local Promoters were:

- Community development – the initiation of some initiative groups and the handing in to the Centre for Rural Assistance of over 15 projects for being financed;
- The National Competition „100 projects for Romania“- five

projects were declared winners with significant scores („The Local Promoter“ project being situated among the first ten);

- The County Competition „ The Reform Belongs to You“ carried out by the Timiș County Prefect’s Office in partnership with the County Council – 2 projects were classified among the first ten;
- The setting up of 4 community associations;
- The realizations of strategies for the territorial administrative units, the Local Promoters are part of – for 15 communities.

Annex 3

The Evaluation of the Community Development Models – Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer (Pilot Project) and Local Promoter project

Methodological specifications

The evaluation was realized with the aim to identify the main aspects which can substantiate the support document for the policy paper within the „Local Development Agent“ project. A series of individual and group interviews were carried out in this respect which underlined the major aspects as they can be understood through the prism of the experience of the persons involved in some community development processes. It is about the main groups which managed these processes: Community Facilitator / Local Development Officer and Local Promoters /Local Development Agents. They will be called Local Development Agents in the present document. Besides the development agents utilized as part of the projects of the Civitas Foundation and CAR, interviews were also done with the development agents belonging to other „categories“. That is about the subjects who carried out their activity within some projects of the World Bank (RDP – Rural Development Program) or within some programs of community development completed by some non-governmental organizations (EDRC, ARDC). The opinion of public administration representatives was asked for, who are partners in programs or projects of community development. The interviews, realized with the representatives of local or County authorities, tried to detect the position of the institutional actors from the position of the main partners of these measures. The option to interview other persons too, participants in similar projects of community development, was done to underline the common or specific elements which can be experienced after such an evaluation.

The group interviews were carried out with Local Development Agents (from the pilot project) who represented both the rural (communes) and the urban (small towns) environment. Ten individual interviews and two focus group interviews were realized. The guide used for both the individual and the focus group interviews was the same. The following discussion themes were proposed:

- a short presentation of the community in which the community development activities were carried out;
- to mention the aspects the subjects consider they contributed to in a direct way ;
- the specification of the positive and negative aspects which influence the display of the activities from the communities;
- the necessary staff and conditions for starting the process of community development (practices, modalities met in the territory);
- the role and the place of the community development agent as part of these measures (abilities, knowledge, relation with other institutions etc.);
- the contribution and the role of the NGOs in the process of community development;
- recommendations for final considerations.

Communities

Most of the communities from Banat and Transylvania are characterized as rural and multi-ethnic ones. The communities in which the Local Development Agents carry out their activity can be characterized as being on an average level from the aspect of socio-economic and cultural development. The problems these communities confront with are represented to be also of an average level, none of the communities can be found in a situation of major crises (for example: extreme poverty, massive migration of the population, delinquency, etc.).

There were a series of specific elements at local level which were represented in an extremely powerful way and which made the intervention in the community more difficult, but we can affirm that the problems of these communities are of average level. In none of the analyzed cases we refer to, were prosperous communities with a positive evolution (in socio-economic, demo-

graphic, or cultural plan).

Contributions of the Local Development Agent

For some of the respondents the simple presence or „employment“ of the Local Development Agents in the apparatus of the local public administration is considered a great advantage, because in this way they succeeded to mobilize people from these institutions (it is mainly about the mayor, the secretary or the local counsellor) in order to stimulate and stir up the process of development at local level. The Local Development Agent's presence in the community and his/her involvement also determines other realizations or „punctual“ contributions: the attraction of financing, the participation to strategic planning process (local development strategies).

The successful accomplishing of these activities entails an increased grade of trust among the initiative groups from the community and for the development agent. In this way we assist to a positive motivation of those who participate at the process of development. The interviews show that in many situations the establishment of some objectives are necessary which can be fulfilled in short term, just in order to increase the grade of trust and the level of motivation of the local initiative groups and last but not least to gain the support of the community in ensemble. From the answers of the participants we can find out that the majority of the activities and the contributions to the community development were and are realized within and together with the institutions of local administration – it is about the town halls or the Local Councils from the communities where the Local Development Agents were present. The activities or contributions which are to come from other public institutions present at local or County level are mentioned on a smaller extent. These answers brought in the first and foremost plan the problem of public-private partnership, in a larger sense, in this case the relations of collaboration established between the NGOs and the public institutions at local or country level.

