

Social Innovation – Need or Resource for Providers of Social Services?

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Abstract. *According to the national regulations, in Romania, social services are provided both by the public and private sectors. The main condition for providers is the respect the normative standards of accreditation. If the public sector is organizing under the umbrella of local authorities, the private services are proving by the nonprofit sector (associations and foundations). Our study tried to answer the question: is it social innovation a need or resources for providers of social services? The study is focusing on non-governmental organizations providing social services. The main criterion for selection has been to be accredited as providers of social services. We used a qualitative approach, based on case study and interviews with social managers. Through the presented case studies, we highlight the implications of innovative approaches, in which the priority is focusing on the individual and to the development of his own potential, and the profit representing only an opportunity to ensure sustainability.*

Keywords: *social services; providers; nonprofit; accreditation; social innovation.*

Introduction

Through the European documents², we can see that the Member States are encouraged to develop national policies for social security and integrated approach structures, to concentrate on employment measures, on facilitating the transition from one workplace to another, on supporting the access on the labor market of those unemployed, on increasing the chances for a good development of training and learning competences. The above-mentioned documents restate and support the importance of the social services of general interest. The social services of general interest actually transform the fundamental social rights, although they depend upon public financing in order to ensure equal access, no matter the wealth or income; they contribute to non-discrimination, equal opportunities, health care, improving living conditions, by actively involving the individuals in the society. Thus, the social services providers can contribute to social inclusion, to the social cohesion of local communities and to the solidarity between generations.

The worsening of the social situation and the sustainability of social protection systems in some EU states are stated as arguments for analyzes and package of measures envisaged in the field of social investments. In fact, the main signal is about the need to invest in human capital. The key message of the Social

² COM(2007) 725 Communication from the Commission “Services of general interest, including social services of general interest: a new European commitment” 224 (2007), Recommendation of the Council of Europe “Ensuring territorial continuity of social services in rural regions”, COM (2010)2020 Communication from the Commission “Europe 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth”, the Biennial Report on social services of general interest SEC(2008)2179 and SEC(2010)1284), the Commission Recommendation of 3 October 2008 on the active inclusion of people excluded from the labor market (C(2008)5737), the Report “A Voluntary European Quality Framework for Social Services” (The Social Protection Committee 2010) and, last but not least, the Report on the future of social services of general interest adopted by the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs of the European Parliament (2009/2222(INI) (the De Rossa Report).

Investment Package³ documents is that the implementation of a fair and adequate social policy means investing in human capital, people's ability to develop and to deal with risks and preventive actions. Active social inclusion is also recommended.

To develop high-quality social services accessible to all becomes a challenge to social protection systems. Every citizen, especially the most disadvantaged, should be able to count on quality social services such as early childhood education and care, long-term care, social assistance (social welfare or benefits), social housing and needs-based personal targeted services aimed at social inclusion and labor market integration. Moreover, The Social Investment Package stresses the role of high-quality, integrated and personalized services in "developing people's skills and capabilities, improving the opportunities open to them and helping them use their potential to the full throughout the lives". Integrated social services delivery can improve both efficiency and effectiveness in terms of active social inclusion.

For Romania, the preoccupation towards development integrated social services has actually emerged after 2011. The Government Strategy on the reform of the social work system 2011-2013 aims to streamline the social care system. Starting from the premise that social care represents the "ultimate safety net of the social protection system and its purpose is to protect the people who, because of economic, physical, mental or social reasons, are unable to ensure their social needs, to develop their own capabilities and competencies for social integration", the strategy is focused on reducing the costs of social benefits, reducing the number of beneficiaries, developing social services, and strengthening control; there is too little focus on increasing the access, quality and efficiency of the measures aimed for vulnerable people. None of the six main objectives of the strategy does not refer directly or indirectly to instruments related to social economy, although in some of them (improving quality, increasing activation and participation of beneficiaries, efficient use of funds in the social care system) promoting the social economy could be one of the innovative and efficient solutions.

