

Social enterprise and the rights of persons with intellectual disabilities:

A case study of Romania's "Pentru Voi" Fundatia

Robin L. Erasing,
University of South Florida

Diane N. Loeffler,
University of Kentucky

Martin B. Tracy,
Social Insurance Research International
Murray

Laila Onu
Fundatia „Pentru Voi”
Timișoara-România

Pentru Voi Fundatia, a private, non-government organization (NGO) dedicated to providing direct service and advocacy to adults with intellectual disabilities, is discussed as an exemplar of best practice in interdisciplinary community development (ICD). Specifically, we discuss the organization's use of social enterprise to provide for the general welfare of the community while simultaneously providing opportunities and services to a specific vulnerable population. The Pentru Voi Bakery, which provides opportunities for individuals with intellectual disabilities to live and work in a community setting, is used to showcase the key elements of successful ICD and social enterprise development.

Introduction

The post-communist era in Romania has brought with it a series of significant social changes. One such change is a shift in responsibility for the care of individuals with physical and mental disabilities. Rapid deinstitutionalization of this population has resulted in the need for innovative practices among community-based agencies to promote and protect the rights of children and adults with disabilities. "Pentru Voi Fundatia" (For You Foundation) is presented here as an organization that engages in "best practices" of interdisciplinary community development (ICD). ICD is based on positive social, economic, and organizational changes that improve the general welfare of the community while providing services to a specific vulnerable population. Specifically, the development strategy implemented by "Pentru Voi" illustrates the integration of local, national and international resources through social entrepreneurship, resulting in economically viable partnerships that offer adults with intellectual disabilities access to education and employment opportunities within a community context.

The history of "Pentru Voi" is presented, as it provides an excellent opportunity for highlighting the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration in the development and delivery of social services in a post-communist Eastern Europe country experiencing numerous barriers to successful service provision and proactive community development. John Dewey's pragmatism provides the theoretical construct for discussing and understanding "Pentru Voi" as an exemplary model of interdisciplinary community development and social enterprise development. Given the organization's relatively short history (as it was founded in 1996), the many ways in which the organization has been able to effectively create positive social change is certainly of note.

The "Pentru Voi" Bakery is the social enterprise initiative that is a hallmark of the organization's success. This social enterprise initiative draws together the public and private sectors to create opportunities for clients to build human and social capital and to sustain the NGO with financial capital generated from the enterprise. This social enterprise initiative provides a template for other organizations to utilize in creating their own successful social enterprise initiatives. While other organizations may not choose to operate a bakery, they can learn from the

highlighting the exemplary work of the Fundatia in the development of a viable social enterprise.

Background

The "Pentru Voi" Fundatia is a private, non-government organization (NGO) committed to increasing the quality of life for adults with intellectual disabilities in Timișoara, a city of about 320,000 in western Romania. The organization is involved in both direct service and advocacy. Founded in 1996, "Pentru Voi" is a sustainable NGO built on community support, government collaboration, international partnerships, interdisciplinary practice, and self-sufficiency. It creates opportunities for adults with intellectual disabilities to be included in the social, economic, and cultural development of the community. "Pentru Voi" has been recognized by the George Soros' Open Society Institute as a model of best practice for its supported employment and opportunities for independent living, providing services and opportunities for persons with intellectual disabilities in the era of deinstitutionalization in Central and Eastern Europe (Open Society Institute, 2005, par. 2).

Challenges for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities in Romania

In the aftermath of the 1989 revolution, the poor living conditions, inadequate food and water supplies, and the generally dismal conditions of Romania's childcare institutions were broadcast worldwide, provoking an overwhelming response (Dickens & Groza, 2004). Parallel to this crisis in childcare was a much less publicized predicament regarding Romania's formerly institutionalized adults. Prior to the revolution, Romania, like most countries in South Eastern Europe, "relied on large residential institutions to provide care to people with special needs, notably children, the elderly, and those with physical and mental disabilities" (Fultz & Tracy, 2004, 6). Indeed, during Ceausescu's reign, the state's policies adversely affected the family's ability to care for small children and handicapped persons (Johnson, Edwards, & Puwak, 1993). Amariei (2003) paints a dismal picture of life for persons with disabilities:

As in most Communist countries, the official government policy towards the disabled was to try and hide their existence...the regime offered two "solutions." The least violent was for them to stay with their families, who would hide them away from neighbors' eyes. Or they would be warehoused – and largely abandoned – in state institutions, where the quality of life could sometimes be on par with that of a prison camp (1).

