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Co-Acte Project Explanatory Note

Thinking of progress in terms of ability to live together on the same planet has become, more than any other time in the history of humankind, a necessity. Initiatives to (re)build this ability to live together at the local level, in territories, in the present and the future, have been emerging across Europe and worldwide. These initiatives have been launched in territories involved in the SPIRAL approach, but also in networks such as the Transition Network, the Global Ecovillage Network, Agendas 21, Social Cohesion Plans, the Zero Waste Movement, decentralised approaches to local development such as LEADER, and so forth. They all have in common the fact that they start from the local level and emerge from inhabitants and local stakeholders who want to build, together and in a spirit of co-responsibility, a society without exclusion where progress towards the well-being of all, future generations included, represent a matter of course shared by all.

However, even though all these initiatives got real impacts in many localities, they are confronted with the need to go beyond this local approach. To systematize the achievements and instil co-responsibility for the well-being of all in the normal functioning of society at all levels, there is a need to reformulate policies and legal frameworks, at national, European and global levels. As a matter of fact, the latter are influenced by different lobbies, which have specific interests to defend, often in contradiction with the necessity to renew our way of life and to protect the planet. In the light of this, TOGETHER Network decided to launch the Co-Act Project, which aims to counterbalance the weight of economic lobbies but with radically different methods. Considering the co-responsibility included not only local, but also policy makers at all levels, the objective is to start an extensive process of reflection together with the citizens and local stakeholders in the territories involved in these approaches, so as to find relevant answers to these issues based on local experience and bring them to the global level, into discussions about Europe and the society of the future. A dialogue process will be developed, starting from the field to the high political levels, involving the largest possible number of citizens and policy makers.

First step: collecting opinions

This first phase aims to collect the opinions of citizens in the territories already involved in such initiatives (Transition territories, eco-villages, territories that develop SPIRAL methods, Agenda 21, LEADER areas, etc ...) and other citizen groups.

Two possibilities:

If it is a gathering of citizens (in a SPIRAL territory or not), it should be a homogeneous one if possible, otherwise split it into several homogeneous groups:

1. Begin by introducing the project, its objectives, etc.
2. Ask the 3 questions by following the SPIRAL method:
 1. What does well-being mean to you?
 2. What does ill-being mean to you?
 3. What do you already do or would like to do for your well-being and the well-being of all?
 4. If you were a decision-maker, what would be the first measure you would take to achieve coresponsibility for the well-being of all?

These first three questions are used to define together what the welfare of all is and what can be done together to achieve it at a local level.

In order to make everyone able to express themselves equally and without discrimination, post-it are used, on which everyone wrote his idea freely (one idea per post-it). After that, a summary is made using the grid available on the website (LINK).

This exercise is essential to introduce the fourth question, more focused on the purpose of the project and also treated individually (post-it) and collectively (through the free organization of post-it on a large piece).

If it is a territory already involved in SPIRAL platforms or similar (Agenda 21, transition, eco-villages, LEADER, etc.) :

1. Two evaluation questions:

- What did you achieve in the coresponsibility for the well-being of all today and tomorrow in your territory and what were the success factors?
- What important element was not possible to achieve and would be important to get, and what are the obstacles, needs to get there?

2. Two prospecting questions:

- If you had the power to influence political decisions, what would be the first measure you take to achieve the co-responsibility between all actors, so as to ensure the well-being of all and respecting the future generations? (This is the central issue of CO-ACT)

- In your territory / group, what would be your first action?

Second step: synthesis and initiation of a political dialogue

To make the construction of a global synthesis taking into account the expression of everyone possible, all the citizens' answers will be compiled on the Wikispiral website that allows to synthesize at different levels.

It should involve policy makers in this process as early as possible, starting with local decision makers.

To get more information on these steps and the following phases, click here:

<https://wikispiral.org/tiki-index.php?page=CO-ACTE+FR>