



**European Foundation
for the Improvement of Living
and Working Conditions**

The role of partnerships in promoting social cohesion

Portugal

Working Paper No.: WP/96/35/EN

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Introduction

Reference in recent years to the principle and mechanism of partnership in programmes, particularly in the area of social and economic policy, has prompted an analytical interest in the subject. The extent, diversity and increasing complexity of processes and situations of poverty and social exclusion within the European Union has led to a reappraisal of the bases and ways of promoting social cohesion. Partnership has been identified and tried out as a means of realizing the potential of agents, organizations and resources at different levels, from the local to the transnational. As a result of previous studies the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions identified partnership as a central theme for European research.

The general objectives of this research are:

- to identify and assess the extent of application of the model of partnership in European Union Member States in the area of social cohesion;
- to identify and analyse the perceptions of the public, private, voluntary and local community partners towards the successes and difficulties resulting from such partnerships;
- to lay down guidelines and recommendations for policy-makers and other parties interested in the future promotion of partnerships as a means of combating social exclusion.

The research began by focusing on local partnerships with a formal organizational structure for designing and implementing policies, and which mobilize a coalition of interests and commit a range of partners to a common agenda and a multidimensional action programme for combating exclusion and promoting social cohesion. According to this basic assumption and in light of the proposed aims the research was organised to cover the following aspects:

- description of the national context;
- identification and broad description of a significant number of cases in the area of local partnerships;
- in-depth analysis of three of these cases;
- the setting of guidelines and recommendations covering both the diversity of partners/agents and the diversity of areas covered (local, regional, national, European).

In addition to analysing secondary sources on each aspect under study, interviews were held with key partners (or associated agents) in the theory and practice of local initiatives. Information on the previous work and current practice of the partnerships was also obtained by means of holding

guided interviews and meetings and participating in various forums. The need to compare the different Member States included (Greece, Spain, Portugal, Ireland, France, Belgium, England, Germany, Austria and Finland) meant that instruments had to be balanced so as to standardise research procedures as far as possible (retaining the same general and specific objectives).

The research report was organized so as to cover the following aspects:

- the national context (Chapter 1);
- case studies as examples of partnerships in action (Chapters 2, 3 and 4);
- conclusions and recommendations (Chapter 5).

The national context is first outlined by describing the history and origins of the concept of partnership in Portugal, when the roles of the different actors (Government/State, local agencies and communities) are analysed in relation to the real development of the partnerships. Secondly the national political context for creating and putting the partnership into practice is studied, including the role of the social partners (employers and their organizations and trade unions). Finally the present scope and form of the partnerships are studied by identifying nine cases illustrating significant aspects such as:

- origins and objectives;
- structure, nature and level of involvement of the different partners;
- funding and other resources;
- roles of the different partners (including agents not directly involved at local level) in developing and implementing partnerships;
- main activities and initiatives;
- monitoring and assessment;
- impact on social exclusion and results for the different partners.

Three of these nine cases were studied in depth:

- Projecto da Zona Historica Sé e São Nicolau (Chapter 2);
- Associação para a Recuperação de Cidadãos Inadaptados da Lousã (ARCIL) (Chapter 3);
- Associação "IN LOCO" (Intervenção, Formação, Estudos para o Desenvolvimento Local) (Chapter 4).

The aim of these cases is to illuminate current national experience in the area of partnership by means of a critical analysis based on the following:

- the structure of the partnership, involving public agencies, employers, trade unions and the voluntary/community sector;
- different spatial and economic contexts (a case in the centre of a large city in the north, a case in a semi-rural area in the centre of the country, and a case in a rural area in the south);
- the implications of the partnership for specific social groups (women, ethnic and young people's groups and the elderly).

The final chapter of the report presents the conclusions and implications of the national context and the three case studies for the theory and operation of partnerships in combating social exclusion in Portugal. The first part deals with issues associated to the operation of partnerships at local level while the second presents a set of recommendations concerning the diversity of local partners, policies and programmes. These specific recommendations are supported by others concerning regional and national policies and programmes, as well as programmes and initiatives at European level.

CHAPTER I

The role of partnerships in promoting social cohesion

National context:

Portugal

1. Origins and historical development of partnership in social policy

1.1. The concept of partnership in Portugal: origins and historical development

Having only recently been invoked as a principle or basis for action in Portugal, the concept of partnership has not yet been analysed on its own account, that is, in connection with but at the same time going beyond the practices with which it is involved.

Analysis of the origins and development of partnership in Portugal enabled us to identify two main arguments. On the one hand, there is the argument that claims that the principle of partnership is not part of Portuguese history and that Portuguese rural traditions, based on small property units (small holdings), particularly in the North, far from promoting cooperation and partnership, have given rise to a tradition of mistrust and territorial demarcations among neighbours. On the other hand, we can also identify another approach, whereby partnership, or "parceria"¹, is perceived as part of an ancient tradition that can be traced back to the right of association, which has been hallowed in Portuguese law since the nineteenth century. It could be argued that the origins and development of Misericórdias [charitable organizations] have contributed to the consolidation of cooperation in the form of partnerships. These charitable organizations, set up within the framework of the Catholic Church, have traditionally negotiated the provision of social services with a highly centralized State apparatus - a tradition that reached its peak during the period of authoritarian centralism of Salazar's Estado Novo [New State] (a period during which the

¹ According to the Dicionário de Língua Portuguesa (sixth edition, Porto Editora, 1987), "parceria" means "a group of individuals with a common interest". Mention should also be made of the definition of "parceria" according to the rural legal scheme, where to work "em parceria" refers to a method of work organization based on sharing agricultural produce between worker and owner.

boundaries between Church and State were at their most tenuous). This course of development has meant that, at the political level, the concept of partnership in Portugal has, in more recent times, come up against concepts and practices reminiscent of the failed corporatist project of the Estado Novo.

The formal(ized) definition of partnership (*partenariado*) emerged in Portugal mainly as a result of European programmes. This influence has meant that the initial reaction in Portugal has been to perceive partnership as cooperation among "partners" in various countries. It is, therefore, seen as a transnational phenomenon and framework.

The idea of partnership as a more informal cooperation among people and/or bodies with shared objectives and interests ("*parceria*") concerning the promotion of local development projects did not emerge in Portugal until the 1960s. The work undertaken by the economist Manuela Silva, firstly within the Gabinete de Estudos Sociais [Social Studies Centre] and later as director of the Serviço de Promoção Social² [Social Promotion Service], on the promotion of "community development" is an example of this form of cooperation. The issue was to develop an alternative approach to the model that perceived development merely in terms of economic growth - a model that was at that time very much in fashion in the western world.

This can be seen as one of the first experiences of partnership in Portugal over more recent years - an experiment that challenged the prevailing authoritarian model. On the basis of her position as a skilled specialist within the State apparatus, and in an attempt to overthrow both the corporatist and the economic approach to development, Manuela Silva promoted the notion (shared by a few others) of development as a multidisciplinary activity, based on experimental projects that took participation and cooperation as their working philosophy. The central idea was based on identifying local leaders (or "*forces vives*"), who were seen as potential catalysts of change, and encouraging these individuals and the local population to develop their own initiatives: "The technique of community development implies a joining of forces by local populations and the public authorities, with a view to improving the economic, social and cultural situation of a municipality or region" (Silva, 1964, p 498).

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State department linked to the Ministério da Saúde (Ministry of Health), which was set up in 1965 and abolished by the regime in 1972.

During this same period, which was marked by heavy pressures, both internal and external, with respect to changes in socio-economic conditions and the prevailing model of development, various references were made in official documents concerning both the advantages of, and ways of introducing and following, a more cooperative approach (both intra- and inter-sectoral). This approach was taken by the preliminary documents for the fourth Plano de Fomento³ [Development Plan] and also underpinned the setting up of the Conselho Superior de Acção Social [Higher Social Action Council] (in an attempt to promote the organic articulation of the following sectors: work, health, social advancement and social security).

In the early 1970s, despite the final desperate attempts of a moribund regime to kill off this experiment of multi-dimensional community development, new schemes arose under the stimulus of the revolutionary period of 1974/1975. In the belief that "the social roots (of a new societal project) are more readily found at local level" and adhering to the new conception of social policy based on the "culture of partnership and association", Alberto Melo, Director General of Permanent Education (between November 1975 and July 1976), promoted partnerships among government departments and local independent associations.

This was partnership⁴ for the "establishment of a new system of adult education - or even a new system, or 'anti-system' of general education". Melo later claimed that the relative success of this partnership could be attributed "to the exceptional situation in which Portugal found itself, with the eruption of enthusiasm when the armed forces seized power in April 1974 and the temporary power vacuum that followed the demise of the dictatorial regime, and to the education initiatives launched by members of the Direcção Geral de Educação Permanente [DGEP - Directorate General of Permanent Education] (Melo and Benavente, 1978, p 37).

Although partnership as "parceria" was the predominant approach in the mid-1970s, gradually, and particularly with Portugal's accession (in 1986) to what was then the European Economic

³ In this document, the definition of the intended model of development takes account of the need to "ensure that the action of economic agents, its newness and much greater necessity, is in compliance (...) with recognition of the following: (...) the meeting, to a greater degree and under better conditions, of the collective need for education, cultural activities, health care, social security, housing, transport and communications" (by the State).

⁴ As precursors to this partnership, mention might also be made of: i) the "Campanha Nacional de Alfabetização" (National Literacy Campaign) of 1975, with its approach of focusing on the community (rather than on the individual), which also implied a programme for the simultaneous reform of production structures, social services and local organizations, and ii) the setting up of Associações Populares de Educação (Popular Education Associations) (based on a partnership between the Ministério de Educação and local associations).

Community, partnership as "partenariado" became hegemonic during the 1980s. The sudden emergence of EC programmes and funds and the growing requirement that the notion of partnership be included and present even in project plans led to a period of frenetic activity: from one day to the next, it became vital to "find" partners. At the same time, the word "partnership" (partenariado) became a key word that appeared in most official documents on social and economic policy. And so emerged a new voluntarism in social, economic and cultural development⁵. Critics of this voluntarism suggested not only that the Portuguese State was incapable of establishing the necessary conditions to promote the contractual and cultural adjustment of Portuguese society (and that the hypertrophy of State normalization would persist instead), but also claimed that, in a neo-liberal project of a new "market friendly" political economy (see Santos, 1993), partnership could become a central concept.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, various agreements on incomes and prices, health and safety at work and vocational training were signed by the Portuguese social partners. And so, in addition to the impact caused by Portugal's accession to the European Community, there was also a trend towards formal cooperation, even though, as Mozzicafreddo (1994, pp 114-115) points out, "the points of reference shared by the social partners were basically the close relationship between pay and inflation, or, in other words, moderation in the growth of real pay and, above all, the strong concern, at least until 1992, to preserve jobs and safeguard the main aspects of labour legislation".

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More than in other examples, this new voluntarism was expressed: i) in the Programa Interministerial para a Promoção do Sucesso Educativo [PIPSE - Interministerial Programme for the Promotion of Educational Success], which was set up by a meeting of the Council of Ministers in 1987 (Diário da República, II Série, No 17, 21 January 1988, pp 537-542), and ii) in the project concerning Escolas Profissionais [Vocational Colleges] (Decree-Law 26/89). The PIPSE, which was set up in the context of Portugal's accession to the European Union, was a programme to promote success at school and to consolidate the public education system in Portugal. It was aimed at schools covering the first cycle of basic education (four years of schooling) and involved five ministries: Education, Health, Planning and Administration, Employment and Social Security, and Youth. The aim of the programme was "to coordinate formal and informal services", "to promote integrated community-development schemes" and "the integrated mobilization of community education" (see the programme mentioned above). Its main agents in the field were organized into multidisciplinary teams to form a "technical partnership". Generally speaking, the programme was not considered a great success. It was criticized for having "an erroneous conception of success and failure at school", since failure was seen mainly as the fault of pupils and their families rather than of the school and, in particular, its articulation with the community. Although teachers were seen as central to the programme, little attention was paid to their educational needs. The programme saw the promotion of success at school as an act of solidarity rather than recognizing it as a right that needed to be consolidated and safeguarded. The knowledge accumulated over time by various researchers was virtually ignored and the programme was conceived and implemented at central level, rather than marking out guidelines for action, research and partnership at local level (as would a genuine joint programme between partners committed to the achievement of shared objectives). See Garcia, 1994.

With respect to the latter project, the vocational colleges (Escolas Profissionais) that were set up in the late 1980s as part of an education reform, it was felt that the environment was favourable to the development of socio-educational partnerships, with the emergence of new social values such as decentralization and participation. Despite the fact that the concept of socio-educational partnership was never rigorously examined, its potential ability to promote and consolidate social change was never questioned.

The worsening socio-economic conditions of companies, in the context of the European recession (which began to be felt in Portugal in the early 1990s), restricted the signing of broad-ranging agreements by the social partners, at the cost of piecemeal concertations (in their scope and/or the number of actors involved). In the face of this situation, various ideas were put forward as regards ways of overcoming the "crisis".

In an attempt to list the areas into which the idea of partnership has penetrated over the past decade in Portugal, though without claiming to offer an exhaustive list, we can mention various other examples⁶. As a result of the European Programme for the Socio-Economic Integration of Less Advantaged Groups (Poverty 3), a national programme was launched (Council of Ministers, Resolution No 8 of 20 March 1990), under which some 100 local projects were to be developed. One of the principles to which this programme adhered was partnership (as was also the case for the European programme). Several hundred agents and partners were involved in these local projects, though their roles and level of involvement varied. On the other hand, the two regional bodies ministerially appointed to ensure execution of the national programme (Comissariados Regionais da Luta Contra a Pobreza - Regional Anti-Poverty Offices) took partnership as the central element in project evaluations, even when it was nothing more than a numerical expression. Some documents concerning national projects referred to partnership as the project's "central methodology", which gives an idea of the significance attributed to this principle. Partnership is one of the recurring themes in all the evaluations produced. None of these evaluations analysed ways of overcoming the limitations of partnership, where the aspects that are particularly relevant are the coordination of resources, the compatibility of priorities, objectives, methodologies and strategies within the project, the need to internalize and adopt concepts and key objectives, as well as reinforcing means of communication both within the project and among the initiatives/measures involved in it (Goulão et al, 1992, pp 259-260).

The creation, in 1991, of a new Direcção-Geral de Acção Social [Directorate General of Social Action] seems to be associated with a trend towards the (re)articulation of the social dimension with economic sectors, with advantage being taken of actions planned in the context of

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It might be noted that, in 1986, a new legal framework was created for cultural promotion, with compensatory fiscal benefits being offered in return for financial or other forms of participation in cultural initiatives. In the 1990s, provision has been made for the same procedure for social initiatives.

contributions by partnerships. In November 1991, with the identification of new trends in social action, it was proposed that "advantage be taken of coordinated action - partnerships":

"Partnership means cooperation among institutions and networking.

The complexity and inter-relationship of social problems cannot be tackled by the functionalist approach currently being taken by organizations.

The time has come to create a partnership culture, a concerted and coordinated way of operating, that is based on recognition of the complementarities and co-responsibility of organizations, both public and private". (Madeira, 1992)

In 1993, as part of the package of measures to deal with housing problems, the Programa Especial de Realojamento [PER - Special Rehousing Programme] made explicit reference, as a basic requirement, to the need for local initiatives to function on the basis of agreements involving the Central Administration and local authorities, and with provision being made for complementary agreements with other State services and non profit-making social solidarity organizations (such as Instituições Privadas de Solidariedade Social [IPSSs - Private Social Solidarity Institutions), for the provision of social facilities.

Mention might also be made of the logic underlying the Second Community Support Framework (1995-1999), which makes express reference to the various partners' contribution, with a distinction being drawn between those responsible for executing various measures and others more directly involved as beneficiaries. Also, in programmes that have recently been launched, it is hoped that the recently appointed "comissões técnicas de acompanhamento" [technical support commissions] will be broadly representative, involving various partners, as well as providing a multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral perspective. This feature is most noticeably present in programmes concerning integrated actions, whose purpose is to combine investments under various policies.

On the basis of what we have stated here, it might be claimed that the key issue for the 1990s, as regards partnerships in Portugal, is articulation of the more European, and more official, concept of partnership with the definition that is more closely bound up with its associative roots and is

based on local culture(s) - in other words, articulation of "partenariado" [formal partnership] and "parceria"⁷ [informal partnership]. It is possible to identify some interesting examples of this articulation, some of which will be described in the case studies that form the second part of this report. Finally, it is also important to note that the concept of partnership has developed unevenly in Portugal, which makes this study of partnerships in various contexts (rural, urban, semi-rural) absolutely vital. This need is borne out and documented by the recent comment made by the coordinator of a local-development agency in Alentejo, in southern Portugal: "in some ways, it might be said that capitalism has yet to reach this part of the country. (...) We do not have a strong entrepreneurial tradition, which obviously affects people's understanding of what partnership might mean in this area" (J C Albino, Empresa de Messejana para o Desenvolvimento Integrado, ESDIME).

1.2. Summary of the main features of social exclusion

Despite recent economic growth, Portugal is still one of the least industrialized countries in Europe and poverty affects a high percentage of the population (between 25% and 30% of the total population, according to recent data). Indeed, "(...) although economic growth and the creation of more wealth appear to be a necessary condition for the continued and sustained improvement of social well-being, they are not, in the end, enough, particularly for the most disadvantaged members of the population" (Ferreira, 1994).

More careful study of the features of poverty in Portugal reveal profound inequalities between the various population groups and regions. For example, some 53% of the poor are pensioners, and 35% are employed people. These figures call into doubt the ability of either wages or pensions as the traditional means of guaranteeing a safety network that is capable of sustaining a decent standard of living. For some time now, inadequate levels of State provision have themselves been a cause of poverty for a significant number of Portuguese citizens. Some 70% of pensioners receive less than the national minimum wage (approximately 140 ECUs).

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It seems, then, that the conditions for the survival of innovation in the Portuguese context are rooted, on the one hand, in local social bases and, on the other, in the contribution of new conceptions by various experiences at both national and international level.

In comparison with other Member States of the European Union, and in the context of a relatively low unemployment rate (though the rate has been rising over recent years), 60% of the unemployed (95% of whom are young people) receive no unemployment benefit. And average unemployment benefit is less than the minimum wage (which is also very low).

In Portugal, poverty is a structural problem that, because of the number of people involved and the uneven distribution of resources in the various parts of the country, is leading to a national situation in which, in various local contexts, poverty and social exclusion are currently affecting most of the local population (Rodrigues and Henriques, 1994). Given the features described above, poverty and social exclusion entail a combination of old and new problems, which can in part be related to the specific trajectory and features of the Portuguese Welfare State, which has also been going through a period of simultaneous crisis and consolidation.

There seems to be broad agreement on the seriousness of poverty and the significance of rising unemployment, and a central place is being accorded not only to debates on relatively separate aspects but also to the discussion of more general policy orientations, relative to the basic model of development (especially in a country that is part of the European Union and is still failing to achieve basic levels of provision, thus putting at risk the consolidation of basic human and social rights).

2. Current context of national policies

The orientation of Portuguese social policy and of initiatives in the field of development has been subject to considerable outside influences, both from Europe and from international organizations, since the mid-1960s. Portugal's accession to the European Union has resulted in even stronger outside influences as regards social policy, though the principle of subsidiarity has been invoked both to justify certain measures at national level and in the conception, design and format of many initiatives.

As we have said before, the situation in Portugal can be more easily understood if we bear in mind the context of inadequate provision of public services and the considerable limitations of compensatory mechanisms. These circumstances also explain certain groups' restricted access to

many goods and services (such as housing, health and education). The goods and services produced by the market are often beyond the reach and means of these groups.

The past 25 years have seen significant changes in the conception and provision of welfare in Portugal. The changes that have taken place over this period have been both similar to and different from those in other European countries. For example, in Portugal, it was not until the early 1970s that the State began to serve as a central provider in the field of welfare policy, complementing the important initiatives developed in this area by civil society. This new orientation had the potential of overturning the long-standing tradition whereby the State served mainly as a supplementary provider. Until 1970, the most important initiatives were implemented by agents, groups or organizations with varying organizational profiles (some of them dependent upon primary solidarity networks based on relationships among relatives, friends and neighbours). The political changes that began in 1974 led to official recognition of the need gradually to set up a universal Welfare State. If we compare the Portuguese context with others, it is interesting to note that Portugal began discussing the establishment of a universal Welfare State in what might generally be perceived as adverse circumstances, that is, at a time when Welfare States throughout the world were in crisis and in a period marked by economic recession. While, in other countries, debates and orientations were being ruled by principles of "individualism and civil and private responsibility and action", the trend in Portugal was towards "State responsibility, collectivism and the virtues of public action".