This approach was very costly and exclusionary. In the years following the Communist era, the process of de-institutionalization has been complicated and communities have struggled to respond to the needs of the growing number of individuals with disabilities now living within the community. By the year 2003, 95% of all persons with disabilities were living outside of residential care facilities. Almost 400,000 persons with disabilities were living in communities, many of which still lacked facilities and services specific to this population. This illustrates the need for community based programs and services, as living with a disability frequently leads to poverty because of the inequality that exists with regard to access and utilization of services available for persons with disabilities (Zamfir, Preda, & Dan, 2006).

Romania's communities have struggled to provide adequate care and services for formerly institutionalized individuals. Some of this need was initially addressed by a large infusion of assistance from international NGOs. Although these initiatives were welcomed, many problems arose because there were no national regulatory procedures in place to deal with the emergence of a non-profit sector, nor was there a trained workforce available to provide care and services to this population. Under Ceausescu, the state controlled all matters of health and welfare (Johnson & Young, 1997), all non-profit organizations were forbidden and Romanian society was closed to Western influence, including a ban on scholarly journals and educational opportunities (Johnson et al., 1995).

The Emergence of the NGO Sector in Romania

In the aftermath of Communism, Romania's non profit sector has emerged. Community based organizations have been created to address a wide variety of needs and areas of interest.

While most international NGOs engaged in social services were created to benefit the thousands of children that had been institutionalized, some were specifically established to assist children and adults with disabilities. However, there were few regulations in place to assure the quality of care and services. Moreover, many organizations did not register with the Romanian government and it was difficult to know how many organizations had been established and what services they were providing. In 2003 the National Authority for Handicapped Persons was created and quality standards for services delivered were formally instituted under the Protection Centres for Persons with Handicaps (Marinoiu, Zamfir, & Vladu, 2004).

Although some internationally supported NGOs have been very successful, the international involvement in Romanian relief efforts waned in the early 1990s and the country itself lacked the infrastructure and capital to provide adequate decentralized care. By the mid-90s, relatively few international relief organizations remained in Romania and few Romanians had the capacity to provide needed services (Dickens & Groza, 2004). With decreasing support from international NGOs, poverty, unemployment, and inflation were on the rise (United Nations Children's Fund, 1997). In response to a diminished presence of international NGOs, Romania's federal government encouraged the development of community-based NGOs, provided limited financial support to these organizations, and worked to establish quality standards and regulations. In 2003, there were 83 requests to establish foundations and associations submitted to the Ministry of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family (Marinoiu, et al., 2004). Nevertheless, there remain multiple barriers to creating effective social service organizations, including a "scarcity of resources...a shortage of trained personnel, the immaturity of contemporary social work...ineffective coordination between national and local levels that makes reaching target groups difficult; and weak utilization of partnerships with [NGOs]" (Fultz & Tracy, 2004, 8).

The History and Development of "Pentru Voi" Fundatia

In this environment, "Pentru Voi" has emerged as an example of best practice, providing quality community based rehabilitation for persons with intellectual disabilities and embracing the concepts of social inclusion, social cohesion, and equal opportunity. What eventually grew into "Pentru Voi" started when a group of concerned parents of children with intellectual disabilities banded together to demand better care and services for their children. The efforts of this group of parents, with support from international organizations, evolved into the *Societatea Romana Speranta A Familiilor cu Persoane cu Handicap Mental si*

Polihandicap (The Romanian Society "Hope" for Families with Mentally Handicapped and Polyhandicapped Persons). The organization (herein referred to as Speranta) was one of the first associations created in the post-Communist era (Alexiu, 2006; Amariei, 2003; Johnson et al., 1995). With support from international organizations and governments, Speranta gained momentum. Using the Dutch system as a model, a day center was created to serve the needs of children with intellectual disabilities and their families. This effort would have lost inertia had it not been for the tireless commitment from parents who were passionate about providing a better quality of life for their own children. With parents working as the advocates, organizers, and volunteer staff, Speranta continued to grow. What started as a volunteer commitment soon became a paid position for one parent who eventually left her job as an electrical engineer to oversee the development and day-to-day operations of Speranta. Because she was fluent in English, she was able to access scholarly research and was able to build partnerships with international organizations, especially from the Netherlands. Funds from international NGOs in Austria and Sweden also helped Speranta to expand its capacity and mission. As the organization grew and prospered, the children of the original founding parents became adolescents and young adults, revealing a glaring deficit of services available for adults with intellectual disabilities (Alexiu, 2006).

