SOCIAL INNOVATION

Table of contents

Introduction

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The **SOCIEDADE e TRABALHO** booklets are a series of publications put out by the Portuguese Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity. National and international specialists in fields related to the Ministry's areas of intervention are invited to contribute articles to the booklets. Eleven of these booklets were published between 2001 and 2008.

Booklet No. 12 is devoted to the theme of Social Innovation, coinciding with European Year of Creativity and Innovation, as well as the closure of the EQUAL Community Initiative. This issue includes a separate supplement in English containing a number of articles on conceptual and political issues and reflecting on good practice. These pieces are emblematic of the approach to emerging paradigms in social intervention.

The term "social innovation" is a conceptual accumulation that gives global meaning to numerous social intervention experiences that reflect mobilisation for action and express movements of active citizenship – initiatives which are gaining momentum all over the world.

The articles in this supplement emphasise the value of individual and collective experiences (especially the action and initiatives of the EQUAL Programme, since the beginning of the 21st Century) and confront us with new approaches and proposals for social intervention, namely:

- To make the model and lessons from the EQUAL experience years reflect upon a new paradigm for social intervention (Ana Vale, Manager of the EQUAL Initiative in Portugal).
- To stimulate new social learning ideas that reveal a conceptual and attitudinal change towards learning in the social systems and the innovation that emerges from it (Etienne Wenger, globally recognised as the leader in the field of "Communities of Practice").

- To develop collaborative solutions as catalysts for social change and innovation (Tom Wolff, prestigious US community psychologist).
- To put innovation, shaped by its users, at the heart of social policies (Andy Westwood, whose experience as Chairman of the OECD Forum on Social Innovation has given him a global vision).
- To highlight the importance of Equal Initiative contributions to stimulating territorial animation and local initiative (José Manuel Henriques, expert and facilitator of two Thematic Networks in the Portuguese EQUAL Initiative).

A New Paradigm for Social Intervention

Ana Vale
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Abstract | In EQUAL, social innovation found concrete expression in new solutions for tackling discrimination on the labour market and responding more effectively to the problems facing disadvantaged communities and individuals. This innovation derived from the EQUAL project development cycle (needs diagnosis, testing, validation and recognition of the quality of the results, and their transfer or mainstreaming to other contexts), from EQUAL principles (innovation, partnership, empowerment, gender equality, transnational cooperation, employers' involvement and mainstreaming of practices) and from the Thematic Networks. These three aspects were heavily promoted by the Programme Management and were found to be critical in EQUAL for creating a learning dynamic that generates innovation.

Based on EQUAL practice, it is possible to identify elements of the new paradigm of social intervention. These elements should form the basis for future action if we wish to achieve a more cohesive and inclusive society: solutions that focus on the beneficiaries and are created with them, preferably "by them", and never without them; focusing on individuals' and communities' "strengths" rather than on their "weaknesses"; not only must discrimination on grounds of ethnicity, age and gender be eliminated, but the very diversity of these aspects should be capitalised on; developing of holistic approaches, rather than fragmented responses, to people's diverse problems; reinforcing and extending partnership, instead of each organisation individually handling "its" services and "its" responsibilities; collaborative working and networking as ways to consolidate social innovation; creating outreach solutions based in the local community rather than "global" solutions, remote from people and communities; investing more in cooperation than in competition; mainstreaming and sustaining social innovation in order to optimise investment in new solutions and multiply their added value; valuing not only certifiable skills, but also new

skills associated with innovation and the discovery of what's new, what has a future and what works; recognising and valuing "social artists"; a new governance for learning.

The EQUAL experience proved that social innovation does not happen just by chance. It needs a favourable culture and context for sharing and learning, and requires particular conditions, including specific, adequate and flexible financial support, if it is to be galvanised, facilitated, given concrete expression and mainstreamed.

The social innovation achieved in EQUAL is a substantiated response that needs to be taken forward, and to give rise to a new form of more effective and efficient social intervention, particularly in response to the crisis and in preparation for the post-crisis.

I. About EQUAL

EQUAL is an experimental programme, financed by the European Social Fund (2001-2009), which aims to promote innovation to combat discrimination in access to employment and the labour market. Recognition of the need to overhaul and improve the effectiveness of public policies in order to address emerging social problems was at the origin of this Community Initiative.

The framework of the EQUAL Programme came from the European Commission and, on this basis each Member State set up a national programme, selecting the priorities and introducing the specificities they considered most appropriate to their national reality. Portugal, therefore, had a programme specifically geared to match its national policy priorities. Furthermore, the programme emphasised certain aspects, such as enterprise involvement in projects, networking and learning, validation and mainstreaming of the solutions produced, which was not similarly reflected in other countries.

In Portugal, EQUAL translated into an investment of 150 million euros, and supported 188 pilot projects involving around 1500 national entities in Development Partnerships, which cooperated with 610 entities from other countries through transnational partnerships. More than 8000 technicians were involved in the development of projects that produced, validated and disseminated about 320 new solutions. Throughout their implementation, the projects, grouped according to their focus, took part in 19 thematic networks.

These figures serve to illustrate the financial and temporal dimensions, and the critical mass that upholds and legitimises the results achieved, as well as the reflection produced around the experimentation carried out by the Development Partnerships, the Thematic Networks and their coordinators, and by the EQUAL Management Office.

In EQUAL, social innovation found concrete expression in new solutions for tackling discrimination on the labour market and responding more effectively to the problems facing disadvantaged communities and individuals.

In all the projects, this innovation was based on the EQUAL model and its principles.

The EQUAL model followed all the stages of the innovation and mainstreaming cycle: needs diagnosis conducted with the beneficiaries, which gave useful meaning to the innovation, followed by testing, validation and recognition of the quality of the results, and, lastly, their transfer or mainstreaming into other contexts, including their modification or even reconstruction.

The principles underlying all the interventions were: innovation, partnership, empowerment and proximity to target groups, gender equality, transnational cooperation, employers' involvement and mainstreaming of the practices. Mainstreaming was only possible because the experimentation conducted was converted into tangible products that could be appropriated by third parties and reproduced on a large scale.

The establishment of Thematic Networks was added to the EQUAL model and principles. All projects took part in these Networks, thus increasing the Development Partnerships' capacity for reflection and innovation. Within the Networks, Development Partnerships were able to share ideas and experiences in "communities of practice", in an atmosphere of trust and openness, and this enabled reflection and in-depth examination of the themes being experimented, product validation, and groundwork to be laid for mainstreaming.

Meantime, the programme's management proactively took on the role of facilitator of resources and tools that would be useful for the Development Partnerships' work. It invested in developing the skills of technicians involved in the projects, directly monitoring the projects, mainstreaming innovative solutions, and intermediation work with policymakers and other potential incorporators of innovation.

The culture and practice of continuous learning, pursuing what is new, cooperative working, and self assessment with regard to quality and results, were instilled and valued in EQUAL. These factors were critical for generating innovation.

II. Characteristics of the new paradigm of Social Intervention

Eight years later, based on EQUAL practice, it is possible to extract the elements that go to make up the new paradigm of social intervention and which should form the basis for future action if we wish to achieve a more cohesive and inclusive society. EQUAL practice showed that, by giving individuals and organisations greater force, autonomy and power, social intervention based on this new paradigm boosts self-employment, job creation, and development of territories and communities.

1. Solutions must focus on the beneficiaries, and be created with them, preferably "by them", and never without them

This is a fundamental requisite of social intervention: social responses must centre on the people (not the processes) and at all times take into account their (changing) problems and life contexts, and their different learning paces.

This principle has to do with empowerment – "nothing about us without us ". "It is about acknowledging that full citizenship can only be built together with the individuals and groups that are excluded, and cannot be achieved by offering or imposing something on them"[1]. In EQUAL, by putting the empowerment principle into practice, social interventions and new solutions were better able to respond to the real needs of people, whether they were agents or beneficiaries of the actions.

Empowerment means giving the action targets a voice in matters that concern them. It involves reinforcing their own ability to influence directions and decisions, and even to actively participate in decision-making. It is this principle that ensures that social policies and interventions are oriented to (and by) the users' real interests (user-led policy), which makes them far more effective and efficient.

2. Focus on the "strengths" of individuals and communities rather than on their "weaknesses"

This new paradigm involves a change of attitude that translates into a positive valorisation of those who are "weakest" or "powerless".

This is one of EQUAL's most important legacies: the affirmation of the primacy of people's own capacity over their needs. Support to vulnerable groups, when designed to developing their skills and aptitudes, reinforces self-confidence and motivation, puts back dignity, and enables more successful, autonomous and responsible integration in the labour market.

'Assistentialist' action oriented to suppressing needs, paternalistic and even charity-like attitudes towards target groups, and the dependency culture that has been created and fostered, must give way to solidary proactive initiatives that put the capability and initiative of the most vulnerable at the very centre of action, and encourage their autonomy and responsibility – initiatives that believe in people, help them find solutions to their problems, and enable them to discover within themselves the necessary potential to envisage and make changes.

"It is about recognising that real social change is only possible if communities are trusted, and given ownership of the solutions to their problems, and given the tools and stimulus to take care of their own destiny"[2].

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[1] Henriques, J.M. (2001), Empowerment como Princípio: Perspectivas para a Acção, Espaço e Desenvolvimento.

[2] Metz, Ben, UK Director of ASHOKA, speaking at the "Powering a New Future" Event, 10 December 2008.

3. Capitalising on the diversity of ethnicities, ages, religions, gender, etc., and not just combating discrimination

Getting the most out of diversity is positively exploring the enormous wealth to be had from different cultures, standpoints, and perspectives. It is changing from actions designed to combat discrimination to actions that see potential in diversity that can be capitalised on, for the benefit of individuals, organisations and local life.

Instead of emphasising the differences between groups and individuals, the idea that organisations that know how to make the most of diversity stand to gain is advocated.

For enterprises that embrace diversity and combat discrimination, "diversity charters" and codes of conduct are a solid basis for changing professional practices, promoting organisational innovation, and even winning over new markets.

4. Developing a holistic approach, rather than fragmented responses, to people's diverse problems

The multiplicity and complexity of problems facing individuals and societies nowadays increasingly call for specific and very often specialised responses. Specialisation, however, must not mean disintegration. There must be a global vision of the person and his/her different problems that must be addressed in their entirety, in an integrated manner. This means going beyond the multiple uncoordinated services, with each responding within its own particular field to individual aspects of problems, and often duplicating efforts and wasting resources.

5. Reinforcing and extending partnership, instead of each organisation individually handling "its" services and "its" responsibilities

The meaning and strength of this principle is summed up in EQUAL's motto "Better than I alone, together in partnership". In EQUAL, responding holistically and comprehensively to problems was addressed by the establishment of "Development Partnerships" that brought together diverse partners, with complementary skills, who focused on resolving multidisciplinary problems rather than on addressing particular isolated aspects of the problem. In other words, the partnerships made a more systemic and holistic approach to social inclusion possible. Furthermore, the diversity of the different partners' profiles and cultures, their commitment to contributing their specific skills to a common goal, the recognition of the gains that each partner could take away with them from the partnership, the dynamic of sharing (sharing objectives, knowledge, responsibilities and financing) that was generated, were all innovation-inducing factors.

6. Collaborative working and networking as ways to stimulate social innovation

In EQUAL, the partnerships were challenged to go even further: to network, share experiences and views, to show the results of their activity to their peers and to specialists and to get feedback and recognition from them. The dynamics present in the Thematic Networks were key to consolidating a culture of collaboration, developing skills and know-how, broadening the vision of the organisations involved, and adding value to their interventions.

Collaborative working among the different actors involved in the EQUAL Networks made arriving at new solutions possible. And the more dynamic and interactive the process was, and the more that different practices and experiences became interlinked, the greater was the learning, discovery and innovation. The EQUAL Networks stimulated and developed a new learning capacity.

7. Creating outreach solutions based in the local community rather than "global" solutions, remote from people and communities

The local level is the level at which people's involvement and commitment is galvanised and consolidated, where it is possible to mobilise capacities to resolve common problems, where people are most able to come up with solutions to their problems themselves.

It is in the territories that complementarity of responses to the diverse problems of target groups is most visible and can be most fruitful. When cooperative solutions involving actors from various sectors of a community combine, then the very meaning of "community" is reinforced.

"Territory-based integrated approaches introduce undeniable added value because of the knowledge, cooperation and coordination dynamics they generate. They broaden communities' potential bases for development opportunities, and contribute to greater territorial cohesion. Firstly, because they stimulate a coordinated mobilisation of capabilities, the negotiation between actors, and the development of individual and institutional practices in partnership or convergence, polarised by territorial development logic. Secondly, they give value to territorial diversity and civic participation, improving the adaptation of strategies, policies and tools that were originally designed in a generic, abstract manner. Lastly, because the formation of a collective voice, whose organisation and strength are based on the sharing of a territory-based project, leads to a more balanced and effective relationship between strategic options that have been arrived at in varying types of public, private and civic decision-making contexts – some local or regional, others national, community or even global."[3]

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[3] João Ferrão, Secretary of State for Territorial and Urban Planning in "Animação Territorial – Caminhos para a Inovação Social" (2008) EQUAL Management Office and Anim@te Network

8. Investing more in cooperation than in competition

In times of crisis, enterprises gain by listening to stakeholders, opening up to the outside, and defining cooperation strategies that can help to mitigate the effects of the crisis. Listening to, and reconciling responsible strategies with employees, suppliers and even competitors in order to minimise social costs, expand markets, and sharpen competitiveness, can be responsible approaches that minimise negative effects of the crisis.

9. Mainstreaming and sustaining social innovation in order to optimise investment in new solutions and multiply their added value

It must be possible to use the innovation produced in wider contexts than those in which it was generated. To achieve this, the innovation must be embodied in tangible products that are transferable, and have visibility and social recognition. The product validation sessions in EQUAL proved to be of enormous added value for their respective creators, for product quality standards, for the recognition/endorsement of the products/solutions, and for their mainstreaming.

The transfer of products and their incorporation by third parties must allow the product itself to 'mature', in the light of its new incorporation context, its continuous adjustment and sustainability. Mainstreaming is, therefore, a means of continuously improving the quality of solutions, an opportunity to learn and cooperate with others. It is also both a consequence and inherent factor of any social innovation process.

10. Valuing not only certifiable skills, but also new skills associated with the innovation and the discovery of what's new, what has a future and what works

This new paradigm is giving rise to new occupational profiles – empowerment facilitator, local community animator, networking animator, mediator for minorities and vulnerable groups, new products/solutions validator, mainstreaming promoter, etc. – and new leaderships, especially where imagining and visualising the future in a highly unpredictable context is concerned.

These profiles are associated with abilities and skills in communication, learning from experience – especially from mistakes –, conflict resolution, having an inclusive vision, client-focus, project management and change by innovating, teamwork, brokerage, leadership, etc., – skills that develop in intervention contexts where there is an increasing call for interdisciplinary and inter-organisational work in multicultural contexts, for territorially-based organisational capacity, for partnership, the ability to perceive a sense of future, to identify what is new and effective.

11. Recognising and valuing "social artists"

In this new paradigm, Etienne Wenger's "social artists" come to the foreground. Their action has to do with "heart and spirit, passion and commitment, a new type of leadership – often hardly visible – that we need to recognise, support and celebrate. These new leaders are like learning citizens. They participate in relevant communities, go beyond the boundaries of the community, and help to create new communities. They use their personal history – their relationships, vision, and position to create productive learning spaces."[4] According to Wenger, these leaders are creative, intuitive, adapt intelligently to new situations, are socially sensitive and know how to make learning a socially stimulating and innovation-generating space.

12. A new governance for learning

Experience has shown that innovation is associated with spaces where people meet and interact and learning occurs. This is what happened in the partnerships, the project teams, the thematic networks, and in transnational cooperation, where the confrontation of participants' different experiences gave rise to new ideas and new solutions.

This process of each one taking their practice along to the same space ("a social learning space" as Etienne Wenger calls it), and being able to share it with others and learn from the practices of others, is a highly dynamic, mobilising and even contagious interactive process. It is, however, a process that heavily depends on the participants themselves and on their determination, and which benefits from the intervention of a good animator who is able to facilitate communication and the learning dynamic, preparing the path towards change.

If innovation and its mainstreaming depend so much on this capacity for sharing and learning with others then high priority must be given to building partnerships, communities of practice and networks. Encouraging, supporting and facilitating these "social learning spaces" is, therefore, one of the key missions of a new governance responsible for and committed to maximising learning capacity and innovation.

This new governance must know how to capitalise on the ideas generated in these spaces, value them, and transform them into new resources and means for the benefit of systemic and policy innovation.

III. Promoting and scaling up Social Innovation

The EQUAL experience proved that social innovation does not happen just by chance. It needs a favourable culture and context for sharing and learning, and

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[4] Etienne Wenger at the "Powering a New Future" event, Lisbon, 10 December 2008.

requires particular conditions, including specific, adequate and flexible financial support, if it is to be galvanised, facilitated, given concrete expression and mainstreamed.

At a time of growing social tension, with more groups and communities on the poverty threshold in need of new, more effective social responses, and more and better cooperation between the different actors, the idea that to promote social innovation is a public mission is gaining currency.

Promoting and scaling up innovation calls for:

- giving this new social intervention paradigm body, using already tested and available innovative solutions, and the professionals who have the skills necessary for applying them;
- investing in agents of change who have robust new ideas, like the "social innovators" and "social artists";
- supporting partnerships and collaborative networks of social innovators, and animating and facilitating their joint work;
- rewarding the best, not just with financial support but especially by giving them social recognition and creating opportunities for developing research and new knowledge;
- facilitating access to technologies, particularly Web 2.0, so that extended information and knowledge sharing gives rise to collective intelligence;
- creating broad consensus on charters of values and codes of conduct for social intervention, inspired by the new social intervention paradigm;
- supporting experimentation, the development of new solutions and promising intervention models, and encouraging their generalisation, so as to create an innovation dynamic and a movement for change to which we all aspire.

Responsibility for scaling up innovation falls with the creators of innovative solutions, for whom these solutions necessarily have an importance that justifies them being incorporated into their practices, and a market value that justifies their "sale" to third parties. It is also the responsibility of those wishing to improve their practices and who can use the solutions available without having to "reinvent the wheel".

The Public Administration – local, regional and central – has a duty to optimise public investment in promoting social innovation and, therefore, for integrating that innovation in its practices and in the operationalisation of policy measures for which it is responsible.

Lastly, it is up to policymakers to commit to social innovation, and promote it and give it scale by incorporating it into their policies and/or systematically and consistently support its dissemination.

The social innovation achieved in EQUAL is a substantiated response that needs to be taken forward in our country and to give rise to a new form of more effective and efficient social intervention, particularly in response to the crisis and in preparation for the post-crisis.