The scope of the measures announced covered an enormous variety of investments: a) the creation of an integrated social security system (to replace the then separate insurance and welfare systems); b) various risks and situations associated with work (eg maternity, infancy, occupational accidents and illnesses), and c) the establishment of bases for the setting-up of a national health system. Just one month after the change of regime, the minimum wage was introduced, though not for all workers but only for those officially employed in the industrial, service and commercial sectors.

Despite these changes, whose practical implementation was restricted by various internal and external pressures, the result, rather than a polarization of State intervention and private initiatives (almost exclusively non profit-making because of the then restricted role of the market), was primarily the development of a welfare system that was based on these two pillars of support, on a

relationship of "cooperative companionship" between the State and the non profit-making private sector (a period of development whose influence can still be felt today).

Portuguese society has been described by some social analysts as being somewhat peripheral in the international context, which is a reference to the existence of socio-cultural and economic features that are typical of an intermediate level of development, with consequences as regards both the trajectory and form of development of production and social reproduction (Santos, 1990). In Portuguese society, a fairly weak Welfare State co-exists with a strong welfare society. Given these features, some authors argue that it is more appropriate to describe Portugal as having a welfare system (irrespective of its level of integration) rather than as being a Welfare State (where State measures, initiatives and benefits account for the majority of social provisions) (Gould, 1993). Similar to the rates in other countries in southern Europe, social expenditure (in 1993) accounts for approximately 20% of GDP (with the level being 30% or more in other, more developed countries).

If we consider the fundamental features of welfare in Portugal over the past two decades, we can identify three periods with the following main characteristics:

- a significant increase in policies to distribute wealth (either by means associated with work, ie direct pay, or by means of social policies, ie indirect pay). Indeed, as of 1974, the Portuguese State has been changing its approach, serving not only as a financing agent but also as a direct producer of social provisions (albeit limited);
- the early 1980s (a period influenced by the prospect of inclusion in the European Union) saw the emergence of certain trends towards the gradual restriction of social rights and a move towards the "recommercialization" of goods and services;
- Portugal's accession to the European Union, with its tangible impact on the assessment and reorientation of social provision (which, generally speaking, had never moved beyond an embryonic phase).

The 1980s saw the development of certain trends towards privatization in the field of social policy. These trends were reflected in two main orientations: i) promotion of a review of the

Constitution to facilitate the penetration of market provision in the social sphere and ii) the transfer of some social facilities and benefits to private management.

On the basis of a very general analysis, it might be claimed that both these orientations were relatively successful in sectors such as education, health and social security. In the area of social services, the vast majority of facilities were transferred to private non profit-making organizations. The purpose of these measures was, on the whole, to contribute to the reshaping of the Welfare State and they were linked with the aim of resetting the issue in the context of cuts in public social expenditure. In Portugal, there might also have been an additional reason associated with the State's inability to meet all needs in these areas. In other words, the State's efforts to promote (and even financially support) action by various agents in this context was a question of survival and the securing of legitimation. This is linked with the polemical issue of the degree of autonomy of some non profit-making initiatives, given their (legal and financial) dependence on the State. In Portugal, there are good grounds to believe that some non profit-making organizations are supported by State contributions, while others survive on their own resources and are, therefore, in a position to develop a more autonomous strategy.

For each of the periods we have mentioned, it is important to analyse the relationship between the current legal structure as regards social provision in the country and the political and institutional practices developed to apply the range of benefits provided for by law. The past few years have seen some clear legal progress, which means that we can now include Portugal as one of the countries with a more advanced legislative framework (a development that has been strongly influenced both by the recent political changes and by the pressure deriving from Portugal's accession to the European Union). Despite this improvement, however, the degree to which this legislation has been implemented is rather more restricted, a fact that has contributed to a hiatus, with at least two consequences: i) the doors that have been opened concern hopes and expectations rather than real rights, and ii) there has been a tempering (and lengthy postponement) of the very necessary (though never achieved at national level) general internalisation of basic rights (as the social and political condition for effectively establishing appropriate living and working conditions).

3. Current scope and form of partnerships

In a period of "detraditionalisation of societies" (Giddens, 1990) or "reflexive modernization" (in the words of Beck, Giddens and Lash, 1994), the emergence of a preoccupation with the concept of partnership seems to be related to the development of new forms of solidarity in an international climate of globalization. It may, for example, be argued that partnership is developing as an important element in the formation of consensus at the international level, as part of the emergence of a new world order. In fact, concepts such as "partnership" and "network" are the language of new forms of solidarity in a context of "action at a distance". In a country such as Portugal, it is a mixture of "new" and "old" forms of solidarity that forms the context in which the cases studied here are being developed.

The partnerships we have studied include associations and organizations associated with the public, private and voluntary/community sectors. They embrace organizations and bodies linked with the Public Administration at central, regional and local level; non-governmental organizations and "quangos" (quasi non-governmental organizations); enterprises (mainly small and very small ones); educational institutions (public, private and cooperative); industrial and commercial associations and associations connected with the promotion of employment; local development agencies, and, increasingly, networks of associations and enterprises and networks based on European programmes or linked to regional development programmes. The nine examples illustrating Portuguese experiences are the following:

1. Title of project: *"Raízes para um Futuro de Sucesso"*

Geographical location: Municipality of Almada, District of Setúbal

Origins: The project began in the early 1980s, at the initiative of the district officer of the Departamento de Acção Social do Centro Regional de Segurança Social de Setúbal [Social Action Department of the Setúbal Regional Social Security Office], and its aim was to coordinate local health and social action services around the Projecto de Intervenção Social Articulada do Concelho de Almada [PSIACA - Coordinated Social Intervention Project of the Municipality of Almada]. When the project was launched, the partners involved, in addition to the health and social action services, were local specialists, the local population and organized groups (IPSSs),

as well as leisure and cultural associations. Strategic groups, priority actions and preferential areas were defined on the basis of a preparatory study. The current project, which was launched in November 1990, is oriented towards actions in the area of what were considered to be the main dimensions of poverty or exclusion on four public housing sites.

Main objectives:

- improving the living, housing and health conditions of the target groups;
- reducing and preventing risk situations affecting children, young people and families;
- helping to change women's attitudes as regards "fulfilling their role, so that they can be free and independent, with the ability to make decisions and exercise their rights as citizens";
- boosting the identity of housing areas to promote existing cultures and increase participation in community life by residents (including people living alone and dependants) participation in community life;
- involving services, enterprises and the local population in reducing unemployment and insecure employment (mainly in the case of women and young people);
- contributing to a review and on-going adaptation of social policy measures.

Partners:

- Centro Regional de Segurança Social de Setúbal [Setúbal Regional Social Security Office];
- Administração Regional de Saúde de Setúbal [Setúbal Regional Health Administration];
- Centro de Emprego de Almada/Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional [Almada Employment Centre/employment and Vocational Training Institute];
- Delegação Escolar/Direcção Regional de Educação de Lisboa [Schools Office/Lisbon Directorate General of Education];
- Misericórdia de Almada [Almada branch of Misericórdia];
- Câmara Municipal de Almada [Almada Town Council];
- Juntas de Freguesia [Community Councils] of Caparica, Pragal and Laranjeira.

Current situation of the project: The project ended in December 1994 but a new initiative based on it has been approved.

Evaluation of the partnership: In the opinion of local specialists, the partnership has been of central importance, though the partners involved offered differing opinions - some argued that there needed to be a public coordination structure for all local projects. The partnership also focused on discussing transfer strategies, which gave rise to a new local action project in other areas (both geographical and covering different issues).

2. Title of project: *"Acção Modelo de Desenvolvimento do Concelho de Pombal"*

Geographical location: Municipality of Pombal, District of Leiria, Central Region (rural and urban coastal areas)

Origins: In the mid-1980s, the Departamento de Atendimento [Customer Services Department] for people using the Centro Regional de Segurança Social de Leiria [Leiria Regional Social Security Office] detected various social problems, the most significant of which was the existence of 100 one-parent families (all women). This target group was included under a local project included in the Second European Anti-Poverty Programme, essentially with a view to improving the employment and living conditions of these one-parent families. It was during integration in the Programa Nacional de Luta Contra a Pobreza [National Anti-Poverty Programme] (between 1990 and December 1994) that the local project established a partnership comprising the Centro Regional de Segurança Social de Leiria [Leiria Regional Social Security Office], the Câmara Municipal de Pombal [Pombal Town Council], the Centro de Saúde de Pombal [Pombal Health Centre], Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Pombal [Pombal branch of Misericórdia], the Associação de Industriais do Concelho de Pombal [Pombal Enterprise Association] and the Associação de Pais e Educadores para a Infância [APEPI - Association of Parents and Primary School Teachers].

Main objectives:

- improving the living and housing conditions of individuals and families in situations of insecurity or social risk;
- helping to solve problems of unemployment and insecure employment (with priority for women heads of households or women with large families);
- helping elderly and dependent people with a view to achieving an improvement in their personal and family situation.

Partners:

- Centro Regional de Segurança Social de Leiria [Leiria Regional Social Security Office];
- Câmara Municipal de Pombal [Pombal Town Council];
- Centro de Saúde de Pombal [Pombal Health Centre];
- Santa Casa de Misericórdia de Pombal [Pombal branch of Misericórdia];
- Associação de Industriais do Concelho de Pombal [Pombal Enterprise Association];
- Associação de Pais e Educadores para a Infância [APEPI - Association of Parents and Primary School Teachers].

Current situation of the project: The project ended in December 1994, but a "transfer strategy" was used to develop a new project focusing on a target group identified as being significant at local level - 50 gypsy families. Plus continuing maintenance of a Centro de Acolhimento Integrado [Integrated Care Centre], covering social security and health issues.

Evaluation of the partnership: In the opinion of local specialists, the partnership was one of the most successful aspects of the project. The partnership that was developed operated on two levels: decision-making (performed by the representatives of the various services included) and execution (the partnership relations developed among specialists from the various services). The most difficult moment of the partnership was when three representatives of the main institutions involved (Centro Regional de Segurança Social, Centro de Saúde and Câmara Municipal) were all replaced at the same time. The main role played by the partnership was that of contributing "in an appropriate way (...) in the spheres of competence" of each of the partners.

3. **Title of the project:** *"Associação "In Loco"* (Intervenção Formação, Estudos para o Desenvolvimento Local)

Geographical location: Interior of the Algarve

Origins: In 1985, the identification by a group of teachers from the Escola Superior de Educação de Faro [Faro Higher Education College] of a situation of major isolation and abandonment in various education units in the area was the original source of the project. With the financial support of the Van Leer Foundation in the Netherlands, an action research project was launched (project RADIAL), focusing on the development of the region and giving particular

attention to the potential local actors concerned. Two areas were identified as priorities: job-creation and support for children, whilst maintaining a global/local approach to community development. The project currently includes a network of other initiatives under the auspices of the "IN LOCO" association, which was set up in 1988 and concentrates particularly on issues of local socio-economic animation. It also runs activities within the framework of Community programmes such as LEADER (under which it has supported 156 projects over a period of three years). "Projecto Radial" has comprised a programme to support children in the rural environment (with the setting-up of social facilities, the training of socio-educational facilitators, the creation of play and development areas, children's centres and community education programmes) and their mothers (by means of vocational training and support for the setting-up of small entrepreneurial projects).

Main objectives:

- supporting the creation, animation and monitoring of social facilities for children in areas suffering from severe isolation and abandonment;
- promoting the training of socio-educational facilitators;
- extending the experience to new areas;
- supporting vocational training and the creation of small entrepreneurial projects;
- making the most of local resources in promoting the economic sector, encouraging the social integration of the most disadvantaged groups and combating exclusion;
- disseminating important experiences (local, national and international) by publishing a quarterly reviews, *A Rede - para o desenvolvimento local*.

Partners:

- regional authorities (Câmaras Municipais and Juntas de Freguesia);
- regional services of the Public Administration (Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional, Direcção Regional de Agricultura, Direcção Regional de Educação, instituto de Juventude, Centro Regional de Segurança Social, Instituto Financeiro de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento da Agricultura e Pescas);
- University of the Algarve and other national and foreign universities (Instituto Superior de Ciências do Trabalho e da Empresa in Lisbon and the Italian Research Institute);
- local associations.

Current situation of the project: "Projecto Radial" is still one of the main focuses of the "In Loco" association's work, since a new phase has now been entered (1991-1995), in which the aim is to apply to new geographical areas and areas of intervention the methodologies and content developed over the past few years. With this objective, negotiations are being conducted with local authorities and services, with a view to expanding activities, which will nonetheless still focus on a particular aspect, but with an approach that is integrated with the objectives of local development.

Evaluation of the partnership: The establishment of the "In Loco" association marked the formalization of a partnership focusing on local development issues. In addition to involving and taking full advantage of local agents, the association perceived and realized the potential of involving bodies at regional, national and European level. The work undertaken by the association is now an ideal point of reference at national level, both as regards local development processes and as regards their promotion on the basis of shared responsibilities (which has been the association's central role).

4. **Title of project:** *"Projecto de Formação para o Desenvolvimento Comunitário de Messejana"* (Empresa da Messejana para o Desenvolvimento Integrado - ESDIME - cooperative of users and services)

Geographical location: Baixo Alentejo

Origins: A cooperative was the institutional model adopted to give continuity to a local development and action project located in Messejana in Baixo Alentejo. In the development of this project, priority was given to supporting its members' economic initiatives (beginning with the creation of an Iniciativa Local de Emprego [ILE - Local Employment Initiative], which also attempted to cover cultural initiatives).

Main objectives:

- community development, including studies on regional development issues;
- supporting enterprise initiatives by providing technical back-up and advice;

- promoting technical and vocational training in the following areas:
 - hotel and catering trade;
 - packaging/printing;
 - building maintenance and repairs;
 - carpentry;
 - audio-visual communications;
 - agriculture;
 - support services for individuals and enterprises;
- supporting action schemes in the area of human-resource training (NOW initiative, in its latter stages).

Partners:

- local authorities (Câmaras Municipais and Juntas de Freguesia);
- local and regional official bodies (in particular, Comissão Coordenadora da Região, Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional, Centros de Emprego, Centros de Segurança Social, Ministério de Agricultura);
- schools (especially Escola Superior de Beja);
- representative associations (Associação Empresarial, Associação de Agricultores, Associação de Artesãos).

Current situation of the project: The project currently has 17 workers, plus some technical advisors. For any initiative or project launched, it opts for a partnership approach at local and/or regional level, seeing this as a way of safeguarding the objectives set. Particular attention is given to activities more directly associated with the promotion of social cohesion: strengthening the capacity of the business world to respond to employment needs, occupational guidance for young people still at school, and entering into agreements with local authorities in order to establish projects that promote employment.

Evaluation of the project: This is a partnership in which we can identify two levels: i) all the partners involved in the ESDIME strategic action plan (see the partners listed above) and ii) the partnership established within the more limited framework of each project.

5. **Title of project:** *Fundação "Solidários"*

Geographical location: Main office in Aveiro

Origins: This foundation was set up in 1985. Its members are individuals, all of whom were originally attached to cooperatives. The origins of the foundation are connected with the problems of employment and support for the promotion of local production (particularly selling and placing local products on the market). In this respect, the foundation promoted exchanges between different initiatives, recognition of the quality of local agricultural produce and organization and cooperation for the sale of local crafts.

Main objectives:

- monitoring and mobilizing local projects;
- management of a rotating fund to support small entrepreneurial projects in their early days (by providing favourable support rates);
- setting up and monitoring information centres providing information on training and employment, particularly for groups with major integration difficulties (women);
- maintaining a communications network (with a quarterly publication, seminars and other information events) to link similar initiatives.

Partners:

- town councils in the action areas (Oliveira do Bairro, Bairrada, Sátão, Arouca, Santo Tirso, Obidos);
- Centro Social e Paroquial de Covide (Gerês);
- development associations in the action areas;
- other associations, via "ANIMAR" (network of initiatives concerning local development);
- Escola Profissional de Braga.

Current situation of the project: The association operates in the field of training (in the areas of management and marketing), essentially in connection with local enterprise creation projects, and also trains local agents to activate and monitor these projects. As regards the geographical location of its activities and target groups, particular attention is given to initiatives in the rural environment and groups of women and young people who are unemployed or in an insecure

socio-occupational situation. It manages some European programmes (NOW, LEADER). It also receives support from international organizations and annual contributions from active collaborators.

Evaluation of the partnership: This partnership involves agents at two distinct levels: the main foundation as such and partnerships deriving from the various local and/or sectoral projects.

6. Title of project: *"Projecto da Zona Histórica Sé e São Nicolau"*

Geographical location: two districts (Sé and São Nicolau) that form the original heart of the city of Oporto

Origins: When the Second European Anti-Poverty Programme was launched, the extent and severity of poverty in this area led to the setting-up of a project whose target group was the elderly. The visibility this gave to the widespread poverty in the area, together with the sorry state of the housing stock, cultural heritage and living conditions justified inclusion of this area in the subsequent Anti-Poverty Programme (Poverty III). The legal form adopted was that of setting up a foundation, both to formalize a partnership comprising the main bodies and actors and to establish conditions of autonomy with respect to customary institutional dynamics (as well as ensuring a more flexible and potentially less bureaucratic mode of operation).

Main objectives:

- promoting the social and economic development of the two communities;
- responding to the main problems and needs of the most needy members of the population.

To achieve these general objectives, four strategic areas were selected to form the focus of activities and research between 1989 and 1994:

- urban renewal;
- cooperation with local institutions and associations;
- education and socio-cultural animation;
- employment and vocational training.

Partners:

- Administração Regional de Saúde [Regional Health Administration];
- Associação Social e Cultural de São Nicolau [São Nicolau Social and Cultural Association];
- Câmara Municipal do Porto [Oporto City Council];
- Centro Regional de Segurança Social do Porto [Oporto Regional Social Security Office];
- Centro Social da Sé Catedral do Porto [Sé Social Centre];
- Centro Social de Santana [Santana Social Centre];
- Centro Social de Barredo [Barredo Social Centre];
- Centro Social e Paroquial de São Nicolau [São Nicolau Social and Parish Centre];
- Círculo Católico Operário do Porto [Oporto Catholic Workers' Circle];
- Comissão de Coordenação da Região Norte [Northern Region Coordination Commission];
- Comissariado Regional do Norte de Luta Contra a Pobreza [Northern Region Anti-Poverty Office];
- Direcção Geral dos Desportos [Directorate General of Sports];
- Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional [Employment and Vocational Training Institute];
- Junta de Freguesia da Sé [Sé Community Council];
- Junta de Freguesia de São Nicolau [São Nicolau Community Council];
- representatives of sports, cultural and leisure associations;
- União das Instituições Privadas de Solidariedade Social [Union of Private Social Solidarity Institutions].

Together, these partners form the *Project Management Committee*, which is responsible for decision-making and directing execution of the activities programme.

Current situation of the project: The project is still functioning and essentially continues to cover the same fields of action. It is supported by European programmes (HORIZON and NOW), receives funding under the Programa Nacional de Luta Contra a Pobreza [National Anti-Poverty Programme] and is also funded by the Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional [Employment and Vocational Training Institute].

Evaluation of the partnership: As part of Poverty III, the aim of the project was to create the necessary conditions to apply the two fundamental principles that make this project innovative - participation and partnership. According to the final project report, "generally speaking, there has been increasing commitment on the part of the partners - commitment that is not merely formal but takes the form of increased and improved involvement and collaboration in executing the project's actions and activities" (p 66). Practical results have included the LADA (name of a district) rehousing scheme and the setting-up of community information centres and a community residential home for the elderly. It would be particularly interesting to study the importance of the partnership, not only in preparing and implementing the "transfer strategy" for this project, but also in the continuing application of the principle of partnership.

7. **Title of project:** *"Projecto Mundo Rural em Transformação"*

Geographical location: Municipality of Almeida, Beira Interior (close to the border with Spain)

Origins: The project was developed as a result of the knowledge gathered by the Centro de Acolhimento e Integração Social [Social Integration Centre] on the high rate of depopulation (because of a strong trend towards emigration, with people seeking better opportunities in other parts of the country), low school attendance rates, the fragility of the supply of work and employment, the lack of basic infrastructures at physical, economic and socio-cultural level, and the already recognized aging of the population. This project benefited from its inclusion in the Second European Anti-Poverty Programme and it has also been included in Poverty III.