In 1996, "Pentru Voi" became a foundation and an international Board of Directors was appointed to oversee the development of the new programs and facilities. The Foundation was created as such to protect the organization from being subsumed by the Romanian authorities. Lessons learned in the development of Speranta allowed the same advocates (mostly parents) to create a successful organization that tapped into support available within the community and within the international donor community. The leadership provided by multiple stakeholders in the new project was essential to the development of "Pentru Voi". The Executive Director, one of the original parents and founding members of Speranta, used her influence within the international community to persuade local authorities to support the project as well. What emerged was a partnership wherein the Romanian state and local authorities contribute to the "functioning expenses" of "Pentru Voi" and the foreign partners provide oversight for the facility (Alexiu, 2006).

"Pentru Voi" bases all programs and services upon the principles of social inclusion and respect. Dignity, worth, self determination, equality, and the ethics of solidarity are the core values of its programs that include: day services, vocational training, residential services (including both assisted and community-based living opportunities), community support, advocacy, and specialized training for other NGOs. "Pentru Voi" creates opportunities for adults with intellectual disabilities to be included in the social, economic, and cultural development of the community. Many of "Pentru Voi's" clients (or beneficiaries, as they are referred to by the staff) spend their days working at "Pentru Voi" and return home to their families in the evening. Depending upon skills and levels of functioning, some beneficiaries work and live in supported environments in the community. One innovative program, the "Pentru Voi" Bakery, established in 2004, provides an opportunity for beneficiaries to live in an independent setting and to work in a social enterprise that provides needed goods (bread and rolls) to the community, as well as providing a source of revenue for the organization. This initiative is discussed below within the context of interdisciplinary community development.

Literature review

Interdisciplinary Community Development (ICD)

Community development is recognized as an integral component for improving the economic, physical, social, and sometimes political conditions of marginalized or impoverished areas by building upon existing assets and resources, and engaging members or residents of the area in the development process (Brophy & Shabecoff, 2001; Estes, 1997; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). Community development is aimed at building assets (defined as physical, financial, political, human and social capital) within a community; these assets are accessed to improve life chances and to promote positive change for targeted populations within the community (Ferguson & Dickens, 1999). Shaffer, Deller and Marcouiller (2004, 230) stress the importance of integrating "new paradigm thinking" into successful community development, challenging communities to think about how new and innovative community development can enhance quality of life for community members. Community development is process oriented and the process is specific to the targeted initiative's strengths and needs. Whether local, national, or international in scope, community development is aimed at promoting greater economic well-being and social capacity and is carried out in both industrialized and developing countries. Different models of community development involve different processes and have different objectives. Thus, the term "community development" itself can take on a host of meanings as it is understood and applied across different populations (e.g. rural migrants, persons with intellectual disabilities, low-income households) with different local issues (e.g. job creation, educational opportunities, housing) and within different arenas of change (e.g. ghettos, barrios, villages).

Various models of community development have effectively been used to create greater economic well-being and social capacity. These include:

- Community Development Corporations (CDCs), organized entities often associated with bricks and mortar projects to address housing and commercial development (O'Connor, 1999);
- Comprehensive Community Initiatives (CCIs) which emphasize capacity building efforts to promote "comprehensiveness, coordination, collaboration, and community participation" (Ferguson & Dickens, 1999, 12);
- Social and Economic Development which fosters building resources and social supports to improve achievement and leadership skills to enhance economic outcomes for individuals (Taylor & Roberts, 1985; Weil & Gamble, 2002);
- Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD), which draws upon the talents, skills and abilities of individuals, organizations and institutions first within and then outside the local neighborhood to achieve effective community change (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1995), and
- Grameen Bank type initiatives that enable small groups of vulnerable people to generate resources while building support networks (Yunus & Jolis, 1999).

While each of the above mentioned processes of community development varies in its strategy, targets for change, and approach, they are all reliant upon the collective work of *interdisciplinary* partners engaged in a developmental process. That we refer to community development as being both interdisciplinary and process oriented draws upon the theory of pragmatism as formulated by John Dewey. Dewey posited that a community's success was dependent upon the processes by which disparate community members and stakeholders could work together, focusing on a common goal and ultimately expanding the community's capacity for economic and social development (Tracy, 2000). Dewey was keenly aware of the

role that collaborative work had to play in successful community development to create and sustain communities that are both socially and economically viable (Campbell, 1998).