A weakly represented level of action is that of collaboration with public institutions represented at County level. The first aspect about which the community development agent informs: the degradation or even the absence of some cultural coordinators

(identity, traditions, values) in the community space. A first observation which can be drawn; the strengthening of the cultural dimensions of the community life (in a larger sense it can be about the construction of a well defined local identity) can represent a first measure of the Local Development Agent's activity. As part of the activities of cultural character some variables connected to sociability can be configured. These measures can have a positive impact upon the social behaviour which can favour the local development process; it is mostly about participation, associability or social responsibility – these qualities are the most important attributes of those who are involved in activities with a cultural character. Otherwise, many of the respondents marked the start of the activities from the community with this kind of activity.

The contribution to the development of the community in which they carry out their activity is the result of some factors difficult to categorize in a hierarchic system, a reason why we will proceed only to mention them:

- the presence of the Local Development Agent in the structures of local public administration brings a qualitative and quantitative advantage in the life of the respective community;
- the finality of the Local Development Agent's activities is materialized in „producing welfare“ for the community in which he carries out his activity. We do not refer only to advantages of material or financial nature, but in the first place we must refer at the benefit of social capital which ulterior can lead to material and financial welfare;
- the availability of the local public administration in starting and supporting the process of local development (attracting external funds, the mobilization of community resources into these processes).

The positive aspects the interviewed refer to alongside with the problems the local communities are confronted with, as well as the modalities which led to the solution of these undesirable situations, are as following:

- the re-stimulation of the community: this thing was mentioned as one of the major positive contributions to the development of the community (achieved in the conditions in which the community aspect was an extremely heterogeneous from ethno-linguistic, social, and cultural point of view).

Aspects considered to be positive are: the founding of an NGO (in most cases it is about the founding of an NGO of local interest), the start of some fundraising campaigns, and the realization of some substructure actions to start the process of community development. It was possible to achieve these indicators after a longer period of activity of Local Development Agents, having all the time the support of some strong non-governmental resource centres, active at regional and national level

- the growth of the level of participation among the young population; the growth of the level of participation of young people was possible to carry out through activities of sporting and cultural character.

We can find the positive contributions to the life of the community in two great categories:

(I). the growth of the participation of the community members (it is about activities with an associative character-culture, sport etc.);

(II). the attraction of some external financial resources with the support of the local public administration.

The chapter of problems and negative aspects occur in the activities of community facilitation are, as it was expected, represented more detailed in the speech of the respondents. The less pompous aspects, the problems we can meet are those which can deliver a real feedback for those who wish the implementation, in the future, of programs of facilitation or community development. The experience demonstrates the fact that when we speak about successful cases we have the tendency to take these models over. But it is necessary to make the inventory of the negative aspects then when we wish to take these models over. The following could be included in this category:

- obstacles of financial-economic nature (the mentioned aspects are those which stop from the beginning the local initiatives; this element is the most important factor which demonstrates the individuals, the organizations, or the local institutions);
- the lack of information, the lack of grounding of the interlocutor from the community for the key domains in which they should start projects of local development;
- the lack of initiative of the formal and informal leaders from the community (their inertia is based on the anterior negative

experience which led to a wrong conception „we tried but it is not possible“);

- the lack of a strategic vision within the local public administrations;
- persistence among the local responsible actors (mayors, local counsellors), the persistence of an obsolete conception about local development („for the majors is important the realization of the water supply, the gas network and to build roads“). Fixing some objectives of investment for which there are no local resources by the local authorities, means that in most of the cases they can't be realized. In these conditions the population is discontented because they cannot see the fulfilment of the promises made during the electoral campaign.
- insufficiently „matured“ development agents: (I) from a professional point of view (in the sense that they have no domain of competence in which they can manifest themselves and they cannot manifest their authority in this domain); (II) from the point of view of personality (lack of seriousness, the assumption of some activities with an immediate gain – an image capital which can ulterior turn to account in the electoral competitions, the drafting only of those financing projects which bring an immediate financial gain etc);
- the migration of some of the Local Development Agents towards politics – this aspect discontents both the representatives of non-governmental organizations and the representatives of political administration. In the very moment a Local Development Agent expresses his/her intention to enter the politics automatically impediments and obstacles appear from the behalf of those who feel threaten or from the behalf of the future competitors in the field of politics (local counsellors and majors);
- the weak support (financial and institutional) of the function of Local Development Agent is the cause of instability or leaving the community.