According to the law in force regarding social work in Romania (Law no.192/2011), the social economy is one of the active inclusive measures for vulnerable people. If from the perspective of employment and labor market policies - the main role of social economy expects to generate new jobs, especially for vulnerable people, as well as providing services in the field of vocational training and facilitating labor integration, from the perspective of social assistance, the social economy is expected to deliver social services to individuals and communities, especially in areas where neither the public or the private sector is able to meet increasing social needs, but also to contribute to the development of new social services (Rebeleanu & Popescu 2016; Melinz & Pennerstorfer, 2016).

In our opinion, there is a close link between social work and social economy, legally formalized. The framework law on social work⁴ defines and emphasizes the role of the social economy in promoting the social inclusion of vulnerable groups and operationalizes the concept of a vulnerable group. The Law of the social economy refers to the vulnerable group so as defined in Social work law, mentions the importance of the development of social economy entities as an inclusive approach with a high development potential of the existing social services, and the creation of a public-private partnership in supporting and promoting the local communities' development.

Overview of the social services providers: The Romanian context

Synthesizing the regulations in force, in Romania, social services are regulated by specific legislation aiming to ensure quality assurance. Thus, we have a law on quality assurance in the field of social services (Law

³ See European Commission (2013). *Investing in Social Europe*(24/04/2013) Catalog N.: KE-31-13-870-EN-C., European Commission (2013). *Social Agenda 33- Social Investment*(24/04/2013) Catalog N.: KE-AF-13-033-EN-C, COM(2013) 83 final *Towards Social Investment for Growth and Cohesion – including implementing the European Social Fund 2014-2020*.

⁴ A vulnerable group represents individuals or families who are at risk of losing their ability to meet the needs of daily living because of illness, disability, poverty, drug or alcohol abuse, or other circumstances that lead to economic and social vulnerability. The categories of vulnerable persons mentioned in the law are families and single people without income, homeless, victims of trafficking or domestic violence, children, detainees, persons suffering from chronic diseases, persons with disabilities, single parents, Roma, people living in isolated communities, young people aged over 18 who have to the foster care centers.

no. 197/2012). Its content regulates the process of evaluation, certification, monitoring and control for quality assurance in the field of social services (art.1, paragraph (1)). The evaluation process is correlated with quality issues, so the assessment involves checking the standards, criteria and indicators that are set for quality assurance in social services. In other words, the evaluation activity is a planned and rigorous analysis of social service. The professional level at which the evaluation is carried out can provide solutions to problematic situations, improved services and organizational and operational arrangements. On the other hand, it can provide a grounded base for policy-making in the social field.

Accreditation is the appreciation made by an outside body to the institution in order to guarantee the quality of the service provided by that institution. This appreciation is the compliance of the institution with a set of explicit criteria and especially known by both parties. So, accreditation is not just a "verdict". Referring strictly to accreditation in the field of social work, accreditation is the process by which the social services provider demonstrates its own functional, organizational and administrative capacity in the provision of social services, provided the quality standards in force are complied with and the state recognizes its competence to provide social services (Rebeleanu 2011).

Social Assistance Law, Law no. 292/2011 defines accreditation under article 6, letter a) as "*a process for the certification of the fulfillment by providers and social services granted of the criteria, indicators and quality standards regulated for each type of service*". (see Law no. 197/2012, article 4, paragraph (2), letter e)).

The new law on social work explicitly states (chapter III, section 2, article 38 (1) and (2)) the obligation of the accreditation of the providers and of the social services, for legal functioning, so as to preclude the modification of the process accreditation, regulated by the old Government Decision no. 1024/2004. Thus, the current accreditation process in the social field targets both providers and social services.

Summarizing, social services are provided by public and private sectors; both of them must respect normative standards of accreditation. If the public sector is organizing under the umbrella of local authorities, the private services are proving by NGO's (associations and foundations). The public sector is more focused on social benefits.