As disparate individuals, organizations, governmental entities, and private businesses work together change can occur within communities, each of these entities contributes different strengths and contributions to the development process. The root of true *interdisciplinary community development* often lies in creating working partnerships that incorporate diverse members, both internal and external to the community itself. Each different partner brings power, insight, and resources to the development process. From our perspective, interdisciplinary community development (ICD) is a synergistic process that makes the whole greater than the sum of its parts. Flora and Flora (2004) similarly characterize community development as being something greater than simply the sum of its parts. When diverse groups of stakeholders come together and work towards a common goal they allow for community issues to be addressed in innovative ways, "recombining community assets" (331) and creating *collective agency* – "the ability of a group of people to solve common problems together" (349). The focus on the process of creating collective agency is central to ICD – no one stakeholder holds the key to accomplishing the task at hand. Interdisciplinary community development processes are important pieces of community building and re-building in post-communist Romania, where social problems are not likely to be adequately addressed without the skills, resources and power that different stakeholders can bring to development efforts. Moving beyond what each partner can contribute, ICD relies upon the collective agency of involved parties in the creation of community-focused solutions to a wide range of economic and social problems. Given the large number of individuals with disabilities that were institutionalized under communist rule who are now trying to assimilate into community living, Dewey's theoretical construct of community development is appropriately used in this context as he was "adamant about including marginalized populations in community networks and decision making processes" (Tracy, 2000, 12).

Such theoretical frameworks have shaped various initiatives in South Eastern Europe. For example, the International Labor Organization Sub-Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe in Budapest has helped to create opportunities to train community leaders and social service providers through the Strengthening Social Protection in South Eastern Europe project that stresses the importance of building community partnerships for effective and sustainable change (Fultz & Tracy, 2004). The project, undertaken within the structure of the Social Cohesion Initiative of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, includes a focus on ICD in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, and Serbia.

Social Enterprise/Entrepreneurship

Lucas and Vardanyan (2005b) define social enterprise as "a strategy used by many NGOs to expand their organizational capacity and to ensure their financial sustainability...their focus is not on generating private profits but on promoting social good, such as creating jobs for less employable people" (p. 3). Others such as Hibbert, Hogg, & Quinn (2001) define social entrepreneurship in terms of using entrepreneurial opportunities for social purposes. When a profit is made, the profit benefits a certain underprivileged or disadvantaged group represented by the NGO. Mair and Marti (2006) define social entrepreneurship as "a process involving the innovative use and combination of resources to pursue opportunities to catalyze social change and/or address social needs" (p. 37). Thus while there are a variety of definitions of social enterprise or social entrepreneurship, the idea of a "double bottom line"

remains constant. Lucas and Vardanyan (2005b) define the "double bottom line" as being "assessed both on its capacity to create profit and to drive social change" (p. 3).

According to a recent report by the Kellogg Foundation (2003, 10), "Social entrepreneurs are inventing new concepts for social change, and they need to build organizations to match." Innovative community development strategies allow for the growth of human and social capital, to benefit those working within the organization and the community at large. Social enterprise traditionally combines both a social and economic approach to achieve three key objectives: economic viability, sustainability, and social change (Alvord, Brown, & Letts, 2002; Lucas & Vardanyan, 2005a). The application of business strategies enables NGOs to develop new revenue streams that can be used to fund programs or services that will meet their social purpose mission. Through creative entrepreneurship, NGOs are able to employ those otherwise excluded from the mainstream workforce, offering individuals an opportunity to become productive contributors to the organization and the local community. Linked with economic viability is the objective to achieve sustainability for the enterprise. The nature of sustainable community development work requires the direct participation of community members, particularly those most affected by the negative conditions, to mobilize and take action (Brophy & Shabecoff, 2001; Green & Haines, 2002). Alvord and colleagues (2002) identify this characteristic as local capacity building of poor and marginalized groups. Important ingredients to achieve a sustainable outcome include being able to engage in self-help strategies to solve problems without further external intervention and to mobilize grassroots assets to build a power base for change. Finally, enhancing revenue and building capacity helps lead to meaningful social change. Social enterprises strive to transform systems that have blocked vulnerable groups from accessing resources and opportunities thereby preventing them from reaching their fullest potential (Lucas & Vardanyan, 2005a). Social entrepreneurship has a place within non-profit organizations and communities; these ventures positively impact communities and create social value for the client groups (Dees, 1998).