The conditions and the frameworks in which the process of local development start are places in the activity area of the Local Development Agents, of the members of the community, or within the local public administration. The selection of the staff and the conditions which can generate the development was done on the basis of the positive experiences the respondents met in the

communities where they worked. The necessary conditions or pre-conditions in order to start the process of community development are:

- the diagnosis of the community;
- the analyze of the community in order to establish the priority audience for different actions/activities at community level;
- campaigns of information and public debates;
- the attraction of the decisional factors at local level into the process of community development;
- strategic planning – following this process the Local Development Agents sketched the development priorities: those priorities that can be carried out with local resources, objectives which can be achieved by using external resources (regarding objectives of infrastructure, or others of socio-cultural nature etc.)

These pre-conditions represent measures of technical nature which were in broad lines covered by all the Local Development Agents. These activities should be carried out in a logical order, but there were stages completed according to another algorithm imposed by the local realities and constrains, in fact most possibly imposed by the situation in the territory. Some of the respondents (development agents) affirmed that they needed a period of time to know the community they will work in (it is about a normal process of acquaintance and socialization with values, norms, and unwritten „laws“ of the community).

Perceived aspects as being relevant by the participants to the process of community development:

Positive aspects met within the community development process:

- the promotion of some positive practices regarding community development. These positive practices, in each case, are aimed at the following: the support of some punctual projects, the improvement of the relationship between the members of the community or of the inter-ethnic climate, the promotion of the local development;
- there is a great freedom in the way how the process of community development can be started (there are no compulsions of formal or bureaucratic nature);

- association and a high grade of participation – it is about the situations in which the agent succeeds to persuade the members of the community for a rapid and efficient involvement;
- going on with some anterior initiatives – continuity.

Negative aspects met within the community development processes:

- the short period of presence / intervention in the community (some communities or some members of the rural community react a bit harder at the stimuli / at the provocation of the Local Development Agents (pilot project);
- problems regarding the adaptation of the Local Development Agents to the specific of these activities (be it because some local problems, be it about the lack of some qualities the person should have had);
- problems due to the difficulties of setting up the initiative groups at local level.

The start of the process of community development

As a result of the analysis of the answers follows the fact that the local development process can be sustainable only if:

- there are local actors who sustain and participate in this process (local initiative groups)
- there is a support both from the interior and the exterior of the community;
- the sustenance can be of the most diverse forms (human, financial, logistic resources etc).

As a result of the analysis of the community problems an analysis of the financing „market“ is imposed in order to establish the calendar of the fundraising actions. The component of elaboration and of management of the projects seems to be far the most important component of the Local Development Agent's activity. In many cases the elaboration process of the projects, in order to attract funds for the community precedes the process of diagnosis and strategic planning. This haste to elaborate projects to be handed in for financing comes both on the part of the development agents and on the part of the representatives of the local authorities. Both parts mentioned before wish to obtain results as quickly as possible, and these results to be as concrete and as palpable as possible. Unfortunately in many cases there is a generalized opin-

ion conformable to which the role of the Local Development Agent resumes only to the aspect connected to the management of the projects. Contrary with the general opinion, the community development agent's tasks and obligations are more numerous and do not follow only the display of the activities regarding the management of the project.

The support of the development process

The institutional structure with a potential to support these processes are: public administrations (local and central), non-governmental organizations (outside the locality, as well the community ones), the private firms (here we can mention the philanthropic activities or sponsorships, but particularly is imposed the mentioning of a more comprehensive concept that of: social responsibility).

The role of the Local Development Agent (facilitator / promoter): who is he/she and what should he/she know

The role and the prerogatives of this person are to be found in each stage/phase of the community development process:

- the Local Development Agent's contacts and the direct contact with the community. The relationship with the community is maintained by the formal/ informal leaders, by the initiative groups constituted at community level or by community organizations;
- the community data collection, synthesis and analysis;
- the motivation and mobilisation at community level;
- the support for the community members in identifying and resolving the existent problems at individual level, at group level or at the level of the whole community;
- the development of abilities, skills for the community leader (formal and informal as part of some training and forming activities which are addressed to the members of the community;
- the direct access of the community leaders (formal or informal) to the resources from outside of the community (information, opportunities, relations, contacts) which can be of local interest;
- the development agent is a: good communicator, organizer,

good in planning and having some basic knowledge from the domain of psychology of the collective actions, education of adults;

- the social communication abilities which allows him/her the realization of social dialogue at community level.

Non-governmental organizations and community development processes

The main aspects resulted from the evaluation regarding non-governmental organizations:

- the non-governmental organizations or the resource centres from the outside of the community having the role and task to start and lay the basis for the main frameworks regarding the community development;
- the community non-governmental organizations become durable / viable structure only in those conditions when there are a support form the part of the community (members of the community and the local public administration).