In 2015, In Romania, the most important field of activity in which the non-governmental organizations in Romania are active in the social/charitable (FDCS, 2016, 2018). The social component of the NGO sector has emerged as a consequence of the public institutions' limitations to respond to the basic social needs of the most disadvantaged social groups: children, the elderly or people with disabilities. The roles of NGOs are both to act as subsidies or replacing social services offered by public institutions (public social services), often insufficient or with low quality (Constantinescu, 2018, pp.11-26).

In our opinion, NGOs have a key role in social innovation, by targeting new social needs. Social innovation also mobilizes each beneficiary to become an active part in the innovation process.

The most part of the social services in Romania are providing by the non-profit sector. Accreditation of social services provide by NGO presents advantages at the level of serving local communities, but also at the level of diversification of financing funds for the non-governmental sector.

Methodology

Based on a qualitative approach, from a critical perspective, the study tried to answer at the research questions: is it social innovation a need or resource of social services providers?

The operational objectives retained for the research are:

- Identifying the difficulties faced by NGOs
- Identifying the needs cover by associations and foundations
- Determining an innovative approach in order to increase the quality of services provided to the community.

The study is conducted in 2016-2019 in counties from the Nord-West Region of Romania. We used the interview with social managers and the case studies focused on non-profit social services providers. The main criterion for selection has been to be accredited as providers of social services. For this research, we

conducted interviews with the managers of the associations and foundations that set up protected units or considered other self-financing mechanisms in order to be able to continue offering social services. The research deontology elements were observed. The registered dialogues were transcribed and analyzed employing thematic analysis. The classification of the answers was done through content analysis, with topics that emerged from the discussions. The processing and analysis of the gathered data allowed the following thematic units: difficulties encountered by foundations and associations, funding strategies used and innovation (good practices).

We used in our paper the following working definition for social innovation: new ideas (products, services, models) that simultaneously meet social needs and create new social relationships or collaboration (BEPA, 2011).

Assuming that we cannot talk about a universal character of best practice in a field and that the applicability of good practice is dependent on the economic, social and political context, we consider that examples of good practice have proved to be useful in formulating national policies, being considered intelligent practices (Bardach, 2000), innovative initiatives (Bendixsen & Guchteniere, 2003) or milestones for decision-making (Jennings Jr., 2007).

The analysis of good practice in the field of development of social services has been concerned with both primary sources of information (interview with managers) and secondary sources (desk research).

Results and discussions

Starting from the idea that social innovation is both a need and a resource among non-profit organizations, the study highlights the difficulties encountered by non-profit organizations as well as innovative solutions to these difficulties. Also, the study points to several attitudes and perceptions of managers of social organizations about social entrepreneurship.

Most of the interviewed managers claimed that the biggest difficulties encountered in carrying out social activity are financial. They fail to support their activity to the desired standards, due to the limited financial resources preventing them to diversify their services, to hire more staff for the activities of the association, or even to support their own social business through which they integrate into the field of work the beneficiaries served:

"Like most non-governmental organizations, we have encountered funding difficulties and, implicitly, the lack of specialized human resources. Even if the European funds were accessed, they were short-lived (one year) and it is extremely difficult to ensure sustainability - as beneficiaries have expectations of free programs. On the other hand, there is no financial support from the local government, there is support only for small, punctual activities" (F., manager NGO which provides services for people with disabilities)

"A permanent problem faced by all NGO's in Romania (so we are not a singular case), it is the financing" (A., manager NGO which provides services for people with mental disabilities)

Other difficulties encountered are those related to the lack of specialists to propose projects for accessing the European structural funds, in order to develop innovative social programs. Also, difficulties related to vague legislation were mentioned:

"Concerning the association and the protected entity, we have encountered legislative difficulties, because the legislation in the field is not very clear. Concerning the projects, the difficulties encountered are related to the lack of specialists in the writing of projects, but also financial problems" (D., protected unit manager offering services for people with disabilities).