There is clearly a considerable obstacle ahead of us – the fact that change is regarded as a threat. Individually, people feel threatened by change. Entities, the public administration and often our policymakers too look upon change as something threatening, insofar as it contains a high degree of uncertainty.

But we have no alternative but to seek and build change, and the only way we can overcome fear is to shoulder responsibility for that change together. And the social innovators are here, with their capital of responsibility and acquired skills, and they will most definitely carry on fighting for change.

Social Learning Capability
Four Essays on Innovation and Learning in Social Systems

Etienne Wenger
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Abstract | Innovative capacity and the spread of innovation are a property of social system that depends on its learning capability. The four essays in this piece outline some fundamental components of a social discipline of learning applied to the learning capability of complex social systems. They explore the social dynamics of learning spaces, the social ethics of participating in learning spaces, the social art of enabling learning, and the systemic challenge of maximizing learning capability:

- **Social learning spaces.** Learning capability depends on people and their interactions. Books, documents, websites, and search engines play an important role in providing information, but they are not enough. Focusing on the human side of learning and innovation, I discuss the qualities of what I call "social learning spaces," places of genuine encounters among learners where they can engage their experience of practice.
- **Learning citizenship.** The behavior required for productive social learning spaces is a substantial commitment, but it cannot be imposed. It requires a willingness to participate – an ethics of learning, which I call "learning citizenship."
- **Social artists.** Social learning spaces are very sensitive to social dynamics. Successful learning spaces often reflect the work of people who provide inspiration to citizenship and address the social dynamics of learning. I call the people who are good at facilitating these subtle and complex dynamics "social artists."
- **Learning governance.** Social learning spaces are part of broader social systems in which learning capability depends on all sorts of small and big decisions and choices that affect learning both locally and systemically. As a guide to the configuration of these decision processes, I discuss some

principles of "governance" oriented toward maximizing learning capacity in social systems.

Interest in these factors reflects a shift in the way learning is understood, from the acquisition of a curriculum to a process inherent in our participation in social systems. Increasing the learning capability of these social systems is becoming an urgent concern in a world where we face daunting learning challenges.

1. Introduction

The following essays contain some reflections on my involvement with EQUAL, an initiative of the European Social Fund, which aimed to foster social innovation. As a way to support the spread of social innovation across projects, EQUAL started a number of communities of practice and organized events for participants to learn together. This capability to organize learning across a complex social system is itself an important achievement. It is less visible than the 188 projects and 320 codified solutions[1] that were heralded as the outcomes of the initiative. And it is still a fledgling capability, to be sure. But if it provides a foundation for new projects and initiatives aimed at social innovation, within the context of the European Social Fund and beyond, it may well be the deepest legacy of EQUAL.

I will use the case of social innovation to reflect on some key elements of social learning capability. I will draw on the case of the EQUAL initiative as well as on my broader experience with large-scale social learning systems in the private and public sectors. I am basing my reflection on my own sense of what the initiative was trying to accomplish without claiming that everything I describe here was fully realized (though it was a good start and much more would have been done had the initiative been continued). The elements of learning capability I highlight are relevant to social innovation, the goal of EQUAL, but also to all large-scale social learning challenges, whether in business organizations or in the public sector, including government, education, health, or international development.

2. Social learning spaces

Social innovation requires investigation of what works in practice. Which ideas are worth pursuing? What difference do they make? What potential do they hold

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[1]   In Portugal.

for other places of application? Peer-to-peer learning focused on practice allows participants to sort out which innovations to adopt on a large scale while remaining sensitive to each context. The negotiation required depends on what I will call "social learning spaces." These are social containers that enable genuine interactions among participants, who can bring to the learning table both their experience of practice and their experience of themselves in that practice.

2.1. Variety of social learning spaces

Social learning spaces can take a variety of forms. The effort of the EQUAL initiative in developing a series of communities of practice was meant to create learning spaces across the projects and the countries involved. Communities of practice, when they work well, are quintessential examples of social learning spaces. The learning space of a community is built through a history of learning together over time. Commitment derives from identification with a shared domain of interest and with others who share that identification with the domain. There is enough continuity to develop a shared repertoire of language, concepts, and communication tools that make practice discussable. All this contributes to building relationships and trust that enable a joint inquiry into practice.

Similar characteristics, however, can be found in other types of spaces, which may require less intensity of commitment. Some may be short-lived, like a good conversation or a well-designed workshop. For instance, we ran a workshop for community leaders in Equal where the main driver of learning was a reflection on practice that connected the participants through their own experience with their communities. The value of learning together in this way helped the participants deepen their understanding of the social learning spaces they were trying to foster. Sometimes, when relationships are more diffuse, social learning spaces happen in pockets. For example, the "social reporters" at the final EQUAL conference were attempting to create social learning spaces in parallel with the formal conference program. They were using new media technologies to enable direct conversations with and among participants in the hallways and publish them immediately on the web in the hope to foster further conversations.

Not all contexts for learning amount to social learning spaces. An instructional space is structured by an instructor and a predefined curriculum. An academic project tends to take knowledge as something to be objectified. Informational spaces, like reports, books, or static websites, support the documentation of practice (so-called "best practice") rather than interactions among participants. Service encounters with professionals can foster learning, but it is usually one-way. All these learning contexts can create value but they rarely constitute a meeting between learning partners. Note that under the right circumstances they can also become a social learning spaces: a classroom run by a very good teacher can be so engaging that the students and teachers create a social learning space; a service encounter can become a two-way learning partnership; a website can be interactive

to the point of enabling participants to experience each other as co-learners. Whether a learning context does or should constitute a social learning space is something that can only be decided pragmatically in each case.

2.2. Rigor of inquiry in a social learning space

Terms like experience and practice often seem to be associated with a lack of rigor. Producing knowledge that is livable in the experience of practice entails a different accountability than traditional research-based knowledge, but there is a rigor to it. It involves a discipline of inquiry that takes practice as the place of knowledge and the person as the vehicle for knowledgeability. It is useful to start by exploring this dual rigor of social learning spaces:

- ***Knowing as practice.*** A social learning space is not a detached inquiry that only succeeds if it objectifies knowledge or formally "documents" practice. Knowledge is not a separate object from the people who produced it or even the process of producing it. It is part of the mutual engagement through which participants refine and expand their experience of practice. Note that the focus on practice in social learning spaces is not defined in opposition to documentation or research-based knowledge. The evaluation of social innovation, for instance, often requires systematic data collection and analysis of the research-based kind. Practitioners themselves often produce reflective documents, concepts, and other reification. If objectified knowledge or documented practice is incorporated into the inquiry of a social learning space, however, it has to be integrated into the experience of practice. In other words, its significance depends on the participants' ability to negotiate its relevance to contexts of practice.
- ***Knowing as identity.*** A focus on practice means that knowledge is part of engagement in the world. Knowing is a lived experience. It is personal, not in the sense of being less valid or objective, but in the sense of requiring a person's experience of engagement. The ability to engage depends on both skills and position in the world. Knowledgeability is therefore a form of identity anchored in practice. In a social learning space, participants engage their identity in the inquiry. They use their very beings – their personal history, relationships, and aspirations – as vehicles for learning. They pursue learning as a change in their ability to participate in the world, as a transformation of their identity.

To become a rigor of inquiry in any social learning space, this dual focus on practice and identity has to manifest in two ways: in the *accountability* of learning to the experience of participants (the lived experience that learning needs to enable) and in the *expressibility* of experience (how the actual experience of participants can become engaged in the learning process).

Accountability

The inquiry process in social learning spaces has to produce livable knowledge, that is, knowledge that is meaningful because it enables new forms of engagement in the world. This accountability to livable knowledge includes both the relevance of knowledge to practice and the ability to become the person who will do the knowing.

- **Accountability to practice.** Learning becomes knowledge to the extent that it responds to and changes the experience of engagement in practice. In this sense, practice acts as the curriculum of a social learning space: challenges of practice are the driver of learning and experiences of practice provide resources to learning.
- **Accountability to identity.** An accountability to practice may seem to put the emphasis on "practical" aspects—on instrumental and technical knowledge. But this is a very narrow view of practice. In real life, being able to engage in practice involves a much broader set of requirements, which includes the ability to find meaning in activities and to engage competently with other people involved. Learning in a social learning space covers all the aspects of knowing relevant to a person who can act meaningfully and competently. This accountability to identity includes ways of being, behaving, and talking. It involves issues such as efficacy, legitimacy, values, connections, and power, typical of engagement in the human world.

Expressibility

Achieving the accountability associated with social learning spaces requires a corresponding rigor of expressibility: participants must be able to express their experience of practice and who they are in that experience, so this can serve as the substance of learning.

- **Expressibility of practice.** Participants must be able to bring their experience of practice into the learning space and give each other access to that experience. Engagement in practice is complex, dynamic, and improvisational. It includes narrative episodes and moments of experience that do not form a coherent body of knowledge. It has many tacit elements. Tacit here does not mean inexpressible; but it means that communication requires enough mutual engagement to negotiate a shared context of experience. This can be easy if participants already share much context, or require substantial work if their contexts are very different. With enough shared context, few words can express huge amounts. Imagine two violinists discussing the vibrato of a student or two technicians analyzing the smell of a malfunctioning machine. They may be together, on the phone, or online. It is the shared experience that serves as the main communication resource. Only then can participants

start exploring what they know, what they don't know, what they only half-know, and what they could learn together. The expressibility of lived experience as a form of social engagement is therefore central to the rigor of inquiry in a social learning space.

* ***Expressibility of identity.*** Knowledgeability in practice is always a personal experience, which includes physicality and emotions as well as cognition. The level of personal involvement varies across contexts of practice, to be sure. But it affects our sense of self as we always locate what we are doing in the experience of life more broadly. There is a discipline to making this experience discussable. Furthermore, our identity is defined across many contexts, which are never simply turned off. It is impossible to predict in any simple way which of these contexts are going to be relevant and where significant insights are going to come from. Actually new insights often come from remixing perspectives, crossing boundaries between contexts, and thus seeing things in new ways. So expressibility of the full identity of participants, in all their areas of experience and identification, is an important condition for the richness and meaningfulness of the inquiry.

Accountability and expressibility can be in conflict. In a given social learning space a strong connection in one area may crowd out or seem to forbid expressibility of other areas of one's identity and accountability to other contexts. Two scientists having a strong experience of learning about a problem may find it difficult to express their experience as musicians or parents because the intensity of the scientific connection crowds out the musician or parent, or literally excludes it, even in cases when it has the potential of being a relevant source of insights.

This rigor suggests two questions to keep in mind for the development of any social learning space. First, what experience must the inquiry be able to induce in order to open meaningful possibilities for engagement in practice? And second, how can the space render expressible all the aspects of participants' lives that can potentially contribute to the inquiry as it unfolds?

2.3. Learning as partnership

In order to achieve a high level of mutual expressibility and accountability, participants in a social learning space need to recognize each other as learning partners through the experience they bring to the space. They need to recognize the practitioner in each other. Whether or not they have equal mastery of the topic, they should be able to negotiate the mutual relevance of their respective experience. They are "peers" in a very broad, practical sense of the term. This recognition forms the basis of a mutual commitment to learning. This commitment can be made explicit but more often than not it will remain implicit, expressed in the doing of it.

Commitment to candor: the value of practice-oriented trust

The expressibility of practice requires a lot of candor and such practice-based candor is a pillar of the discipline of social learning space. But it is not necessarily easy. Theory and policy are clean, but practice is messy, improvised, and always requiring judgment. It is made up of fragments of experience that are not necessarily coherent. This is a condition for its effectiveness, but also something that makes it more difficult to share, not only because of the difficulty to express what really happens, but also because there is a personal vulnerability inherent in opening the door of reflection on the messiness of practice. One's identity may easily seem at stake. Engaging with knowledge as lived in practice requires a lot of trust.

Practice is always complex and dynamic. It is difficult and challenging. In practice, there are no smooth-sailing superheroes. So when practitioners become less guarded with one another, when they recognize each other as co-practitioners, candor becomes almost a relief. There is a comfortable discomfort in the shared refuge of authenticity. Candor can then become a mutual aspiration. It is a form of togetherness – candor reinforced by its mutuality, by its effects on the partnership, and the possibility of learning together. I have seen communities of practice thaw from a terror about exposing one's practice to fellow practitioners and over time shift to a full commitment to candor. This shift was based on the quality of conversations that were possible once candor had opened a window onto practice. They had experienced how sharing the actual challenges they face in their practice was the best way to trigger significant collective learning. Admittedly, this often takes the leadership of some courageous individuals to start the process. But over time, trust becomes a property of the social learning space, not merely of individuals toward each other.

Commitment to openness: reframing stories of practice

Social learning spaces involve an open-ended learning process. Participants contribute their perspectives in the hope that something will come out of the mix. No single person can direct the process because there is no knowing where significant insights are going to come from. When engagement in practice is the curriculum, the learning process has to unfold out of the interactions among participants. Mutual engagement and negotiation become ways for people to build a shared and deepened understanding of the situation at hand. By listening and giving voice to multiple experiences of practice, the interplay of diverse perspectives often reframes the initial stories. In such cases, the conversation of practitioners goes beyond sharing tips or good practices. It becomes a shared commitment to an open inquiry.

Pushing the inquiry in this way means leaving our zone of comfort. We identify strongly with our experience of practice and its interpretation. It becomes part of who we are. Reframing our stories is also reframing who we are. Learning,

and the attendant need for unlearning, is a journey of the self, with birth and death, resistance and willingness, doubts and inspiration. But again, this commitment to re-understand practice and discover new perspectives through interactions can be reinforced when it is mutual. The spirit of inquiry is contagious when it takes off. It becomes a property of the social learning space.

Opening and sustaining successful social learning spaces with such a depth of reflection is not an easy thing to do. Conversations can easily remain superficial and uni-dimensional. Difficult topics can degenerate into conflicts. Many communities of practice struggle to create enough commitment and some simply fail. There are many psychological, social, and organizational obstacles. The next essays explore further aspects that I have found to be key success factors.

3. Learning citizenship

Learning is not just something that happens in our heads. It happens in social spaces and across social spaces. As we engage in and move across learning spaces, we carry who we are. Our journey forms a trajectory of identity, which involves both participation in specific spaces and connections across these spaces. People and social spaces both have histories, but these histories are not parallel. They crisscross in a kind of social weave. Social learning spaces and individual trajectories are two distinct dynamics of learning, but they are in interplay. Their dynamic complementarity is key to the learning capability and innovation potential of a social system.

3.1. Learning as citizenship

As we participate in various social learning spaces, our actions affect the nature of these spaces They also affect the people we interact with, who in turn belong to further social spaces. So our own learning behavior can affect the learning capability of a whole landscape of social learning spaces. How we manage our participation in and across learning spaces is what I call "learning citizenship." Learning citizenship can take multiple forms:

- *Engagement.* At its most basic, learning citizenship is expressed through the quality of our engagement in the learning spaces we participate in. In some spaces we are central players; others, we barely touch. In some we are experts; in others we are beginners. We act as learning citizens whether we ask a pertinent question, present an interesting case, probe an assumption, or talk about something relevant we just read. As we bring our experience to the table, we push the learning and build relationships with others.
    – The extent and quality of our engagement in various learning spaces is the most obvious way in which we can influence learning, ours and that of others.

- *Moving on.* The decision to disengage from a learning space is as significant as entering and engaging. It lets us move on with our lives. It affects both our own trajectory and the learning space we leave behind.
    – Unlearning and letting go are an essential part of the ability to journey forward and innovate.

- *Brokering.* We all participate in multiple social learning spaces. We affect the relationships between spaces as we carry (or do not carry) our learning from one space to another. In some cases we play a key brokering role by importing or exporting significant insights or challenges across the boundaries between spaces. Such brokering can even reshape these boundaries when, for instance, it triggers substantial interactions between the spaces involved.
    – Brokering is important because it thickens the weave of a social system. Innovation often happens at boundaries when things are combined in new ways.

- *Convening.* Sometimes we are in a unique position to see the potential for a social learning space that does not exist yet; and our position also gives us the legitimacy to step in and create it. We start a conversation, we call a meeting, or we convene a community that needs to come into existence.
    – Convening is one of the most significant acts of learning citizenship in terms of opening new possibilities for learning and legitimizing the need to care about an issue.

Our stance toward learning citizenship affects the spaces we enter, create, connect, or leave as well as our own learning. This remains true whether or not we have a choice in our participation and its form; and whether we are just a participant or take leadership in making things happen. Learning citizenship matters in all cases. The actual quality of our engagement (even if it starts as submission or rebellion) is something that we can modulate – with deep effects on the learning potential of social spaces.

3.2. Ethics of identity

With the term "learning citizenship" I want to emphasize that learning has an ethical dimension: our participation has both local and systemic effects. I do not use the term citizenship to suggest that some are citizens and some are not, that learning citizenship is an elite club. We are all learning citizens, just as we are all citizens of the world, whether we let this reality guide our actions or not.

Claiming that there is an ethical dimension to learning is not assuming that learning depends on altruism. Some altruism may be involved, but engagement in social learning spaces is for our benefit as well as our contribution. Pushing our learning, building a reputation, forging relationships, all are part and parcel of the

process. When it comes to learning citizenship, the distinction between contributing and benefitting is not so clear. More often than not, the two go together.

If our moves have learning consequences for ourselves and for the social systems in which we live, our trajectory is part of the weaving of these systems. Learning citizenship is situated right at the crossroads between social learning spaces and trajectories of identity. As learning citizens, we proceed from who we are – our personal histories, connections, networks, vision, aspirations, and position in the landscape of practice – to find forms of participation that increase learning capability. When we seize opportunities to participate in social learning spaces, to bridge a boundary, to convene a community that needs to exist, it is because we understand the learning potential of our location in the world and act upon it. It is also because we understand our limitations as just one person. With this understanding, we can invest who we are in enabling learning. We can invest the perspective, capacity, legitimacy, and accountability that we derive from our unique trajectory, where we have been, where we are going, and what that makes us. In this sense, learning citizenship involves a recognition that our identity, as a dynamic location in the social landscape, is a unique learning resource. As learning citizens, we are investing and developing that resource, for ourselves and for the world.

3.3. Fostering learning citizenship

Recognizing the ethical dimension of learning is important because the behavior of a learning citizen it is not something that can be mandated. You cannot mandate learning of the kind that happens in social learning spaces because it requires an authenticity that cannot be perfunctory. No one knows in advance what it will look like. If one could know what to mandate, then a social learning space would not be necessary; a course or a book would do. The process of bringing the experience of practice into a social learning space can only be shaped by those who are doing it. The result of this kind of mutual engagement is never predictable. Even if you tried to mandate such learning and people did what you ask them to do, the result would probably not be what you wanted in the first place.