Main objectives:

Two main objectives have been pursued by the project, with a view to combating social exclusion and poverty: 1) improving the living conditions of particularly vulnerable population groups (the elderly, people living alone and those with special needs, women, young job-seekers, small farmers, craftspeople and the unemployed); 2) promoting conditions that are conducive to a local development strategy.

Partners:

- Centro de Acolhimento e Integração Social [Social Integration Centre];
- Câmara Municipal de Almeida [Almeida Town Council];
- Juntas de Freguesia [Community Councils];
- schools;
- cooperatives;
- enterprises;
- Portuguese Red Cross;
- Centro Regional de Segurança Social [Regional Social Security Office];
- Administração Regional de Saúde [Regional Health Administration];
- Direcção Regional de Educação do Centro [Regional Educational Directorate for Central Portugal];
- Instituto de Apoio às Pequenas e Médias Empresas e ao Investimento [Institute to Support Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises and Investment];
- Direcção Regional de Agricultura da Beira Interior [Regional Agriculture Directorate for Beira Interior];
- Núcleo Empresarial da Região de Guarda [Guarda Region Employers' Group];
- Direcção Geral do Desenvolvimento Regional [Directorate General of Regional Development];
- Direcção Geral de Acção Social [Directorate General of Social Action];
- Direcção Geral da Saúde [Directorate General of Health];
- Direcção Geral de Família [Directorate General for the Family];
- Comissão Nacional de Apoio à Terceira Idade [National Commission for the Support of the Elderly];
- Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional [Employment and Vocational Training Institute];
- Instituto Financeiro de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento da Agricultura e Pescas [Financial Institute to Support the Development of Agriculture and Fisheries].

There is a Management Committee, comprising several organizations, which established an initial collaboration agreement. As well as these organizations, there are also "associate institutions", which are organized on the basis of areas and problems to solve. The partnership distinguishes two types of partner: those at local level and representatives of regional (and national) structures.

Current situation of the project: The project's main activities are guaranteed by financial and technical contributions from partners such as the Centro Regional de Segurança Social and the Centro de Acolhimento e Integração Social. The LEADER and HORIZON initiatives make it possible to continue other areas of investment, particularly in the area of training and human resources.

Evaluation of the partnership: In the project evaluation, the partnership is seen as a strategic element in the construction and running of the project, though it is detrimentally affected by the special features that have to be taken into account in a rural context (absence and/or inadequacy of resources and potential distrust of projects with broad-ranging objectives). The various partnerships established have taken as their point of reference concrete actions and problems that are keenly felt at local level, which has helped to encourage participation in the various spheres of competence by agents as diverse as the Central Administration, town councils, economic agents and local groups and associations.

8. Title of project: *"Escola Profissional de Braga"*

Geographical location: District of Braga

Origins: The project was officially established in September 1989 under an agreement between the State, represented by the Gabinete de Ensino Técnico, Artístico e Profissional [Office responsible for Technical, Artistic and Vocational Education], and three regional bodies: a town council, a trade association and a commercial association. Located in an urban area, the school was, in March 1991, attended by 145 students, divided into ten groups, most of whom came from an urban environment; it had a large teaching staff, comprising 59 teachers working reduced hours.

Main objectives:

- to fill the gaps in vocational skills that are a feature of the local world of work (to promote social cohesion);
- to prevent students from leaving school early (thus combating one of the components of social exclusion);

- to provide a favourable environment for the development of socio-educational partnerships.

Partners:

- Câmara Municipal de Braga [Braga Town Council];
- Associação Industrial de Braga [Braga Industrial Association];
- Associação Comercial de Braga [Braga Commercial Association].

Current situation of the project: The college is currently offering the following courses: Commercial Services/External Trade, Secretarial Course, Accounting, Communications/Marketing, Public Relations and Advertising, Electronics and Civil Engineering.

Evaluation of the partnership: As part of the education system, vocational colleges are now seen as environments that are favourable to the development of socio-educational partnerships, with the emergence of new social values and the objectives of decentralization and participation. These colleges are seen as a place for negotiation between local social actors and the State, at both local and national level. Although one-dimensional in their original field of intervention (training courses), they are seen as being multidimensional as regards both the areas on which they focus and the local effects they can produce.

9. **Title of project:** *"Associação para a Recuperação de Cidadãos Inadaptados" [ARCIL]*

Geographical location: Lousã (rural/urban environment)

Origins: This initiative was launched in 1976 by a group of parents, children and young people with special needs, with a view to their social integration. Based on the individual and social needs of this specific group, various integrated projects were launched by ARCIL. These projects prompted the setting up of a community centre for the local population, which is also used for initiatives with local disadvantaged groups.

Main objectives:

- offering special education and rehabilitation in close cooperation with schools and health centres;
- developing vocational training and creating employment in accordance with the characteristics of the local population and taking account of local conditions;
- setting up production activities in the area (for example, production of magnetic boards by agreement with a specialist commercial enterprise);
- facilitating the provision of social infrastructures and facilities (as in the case of a kindergarten with a limited number of places for children with special needs);
- providing support for improving housing conditions, either in the form of residential homes or by providing individual apartments.

Partners:

- Centro Regional de Segurança Social [Regional Social Security Office];
- Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional [Employment and Vocational Training Institute];
- Centro Regional de Saúde [Regional Health Centre];
- Direcção Regional da Educação do Centro [Regional Educational Directorate for Central Portugal];
- Escola Preparatória e Secundária [Preparatory and Secondary School];
- Câmara Municipal [Town Council];
- Misericórdia;
- local and national enterprises;
- transnational partners (associated with the European programmes Horizon, Helios and Handinet).

Current situation of the project: The project continues to develop activities in the field of basic education, training and employment for people with special needs. It has expanded and diversified its activities to provide broader support that includes the preventive dimension as well as rehabilitation activities.

The specific nature of the project means that special attention needs to be given to the particular difficulties associated with social integration encountered by people with special needs and disabilities. This implies giving special attention not only to the project's local image but also to the task of its financial survival.

The Centro de Reabilitação Funcional [Functional Rehabilitation Centre], set up on the basis of agreements with local bodies (such as State services and insurance companies), has established a pioneering relationship with people with special needs. Another very innovative area has been housing aid.

Recent participation in the Programa Nacional Anti-Pobreza [National Anti-Poverty Programme] is part of a plan to take an integrated approach to local problems, with priority being given to less advantaged members of the population.

Evaluation of the partnership: In this initiative, set up and run locally on the basis of a "bottom-up" approach (that is, based on local needs), we can identify not only a partnership but various combinations of partners, depending on the areas covered. The form of joint initiatives is mainly decided in accordance with working programmes rather than on the basis of formal, overall agreements. In some cases, ARCIL is the driving force that both provides the initial stimulus for implementing plans and activities and promotes the facilitation and back-up required to ensure that initiatives are completed.

Of particular interest is the fact that the project emerged in connection with a specific issue - people with special needs - and has become a project based on an integrated approach that covers various fields of action as well as various local population groups (the disabled, pensioners, young people, women, etc).

Some of the results achieved concern the following aspects:

- helping to improve social infrastructures and facilities;
- the multiplying effect, in terms of stimulating similar initiatives in other areas of the country;
- creating local employment (more than 200 jobs).

Our analysis enabled us to see that the main objectives of partnerships in Portugal can be grouped into two (of the three) models of partnership defined by Craig (1994), namely the models of "delivery" and "agency" (the "brokerage" model does exist but is more rare).

The "delivery" model of partnership involves objectives based on i) the development of infrastructures at local level, ii) the distribution of services and the securing of resources for their provision, iii) the development of new ideas for the distribution of services and, iv) contributing to a change in attitudes and the appreciation of local culture(s). The "agency" model, on the other hand, is associated more with objectives that emphasize i) a "secondary role in provision", ii) an "orientation towards the design of provision programmes" and, iii) the "direct distribution of resources to services and organizations" (see Craig, 1994, pp 24-25).

In Portugal, the "delivery" model tends to predominate among initiatives established on the basis of "partenariado" (see Section 1.1 for the distinction between "partenariado" [formal partnership] and "parceria" [informal partnership]). The "agency" model tends to predominate among initiatives that are structured around a mediating association or organization at local level. This model is more often identified with "parceria" or, in some cases, with a combination of "parceria" and "partenariado" (a combination that we examine in our case studies).

A quick glance at the summary table of examples of partnerships in Portugal gives a clear picture of the key issues around which partnership initiatives are organized.

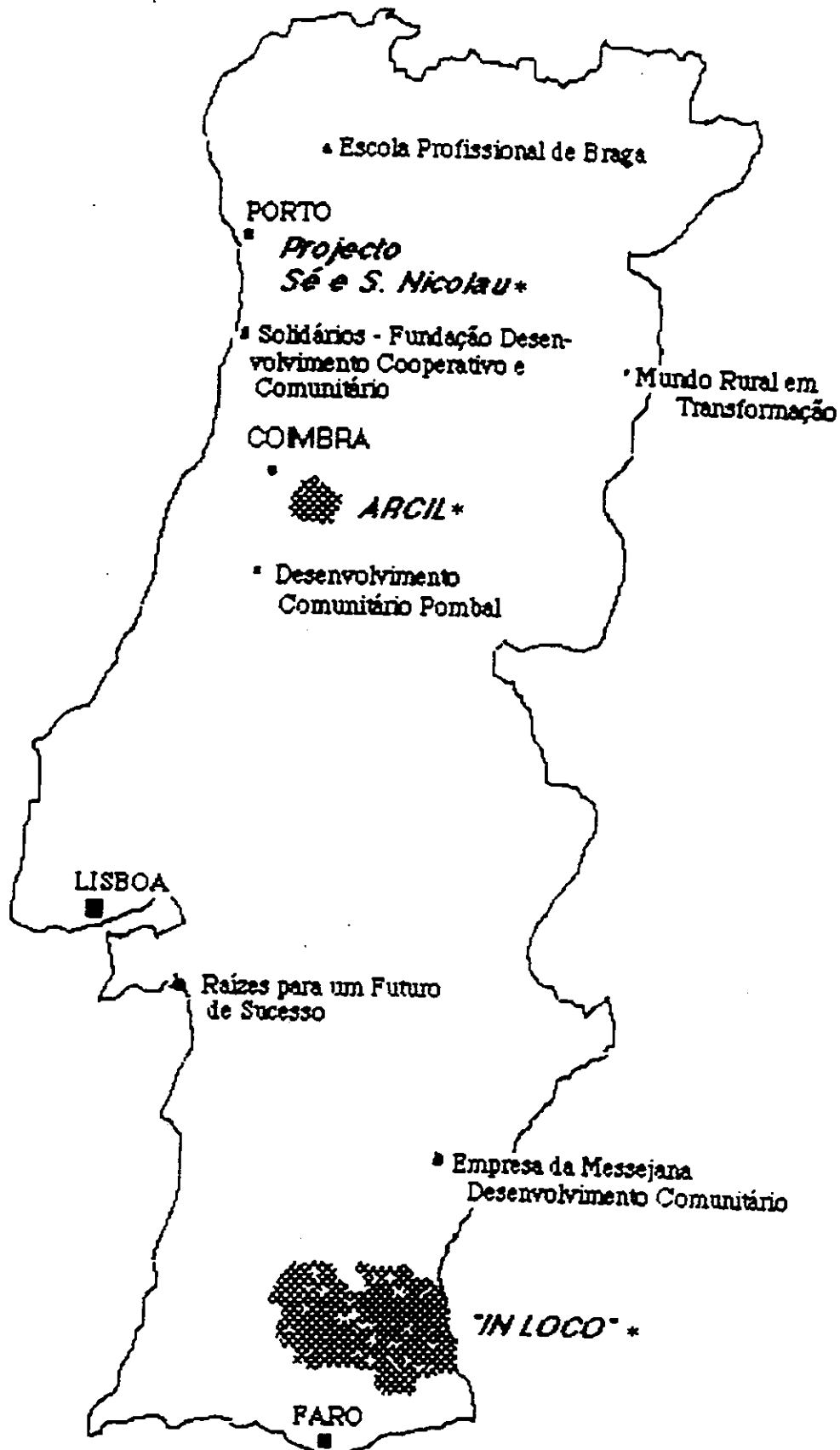
Summary table of examples of partnership in Portugal

Title of partnership Key features	Raízes para um Futuro de Sucesso	Acção Modelo Des. Com. Pombal	Associação "IN LOCO"	Empresa da Messejana para Des. Com.	Fundação para Des. Coop e Comunitário	Projecto Zona Histórica Sé e São Nicolau	Mundo Rural em Transformação	Escola Profissional Braga	Assoc. para a Recup de a Ciudad. Inapt. da Lousã
Geographical location	Urban	Rural Urban	Rural	Rural	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural Urban
Origin	Public social security office	Public service and Second European anti-Poverty Programme	Local community initiative (teachers)	Local community initiative Cooperative	Local community initiative	Public social security office (Poverty II and III)	Voluntary institution (Poverty II and III)	National programme	Community initiative Parents of children with special needs
Main source of funding	National and local programmes	EU: Poverty II, ESF National programme	EU: LEADER, LEADER, National programme,	EU: LEADER, ESF, National programme	EU National programme	EU: Poverty III, Horizon, NOW, EUROFORM National programme	EU: Poverty III, INTERREG, NOW, Horizon, EUROFORM, National programme	EU: ESF National programme	EU: Helios National programme
Main issues	- Poverty - Social exclusion - Housing - Health - Education - Training	Single parents Housing Health Employment Elderly dependants	Education Rural development Training Social and economic facilities	Rural development Training Unemployment Education	Training Unemployment Rural development Information	Poverty, Housing Education Training Unemployment Health Social facilities	Poverty Rural development Education and training	Vocational training Unemployment	Special education Health Social facilities Employment
Partners	Public services Local authorities Voluntary institutions	Public service Local authorities Voluntary institutions Employers' association	Local authorities Public Administration Local associations Employers' association	Local authorities Public services Employers' association Agricultural association Craft association	Local authorities Voluntary institutions Local associations	Public services Voluntary institutions Local authorities Sports, leisure and cultural association	Public services Local authorities Local enterprises Local associations	Public services Local authorities Employers' association	Local authorities Employers Public service

** = Case studies

It is immediately evident that these initiatives are associated with the issue of poverty and social exclusion that is manifest in many dimensions of deprivation, at the level of individuals, groups and local areas, as well as in relation to physical infrastructures or social services and facilities and in the area of economic and occupational integration. The target groups of actions tend to be unprotected groups (people who are marginalized or moving towards poverty and marginalization) and there are also many initiatives aimed at associations, local groups and very small enterprises. Apart from being the target groups of initiatives, these groups and associations often tend also to be seen as potential partners. However, the precarious nature of many local associations and a certain attitude of "complicity" and wish to "dominate locally" on the part of technical teams (because formal partnerships tend not to have local roots) create some ambiguities in the development of partnerships, particularly when the "rules of the game" are not clearly laid down from the outset (for example, as regards mutual investment and the allocation of resources by partners). We shall examine these "ambiguities" later, in our three in-depth case studies, which were deliberately selected in different areas of the country, as can be seen from the following map.

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE NINE EXAMPLES



* = in depth case studies

4. Views of the key actors in the public, private and voluntary/community sectors

"Partnership is a concept that should receive privileged treatment, but it is not a magic wand" (manager of a local development association).

"It is all double Dutch to me" (a local policy-maker).

"I looked it up in the dictionary because I had never heard the word before" (director of a public service).

There appears to be agreement on the fact that partnerships take time to develop, depending largely on the mutual understanding among the potential partners. In Portugal, political and ideological constraints, rooted in the socio-political contexts of the recent past but still leaving their mark, make the creation and development of relationships based on trust a process that requires a long maturation period. In this context, it can be seen that it is vital to create a "partnership culture", that is, an approach to joint actions (often of a transnational nature) that takes account of the specific features of each partner and that is, therefore, based on diversity (in terms of status, power, culture, gender, disciplinary base, nature of activity, etc). It is this approach more than anything that might make it possible to tackle some of the effects of an uneven development process and relatively recent political upheaval. In this sense, some agents of development at local level speak of the minimum requirements for effective partnership: for example, shared objectives among partners, a minimum of responsibility and investment on the part of each partner, clear establishment of the "rules of the game" before any partnership is launched, a shared philosophy of development and training, compatible approaches to the articulation of theory and practice, etc.

There also seems to be a consensus in Portugal that for formal partnerships to be viable, they must be based on formally guaranteed resources. This argument seems to be particularly attached to participation in programmes funded at European level, though there is increasing encouragement of formal partnerships in official discourse, particularly among ministers and government officials responsible for employment, industry and commerce. The non-governmental organizations, groups and associations we contacted suggest that it might be possible to establish viable partnerships outside the framework of strict dependence and financial resource management, namely in the form of mediating bodies that establish and maintain an interface

among potential partners. These bodies can then become catalysts to stimulate and give concrete form to the convergences that are the fundamental basis of partnership. Examples of such catalysts in Portugal are: i) cooperative and community development associations such as ARCIL [Associação para a Reabilitação dos Cidadãos Inadaptados da Lousã - Association for the Rehabilitation of People with Special Needs in Lousã], ESDIME [Empresa Social para o Desenvolvimento e Integração da Messejana - Social Enterprise for Development and Integration in Messejana], Solidários [Fundação para o Desenvolvimento Cooperativo e Comunitário - Foundation for Cooperative and Community Development], IN LOCO [Associação de Desenvolvimento Local - Local Development Association]; ii) quangos such as IEFP [Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional - Employment and Vocational Training Institute]; and iii) initiatives run by the Central Administration, such as Comissariados Regionais do Programa Nacional Anti-Pobreza [Regional Offices of the National Anti-Poverty Programme]⁸.

On the basis of various schemes, it is illuminating to analyse the main advantages of partnerships, as expressed by the people we interviewed:

- i) they make it possible to combine resources in a shared fund (often creating "something out of nothing");
- ii) they offer knowledge based on a variety of sources;

⁸ The table below illustrates what has been described as being the construction of partnership on the basis of an "affinity of identities", with a mediation agency - ESDIME - playing the role of mobilizing and facilitating the interface between partners:

Partnership

Mobilizing and facilitating agency	Criterion of cooperation	Other partners
ESDIME	Affinity of identities	- Group of unemployed women - Trade union - Associação de Municípios de Beja(Alentejo) - Junta de Freguesia, Vale Santiago

- iii) they make projects viable (hence the search, sometimes more particularly in Portugal, for official - State - participating bodies, often via local and municipal authorities);
- iv) they may influence national policies (partners and supporters - *stakeholders* - may join forces to form pressure groups and/or lobbies);
- v) they facilitate the creation of local structures with various aims (for example, the sale of local products);
- vi) they strengthen trust, collaboration and reciprocity (which is crucial at a time of "detraditionalization", when trust is no longer based on "invisible" structures⁹).

The disadvantages (or obstacles to the creation and development of partnerships) that were generally expressed were as follows:

- i) the flexible conception of work, often seen as being inherent in the concept of partnership (according to one of our interviewees, "... the local population sees work in its traditional conception, that is, as an occupation for which a wage is received at the end of the month; people have difficulty in accepting short-term work or jobs that are not based on a contract of employment");
- ii) "the illusion of external aid", particularly in the case of programmes that are based on and promote partnership. Programmes that involve the allocation of funds often require minimum guarantees that a) are difficult to secure, and b) depend on regular, guaranteed funding; but, in a country such as Portugal, flows of funds and own resources are often at the mercy of other priorities);
- iii) waste of all the time and effort invested, because of difficulties in coordinating what are sometimes not only different operational logics on the part of the various partners but also different conceptions of what development is;

⁹

This trend opens new opportunities for the coordination of different spheres of competence but, at the same time, makes relationships more precarious, since they have to be constantly renewed. It is in this context that networks are emerging to facilitate this task and guarantee this constant renewal.

- iv) ingenuous voluntarism, in the area of social policies (including education policies), associated with the criticisms made of the Welfare State and of the attempts of State agents to promote a dynamic private business sector.

According to the view of employers' organizations, the European Union is deliberately promoting partnership in Portugal, through, for example, joint ventures, cooperation among enterprises, etc. This promotion also involves the creation of networks with a view to establishing and maintaining contacts between enterprises in different countries (with particular attention being given to the more disadvantaged areas of Europe, including Portugal). In this respect, it may be noted that the *Europartenariat* [Europartnership] has been organized every year since 1987,

"(...) in the field of Community enterprise and regional development policies, with the aim of encouraging the establishment of negotiations and cooperation among Community SMEs [small and medium-sized enterprises], as well as promoting the economic development of certain European regions. (...) In each country, an official representative of Europartenariat, the "national adviser", is appointed and is responsible (...) for mobilizing potential collaborative partners" (see A Indústria do Norte, journal of the Associação Industrial Portuense, January 1996, p 14).