In discussing the history and development of social enterprises in Eastern Europe, Lucas and Vardanyan (2005b) cite its development as a way for social service organizations to build up and maintain financial stability in an area that is still plagued by widespread poverty and limited philanthropic giving. While international NGOs supported development efforts in the former Communist bloc countries, "among local NGOs, there is a growing dissatisfaction with financial dependency on international donors and the donors' changing demands and expectations" (p. 2). While their work primarily discusses Albania, Armenia, and Ukraine, the history and development of NGOs in Romania has followed a similar trajectory. In their discussion of social entrepreneurship in Europe, Borzaga and Santuari (2000, 14-15) identify four economic indicators of social entrepreneurship: 1) the development of continued activity producing goods and/or services; 2) a high degree of autonomy; 3) a significant level of economic risk; and 4) the presence of paid work. A possible fifth parameter might be added: a market orientation, which means that a significant part of the organization's income has to be derived from the market...or from contractual transactions with public authorities. Attendant to these five economic indicators, there are five social elements of social entrepreneurship: 1) an initiative undertaken by a group of citizens; 2) direct participation by the persons affected by the activity, 3) power not based on capital ownership; 4) limited profit distribution; 5) an explicit aim to benefit the community (Borzaga & Santuari, 2000, 15). Thus, meaningful social enterprise as a critical component of agencies engaged in community development also creates opportunities for the growth and expansion of social and human capital. This cooperative action and access to resources is realized through networks, reciprocity, trust, shared norms, and social agency (Onyx & Bullen, 2000).

“Pentru Voi” Bakery: a social enterprise model in an icd context

The “Pentru Voi” Bakery demonstrates the importance of collective social action through ICD and social enterprise as a way of redistributing power and resources for sustainable social change, as well as creating and expanding opportunities for social and human capital to flourish. Prior to the bakery, “Pentru Voi” had established a program called DINU that originally provided opportunities for residents to do yard work and to work in a small carpentry workshop. Feedback from residents and staff suggested that these opportunities were limited and that residents would benefit from more challenging and transferable skills. The staff studied the different opportunities available and in 2002 decided to build a bakery in Sacalaz, a small village located outside of Timișoara. This village was selected for several reasons: 1) the village did not have its own bakery; 2) DINU residents responded favorably to the idea of working in a bakery; and 3) a local flour mill within the village would provide a good source of support and raw materials.

The Board of Directors and management staff began the process of cultivating relationships within Sacalaz and raising enough funds to build the Bakery and a group home for ten to twelve men and women. It was important to gain not only funding, but to get local officials to “buy in” to the bakery idea. The mayor of Sacalaz viewed the Bakery as potentially good for the community, stressing that there was no locally produced bread available and that the bread carried in local retail outlets was not always fresh. With the mayor’s support, the facility was designed and built by the organization with international financial assistance. It continues to receive support from a variety of organizations, including an academic social work program in Holland.

The Bakery opened in 2004 with an artisan chef to whom residents are apprenticed to learn the art of baking bread products. Three DINU residents are employed in the Bakery at any given time. Employees work up to four hours a day in the Bakery and make crescent rolls and chocolate rolls. What makes the Bakery stand out is not the revenue generated, rather it is the ability of community members, international stakeholders, foundation staff and board members, and beneficiaries to work together to cultivate collective agency, creating a viable social enterprise that, while still in its infancy, is impacting the lives of many.

ICD Components of Best Practice

The “Pentru Voi” Foundation and Bakery are inherently interdisciplinary. The foundation has successfully created a network of stakeholders who, given their shared values, trust, and social agency, have come together to support the NGO’s work and service. Through collective action, these stakeholders have jointly created innovative partnerships and projects that provide benefit to Pentru Voi’s client population as well as to the larger social and economic community in which they live. The community is invested in the organization and the organization, likewise, is invested in the community.

“Pentru Voi” has also become a leader in the emerging non-profit sector in Romania and has been highlighted by the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the Soros Foundation for effectively addressing the needs of a vulnerable population. Several years before the 2003 protocol for national oversight of programs and services for persons with disabilities under Romania’s National Authority for Handicap Persons (Ordinance no. 14.2003), “Pentru Voi” pioneered best practices for individuals with intellectual disabilities that continue to meet, and exceed, the National Authority’s mandates. “Pentru Voi” continues

to create successful alternatives to family-based care and is able to provide the requisite financing for these innovating alternative programs (Marinoiu, et al., 2004). The development of the Bakery is also indicative of best practice as outlined in a Bulgarian report prepared by an interdisciplinary team (Jeliaskova, Georgiev, & Abadjieva, 2004) for the International Labor Organization (ILO) that identifies four components of best practice in the development and delivery of social services for people with handicaps. While the report focuses on Bulgaria, the components are applicable to other South Eastern European nations, including Romania. The four components are: partnerships, integration, innovation, and transferability. A successful ICD will integrate targeted beneficiaries and the community into the planning and decision making processes related to service delivery, thereby creating partnerships that are mutually beneficial. Effectively integrated services typically are coordinated through one point of contact or joint operating procedures. Innovative programs offer new and creative ways to solve problems. Transferability refers to the ability of programs to be replicated in other communities and cultures. These four elements of best practice can be used as a framework to discuss "Pentru Voi".