Because learning citizenship is fundamentally voluntary, but with broad effects for individuals and collectives, the ethical dimension of learning is inescapable. People are going to act as learning citizens out of their own experience of the meaning and value of doing so.

That learning citizenship cannot be dictated does not mean that it cannot be fostered, however. While it involves a sense of personal responsibility and initiative, it is not merely an individual experience. It is in fact very sensitive to context. It is easily thwarted by obtuse bureaucracy or conflicting demands; those in charge of organizing the context have to be very careful that it does not inadvertently discourage learning citizenship. At the same time, learning citizenship is also very contagious when it thrives; leading by example can therefore be quite effective. Manipulative rewards are usually counterproductive for the same reason that mandates do not work in that they assume that one knows what to reward in

advance. Recognition after the fact works better. Some organizations have started to recognize acts of learning citizenship explicitly as part of one's contribution to organizational goals. This puts some teeth to the assertion that learning is valued, which can seem empty when people's schedules are crowded with operational demands and project deadlines. If our ability to innovate and spread innovation depends on learning citizenship, then learning how to foster this citizenship, recognize it, and make it count is an urgent challenge for increasing the learning capability of our social systems.

4. Social artists

Enabling social learning spaces is an art. And so is inspiring the learning citizenship these spaces depend on. Among the many factors that account for the success or failure of the process, I have seen again and again that one of the key ingredients is the energy and skills of those who take leadership in making it all happen. I call the people who excel at doing this "social artists."

The name may be surprising, but it is quite apt. Artists create beautiful pieces of art that inspire us: songs, paintings, movies, sculptures, poems, dances. The presence of this art shapes the world around us and enriches our lives. Similarly social artists create social spaces where meaningful learning can take place. When these social learning spaces work well, they are magnificent pieces of art – social art – that change the way we experience the world and ourselves.

4.1. Social artists as leaders

Social artists are leaders, but the kind of leadership they exercise is subtle. It does not engender or depend on followership. Rather it invites participation. It is a mixture of understanding what makes learning socially engaging and living the process yourself. It is not a formula; it is creative, improvised, intelligently adaptive, and socially attuned. I find the magic of this artistry difficult to describe, though I know it when I see it.

- *Opening learning spaces.* Social artists have a good understanding, sometimes completely implicit and intuitive, of the social discipline that makes social learning spaces productive. They have a knack for making people feel comfortable and engaged. They generate social energy among participants. They have a nose for the cultural and personal clues to social dynamics. They produce a climate of high trust and aspirations.
- *Inviting learning citizenship.* Social artists help us experience ourselves as learning citizens. They know how to bring out our passions. They make us care to the point of engaging our whole person in a social learning space. Or rather they help us discover we care and channel that care into learning citizenship.

This dual focus is important. Social artists are not just good pedagogues who can help people learn something. They have a natural instinct for leveraging the complementarity of learning spaces and individual trajectories. They help people experience learning spaces as part of their own trajectories so that collective and individual learning blend.

4.2. An exercise in paradoxes

Like all artists, social artists are unique. They vary in style. Some are flamboyant and some prefer to operate almost invisibly. Some are jovial and some are sharp-edged. Some will make you laugh and emphasize the fun of learning; some will make you feel serious about the challenge. What they all seem to have in common is an ability to embrace successfully a number of paradoxes.

- *Social yet intentional.* Social artists are of course, by definition, social. Their personal touch is a cornerstone of their artistry. They connect with people and they connect people. They are natural networkers. But they are not generic networkers. They network because there is something they care about, some new learning they want to enable. Their social artistry is suffused with purpose. Yet it is not the case that they are disingenuous or manipulative in using their social connections to serve their purpose. On the contrary, they combine the two to help others identify with what they care about and become partners in the aspiration. Their ability to enlist engagement in social learning spaces is precisely due to the fact that it reflects a genuine intention to create a collective learning process.
- *Collaborative yet willful.* Social artists tend to be collaborative. They care that people feel ownership of their learning space. They listen to others and are very good at including multiple voices. They create social containers that turn conflict into learning opportunities. They are patient with social proces-ses. They do not seek control and are comfortable with a high level of uncertainty. They can tolerate chaos, dissension, and negotiation. Given these characteristics, it might be easy to assume that social artists are easy-going or consensus-seekers. But my experience is that they are extremely willful even if this willfulness is expressed in collaborative ways. They care about making things happen. They will (gently) twist arms if need be. They will inspire people to do things these people never thought they would do and end up feeling good about doing. In the social expression of their willfulness social artists help others discover new part of themselves.
- *Idealistic yet pragmatic.* Social artists tend to be activists. They do not accept the status quo. They are not impressed by arguments that "this is the way things have always been done." They have visions and aspirations even when they are quiet about them. But they are also practical. They may have strong opinions, but they are not ideologues. While they too visionary and socially attuned to be political beasts, they are politically astute. They are able to

navigate the complex politics of communities and organizations to promote and protect the learning spaces they care about. Learning can be threatening; energized learning spaces are not always welcome in organizational contexts. Social artists pay careful attention to all the factors, internal and external, that can contribute to the success or failure of a learning space. In this sense, their idealism is of a very pragmatic kind.

Above all, social artists live what they seek to bring about. Like all artists, they use themselves, their own experience and identity, as a source of inspiration. They are themselves learning citizens of great intensity. This is how they can embrace the paradoxes of their work without falling, like the rest of us would, into an easy, but fatal resolution on one side or the other. We can all be learning citizens in our own ways, but we are not all social artists. That would be an unrealistic and unnecessary expectation.

I am sometimes hired to train people to lead communities of practice – aspiring social artists as it were. It is always a special occasion for me. I prepare a workshop agenda, with presentations and activities. I am always amazed by the amount of learning taking place. But in my heart of hearts, I know that the real secret ingredient, what is really going to make a difference in enabling a community, is not something I can teach. It is not a technique or something that can be reduced to skills, even when some techniques and skills are involved. It has to do with the heart as well as the mind, with passion and commitment. It has to do with the person, with identity as a social resource. The key is the ability of social artists to use who they are as a vehicle for inviting others into inspiring social spaces. The intensity of their own passion is the powerhouse of their artistry. Their livingness and spirit of inquiry are contagious. They infuse social learning spaces with their soul, their humanity, their restlessness, their optimism, their courage, and their own focus. If this makes it sound "soft," nothing could be further from the truth. A social learning space is an ideal context to address thorny issues of strategic importance. And it is hard work. A social learning space can be infinitely demanding of attention. I think most social artists love what they do; but it is the most delicate and consuming work I can imagine.

4.3. Recognizing social artists

One thing about the type of leadership exercised by social artists is that it often seems to be of a less visible kind. This is unfortunate at a time when learning and knowledge are recognized as critical to organizations and society. My experience is that this recognition has heightened appreciation for the role of experts and specialists. Experts and specialists are key players indeed, but we seem better equipped culturally and organizationally to appreciate their role. I want to shine a light on social artists because I believe their role is only going to grow in importance. The world is becoming so complex that any expertise worth caring about is too extensive for any one person to handle. Social learning spaces are indispensable – and so is the work of social artists as the key ingredient. By helping people come

together and discover their own learning citizenship, social artists build up the learning capability of social systems. I have met a number of them in my work and I have grown a profound respect for who they are and what they do. It is of extraordinary beauty and usefulness. Still social artists tend to be invisible because we do not have good frameworks and language to appreciate their contributions. I hope writing about them can help make their work more visible. Whether they do what they do because of professional responsibilities or just as extraordinary learning citizens, their role is of utmost importance. We need to learn to recognize, support, and celebrate their work. Their contribution is especially critical today when humankind faces unprecedented challenges that will place increasing demands on our ability to learning together.

5. Learning governance

The EQUAL initiative is an example of a fairly complex social system. It includes a constellation of learning spaces operating within an institutional context, which consists of an overall sponsor, the European Social Funds, and a multiplicity of decentralized administrative units and local governments across numerous countries. In creating social learning spaces across innovation projects, the intent of EQUAL was to increase the learning capability of the overall system. The intentional weaving of independent projects into a learning system is a key role for the central sponsor, which differs from the role of managing the projects themselves and requires an additional layer of accountability and governance oriented to learning across the board.

Everything I have said so far about the dynamics of social learning spaces, the voluntary nature of learning citizenship and the paradoxical work of social artists suggests that increasing learning capability in a social system is a lot more complex than increasing, say, efficiency or even coordination. In addition to local factors, it is necessary to look at systemic factors such as governance and accountability that affect learning capability. I will proceed in three phases. First I will discuss governance processes oriented to learning itself. Then I will add the complication of accountability structures typical of organizational contexts. Finally, I will explore how the two interact to foster or inhibit social learning capability.

5.1. Emergent and stewarding governance

Issues of governance are crucial to learning in social contexts. First, learning in social systems is inherently political. It involves decisions about what matters, about what counts as learning, about the direction to move toward. To the extent that learning suggests doing something better, then the definition of "better" is a contestable terrain. Second, learning capability has both local and systemic dimensions. Governance processes propagate decisions among these levels.

Governance oriented to social learning capability must reflect two fundamental characteristics of socials systems. On the one hand, our imagination gives us the ability to project what we care about, individually and collectively, into the

future and across social spaces. On the other hand, our knowledge and our visions are limited. Each of us is just one node in a network. We need to respond to and embrace the unexpected as part of our learning. This suggests two types of governance processes that contribute to social learning capability:

- *Stewarding governance.* This type of governance derives from a concerted effort to move a social system in a given direction. Championing a cause or pushing an issue is a typical example. Stewarding governance is a process of seeking agreement and alignment across a social system in order to achieve certain goals.
- *Emergent governance.* This type of governance bubbles up from a distributed system of interactions involving local decisions. Market mechanisms are the quintessential example of emergent governance in that they produce decisions like prices of goods that emerge out of many transactions. Similarly, aspects of learning capability emerge as the cumulative effect of local decisions negotiated in learning spaces and spread by participants.

The two types of processes interact. What is stewarding at one level of scale can be emergent at another. Stewarding governance in individual social learning spaces can result in emergent governance1 at the system level. Furthermore, emergent and stewarding governance have complementary strengths and weaknesses in their effects on learning.

From a learning capability perspective, however, stewarding governance can Participants in local learning spaces may not be aware of systemic effects. A constellation of local experiments can lock the system in unproductive patterns that are not visible or manageable from local spaces or individual action. Some things we care about cannot be dealt merely through local decisions because they require too much coordination. Sometimes we need to recognize our interdependence and act in concert to bring about the learning we need. It takes stewarding governance to nurture the imagination of people so they can see themselves as participants in broader systems and align their actions accordingly.

From a learning capability perspective, however, stewarding governance can be the victim of its success. As the saying goes, be careful what you wish for; you might get it. The alignment and agreement sought under stewarding governance are like fire or knives: very effective but dangerous. Our designs have unintended consequences. To the extent that we inevitably act from our own perspectives, our efforts at stewarding governance require a degree of humility. Emergent governance is a learning safeguard against overreach.

Given this complementarity, it is necessary to consider both types of governance processes when learning capability is concerned. It is the combination of the two that can maximize the learning capability of social systems.

5.2. Vertical and horizontal accountability

When one considers institutional contexts, the story becomes a bit more complicated. Social learning spaces often function in the context of institutional

accountability structures. Institutional structures tend to be based on what can be called *vertical* accountability. In organizations, for instance, governance is usually implemented with hierarchical relationships configured to ensure, at least in theory, that the organization achieves its goals. Systems of government also create vertical accountability through positions of authority, legislation, policies, and enforcement mechanisms. By contrast, the kind of accountability I have described for social learning spaces and learning citizenship could be defined as *horizontal* in that it exists in mutual relationships among participants. To the extent that social learning spaces are expected to play a role in organizations, it is important to recognize both types of accountability:

- ***Vertical accountability***, associated with traditional hierarchies, decisional authority, the management of resources, bureaucracies, policies and regulations, accounting, prescriptions, and audit inspections
- ***Horizontal accountability***, associated with engagement in joint activities, negotiation of mutual relevance, standards of practice, peer recognition, identity and reputation, and commitment to collective learning

A common mistake in organizations is to assume that horizontal relationships lack accountability – and therefore that the only way to create accountability is to overlay vertical structures. A well functioning community of practice can give rise to very strong horizontal accountability among members through a mutual commitment to collective learning. Even a good conversation creates accountability, albeit of a temporal and tacit nature. Participants are held to an expectation of mutual relevance: they can't just go off into irrelevant topics or statements without violating such expectation. In its own ways, the horizontal accountability inherent in social learning spaces is no less binding and operative than formal vertical accountability. Horizontal accountability has to be the primary axis of social learning spaces, even when they operate in the context of institutions. Without a strong sense of mutual accountability, the learning potential of these spaces cannot be realized since genuine peer engagement and learning citizenship cannot be dictated. Social learning spaces must place governance in the hands of participants because it is the only way that learning can fully engage and reflect who they are.

Vertical accountability structures are usually not primarily geared to learning but they can deeply affect social learning capability. In fact, my experience is that learning capability is often a casualty of institutional accountability structures. Vertical accountability privileges the perspective of those to whom it gives more power to affect a system. From this perspective, if power corrupts, it is among other things because it can make horizontal accountability less expressible and thus decrease learning capability. From these observations, another common mistake is to demonize vertical accountability and romanticize local engagement in practice. A self-governed social learning space is not heaven. It can reproduce all sorts of undesirable things, such as racism or corruption. It can be a place of collective mediocrity or contribute to systemically counterproductive patterns.

When a system becomes too complex for negotiating governance issues directly, horizontal accountability is not always the best means of fostering systemic learning capability. It is useful to have certain things that are non-negotiable across a social system to limit the effects of local dysfunctions and myopia. Vertical accountability can help structure and simplify local engagement. We don't need to each decide at every moment on which side of the road to drive or whether it is a good idea to grab someone's wallet. Not everything has to be negotiable and decided anew every time. There is more productive use of our learning capability.

Even though vertical and horizontal accountability structures can both be useful, there is an inherent tension between them. Vertical accountability is based on compliance; power and expressibility tend to be one-way. By contrast, horizontal accountability is based on negotiation and tends to involve mutual expressibility. (Note that this mutual expressibility does not necessarily imply equality. For instance, when an expert interacts with a novice, their relationships may be mutual without denying a difference in knowledge and power). Coexisting vertical and horizontal systems of accountability can create conflicting demands, for instance, in the use of time. Compliance requirements can be at odds with the conclusions of engaged intelligence. It is not uncommon for practitioners to be caught in the two and have to choose between their own understanding of a situation and the demands of a policy. Finally, the two types of accountability are not easily visible to each other. The delivery of policies typically does not convey the full process by which they come into existence. Similarly, measures for auditing compliance are proxies because they need to be extractable from local practice, and in the process they inevitably lose much of the richness of the situations they are about.

The respective characteristics of vertical and horizontal accountability make the tension between them an inherent trait of institutional contexts. The tension is not to be removed or resolved; it has to be managed productively. The point is not to choose between vertical and horizontal accountability, but to configure the two so as to enable learning capability through both emergent and stewarding governance.

5.3. Configuring social learning capability

Learning governance and accountability structures interact. For instance, a stewarding stance can be expressed vertically or horizontally, and in both cases meet emergent governance.

Organizations typically seek stewarding governance through vertical accountability structures, but emergent governance still operates in practice. First hierarchies are never total. They inevitably rely on local decisions. Second, attempts at bureaucratic control have unintended consequences in the local responses they generate – unexpected situations, compliance to the letter rather than the spirit, workarounds, appearance of compliance, improvised interpretations. From a purely vertical perspective, unintended consequences are bugs to iron out (or ignore). From a learning perspective, they are data that reflect local intelligence.

Social artists also take a stewarding stance by promoting what they are passionate about and enabling the necessary social learning spaces, but they typically act horizontally. Participants in social learning spaces usually do not report to them formally and they have no vertical authority over them. In expressing their stewarding, they are masters at engendering horizontal accountability. But the negotiated nature of their social work also involves a lot of emergent governance. Good social artists embrace the complexity of social learning spaces to calibrate their own stewarding. They leverage the complementarity of social spaces and individual trajectories to let unexpected encounters and emerging processes shape the learning they care about.

The interaction of learning governance and accountability structure is summarized in the following table:

Governance Accountability	Stewarding	Emergent
Vertical	• Hierarchies • Policies and legislation • Prescriptions • Compliance audits	• Gaps in prescriptions • Local responses to design • Unintended consequences • Workarounds
Horizontal	• Collective "self-design" in social learning spaces • The passions and caring of learning citizens • The willfulness of social artists	• Unpredictable interactions between learning spaces and individual trajectories • Cumulative systemic effects of local negotiations

A similar table can frame the intentional use of vertical and horizontal accountability to realize stewarding and emergent governance:

Governance Accountability	Stewarding	Emergent
Vertical	• Enforcing non-negotiable alignment around what is certain, i.e., clearly known or desirable • Making the local accountable to systemic effects	• Unlocking clearly dysfunctional patterns to revitalize learning • Legitimizing voices that might be silenced locally
Horizontal	• Inspiration • Local initiative • Grass-root leadership	• Engaged improvisation • Joint reflection-in-action • Increasing movement of people

I outline these principles because I believe we need a language to take into consideration the learning implications of the governance and accountability systems we design. For instance, if a topic of stewarding governance is going to be non-negotiable through vertical accountability, it had better be something that is worth the possible cost in learning capability: curtailing learning experiments and improvisation, privileging the stewarding perspective of those who enforce it, and usually reducing the expressibility of other perspectives. More generally social learning capability can be hindered in two opposite ways:

- If a uniform policy or "best practice" imposes compliance on all localities in a social system, the learning capability of the system is decreased because experimentation is curtailed (at least of a visible and sharable kind).
- Conversely, if governance is purely local and everyone acts completely independently, the learning capability of the system is not fully achieved because experimentation, risk-taking, success, and failure remain local.

Maximizing learning capability requires a variety of learning experiments that are independent, yet woven together with appropriate communication channels, commitment to learning, support, and distribution of risk. The beauty of this *principle of interwoven learning experiments* is that it does not homogenize practice, as a uniform policy would, and yet it does interconnect contexts of practice by generating learning interdependence among the participants.

This principle of independent but interwoven learning experiments suggests a new role for a centralized function in social systems. It is neither control nor laissez-faire, but an instance of stewarding governance aimed directly at fostering learning capability.

In the space defined by the tables above, maximizing learning capability requires all sorts of *transversal* processes that cut across dimensions:

- Vertical accountability structures make explicit room for social learning spaces without "colonizing" these spaces with vertical accountability. For instance, projects may be structured to include activities for cross-project learning. Communities of practice may have a budget.
- The role of social artists is recognized and they can engage directly with hierarchical power structures to give voice to the learning they care about and draw attention to key learning spaces.
- Learning citizenship is encouraged and valued as a carrier of learning capability within and across social learning spaces. For instance, the time people dedicate time and the contributions they make significant to their learning spaces are recognized in the vertical systems in which their performance is evaluated.
- People in the hierarchy act as learning citizens in their own ways and capacities. An executive can decide to sponsor a community of practice or to open a series of conversations as a way to steward an issue.

