

play a rather insignificant role, Rwanda is in a process of restructuring planning processes towards more decentralised and bottom-up forms of planning promoting the accountability of the public sector, the private sector and civil society equally. The stakeholder analyses helped identifying possible difficulties and challenges (e.g. work culture, work relations, lacking policies) and are thus an essential prerequisite for designing a culture sensitive implementation of the trans-sectoral planning method.

The objective of this presentation is to illustrate first results of implementation of the trans-sectoral method in Kigali and Da Nang. An approach is proposed of how to cope with different cultural and political contexts in order to take those adequately in consideration when shaping trans-sectoral participation processes in urban planning.

Social innovation in sustainable transitions. The role of social learning and empowerment in grassroots social innovations

Adina Dumitru¹, Isabel Lema-Blanco², Ricardo García-Mira³

¹University of A Coruña, Spain

Grassroots social innovations are attracting increasing scientific and policy attention for sustainable transitions processes based on the active participation of citizenship in transitions towards low carbon societies. Social Innovations are defined as “new ideas that meet social needs and create new social relationships or collaborations” (Hubert, 2010). Sustainable Social Innovations -like Transition Towns, the Slow Food movement or the Global Ecovillage network- foster new social relations and alternative -sustainable and fair- modes of satisfying needs within new social contexts tangled in networks of power relations. Existing examples of sharing economy (Schor, 2014) and social economy (Moulaert & Ailenei, 2005) have introduced sustainable practices into production and distribution systems emphasizing the value of sharing and collaboration in transitions to green economies.

Sustainable transitions towards low carbon societies also imply changes in individual and collective behaviours that are enhanced by social learning processes within community-based initiatives. Learning processes enable individual and collective agency for social change (Bandura, 1982). Social learning has been conceptualized as a change in understanding “that goes beyond the individual to become situated within wider social units through social interactions between actors within social networks” (Reed et al, 2010). This work is part of the EU-funded research project named TRANSIT that aims to build a theory which explains Transformative Social Innovation processes. This theory-development is grounded and tested in empirical qualitative analysis of 20 international networks and 40 local initiatives that (aim to) work on transformative social innovation. The research approached the emergence and evolution of social innovation initiatives; the internal and external dynamics of change and agency processes that social initiatives develop to gain social influence. This paper will present the main insights that emerge through the comparative analysis of social learning processes developed within a comparative of 20 grassroots social innovations. The results explain the way that practitioners learn from each other (vicarious learning, communicative action) and identify a number of meaningful outcomes. Social learning produces a change in personal and collective understanding (in terms of social relations); and occurs in a relational framework, through social interactions

and processes between actors within a social network (learning contexts) and lead to the (co)production of new ideas and knowledge, new practices, new framing (and social norms) and new social relations that may transcend the original social (experimental) context. Significant social learning processes may be essential to transformative change, especially regarding to processes of capacity-building, empowerment and self-determination of social actors that constitute the basis of the success (or failure) of sustainable transitions.

The role of grassroots innovations in promoting local sustainable consumption. Motivations, values and learning outcomes within the “Galician network of conscious and responsible consumption”

Isabel Lema Blanco², Ricardo García-Mira³

³University of A Coruña, Spain

Sustainable consumption has become a central focus for national and international policies. The actions that people take and decisions they make to consume certain products and services or to live in certain way have direct impact on the environment as well as on personal and collective well-being (Jackson, 2005). Besides, individual behaviours are deeply embedded in social and organizational contexts that condition or influence their consumption choices. A wider responsible consumption movement -associated with ethical and green consumption- have arisen worldwide as community-based initiatives grounded on the active engagement of citizens in promoting sustainable lifestyles in the local and global context.

Consumers are seen as active agents that assume ethical responsibilities in their consumption decisions, which also requires extent knowledge and education regarding environmental issues. In this context, environmental education is conceived as a real instrument of social empowerment and collective learning (Uzzel, 1999; Losada Otero & Garcia-Mira, 2003; Garcia Mira, 2015) to be developed in different contexts and scenarios, such as processes environmental participation through which people take part in solving the problems, sharing responsibility in making decisions on collective issues and deepening a well-functioning democracy.

This work will present the first phase of qualitative research that aims to determine the motivations, processes and objective and subjective factors that influence in the constitution and operationalization of grassroots sustainable consumption initiatives in Galicia (Spain). The investigation pretends to contribute to the understanding of bottom-up participatory processes and their educating and social empowerment role. The selected case-study is the “Galician network of conscious and responsible consumption”, which gathers twenty (non-profit) associations, cooperatives and responsible consumption groups distributed in the Galician region. Empirical data have been collected through qualitative research methods: a semi-structured questionnaire has been designed to guide the interviews with practitioners and key-actors. Participant observation and document review completed the data and primary results of the research.

The results demonstrate that responsible consumption is linked to personal values and worldviews shared by the practitioners. Besides, the participation within the network promotes pro-environmental behaviours that go beyond “green consumption”: implementing strategies of low-carbon emissions, waste management and enhancing sustainable local development and collective entrepreneurship. The Galician Network