Partnerships. In developing the Bakery, as well as the foundation, "Pentru Voi" has created local and international partnerships, using each partner's assets and capabilities to enhance the overall operation. As regards the Bakery, for example, individuals, local businesses, and institutions at the local level have become an integral part of the project. Individuals offer their talents (the head baker is employed by "Pentru Voi") and provide a consumer base for the bakery's sales. In addition, the Bakery provides rolls for meals at a local school. "Pentru Voi" works closely with the city of Timișoara, receiving government funding to help with many of the costs associated with running successful day programs for individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families. Residents of DINU that work within the bakery enterprise take advantage of these programs as well. Thus, local partnerships between "Pentru Voi" and individuals as well as government institutions are important in the successful operation of the Bakery.

International partnerships have provided much needed capital for the construction of the Bakery as well as providing assistance in the form of economic development consultation. Currently a Peace Corps volunteer is working with the Bakery to develop and implement a new marketing plan that can help to increase sales, enhancing the bakery's earnings. Revenue from the Bakery, while not yet enough to make it a self-sustaining enterprise is folded back into the enterprise and group home to help defray operating costs. For example, earnings in 2006 were set aside to build infrastructure around the Bakery and the group home. (In US Dollars, gross revenue for the first six months of 2006 was \$9,456. Of this, \$7,041 went towards operating expenses, leaving a profit of \$2,415, or 26% that was used to build fencing and infrastructure). With the help of international educators and volunteers such as the Peace Corps volunteer and many students from foreign universities, "Pentru Voi" will continue to increase the Bakery's production and sales, increasing the revenue generated. Ultimately, the Bakery will become a self-sustaining enterprise.

Integrated Services. The Bakery provides an opportunity for residents of the DINU group home to learn a valuable trade and to become engaged in daily work within their village. The environment is both a business/work environment and a supportive learning environment. "Pentru Voi" integrates independent living, job creation, skills development, and socialization opportunities into one program. Thus, it demonstrates how well integrated services can provide positive opportunities for the targeted population, promoting greater economic well-being and social capacity.

Innovation. The “Pentru Voi” Bakery is innovative in many different ways. Given the stigma and lack of understanding of persons with intellectual disabilities that was prevalent in post-communist Romania, creating a social enterprise that utilizes the skills and services of this population was in and of itself innovative. In this sense, the Bakery has helped to decrease stigma associated with intellectual disability. For example, villagers who originally viewed the Bakery as something they did not want in their community, have come to embrace the Bakery and its employees as productive and valued members of the community.

The “Pentru Voi” Bakery, while small in scale, is an innovative example of an emerging social enterprise in Eastern Europe. The Bakery indeed has a “double bottom line,” providing a revenue generating product, as well as providing a quality of life (through job/skills training, apprenticeship, and independent living) for beneficiaries. The project is also innovative in the way that it was created and continues to be managed. The stakeholders in the project range from the beneficiaries to the community members to the international funding partners. Each stakeholder is invested and they work collectively to act in the best interest of the Bakery and the organization as a whole. Events that might have derailed a less organized, less optimistic enterprise have been turned into opportunities for the “Pentru Voi” Bakery. For example, in 2005 when the County did not renew a contract for bread delivery, the Bakery re-examined their processes and products. Loaves of bread were not selling well and without the government contract they had no outlet for these products. While the loss of the contract might have stopped production for another fledgling business, the Bakery adapted and began to produce only rolls, both “salty” and “chocolate.” These products prove to be easier to sell and the Bakery now produces 500 rolls per day. Sales continue to fluctuate. Recognizing the need to better understand the Bakery’s earning potential and to create a plan to increase sales, “Pentru Voi’s” management team worked to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis) to the Bakery. Employing this evaluation framework, several areas for change were identified (including, but not limited to purchasing equipment that could help to standardize the recipe and production). Once identified, these areas were acted upon and the Bakery was able to stabilize production, hoping to also see stabilization in sales, and therefore income.

Transferability. As noted, each ICD project is inherently unique. However, many elements of “Pentru Voi’s” Bakery can easily be transferred to other organizations working to establish social enterprise opportunities to meet organizational and client needs. Other organizations can emulate the development of an extensive network of partners and stakeholders, accessing resources locally and internationally to invest in the project. Further, the process that “Pentru Voi” used to determine what kind of a social enterprise to create can be easily adopted by others.