The most recent of these initiatives (1995) brought together 2400 enterprises in Portugal.

According to employers, Portuguese enterprises have shown a considerable interest in these programmes, primarily with the objective of opening new markets. It seems obvious that partnership in industry should be perceived mainly as an exclusive exchange between economic partners (though it may be noted that recent years have seen some developments, however hesitant, involving municipal councils and other local authorities). With respect to the trade unions, the employers' attitude continues to be relatively fixed: "the trade unions are still living in the times of the Industrial Revolution" (statement by a manager of an employers' federation). The same person also added that "(...) the trade unions do not take sufficient account of basic human and social rights; they are still too preoccupied with wage issues".

Another employer suggested that some progress had been made as regards the formulation of overall social and economic policies, that is, policies that are not based solely on pay issues. However, it was also argued that there is some evident lagging behind in terms of culture and at the industrial level in Portugal. How can this situation be dealt with? By "pressure from outside Portugal" (namely, from the European Union) and by internal strategies of varying scopes and types to solve national problems. Persistent mention was made of the Portuguese people's ability to ensure their survival in adversity (specific mention was made of the technique of "desenrascanço" [overcoming difficulties], which implies a recognition of a "macro-capacity through micro-strategies"). In this same respect, much mention was made of the ability of Portugal's social fabric to attenuate, or even absorb, social and economic problems (problems as sizeable as, for example, the integration of the more than half a million people who returned from former colonies, or as in the case of unemployment).

The growing trend towards globalization has led the trade unions in multinational companies to reflect on the need to adapt and restructure themselves in accordance with the so-called "European social dimension". For example, a figure that has recently emerged is that of the "European Works Council" (Directive 94/45/EC, published in the Official Journal of the European Communities, No L 245/64 of 30 September), whose main objectives include "improving the right to information and consultation of workers in Community enterprises or groups of enterprises" (Article 1.1).

In addition to this cooperative approach among the trade unions, and despite some employers' opinions as regards the lack of trade union involvement in areas other than mere pay bargaining, it is possible to find partnership initiatives that include trade union participation. These concern mainly cooperation in the field of basic human and social rights or in the world of work. In this respect, recent years have seen the establishment of the Confederação Nacional de Acção Sobre o Trabalho Infantil [National Confederation for Action with respect to Child Labour], whose partners include the Liga Operária Católica [Catholic League of Workers], Confederação Geral dos Trabalhadores Portugueses [CGTP - General Confederation of Portuguese Workers], União Geral dos Trabalhadores [UGT - General Workers' Union], Movimento de Apostolado das Crianças [Apostolate Children's Movement] and Associações de Pais [community associations] (linked to schools). As regards the right to work, mention should be made, for example, of the creation of the Núcleo de Apoio à Criação de Emprego [NACE - Job-Creation Support Network]

in Santo Tirso, whose objective is to stimulate the development of employment in an area traditionally dominated by the textile industry, which is currently undergoing restructuring. NACE is developing cooperation among the Confederação do Comércio Português [confederation of Portuguese Commerce], Instituto de Apoio às Pequenas e Médias Empresas [IAPME -Institute to Support Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises], Confederação Geral dos Trabalhadores Portugueses [CGTP - General Confederation of Portuguese Workers], União Geral dos Trabalhadores [UGT - General Workers' Union], Caixa Geral dos Depósitos [General Savings Fund], Câmara Municipal de Santo Tirso [Municipal Council of Santo Tirso] and Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional [IEFP - Employment and Vocational Training Institute].

5. National context - summary

"Research will focus on local partnerships that are based on a formal organizational structure for policy-making and implementation 'on the ground', and that mobilize a coalition of interests and the commitment of a range of different partners around a common agenda and multi-dimensional action programme to combat social exclusion and promote social cohesion" (Research Programme, 1994).

Our analysis enabled us to identify two models of partnership in Portugal: "partenariado" and "parceria". In a combination that we refer to as "dynamic oscillation", these two models, together, comprise a conception of partnership that is quite compatible with the definition adopted for the research programme. Taken individually, each of the models is incomplete in relation to the working definition:

- the first because it has an organizational structure that is *excessively* formal (even artificial), to the point, in some cases, of being a conception imposed by Central Government (often through regulations) or by economic and social programmes supported and funded by the European Union;
- the second because it has an organizational structure that is essentially *informal*, sometimes to a point where the partners involved have difficulty in distinguishing between "colleagues" and "friends", thus reproducing an homogenizing effect that calls into question the notion of partnership as mobilizing "a coalition of interests" and "the commitment of a range of different partners around a common agenda".

Generally speaking, both models, in implementing the concept of partnership, promote "a multi-dimensional action programme"¹⁰; and, in almost all cases, the general objective includes a programme "to combat social exclusion and promote social cohesion". As we have already said, programmes and projects based on European Union policies and resources tend to promote the model of "partenariado", where there is direct reference to combatting social exclusion. On the other hand, the model of "parceria", because of its specific nature, tends to be reflected in processes of integrated local development, where the struggle against social exclusion is seen as an integral part of a process of development based on local participation and the taking of responsibility by local social and economic forces.

We hope that the following case studies will give a clearer picture of the content and implications of the two models of partnership identified in Portugal. We also hope to be able to show how their articulation enriches the concept of partnership and makes it possible to go beyond both its mere legitimation (by official departments) and its dependence on a logic imposed from the outside.

The case studies selected are based on recent national experience and aim to reflect not only the successes but also the problems encountered. We have tried to combine experiences associated to programmes with partnership as the fundamental principle (European Poverty III Programme), together with others where this principle was not specifically expressed. We also sought to illustrate the variety of partnership structures and the variety of agencies involved. In Portugal, as in other countries, we also tried to embrace different spatial and socio-economic contexts (urban area, rural area and rural-urban "transition" area). Our analysis highlighted various aspects, particularly the implications for specific population groups. We selected experiences that were consolidated on the ground so as to allow us to analyse not only the processes but also the results achieved. We have tried to describe the origin, structure and mechanisms of the partnership in each case study, the principal objectives of which were:

¹⁰

The most obvious exception to this rule is the case of Escolas Profissionais [EPs - Vocational Colleges]. These colleges emerged as a result of negotiations established first among their promoters (including trade unions, local authorities and local enterprises), then between their promoters and the Central Administration, and finally between each college and the Central Administration. The colleges are seen as resulting from *socio-educational partnerships* with an ability to identify educational projects at local level and to generate new resources at that level.

- i) to analyse the partnership in action (reflecting the formal and informal aspects of such co-operation);
- ii) to explore the different views of the partners (accepting their different values, cultures and approaches and their interests, objectives and roles); and
- iii) to reflect on the expression of the objectives and strategies defined, their specific implementation and their results and impact (expected and unexpected).

CHAPTER II

Case study: "*Projecto da Zona Histórica Sé e São Nicolau*"

Description of the partnership

Context and origins of the partnership

The partnership originally developed within the framework of the "Projecto da Zona Histórica da Sé e São Nicolau" [Project covering the Historical Area of Sé and São Nicolau] (a project included under the European *Poverty III* programme), whose area of action was the two communities (Sé and São Nicolau) that form the ancient heart of Oporto. These communities have a resident population of 11 300, a housing park of approximately 4700 dwellings (comprising both seriously dilapidated ancient buildings and old "ilhas" - early twentieth century workers' dwellings) and a recently implanted shanty town.

When the European Commission's Second Programme to Combat Poverty was implemented (and coordinated with the urban restoration programme that has been in operation since 1974 and is run by the *Comissariado para a Renovação Urbana da Area Ribeira/Barredo* [CRUARB - Office for the Urban Renewal of the Ribeira/Barredo Area]), the extent and seriousness of poverty in this area, and particularly among certain population groups, justified the launching of a special project aimed at the elderly. The consequent highlighting of widespread poverty in the area, associated with the sorry state of its housing stock, cultural heritage and living conditions, contributed to its inclusion in the subsequent European anti-poverty programme (which was launched in 1989). The legal basis of the project was a foundation (*Fundação para o Desenvolvimento da Zona Histórica do Porto* - Foundation for the Development of the Historical Area of Oporto, set up in 1991). The aims of the project were to i) formalize an informal partnership ("parceria") of the main bodies and actors involved, and ii) establish some autonomy in relation to usual institutional dynamics (as well as offering a way of working that was more flexible and potentially less bureaucratic). It might be said that the "Projecto da Zona Histórica da Sé e São Nicolau" was the driving force behind the partnership dynamic, while the setting up of the foundation marked the beginning of its "institutionalization".

Structure of the partnership

The structure of the partnership is indicated in the following table, "Organization of the management committee", which was included as an annex to the final report on the "Projecto da Zona Histórica Sé e São Nicolau" (*Poverty III*, 1994).

Organization of the Management Committee

Chairman of the Management Committee			
A. State services	B. Local authorities	C. Private social solidarity institutions [IPSSs]	D. Local associations
1. Regional Health Administration	1. Oporto municipal council	1. IPSS union	1. Catholic circle
2. Regional Social Security Office (Oporto)	2. Sé community council	2. São Nicolau social and cultural association	2. Sporting, cultural and leisure associations
3. Northern Anti-Poverty Office	3. São Nicolau community council	3. Sé social centre	
4. Directorate General of Sports		4. Santana social centre	
5. Employment and Vocational Training Institute		5. Barredo social centre	
6. Northern Region Coordinating Commission		6. São Nicolau social and community	

Inter-relations among the various partners:

1. the regional social security office (A2) and the employment and vocational training institute (A5) are part of the same ministry (Ministério do Emprego e Segurança Social - Ministry of Employment and Social Security);
2. the regional social security office (A2) supervises and financially supports all the private social solidarity institutions (C2, 3, 4, 5 and 6);
3. the chairmen of the community councils (B2 and 3), who are directly elected by the population of the two communities (Sé and São Nicolau), are automatically included as members of the municipal assembly of the municipal council of Oporto (B);
4. the union of private social solidarity institutions (C1) represents all private institutions throughout Portugal.

The table indicates all the partners who, at various levels, make up the *Comité Director do Projecto* [Project Management Committee], which is responsible for making decisions and setting guidelines concerning execution of the programme of activities. On completion of the European *Poverty III* programme in June 1994, the *Fundação para o Desenvolvimento da Zona Histórica do Porto* [Foundation for the Development of the Historical Area of Oporto] continued to pursue the objectives of the local project and maintained the structure of the partnership, though, as we shall see later, with a different orientation.

Mention should also be made of the relationship (or, perhaps, the lack of relationship) inherent in the project's working structure between the Management Committee and the multi-professional team of officers directly responsible for implementing activities. These officers or technicians, either linked directly to the project or seconded by the various services involved in it (such as, for example, State services, local authorities and private social solidarity institutions - IPSSs¹¹), seem not only to have become and remained strong protagonists but also to have acquired an identity in

¹¹

Some social analysts see Instituições Privadas de Solidariedade Social [IPSSs - Private Social-Solidarity Institutions] as organizations that, because of their position of relative autonomy and dependence with regard to the State, might be designated as "quangos" in other countries.

their own right, on the basis of which the project evaluators saw it as a "technical partnership". The implications of the technicians' apparent "relative autonomy" throughout the development of the project will be discussed later, in the section on "The partnership in action".

Objectives and activities of the partnership

On the basis of the features and problems identified in the two target communities (Sé and São Nicolau), the main objectives of the project and partnership were defined as being:

- i) to promote the economic and social development of the two communities;
- ii) to provide responses to the main problems and primary needs of the more needy members of the population.

To pursue these objectives, a selection was made of four strategic areas around which all action and research would be focused over the period 1989-1994:

- urban renewal;
- cooperation with local associations and institutions;
- education and socio-cultural activities;
- employment and vocational training.

The final report on the project (1994) states that the main target groups of the action taken "were the elderly, children, young people and women, and, within these groups, those people who, because of their specific situation, were more vulnerable to poverty and exclusion". Actions were, for example, undertaken with a view not only to "directly tackling some of the most serious cases of deprivation" but also to providing opportunities that might reinforce citizens' rights by means of greater local participation. Thus, work was done on "preventing the emergence/reproduction of situations of exclusion" by, on the one hand, developing "actions in the social and educational areas and as regards leisure activities" and, on the other, implementing "vocational and continuing training actions".

Annex I contains the summary table of the project's strategies and activities that was contained in the final report (1994, p 6).

Resources available to the partnership

As a project located in an "historical" area of the city of Oporto, an area that has, over time, played a central role in establishing the city's identity, the "Projecto da Zona Histórica da Sé e São Nicolau" aroused the interest and support not only of national policy-makers but also of bodies at European level, thus securing funding at three levels:

- i) European level - through the *Poverty III*, *Horizon*, *Now* and *Euroform* programmes;
- ii) national level - through the Programa Nacional de Luta Contra a Pobreza [National Anti-Poverty Programme] and the Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional [Employment and Vocational Training Institute];
- iii) local level - through funding by the Câmara Municipal do Porto [municipal council of Oporto].

The amount of money allocated to the project accounted for approximately 20% of the total budget of the *Fundação para o Desenvolvimento da Zona Histórica do Porto* (annual investment of the order of Esc 2 000 million).

In addition to support in the form of money, various State services (at central, regional and local level) contributed by providing services, especially by making technicians available (usually by seconding or assigning them to the project). Other partners, and particularly ones with well-established roots in the area, also provided resources, mainly by using their abilities to mediate with the local population, but also by offering voluntary work and sharing their cultural and material resources (for example, providing premises for activities).

The partnership in action

Representation and power

As we mentioned earlier, this is a partnership that developed on the basis of the impetus of two programmes launched by the European Commission: *Poverty II* and *Poverty III*. In the first part of this report, we drew a distinction between two forms of partnership in Portugal: "partenariado" and "parceria". In terms of this distinction, the prevailing logic of this project is that of "partenariado", because of its relatively formal nature and predominantly vertical organization. In this initiative, the partnership began to develop in connection with the "Projecto da Zona Histórica da Sé e São Nicolau" and would appear to approximate to the "delivery" model (see the classification suggested by Craig, 1994). The end of the project, which coincided with the end of the European support programme (*Poverty III*), saw its guaranteed continuation transferred to the Fundação. This new phase of local action would seem to be closer to the "brokerage" model. In other words, the dynamic of the project, initially based mainly on the capacity to produce concrete results by the strong input of creative ideas over a limited period, was gradually transformed into a dynamic that was based much more on the way of working of a foundation that was possibly more concerned about producing development policies, with the focus on consolidation, and less concerned about innovating and evaluating its investments.

Significantly, the submission of a formal application (the first step in the entire process) for inclusion in the *Poverty III* programme was organized by the Centro Regional de Segurança Social do Porto [CRSSP - Regional Social Security Office of Oporto]. According to some of our interviewees, this led to the inclusion of some determining factors right from the outset: on the one hand, the introduction of a partnership process without any prior analysis of what this might mean and, on the other, the existence of a political culture of limited participation (we have already mentioned the "over-representation" of the State in Portuguese society, which was further consolidated during the recent experience of dictatorship in the form of the "Estado Novo"). These determining factors produced some limitations, which were, in particular, reflected in the limited representation of the local population by the partners involved: "the project design served as a point of arrival, when it should have served as a point of departure (rather than being imposed on local partners)" (opinion of a member of the technical team). The project design did not emerge from the contributions of the various partners but was imposed by a State body.

Analysis of the functioning of the Management Committee gives us an idea of the impact this initial choice had on the development of the project. The Oporto Centro Regional de Segurança Social and, though to a lesser extent, Instituições Privadas de Solidariedade Social, had most of the decision-making power, which clearly reinforced i) the bodies more traditionally associated with processes of social action in the context of poverty and ii) approaches based on such social action (therefore contradicting the programme guidelines, which pointed towards a multidisciplinary approach, involving the social, cultural, economic and environmental sectors).

Of the members of the Management Committee, the Chairman was appointed by the Ministry (after consultation with the Municipal Council of Oporto), the two representatives of the Municipal Council were appointed by the council itself, the Comissário Regional do Programa Nacional Anti-Pobreza [Regional Officer of the National Anti-Poverty Programme] was also appointed by Central Government and, finally, to complete the team, the Chairman of the União das Instituições Privadas de Solidariedade Social [Union of Private Social Solidarity Institutions] was automatically appointed as part of his job. The other institutions and associations involved (see the organizational chart) formed the Conselho Geral [General Council], with a purely consultative role. This composition had an effect on decision-making within the project, with a tendency to place too much emphasis on political factors (both party political and/or deriving from adherence to the approach taken by the Public Administration) and too little on working methods.

According to some local agents, termination of the project, with the Fundação assuming responsibility for "outstanding" objectives, increased the gulf between the Management Committee and the other institutions and associations involved. During this phase, there seemed to be a sharpening of the contrast between an approach based on on-going local mobilization and the approach taken by the Fundação, which looked more towards the institutionalization of local activities. In this process, there was a trend whereby the institutions and associations involved consolidated their individual strategies with respect to the Fundação (with a view to gaining status, visibility and resources), to the detriment of any strengthening of the collective interests held by all the partners. This approach encouraged a partnership that was oriented more towards vertical communication than towards the strengthening of horizontal cooperation, with all the inevitable consequences (in the metaphorical words of a privileged observer whom we

interviewed, a partnership with a "masculine" orientation took predominance over a partnership with more "feminine" characteristics, which would have been more interested in successful horizontal cooperation).

Conceptions of the content and scope of local development are an important indicator revealing two different perspectives: the view held by the Juntas de Freguesia [community councils] focused on recognizing and realizing the full potential of local spaces and ways of life, while that of the Fundação was oriented more towards development of the area and its relationship with the broader context. These perspectives not only reflect differences of scale and dimension, but also point to the diversity of scale and dimension that needs to be taken into account in local development processes. A significant example is that of a local association we interviewed, which feels that the role of the Fundação is at the moment directed "only" towards urban renewal, thus expressing its concern about a process whose dimension and implications could be difficult to (co-)control. If we agree that the two approaches are complementary, then the ground seems to be fertile for the promotion of a "partenariado" [formal partnership] based on "parceria" [informal partnership] - that is, a dialogue based on cooperation and the sharing of power that would be capable of building bridges between these two approaches.

As regards representation and power within this partnership, there is a very obvious gender division that essentially follows the conventional model of the separation of fields of action. For example, members of the Management Committee, the chairmen of local authority bodies and the managers of local groups are mainly men; women, on the other hand, are in the majority in the technical teams responsible for execution of the project and/or for the day-to-day work conducted locally by the Fundação.

Resources, skills and working methods

One of the most scarce resources for the Projecto da Zona Histórica da Sé e São Nicolau was time:

"(...) from the operational viewpoint, the first year was virtually entirely spent identifying partners and training the technical team (two separate processes) - we did not have

enough time to make any refinements; the entire year was spent structuring the team" (member of the technical team).

The time limitations built into the project (fixed-term project and increased consolidation needs) were eased by the medium-term approach introduced by the setting-up of the Fundação, although, as we have already seen, this also altered the nature of the partnership (which became more institutionalized).

Another vital resource for the development of this partnership was the project's technical team. In a clear critical reference to the perceived power of this team, one of our interviewees, a member of the Management Committee, went as far as to state that "the technical team determines the nature of the partnership".

In its activities as regards the partnership, the technical team performed mediation, management and promotion tasks, namely:

- i) stimulating and encouraging interaction among the partners (**the specialist as mediator**);
- ii) encouraging communication among the partners (**the specialist as facilitator**);
- iii) creating spaces for interaction and promoting coalitions among partners (**the specialist as manager and arbitrator, as "bargaining therapist"**, suggested one of our interviewees);
- iv) pointing out and defining problems and mobilizing partners in accordance with the tasks in hand (**the specialist as animator**).

In projects of this nature, specialists are usually professionals trained in social services, psychology, management and administration, sociology, education sciences or cultural animation, and may be recruited in various ways. In this project, the following forms of recruitment were used: i) people especially seconded by a central, regional or local State body, on a full-time, fixed-

term basis, ii) people taken on by organizations for part of the working week to perform pre-determined functions:

"(...) we contribute (to the partnership) by providing a social worker, who is made available every week by the Centro Social to the Centro de Informação e Atendimento Comunitário [CIAC - Community Information Centre] in São Nicolau" (manager of a local IPSS),

and iii) people contracted directly by, and for, the project. Whilst it makes it possible to create a strong team with a variety of experiences and backgrounds, the fact that team members come from different sources (differing status and autonomy) also makes it even more important, as a central project-management task, to find appropriate methods of coordination, in terms of objectives, means and proposed actions.

