

QUALITY – AN ATTRIBUTE OF A TERRITORY’S DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract: *Sustainability starts from the idea that human activities are dependent on environment and resources. Health, social security and economic stability of society are essential in defining quality of life. Sustainable development subsumes and puts in relation the economic development of a territory and human development. Sustainable development argues that, first, development is made for people and it implies people’s participation in obtaining economic results and in the fair distribution of income.*

Keywords: natural capital, human development index, territorial management, ecological system.

JEL Classification: J24, Q01, Q57.

Territorial development is the process by which various actors in the public sector, business and non-governmental sector work together to create better conditions for economic growth and to generate new jobs, here to improve the quality of that territory.

1. Areas of quality’s manifestation in the territorial development

At regional level, communities, within a region, compete to attract external and local investments. There are also many opportunities for the communities (rural or urban) to collaborate to sustain their economic development. This will increase the competitiveness of the regional economy.

When we talk about quality’s manifestation in the territorial development, we must consider the following:

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- carrying out a process of diversification and development of economic and social activities across an area from the mobilization and coordination of existing resources and energies;
- an effective strategy that allows finding solutions to the problems of disadvantaged groups, and also of collectivities less developed;
- human, physical and financial resource development of community;
- integration of economic and social development in the community;
- improving the community's environment, service quality and its ability to adjust its own social-economic problems;
- promoting sustainable development and socially acceptable;
- the possibility that community can benefit from social investments;
- increasing the number of companies that can pay local taxes and can meet the needs of the community, etc.

A key role in developing a territory is the local economic development that is the most important step in further development of a local community, because, by this process, is established and maintained a dynamic entrepreneurial culture that leads to the creation of material resources for community and business area, with the ultimate goal of improving quality of life of local community. So, to create a local economic development means to raise the economic competitiveness of a local community to improve its economic future.

The success of territorial development depends on collective effort and the quality of the institutional act, in this process being involved: the public sector (government), business (private) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs, employers, social, civic, religious).

A community begins the strategic planning process by identifying individuals, public institutions, companies and industries, civic organizations, private professional organizations, private education institutions and other groups with a clear interest in the local economy.

The quality of the institutional framework plays a key role both in preparing development strategies, and in achieving development's goals. The importance of institutional framework is presented in the following diagram showing all the actors involved in regional development.

Table 1

The actors involved in territorial development

PUBLIC	PRIVATE	NONGOVERNMENTAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - local authorities including technical departments; - regional or district authorities; - sectorial councils and relevant authorities; - health, education, transport, environment; - research institutions and higher education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -corporations; - employers; - small and medium sized enterprises and micro-enterprises; - banks and other financial societies; - Chamber of Commerce; - mass-media; - other business groups; - professional associations; - private utilities; - private education institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - communities' leaders; - lodgers' associations; - community service organizations; - local education institutions; - local religious institutions; - other nongovernmental organizations, for example: Organizations' representatives which deal environmental issues, etc.

Source: Profiroiu, Alina, Racoviceanu, Sorina, Țarplungă, N., "Dezvoltarea economică locală", Editura Economică, București, 1998, p.161.

Resources, brought by every interest group in the process, are the foundation of the strategic process. Establishing work relationships and structures involving interest-bearers in the process should lead to long-term beneficial partnerships among the public-private-nongovernmental.

2. *Quality in developing a territory in the context of sustainable development*

Successive strategies for sustainable development of the European Union tend to focus increasingly on conservation and prudent exploitation of natural capital. One factor of this evolution was the awareness of real dangers of climate change caused by human activities.

As EU member, Romania has undertaken specific obligations regarding implementation of *acquis communautaire*, including the transition

to a model of sustainable development, assimilating principles, objectives and working arrangements agreed in the EU.

Sustainable development is an approach that aims to balance social and economic problems and impact of human actions on the environment.

Sustainable development requires reviewing current needs: economic security, shelter, food, education, political representation, contact with nature, without compromising the ability of future generations. Reducing the use of renewable resources: oil and gas, reducing waste and pollution, we protect natural systems.