Social Enterprise Components of Best Practice

As discussed above, Borzaga and Santuari (2000) identify several economic and social elements that must be present within any social enterprise. These elements are found within Pentru Voi’s Bakery, making it an exemplary model of a burgeoning social enterprise that can be used as a model for other NGOs wishing to develop entrepreneurial ventures. The “Pentru Voi” Bakery has all of the economic elements that Borzaga and Santuari highlight – the product (currently two kinds of rolls) is continually produced, the Bakery and bakery workers are allowed a significant amount of autonomy, there has been economic risk involved in the project, the employees are being paid for their work, and income is generated from sales both to private citizens and government contracts. In addition, within the Bakery the five social

elements of social entrepreneurship can be identified. "Pentru Voi" was initially started by concerned parents who are still very involved in the programs, including the development of the Bakery, persons eligible to work in the Bakery were involved in the planning process, there is no power structure built upon capital ownership, any profits are re-absorbed by the organization and are used to benefit the program itself, and the benefits to the community are plentiful.

Overcoming Barriers. Pentru Voi's Bakery has worked to overcome typical barriers to successful social enterprise development and interdisciplinary community development. Ducci, Stentella, and Vullterini (2002) highlight three barriers to success: The inability to cultivate and maintain stakeholders, the lack of knowledge related to business development needed to successfully cultivate and grow a business, and difficulty associated with accessing required capital for project start up. "Pentru Voi" has been able to overcome these barriers. The organization has cultivated strong relationships with stakeholders, has embraced the need to understand the "business world" and has a staff with substantial for-profit business experience as well as non-profit experience, and has been able to raise the requisite capital to start and maintain the business venture. In order to do so, "Pentru Voi" was able to leverage support from the community, local, state and international sources. For example "Pentru Voi" has received international support from: the Dutch Foreign Affairs Ministry; Rotary Clubs from Elst over-Betuwe, The Netherlands; Sweden's Solidarity, Human Rights, Inclusion & Accessibility organization (SHIA); and The Cooperating Netherlands Foundation for Central and Eastern Europe. Further, "Pentru Voi" has worked in alliance with the World Bank and the European Union. Local and state support has come from government sources, businesses, and individuals.

Green and Haines (2002) find that successful interdisciplinary community development can be hampered by a lack of common language and conceptual framework, as well as a lack of understanding of the agreed upon problem. "Pentru Voi" overcomes these barriers by working with a diverse cross section of the academic and international development community, employing support from academic social work as well as the business sector. A common understanding of the organization's mission and a belief in social inclusion provides a common starting point for successful interdisciplinary development. Given the poverty rate in Romania and the government's limited resources, accessing international partners and stakeholders has been crucial in the development of the "Pentru Voi" Bakery. Today, the Bakery continues to provide a source of employment, opportunity, and education, as well as providing financial support for the organization itself.

Through the bakery project, "Pentru Voi" creates an inclusive society wherein the Bakery provides workers and residents with common experiences, provides opportunities for life-chances for individuals with disabilities through the creation of human capital, and provides for the well-being of the community by providing a basic component of every meal, bread. Sen (1992, 2000) reminds us that "taking part in the life of the community" is one of the basic capabilities that individuals need in order to overcome difficulties associated with social exclusion (1992, 109). "Pentru Voi" has worked to create significant change for persons with intellectual disabilities – their successful social enterprise creates social and economic change and the organization has been deeply involved in advocacy efforts that are helping to create change within a political context. Social enterprise is a "catalyst for social transformation" (Alvord, et al., 2) and Pentru Voi's Bakery is a primary example of such transformation.

Implications and Recommendations

“Pentru Voi” Fundatia continues to succeed in achieving its mission of increasing the quality of life for persons with intellectual disabilities through a systematic process of innovative public-private collaboration. In 2006 the Romanian government, as part of an effort to join the European Union (EU), enacted legislation aimed at improving access to employment and social integration for persons with disabilities. Romanian Law has attempted to address the protection of rights for the population of disabled adults by establishing a “quota system” whereby larger businesses, (i.e. those employing 50 or more workers), are required to hire adults with disabilities to comprise four percent of their workforce (Open Society Institute EU Monitoring and Advocacy Program, 2005, 4). More recently, Romanian Law 448/2006 stipulates that businesses not directly employing adults with disabilities have the option to either pay a government imposed fine equivalent to 50% of the minimal national gross salary multiplied by the number of positions designated for disabled persons, or purchase goods and services from “authorized protected units” operated by organizations engaged in job training and supportive services for the disabled (The LAW 448, 2007). As a result, “Pentru Voi” received authorization by the National Agency for the Persons with Handicaps (ANPH) to establish a “Protected Unit” social enterprise that employs adults with intellectual disabilities using labor contracts (“Pentru Voi” Protected Unit, 2007). To maximize the potential of the newly formed Protected Unit, Fundatia members continue to conduct needs assessments among companies both locally and internationally to identify opportunities for contracted employment. This information is then used to effectively organize and market a variety of goods and services including bakery products, business products and services, and sewing services. Within four months of becoming a Protected Unit social enterprise under Law 448/2006, an increased number of “Pentru Voi” service-users are gainfully employed thus providing benefits to families, businesses, and the community.