It is the technical team that works most closely with the local population, serving as an interface at which the various levels and sectors of the partnership meet. In the original project proposal, the partners were organized on the basis of their perceived interests. An official agreement was drawn up and stated the contribution that was expected of each partner. It stated, for example, that the Oporto Centro Regional de Segurança Social would contribute by providing specialists and administrative staff, money and facility-maintenance services; the Administração Regional de Saúde would provide technical support in its specific area, as well as maintaining any facilities it made available; as the body responsible for managing and evaluating the project, the Fundação would also be responsible for recruiting legal and psychological advisers (not available from any of the partners), providing facilities and promoting staff training. According to this agreement, all the partners would be regularly consulted in connection with decision-making. At the executive level, it was up to the technical team to try to integrate decisions in execution of the project, by finding formal or informal solutions and sometimes proposing that a new partner, who could play a key role, be included in the project.

According to the analysis of the functioning of the project offered by some of our interviewees, it is possible to identify three types of institutional attitude to the power held by the technical team:

- i) institutions that were represented by their managers and essentially monitored the technical team (this applied mainly to State institutions);
- ii) institutions that were open to the specialists and collaborated with their work (this applied to local-authority bodies and the Juntas de Freguesia);
- iii) institutions that took a competitive stance, the underlying reason for which was a degree of conflict, since they were afraid of losing their power of intervention (this applied, essentially, to a few local associations).

As well as categorizing the various attitudes, the preceding comments also demonstrate the multiplicity of interwoven factors and influences that affect work of professional project teams whenever they try to bring together a diverse range of interests and/or partners. It might be argued that the plurality of partners' expectations and interests corresponds to the different levels of demand and of relationship with specialists. Teams work virtually continuously on a "revolving stage", working at and on the intersection of interests and approaches.

Because of its daily contact with the local population and local resources, it is the technical team that can most readily recognise partners as a resource¹². This can lead i) on the one hand, to the definition of a partnership more in the terms of "parceria" (though within a "partenariado" that is essentially formal), and ii) on the other, to specialists being perceived as having a selective or even arrogant attitude. The perception of partnership as "half a dozen people sitting around a table trying to coordinate and negotiate different 'cultures', experiences and outlooks" (in the definition of one member of the technical team) is an example of how the benefits of informal partnership can be introduced into the formal partnership approach. The latter position may, in particular, arise in circumstances in which many of the local actors see themselves as being "very poor"¹³, in so far as they have few tangible resources to offer. In this context, their "choice" or selection might be prejudiced, especially when what is involved is working (and negotiating) with

¹² Initially, the target groups were, essentially, children, young people and the elderly. However, activities with children can serve as a process for gradually involving those children's mothers, for whom specific activities might later be offered. The NOW programme partly illustrated this dynamic in supporting the training of women at local level - women who were later placed in Centros de Acolhimento and domiciliary services.

¹³ During a meeting with informal partners, they were asked how they saw themselves as local actors and resources; a representative of a local association answered: "as resources, we are very poor; as actors, well, it's true we have a theatre group" (related by a member of the project team).

institutions invested with power and a tradition of prestige and service provision (as is the case, for example, of the Catholic Church and the State).

It might be said that stance and commitment vary with the ability to provide or create resources. In contrast with what happens in the case of partners who come somewhere between being small contributors and target groups, State partners seem to act mainly with their eye on new (and sometimes easy) opportunities for expanding their services. The manager of a social centre said: "(...) we provided a room in Barredo, (...) then they moved in the furniture they needed and put a supervisor in there [without authorization], so they were supervising instead of collaborating". The position taken by State partners, in addition to feeding a hierarchical view of partnership, is also part of an approach whereby certain local agents and agencies can never get out of the position of being consumers of services produced outside (by State institutions) and instead become consumers of locally produced services and are even less likely to become partners in a project in which common objectives are shared.

Conflict and consensus

"Ever since the predominance of the sociological structural/functionalist paradigm in the 1950s and 1960s (associated, in particular, with the work and theory of Talcott Parsons in the USA), conflict has been seen in negative terms: the functionalists' aim was to try to short-circuit possible disorder (latent, but threatening to become manifest). We now know, however, that "the ability to manage conflict in innovative situations is a vital skill that can guarantee everyone's professional survival, as well as the survival of their projects, and can make it possible to avoid inhibiting and destructive despair and frustration" (Benavente and Carvalho, 1995, p 145).

As regards the partnership's capacity to develop a common agenda, resolve conflict and promote consensus, we broke down our analysis as follows:

- i) the structure of the partnership as a "partenariado" and the implications of its "top-down" model;

ii) obstacles to the development of "parceria".

i) As we have already said, for local institutions and associations, the building of partnership in this project was based on an invitation to various agents by the Oporto Centro Regional de Segurança Social. According to various representatives of these local institutions and associations, participating in the partnership implied hope for changes in local conditions. At the level of change, there were hopes for involvement that would, firstly, take the form of "training for the staff of centres and associations" and would then be transformed into "appropriate action by those centres and associations". However, according to one participant,

"(...) unfortunately, there was no dialogue between the federal body and centres. A rapid judgement was made of the capacity of centres' staff to change. (...) Communication between centres is no different from before and it has not improved as a result of the partnership. In the beginning, there was hope, then there was (...) an initial phase of involvement that was riddled with conflict, and then, finally, there was a second phase, during which we fell silent" (manager of a social centre).

The limited dialogue raised the question of the causes and factors that were blocking it. The fact that the project was organized on the basis of areas of intervention defined in accordance with the traditional conception of distinct areas meant that, instead of being based on concerted cooperation, the partnership was, essentially, a gathering of separate partners (each of them keeping to their particular field of competence and trying to secure the available resources).

As we have already seen, the vertical structure of the partnership, to which we earlier alluded, sometimes had the effect of leading to a confusion between the technical team's activities and the role of the partners involved. Once the partnership's "common agenda" had been defined, in terms of relatively general objectives, the decision-making procedure concerning implementation of that agenda fell to the initiative of the technical team (this situation led one member of the Management Committees to ask, rhetorically: "why build a laundry instead of opening a photography shop?"). Because of the gap that emerged between the general plan and actual activities, the technical team took initiatives that would, in a more horizontal partnership approach, have merited greater involvement of the partners (albeit in harmony with the team's knowledge of local dynamics).

ii) With respect to the obstacles to the development of "parceria", it may be noted that, generally speaking, the requirements and regulations governing the project worked, quite paradoxically, as blockages to the development of an informal partnership at the level of the interface between decision-making power and power of execution. Thus, for example, according to one specialist, requests for contributions towards activities were usually seen as abusive, since people felt the project *ought to be providing*, not *demanding*. On another level, the practice that was introduced in the project as regards the need to have activity programmes, to budget and justify funding and to produce execution reports (all in connection with external rules but also with formalizing cooperation and the need to keep accounts), were all requirements that hindered communication with partners and the consolidation of "parcerias".

In addition to these obstacles, other difficulties arose, either because of communication problems or because of situations perceived as being a waste and/or under-utilization of resources¹⁴. For example, some interviewees said that it was a partnership process largely constructed on the basis of the implicit: some of the rules were not sufficiently clear and the technical team proved incapable (because of the vertical structure) of promoting the necessary communication to achieve coordinated action and "subvert" the negative effects of (necessary) formalities. Other limitations were caused by the rules of the European programme, namely as regards the timetabling of stages for the development of the project and the funding schedule, neither of which always suited the local dynamic. Another level concerned difficulties in making the organizational structure of the programme compatible with the pace of work and habits of local people ("you don't talk to associations at five o'clock in the afternoon - you have to speak to them in the evening", said one local person responsible for cultural activities, which led to the adoption of a more flexible timetable by the technical team). Once again, the main problem was that different rationales and approaches had been brought together without the necessary time and organization to build partnership bridges.

Some of the obstacles mentioned here could be overcome by the medium-term approach to action that is linked with the creation and existence of the Fundação (obstacles that could be overcome

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As promoters of a route for the training and later professionalization of individuals, the project and the Fundação invariably served also as "receptacles" for conflict between neighbourhoods, since the opportunities provided for some could not be extended to all.

with more time available). Certain other blockages are likely to continue to demand a "culture" of evaluation, internal assessment and relationship with the outside world, which would make it possible to propose, debate and experiment with alternative approaches (such as, for example, negotiation among partners with different statuses and practices within the partnership).

Impact of the partnership

The partnership as a working method

As a working method, the effectiveness of the partnership essentially developed on four levels:

- i) communication among the various bodies involved in the partnership;
- ii) the work of the technical team;
- iii) the creation of an informal "partnership interface";
- iv) action that was more inter-institutional and multidimensional.

At the level of communication, the effectiveness of the partnership took concrete form in, on the one hand, the creation of *regular* channels of communication among *some* of the partners and, on the other, the facilitation of a network of informal contacts. Despite this success, there appears to be agreement that communication - and particularly the process of building dialogue among the partners - could have been more strongly developed. Greater reflection on the processes under way, training to improve communication and a more solid strategy to promote communication are some of the ways in which the effectiveness of the partnership could have been increased. Apart from the need for clear, agreed rules "from the outset", the ability to resolve, or reduce, disputes between bodies and individuals is dependent on means of communication - means that are very often based more on listening skills than on "transmission" skills.

As regards the technical team's work, the creation of a multidisciplinary team allowed a multidimensional approach when analysing situations and tackling problems. Gradually, a coordinated way of working emerged and allowed for increasingly harmonious and coordinated action to implement project strategies.

Increasing identification with (and awareness of) the partners' role gradually allowed for the emergence of the idea of an informal "partnership interface". This interface, between different "geographical" approaches (European, central, regional and local), made it possible to attenuate traditional hierarchies and create spaces for dispute management (this idea was described by one of our interviewees as corresponding to the development of an *informal partnership culture* based, at least in part, on the tradition of "parceria" described in the first part of this report). At play in the creation of this interface were, on the one hand, the questioning of traditional seats of power (State, Church, enterprise) and, on the other, the sharing of minor powers in a spirit of openness and dialogue (based on respect, performance, responsibility, etc).

As regards more inter-institutional and multidimensional action, the partnership made a contribution towards rethinking other dimensions of local action and providing more and better information, as well as creating a critical sense among the partners and allowing the emergence of new forms of decision-making. As a result of this, participants became more courageous in tackling problems and developed collective notions of appropriate responses. An obvious benefit of this process was the introduction of changes within the partners' own organizations. And another benefit was that it highlighted both the potential of coordination among various agents and the disadvantages of local "cliques" (very often based on a symbolic power that is more inherited than earned). Finally, it is worth mentioning the fact that this entire process was marked by an integrated way of approaching urban renewal:

"(...) physical renovation was accompanied or complemented by social aid actions and actions to promote socio-economic and cultural development. This had very positive effects and helped, in particular, to prevent the area losing its character and to prevent the 'expulsion' of the resident population" (final report on the Projecto Zona Histórica da Sé e São Nicolau, European Poverty III Programme, 1994).

Impact of the partnership on social exclusion

The final report on the Projecto Zona Histórica da Sé e São Nicolau describes the main activities performed as part of the project, some of which have had a lasting impact on the area and on local dynamics. Of these activities, mention should be made of the setting up of the Fundação, which, as we have already said, mobilized not only legal support for the project but also annual investment in the area of the order of ECU 10 million. It is also worth citing some of the effects produced by some of the initiatives supported by the project to combat social exclusion:

- 1500 people benefited from the project's activities (that is, some 15% of the resident population);
- socio-cultural and information activities affected approximately 1700 people;
- the setting-up of two Centros de Informação e Atendimento Comunitário [CIACs - Information and Community Centres] to provide premises for community activities and information and advisory services, including all local bodies involved in attending to the needs of the local population (with services concentrated in shared premises, it was possible to experiment with "integrated" services);
- the creation of a community residential home (for young people and the elderly);
- rehousing of 35 families in a new residential complex (called LADA).

As we have already mentioned, project activities affected the entire resident population in the two communities of Sé and São Nicolau but had a particular impact on more disadvantaged groups. The impact achieved helped to i) ease situations of deprivation by, for example, improving housing conditions, improving the quality of life of elderly people, particularly in the areas of food and health, and raising the level of disposable income of some elderly people by providing services at lower prices, ii) improve conditions of social integration by, for example, providing access to housing, in the case of rehoused families, improving the level of general training and occupational skills of the unemployed and people in insecure jobs, and improving levels of achievement at

school, and iii) reduce the level of vulnerability to social exclusion of a significant proportion of the local population. "Greater awareness of social rights", "greater accessibility of services", "strengthening of a positive identity" and "new attitudes and ways of behaving" (final report, 1994) have all helped to produce a degree of "resistance" to social exclusion.

There are differing opinions, even among the partners, about the success of the project, and of the project partnership, in combating social exclusion, particularly as regards the medium and long-term effects of the actions undertaken. Some of our interviewees felt that the "galloping" deterioration of the area was such that, despite the project's efforts, it was sometimes impossible to distinguish between the different categories of the poor and vulnerable (that is, between those in an "established" position of deprivation and those vulnerable to the process of impoverishment). Some of our interviewees also felt that, after some of the project's interventions, some people were "in an even more vulnerable position". With reference to the partnership, some interviewees were of the opinion that, although the project had been set up to combat exclusion, there were cases in which it actually worked as an exclusion factor (namely, by restricting the inclusion of partners or moderating the actions of existing partners). This assessment gives us some idea of the limitations of a project whose lifespan and objectives are pre-defined, and also of the limitations of a partnership that is more formal than organic.

Impact of the partnership on social policy and the broader context

There seems to be no doubt that the concept of partnership, introduced by the European *Poverty III* Programme, has had an impact, as in the case of other initiatives mentioned in the first part of this report (see the section on the national context), on the development of a new vocabulary (particularly the official/State vocabulary, but also, and increasingly, the vocabulary of the social partners - employers' organizations and trade unions - and of organizations and associations in the voluntary sector). At the level of social policy, "partnership" has become a key word, though its meaning, and especially as regards the practical aspects of its implementation, continues to be largely misunderstood (the danger here is the temptation to use new terminology to legitimate conventional practices). In fact, apart from providing a vague notion of collaboration among social actors in various sectors of activity, there has been little reflection either on the content of partnership or on the implications of its application (which is paradoxical, when we

consider that the term itself is intended as a vehicle for social relations that are more open, more reflective and less based on "hidden" structures or relatively "automatic" processes).

More specifically, the promotion of a partnership to mobilize the Projecto da Zona Histórica Sé e São Nicolau has shown that, despite problems associated with the very definition and application of this instrument (many of them already mentioned in this report), the concept not only stimulated the preparation of a new environment for the discussion of issues of local involvement but also raised awareness of the need to reconceptualize these issues in a more solid form, in carefully negotiated, collective actions. Thus, the experience of the project, apart from having led to the creation of a relatively autonomous support structure (the Fundação), has also influenced the operational design of that structure, which therefore serves as an innovative example (though still embryonic and in need of consolidation). It is an experience that will promote the development of what has been termed "contractual and cultural adjustment" in Portugal (as opposed to the "hypertrophy of State normalization"¹⁵ [Santos, 1993]).

The partnership developed for the Projecto da Zona Histórica Sé e São Nicolau" has also served as a point of reference for the development of a community working model that promotes action research methodology. The foundation of this work lies in the notion of social change that develops on the basis of the production of particular understanding and knowledge rather than from the production of explanation and application associated with a supposedly universal model.

The impact of this project has also been reflected in numerous presentation meetings, where especial emphasis has been placed on partnership as the principle of innovative action whose example can also be applied in initiatives in other contexts (rural, semi-urban, inter-institutional, etc).

Conclusion

As part of the European *Poverty III* Programme, the project undertook to create the necessary conditions for implementing the two fundamental principles that made it innovative - participation and partnership. According to the final project report: "generally speaking, there has been

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"Normalization" refers here to the process of consolidating the democratic regime (since 25 April 1974).

increasing commitment on the part of the partners - commitment that has not been merely formal but has been reflected in increased and improved involvement and collaboration in the execution of the project's actions and activities" (1994, p 66).

The main objective of this case study was not only to analyse the truth of this statement but also to understand the implications of its content - in other words, we wanted to examine the relationship between the nature of the partnership and its capacity to promote commitment and collaboration around a common agenda, with the objective of promoting social cohesion.

Throughout this case study, we have defined the partnership as being formal(ized) and having a predominantly vertical structure. We have also said that, according to the model presented by Craig (1994), this partnership began its development as the "driving force" behind the Projecto da Zona Histórica Sé e São Nicolau and was in line with the "delivery" model (its concern being to develop infrastructures and provide services at local level); it later passed into a phase of "institutionalization", where local action increasingly acquired the characteristics of the "brokerage" model (with the concern being not so much to provide services as to serve as a support structure for local agencies and organizations which do have a delivery function).

Despite the fact that the original impetus came from supranational level (the European Commission), national government played a crucial role in the development of the experiment at local level, and this fact has been vital in determining the form, model and development of the partnership. To quote Rodrigues and Henriques, "(...) the possibilities of local cooperation with State organizations in the fight against poverty depend very much on how the 'responsibility' of the State is interpreted and evaluated by the other partners" (1992, p 109). Indeed, and this will be even more evident in the following two case studies, the greatest distinguishing feature of partnerships in Portugal has been the level of participation by State institutions and organizations - or, seen from another viewpoint, the level of participation by local associations and organizations - in the partnerships concerned. The impact of a partnership on social policy or on the broader context largely depends on this factor. Thus, in terms of the distinction that we have drawn between "partenariado" and "parceria", the former tends to influence social policy through the official discourse, whereas the influence of "parceria" is particularly evident in its capacity to i) implant itself at local level and ii) establish broader links (networks) that might become part of the social movement (in the context of an approach) towards integrated local development.

CHAPTER III

Case study: "*Associação para a Recuperação de Cidadãos Inadaptados da Lousã*" [ARCIL]

Description of the partnership

Context and origins of the partnership

Situated in the Lousã mountains in central Portugal (district of Coimbra)¹⁶, the Associação para a Recuperação de Cidadãos Inadaptados da Lousã [ARCIL - Association for the Rehabilitation of People with Special Needs in Lousã] was set up in 1976 by a local group working with disabled children. It is a non profit-making Instituição Privada de Solidariedade Social [IPSS - Private Social-Solidarity Institution] and has, as such, established cooperation agreements with the Centro Regional de Segurança Social [Regional Social-Security Office]¹⁷.

"Its philosophy for the social integration of disabled people is applied through a model of intervention at community level, whereby, in conjunction with other services, it secures solutions that are appropriate to the specific features of each individual case. ARCIL, therefore, joins forces with other public and private structures to take action that ranges from prevention to integration in the world of work" (ARCIL leaflet).

It was at ARCIL's proposal that the Projecto de Acção Social [PAS - Social-Action Project] was set up in 1987; this project later became the Projecto de Desenvolvimento Integrado de Acção Social [PDIAS - Project for the Integrated Development of Social Action], involving the Câmara Municipal de Lousã [Lousã Town Council], Centro de Saúde [Health Centre], Santa Casa De Misericórdia [charitable organization linked to the Catholic Church] and local structures of the Centro Regional de Segurança Social. The main purpose of these projects was integrated care of the local population, and not only care for the disabled (see Amaro et al, 1992). The PDIAS,

¹⁶ Lousã has a population of approximately 8000.

¹⁷ Cooperation agreements are drawn up to establish the working rules and methods of social services and/or programmes co-funded by Centros Regionais de Segurança Social (body responsible for periodically assessing these agreements).

whose driving force was, from the outset, ARCIL, was soon represented in various municipalities and thus covered the entire population and all its problems. In the words of one of our interviewees, "it was the experience in Lousã that allowed it to expand and embrace the entire district".

In 1990, ARCIL became the management body responsible for a project that brought together, at municipal level, the partners involved in PDIAS and was part of the national anti-poverty programme (set up by the Ministry of Employment and Social Security in 1990, following applications submitted and excluded from the European *Poverty III* Programme).

Right from the outset, ARCIL succeeded in orienting action towards the broad integration of the disabled population, including a wide range of dimensions, activities, agents and resources. On the basis of the living conditions and needs of a specific population group, ARCIL promotes intersectoral collaboration that takes account of all interest groups and whose dynamic is similar to that of an integrated local development project (that seeks to combine both the social and the economic dimensions under a single strategy). Thus, for example, the way in which ARCIL operates reflects an approach that combines educational aims with training concerns. And ARCIL also pays attention to the possibility of placing the goods and services produced at the most diverse levels: local, national and international markets.