- Systemic patterns are made visible so they can become actionable through local interpretations.
- Ideas generated in a social learning space become proposals for new directions to be implemented across the board.

The configuration of horizontal and vertical accountability to support learning governance is key to the learning capability of a social system. But it paradoxical and dynamic character challenges traditional organizational structures. It requires transversal processes. It cannot be fully formalized and intelligence cannot be designed out through bureaucracy. Learning governance requires strategic conversations with a focus on substance rather than form. The configuration of a productive interface between horizontal and vertical accountability is perhaps *the* central challenge for 21st-century organizations in all sectors that are concerned with systemic learning and innovative capability.

6. Conclusion: a shift in mindset about learning

What I have said here about these four factors of social learning capability is not really new. It has always been happening in small pockets. What is new is a need to become more intentional and systematic about fostering social learning capability as well as a need to do so at higher levels of scale and complexity. The learning capability that EQUAL was trying to promote across a diversity of projects, cultures, and nationalities is something we are only beginning to learn how to do. Still I am aware of a number of contexts where ideas like the ones presented here are influencing attempts at organizing for learning, including businesses, governments, school improvement programs, healthcare systems, and regional and international development agencies. I believe that a shift in mindset about learning is in the air – from a view of learning as a formal process caused by instruction to learning an essential aspect of everyday life and thus a capacity inherent in social systems. I see people in a position to make a difference all over the world becoming attuned to this reality and interested in taking action. To move forward, we need two things. We need more examples to serve as living laboratories. And we need better conceptual frameworks of the type I have tried to outline here to interpret these experiments and learn from them. This combination of practical experiments and conceptual framework is an urgent need today when the world is full of pressing large-scale learning imperatives. It is what will give us the models we need to accelerate the learning of our small planet.

Acknowledgments

User Led Innovation – a Future for Social Policy?

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Abstract | This short paper is based on the author's presentation at 'Powering a New Future' in Lisbon on the 12th December 2008. The conference was arranged to mark the end of the European Union's EQUAL programme and to consider the prospects for the future of individual projects as they were to be absorbed into mainstream policies operated in each member state. The paper introduces the work of the OECD's Forum on Social Innovation and also gives a brief description of recent approaches of the UK Government to social and economic innovation. It discusses how the context for social innovation and experimentation has shifted with the creation of the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills and the publication of the Innovation Nation white paper in April 2008. This has fundamentally changed the UK Government's understanding of innovation moving from policies concentrating on science and technology to a much broader acceptance of how innovation is essential to everyday life. In particular the paper describes the need for user led innovation – enabling individuals and communities to help design public services and to shape products – thus changing the way that policy is designed and implemented. The author argues that this approach means that the philosophy and the goals of the Equal programme will endure as projects are mainstreamed into broader policy.

"Imagine trying to cut a piece of paper with just one blade of a pair of scissors. It's near impossible. Yet that is what we try to do with innovation policy. We rely on supply side measures to push technology. We neglect the critical role that demand and markets play in pulling innovation through. We need to use both blades of the scissors."[1]

Observers of innovation have long argued that the best conditions for innovations contain a mix of supply and demand led measures. Over fifty years ago, the economist Alfred Marshall first used the metaphor of the blades of a pair of scissors to represent this and the equal and inter-dependent role of supply and demand in influencing the prices of goods and services in the post Second World War economy. Luke Georgiou, in a more recent paper for the UK organization NESTA[2], uses the same analogy to describe the best environment for innovation to take place.

The overall message is a simple one. All products and services – whether in new technology, scientific or manufacturing discovery or in the delivery of public services such as health, employment or education – are better if their development is based on both the people who design and build them and also those who will buy or use them. This may be a long understood principle in some parts of the private sector, but as governments throughout the world increasingly look to innovation as a way of powering their economies, it is in their approach to public services, where the most dramatic effects may be realized.

As the European Union's EQUAL programme – part of the European Social Fund – comes to an end, this could prove to be a timely realization of how both locally designed and user led policy experimentation can best be used to stimulate more effective policy design and delivery particularly in the fields of employment,

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[1]   GEORGHIOU, L. (2007), *Demanding Innovation: Lead markets, public procurement and innovation*, NESTA, London.
[2]   National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts.

education and social cohesion. That might be as a result of serendipity, rather than just EQUAL's principles of sound policy design and evaluation, but that too is a fundamental and vital part of any innovation system.

Definitions and Understanding of the Innovation Process

As Luke Georgiou and Alfred Marshall explain, innovations are the product of the creative interaction of supply and demand. According to Robert Reich, former Labor Secretary to President Clinton, this can also be described as the coming together of 'geeks' and 'shrinks' in a creative process;

> *"At the core of innovation lie two distinct personalities, representing different inclinations, talents, and ways of perceiving the world. The first is that of the artist or inventor, the designer, the engineer, the financial wizard, the geek, the scientist, the writer or musician – the person who is capable of seeing new possibilities in a particular medium and who takes delight in exploring and developing them."* [3]

Such individuals find pleasure and reward in stretching a medium, testing limits and solving problems. Reich uses the term "geek" because it encapsulates a particular example of this kind of thought process and set of abilities – that of someone involved in technology or information technology. However, he readily admits that the qualities are much more than a "geek" suggests. Reich also describes them as "dreamers, visionaries and revolutionaries" and not limited just to technology or science. His analysis continues with a description of their complementary qualities:

> *"A second personality is essential. It is that of the marketer, the talent agent, the rainmaker, the trend spotter, the producer, the consultant, the hustler – the person who can identify possibilities … and understands how to deliver on these opportunities. The second personality is no less creative. But expertise focuses on others – business customers… a set of clients, a cohort of people… (Their) absorption is in discovering what people want rather than in what a given medium can do. Let me call this second person a 'shrink".*

It is when you bring the "geeks" and "shrinks" together, that you create innovation. Sometimes they can be found together in one person. Reich lists some of the great inventors, artists and entrepreneurs as examples – Shakespeare, Henry Ford, Bill Gates, Stephen Spielberg, Gianni Versace and Oprah Winfrey. All had or have the ability to create, to invent and also to understand what people want and need.

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[3]   REICH, R. (2002), *The Future of Success*, Vintage.

In many instances you can find companies, organisations or groups of people that successfully and deliberately bring together these complementary types of thinking and ability – Apple, Nokia, Glaxo Smithkline are well known examples from the worlds of technology and commerce. But other examples might include the four members of the Beatles or Led Zeppelin, the artists Gilbert and George, or the combination of Bob Geldof and Harvey Goldsmith when they conceived and staged Live Aid as a way of raising awareness and funds for African famine relief in the 1980s.

Demanding and adventurous consumers have long driven innovation by providing firms with incentives and signals about new markets as well as creating pressures on firms to improve their products and services. This role is increasingly well understood by business and especially so in some sectors.

Demand-led policies have a sound rationale. Many innovations do not appear "off the shelf", but are often crude or inefficient and require considerable adaptation before they can be delivered and used in a mass or a niche market. There are also advantages in waiting and learning from the experience of users and of course for the concurrent increase in the number of users too.

Particularly important in our understanding of user led innovation is also the concept of the "lead user" or the "early adopter". First coined by Eric von Hippel of MIT in 1986[4], he described "lead users" as those customers or users whose strong needs help to shape and refine a product or service ahead of it becoming more generally and widely adopted by others in the future. Since that time, von Hippel and others have identified the contribution and importance of lead users in the development of many products and services, from medical instruments to mountain bikes and equipment for extreme sports.

More recently, Eric von Hippel and others including Charles Leadbeater[5] have argued that users and communities, can often engage in innovation in place of traditional manufacturers or service deliverers by creating, developing and distributing their own products and services too[6]. "Open source" software is a classic example, but so too are examples from social and economic development such as the formation of co-operatives, mutual organisations and credit unions. Leadbeater has also argued that public services in particular can only be effective if they are personalized to and by the people who use them, leading to the shaping and creation of new types of service[7]. He describes how users can shape their own lives for the better:

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[4]   VON HIPPEL, Eric (1986), "Lead Users: A Source of Novel Product Concepts," *in Management Science* 32, no. 7 (July):791-805, a paper which built on a decade of work on the importance of users in the innovation process.

[5]   LEADBEATER, Charles, "The Ten Habits of Mass Innovation," NESTA Provocation 01 November 2006.

[6]   VON HIPPEL, Eric (2005), *Democratising Innovation*, MIT Press, Cambridge Mass.

[7]   LEADBEATER, Charles (2006), *The Man in the Caravan and Other Stories,* IDEA, London.

"Wilf was a frail 80 year old who lived most of his adult life in a dilapidated caravan with no running water, fridge or electric light and only rudimentary heating. Yet by the end of his life Wilf was living in a smart flat, and spent much of his time watching sport on a widescreen television, thanks to an innovative recuperative care scheme developed by Kent County Council which changed his life completely."[8]

Thinking of these broader examples and definitions of innovation are a useful way of understanding why the EQUAL programme and its thousands of individual projects and partnerships might have been a success and how they might be mainstreamed by member states in the future. Anybody reading this paper from an EQUAL funded project should by now, be wondering how the "scissors" of innovation or "lead users" might apply to them – or perhaps who were the "geeks" and "shrinks" in their partnership…

Social Innovation

The observations of Robert Reich, Alfred Marshall, Luke Georgiou, Eric von Hippel and Charles Leadbeater provide us with colourful and effective analogies of how innovation happens. At the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), further thinking about different types of innovation and the conditions in which it occurs takes place is taking place.

The OECD LEED Programme[9] established a forum on social innovation in 2000, with the main objective of facilitating international dissemination and the transfer of best policies and practice. The Forum also looks at innovation, its definitions and how different countries, regions and cities are developing policies to encourage its application in a variety of local contexts. The working definition of social innovation adopted by the Forum on Social Innovation is that it *"can concern conceptual, process or product change, organisational change and changes in financing, and can deal with new relationships with stakeholders and territories"*[10].

The OECD also describe social innovation as a key element of prosperity and sustainable development. There is social innovation wherever new mechanisms and

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[8]   After an accident and a spell in hospital, Wilf moved to the Dorothy Lucy Centre in Kent where patients and care providers jointly develop plans for ongoing care, health and lifestyle needs. For the full story see 'The Man in the Caravan' (ibid).

[9]   LEED – Local Economic and Employment Development Programme – housed within the OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs and Local Development: http://www.oecd.org/department/ 0,3355,en_2649_34417_1_1_1_1_1,00.html
      The OECD Forum for Social Innovation now brings together many international partners from national, regional and local governments as well as from non government organisations in each country. It is a space for experimentation, learning and collaboration, organising studies, conferences and research projects and evaluations FSI brings together an unrivalled network of experts and practitioners from governments, academia and the social economy with expertise in employment, skills and lifelong learning, economic development and social and economic innovation policies.

[10] http://www.oecd.org/about/0,3347,en_2649_34459_1_1_1_1_1,00.html

norms consolidate and improve the well-being of individuals, communities and territories in terms of social inclusion, creation of employment and quality of life. Social innovation aims at satisfying new needs not taken on by the market or creating new, more satisfactory ways of giving people a place and a role in economic and social life. Like economic innovation, social innovation can come from introducing new types of production or exploiting new markets and can also encompass conceptual and organisational change, changes in financing, and changes in the relationships between stakeholders, users and governments and service providers.

"Social innovation" seeks new answers to social problems by:

- identifying and delivering new services that improve the quality of life of individuals and communities;
- identifying and implementing new labour market integration processes, new competencies, new jobs, and new forms of participation, as diverse elements that each contribute to improving the position of individuals in the workforce.

Social innovations can also therefore be seen as dealing with and promoting the welfare of individuals and communities, both as consumers and producers. A range of current studies and research projects are currently being delivered by the OECD Forum on Social Innovation. The following are just a few examples of current projects taking place through the Forum:

OECD FSI Study 1: Improving social inclusion capacity at local level: a cross-country comparative review.

The project aims to provide guidance on ways to improve social inclusion capacity through the social economy. While the social economy plays an important role in reducing social exclusion, work shows that its impact is greater when embedded in social inclusion strategies. The project will review and assess: i) policy arrangements that impact service provision and social inclusion at local level, including the degree of policy integration and decentralisation in welfare provision; ii) the obstacles and opportunities for the development of social economy and social entrepreneurship, including regulatory provisions and networking and partnership tools; iii) the innovation dynamics at local level and scaling up of capacity; and iv) the levers to activate involvement and incorporation of the social economy into social inclusion strategies. Field work will be undertaken in selected countries to review factors impacting upon social inclusion capacity and identify innovative experiences.

For further details see http://www.oecd.org/department/0,3355,en_2649_34459_1_1 _1_1_1,00.html

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OECD FSI Study 2: Community capacity building: a cross country comparative review.

This project will identify the enabling factors of community capacity building and assess relevant holistic approaches. Community capacity building is now being recognised as a valid strategy to stimulate local participation in local development issues. Policy-makers at both central and local levels are concerned that a holistic approach should be taken to assist local communities in developing their resources and capacity to respond to local problems. It is essential to develop a better understanding on the most appropriate ways to integrate the diverse dimensions of community capacity building into holistic approaches. The project will build on the current project on community capacity building in selected OECD member countries and expand the geographical focus of current research. Country reviews will be undertaken to review enabling framework conditions to secure an effective community capacity building approach.

For further details see http://www.oecd.org/department/0,3355,en_2649_34459_1_1_1_1_1,00.html

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OECD FSI Study 3: Innovation in social and community interest services – social innovation for better efficiency.

This project aims to identify and assess innovations in the field of social and community interest services. The rise and development of the non-profit sector and social enterprises have generated important innovations in the field of social and community interest services. These innovations mainly concern: the ways of producing social services; the type and organisational methods of providing these services; the style management and the relationship with service users; and the ability to create networks and partnerships. The project will assess the social and economic consequences of these innovations; identify appropriate indicators for measuring the development of social enterprises and their impact on innovation; suggest appropriate policies responses for the regulation and support of partnerships between public administration and social enterprises and between social enterprises and for-profit businesses, and for maintaining their innovative capacity. Country reviews will be undertaken and a final synthesis report will be prepared.

For further details see http://www.oecd.org/department/0,3355,en_2649_34459_1_1_1_1_1,00.html

At the European Union level, the evaluations of the ADAPT and EMPLOY-MENT programmes[11] offer the following definitions of innovation:

> *"...innovations are novel changes in a system, which are performed and achieved for the first time in its development. This first-time aspect of a novel change – the development aspect – is an important but insufficient criterion for innovations; a more important one is that the development should lead to something qualitatively new which increases the efficiency of a certain system. Innovations provide better solutions to problems from the previous state. The decisive determinant of the innovative content of the new solution is its relation to the old one. It is the relation to previous solutions and approaches that determines the degree of innovation of a novel change."*

A changing approach to innovation in the UK

In June 2007, after Gordon Brown succeeded Tony Blair as the UK's Prime Minister, he immediately reorganised the education departments and created a new Government Department directly responsible for promoting innovation – the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS). It brought together a range of key actors in creating innovation and economic success including funds and agencies that supported and promoted science, research, adult education and skills.

In March 2008, the new department published its strategy for innovation in the UK, "Innovation Nation"[12], setting out a new approach to economic and social innovation with a major shift to demand and user driven innovation and with it a consolidation of a user led agenda in both economic and social policy. In the foreword to the white paper, the first Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills, John Denham MP said:

> *"We want innovation to flourish across every area of the economy and, in particular, wherever high value added businesses can flourish and grow. We must innovate in our public services too. Innovation is as important to the delivery of healthcare and education as it is to industries such as manufacturing, retail and the creative economy. Innovation will be the key to some of the biggest challenges facing our society, like global warming and sustainable development."*[13]

Specifically, "Innovation Nation" set out the following themes and understanding:

- The UK's long history of industrial, technological and economic innovation.
- The importance of continued large scale investment in scientific and technological research.

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[11] A Methodology for European Evaluation of the Employment Initiative, 1999, NEI/FHVR).
[12] Innovation Nation, http://www.dius.gov.uk/publications/innovation-nation.html
[13] Foreword to Innovation Nation white paper, March 2007.

- A recognition that UK should move from purely supply side policy making such as investment in science and research and university capabilities to a broader model of supply and demand driven innovation.
- A recognition and understanding that in ICT, technology and scientific fields, innovation was often led by users and consumers.
- Introduced a much broader definition of – and strategy for – innovation across non technological sectors such as the creative economy, the service sector and in the design and delivery of public services such as health, education and employment policies.
- A clear understanding of the need for users, communities and local experimentation to take risks in order to develop and build better public policy.
- The need for Government to use all levers at its disposal to encourage both supply and demand led innovation including through procurement, regulation, direct investment and policy creation.

Whilst its main messages may have provided little that was new or surprising to thinkers such as von Hippel, Georgiou or Leadbeater, for a national government to take on their understanding of the innovation process and specifically the importance of consumers and users, 'Innovation Nation' marks a profound shift. In the past, innovation policy was thought of as a simple process of investment in fundamental science and research leading to commercialisation by farsighted managers in industry – a sector based demonstration of Reich's 'geeks and shrinks' theory perhaps. This understanding has been traditionally supported by supply-side policy initiatives, such as the UK's major investment in science research and facilities over the last decade.

The insights generated by fundamental scientific research are critical to long-term innovation performance but the path they follow from the laboratory to the marketplace is long, complex and uncertain. The model of a pipeline where governments can simply pump in more resource at one end and reap the economic benefits from new products and services at some point in the future is increasingly obsolete.

It fails to capture two important issues about innovation. Firstly, that innovation does not typically follow a pipeline or linear model. Enabled and accelerated by new technologies, innovation is becoming more open. Organisations are increasingly reaching outside their walls to find ideas – to universities, other companies, suppliers and even competitors. Users are also increasingly innovating independently or in collaboration with businesses or in the co-creation of public services.

Secondly, innovation happens – and is essential – in a much broader field of life and business than just in the translation of scientific or technological discovery. Other important sources of innovation include the role of design in developing innovative products and services. Innovation is also not restricted to the private sector – increasingly the public sector is called upon (often in partnership with the private and third sectors) to innovate in the design and delivery of public services.

In "Innovation Nation", the UK Government recognises these wider sources of innovation and, in particular, aims to develop new levers and policies to drive demand for innovation as well as its supply.