The innovative approach by “Pentru Voi” Fundatia to protect the rights and welfare of adults with intellectual disabilities has earned the organization recognition as a “best practice” model in the delivery of sustainable and socially responsible services that meet the needs of the community. The Bakery is just one example of agency’s commitment to community change. In this regard, we believe the success of “Pentru Voi” offers several learning points that may aid nonprofits interested in replicating their approach. The first is recognizing the importance of investing the assets of local groups into the organization’s overarching vision. In “Pentru Voi’s” case, this meant involving individuals, citizen associations, and local institutions in the development of their bakery operation as both a social and business venture. These diverse resources aid in analyzing problems that occur and help in advancing the social mission of the organization which values inclusion of all people.

Second is the realization that for many in the nonprofit sector, the economic climate of the 21st century have made the writing of business plans an integral part of NGO success (Massarsky & Beinhacker, 2002). Over the past two decades, increased competition for government and philanthropic resources has resulted in a growing number of what the Kellogg Foundation refers to as “hybrid” organizations where the nonprofit organization takes on a revenue producing venture to achieve fiscal sustainability (2003, 10). A study in 2002 revealed that 42 percent of nonprofits in the United States surveyed reported earning revenue from a private business venture, allowing the organization to enhance sustainability and carry forth their social mission (Massarsky & Beinhacker, 2002).

In the case of “Pentru Voi”, social, economic, and political struggles made it necessary for the nonprofit to seek an innovative interdisciplinary strategy that would generate income to support delivery of services to a marginalized population. The success for “Pentru Voi” is

in identifying a product that can use resources available locally and be sold through real market outlets. In addition, the economic enterprise is needed to double as a setting that can provide training and employment opportunities for clients, thus aiding in advancing the social mission of the organization. This type of creative thinking is supported through collaborative community development work to produce innovative alternatives that may fill a market niche.

Finally, nonprofit organizations hoping to replicate "Pentru Voi's" achievement will be well served in strengthening their capacity to advocate effectively in accordance with the mission and philosophy of their agency. Social change is a process involving activities that raise awareness, educate community members, and influence the hearts and minds of policy-makers. Building successful relationships with interdisciplinary partners is an important advocacy tool to increase sponsorship of the organization's mission. For "Pentru Voi", ICD not only aided in establishing economic viability for delivery of services to a vulnerable population, but also provided an opportunity for raising awareness that the isolation and stigmatization of people with intellectual disabilities are human rights violations and must be addressed.

"Pentru Voi's" Bakery is an exemplary model of social enterprise as ICD. The involved staff and stakeholders are invested in the process of creating a program that meets both the social and economic bottom line. Process oriented evaluation has been well utilized to make positive changes in just two short years (i.e. moving from loaves of bread to rolls to increase sales). Creative thinking is, in part, a result of the administration and staffs utilization of feedback from beneficiaries and findings from program outcome, including accounting data from the Bakery. However, the lack of resources make it a challenge for the foundation to systematically collect and analyze program data. As in many NGOs, this is an area of administration that requires constant attention. Thus, it is important that "Pentru Voi" begin to incorporate outcome based evaluation components into the organizational structure. This will aid in the further development of the project and will be beneficial in seeking and retaining outside funding for the project.

Conclusion

"Pentru Voi" Fundatia is a remarkable example of a NGO that has embraced ICD to successfully create opportunities for a population that, without such services, would be deeply marginalized in post-Communist Romania. In this paper, we have reviewed the history and development of "Pentru Voi" and highlighted the organization's social enterprise, the "Pentru Voi" Bakery. Through the establishment of creative collaborative partnerships and innovative social enterprise, "Pentru Voi's" bakery can be held up as an example of what can be achieved when local, national, and international stakeholders collectively work towards a common goal of a systematic process for creating opportunities and resources for a targeted population and/or community. The Bakery initiative continues to grow and generate revenue and opportunities for beneficiaries, as well as quality consumable goods for community members. While each ICD project is inherently unique, elements of successful ICD used by "Pentru Voi", notably partnerships, integration, innovation, and transferability, can be modeled by other NGOs interested in creating similar programs.

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