Structure of the partnership

Our analysis indicates that the type of cooperation promoted by ARCIL, or in which ARCIL has been asked to participate, can be described as being developed mainly on the basis of "partenariados *de parceria*" [formal partnerships of informal partners] (according to the distinction we drew earlier - see Chapter 1, National Context). In other words, the basis of the development of partnerships has been initiatives structured at local level, in accordance with a model in which "agency" takes precedence over "delivery", on the basis of which "guidelines for the design of delivery programmes" have been promoted, with "resources being distributed directly to services and organizations" (Craig, 1994, pp 24-25). This means that ARCIL has essentially served as a stimulus, with the aim of its initiatives being to support, develop and implement local actions that meet needs that have been identified locally. Even ARCIL's

participation in transnational partnerships, particularly through European programmes¹⁸, has obeyed a logic of local partnership development, with the emphasis on using the resources provided by these programmes to stimulate local development.

Since ARCIL is a private social solidarity association, its articles of association state that membership is open to "any individual over the age of 18 and any legal person, whose admission shall be decided by the Management Board, at the proposal of a member entitled to exercise full membership rights". ARCIL's Management Board, which comprises seven members who are elected by the General Meeting for a period of two years, "must include a member who is also a member of the Technical Team (...) and a member who is a parent or guardian of one of the pupils at the Institution" (Articles of Association). In recent years, the Management Board has comprised specialists (from ARCIL), the vocational training coordinator, the health coordinator, the father (or mother) of a person with special needs, an economist and a former ARCIL specialist. Among the members of the Management Board, there is one who stands out for his experience and ability to instigate action and mobilize resources (whether local, national or international), who is known as "the spirit of ARCIL". According to the management model that has been applied in recent years, it might be claimed that the very composition of the Management Board is, in itself, a form of partnership (integrating and coordinating the interests of specialists, parents and other citizens).

ARCIL's partners include the Centro Regional de Segurança Social de Coimbra [Coimbra Regional Social Security Office], Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional [Employment and Vocational Training Institute], Administração Regional de Saúde [Regional Health Administration], Centro de Saúde da Lousã [Lousã Health Centre], Hospital Universitário de Coimbra [Coimbra University Hospital], Hospital Pediátrico de Coimbra [Coimbra Children's Hospital], Associação Portuguesa de Paralisia Cerebral [APPC - Portuguese Cerebral Palsy Association], Ministério da Educação [Ministry of Education] (namely via the Direcção Regional da Educação do Centro [Regional Education Directorate of Central Portugal], kindergartens and primary and secondary schools), Cooperativas de Educação e Reabilitação de Crianças Inadaptadas [CERCIS - Cooperatives for the Education and Rehabilitation of Children with Special Needs], Câmara Municipal da Lousã [Lousã Town Council] and various local authority

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It is also important to mention here the increasingly frequent development of cooperation projects with Spanish agencies and institutions.

bodies at community level, the Associação de Desenvolvimento da Lousã [Lousã Development Association], Santa Casa da Misericórdia [local branch of charitable body linked to the Catholic Church], Direcção Geral das Florestas [Directorate General of Forestry], local and national enterprises and informal partners in community programmes (previously discriminated against in the allocation of partnership resources).

The multiplicity of initiatives and activities undertaken reflects the broad variety of partners involved: local, national and transnational agencies and agents representing public, private and voluntary sector bodies. It should also be noted that partners may come from specific sectors or may be bodies directly interested in processes and situations of local development.

The various lines of action taken by ARCIL are summarized in the organizational chart in Annex II.

Objectives and activities of the partnership

According to its Articles of Association, "ARCIL's objective is to contribute to promoting disabled people in the municipalities of Lousã, Mirando do Corvo, Gois and Poiares, by expressing the duty of solidarity and social justice among individuals and with the aim of providing social services or benefits (...)" (Article 2). For this purpose, "(...) the institution shall aim, among other things: i) to promote the rehabilitation of disabled people within the family and in society; ii) to promote all efforts to encourage, guide and raise the awareness of parents to offer or accept active collaboration to or from all individuals or legal persons with the same aims as ARCIL; iii) to prepare the integration of children with special needs in normal educational establishments; iv) to ensure that disabled people are educated, valued and occupationally motivated; v) to ensure the setting up of structured activities to enable disabled people to undertake a professional occupation" (Article 3).

This means that ARCIL's general objectives are the rehabilitation, training and integration of people with special needs. As part of these objectives, it aims to:

- provide special education and rehabilitation in cooperation with schools and health centres;

- facilitate the provision of social infrastructures and facilities (as in the case of setting-up a kindergarten with a certain number of places reserved for children with special needs);
- develop vocational training and job-creation in accordance with the special features of the population concerned and local and national conditions.

This last general objective has led to some more specific initiatives, such as:

- the setting-up of production activities in the area (for example, the production of magnetic boards, in conjunction with a commercial enterprise specializing in this field);
- the promotion (more or less direct) of improved housing (in the form either of small collective residences or private apartments).

In more recent years, ARCIL has taken a multifaceted approach to the development of activities:

- preventive action and guidance for families at risk, through permanent collaboration with the Centro de Saúde da Lousã and the Hospital Pediátrico de Coimbra;
- in conjunction with the Santa Casa da Misericórdia da Lousã (management body) and with the support of the Centro Regional de Segurança Social de Coimbra, setting up a creche with six places reserved for children with special needs;
- in collaboration with the Direcção-Geral do Ensino Básico e Secundário [Directorate-General of Primary and Secondary Education] and the Direcção Regional de Educação do Centro [Regional Education Directorate of Central Portugal], and involving all local education institutions, creches, kindergartens and schools, setting up a special education team in Lousã to provide special support for all pupils integrated in local schools;
- with the support of the Ministério da Educação and the Ministério do Emprego e da Segurança Social, implementing

pre-vocational training activities for people to work in ARCIL's establishments;

- with the support of the Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional and co-funding from the European Social Fund, implementing various vocational training activities;
- developing activities within the framework of a Centro de Emprego Protegido [Sheltered Employment Centre] that integrates disabled people in paid work in the following production activities: sawmill [ARCILMADEIRAS], shoe repairs and craft shop [ORCA], provision of internal and external services (cleaning, laundry, mechanical engineering, locksmithing, carpentry and cooking), ceramics [ARCILCERÂMICA], agriculture and stock-rearing for in-house use and outside sales [ARCILAGRO];
- setting up an "enclave" (the first in Portugal) in Lousã's carpet factory (on the basis of a tripartite agreement between ARCIL, the enterprise and the Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional - under legislation on sheltered employment), with the creation (in January 1989) of three posts for three women with special needs, to whom ARCIL continues to offer psychological and social support;
- setting up an occupational centre [CAO - Centro de Apoio Ocupacional] for users with severe disabilities who cannot be integrated in normal or sheltered employment; the centre offers cultural, sports and leisure activities to promote self-esteem and social integration, as well as creative activities (glovemaking and knitting) that are socially and economically useful;
- launching (in 1989) a production unit for marking and labelling plastic containers; as an economically viable unit, it helps to fund ARCIL's activities and might eventually provide employment for young people and adults with special needs (the use of new technologies is seen as important and is "imposed" for reasons of quality and competitiveness);
- setting up and running a day centre for severely disabled people (there are plans to expand this centre);

- opening a home for severely disabled people, under a cooperation agreement with the Centro Regional de Segurança Social de Coimbra and Santa Casa de Misericórdia da Lousã and on the premises of the latter institution;
- purchasing three properties in the town of Lousã to provide housing for young people and adults with special needs, with personal autonomy (currently housing 50 people);
- building and running a functional rehabilitation complex on ARCIL's premises, offering hydrotherapy, electrotherapy, physiotherapy and a gym; services are free for ARCIL users and are also available to members of the local community, under cooperation agreements with various public and private insurance bodies - for instance, to beneficiaries of Assistência na Doença aos Servidores do Estado [ADSE - health insurance for public employees].

These activities have led to the creation of more than a hundred new posts (some of which are occupied by people who have moved into the area), which means it has also been possible to integrate a large number of people with special needs in the local labour market.

The support network set up and developed by ARCIL, with the involvement, enthusiasm and collaboration of the local community, has attracted into Lousã people who are seeking support for themselves or for relatives with difficulties in social and occupational integration.

Resources available to the partnership

ARCIL has 97 members of staff, has created 61 "sheltered" posts and caters for some 300 users in the municipality of Lousã and the neighbouring municipalities of Góis, Miranda do Corvo and Pampilhosa da Serra, in the District of Coimbra. In addition to the human and social resources provided by its workers and users, ARCIL has received financial support from the Ministério do Emprego e Segurança Social [Ministry of Employment and Social Security] and the Ministério da Educação [Ministry of Education]. It has also been supported by local authority bodies and private organizations, including foreign organizations. Another source of funding (which could

account for as much as 50% of the association's annual budget¹⁹) has been created by providing services to other institutions and self-funding, which is essentially based on the sale of products made by the association's users.

In addition to direct agreements and aid arrangements with similar institutions in other countries, ARCIL also participates in 6 projects within the framework of the *Horizon, Helios, Leonardo and Handynet* Community programmes (between 1991 and 1995 ARCIL participated in 11 such projects). ARCIL is also one of the founder members of European networks such as *Cometra* and *Philadelphia*. Not only does this participation provide some financial and material resources, but it also facilitates the exchange of experience and knowledge, thus strengthening the design of special strategies for local action.

The partnership in action

Representation and power

According to a specialist from the Centro Regional de Segurança Social, "ARCIL is an institution that has always been aware of social action and partnership issues". According to this same specialist:

"Very early on, ARCIL realized that there were advantages to partnership, both in qualitative terms and in terms of providing responses to social problems. The example of a women's training project, which was proposed by the Centro Regional de Segurança Social do Centro, enjoyed ARCIL's legal support and was later handed over to be managed by another association, illustrates the fact that ARCIL, unlike many other institutions, does not serve as a springboard for political power."

ARCIL appears to be tangibly aware of the need to promote cooperation with other bodies on the basis of open, horizontal processes; and this is especially significant, given its organization as a non profit-making social solidarity institution (a legal form that embraces a multitude of

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ARCIL's annual budget amounts to approximately Esc 500 000 000.

approaches to provision and cooperation, from the most paternalistic and hierarchical to more participative approaches).

Partners in the partnerships "brokered" or participated in by ARCIL tend to be represented on an egalitarian basis, so that, as a rule, every attempt is made to provide room for the expression of all beliefs and interests, and decision-making is shared. According to our interviewees, in an organizational structure that allows for the expression and coordination of diverse interests, that diversity is a source of "enrichment". ARCIL's organizational structure has, for example, made it possible to coordinate the priorities raised by technical teams with the decisions taken by management. The practical reflection of this coordination in the form of partnership has made it possible to monitor the population in a more on-going and coherent way as regards the measures and activities to be developed - substantive conditions for improving the quality of life of users/clients.

Formal agreement between institutions has, for ARCIL, been a common procedure for establishing partnership. In the words of one of ARCIL's partners, an agreement does not simply serve to develop a relationship between parties but, more importantly, lays down in concrete form the value of and conditions for inter-institutional and inter-sectoral relationships. As regards the conditions that allow the development of partnership initiatives, it might be said that informal relationships, which are especially typical of small communities, are often at the root of formal agreements. This is true of the PDIAS [Projecto de Desenvolvimento Integrado de Acção Social], mentioned earlier. The greatest advantage of a formal agreement is that it increases the sense of responsibility of the partners brought together around a common project. Despite this, a formal agreement may have the potential disadvantage of blocking a lively dynamic, by, for example, obstructing a collective approach by distinguishing between participants and non-participants; and it may also lead to the "officialization" of restrictive rules.

Although the main aim of a partnership is to recognize and realize the full potential of local resources and to promote open, horizontal cooperation, it may nonetheless be that some partners tend to be seen as more important than others. In the case of ARCIL, according to one of our interviewees, "the Câmara Municipal [Town Council] is the backbone of it all". The importance thus attributed derives not only from the Town Council's ability to mobilize financial support, but also from the significant symbolic recognition that local authorities confer on the institutions and

organizations with which they enter into partnership. In spite of this perceived protagonism, it is noticeable that ARCIL was responsible for mobilizing and making the local authority aware of activities developed jointly.

As previously mentioned, informal relations in small communities are very often a vital ingredient for setting-up a platform for cooperation. In this respect, we note the experience of a coordinator in a local semi-public service who said that the fact she lived in a neighbouring town and was not locally integrated meant that she could not use previously established relationships to help her coordinate local services, which was her job. In this case, contact with ARCIL allowed a bridge to be built to provide the coordinator with access to local agents on the basis of what we have called a "formal partnership of informal partners", that is, cooperation that is developed both by means of formal coordination (which tends to be more vertical) and by taking advantage of more informal cooperation processes (which tend to be more horizontal). However, it should be pointed out that, in addition to ARCIL's role in facilitating and bringing partners together, other factors also have an impact on the success of these initiatives, whose realization depends, in particular, on the characteristics of local institutions and agents, both as regards the degree of flexibility in their organization and operation and as regards the availability of local specialists.

Again, according to the interviewee quoted above, specialists - "who are dealing more with the local situation" - are crucial to the establishment of a partnership and the consolidation of a spirit of cooperation based on communication. Managers seem to be more influenced by the logic of institutional protectionism, which very often, because of established power positions, deep-seated bureaucratic attitudes, etc, hinders the development of partnership relations. In this respect, one of our interviewees put forward the hypothesis that "the more professional institutions and teams are, the more partnership will be promoted". In the Portuguese context, this statement could be read as indicating a strategic orientation towards making the most of scarce resources and, also, towards affirming disciplinary and/or multidisciplinary status.

As we have just said, ARCIL's main activities concern the integration - hopefully, the full integration (with the emphasis on integration in the labour market) - of all citizens in the community, an integration based on valuing diversity. This being so, ARCIL is filled with concern to promote the internalization of basic human and social rights by its partners. Despite this concern, any such internalization is bound to be marked by varying degrees of awareness and

implementation capacity. Thus, for example, the visibility of the gender variable as regards the question of equal opportunities does not seem to be an explicit objective among ARCIL's priorities (though it does have an implicit place in its general guidelines). There are many women among the workers and target group associated with ARCIL. And most members of the technical team are also women. The representatives of public and private institutions with which ARCIL cooperates are often women, though there is a preponderance of men in higher management posts. The fact that women are visibly present in the setting-up and development of partnerships does not, in itself, guarantee that women will be recognized as partners with equal status - that is, their presence is not necessarily reflected in the affirmation of diversity. Of the many forms that the difference marked by the participation of women could take, it would seem that partnerships involving women tend to be more determined and open in their negotiations. Their contribution also seems to be oriented more towards objectives that are internal to the partnership (to ensure that the partnership survives and succeeds) than towards objectives concerning the affirmation of women outside the partnership.

Resources, skills and working methods

As "an association for the rehabilitation of citizens with special needs", ARCIL developed close cooperative links with the Direcção Regional da Educação do Centro [DREC] and schools in Lousã right from the outset. According to one of our interviewees, ARCIL was a pioneer in attempting to integrate all its pupils in the normal education system (for pupils with severe difficulties, cooperative links were established with Cooperativas de Educação e Reabilitação de Crianças Inadaptadas [CERCIs - Cooperatives for the Education and Rehabilitation of Children with Special Needs]. On the basis of an agreement signed in 1987, DREC seconded five teachers to ARCIL and agreed to pay the wages and meal and transport costs of a psychologist and assistant to work within ARCIL. As well as organizing training activities within the field of education sciences, including special education, for local teams and institutions, DREC placed with ARCIL some pupils with special needs from central Portugal.

The informal assessment made of this experience by DREC was very positive, though there has still been no formal evaluation of the results of the agreement - "it is still a semi-clandestine experiment". But attempts have been made to repeat the experience in other areas. On the basis of this experience, we could ask ourselves how partnership works as a vehicle for relations between

a public service and a non-governmental organization. Indeed, all CERCIs and some IPSSs emerged out of the vacuum left by the paralysis of the State during the revolutionary period of 1974-1975, a period that was rich in initiatives rooted in civil society. Since then, the State has assumed power - and, therefore, ultimately, legal responsibility - as regards the teaching offered in these organizations. In practice, however, the task of designing, organizing and managing approved education (in the spirit of the development of education for all) has fallen to agencies whose approaches vary from the commercial to the community-based. In this way, the State has been establishing a model of less direct and more delegated State responsibility. The fact that these experiments are so recent, together with the assessment problems encountered by the competent bodies and other agents involved (ie there has been no explicit, formal evaluation process), means that it is difficult to assess the possible advantages and/or disadvantages as regards the (legal and practical) guarantees offered to citizens.

Another of ARCIL's partners in its efforts to integrate "people with special needs" has been the Escola Básica 2.3. [Middle School] in Lousã. In collaboration with ARCIL (and under the agreement with DREC), the school has organized "alternative curricula", as well as running a support room for special activities and an early detection and diagnosis service (for cases/situations of individuals and/or families needing special attention). ARCIL's technical team (including psychologists and social workers) has supported these activities, particularly by holding weekly meetings with teachers. Another area of collaboration has been aid in transporting assisted pupils to school.

From our interview with the school head, we learned that, within the framework of this collaboration, one of the major tasks has been making teachers aware of the cooperative work with ARCIL, or, in other words, ensuring application of what is, in fact, official education policy as regards integrating children with special needs in ordinary schools. This being so, it is curious to note that this area of the partnership was developed with the objective of "ensuring application of State policy": in other words, the partnership dynamic - between public services, private bodies and local associations - has been used to protect the interests of the local community against the possible inflexibility of institutional practices that actually go against what current education policy perceives as being national interests. According to the school head, the link with ARCIL was seen as being "the school's good fortune, by comparison with a lot of schools in other areas". Going into more detail, the head also mentioned what she saw as a wider gain for the school: the

awareness and acceptance of difference, which had grown as a result of the initial emphasis of collaboration with ARCIL on young people with learning difficulties.

On a broader level of intervention, the school has received aid for pupils' free time (for example, the setting-up of a data-processing centre). This aid has been developed under the Projecto Nacional de Luta Contra a Pobreza [National Anti-Poverty Programme], managed by ARCIL. In this way, the coordination of partners of differing origin, nature and scope has been promoted and made viable - coordination that is supported by "umbrella-type" action that, promoted by catalyst and broker ARCIL, embraces a multitude of interests, resources and actors. In the case of the school under consideration here, this approach enabled it to establish links with a broad range of local agencies: Câmara Municipal, Projecto de Luta contra a Pobreza, Juntas de Freguesia, Centro Regional de Segurança Social, Misericórdia and local enterprises.

ARCIL has had links with the Santa Casa de Misericórdia for more than 18 years, and the cooperation between these two IPSSs has been central to local intervention strategy, especially as regards the social protection of disabled people in Lousã. On the one hand the Misericórdia has made a material contribution at various levels: infrastructures, facilities, staff, food and care of clothing, within the scope of its agreement with Social Security. On the other hand, for example, the Centro de Estimulação Precoce [Early Learning Centre] emerged from diagnosis of the needs ARCIL perceived in relation to children with special educational needs. If we analyse the original stimulus for working in partnership, we can see that, by contrast with ARCIL, which has always sought collaborative links, at Misericórdia, the initiative to participate in partnership projects came mainly from workers in the field. As we have already pointed out, the innovation of participation in a local partnership by an organization such as Misericórdia very often depends on its workers' ability to break away from the bureaucratic approach that is typical of large organizations.

There seems to be little doubt that the partnership model promoted and developed by ARCIL is one that depends on a close relationship, particularly between the specialists of the various institutions involved. This leads us to wonder about the distinction between inter-professional, inter-institutional cooperation and partnership. In this particular case, it might be argued that, in contrast with inter-institutional cooperation, partnership depends not only on a common programme implemented by means of multidimensional action but also on an integrated local

development model based on a "community of agents", who not only mutually recognize each other but also *know each other* as a result of a dialogue over time, in which communication is an expression of interests and concerns that bring together objectives that are shared by the community. The constituent elements of this cooperation allow us to label it as a formal partnership of informal partners (a combination that we have come to define as being characterized by an approach that is based on horizontal coordination and rooted in the local situation, and yet associated with a formalized structure). In this respect, one of our interviewees told us:

"The partnership, established and operated on the basis of the methodology set out by the Horizon Programme, has made it possible to establish links between potential employers and State and private services by creating a *common language*. It is easier to get through to an employer using affective, rather than formal, language. Mediating bodies can serve as channels for communication between employers and State services (such as the Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional). It is easier to get employers involved using this approach than it is using formal expedients."