"When we set up the foundations of social enterprises, we did not even know about the social economy, but we identified some needs both within the association and among the beneficiaries and we wrote folded projects to meet these needs, that was also the justification for the project." (I., social entrepreneurship manager)

Most non-profit organizations manage to carry out their activity based on the funds raised from donations, fundraising campaigns, charitable events, or even participating in social economy fairs with products made by the beneficiaries and volunteers of the organization. An example of this is found in the following quote:

"We organize fundraising campaigns through 2% statements, we organize charitable events and we identify sponsors. More recently, within the X Day Center, the young beneficiaries, coordinated by volunteers, made handmade items and participated in fairs, exhibitions with sales. We have also initiated educational programs for children in the locality and we also support the part of the costs of social assistance activities."(F., manager NGO that provides services for people with disabilities)

On the other hand, innovative strategies and the development of social businesses bring much more benefit to non-profit organizations. Managers are aware that donations, sponsorships, and philanthropy are short-term. Social entrepreneurship consists of thinking of some innovative strategies that combine the economic dimension with the social dimension and through which sustainability is ensured. For example, the social business represents an opportunity for the integration in the labor market of vulnerable persons as well as for covering the costs with the social services offered. An entrepreneurial spirit is connecting with social innovation.

"A benefit would be to generate financial resources in order to keep going the activity, the employment of the specialized personnel and the insurance to high standards of services delivery" (F., manager NGO that provides services for people with disabilities)

„The role of these organizations (social-economic entities) it is precisely the fact that they are looking for a niche on the market, on the economic market, which for the others, for an SRL is not interesting because it does not bring these benefits you are, but for a social economy structure you are not only going through the tangible, pecuniary benefit, but you are also going through the prism of what you bring social, community because it is important to raise the community and such structures, on the other hand, are good because they are not all the time they have to resort to a certain form of receiving income from the Local Council, they alone can generate these revenues which he uses according to what he considers necessary to develop his service better in the respective market". (D.C. - manager NGO, that provides services for children and disadvantaged families, 2016)

"The beneficiaries we serve become active members of the community in which they live" (E., manager NGO that provides services for people with disabilities)

„Benefits for the employed persons: valuing the work potential and increasing the self-esteem" (D., protected unit manager offering services for people with disabilities)

The researchers Weerawardena and Mort (2006, p.29) point out that non-profit organizations that develop social entrepreneurship activities face great challenges in risk management to support the organization and the projects carried out. From the interviews with the managers of the associations and foundations, it emerged that there are certain fears when it comes to the implementation of initiatives specific to social entrepreneurship. They adopt a very cautious approach in dealing with risk, with a great emphasis on the survival of the organization:

"Our fear is that we will not find service "buyers", that we will not be able to establish realistic costs of services to be agreed upon by their potential beneficiaries". (F., manager NGO that provides services for people with disabilities)

A., manager of a NGO who is providing services for people with mental disabilities affirms that its fears related to the development of specific activities for social entrepreneurship consist in: *"Lack of viable public policies and fiscal facilities to support social business; community prejudices related to products made by people with disabilities; lack of managerial expertise (marketing, sales, etc.) regarding social business; the reduced abilities of the target group employed, reduces productivity, efficiency, and low profitability; the moment you enter the market you compete with the other businesses and you have to be as productive, efficient and profitable, even if you are a social business".*

On the other hand, it is hard for NGOs to survive on the market if we have in mind the competition with private economic suppliers: *"It is very difficult to adapt our business to market requirements because our products are hand-made, but the work time and the cost of products are higher than the products available on the market."* (D., protected unit manager offering services for people with disabilities).

Given all these difficulties, the question is why do managers think of innovative solutions to carry out activities specific to social entrepreneurship? What is their motivation?

"The desire to give the beneficiaries a normal life" (A., manager of an NGO who is providing services for people with mental disabilities).

"The need to support jobs for people, who in other circumstances have no chance of their own development" (D., protected unit manager offering services for people with disabilities).