Local public administration and community development

Major aspects regarding the role of local public administration in the process of community development:

- the local public instruments which completes the resources of the NGOs in the plan of community development – complementarities;
- LPA has or should have major responsibilities in what means: information, disinformation, and support for adopting some favourable decisions of the community development;
- Availability for realizing viable partnerships with organizations and institutions from the community or from outside of the community;
- The creation of a legislative framework (decisions and ordinances) which supports the activity of the community development agent or of the organization which supports the process of development of the community.

Satisfactions results within these activities

At this chapter a series of elements can be mentioned which are connected to public or private staff (we refer here to the person of

the Local Development Agent).

The positive results from management gaining and implementing with success of some punctual projects or programs. These gains can be/ are assumed both by the institutions / organizations and by the individuals who were part of or the beneficiary of the respective programs. The main benefits mentioned are: accumulated experience, knowledge or practices of new things, gains of material or financial nature for the institutions and individuals from the community. Beyond these aspects mentioned by the interviewed persons the most important gain is that: of regaining the trust in the personal strength, in the growth of motivation of the individuals from the community in order to engage themselves in the other actions too, which will lead to the raise of the welfare at community level.

One other set of affirmation which underlined the satisfactions refer to the aspect of working in a team. One of the main tasks of the community development agent is that to form some initiative groups from the members of the community. These initiative groups must be formed in that way as to be able to function on a long term and to be able to take over, in time some of the functions and prerogatives of the Local Development Agent. Some of the respondents underline that the main satisfaction in their work was just that of forming teams or functional groups as homogeneous groups. As a matter of fact this aspect, the one of forming some efficient groups of work at local level, can be considered the main indicator of success in the work of a Local Development Agent.

Dissatisfactions

In broad lines the dissatisfactions of the interview subjects are the following:

- The distrust of the representatives of the community or the lack of support from the part of some members of the community. In these kind of situations the only problem can be that of the adaptation of the Local Development Agent or can be about a wrong approach of the LDA;
- A long period of time for the initiative groups to become homogeneous and well structured (this thing results the loss of motivation both by the LDA and also by the active mem-

bers of the community, who usually want palpable and quick results);

- The allocation for the Local Development Agents (some are more equal than the others). In this case we speak about the support some LDAs got from the part of some County institutions while the others could not enjoy the same support;
- The lack of a legislative framework which regulates the prerogatives and the responsibilities of the LDA;
- The lack of a legislative framework regarding the functioning background of the community development process (for ex. the lack of community parliament, the unknown legal framework regarding local or community development: the law does not protect them and the community cannot support them – we refer to the Local Development Agents).
- Some NGOs are like „chameleons“: they do not know the needs of the community, they do not have consistence, they resolve only momentary problems and they frequently change their domains of activity. All these elements create a negative image of the NGOs among the servants from the structures of public administration.

Recommendations

Among the recommendations as a result of the evaluation we mention:

- The Local Development Agent should work together with a person from the community who has the same grounding or close knowledge with that of the agent. This person can be one familiarized with the work methods and the techniques of the development agent. More than that, his correspondent must be interested in the development processes of the community he lives in or where he carries out his activity;
- The community development must be adapted to the specific of the locality (the recommendation of a scheme or of a model is not feasible because between the rural communities there are great differences: of cultural, economic, and social nature, differences of mentality and of ethnical structure etc.);
- The carrying out of some complementary activities (socio-economic development and the development or the safekeeping of the cultural patrimony, of the local identity);

- The community development can be regarded as a multidimensional and bipolar phenomenon, for each dimension. In this respect three major dimensions can be included:

D1: – the development of the community capacities (it is about the community organization which supports this process);

D2: – the combination of the implementation of some concrete projects versus work with the members of the community;

D3: – the construction of some long term relations with the community versus the evaluation of the external environment of the community;

- The community development must not aim only at the members or groups from the community, the efforts of the agent must equally oriented towards local institutions and authorities (only the NGOs are not able to sustain the development, that is why an important aspect of the community development should be the development of the public or private institutions from the community);
- The implementation of the function of development agent in those communities which are prepared for this step (mentalities, resources, institutions); the compulsoriness to adapt the function of development agent would quickly transform this into a public servant who „translate to and from English or attend meetings about the problems of the European integration“;
- The Local Development Agent must keep an equidistant attitude from the different interest groups existent at local level (can it be about political, economical groups or groups of other nature);
- The process of the community development must be centred on the following: men, tradition, community, and secondly to be presented as an economic measure or as a „good business“;
- The correlation of the measures of the Local Development Agent with other interventions at community level.