The creation and maintenance of a community of agents requires the constant updating of dialogue skills and their enrichment through on-going training in communication. What comes into play here is not only the ability to coordinate local knowledge, know-how and resources with their counterparts at national, supranational and even global level, but also the capacity to evaluate past and current experiences. ARCIL has taken significant steps towards stimulating these dialogue skills, though this is obviously a process that is still developing.

Conflict and consensus

Despite the fact that partnerships usually bring together a plurality of diverse interests, discourses are more likely to mention convergence and consensus than they are to analyse tensions and conflict. This is why the identification of points of tension is mainly a result of the research team's reading and interpretation of the situation rather than being based on statements made by those involved in the cases analysed here.

In the case of ARCIL, we identified four areas of potential conflict. The first area concerns the nature of the approaches underlying ARCIL's experience: although, on the one hand, the experience is defined as a local development project, mention is also made, on the other hand, of the need to adopt an enterprise management approach. Although the association's basic approach continues to be reflected in its approach to a project - a local development project depends on human development and on the viability and use of the social, economic and cultural resources of *all citizens* in the area - there exists at the same time, strong pressure for ARCIL to take an enterprise approach. This is particularly manifested in constant concern about the financial viability of the investments made and the accounting controls that such an approach implies. Yet it should be noted that, since it is a non profit-making association, any profit that might be made cannot be distributed among members but must be reinvested in the association. The tendency to take an enterprise approach has been reinforced over recent years, partly because of demands to increase the level of financial autonomy and consequently the Association's autonomous development, and also due to the requirements attached to applications for inclusion in European programmes and their subsequent management.

In fact, according to one of its more dynamic members, ARCIL has had very little opportunity to invest in training its staff in management, organizational and communication skills. This fact, which is related not only to the rapid expansion of ARCIL's activities but also to the shortage of resources available for this purpose, has led to a situation in which, on the one hand, i) ARCIL has missed the opportunity of developing knowledge and skills that are pertinent to its various areas of activity and, on the other, ii) ARCIL has failed to use these skills and knowledge to promote the coordination of two approaches that are not necessarily antagonistic (the enterprise approach and the local development approach).

In agreement with the logic of local development, ARCIL has developed a common agenda on the basis of strategies shared by the various partners in the numerous initiatives in which it has been either a promoter or a participant. On the other hand, when this logic has come up against the logic of the enterprise management approach, the resulting tensions have largely been overcome thanks to the skills demonstrated by some of ARCIL's officers. ARCIL's ability to enter into dialogue and negotiate with current and potential partners has certainly been affected by these tensions. However, the clarity of objectives and the determination to develop a methodology of community action based on local abilities, skills and needs have, to now, been able to counter the

potentially detrimental effects of these tensions. In fact, the very size (and history) of ARCIL - which is, as we have already pointed out, now responsible for providing a very broad range of services - reinforces the organic nature of its interaction with the local community.

A second area of possible dispute concerns attempted political appropriation of specific issues tackled by ARCIL; this means that its laudable social activities can give local visibility to a particular political party. In addition to this, there was recently a case of misuse of funds (by an ARCIL officer) - a fact that has led some people to try to argue for outside intervention with respect to this incident of institutional breakdown. Indeed, ARCIL's public image was temporarily affected and an interviewee told us that "(...) for many years, ARCIL was the apple of our institution's eye; when the incident of the misuse of funds occurred, this image became somewhat tarnished". In the face of this incident, ARCIL's ability to recover in a relatively short time was cited as proof of the fact that its objectives were in line with the interests of the local community.

Another area of tension has to do with conventional views of the central issue on which ARCIL's activities focus (people with special needs). Despite ARCIL's unique design, it was for a long time seen by the local population as being essentially an institution "for half-wits", an image that stayed with the association during its early years and hampered its aims concerning the full social integration of people with special needs. The diversity of activities promoted and ARCIL's ability to develop the necessary means to solve local problems were crucial to public acknowledgement of its value, which has partly contributed to rectifying the original perception of its main target group.

Finally, mention might be made of a degree of conflict between the nature of ARCIL's initiatives, and indeed its very ethos, and the approaches and attitudes of the public authorities. At local level, the public authorities have only very recently begun to take an active role in the area of local development. As Rodrigues and Stoer point out in their analysis of the relationship between *local action* and *local power*:

"(...) expectations of the local dimension in Portugal as a place for the solution of problems are very low. Because of this, it would appear that a first step towards strengthening local action could come from local authorities establishing inter-relationships and recognizing their own value." (1993, p 226)

The difficulties very often experienced by ARCIL in establishing a productive dialogue with the local authorities derive from, among other things, the fact that the authorities take a predominantly bureaucratic attitude rather than behaving as equal partners who are confident and clear about the value of their contribution.

In this area, experience points to the need to improve the environment for dialogue at local level, particularly by providing space for interaction with a range of agents and for the negotiation of diverse interests.

Impact of the partnership

The partnership as a working method

One of our interviewees said that "public bodies have great difficulty in dealing with partnerships; they do not see the project concerned as being theirs and are reluctant to make procedures more flexible. We have overcome this, simply because there are European directives that encourage change". This statement once again raises two of the questions mentioned earlier as regards partnership as a working method: on the one hand, the fact that this method of working is hampered by the lack of active involvement on the part of public bodies (in this case, local and regional authorities) and, on the other hand, the fact that it has the potential to facilitate the clearing of communication channels that have for so long been so evidently blocked by central political powers.

There is evidence that ARCIL, in practising and promoting a "partenariado de parceria", has been successful in terms of the impact its activities have had, particularly on public bodies: "(...) specialists of the Centro Regional de Segurança Social have learned from ARCIL's example. But it is not easy to prompt other institutions to enter into a similar dynamic". Similarly, joint projects in which ARCIL is involved always have the objective of disseminating results and involving new institutions/users. It can be inferred from this that one of ARCIL's objectives in participating in partnerships is to make other potential partners aware of this shared dynamic.

Some of the results of this awareness-raising can be seen in the statements made about the benefits of partnership by the various partners we interviewed:

- "better use is made of human and financial resources";
- "we can do different things in the same space";
- "with this dynamic, it is guaranteed that everyone will give each other feedback on what they are doing";
- "there is better communication between individuals";
- "the activities of the institutions involved are better adjusted to the prevailing social and economic situation";
- "people with special needs are better integrated: working with this group, people operate on the basis of very humanistic principles";
- "there is a training project that can integrate a variety of people: the relationship between diverse organizations means that elitism can be avoided";
- "you come to understand that it is not people who are 'deficient', it is the facilities available to them that are";
- "it is important to understand the world in which people with special needs live, because they are often members of very needy families";
- "you realize that people with special needs are not marginal, it is society that marginalizes them";
- "partnership promotes the best possible use of resources and co-responsibility for funds";

- "there is better quality of life, both for users and for workers";
- "it is the beginning of a culture of collaboration".

Significantly, the limitation of partnership that was most frequently mentioned was its "inability to respond to all requests" - which can lead to a failure to meet expectations (for example, expectations created within the local population). In this respect, the example cited was that of the residential home, which has still not been set up because of the current "lack of funds".

Impact of the partnership on social exclusion

In the Portuguese context, the limited amount of support available for people with special needs means that this group is particularly vulnerable and at risk. These circumstances underlie the emergence of a significant number of civil initiatives with identical objectives but with differing legal forms and activities. Mention might be made in this respect of the cooperative movement of CERCI's [Cooperativas de Educação e Reabilitação de Crianças Inadaptadas - Cooperatives for the Education and Rehabilitation of Children with Special Needs], which have set up some 50 initiatives throughout the country for children and young people between the ages of 6 and 18, offering vocational training and occupational activities. The ARCIL initiative, organized on the basis of an association, is part of this civil movement/response to people with special needs, though with the special feature of action, from the outset, to mobilize and bring together partners at various levels to implement planned activities. Certainly, one of the primary effects was to bring the issue of disability and special needs "in from the cold", not only integrating this issue in local debate but also bringing together actors to conduct initiatives in this area.

This qualitative advantage also had an impact as regards the number of users included, who currently number about 300.

According to our interviewees, and in addition to what we have already said, collaboration with ARCIL has been very positive in the following ways:

- i) it has made people aware of ARCIL and of its project to integrate people with special needs (it is difficult to find any similar organization in the area). Various areas of development have been created to integrate the various types of special need present within the area of intervention. It is a multifaceted project, since it provides training, guidance and integration for the work of disabled people;
- ii) it has made it possible to develop a functional rehabilitation service, whose purpose is the reintegration of people with special needs. It is important that this process of functional rehabilitation is not interrupted, though it calls for a flexibility that the hospital cannot offer. Thus, the complementarity of the services offered by ARCIL becomes evident;
- iii) the nature of the rehabilitation service has been confirmed in general terms, serving as a platform for collaboration with other hospital services, but, in this case, looking to the outside, reflecting its weight as a social service.

In analysing the impact of ARCIL's activities on social exclusion, account must also be taken of the results produced by the various partnerships formed not only on the basis of the integration of people with special needs. Thus, for example, the anti-poverty project and the activities of various social institutions in the area have been reinforced because greater socio-political attention has been attracted to the activities being undertaken. In other words, we could say that ARCIL's activities have been "infectious", with the initial emphasis on care for people with special needs spreading out to embrace other social differences and vulnerabilities.

Impact of the partnership on social policy and the broader context

The partnership set up and run by ARCIL has taken the form of a model of provision that, without dismissing the State's role, has emphasized the potential of initiatives born of the local community and its agents. Hence, we can speak of the relatively successful experience of a delivery system that makes full use of various agents and resources and operates on the basis of more participative working processes. We can speak of a knock-on effect, with ARCIL offering, in particular, an example of an action-based partnership.

Cooperation involving European partners, either through joint initiatives or through the exchange of information and knowledge, has influenced policy-makers at national level, both as regards their perceptions and priorities and also as regards the valuing of Portuguese experiences.

Conclusion

ARCIL continues to develop activities in the area of basic education and training for people with special needs (a concept that is increasingly inclusive of various differences and inequalities that affect local populations). The expansion and diversification of its activities are linked with the strengthening of the aid being offered, which is increasingly broad and includes both rehabilitation activities and preventive actions.

The original nature of the project stressed the specific difficulties inherent in the integration of people with special needs, which meant that both the project's local image and its funding were dependent on its effectiveness in solving the practical problems of the local population. The functional rehabilitation centre was set up, on the basis of agreements with local bodies (for example, public services and insurance companies), promoting a pioneering relationship between the local population and people with special needs. Many of the services, infrastructures and job opportunities created as a priority for ARCIL's specific target group were soon expanded to benefit the rest of the population: a sort of solidarity that usually works in the reverse, that is, from the population in general "in favour of" people with special needs. In addition to this, the informal partnership in the housing sector, with the local town council and other public and private bodies, has produced some innovative results, both in terms of the degree of involvement of the target group and in terms of the effects on the cost of initiatives, plus the effects of producing and repairing housing.

Recognition of the work performed by ARCIL justified its being chosen from among all the partners to manage a local project under the Programa Nacional da Luta Contra a Pobreza. The special feature of this recognition seems to be associated with the fact that ARCIL has developed an integrated approach to local problems, with priority being given to less advantaged people and with a view to the multi-sectoral inclusion of agents at various levels (local, national, European). This initiative, that was born and mobilized locally and has been based on grass-roots

organization, is an example not only of a partnership but also of various combinations of partnership, depending on the areas and projects concerned. The formal aspect of cooperation is mainly reflected in specific programmes of work, rather than in any global agreement. As a general rule, ARCIL has been the driving force, serving not only as the initial stimulus but also as a constant mobilizer and valued assessor of the activities undertaken.

Particularly interesting is the way in which a project that emerged to deal with a specific problem - the integration of people with special needs - developed into a diversified project based on a local development approach that embraced various areas of activity and various population groups (people with special needs, the elderly, young people, women and children). If we look again at the results achieved, it is worth emphasizing the following:

- ARCIL's contribution to improving local physical infrastructures and social facilities;
- the creation of local employment (more than 200 jobs);
- the fact that this project serves as an example to stimulate similar initiatives in other parts of the country;
- cooperation through inclusion in European programmes has made viable projects that, apart from stimulating mobility and the sharing of experiences and skills, have contributed to an injection of funds and maximum advantage being taken of varied resources.

CHAPTER IV

Case study: Associação "IN LOCO" (Intervenção, Formação, Estudos para o Desenvolvimento Local)

Description of the partnership

Context and origins of the partnership

The project's origins go back to 1985, when a group of academics from the Escola Superior de Educação de Faro [Faro Higher Education College] recognized the great sense of isolation and abandonment in the inner mountain region of the Algarve. With the support of the Dutch Bernard van Leer Foundation, the group launched an action research project to lead to the development of a project with the children of the Serra do Caldeirão (Projecto RADIAL²⁰), paying particular attention to local actors and potential interested parties and actors. Two areas were identified as priorities: job creation and support for children, which would be coordinated by an integrated community development approach.

Projecto RADIAL was set up to support children in the rural environment (with training for socio-educational facilitators, the creation of play areas and areas for personal and social development, children's activity centres and mobile education activities) and their mothers (with vocational training and support for the creation of small enterprise projects).

With the creation of Associação "IN LOCO" in 1988 (an association focusing particularly on issues of local socio-economic animation²¹), Projecto RADIAL became the socio-educational arm of this association, thus giving the project's initiatives a new dimension. From the outset a methodology of cooperation was developed involving parents' committees, first transformed into

²⁰ RADIAL stands for "Rede de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento Integrado do Algarve" [Support Network for the Integrated Development of the Algarve].

²¹ The "IN LOCO" association was legally formed on 28 August 1988. According to its Articles of Association, its objectives are: i) to promote local development as a process for improving the cultural and material living conditions of the population, by means of community-based initiatives; ii) to promote and take full advantage of human and material resources in the region, in association with local populations and all the institutions and individuals concerned (from the leaflet *Perfil*).

local associations which then became IPSSs, and the Centro Regional de Segurança Social. The philosophy of Associação "IN LOCO" was gradually to hand over the management of local initiatives to local organizations. The same project included the creation in 1995 of a Centro de Recursos para a Intervenção Educativa [Educational Resource Centre], and the development since 1986 of in-service training. The work begun in 1985 with four communities embraced a total of 31 communities from 1995. The mobile education process (with the collaboration of relatives and planned/facilitated by teachers) grew to include three mobile play sets to support isolated schools in Alcoutim, Mértola and Almodôvar. Following this process, with the support of the Centro de Saúde and the Câmara Municipal, a mobile nursing service was set up in Alcoutim, using a duly-equipped van.

The second dimension of the association's work, adult education, more specifically training for women, was developed on the basis of parents' committees. Because of their disadvantaged situation as regards employment, women were keen to take part in vocational training. In 1987 aid from the European Social Fund made it possible to provide not only training but also training grants equivalent to the minimum wage. Various courses (7) were organized within the area of the Conservation of Cultural Heritage Programme (with the support of the Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional - IEFP) in the Fashion and Crafts, Confectionery and Aromatic and Medicinal Plants sectors. The RIMA project was also set up to develop a network to provide support for enterprise initiatives by women in the rural environment, covering the period 1991-1993. In all these initiatives "IN LOCO" provided assistance both to the beneficiaries of the Programme in the application procedure, project design and monitoring and assessment of experiences and to the IEFP by drawing up recommendations and policy proposals. By way of example mention could be made of the creation of a joint savings fund by the trainees of each course, the purpose of which was to allow on-going, sustained investment (in addition to periods of guaranteed funding).

A third aspect of the association's activities began with its participation in European Community programmes, such as LEADER. An application for inclusion in the programme was made in 1991, and the first funding was received in 1992. The project's objective was the development of rural areas in the Serra do Caldeirão (north of Algarve and south of Alentejo). "IN LOCO" was selected as one of 20 Portuguese local initiatives with responsibility for management, facilitation and technical back-up, all of which were activities subsidized by the LEADER programme. The

area covered measured 3700 m² and had a total population of 50 000. Strategic focuses included animation and education at community level, taking full advantage of local products by modernizing treatment processes and promoting their sale in appropriate niches in the market²¹, and rural and cultural tourism. The project was developed by means of cooperation with local authorities, local associations, small enterprises and individual businessmen. This project included, in 1994, the setting-up of the Centro de Recursos, Investigação Aplicada e Inovação para a Média Montanha [CRIA IMM - Centre for Resources, Applied Research and Innovation in the Mountain Environment], with "IN LOCO" collaborating with the Direcção Regional de Agricultura do Algarve [Algarve Regional Directorate for Agriculture], the Câmara Municipal [Town Council] of Loulé, the Universidade do Algarve [Algarve University] and the Instituto Florestal [Forestry Institute]. This centre was concerned with the following issues, among others:

- i) making small family farms viable;
- ii) setting appropriate modernization objectives for the target area;
- iii) developing the necessary and appropriate technologies for various initiatives (particularly by reviving local traditional technologies).

As well as participating and cooperating in a series of initiatives in the area of rural tourism, it should be pointed out that "IN LOCO" coordinated a network of six rural development agencies in Portugal and Spain, with a view to drawing up quality standards for tourist activities in the rural environment, with the support of CEDRE (Strasbourg) and DG XVI (1993-1994). The association also participates in the "Via Mediterrânea" network and in the area of new technologies, taking part, for example, in the LEADER PORTUGAL telematic network.

In 1993, "IN LOCO" entered into association with more than a dozen other local development agencies in the rural environment, with a view to setting up ANIMAR - Associação Portuguesa para o Desenvolvimento Local em Meio Rural [Portuguese Association for Local Development in the Rural Environment]. In collaboration with the Núcleo de Empresas da Região Algarve [NERA - Algarve Region Enterprise Group] and a local development association in the western Algarve (Associação Vicentina), it prepared and submitted an application for an overall local development grant (1994-1999) (technical/financial instrument managed by DG XVI). This

cooperation gave rise to GLOBALGARVE, a regional development agency, which was set up in October 1994 and included many regional, public and private bodies (Town Councils of Faro, Loulé, Olhão and Tavira, Associação dos Municípios do Algarve [Association of Algarve Town Councils], Região de Turismo do Algarve [Algarve Tourism Region], Associação Nacional de Jovens Empresários [National Association of Young Entrepreneurs], and the Instituto de Apoio às Pequenas e Médias Empresas [Institute for the Support of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises]) etc.

"IN LOCO" also organizes seminars and courses in training facilitation and management (for example, within the framework of the HORIZON, NOW programmes etc.) and conducts research studies on the region. It also produces a quarterly review, *A Rede* (since 1990). This review provides a space for publicizing and discussing initiatives, processes and methods in the area of local development. The association is also responsible for publishing *Jornal da Serra* (since 1993), which focuses on and is aimed at the area covered by the LEADER programme. Finally, it should be pointed out that it produces a series of books and leaflets on the region.

Structure of the partnership

The partnerships set up by "IN LOCO" or in which it has been asked to participate have been developed both as "partenariados de partenariatado" and as "partenariados de parceria", or, in other words, have been developed as a form of cooperation that oscillates between formal and informal partnership. This oscillation has to do with the basis for the development of the partnerships, which has, according to Craig's typology (1994, pp 24-25), been a hybrid of the "agency" and "brokerage" models. In other words, as well as being structured in accordance with the local situation, partnership initiatives have been set up as a means of supporting agencies and organizations that are based in the community and have the objective of "delivery". This means that all the initiatives involve a rethinking of the local situation on the basis of very wide-ranging inputs, providing support, facilitating planning and the capacity to exert pressure (on regional, national and European bodies). Together, they develop evaluation processes (to assess needs and the effectiveness of the partnership), as well as promoting links between public and private agencies and local organizations and associations. It is a "mixed" model of partnership, a partnership "in oscillation", whose advantages lie i) on the one hand, in its capacity to promote European and national programmes, at the same time as functioning as a protagonist for change at

local level, and ii) on the other hand, in its capacity to avoid the dangers of bureaucratization and centralization by taking action to promote the distribution of resources among the partners.

"IN LOCO" is organized and run as a non profit-making association. Its members are either professionals who take part as independent professionals or employees of bodies in the Algarve region. According to the conception of partnership that it promotes:

"(...) the association does not intend to establish itself nationally or as a mass association, since it gives priority to its members knowing each other directly and participating in projects and activities, and wishes to remain open to anyone who sees local development as an open and creative space for his or her professional and personal involvement" ("IN LOCO" leaflet, *Perfil*).