"To mobilize people with disabilities to emerge from the shadow of disease and from the prison walls of the home, to have initiative, to take courage, to acquire the feeling of usefulness, being able to create something." (E., non-profit organization manager - services for people with disabilities).

Regarding the part of innovation and self-financing mechanisms, the managers of associations and foundations carry out various entrepreneurial activities through which they combine the social dimension with the economic dimension. Some examples are as follows:

"We are constantly trying to offer quality services, to improve the services offered to the beneficiaries and to diversify the range of products made by the beneficiaries in the ergo therapeutic workshops. At the moment, the main concern is to open a business that partially supports social services provided free of charge to our beneficiaries. In this sense, we succeeded in endowing with the latest equipment a workshop of personalizing objects, but in which the beneficiaries do not work because they don't have the necessary skills. But, in the workshops of ergotherapy, a part of the raw material can be provided with the help of the beneficiaries" (A., manager NGO providing services for people with mental disabilities)

"We have many types of services. The main service where most of the vulnerable people work is the archiving, binding books, storage and document handling service. We also have a tailor shop where we can make gowns or protective equipment, write protective equipment, motivational gifts, and these are the basic activities we make in these social economy structures (G.P. - social enterprise manager - services for people with disabilities, 2017)

„Within the association operates a protected unit, through which we sell the products made in their own workshops (the condition is that the contribution of persons with disabilities employed is identifiable by the job description). The lucrative activities included in the accreditation as a protected unit are carpentry, silkscreen printing, tailoring, decoration/gifts, evaluation and selection of personnel, brokers" (D., protected unit manager offering services for people with disabilities).

These aspects are relevant and important for sustainability. Especially, because Romania is the country where civil society organizations have the least support (Hollerweger, Bogorin, Litofcenko, & Meyer, 2019). Social managers must be creative and innovative in order to search and activate resources for activities.

The managers of non-profit organizations argue that all this action of socio-professional integration can be realized only if accompanying measures are offered:

"Assisting vulnerable people in identifying, adapting and maintaining a job involves a set of activities, measures, programs, specialized services - implemented by specialists - with the aim of supporting socio-professional development and work mediation" (D., protected unit manager offering services for people with disabilities).

„The experience gained helped us to realize that without counseling services, without offering them any facilities we cannot manage to motivate the vulnerable group. We have offered psychological

counseling, job mediation, professional training for social entrepreneurship manager and other employees, employee incentives (transport bill)" (I., social entrepreneurship manager).

In view of the above statements, the steps of socio-professional integration within the protected units or in another workplace requires the development of social services that support the employees and help them maintain the job.

Models of good practice

We choose to present two models of good practice in which we present two non-profit organizations that have managed to be innovative in their activity and present an impressive work in the social field. In the description of these case studies, we followed the same thematic units as from interviews analyses, but we added two news items: the objectives and the social mission of the non-profit organizations.

Both case-studies are models of good practice in terms of developing the social economy entities and, implicitly, the social services provided to the community, in order to maximize the self-determination capabilities of vulnerable people.

THE HUMANITARIAN ASSOCIATION "TOGETHER FOR THEM", Baia Mare is a non-governmental organization, founded in September 2010, involved in solving the problems of the community in which it operates.

The main activity area of the organization is to provide social services in order to combat poverty, by developing programs tailored to the needs of each category of people in vulnerable situations.

The associate's mission is to promote a model of community involvement by providing support to families, social groups and communities found in difficulty. The purpose of the organization is to improve the quality of life for people and groups at risk, as well as, to organize and develop viable social economy services and structures to meet the needs of socially excluded categories. Therefore, the social economy is the lever of the development of social services.