Sustainability starts with the idea that human activities are dependent on environment and resources. Health, social security and economic stability of society are essential in *defining quality of life*.

The living standard and quality of life positively affect health, education, culture of population. Expression of the volume of goods and services that are available to individuals and families to meet the needs of their living, living standard conditions peoples' lives and it is dependent, in its turn, to the degree of economic development of the country, to the extent of participation in the process of employment of employable persons, to the size of revenue created in society and to the degree of accessibility for persons and families to those revenues.

Sustainable economic development is mainly intended to improve quality of life, raising the comfort and welfare, ameliorating living conditions. Everyone should be aware that his attitude to nature, other people, and future influence his wealth and his successors' wealth. To live in comfort and prosperity everyone has to take care of the environment, to use more rational and efficient resources that nature offers him, to cease its destructive actions on the environment.

Sustainable development subsumes and correlates economic and human development. Sustainable development argued that, first, development is made for people and implies people's participation in obtaining economic results and fair distribution of incomes, signifying individual's access to resources to secure a suitable standard of living, it ensures meeting the decent personal needs, normal consumption of goods and services, individual's social mobility. A second essential feature of sustainable development refers to the fact that economic and social development is achieved by people and therefore human potential must be created and raised, by investing in man, in schools, education and culture, in

training and in health. Level of education and health reflects the ability of individuals to acquire knowledge, to communicate and to participate in social life of the community of which he is part of, to fulfil their social roles creating a certain material and spiritual comfort.

Starting from the idea that the meaning of the concept of sustainability is actually abstracted to the complex process of co-development formed of the social-economic system and natural capital, we can say that the transition to a model of sustainable development through quality, in regional development, involves:

- identification, negotiation and concomitant and balanced promotion of some measures corresponding to the coordinates of the model of sustainable development;
- design (elaboration), application and development of indicators' set for monitoring the process;
- design, development and application of technologies, processes and legal rules, economic instruments and mechanisms, ethical and moral precepts, and mechanisms of negotiating interests and of systems supporting transition.

Information received through sustainability indicators must identify limitations and failures and sustain the measures for expanding and resizing action programs of transition nationwide and their harmonization at macro-regional and global scale. Effective control of transition process to the model of sustainable development is thus strictly dependent on its additional oversight process through a set of sensitive indicators and relevant to the process followed.

3. Quality of projects, programmes and of the enhancement of local resources in the context of sustainable development

Following implementation strategies for regional development under the auspices and control of authorized institutional framework some studies are made on exploitation of results leading to increasing and improving quality of life in the regional level.

If development strategies are based on realistic plans and programmes, the purpose is to increase living standards of citizens in improving quality of life.

The research units of territorial development area carry out applied researches, studies, information and scenarios, patterns regarding regional development from a European perspective, such research ending in a SWOT analysis which aims to highlight the strengths and weaknesses resulted from implementation of regional development programmes.

On some specific programmes for analyzing regional development, the positive effects, occurred in the territory and any negative aspects or those that could not be completed by the program, are realized.

Quality of development projects and programmes consists of a series of appropriate measures regarding regional development in the context of sustainable development, as follow:

- Measures to increase market competitiveness with regard to:
 - regional marketing;
 - the improvement of structures to achieve quality control.
- Measures for regional infrastructure development with regard to:
 - development and improvement of rural and urban infrastructure;
 - environmental resource management.
- Measures that serve regional economic development that direct:
 - investments;
 - the establishment of a stable business environment;
 - development and diversification of economic activities to generate multiple activities and alternative incomes.
- Measures that serve human resource development and have regard to:
 - improvement of training;
 - support for development programs in the region.

These measures aim to increase the quality in the region, and it is carried out in:

- increasing efficiency in the market;
- bringing production under foreseeable market trends;
- stimulating the development of new markets;
- creating conditions for compliance with environmental protection;
- creating new jobs and maintaining the existing ones;
- competitive economic agents;
- improving infrastructure in general;
- protecting and improving natural resources;
- increasing the level of training, etc.