Open and User led Innovation in the Private Sector

"Open innovation" is another expression of how innovation has moved beyond a linear or pipeline model. Businesses are increasingly developing organizational models and networks that can maximize the conditions for developing innovative products and services, reaching outside their organizational boundaries to find ideas at different stages of development and then developing them in-house. They might reach across sectors, up and down their supply chains, to lead users or suppliers or out to SMEs and universities for ideas and applications. Compared to more traditional models of product or service development, open innovation offers considerable benefits to the business and to consumers. It might fundamentally alter the way that high innovation businesses are structured as well as they way that they operate, but amongst the benefits are a constant supply of new ideas from many sources, less expensive and shorter term investment needs and shorter product to market timelines. Reich's geeks and shrinks can exist across a wide network and don't all need to be housed within one organization.

These new approaches can also generate considerable economic returns: Toyota's networked approach to innovation has resulted in suppliers having 14 % higher output per worker, 25 % lower inventories and 50 % fewer defects compared with competitors. Procter & Gamble's 'Connect and Develop' strategy now produces 35 % of the company's innovations and billions of dollars in revenue. Significantly, since 2000, its own spend on formal R&D as a percentage of sales has declined from 5-6 % to 3-4 %[14].

Historically, users have always been important in technology and scientific discovery. Specialist users of technology and science have been responsible for many important inventions including the first heart-lung machine and the World Wide Web. In a range of different sectors, users have been the source of the most commercially significant and novel products and processes: oil refining (43 %), chemical production (70 %), sports equipment (58 %), and scientific instruments (77 %) were highlighted by one recent study[15]. However, largely due to the widespread use of ICT, users are becoming increasingly important innovators in many different industries[16].

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[14] HUSTON, L.; SAKKAB, N. (2006), "Connect and Develop: Inside Procter & Gamble's New Model for Innovation", *in Harvard Business Review*, vol. 84 (No. 3).

[15] According to Riggs and von Hippel, 82 % of new scientific instruments market came from user innovations – RIGGS, W.; VON HIPPEL, E. (1994) "Incentives to Innovate and the Sources of Innovation: The Case of Scientific Instruments", *in Research Policy,* vol. 23 (no. 4), pp. 459-469.

[16] VON HIPPEL, E. (2005), *Democratizing Innovation* Massachusetts, MIT Press.

As this paper has demonstrated, ICT often provides good examples and analogies of innovation. Reich's "geek" is a creature of ICT. It also provides a tangible understanding of how users will always help to shape technologies in new ways. Mobile phone technology was developed so that people could communicate without having to be in the same place – ie next to a telephone line – when a conversation needed to happen. From the early development of mass market mobile phones in the 1980s, we as users have demanded that our mobile telephones can do much more. Users have developed the sending of SMS text messages into a key element of the technology. Taking and transmitting photos, accessing the internet, storing and playing music, keeping contact information and using satellite positioning technologies are all now common features and capabilities of the mobile telephones that most of us carry around with us everyday.

Apple, Microsoft, Google and Youtube are also leading examples of how private sector technology companies have depended on users to refine and shape their products. Try and remember how early PCs looked when you switched them on - with screens full of numbers and letters, technological language and complex user instructions. That has all changed today.

In the past, ICT firms have often tried to hold back or constrain innovation, by limiting the ability of users to switch between software and hardware, restricting the use of different technologies on different products. Today we fret about the incompatibility of music downloaded onto ipods with other manufacturers' devices. We can't but software or dvds in the US and play them on European systems even if bought from the same manufacturers. In the past we had to choose between VHS and Betamax video recorders. But users and consumers usually and eventually find a way around these problems – either legally or illegally. And manufacturers and businesses have to catch up and respond to this.

Today, Microsoft are even celebrating users as the key drivers and users of their software with their 'I'm a PC' advertising campaign[17] – something that many of those user innovators that promote open source software quite hard to digest.

Innovation in Public Services and the Equal Programme

Innovation Nation is explicit about how innovation is also essential not only if the UK is to develop the most effective public services, but also to develop the public infrastructure on which private sector innovation often depends.

> *"Innovation in public services will be essential to the UK's ability to meet the economic and social challenges of the 21st century. Education, health and transport provide the underpinning for all innovative activity. Demand is growing amongst public service users for more efficient services that are personalised to their needs.*

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[17]   See http://imapc.lifewithoutwalls.com/ for the Microsoft campaign or see http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=hi1se9rH7S8 for some of the way that users have responded to it!

The Government can drive innovation in public services through the way it allocates resources and structures incentives. Major forces such as attitudes to risk, budgeting, audit, performance measurement and recruitment must be aligned to support innovation. Together and with effective leadership, these will progressively overcome existing cultural and incentive barriers. Those responsible for public service delivery must also learn the lessons of open innovation and adopt innovative solutions from the private and third sectors. "[18]

The EQUAL Programme is a clear example of how local and user led innovation can be harnessed to improve people's lives through the delivery of better targeted, more effective public services. Funded by the European Union, through the European Social Fund (ESF), the EQUAL programme has tested new ways of tackling discrimination and inequality in the labour market. The Equal Programme operated across identified five thematic fields, embrace the four pillars of the European Employment Strategy – employability, entrepreneurship, adaptability and equal opportunities as well as in the fifth area of developing specific support for asylum seekers. The first round of EQUAL Development Partnerships was launched in 2001, with 77 Development Partnerships in Great Britain and 8 in Northern Ireland. This first round ended in 2005. The second round, with a further 100 Development Partnerships across England, Scotland and Wales, began in 2004, running until 2008.

EQUAL and Employment Services in the UK

The development and introduction of Jobcentre Plus from 2002/3 was the product of much innovative thinking. The design of the service itself, bringing together benefit advice and active labour market policies such as the New Deals and Employment Zones, into a single modern service was a new way of approaching and moving beyond more traditional, passive benefit services. It built on the experiences and knowledge of a wide range of public, private and third sector organisations including those in countries outside of the UK.

It now operates a single work-focused service for everyone of working age claiming benefit; helping them to find jobs, paying benefits to the workless and also providing a service to employers by helping them to fill their vacancies quickly and cheaply. It also manages contracts with a wide range of private and voluntary sector organisations to deliver tailored services to specific groups or in particular neighbourhoods or locations. This too has incorporated a strong sense of open and ongoing innovation into the organisation and into the way it procures services from other providers.

A further innovation has come with the development of the personal adviser function within the service. Personal advisers provide personalised information and advice on jobs, training, benefits and other help they might need to move

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[18]   Innovation Nation.

into work, such as help with basic skills, transport and childcare. Again learning from other organisations, the availability of the same personal adviser to a client – be they workless or an employer – is an important step forward from the impersonal and inconsistent past. So too is the design of each Jobcentre Plus office. From high security benefits offices with protective screens and metal grills between staff and claimants, they have been changed to more welcoming buildings with a range of formal and informal facilities and trained staff.

Co-financed ESF and EQUAL activity is firmly embedded within the strategic and 'day to day' operations of Jobcentre Plus. A wide range of EQUAL and ESF programmes have been specifically developed to target the long-term unemployed, people claiming incapacity benefits (including the disabled), lone parents, people with low or no skills, the homeless, ex offenders and people recovering from alcohol and drug addictions.

The Equal Employability DP**,** led by Ayr College in Scotland, developed inclusive and innovative models of delivering training and employment-related support to people furthest from the labour market. The DP influenced Scottish and UK policy about the broader systems that needed to be in place to effectively combine training with Jobcentre Plus activities and programmes. In Scotland the Re:Focus DP, led by Glasgow City Council, is set against a backdrop in which over 90,000 people in Glasgow are claiming benefits. In 2006, this DP tested new approaches to supporting people with multiple barriers into work and connecting mainstream programmes so that people with health and social care needs experience a joined up service between the health and social care and the employment and training sectors as they progress towards sustained employment.

In Wales the North Merthyr Tydfil Regeneration Development Partnership began testing new delivery models in 2006 to tackle one of the highest levels of incapacity benefit claimants anywhere in the UK. The problem is so concentrated that conventional services in other areas such as health and education are affected. The Development Partnership has developed a multidisciplinary focus linking to other services to reduce IB claims and improve the employment rate in the area.

EQUAL, Entrepreneurship and Social Enterprise

EQUAL has provided support to a wide range of partnerships aiming to increase and sustain entrepreneurship in both the private and third sectors. As with Jobcentre Plus, EQUAL programmes have been embedded in the strategic and operational activities of national Government agencies such as Business Link, the Small Business Service and the Office for the Third Sector.

The Business Creation Partnership DP, led by the University of Northampton, aims to develop, new ways of providing business support to people from disa-dvantaged groups starting business or entering self employment in Northampton-shire. The four main target groups are women, ethnic minorities, ex-offenders and people living in rural parts of the county. "Business Support Northamptonshire"

was successfully established in 2005 as a "one-stop-shop" for business support within the region.

The Trading Up partnership led by Business Link in Kent**,** focused on developing a business start-up programme and to increase the self-confidence and motivation of individuals considering starting a business. It incorporates 'trial trading' techniques and other intermediate, sheltered schemes. This helps to ensure that beneficiaries can develop their entrepreneurial skills within a safe environment. During 2006, the DP held trials of a business start-up board game, which had been adapted from an existing resource to be more appropriate for the DP's target groups (communities from disadvantaged wards in Kent). The Partnership worked closely with Canterbury Christchurch University and Kent University to deliver programmes and workshops.

The Strive partnership led by Wandsworth Borough Council, is working with women, lone parents, BME groups, the young and those in the shadow economy to promote entrepreneurship and self-employment. The DP is based in London South Central, one of the London Development Agency's priority areas for regeneration. Services across the area are disjointed and often do not meet the needs of disadvantaged groups in this community, so they have developed a sustainable model of co-ordinated and holistic entrepreneurship support for these groups and to develop an overall shared vision for entrepreneurship across London borough.

EQUAL and innovation in education policy

The Trades Union Congress (TUC), through one of many partnerships has established a number of union academies throughout the UK. Courses are available for people ranging from those with no qualifications to continuing professional development for those with degrees. The TUC's High Road Partnership, is part of its Unionlearn service. The DP is also investigating the feasibility of developing an accreditation system for providers of equality and diversity training to ensure standards are set at a high level for practitioners. Unionlearn will provide support and advice on lifelong learning and workforce development across England and play a key role in meeting the Government's Skills Strategy. It will focus on literacy and numeracy skills and Level 2 qualifications amongst the seven million adults in England who lack any formal qualifications.

The Midlands Engineering Industries Redeployment Group (MEIRG) Partnership developed a range of services for businesses that were in difficulty and having to make people redundant by providing bespoke training and support to individuals who were about to become unemployed. This has helped to retain skilled staff in the manufacturing and engineering sector of the East Midlands economy and enabled the DP to broaden the scope of its services to businesses by accessing other resources including those through Jobcentre Plus and Business Link.

The ELearn 2 Work DP led by York University has an action research programme that has explored and makes recommendations to policy-makers and practitioners about how e-learning could accelerate workforce development within small and micro firms. Using a demand side approach, and engaging continuously with both employers and employees, a better understanding has emerged of small firm learning cultures, and how trainers can use ICT to better match SME needs.

Conclusions – Mainstreaming Equal and social innovation/experimentation

"These unhappy times call for the building of plans that build from the bottom up and not from the top down, that put their faith once more in the forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid."

Franklin D Roosevelt radio broadcast, 7 April 1932

This discussion about social innovation, the importance of users, communities, EQUAL partnerships and a new approach to delivering personalized public services is not happening in a vacuum. We are living through an extraordinary economic moment in history. The free market, underpinned by a risk taking global banking system is in near collapse. Politicians, academics, commentators and ordinary citizens are speculating about the short, medium and longer term consequences of worldwide recession. The theories of free market capitalism and economic development, trickle down economics – for so long unchallenged by the mainstream – are under attack.

A radical mix of old and new ideas are being discussed by governments throughout the world. From a reinvention of Keynesianism to an expanded role for governments and the social economy, the rules are being rewritten. All of this at a time when many communities or specific groups of people that benefit from EU structural funds are still tackling the fallout from previous recessions, from entrenched discrimination or the consequences of structural change in national and European economies.

In October 2008, the former U.S. Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan admitted that he could never have envisaged the 'once-in-a-century credit tsunami' that has wreaked havoc on national economies throughout the world. Greenspan, who led the Federal Reserve for nearly two decades, said the financial crisis had 'turned out to be much broader than anything I could have imagined'. And he warned the economic meltdown will drive millions of people out of work.

So what will it all mean for the legacies of the individual programmes and partnerships that have benefitted from EQUAL funding and support? A sense of optimism may seem misplaced in these universally gloomy economic times. Nevertheless it is clear that the world may now be better placed to learn from the lessons that EQUAL has delivered over the past eight years.

Firstly, the questioning of the prevailing orthodoxies of recent years suggests that it will be less likely that any member states will simply leave the interests of specific groups and communities to market forces. There will be no rising tide to

lift all boats at least for the foreseeable future, even if it was ever true in the past.

Secondly, as unemployment rises the need to apply the learning from specific interventions in the past decade to a broader range of people and places will intensify. Governments and political parties of every persuasion are developing more interventionist strategies than at any time in the past decade, whatever their philosophies and guiding values.

Thirdly and perhaps most promisingly, Governments now understand the relationship between innovation and better policy making in a way that they have often failed to understand in the past. In all of the economic and social uncertainty, we now know that the best public services and the best interventions to tackle the recession will be developed from the "ground up" as well as by local, regional and national governments.

Communities, "users" of services and ordinary citizens will be as much a source for creativity and solutions as anybody else and policies that understand and encourage this will be more successful than those that don't. This, above all perhaps, was the over-riding philosophy behind the EQUAL programme. It has developed a sense of agency and confidence among a wide range of previously disadvantaged communities and social groups. This confidence alongside the explicit skills, networks and hard outcomes from programmes funded through EQUAL, will build greater resilience amongst many communities throughout Europe.

Equal has successfully tested new means of combating discrimination and inequalities in the labour market, for those in and out of work. Not all projects or partnerships will have been successful or will even continue to exist. But risk and failure is as much a part of the social innovation process as it is in the private sector. We can always learn as much from failure as we can from success.

The European Union, its member states and organisations like the OECD will help countries and communities to learn, to exchange good practice, to create and enable the necessary conditions and space for risk and for continued experimentation and innovation in policy making.

But one lesson should already have been learned by everybody. That citizens and communities have the power to change the world in which they live, to shape the services and products that they use, to improve their communities and their local economies and to improve their own lives for the better. That's at least one reason why we can all face the future with confidence.

Social Change and Social Innovation: Creating Collaborative Solutions

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Abstract | Partnerships and collaborative solutions are sparks and catalysts for social change and innovation. Collaboration is doing together that which you cannot do apart. A more formal definition is that a collaboration is a group of individuals and organizations with a common interest who agree to work together towards a common goal.

The advantage of collaboration is that agencies can provide a rounded solution to problems – but in order to achieve that we need to bring to the table everyone who has a part to play, including those who would benefit. There are six principles of collaboration

1. Engage a broad spectrum of the community.
2. Practice true collaboration. This involved going beyond networking (talking to each other); coordination (modified activities); and cooperation (sharing resources). Collaboration occurred when you aim to enhance the capacity of others involved.
3. Practice democracy, so that decisions are made by the group as a whole.
4. Employ an ecological approach, looking at the strengths and weaknesses in the community.
5. Take action – you can't achieve change just by sitting talking.
6. Align your goals and the process. For example, if you wish to develop a respectful community, you can't achieve that by disrespectful leaderships.

Overall, research shows that successful collaborations require a clear vision; actions to get to your goals; broad leadership within the group, not just one leader; technical assistance; resources and also being prepared to work with conflict, not avoid it.

Barriers to successful collaborative solutions are covered. As well the issue of diversity is a critical issue to address in collaborations.

The paper ends with reference to the election of President Barack Obama, a community organizer, whose campaign illustrated the principles of collaborative solutions.

Collaborative solutions are critical to the work of EQUAL and can be a crucial spark and catalyst for social change and social innovation. They can facilitate helping those who suffer from social exclusion to become empowered to not only move into society but also to change their communities, the society and its systems.

Partnering is one of the four EQUAL principles of good governance and collaborative solutions are achieved through partnering. Collaborative solutions increase the chance for creating social change and social innovation and also addressing the short- comings of our present helping systems. They allow us to bring to the table all the critical parties, viewing issues in their broadest context, and then seek new ways of addressing emerging problem

What are collaborative solutions? Simply put they are doing together that which we cannot do alone. There are many aspects of community and systems change that cannot be accomplished by one person or one organization. Partnerships are attempts to create community change through collaborative processes.

A more formal definition of a collaboration is: a group of individuals and/ or organizations with a **common interest** who agree to work together toward a **common goal.** Thus we cannot just have a common interest we must also agree upon a common goal. Too often those with a common interest are gathered at the table for a partnership but they do not establish a common goal. This happens frequently in partnerships where higher authorities mandate that various groups must sit down with each other.

Many different terms are used to describe these groups including – partnerships, coalitions, collaborations, alliances, etc. In this paper I will use many of these terms interchangeably. Some people have gone to some length to distinguish among the terms. I do not think the label is important. What is critically important is what happens in the partnership. We will distinguish among various exchanges that occur in partnerships later in this paper.

The core ideas of collaborative solutions include:

- Incorporating those directly affected by policies at the heart of dialogue and community building.
- Valuing racial and cultural diversity as the foundation for community wholeness.
- Promoting active citizenship and political empowerment.
- Building on community strengths and assets.

Partnerships have been encouraged for a wide range of reasons – some good some not so good – including:

- To create social change.
- To encourage social innovation.
- To expand successful interventions to the whole community.
- To do more with less when there are budget cuts (not necessarily a good reason).
- To address limitations of the health and human service helping systems.
- To promote civic engagement.
- To build healthy communities.

Wolff (2001)

The unique characteristics and potentials of successful partnerships and coalitions are:

- They are holistic and comprehensive, being able to address any identified issue in its full community context.
- They are flexible and responsive and thus able to encourage creative approaches.
- When collaborative solutions gather and engage the many sectors in a community they build a sense of community.
- Collaborative solutions can be a vehicle to build and enhance resident engagement in community life, encouraging grassroots mobilization.
- By enhancing the community's capacity to solve its own problems it can provide a vehicle for community empowerment.
- When partnerships truly engage all the groups in a community they can allow diversity to be valued as the foundation of the wholeness of the community.
- Successful partnerships are incubators for innovative solutions to community problems.

Collaborative solutions are especially useful in addressing the serious dysfunctions in our community helping systems (health and human service systems, etc.). Some major concerns with these helping systems include.

Fragmentation – Our systems tend to deal with people in a fragmented manner, with multiple agencies handling aspects of the problem and no one dealing with the family as an integrated whole.

