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NEXT MED

CLOSER



Connecting Local proximity networks Sustaining participatory governance

To support Mediterranean cooperation for the promotion of participatory governance models in Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Greece, Spain and Italy, training civil society and public authorities to co-design social public services closer to the needs of their territories.

Description of the project

The need to reinforce social services and social rights in the MED area is urgent and particularly relevant in rural/remote/peripheral areas, increasingly suffering from depopulation and aging, often lacking of basic services' provision or where the access to them is most difficult, leaving the population more exposed against both systemic shocks and ordinary life-cycle risks.

To build an effective response to these issues, it is fundamental to act locally and involve the citizenry in co-constructing solutions that can benefit the entire population.

Participatory governance responds to these needs in an innovative and inclusive manner because it facilitates cooperation between public and private sector's actors with the active engagement of the local population resulting in a higher co-responsibility and ownership of the decision-processes and sense of belonging. Through bottom-up co-design, carried out through active cooperation between civil society actors and public authorities, and with the direct involvement of the population, social services will be more responsive to local needs and their management will be more effective and inclusive. CLOSER wants to connect and build the capacity of public and private actors in working as a network and jointly designing solutions to provide social services, planned and delivered through participatory models of governance to enhance social rights for the Mediterranean populations.

Objectives

- To set-up local proximity networks between public authorities, third sector organisations and other stakeholders involved in social sector governance in Italy, Spain, Greece, Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan, and promote their cooperation at local, regional and cross-border levels.
- To strengthen the capacity of local networks' members and other stakeholders to become facilitators of participatory local governance processes through face-to-face and online training opportunities, study visits abroad and international training camps.
- To develop and implement a joint model of participatory governance based on cooperation between local and cross-border territorial proximity networks for the co-design and provision of social services aimed at improving the well-being of the local population.
- To pilot local initiatives of participatory local governance, implementing at local level the joint model developed, by launching and managing in a participatory manner a social service co-designed by the proximity networks to respond to the needs of the populations involved in remote, peripheral or underserved areas.
- To evaluate the impact of the pilot initiatives implemented and promote the exchange of good practices and the replicability of the joint model developed.

Activities

- Development of an e-learning platform for training and cooperation between proximity networks at cross-border level
- Participatory mapping of stakeholders at local level
- Collection of good practices of participatory governance at regional and national level
- Setting-up of local proximity networks and launch of local and cross-border collaboration with regular meetings throughout the duration of the project
- International training camp in Jordan for members of proximity networks
- Local training seminars for members of proximity networks and other interested actors, including online training via the e-learning platform
- Study visits across partner countries for members of local proximity networks
- Development of a joint strategic model of participatory local governance
- Adaptation of the strategic model into local action plans in each partner country
- Piloting of action plans and launch of co-designed and co-managed social services
- Monitoring and impact assessment
- Development of a booklet with good practices and guidelines for the replicability of participatory local governance initiatives
- Promotion and dissemination of results
- International forum in Lebanon for the exchange of good practices

Resources

- E-learning platform for third sector organisations, civil society actors, public authorities and other stakeholders with training materials, videos and a collection of good practices about participatory local governance
- Interactive map of the territories involved, showing existing social services and stakeholders involved for identifying needs and gaps in the field of social rights
- Joint strategic model of participatory local governance developed by local proximity networks
- Local action plans for testing participatory governance initiatives in the territories involved
- Report on the social impact assessment of the initiatives carried out
- Booklet of best practices and guidelines for replicability
- Memorandum of understanding for the promotion of the CLOSER model in other territories and regions

Impact

- 6 local proximity networks created and connected in a cross-border network with the active participation of 10 local actors in each partner country representing public and private bodies involved in various ways in the provision of social services at local level.
- 240 representatives of civil society organisations, public bodies and other stakeholders (60 members of local networks + 180 additional external participants) trained as facilitators of participatory local governance processes.
- 6 local areas in Italy, Spain, Greece, Palestine, Jordan and Lebanon involved in the co-design and co-management of a social service for the benefit of citizens.
- Strengthening of social rights and improvement of the well-being of the populations of the 6 local areas involved, through the provision of new social services that better respond to the needs and desires of the community.

1.45M€
project budget

89%

EU contribution

6

partners

7

associates

Partners

- Coordinator: Centro per lo Sviluppo Creativo Danilo Dolci – ETS, Italy
- EUROTraining, Greece
- University of Alicante, Spain
- JUHOUD for Community and Rural Development, Palestine
- ARDD – Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development, Jordan
- Moukhtara Municipality, Lebanon



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CLOSER to the people

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