Quality of resources' capitalization consists in the calculation of indicators showing the purpose of a development plan.

Due to the diversity of quality characteristics in the regional development, it is difficult to assess the overall quality in regional development. Basic criterion for assessing its level is the extent in which certain requirements are met, and thus the *quality level* is a function of quality characteristics related to the limitations of identification of expressed requirements.

Quality of resources' capitalization in the region, in the context of sustainable development, we believe that can be accentuated by what we call the *regional series*, also called *spatial series* that are strings of values of static characteristics arranged relative to administrative units or regional divisions to which they belong with.

The terms of such series are either *absolute indicators*, which are obtained by cumulating within each administrative-regional units all elements regarding to researched characteristic, or *derived indicators* resulting from the application of some methods of calculation in each studied unit.

Therefore, the regional series operate with complex units such as: county, region, area, country, continent, etc. From the above, it is shown that each administrative-regional unit may be characterized both independently, and as part or as level of a variable studied in regional profile.

To realize a complete knowledge of collectivities analyzed in regional profile, it is recommended to use in parallel more data lines, which reflect changes in the same space of several features, usually interdependent. It results a multidimensional regional series.

4. Decision's quality in local management, a factor of sustainable development

The regional management starts from the principle that, in current circumstances, organizational capacities of public collectivities are an important element in terms of decisions' quality in local development management. It involves collaboration among collectivities, creation of specific forms of coordination and verification of results and regional effects of policy.

Performance and management relations, in the regional community, are achieved through regional management system. At its base is a complex

of principles, rules, requirements, that provide its modelling, concordantly to management science.

Decision's quality in local development management is given practically by the variety of individual styles, often based on creativity, human reasoning, intuition and experience that have been used in solving problems at the expense of quantitative methods and scientific approaches.

The complexity of the issues raised by the need to ensure the functioning of organizational communities to a higher qualitative level, and the achievements that are obtained in the contemporary scientific-technical revolution, require the replacement of management methods on intuitive and experimental bases with scientific methods at any level and in any field.

Ensuring a leadership based on quality and dynamics needs to express different phenomena or real facts in functional relations through theories, mathematical techniques, use of laws or of functional relations to form various patterns, experimenting on these models of possible strategies and establishing a system of planning, recording and analysis that allows the adoption at any time decisions in best conditions and carried out on quality.

Taking the decision carried out on quality should be made taking into account the components of regional management system, which are the following:

- organizational subsystem;
- informational subsystem;
- decisional subsystem;
- subsystem on the methods and management techniques;
- other subsystem of the management system.

Decision-making in the global context of development in terms of local economic development is taking into account the history and traditions of different communities.

Thus, in the American context, "community development" means all activities conducted by economic and social agents of a community to meet their needs, so the reference to the community is very important.

In Europe, the concept "local development" is most common. Local initiatives are all activities organized by local agencies (economic, social and cultural) for the creation of businesses and, thus, new jobs. Also in Europe there is a growing partnership among companies, the emergence of different economic agents, the search for alternative solutions to those macroeconomic, social and cultural alignments to the criteria of economic rationality.

Establishing quality systems by developing countries requires understanding the mentality and culture of people in the region in which a development program is elaborated, a certain industrial culture and a perception of quality from developed countries. Also, it is required to avoid erroneous concepts such as quality costs more, improving quality means reducing productivity, quality is affected by poor training of the workforce, the quality can be ensured through a strict verification, etc.

The quality system is the set of organizational structures, responsibilities, procedures, processes and resources, which aims to achieve effective quality management.

The quality system aims to establish mechanisms to integrate all functions into one comprehensive system and it must be transparent so that the company and its customers clearly understand how the company intends to ensure that its products will meet all quality requirements.

A quality system contains elements that are found in the technical documentation of the respective product, how to work, channels of communication, interference.

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