Duplication of effort – We don't often see duplication of services but we do see duplication of efforts. For example in a given community, three groups can be concerned about teen pregnancy and not even know about each other, much less coordinate their efforts.

Focus on deficits – Helping systems tend to look for and find the weaknesses in individuals, families and communities, rather than their strengths.

Crisis orientation – Helping systems are very responsive to emerging crises but have much more trouble planning ahead and creating preventive approaches to issues.

Failure to respond to diversity – Without a focused intent to create cultural competence, our helping systems will often reflect the sexism, racism, homophobia and class related biases that are part of our culture.

Excessive professionalism – When we ask community members who they turn to first when they are faced with a problem they usually respond with 'family, friends and neighbors'. So why do we build our partnerships only around professionals? We need to engage the formal and the informal helping system in the community as well.

Detached from community & clients – Our traditional problem solving processes and organizations are seriously handicapped because they are not connected to the communities where they seek solutions and to the people most affected.

Competition – Competition among organizations can be a significant barrier to finding collaborative solutions and can instead make situations worse. Failures in successful partnerships are often due to the competition among those gathered at the table.

Limited and inaccessible information – Those attempting to solve problems often do not have all the information that they need to generate the best possible solutions.

Loss of our spiritual purpose – The higher purposes that bring people into careers in the helping professions are often lost as people work in a helping system that focuses on productivity and competition not people.

Community Story

An actual community story will best illustrate the work of collaborative solutions in creating community change. For many years I have worked with the Cleghorn Neighborhood Center located in Fitchburg, Massachusetts, a former mill town of 40,000 which has fallen on economic hard times. The Cleghorn neighborhood is the densest area in Fitchburg with over 4000 people. Cleghorn has always been the neighborhood that is the home to the newest immigrants in Fitchburg. Now these immigrants are mostly Latinos from Central and South America and Puerto

Rico and they live in Lower Cleghorn. The older French Canadian immigrants who settled earlier live in Upper Cleghorn. The overall population of Fitchburg has decreased 2 % over the last 15 years, yet the Latino population has increased 176 % over that same time period. This situation is not unlike some neighborhoods and communities in Europe.

The Cleghorn Neighborhood Center began as a neighborhood development organization but slowly evolved into a social service agency delivering counseling, tutoring and a food pantry. We worked with the Board of Directors of the agency and helped them decide to move from a social service to a social change model for the agency. This meant returning to focusing on community building, community development and community organizing.

Once the agency had a new mission they began to visit every household in the neighborhood, going door-to-door. As they visited they asked the residents what they liked about the neighborhood and what they thought needed to be changed. They also inquired as to whether the residents wanted to work with us in addressing the community's issues.

One of the Center's first events for residents was a Candidates Night for those running for City Council for the Cleghorn neighborhood. The candidates came that night but were not invited to give a speech, Instead they sat at a table with residents and listened to the residents speak about what issues they perceived were of most concern to the neighborhood, Then the candidates stood up and said what they had heard. The residents felt terrific, they knew that they had been heard and they began to feel that they mattered.

The agency then hired a new leader, their first Latina. A young, activist, trained in community organizer in Chicago, she brought energy, commitment, smarts and a strong capacity to link with and organize the residents of Cleghorn.

The new leader began to develop new programs to build the skills and leadership of residents. She began with helping residents take classes to pass their high school equivalence test (many had not finished high school either in their native country or the US), The Center combined a GED (General Education Diploma) class with a class that teaches leadership and advocacy skills in residents (PEP - People Empowering People).However when the residents went to take the GED test in Spanish they were treated poorly. The person who administered the test did not speak Spanish, the material was not translated, and staff did not treat them with respect. Because they had been trained in PEP, they took their new advocacy skills and protested. They wrote to the President of the Community College where they had taken the test and then met with him. This led to institutional changes that improved the system. Similar training also was happening with the Youth Resident Council, teaching young people leadership skills.

Unexpectedly last year the city elected a new young, Asian, female Mayor. She readily agreed to hold quarterly neighborhood meetings in Cleghorn. This allowed the Center to have an attraction that would bring together the Latinos and French Canadians. Prior to this numerous attempts to bring these two populations together failed – they did not respect or trust each other. But through

the quarterly meetings with the Mayor they could now problem solve neighborhood problems and learn to hear each other. They discovered that they valued the same things and were concerned about the same issues (neighborhood safety, traffic safety, community events). They began to gain respect for each other and work together. At a recent meeting with the Mayor the young Latino teens and the gray haired French Canadian grandmothers were working together to draw their pictures of what the neighborhood would like if their visions could be fulfilled.

This is a wonderful example of collaborative solutions

Collaborative Solutions has six key principles

Principle One

Engage a broad spectrum of the community

Most problems in communities have multiple root causes and are deeply interconnected with other community issues. Thus collaborative solutions in order to be successful must engage many sectors on the community. They need to especially engage those most directly affected by the issue. Although that sounds absolutely logical, how often do we see those most affected at the table in partnerships? Are the immigrant groups at the table when we talk of employment opportunities for them? Are the youth gang members at the table when we talk of gang violence?

Too often we approach communities from an agency-based approach rather than a community based approach. In the agency based approach the formal organizations label the problem, decide on the solution and implement. In a community based approach the community takes the lead on all those issues.

What are the benefits of bringing the grassroots groups to the table?

– They can reach "high risk" and "yet to be reached" populations.
– They can work with both the "formal" and the "informal" leaders.
– They know what works in their communities. They are the best architects of solutions.
– The community organizations are community historians. They know what has been tried in the past and whether it worked.
– They can provide local leadership, ownership and participation.
– And they can create positive "norms" in the community.

One can easily see why they are so valuable to creating collaborative solutions.

Once we have gathered a diverse group to our table we then need to create an environment that values and respects the cultural, economic, racial and other diversity within the group as being central to the community's wholeness. Celebrating our community's racial and cultural diversity is critical to successful collaborative solutions.

Principle Two

Encourage true collaboration as the form of exchange

When we work in partnerships there are many possible exchanges that can occur among members. It is helpful to define these exchanges so that we are clear about what we are trying accomplish through partnerships. Arthur Himmelman (2001) has defined four levels of exchange that increase in complexity, risk and the degree to which they can create community change that is meaningful.

Definitions

• **Networking** – is exchanging *information* for mutual benefit. This is the basic and most common exchange that occurs in a partnership. We swap business cards. We tell each other of our programs and offerings.
• **Coordination** – is exchanging information and *modifying activities* for mutual benefit. Here we not only exchange information we actually take action to modify activities. If two organizations are offering after school programs to the same age group of children on the same day, one might move to another day to promote coordination.
• **Cooperation** – is exchanging information, modifying activities, and *sharing resources* for mutual benefit and to achieve a *common purpose*. Here we have introduced the phrase "sharing resources" and this tends to make creating partnerships more difficult. Organizations tend to hold on to resources rather than share them. Pooling resources is often the only way to accomplish certain goals, so it a crucial exchange in creating desired community changes. Sometimes pooling resources from various agencies is the only way to provide certain services.
• **Collaboration** – is exchanging information, modifying activities, sharing resources, and *enhancing the capacity of another* for mutual benefit and to achieve a common purpose by *sharing risks, resources, responsibilities, and rewards.*

This is the most powerful form of exchange in partnerships and the one most likely to create important community changes that the partnership is seeking.

In the example of the Cleghorn Neighborhood Center we see examples of collaboration between the Mayor and the residents; between Upper and Lower Cleghorn; and among the Center, the neighbors and city government. They are all enhancing the capacity of each other.

Principle Three

Practice democracy

Our work in creating collaborative solutions aims to promote active citizenship and empowerment. The first step in that process is for the partnership itself to

practice democracy. That means allowing all those who are part of the partnership to have an equal say in the decisions of the partnership. When we run a meeting by setting chairs in a circle, filling the room with the diverse members of the community, and then encouraging participation by all we are beginning the process of practicing democracy.

When we ask the group what the major issues in the community are and write down the response of the Mayor and the neighbor in an equal manner we are continuing the process of practicing democracy.

In the story of the Cleghorn Neighborhood Center we also illustrate the value of teaching leadership skills to populations that have been disenfranchised as a way of encouraging their active participation in these democratic processes.

Principle Four

Employ an ecological approach that emphasizes individual in his/her setting.

We need to understand behavior in its full context and understand community issues in their full ecological sense. The World Health Organization made this clear in discussing the prerequisites of health in their Ottawa Charter (1992). The prerequisites are: peace, education, food, shelter, equity, income, social justice, a stable ecosystem, and sustainable resources. Clearly this is a list that goes well beyond access to health care, and even traditional public health domains. This list of prerequisites emphasizes the social determinants and ecological settings of one's health. This approach can be made to other issues as well – housing, employment, etc.

As we look at communities and community settings we also have to view them through lenses that see both their strengths and their weaknesses. Too often the helping systems in communities specialize in categorizing a community's deficits rather than their strengths. Indeed helping systems thrive on community deficits. When more people have problems, then more people will want services, and thus service providers become more successful. With this perverse set of lenses to look at the world, helpers have become expert at seeing all the deficits in communities and not their assets or strengths.

In collaborative solutions we need to build on community strengths and assets. We can do this in our first contact with a community which is often a community assessment. In the traditional assessment we ask people what their problems are and how we (the professionals) can help them. In an assets-based approach we change that paradigm. Now we ask:

- What are the greatest strengths in the community?
- What are the biggest issues in our community?
- What can we all do to address these issues?
- What can you imagine contributing to the solutions?

Principle Five

Take action

Very often partnerships spend much more time talking then acting. However in order to create community change which is the goal of collaborative solutions partnerships must learn to be able to move to action. Community change does not occur unless one takes community actions. The actions they take can not just be limited to creating new programs they must also address issues of social change and power built on a common vision. This is a tall order.

Judith Kurland, one of the founders of the Healthy Communities movement in the U.S. states that "our work is not just about, projects, programs or policies. Healthy Communities work is about power. Unless we change the way power is distributed, so that people in communities have the power to change the conditions of their lives we will never have sustainable change" (2001)

Principle Six

Align the goal and the process

Gandhi said "Be the change that you wish to create in the world." And that statement applies to partnerships as well. We cannot be part of a coalition that is attempting to create a respectful, caring community if the meetings of our partnership do not manifest the principles of caring and respect. Too often our coalition meetings can display processes that are not consistent with the spiritual values that we espouse. So this last principle asks us to look at our own processes and align them with the goals of our partnership work.

What works and what doesn't?

Unfortunately many partnerships and coalitions are unsuccessful at creating collaborative solutions. Most of us have had the experience of being in dysfunctional coalitions. In these less successful coalitions the partnerships absorb large amounts of time; they do little more than engage in exchanging information; they never change programs, policies or practices; and ultimately fail to achieve their goals (if they ever really had any). We need to be able to become more sophisticated in our understanding of what makes for successful partnering so that we can make best use of our time and help struggling coalitions succeed.

What are we learning about what factors affect the capacity of a partnership to create community change?

Roussus and Fawcett (2000) reviewed a wide range of research studies and identified the following key variables as being associated with partnership success in creating change:

•   Having a clear vision and mission.

- Action planning for community and systems change.
- Developing and supporting leadership.
- Documentation and ongoing feedback on programs.
- Technical assistance and support.
- Securing financial resources for the work.
- Working with conflict.
- Making outcomes matter.

These variables are very consistent with the view of those who are successful practitioners of coalition building. We can review our existing partnerships against these variables to see where we are doing well and where we are struggling in moving towards creating community change.

There are numerous barriers (Wolff & Kaye, 1996) to achieving success in partnership building. These barriers include:

- **Turf and Competition** – the major players in the community and those who come to the table are often in fierce competition with each other. These turf battles can undermine attempts to create change.
- **Bad history** – the community and players at the table may have a bad history of trying to work together. Past experiences may have failed, wasted time, or been concluded acrimoniously.
- **Failure to Act** – when partnerships spend large amounts of time meeting without taking action and without creating change they tend to lose momentum and membership.
- **Lack of a Common Vision** – partnerships that fail to create a common vision in an open process that includes all its members will struggle with a lack of direction and intent.
- **Failure to provide and create collaborative leadership** – coalitions that do not have skilled collaborative leadership and are not building community leadership on their issue will struggle to move forward.
- **Minimal organizational structure** – often partnerships fail to provide the basic organizational structures – meeting agendas, minutes, follow-up, meeting leadership. The lack of these basics makes success very difficult to achieve.
- **Costs outweigh the benefits** – partnerships are made up of busy people, and busy people informally calculate whether the amount of time and energy they are spending on a given effort is worth the benefits. When coalition meetings do not create action then people will decide that the costs outweigh the benefits and they will drop out.
- **Not engaging self-interest** – we often deride "self interest" as being bad for partnerships. Yet self interest is really what makes coalitions succeed. We worry about "hidden agendas" but they really are just unstated self interests. If we don't engage the self interests of those attending we miss the opportunity to get their buy in.

A review of case studies and evaluations of partnerships indicates that they are capable of the following types of outcomes:

- Creating numerous community changes related to their mission as seen in changes in programs, policies, and practices.
- Reinvigorating civic engagement and increasing the sense of community.
- Creating vehicles to enhance community empowerment.
- Providing significant support to coalition members.
- Becoming incubators and catalysts for innovative solutions to problems facing their communities.

Diversity

One critical aspect of partnership success is their capacity to engage and address issues of diversity in their community. Let me illustrate the issue of diversity with another story:

Community Story

The REACH 2010 (Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health).
The Boston REACH 2010 Breast and Cervical Cancer Coalition was developed to eliminate disparities in Black women's health in the city of Boston. It was developed based on the following principles and background information on racism and health:

Racism and racial discrimination are major contributing factors to racial and ethnic health disparities and in the differences in health outcomes for people of certain racial and ethnic groups.

Disparities in the health care delivered to racial and ethnic minorities are real and are associated with worse outcomes in many cases.

The legacy of slavery and substandard care for slaves has led to diminished expectations for African-American health outcomes. Racism in the delivery of health care has a long and disturbing history in the United States that has certainly harmed the health of racial and ethnic minorities.

Residential segregation also plays a part in health disparities. Through: substandard housing, under-funded public schools, employment disadvantages, exposure to crime, environmental hazards, and loss of hope, thus powerfully concentrating disadvantage in certain neighborhoods.

In the Boston REACH program the issue of racism is addressed upfront.

The REACH Boston 2010 brochure states it this way: "Fact: If you're a Black woman living in Boston, you have a greater chance of dying from breast or cervical cancer than a White woman. Why? Racism may play a key role in determining your health status. It may affect your access to health services, the kind of treatment you receive and how much stress your body endures. The REACH 2010 Coalition can help."

The work of this coalition took a very broad approach, one that not only included action in the health care and public arena but also addressed economic and social issues. In this way it took a broad healthy communities approach to issues of racial disparities. The Boston Blueprint for Action called for the actions in the following areas:

Health Care and Public Health
    Health Insurance.
    Data Collection.
    Patient education.
    Health Systems changes.
    Cultural Competence.
    Workforce Diversity.
    Public Health Programs.
    Research Needs.

Environment and Societal Factors
    Neighborhood investment.
    Jobs and economic security.
    Public awareness.
    Promotion of key community institutions.

The Boston REACH 2010 program was successful in creating community changes in many of the above categories.

According to Barbara Ferrer the Commissioner of Public Health for the city "We felt like part of the solution lay in being able to get a broad-based coalition that would tackle issues like racism. And that would bring together the provider community with the resident community to tackle those issues."

"The role of a public health department, is to create a space for people [residents] to come together to define a problem, to define the solutions, and then enter into a dialogue with us – not the other way around. Not we define the problem, we define the solution and then we invite you in to help us implement the solution, which is what we're most comfortable doing." – Barbara Ferrer.

Barack Obama's election and the future of collaborative solutions

The election of Barack Obama illustrates the new emerging role for collaborative solutions and community organizing in the U.S. and perhaps globally. His election was built on the principles of community organizing and collaborative solutions. Many are hopeful that he will govern using the same principles.

After the election many of us who are organizers were elated. The country had elected a community organizer as president. His campaign was based on community organizing principles. The three words "Respect Empower Include" were hung in every one of the thousands of Obama campaign offices around the

country. These same three words are basic to our work in building partnerships and seeking collaborative solutions.

In seeking collaborative solutions Obama appealed to our highest desires. He was not just cobbling together constituencies; he was creating a new politics of the common good. The sense of common ground is also the foundation of all community organizing and collaborative solutions.

Collaborative solutions were also in his vision and in his acceptance speech. The reaction of many Americans to the election results was to want to be part of the solution.

Selections from his acceptance speech illustrate this:

> "I will never forget who this victory truly belongs to - it belongs to you….It grew strength from the young people……Above all, I will ask you join in the work of remaking this nation the only way its been done in America for two-hundred and twenty-one years - block by block, brick by brick, calloused hand by calloused hand…..So let us summon a new spirit of service and responsibility where each of us resolves to pitch in and work harder and look after not only ourselves, but each other. Let us remember that if this financial crisis taught us anything, it's that - in this country, we rise or fall as one nation; as one people……. Yes we can"

On a personal note when Obama won I surprised myself by crying. And I asked myself why. I cried because:

Barack Obama actually won.

The American people were able to support him and resist the negative appeals of the opposition. We will have a Black family living in the White House.

I could be proud of being an American and can stop being ashamed of my country. We may be in good standing in the world again.

Democracy actually worked.

All the possibilities for social change that I have dreamed of are now worth considering again.

We will actually get out of Iraq.

There is a break in the cycle of hate, fear and greed in America.

Young people stepped up to the plate.

Fresh ideas are coming - government will open up and problem solve with the best interest of the people at heart – collaborative solutions will be a key part of the Obama approach.

Just as Barack Obama provides us with the phrase "Yes we can" another perspective to conclude this paper comes from the Dalai Lama who suggests to "Be optimistic it feels better"

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Social Innovation and Territorial Animation[1]: Contributions from the Equal Community Initiative in Portugal

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Abstract | Local initiative and organisational and institutional conditions for sustainable action are to be found at the heart of reflection on territorial articulation of public employment policies and on forms of local governance that can contribute to improving its results. However, this type of initiative tends not to emerge *spontaneously* in the most suitable form. This *non-emergence* can be understood as a result of *territorial disintegration* processes that combine in the economic and socio-institutional destructuring of local communities.

Territorial animation aims at the emergence of initiative and the creation of conditions to make it self-sustainable calls for action that *reverses* "territorial disintegration" processes expanding opportunities for economic and social integration, improving access to employment, and promoting citizenship.