The main objectives of the association are:

- Improving living standards, education, the environment, and public health;
- Helping families with many children, people with disabilities, children in need, the unemployed and the elderly who are physically or materially unable to take care of themselves and maintain themselves;
- Promoting, supporting and developing social economy activities;
- Promoting volunteering - empowering citizens to involve them in solving community problems by facilitating programs and services, linking existing needs in the community with eager people to engage in voluntary activities;
- Developing civic awareness, promoting a responsible attitude towards social issues;
- Involvement in sustainable community development strategies at the local and national levels.

The Association provides free social and humanitarian services for children in difficulty, people with disabilities, families at risk, job seekers, elderly people unable to care for themselves and marginalized communities. The beneficiaries, of the services offered by the association, are persons lacking minimum living conditions (shelter, food, hygiene, health care, family affairs), persons with physical, mental and/or social disabilities, children in difficulty, families with more children living to the limit of subsistence, elderly people, disadvantaged communities / Roma at social risk.

The activities carried out by the HUMANITARIAN ASSOCIATION are varied: providing social services, social and psychological counseling, non-formal education, socio-medical assistance, occupational therapy, counseling, and vocational guidance, mediation on the labor market, advocacy, and assisted learning, "School of Parents" activities, support activities for enrollment of children in the educational system and their maintenance in school, in order to reduce school dropout.

Since 2012, under the association umbrella is authorized a protected unit. It offers jobs especially to people with disabilities, but also to other people from vulnerable groups. The Protected Unit provides bookbinding

services - archiving, signage of protective equipment and advertising materials/gifts: shirts, mugs, bags, caps, etc. At the same time, within the unit are made customized types and are done typing/multiplication operations, diploma/license works, sales activities/products, services intermediation, etc.

In May, the manager said in a broadcast about the „Zilele Clujene ale Economiei Sociale”, the following: *"You need the will to do something, people around you who want to do something, and of course volunteering. We went on the principle "small steps, safe construction". We always calculated our every step well, we did not stretch more than we could, we weighed very well the decisions we took and that's why we are where we are today and we provide 32 jobs for vulnerable people in this type of social-economic structure"* (G.P. - social enterprise manager - services for people with disabilities, May 2017).

But, after September 2017 the association was forced to reduce activity in protected units. From 32 employees (people with disabilities) only 14 employees are still working, because of the impossibility of paying salaries. Moreover, the number of contracts that has decreased due to the lack of funds for public institutions for which association provides services. After this period, the association continued to offer to its beneficiaries continuous support measures to work outside the protected units. This fact is, unfortunately, no unique at the national level. Is the effect of Ordinance no.60/2017, a legal act that made changes with direct consequences on the activities of protected units. After this regulation, a lot of protected units closed their activity. According to data from the Ministry of Work, almost 70 disable people are working in protected units in 2019.

THE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION OF ST. DANIEL from Turda is a non-governmental organization founded in 1996, which is founded on the purpose of raising the values of charity and self-help between people, protecting and helping minors deprived of parental care and giving nursing.

The services provided by St. Daniel foundation are social services (specialized assistance for children, elderly people, vulnerable families), employment services (professional counseling and vocational guidance, mediation on the labor market, training and apprenticeship), entrepreneurship services (sustainable support for the process of setting up a business from idea to reality) and educational services (parents workshops, alternative programs to formal education, school counseling, summer holidays, excursions and thematic camps).

The foundation applied and developed different projects financing by European funds. It is the result of the entrepreneurial spirit of the foundation's manager. For example, within the project "SES - SANSA EGALA SIGURA for your social inclusion", a project co-financed from the European Social Fund through the Sectoral Operational Program for Human Resources Development 2007 - 2013, priority axis 6 "Promoting Social Inclusion", the major area of intervention 6.1. "Social Economy Development", the social-economic structure was created 8 social enterprises: 5 in an urban area and 3 in a rural area. The project was carried out in the North-West and Center Region, in the Cluj and Alba counties. Kinders SES, which is part of the 8 social economy structures established by the project. 4 social enterprises provided are active in the construction field, and 4 provide social and educational services.