The Anim@Te project originated in the "Territorial Animation" thematic network that operated throughout Round 2 of the Equal Community Initiative. The experience of the projects represented in the thematic network combined with the experience of the Anim@Te project, focused on disseminating and mainstreaming the 'transversal' results of those projects allowed experimenting with an Anim@Te Model for territorial 'animation' in which three different perspectives converge: a model of analysing context-dependent 'territorial disintegration' processes and the role of local initiative in 'reversing' them; a model of experimental action for social innovation in linking new forms of governance with substantive action strategies; and a model of learning and capacity building for the mainstreaming of Equal results.

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[1]   Translator's Note: as there is no exact equivalent in English for the Portuguese term "*animação territorial*", the expression "territorial animation" has been used throughout this article to refer to action that is intended to inspire and prompt initiative and organisational capacity for development in territorial contexts.

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1. "Territorial disintegration" and the need for social innovation

Recognition of the importance of territory-based initiative and organisational capacity for the full mobilisation of resources is becoming clear in the context of developing current thinking in Europe on the future of territorial cohesion policy. The European Commission's *"Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion: Turning territorial diversity into strength"* (CEC, 2008) formulates this perspective. The communication was drafted following the adoption of the *"Territorial Agenda of the European Union"* at the informal meeting of Member State ministers responsible for spatial planning and development, held in May 2007 under the German Presidency of the European Union. An independent report written by Fabricio Barca (Barca, 2009), *"An Agenda for a Reformed Cohesion Policy: A place-based approach to meeting European Union challenges and expectations",* takes an in-depth look at this perspective.

Meanwhile, the increasing complexity of territorial manifestations of globalisation has been attracting mounting attention. The fact that the complexity intensifies when *'territorial disintegration'* processes (urban areas in crisis, less developed peripheral regions, etc.) are involved was being recognised, together with the fact that to overcome them calls for changes in the socio-economic contexts in which they are experienced. Local development offered perspectives for action and cooperation of local initiative for such changes was clearly essential.

This local initiative, however, may not emerge spontaneously, and the meaning of action for local development may not be clear (Henriques, 2007). The world is facing profound and accelerating politico-economical transformation, a *transition* in which globalisation and localisation processes are simultaneously intensifying, with repercussions that are potentially both negative and positive.

Widely divergent points of view on the meaning of this transformation combine to reinforce local social agents' *inhibition* of organising forms of collective

action, whether orientated towards "preventing" and "mitigating" problems, or towards identifying and making the most of opportunities arising out of the transformation process. How to counteract this *inhibition* could constitute the central focus of reflection in public policies aimed at *reversing* "territorial disintegration" processes.

Social innovation is therefore evidently more necessary and urgent for improving public policy and for collective capacity-building in the societal response to these problems. The meaning of public action in the facilitation of local initiative and promotion of local development needs to be clarified.

Indeed, it is in this sense that the notion of social innovation is presented by the OECD, according to which, there is social innovation whenever new mechanisms and norms consolidate and improve the well-being of individuals, communities and territories in terms of social inclusion, creation of employment, and improved quality of life. Social innovation aims to respond to new needs that are not addressed by the market, and which may encompass conceptual and organisational aspects, and changes in the relationships between communities and respective territories.[2]

Contemporary reality makes it impossible to accurately predict all the repercussions that the present crisis in the international financial system will have on employment. Increasing difficulties facing businesses in obtaining credit, dropping local demand as result of the recession, and stiffer international competition are giving rise to concerns about increased social problems associated with unemployment, discrimination, and unequal access to employment.

The following reflection endeavours to show the importance of the Equal Community Initiative's contributions to overcoming the absence, insufficiency or unsuitability of current public measures in stimulating the emergence of local initiative. As has been seen, territory-based capacity for initiative and organisation is vital for mobilising the potential endogenous to local communities to be used in the collective effort to fully mobilise local resources to address employment access problems. It will be endeavoured here to show how it was possible to:

a) build a territorial animation "model" based on experimentation undertaken by a number of projects working within a thematic network – the "Territorial Animation" thematic network.

b) build a dissemination and mainstreaming "model" based on work carried out in a partnership, open to new agents directly involved in the design of the action (a partnership based on 'community of practice' principles); the Anim@Te project integrated Peniche Municipal Council, Beja's *Escola Superior de Educação, Associação Animar* and *Federação Minha Terra* in the partnership originally set up within the thematic network.

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2   For further information see: http://www.oecd.org/about/0,3347,en_2649_34459_1_1_1_1_1,00.html (accessed 3 June 2009).

c) develop a capacity-building methodology for action, based on social interaction and *attributing meaning* to the results of Equal Community Initiative projects represented, or otherwise, in the initial thematic network, contributing to collective efforts to expand local assimilation of social innovation, learning from experience, and full mobilisation of resources in response to the crisis.

2. Social innovation and local initiative

Recognition of the importance of local development and local initiative in territorial development processes has been gradually consolidating since the early 1980s. The recognition referred to above is concrete expression of that process.

International organisations have taken up "local development" as a domain within their remit. The World Bank[3], the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)[4], and the International Labour Organisation[5] have explicitly affirmed their involvement in the issue.

As mentioned above, there has been a progressive evolution at European level. The potential significance of local initiative for employment and development began to arouse particular attention from European institutions after the Council Resolution of 7 June 1984[6]. Research-action programmes followed (LEDA, ERGO, EGLEI, TURN, ELISE, LEI and POVERTY III) for about a decade, and emphasis was placed on experimentation for innovation in this field in the context of the structural funds through Article 6 of the ESF and Article 7-10 of the ERDF.

Nonetheless, it was only fully and formally recognised following the European Summits of Corfu (1992) and Essen (1994) and given a decisive thrust by the Commission's 1993 White Paper on "*Growth, Competitiveness and Employment*". Later, even before the formal launch of the European Employment Strategy, the local dimension of action for employment was highlighted through the 1996 *"Territorial Employment Pacts"*.

More recently, the European Commission has been attaching increasing importance to the local dimension of the *European Employment Strategy*. Initially, through its Communication on "*Acting Locally for Employment: the Local Dimension for the European Employment Strategy*" (2000)[7], and subsequently through its Communication "*Strengthening the Local Dimension of the European Employment Strategy*"

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[3] For an overview of World Bank initiatives, see "Sustainable Local Economic Development", at http://www.worldbank.org/urban/led/index.html (30 May 2009) or Glocal Forum, at http://www.glocalforum.org (30 May 2009).

[4] For an overview of OECD initiatives (LEED programme), see "Local Economic and Employment Development", at http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/14/13/17834061.pdf (30 May 2009).

[5] To learn about ILO initiatives (LED programme), see "Local Economic Development (LED), at http://www.ilo.org/dyn/empent/empent.portal?p_lang=EN&p_prog=L (30 May 2009).

[6] Council Resolution of 7 June 1984 (84/C – 161/01).

[7] COM (2000) 196 Final, 07.04.2000.

(2001)[8], the European Commission emphasised the local dimension of the *European Employment Strategy*.

The potential contribution of local action came to be recognised as a vital contribution to combating unemployment, promoting entrepreneurship, and building new forms of governance. The IDELE[9] project illustrates the development of this perspective.

3. "Territorial Disintegration", social innovation and territorial animation

Local initiative and organisational and institutional conditions for sustainable action are to be found, therefore, at the heart of reflection on territorial articulation of public employment policies and on forms of local governance that can contribute to improving its results.

However, this type of initiative tends not to emerge *spontaneously* in the most suitable form. The *non-emergence* itself has been the subject of some reflection (Henriques, 2006, 2007). This *non-emergence* stems from *"territorial disintegration"* processes that combine in the economic and socio-institutional destructuring of local communities and this needs to be looked at separately.

Spatially different in their material effects, public policies, particularly those concerned with regional development, have proven to be neither sufficient nor suitable for effectively tackling the *non-emergence* of local initiative. In some cases, they may even have contributed to reinforcing it (internal migrations, ill effects of additional access in peripheral regions, the effects of land price increases in urban 'crisis' areas, etc.).

Territorial animation oriented towards the emergence of initiative and the creation of conditions to make it self-sustainable calls for action that *reverses* "territorial disintegration" processes. Accordingly, it finds its strategic meaning in two different domains:

a)   the domain of public policy and the institutional conditions that link them to the creation of new forms of governance oriented to self-sustaining territory-based action (in the face of spontaneous *non-emergence* local initiative).
b)   the domain of the theoretical, conceptual and methodological conditions that contribute to define the *substantive* content of the "territorial animation" action (regardless of the entity promoting it) and the development of the right skills for this type of action.

"Territorial animation" aims to help expand opportunities for economic and social integration, improve access to employment, and promote citizenship. In this respect, "territorial animation" makes it possible to redefine employment, not as

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[8]   COM (2001) 629 Final, 06.11.2001.
[9]   The Project "Identification, Dissemination and Exchange of Good Practice in Local Employment Development and Promoting Better Governance" (IDELE) (http://www.ecotec.com/idele/resources) (accessed 3 May 2009).

an end in itself but as a means of accessing monetary resources, creating and maintaining relations of social interdependence, and facilitating the realisation of social rights. In the final analysis, it allows the "economic" to be put back at the heart of the conditions that facilitate or block satisfaction of human needs.

4. Contributions of the Equal Community Initiative: the Anim@Te Project[10]

The Anim@Te project originated in the "Territorial Animation" thematic network that operated throughout Round 2 of the Equal Community Initiative[11]. The experience of the projects represented in the thematic network combined with the experience of the Anim@Te project, focused on disseminating and mainstreaming the transversal results of those projects, now make it possible to identify a number of dimensions in which more extensive action in the domain of public policy can be suggested.

Through their experiences and outcomes, the projects are able to offer examples of action possibilities. Their "products" can always be used as possible supports for actions carried out in different contexts. The projects demonstrated that it is possible to act in accordance with the assumptions and challenges referred to here, and that it is possible to put in place the right institutional, organisational and technical conditions in which to implement self-sustaining action (Henriques, 2008).

By extending the original partnership to include Peniche Municipal Council, *Associação "Animar", Federação "Minha Terra"* and Beja's *Escola Superior de Educação*, the Anim@Te project demonstrated how people's qualifications and skills development prospects can be improved by combining access to information about the results of experimental action and facilitating conditions for social interaction in learning processes that directly involve professionals and organisations that have acquired new knowledge and skills as a result of their involvement in the work of these projects.

Implementing territorial animation is demanding. It presupposes acknowledgement that the action's *departure point* is actually the *arrival point* of "territorial disintegration" processes. It means recognising that the *non-emergence* of local initiatives could be a *consequence* of those very processes. And it means admitting that conventional public responses are non-existent, insufficient or inappropriate for bringing about a "reversal" of the processes that inhibit those local initiatives from emerging.

Establishing entities that have the initiative and organisational capacity for self-sustaining territorial animation action is starting to become the object of public policy. Likewise, deepening knowledge about the substantive nature of animation action to be carried out could start to be the object of public policy.

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[10]   I thank all the members of the Anim@Te partnership for the opportunity to interact and learn from their experience and insights based on the development of the individual projects they represent.

[11]   The following reflection is largely based on texts contained in the *"Living Document"*, written in the context of the thematic network "Territorial and Sectoral Animation" (Henriques, 2008a) and the White Paper for the Anim@Te Project (Henriques, 2008b).

The Anim@Te project experience allows for speculation about an Anim@Te Model for territorial animation in which three distinct perspectives converge:

a) analysis of the territorial intervention contexts and knowledge production about the specific factors that inhibit local initiatives from reversing "territorial disintegration" processes, and about the conditions on which implementation of action to ensure resources are fully mobilised could depend.
b) territorial integration of results from experimental action, linking new forms of governance with substantive action strategies based on projects' transversal learnings.
c) learning facilitation and capacity-building processes for the action by means of incorporating information about other results from the Equal Community Initiative, "making sense of them" and coherently associating them with the original experimentation.

5. The "Anim@Te Model" of Analysis: epistemological, theoretical and conceptual perspectives

Associating territorial animation with results from an experimental programme and social learning processes for capacity-building calls for some structuring of the respective epistemological, theoretical and conceptual assumptions. (Henriques, J.M., 2006)

a) Critical realism

Critical realism is a perspective in contemporary epistemological debate according to which reality is conceived of as stratified (Sayer, 1984). The empirical (observable) domain, the structures and mechanisms domain (only discernable through the social agents' behaviours), and the domain of the potentially real (possibly observable through the activation of the social entities' capacity to bring about change) are distinguishable.

Critical realism does not reduce the real to what exists but seeks to deepen knowledge about what does, and what might not exist (problems), and about what does not yet exist but could exist (innovation, possibilities of change).

Lastly, critical realism introduces a notion of causality, according to which there is a distinction between formal and substantive relations (necessary and contingent) in the analysis of the relationship between social entities. Critical realism emphasises "rectroduction" in the identification of causal relations. For example, starting from the concrete manifestation of innovation facilitated by a project, the aim is to identify the causal powers upon whose activation its concretisation depended.

Critical realism makes it possible, therefore, to focalise knowledge production in order to clarify the conditions on which the occurrence of (as yet unobservable) "social innovation" could depend.

b) *Territorial disintegration, local development and local initiative*

The concept of "territorial disintegration" has diverse origins. It stems from the notion of "regional disintegration" proposed by Walter Stöhr (Stöhr, 1983) (erosion of resources, under-utilisation or over-utilisation of local resources, community and socio-political disintegration, etc.) and is enriched with the perspective advanced by Frank Moulaert (Moulaert, 2000). The complex interdependence between ecological, economic, socio-cultural, political and psychological aspects underlying the *inhibition* of local initiative to respond to "local disintegration" has already been described as *local under-development'* (Henriques, 1990*b*). Taking action to overcome "local disintegration" processes is also becoming dependent upon the way in which the processes that combine to produce *non-emergence* of place-based initiative and organisational capacity and *invisibility* of action possibilities and the resources that could make them viable, can be offset.

However, overcoming "spontaneous" *non-emergence* of local initiative is rarely a key dimension in the conception of action. This shortcoming was acknowledged at European level when it was recognised that obstacles to local development are to be found less at financial level and more at "*mindsets and administrative organisation*" levels.[12]

There still remains some *ambiguity* concerning the nature of the respective scope (Henriques, J.M., 2007). It is not always clear that at the root of local development approaches there is a regional development *paradigm shift.* A paradigm shift that involves an explicit restructuring of the concept of development (human needs, poverty, employment, the small scale of human organisation, environmental sustainability, etc.), and which explicitly presupposes the *non*-reduction of local development to "economic growth at small-scale territorial units level". When job creation, social inclusion or environmental sustainability objectives are concerned, not only are the emergence of initiative capacity and organisational capacity brought into play, but also the capacity to *take action beyond* more conventional assumptions (Baumhöfer, 1982; Ekins, 1986; Ekins and Max-Neef, 2002; Friedmann, 1988, 1992; Galtung, 1986, Henderson, 1999; Norberg-Hodge, 2001; Philips, 1986; Perry, 2001; Walker and Goldsmith, 2001, Schuman, 2000).

Previous research in fields that impact on the theoretical grounding of local development already contains different perspectives for possible development. Reference should be made here to perspectives of theoretical reflection around the grounding of 'endogenous' regional development strategies (Stöhr e Tödtling, 76, 77, 82; Stöhr, 1981*a*, 1981*b*, 1983, 1984, 1986, 1987, 1990; Weaver, 1984; Friedmann and Weaver, 1979), community development strategies (Chanan,1992), 'locality studies' (Bagguley et al, 1990; Cook, 1985; Urry, 1985), territorially integrated development strategies (Moulaert, 2002; Moulaert et al 1991) or insti-

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[12]   CEC (1994*), "Inventory of Community Action to Support Local Development and Employment*", Commission Staff Working Paper, SEC (94) 2199, see point 2.3.

tutionalist and realist perspectives of regional development (Amin, 1994; Malecki and Tödtling, 1994; Novy, 1992; Storper, 1995; Syrett, 1995).

The paradigm shift referred to above emphasises the role of local communities' capacity for initiative and organisation as a precondition for development. In the "spontaneous" absence of initiative, *territorial animation* could itself be the object of action for creating *conditions for collective action*, with a view to the exercise of that initiative and organisational capacity (financial resources, legal competences, etc.).

c) *Realist evaluation and learning from experience: information on "conditions of possibility", knowledge and skills*

Recognition of the *absence, insufficiency, or unsuitability* of government responses to current social problems is implicit in the recognition that social innovation is needed for public policy restructuring. The creation of experimental programmes based on local projects aimed at promoting innovation in public policy falls within the sphere of that recognition. This is the case of the Equal Community Initiative. Such programmes are remarkably complex and pose specific challenges to effectively evaluating of their contributions to improving public policy. (Henriques, 2004)

Not contemplating the entire national territory, i.e., "*the totality of localities*", these programmes are associated with the implicit acceptance that their "*territorial selectivity*" translates the assumption that the social problems they deal with *are not* regarded as problems *of* the localities, more importance being given to the initiative and organisational capacity (submission of applications, organisation of the action, etc.). On the other hand, projects of this type reveal non-correspondence between the *end* of the project and the *end* of the problem (which justified the creation of the programme and project), and this presents a challenge with important implications for the setting of their objectives.

There are remarkably complex methodological challenges that can lead to a questioning of the limits of the dominant scientific paradigm (limits of positivism and, given the need to accept unobservable, albeit possible, empirical realities, limits of the disciplinary constitution of knowledge in the face of problems that only exist in their real totality, limits of deductivism in the causal analysis for innovation, etc.) (Henriques, J.M., 2006; Henriques, J.M., 2004).

The relation between evaluation of programmes with these characteristics and learning facilitation processes that are based on experimentation carried out deserves some specific attention. This matter is all the more relevant since the relation to be established does not presuppose direct involvement in the action but rather access to information about the outcomes of the action (best practice databases, product portfolios, etc.).

There are two approaches to understanding knowledge production and learning facilitation (Henriques, J.M, Trayner, B., 2009) that are relevant to this reflection. On one hand, there are approaches that valorise *information transmission*

based on contents created by specialists, which can be categorised, transmitted and used by potential users. The user is seen as an individual, and the main effort behind the preparation of information goes into content development. On the other hand, there are approaches based on learning models that take into account the shared discovery between participants, the "attribution of meaning", and the practice of applying knowledge.

6. The Anim@Te Intervention Model for territorial-based action: new forms of governance and action strategy

Transversal reflection on the experiences of the projects represented in the Anim@Te project led to the creation of a thematic structure on which to base a model for analysis, intervention and capacity-building for action based on the exercise of critical reflexivity and on social interaction involving social agents involved in the action. The following reflection is based on information contained in the "Living Document" drafted in the Thematic Network on "Territorial Animation" (Henriques, J.M., 2008b) and the White Paper written in the context of the Anim@Te project (Henriques, J.M., 2008a).

a) New forms of place-based governance and action

Delving into the challenges facing "governance" takes place in a general context of increasing *denationalisation* of the State, *de-statisation* of political regimes and *internationalisation* of the national State. "Governance" reflects the transition from a model of social regulation based on the central role of the State ("governance") to another based on partnerships and other forms of association between governmental, *para-governmental* and non-governmental organisations in which the State plays only a coordinating role.

However, the exercise of governance in action facing "territorial disintegration" processes calls for pro-active attitudes on the part of territorial agents that are not independent from the ways in which those agents interpret the nature of the phenomena in question, as well as the respective 'space for manoeuvre' in the action dealing with them.

It is about situating the action according to the manner of interpreting the relation between local *causes* and *manifestations* of social problems such as urbanistic functional *mono-specialisation*, disconnection from economic prosperity processes, unemployment and precarious employment, impoverishment and social exclusion, or socio-community disintegration processes.

Inter-institutional articulation for action

Thus, paradoxically, the creation of new forms of governance aimed at countering "territorial disintegration" will hardly be able to do without the collaboration of state action for its animation in the process of creating *new ways of social regulation*.

Animation of the strategic sense of public action and the development of coordination tasks by the State cannot be other than effectively carried out. Neither can the State's responsibility "*dilute*" in the face of unavoidable competences, nor can the strategic sense of action stop from being 'animated' through the centrality of the State in the process of social regulation.

The projects represented in the Anim@Te project showed *how* territorial integration of policies can be promoted by means of greater inter-institutional coordination. The "Logística" project, for example, by focusing on prevention logistics and forest fire prevention, contributed to increasing knowledge about the complexity involved in inter-sectoral, inter-organisational, and multi-level action, as well as to a deeper understanding of the conditions needed for building new forms of inter-institutional articulation in territorial animation.

Building collective action ("agency")

The *reversal* of "territorial disintegration" processes presupposes the possibility of engaging in critical reflection on situations and their causes, as well as on the absence of organisational forms that make viable the defence of interests and achievement of objectives that have been prioritised by the local population.

Local authorities have "attributes and competences", conferred on them by law, which contribute to facilitate action in this domain. The possibilities for action, however, are not always clear.

The projects represented in the Equal Anim@Te project showed how it is possible to actively promote citizenship through innovative forms of social participation involving setting collective priorities and decision-making about mobilising local resources to achieve them. This was the case of the "São Brás Solidário" project's contribution, which experimented with a "participative budget", a municipal initiative, and with organising different forms of voluntary work, "exchange clubs" with the issue of *solidarity money*, solidarity markets and organisation of "community meetings".

"Action partnerships"

In the context of this reflection, the notion of "governance" combines with the implicit acknowledgment of pre-existing initiative and organisational capacity among different territorial social agents. It is, however, the *absence* of these that is the preferential object of reflection in the sphere of public policy.

International organisations have been recognising the need for forms of local governance and the role to be played by "Local Development Agencies". The United Nations LEDA Programme[13], the ILO through the LED Pro-

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[13]   For further information on the "International Liaison Services for Local Economic Development Agencies" see: http://www.ilsleda.org/ils-leda (accessed 3 March 2005).

gramme[14], the OECD through the LEED Programme[15] and the World Bank
through its support programme for Local Economic Development[16] illustrate
this recognition.

The projects represented in the Equal Anim@Te project showed *how*, by
using formal local partnerships ("Development Partnerships"), it is possible to
develop in-depth working partnership and to progress to effective forms of local
governance based on efficient "action partnerships". The "Prometrur" project
demonstrated how that progress can be achieved through promoting teamwork
and mobilising different types of knowledge.

b) *Animation strategies*

Animation strategies are about creating new forms of organisation and conditions
that ensure action is self-sustaining through community animation (animation
groups, monitoring and consultancy, organising interests, etc.).

It presupposes the possibility of building a *hope project* that mobilises people
around images of desirable futures without reversion to collective memories of
shared pasts, and the possibility that forms of local organisation can ensure the
continuity of the action. It presupposes the build-up of hope and confidence
based on inter-personal relationships, that is, technical teams with specific and
generic skills and a constant local physical presence.

Animation for citizenship and creation of new organisational forms

Different forms of "citizenship deficit" are expressed by the inability to exercise
power at both discursive and organisational levels ("organisational outflanking").
People who experience situations of this type are not a collective with specific
interests, nor are they in conditions that facilitate the discursive reconstitution of
the situations they find themselves in. The differentiation and heterogeneity of
these situations contribute to exacerbating this difficulty.

Institutional and organisational innovation, which is oriented to creating locally
based organisations in conditions that will ensure the continuity and self-
sustainability of the action, is considered a necessary prerequisite for the full
mobilisation of local resources. It is in this context that the vital importance of
organisational forms such as "Local Development Agencies" or civil society

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[14]   For further information on the Local Economic Development Programme (LED) see: http://
www.ilo.org/dyn/empent/empent.portal?p_lang=EN&p_prog=L&p_subprog=LE (accessed 3
March 2008).

[15]   Further information about the "Local Economic and Employment Development" (LEED) Programme
available at: http://www.oecd.org/topic/0,2686,en_2649_34417_1_1_1_1_37457,00.html (accessed
3 March 2008).

[16]   Further information on the World Bank's approach to Local Economic Development available at:
http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTURBANDEVELOPMENT/
EXTLED/0,,menuPK:341145~pagePK:149018~piPK:149093~theSitePK:341139,00.html
(accessed 3 March 2008).

organisations that work to promote citizenship is defended. It is up to these organisations to animate the exercise of the *prospective* and the building of collective action for the strategic anticipation and achievement of contrasted scenarios.

The projects represented in the Anim@Te project have shown *how* it is possible to link citizenship animation with innovation in organisational forms, creating conditions for overcoming the absence of conditions for collective action and for mobilising resources around a collectively driven change project. The "Teias" project, for example, which set up a "Citizen Support Unit", sought to combine a community-based service with "social mediation", networking, and change promotion for development.

Individual and collective capacity-building

The substantive concretisation of territorial animation strategies can take different forms, either geared to individual members of communities or to organisational forms that may already exist.

The projects represented in the Equal Anim@Te project showed *how* it is possible to take action to achieve a positive territorial identity and individual and collective capacity-building, by means of intervention units in places affected by "territorial disintegration". One such project is "K'Cidade", which used an empowerment approach to achieve self-sustaining action (community innovation projects for collective mobilisation, capacity-building and an improved standard of professionalism in residents' organisations, etc.).

Animation strategies for economic integration

Promoting access to employment in the wider sphere of citizenship promotion raises the need to place the contribution employment makes to satisfying human needs in a global context, in which their satisfaction is increasingly market dependent. The present international financial crisis makes in-depth reflection in this area more urgent.

Individual and collective organisation to reduce that dependency could be combined with individual and collective organisation aimed at increasing the possibilities of accessing employment and income, and to realising social rights. An integrated vision of the respective interdependencies and non-conventional action frameworks are called for.

Selective self-determination and "total" economic animation

The creation of conditions that facilitate greater autonomy in respect of avoidable consumer habits may deserve urgent attention. Farm produce for self-consumption, self-building, volunteer work in community associations, group organisation for childcare, etc., are just some examples of ways to give concrete expression to this perspective.

The importance of creating use values in the local "economic" is not perceptible through more conventional approaches (Wheelock, 1992). It can, however, play an important role in the reconceptualisation and reconstitution of conditions that facilitate the economic and social integration of impoverished or socially excluded groups.

The Equal projects in the Anim@Te project showed *how* it is possible to take action to achieve less market dependency in the satisfaction of human needs, and *how* solutions in this field can be linked to organisational forms that facilitate the strengthening of social interdependence and citizenship. By encouraging organisation and production for self-consumption, and organising 'exchange clubs' and the issue of local money, the "São Brás Solidário" project experimented with different ways of underpinning territorial self-determination.

Animating Integrated Pathways

Placement and vocational training are insufficient responses to facilitating job access in today's context.

Prior identification of real job opportunities (identification of local and non-local enterprises with genuine job creation potential, identification of potential for job increases in existing or emerging establishments, etc.) and the combination of actions involving personal development, awareness-raising, and occupation specific training, are all necessary in concrete situations.

There is already some consensus at European level in respect of the "integrated pathways" approach to facilitating access to employment. In fact, "integrated pathways" approaches to guidance-training-integration are based on the realisation that certain groups are systematically excluded from mainstream education-training systems and face persistent difficulties in gaining access to employment.

This is a comprehensive approach that focuses on providing direct support to job seekers. It can come in a variety of forms, but stems from consensus around the fact that conventional measures for combating employment have been notably unsuccessful.

It also stems from the realisation that existing responses are often fragmented, and inappropriate to the specific characteristics of the very people in most need of support.

The projects represented in the thematic network "Integrated Pathways of Training-Insertion-Employment" (1st Round) (Henriques, J.M., 2005) and the projects represented in the Anim@Te project have shown how it is possible to facilitate access to employment using "integrated pathways" approaches, directly involving enterprises as potential employers, and facilitating direct contact between potential employers and candidates for the job opportunities created.

Animating "inclusive entrepreneurship"

As has already been pointed out, accessing employment is becoming increasingly dependent upon new employment, and new employment depends more and more

on new business initiative (and less on job increases in already existing enterprises). Self-employment and micro firms are opportunities to be explored here.

However, in view of the reality of people who are unemployed or in precarious employment, it is unlikely that spontaneous and generalised emergence of formal business initiatives are going to emerge. It is important to recognise the very specific characteristics of the target groups and of most small (individual and associative) business initiatives: they need incentives and follow-through that are different to the "normal" type of available support, which is often inappropriate to their specific needs.

Before access to financing, there are a number of issues that should be dealt with first. Animating attitudinal and behavioural changes, fine-tuning business strategy, and organising marketing are just a few of the critical areas that need the pre-existence of specific organisations and appropriate conceptualisation of the action. More conventional approaches are not enough Microcredit has polarised attention around this issue. However, it is only one dimension of necessary action.

Reflection underway at European level on the development of an "Inclusive Entrepreneurship" Community of Practice, around which the results from the Equal Initiative Europe-wide will be systematised, illustrates the issues that are in question.[17]

The projects represented in the Equal Anim@Te project show *how* it is possible to take action to achieve business projects for people who have *no* other employment alternatives in the formal employment system, by implementing specific actions to develop entrepreneurial spirit, support start up, support innovation, and consolidate suitable business strategies and access to financing.

Local economic animation and reinforcing the 'thickness' of local economy

The present globalisation process reflects differently and uniquely in each territorial context. It always translates into different forms of productive and organisational restructuring. This is the case of vertical disintegration and chain reaction subcontracting processes.

Redefining the local "economic" in the animation of income, employment and citizenship calls for focusing attention on interdependence and border relationships. It is less about focusing attention exclusively on enterprises or the unemployed, or on formal and informal sectors, and more about analysing modes of articulation between the different ways of organising economic activity and the social relations around which interdependencies materialise (domestic households, associations, enterprises, etc.).

The projects represented in the Equal Anim@Te project demonstrated *how* action can be taken to create forms of greater interdependence between local organisations and reinforce the closeness of inter-local economic relations, in order to increase job access opportunities and stimulate entrepreneurism.

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17   For further details please see: www.cop.downloadarea.eu (accessed 30 May 2009); www.wikipre
      neurship.eu (accessed 30 May 2009).

Territorial identity for competitive differentiation

The building of development projects aimed at increasing opportunities for accessing employment and increasing economic agents' income, by valorising and mobilising local resources frequently calls for a collective place-based identity that facilitates those processes.

The projects represented in the Equal Anim@Te project showed *how* action can be taken to create a positive and distinct territorial identity in order to establish local competitive advantages. The "Parques com Vida" (Parks with Life) project, for example, demonstrates how action can upgrade territorial identity, enhance local firms' competitive advantage, and involve them in organisational forms connected with managing a "brand name" that promotes the territorial identity (the *Associação Parques com Vida*).

c) *Strategies for mobilising know-how, learning, and skills development*

Animation presupposes proactive effort, which is informed by strategic information and a project for possible change. It is a demanding action domain for technical teams.

The capacity for exercising and facilitating *"visioning",* for example, is now a "generic skill" explicitly considered on the *"European Skills Agenda".*[18] Planning methodologies such as those that may be found in *"Planning for Real"*[19] or in the creation of *"Future Workshops"* (*"Zukunftswerkstaete"*)[20] can offer suitable perspectives for the exercise in question but call for the mobilisation of the type of skills which are not developed through the formal education-training system.

Full mobilisation of resources and different knowledge forms, new forms of dialogue between formal and informal knowledge, and formal, non-formal and informal learning

Implementing territorial animation is demanding. The identification and mobilisation of a local community's *endogenous potential* for mobilising to the full its resources is no easy task.

Furthermore, a certain ambiguity regarding the *nature* of the local development to be undertaken does not facilitate the task. As has been seen, it is about simultaneously identifying the processes that inhibit local initiative, the social agents able to promote capacity for collective initiative and organisation, and the creation of right conditions for implementing buildable, self-sustainable change projects.

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[18]   For further information: http://www.ascskills.org.uk/pages/international (accessed 30 May 2009).
[19]   Further information: http://www.ilo.org/ciaris/pages/portugue/tos/actcycle/planific/methodes/fiche_18.htm (accessed 30 March 2009).
[20]   Further information: http://www.ilo.org/ciaris/pages/portugue/tos/actcycle/planific/methodes/fiche_10.htm (accessed 30 March 2007).

Familiarity with the local reality is essential for the action. Since different types of knowledge coexist in a local community, non-formal agents may be in possession of knowledge that is strategically important for the action.

A local community can house different knowledge forms, but dialogue between them is not always easy. In the end, promoting dialogue between these different knowledge forms means promoting dialogue between the agents who possess them.

The projects represented by the Anim@Te project showed *how* action can be taken to recognise, give value to, and mobilise all available knowledge forms, by creating the right procedures to do so. The projects also demonstrated how different knowledge forms can be used as the basis for action and how dialogue between them can be promoted to ensure that local resources are fully mobilised in favour of development. The "Prometrur" project clearly illustrates how this perspective can be developed. The project showed *how* this type of dialogue can be promoted from a school environment, involving children, young people, and older persons in the action as unconventional agents of change.

Skills development for territorial animation and training technicians

The mobilisation of different knowledge forms, and skills development and continuing training of territorial and sectoral animation practitioners are areas that should be increasingly focused in reflection on "territorial animation".

What is called for is the mobilisation of non-conventional skills, requiring consistent exercises of conceptual restructuring. The specific and generic skills learned through conventional training are not enough.

The projects represented in the Anim@Te project showed *how* action can be taken to produce non-conventional types of skills. The "Florestar" project, for example, worked to promote entrepreneurship among small forest landowners. By creating an online management simulator it demonstrated how conditions can be put in place to facilitate skills development, using means that are not dependent upon the formal education and training system.

7. The Anim@Te Mainstreaming Model

By extending the original partnership to include Peniche Municipal Council, *Associação "Animar", Federação "Minha Terra"* and Beja's *Escola Superior de Educação*, the Anim@Te project demonstrated how people's qualifications and skills development prospects can be improved by providing access to information about the results of experimental action and facilitating conditions for social interaction in learning processes that directly involve professionals and organisations that have acquired new knowledge and skills as a result of their involvement in project work (partnership as a "community of practice").

The work methodology associated with partnership as a "community of practice" was inspired by the work of Etienne Wenger (Wenger, 1998; Wenger et alt, 2002).

a) *The 'Gestão de Proximidade para a Sustentabilidade'(GPS) Project organised by Peniche Municipal Council*

Peniche Municipal Council harnessed features from the experiences of projects in the "Territorial Animation" thematic network. Adapting them to its own context, the Council designed a new organisational form suited to the territorial animation work to be carried out in the municipality's social neighbourhoods. GPS aimed to provide integrated and individualised support that would contribute community development, improve access to information about social support services, facilitate access to employment or self-employment, and promote citizenship.

b) *Summer Course organised by the Escola Superior de Educação in Beja*

The *Escola Superior de Educação* (Higher School of Education) in Beja incorporated elements from the collective reflection in which it had taken part. It intensified reflection on cultural animation already underway at the School and developed an approach to territorial animation that will contribute to a new profile for complementary training especially designed for the employed.

8. Potential importance of the Anim@Te "model" in Portugal: future prospects and action implications

The experience developed by the Anim@Te project constitutes an important legacy for the collective effort to improve public responses in the promotion of economic and social integration, employment creation, and combating inequality and discrimination in access to employment through territory-based animation.
  The projected developed out of a group of projects in a position to provide:

a) in-depth knowledge about the relation between the causes of discrimination and inequality in employment access and the specificity of their local manifestations, and about the reasons why these problems persist in the face of existing public responses, particularly when associated with "territorial disintegration" processes.
b) innovation made viable by the experimental activity undertaken, and illustration of how specific aspects of public responses to promote employment access for disadvantaged target groups may be improved, namely through "territorial animation" to *reverse* these processes and facilitate the emergence of *local initiative*.
c) perspectives on *conditions of possibility* that make such innovation viable and enable its *transfer* to other contexts ("methodological transferability",

horizontal mainstreaming), and perspectives on the conditions upon which the spread of tested innovation for improvements in public responses may depend (policy recommendations, vertical mainstreaming).

The Anim@Te project shows how it is possible to link up the production of knowledge with skills development on the basis of territorial integration of results from the projects represented in Anim@Te, as well as from other projects. It therefore offers a particularly promising methodology for the potential connection between "territorial animation" for local initiative and *capacity-building for action* based on *attributing meaning* to information relating to other Equal results.

Recognition of the spatial diversity and local specificity of problems most vulnerable to unemployment, poverty or social exclusion, recognition of the need for territorial integration of the different action domains within domestic public policy, and recognition of the irrefutable need for territory-based capacity for initiative and organisation around change projects to ensure such integration and guarantee the action's self-sustainability, can all be found in, for example, the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity's "Local Contracts for Social Development", and the "Critical Neighbourhoods Initiative", launched by the Ministry for Environment, Spatial Planning and Regional Development.

By aiming to link the identification of priority intervention territories with local capacity for partnership realisation, the "Local Contracts for Social Development*"* (Ordinance no. 396/2007) are at the heart of the Anim@Te project's stated challenges regarding the substantive content of possible implementation of "territorial animation" strategies.

The "Critical Neighbourhoods Initiative" (Council of Ministers Resolution no. 143/2005) endeavours to test new models of governance involving local authorities, local organisations and central administration, with a view to clarifying the conditions upon which the implementation of integrated continuous public action in urban "crisis" areas in Portugal may depend in the future.

The challenges facing the development of the action in the "Critical Neighbourhoods Initiative" and "Local Contracts for Social Development*"* in Portugal make this issue even more significant and current. In both initiatives, the Anim@Te Model will be able to provide a methodology that is suited to territorial integration of social innovation that was triggered by the Equal Community Initiative's development in our country.

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