Kinders SES is one of the social economy structures developed by Sf. Daniel Foundation. The Kinders SES Association has as its main purpose the provision of services in order to improve the quality of education and the development of individual skills. The day center features two components of after school - to develop the capacities of children aged 5 to 11 with a capacity of 80 seats. Objectives and activities of the association are: education and daytime support for children after school or providing specialized educational services to improve school adaptation behavior; services addressed to children and their families by ensuring day-care activities, recreation-socialization, counseling; development of independent life skills, school and professional orientation; thematic summer schools; ensure a secure and leisure environment; prevent abandonment and school failure; increasing the accessibility of families who want better alternatives for childcare and education; integration into school curriculum by increasing adaptability to this type of environment; organizing actions to inform the community about services are offered, its' role in the community, its' access to and functioning; psycho-behavioral optimization of the child; offering jobs for people deemed vulnerable, according to the principles underlying the social economy; diversification of self-sustaining sources for social structures, giving priority to the individual and social objectives towards increasing profit.

One of the main features of foundation is the initiative and concern for access funds in order to create new services offered to the local community and, to create new jobs for vulnerable people, but not only for them:

“Of course, interest arose when you came up with innovative services when you came up with something else that does not exist on the market. We came with the equipment and techniques we could buy through these project funds, which you could not otherwise buy. There have been smartboards, there have been many of the top performances that have made this place unique and attractive in town. It is very important when you go there to find a pleasant environment, an environment where the child can achieve through games and informal education the purchases it needs or can bring the corrections that the child needs to stay in school to deal with the acquisitions he has not made due to the environment from which he came, precisely through these endowments. Those who come to benefit from these services, 70% of the children are coming from a normal environment of the normal community, where parents can bring some money for the services they receive and benefit from and the difference goes for those children who come from disadvantaged environments and will never be able to afford those foreign language courses because there is also a communication component of German and English acquisition. That is why it is important to support these services from the community and the desire to take these services and products that we offer, of course, if they are at certain standards that make them competitive and attractive”.
(D.C. - manager NGO and Kinder SES structure economy, 2016)

Final remarks

In the context of limited resources (the main difficulty encountered by foundations and associations in the opinion of social managers), social innovation offers a way forward by providing a new solution to pressing social demands while making better use of available resources.

The present research has attempted to highlight the need for non-profit organizations to develop entrepreneurial initiatives to deliver innovative, high quality and social value creation services.

The research outline an overview of the competencies and abilities needed by the social managers who want to create social value by developing activities for social entrepreneurship. This desideratum is absolutely necessary if we consider the utility and benefits of social innovation, but also the need to adapt the social services providers to the pressing problems of society. Moreover, among the benefits of social entrepreneurship in the sustainability of the activity of non-governmental organizations providing social work services are revealed some. It accepts the necessity and desirability of obtaining income through its own forces, which contributes to decreasing the dependence on governmental and / or philanthropic resources.

Their most important competence in the opinion of the respondents is the ability to identify and use creatively various resources. And that means to be innovative and take the initiative in order to keep the social investments!

Both organizations prove that they have the capacity to create and implement new ideas in order to deliver social value. They have a real contribution to increasing the quality of life and well-being of their beneficiaries, and also, increasing the solidarity in the local community. Both developed creative solutions in order to assure social inclusion for vulnerable people (unemployed persons, aging persons, disables, children, etc.). Their solutions are based on the need of local communities. Moreover, the solutions are focusing on the beneficiaries of social services and capitalizing on the diversity of ages, gender and ethnicities (both are working and offer services to Roma people).

The analyzed organizations are concerning to develop and extend their partnership. The research outline an overview of the competencies and abilities needed by the social managers who want to create social value by developing activities for social entrepreneurship. This desideratum is absolutely necessary if we consider the utility and benefits of social innovation, but also the need to adapt the social services providers to the pressing problems of society. Moreover, among the benefits of social entrepreneurship in the sustainability of the activity of non-governmental organizations providing social work services are

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