The association's partners include public bodies and services, such as regional authorities (Câmaras Municipais and Juntas de Freguesia), the Universidade do Algarve and other universities (both Portuguese and foreign - for example, the Instituto Superior de Ciências do Trabalho e da Empresa [Higher Institute of Labour and Enterprise Sciences] in Lisbon and the Italian Research Institute), central and regional services of the Public Administration (Direcção Geral do Emprego, Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional, Direcção Regional de Agricultura, Direcção Regional de Educação, Instituto de Juventude, Centro Regional de Segurança Social, Instituto Financeiro de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento da Agricultura e Pescas, Associação dos Municípios do Algarve, Região de Turismo do Algarve, etc), special foundations (Gulbenkian and Van Leer Foundations), local and regional enterprises (particularly small and very small enterprises) and local organizations, associations and groups.

Through its participation in and management of European programmes (eg HORIZON, LEADER, NOW, ERGO, EUROFORM, TELEMATIQUE), networks (eg IRIS - European network of women's initiatives) and study and training centres (eg CEDAG [Centre for the Study and Development of Agriculture and Groups] in Rennes, France, and CIPA [Centre for Agricultural Vocational Training] in Bologna, Italy), "IN LOCO" has entered into and consolidated cooperation with many international partners.

Objectives and activities of the partnership

"Development must be based on the will and knowledge of individuals and groups who wish to undertake the task of improving the quality of life in the communities in which they live and work - seeing this process as an achievement of the status of full citizenship and as fundamental to building a participative democracy.

Development must be the product of a creative synergy between local populations and outside professionals, between grassroots organizations and public services, between ancient traditions and modernity.

Development must be open and participative, integral and integrated, encouraging a strong local dynamic and in line with the needs both of enterprise and of social solidarity.

Development must be an integral part of an ecological approach that is capable of protecting and recognizing the full value of the natural, social and cultural heritage.

Development must be reflected in a process of lifelong education that is capable of creating a culture of development and, at the same time, managing a social and cultural project.

European construction must not be limited to agreements between States and alliances between major enterprises, but must, on the contrary, be affirmed through the on-going interaction of cultural, social and economic projects that are designed and run at local and regional level" ("IN LOCO" leaflet, *Perfil*).

Within the framework of the philosophy described above, "IN LOCO" has promoted objectives such as integrated rural and local development; taking full advantage of local products; supporting small and medium-sized enterprises; promoting rural tourism; supporting craftspeople and the development of new technologies for rural activities; work with children and young people in the rural environment and the training of young local facilitators and women in rural areas, as well as in-service education activities; conducting studies and research on areas of intervention and

disseminating significant experiences (local, national and international) by holding international exchanges and seminars and through various publications, including a quarterly review.

The activities conducted by "IN LOCO" are developed, as the name of the association suggests, at local level, where the term "local" is understood to embrace both the notion of "problem" and that of "hope" (Melo, 1991). The local situation is a problem in that it expresses the result of a dominant approach in the social and economic organization of our societies, whose repercussions are felt at local level; it is full of hope in that it expresses the "possibility of social experimentation, which opens new doors to us and does not allow us to fall into the one-dimensional trap into which the current dominant socio-economic system seems to be forcing us" (*ibidem*, p 4). From this standpoint, it is argued that it is possible to focus, at local level, on activities that can benefit the entire population, or at least most of it. For this to happen, it is essential to establish, at local level, platforms whose potential benefit is recognized by the local population. These platforms can stimulate the creation of local organizations that are based on local needs and "not on the policy orientations of an elite that tend to divide the local population" (*ibidem*, p 5).

In its role of facilitating local development, "IN LOCO" sees potential for promoting various orientations as regards the organization of society and production, especially in small communities or less advantaged areas. It is, therefore, tackling two types of danger that such communities are currently facing: on the one hand, a process of assimilation/colonization that is threatening them with extinction and, on the other hand, a process whereby they are being totally left out of current growth patterns and are being condemned to a situation of exclusion (Melo, 1991).

Tackling these dangers by promoting pluralism as regards the organization of society and production involves the creation of a culture that is based on promoting rights and duties (encouraging both public services and local associations to accept responsibility) and continuing, positive contact between local representatives and representatives of other levels of action:

"The task is to bring together local knowledge and, shall we say, erudite knowledge - knowledge based on current scientific research; the challenge is to find new combinations. We need to take advantage of a mixture of traditional techniques and new technologies. We need to introduce local products and traditional crafts to world markets; to seek out all kinds of articulations; to reinforce contact between local representatives and

representatives of the world outside. The challenge is to promote dialogue, and even conflict, between tradition and modernity" (Melo, 1991, p 8).

Resources available to the partnership

"True to himself, Alberto Melo has gradually put together a real team, a team of strong personalities and talented specialists, for whom the local development approach is an ideal. Pay at IN LOCO is relatively low. Alberto Melo would say that this is a deliberate policy whose purpose is to ensure that the project team is made up of truly dedicated people" (Lemaître, 1994-1995).

The "IN LOCO" team currently comprises 30 specialists (all working on a self-employed basis) with considerable experience in various areas: local and regional development; the economics of development; Public Administration; town and country planning; project methodology; action and management techniques for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); the cooperative movement; vocational training; adult education; the associative movement; primary education; communication; documentation and information; anthropology; ecology; analysis of agricultural and forestry systems; socio-cultural facilitation; creation of small enterprises; computers; social psychology, etc.

The financial resources secured come from various sources: i) participation in European programmes, such as LEADER (176 projects were co-funded under this programme, with a total investment of more than Esc 1 000 000, of which some Esc 600 000 came from the Structural Funds, between 1992 and 1994) and NOW; ii) private foundations (significant constant support since 1985 from the Bernard van Leer Foundation in the Netherlands and very occasional support from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Portugal) for social and educational projects. Projecto RADIAL, for example, was developed with the support of the first of the above-mentioned foundations, as well as the University of the Algarve (formerly Faro Polytechnic), Câmaras Municipais, Juntas de Freguesia and the Direcção Regional de Educação.

Because it is recognized as a development agency of local value, "IN LOCO" has also been subsidized by the Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional [IEFP], which over two years awarded a grant for launching and running general activities, and provided aid for training courses

in specific areas such as weaving, medicinal plants, needlework, toy making, etc.. Interviewees from both organizations acknowledged that the cooperation between the IEFP and "IN LOCO" was useful and had been developed on the basis of priorities and programmes defined by the IEFP (giving priority in certain areas and initiatives). According to the IEFP management, the most important contribution that IEFP/"IN LOCO" cooperation had made at local level was the dissemination of information (to the local population), as well as the development of skills for dealing with the Public Administration (for example, information points were set up in Juntas de Freguesia and in the more remote mountain areas). In addition to this contribution, mention should also be made of the association's ability, on the basis of intimate knowledge of local needs, not only to ensure that the services available from the IEFP take close account of local interests and needs, but also to influence the way in which those services are administered, because of its experience in promoting social change. This interaction is illustrated by the support the IEFP has given local craftspeople and for the creation of a network for the sale of local products, with aid for setting up the "Casa da Serra" (to provide an outlet for local products).

Various focuses of activity were developed under the European programmes LEADER I and NOW, with those involved serving both as "target groups" and as partners (especially in the form of small enterprises). A good example of this dual role is provided by the activities and involvement of Quinta do Freixo. On the one hand as a member of the target group this agricultural enterprise secured, through "IN LOCO", aid that helped it to develop both a unit producing traditional sweets (preserves and fig cheese) and rural tourism. On the other, as one of the association's partners it has more recently, on the basis of its experience, taken on the role of an information provider and animator, both of local potential and of opportunities for development initiatives. In this respect, it has also played a very active role in developing and consolidating an information, self-help and training network based on the active taking of responsibility prompted by experience as a member of the target group. In fact, this seems to be typical of the association's action at local level: working and taking advantage, simultaneously, of the dual condition of beneficiary and animator, or, in other words, building partnerships that are based on the local target population, though not necessarily exclusively so.

Another example is the support and encouragement "IN LOCO" has given for the creation and development of other local associations (for example, the Associação Castelar in Salir - Loulé). It plays this role by providing logistical support and access to information (since local associations

tend to be included in the target group) and has thus helped to create another focus of local activity, at the same time marking its intention to achieve closer proximity to specific local concerns and needs (and so these associations have become partners in the "IN LOCO" project).

As a final, summary comment, we feel that one of the most important resources activated by "IN LOCO", as regards partnership, was the ability to create a particular type of cooperation for each local project. In its quest to promote local development, in which it has tackled a broad range of needs and areas of investment, "IN LOCO" has had to develop a variety of cooperation strategies that have enabled it to avoid neglecting existing agents, agencies and resources but have, at the same time, enabled it to avoid becoming tangled up in tension-laden dynamics, especially at the time when it was discovering its potential and ability to interact.

The partnership in action

Representation and power

Because it is a non profit-making association and is pursuing i) a philosophy based on decentralization and the acceptance of responsibility and involvement at local level, and ii) a methodology of intervention in community development that is based on research and action, "IN LOCO" is particularly aware of and concerned about issues of representation and power within the framework of cooperative initiatives. Since one of its main objectives has been to fight for the "visible" representation of people, groups and cultures that are very often marginalized or subordinated by the approach to development on the broader scale, there has been a tendency for the association to reinforce the "territorialization" of its target groups. It can be argued that this orientation was explicitly assumed with the definition of its area of intervention when "IN LOCO" applied for inclusion in the European LEADER programme in 1991. Thus, for the ARRISCA project [Apoio Revitalização Rural Integrada da Serra do Caldeirão - Support for the Integrated Rural Revitalization of Serra do Caldeirão], "IN LOCO" specified that it would be covering the geographical area of "Serra do Caldeirão/Ribeira do Vascão".

In the contacts undertaken with local partners, two approaches to development emerged as underlying the various projects and partnerships: one approach was more concerned with the impact of development on national revenue (with emphasis being placed, in the Algarve, on

"urban and resort-based tourism"), while the other was oriented more towards integrated rural development (with advantage being taken of, for example, "rural tourism" - see *A Rede*, No 13, p 40). What we have, therefore, are two trends, one more systemic and sub-paradigmatic and the other more anti-systemic and paradigmatic, with the first emphasizing local development that is oriented mainly towards, and by, general economic growth, and the second focusing on development based on local need and potential, attentive to the life-world and constructing a path based on realizing the potential of possible articulations and bridges, rather than on producing dichotomies.

"IN LOCO" has played a crucial role in managing these two approaches, namely by ensuring that the principles expressed and defended by it within the second approach can be operated through strategies of action and research that take full advantage of the resources generated for the partners by the first approach. The balance created between different interests depends on a conception of development that is oriented towards social cohesion - an orientation that has been at the heart of the association's simultaneous promotion of "formal partnerships of formal partners" (*partenariados de parceria*) and "formal partnerships of informal partners" (*partenariados de parceria*).

As regards the representation of varying interests within partnerships, it is worth noting some of the most unique features of this project. Firstly, there is the much less visible role of the Catholic Church in "IN LOCO" partnerships. Our interviewees explained this difference between southern and northern Portugal by the fact that the Church has less strong a hold in the South - there is just one priest for an enormous area and "people around here say that a priest is posted to the Algarve as a punishment". This means that initiatives either directly or indirectly connected to the church are less influential in this area than they are in other parts of the country²².

Secondly, it may be noted that women participate strongly in local associations and are much more involved in voluntary work. At the formal level, the representatives of local associations and groups tend to be men: "women do the work on the ground", one of the association's facilitators told us. It might also be noted that women like Dona Jesus (from Moinho Ti Casinha) and Conceição (a female engineer from Quinta do Freixo) have been key actors in developing small

²²

It should be noted that southern Portugal has fewer IPSSs (most of which have relatively close links with the Catholic Church), even taking account of the difference in population levels.

enterprises based on making the most of local products and potential. The NOW programme played an important role not only in promoting the visibility of these initiatives but also in consolidating and developing skills that had previously been under-used.

Resources, skills and working methods

With the support of the LEADER programme, "IN LOCO" extended its initial action base in the Serra do Caldeirão from seven to 27 communities (and 31 from 1995). Seven action sub-areas were created, each with its own coordinator. At the peak of the programme (1992), there were 24 local socio-economic animators, a number which had fallen to 12 in 1994 and which now stands at seven (since no support was received from the LEADER programme in 1995). Through the LEADER II programme, the association hopes to set up a network of 18 local socio-economic animators for integrated rural development. This aim is based on the need for local coordination and animation of development initiatives, since this does not emerge spontaneously.

Local animators are members of the local communities that receive logistic and financial support from local bodies (Câmaras, Juntas, Associations, Casas de Povo, etc.) and also from "IN LOCO", which also ensures their technical and training requirements. As we have already pointed out, the processes for establishing and formalizing local informal partnerships take various forms and involve various combinations of agents and agencies. In many cases, agreements are entered into with Câmaras Municipais and Juntas de Freguesia. According to our interviewees, these agreements are an important indicator of power relations and collaborative links between the various levels of local power. The shortage of financial and technical resources available to Juntas de Freguesia, by comparison with those available to Câmaras Municipais, often means that the Juntas de Freguesia have less power (and a lesser role). Despite the inherent difficulties, this means there is a need to rebalance the powers and roles of local authorities in local action.

According to our interviewees, a first step in establishing a partnership is to find enthusiastic, responsible and dedicated representatives (personal and vocational training, life experience, personality and "political will" are all characteristics that might prove important for the development of a partnership team). The particular features of the development of a partnership will depend on the content of the specific project in question. The association tries to prevent the power and interest relations present in the national arena from being reproduced at local level.

This means that it is vital to know who the local "powers that be" are and where these people's or groups' interests come into contact with the dynamic of the planned initiative. A second step is to promote what is, for "IN LOCO", the essence of its intervention paradigm: working to encourage local responsibility and involvement.

As we have just said, "IN LOCO" tries to combine criteria of economic viability with social, environmental and cultural criteria concerning local promotion. For example, the partnerships established with the Instituto Florestal, the Universidade do Algarve, "IN LOCO" and the Direcção Regional de Agricultura have led to the study and promotion of local products (for example, goat's milk and its by-products, "medronho" brandy, almonds and local fruits). The aim is to improve the quality of these products by introducing new technologies without doing away with traditional methods and by trying to preserve the human relationship between product and producer on the basis of integrated local development.

As we have already said, the partnerships in which "IN LOCO" is involved have included public or semi-public services (such as the Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional). These services, which are organized in accordance with a very specific approach, recognize the quality of the work undertaken by the association and make specific mention not only of its members' "strength of will" and "patience" but also of the scientific and professional skills of its development agents. This combination of skills has made it possible to set up networks, that is, spaces for communication and interaction, which have reinforced the association's ability to attract, involve and hold on to committed people. Another positive aspect is the fact that the animators live in the local area and that the members of the central team often travel to their action sub-area; they are therefore able to develop their skills in mediating between the association and the local population and to become established as important sources of "moral support" (to use the words of some local interviewees), thus reflecting not only a general interest but also a very specific interest in local processes and dynamics. Another factor that has contributed to recognition of the association's work is the emphasis on training. Various agents working in the action area pointed out that training had been designed in such a way as to overcome any prejudices that might obstruct integrated local development. By way of example, one elected local official mentioned the difficulties that might arise in a mountain region if activities did not take account of local belief systems. In this region, traditional work and local heritage is very often confused with the condition of poverty. This meant that the training not only

of rural development animators but also of other development agents, including the target group, made a vital contribution to building and consolidating mutual cooperation based on both the long-standing and the new potential of the area.

Conflict and consensus

"The people of the Algarve are very individualistic: they do not find it easy to work as a team (or cooperatively)".

"The people of the Algarve do not move much - it takes a lot of effort to get them moving".

"The mentality of businessmen in the Algarve is very individualistic".

Some of our interviewees fell into this stereotypical view of the local personality when mentioning some of the difficulties of working in a partnership in the Algarve: "people live with their faces turned away from each other" (...) "it is a question of culture". This has been illustrated by the example of job clubs which have apparently worked very well in the UK but have had little impact in Portugal. "What reigns here is individualism and a centralized State: partnership is to participate *when you are asked to*".

The stereotype does not, in itself, necessarily indicate any reluctance, or even inability, to work in collaboration with people who are known in advance to be "rather individualistic". But it can undoubtedly make the work of creating a team more difficult. In the end, it is possible that the origin of the stereotype lies in the social and cultural conditions that have meant that the Serra do Caldeirão has become an isolated area that has attracted little investment, thus demotivating the local population. In this respect, the partnership work carried out by "IN LOCO" could help to "break down" the stereotype.

With regard to the work undertaken by "IN LOCO", the most common criticism is that the association lacks the "entrepreneurial spirit", so that its work is not having any real impact on the development of the region. In fact, the association's key involvement in partnerships that embrace not only major public services and local authorities but also enterprises and employers'

associations, in addition to its proven ability to secure European and other funding to develop its projects, proves that it is actually possible for it to be both an "agency" and a "broker", playing a role that is simultaneously local, regional and international. The association's practical, persevering work over the past few years means that the criticism of its supposed lack of "entrepreneurial spirit" is increasingly vacuous and difficult to sustain.

Finally, a local public official mentioned the difficulty of achieving local consensus. "People yearn for their problems to be solved - and pray that somebody will come to solve them", he said, adding that work that is undertaken with this objective is very much "an act of devotion". According to one of our interviewees, it is a political problem - "because of the lack of any clear political majority" - but also a problem specific to the area, where, we were told, the people have suffered "years and years of abandonment and isolation". A situation has been created in which people defend themselves against anything coming from the outside, because they trust nobody other than those they know well.

This same interviewee said that "European Union policy serves as an obstacle to development. Measures are not suited to the scale of the problems concerned: it is very difficult to work with people who are 60-70 years old, illiterate and incapable of catching up with the modern world".

At the heart of the issue raised by this local official lies the problem of bringing together cultures and generations and, also, of ensuring that work that has begun is followed through. As we shall see in the next section, the partnership work undertaken by "IN LOCO", based on the "patient" promotion of dialogue between cultures and on the principle of accepting responsibility for oneself, has made some progress as regards these problems.

Impact of the partnership

The partnership as a working method

As we mentioned earlier, interviewees seem to agree that "IN LOCO" has secured itself a very well established position in the area by its coherent, consistent work. They also all agree that it is long, slow work, involving a great effort of communication and negotiation to establish communication between cultures. The action area is clearly a disadvantaged one, with little

agriculture and very dry entisols, which young people are leaving to seek work on the coast. It also tends to be used as a recruitment area for the coast (for example, women leave the mountains to do cleaning jobs in hotels and men are attracted away to work on building sites).

Criticism of the theory of modernization, of its tendency to promote standardized development and to assess everything in terms of the performance of competitive systems, has created spaces for the re-emergence of a paradigm of more integrated development. In Portugal, this criticism has been accompanied by another that argues for a reduction in State activity in favour of the private and associative sectors. One of our interviewees, the manager of a public service, argued that, instead of this criticism being reflected in the explicit promotion of partnership by the State ("at least, I did not experience any pressure from my superiors"), it was much more common for there to be a move towards State withdrawal. The State approach, then, is to promote experimentation through projects, where priority is given to projects that comply with certain rules, for example, the involvement of more than one institution. The result is to create competition among projects, force projects to be open to new institutions, oblige institutions and associations to find partners and assess the work carried out. Of the many activities that emerge from this process; "advantage can be taken of diversity to promote local solutions and new dynamics".

The work carried out by "IN LOCO" has made the most of diversity. Its working model, which is a mixture of "agency" and "brokerage", with the association serving as a support structure for agencies and organizations based in the community that serve the "delivery" function, has been particularly effective i) not only in terms of its ability to mobilize resources and skills to promote integrated local development, but also ii) in terms of its capacity to remove obstacles to cooperation (for example, by dismantling "cliques", questioning the boundaries of isolation or combating draining rivalries between associations).

The conception of partnership upheld by the association (based, as we have already said, on shared responsibility and broad local involvement) has emphasized the importance of action based on the greater knowledge that is, in turn, constructed within the discourse of local intervention. The action research methodology - with its characteristics of implicating the research in his/her object of study, the development of the collective researcher and of producing relevant knowledge at various levels - has formed the central pivot for the construction and expression of partnership.

Impact of the partnership on social exclusion

"IN LOCO" has succeeded in demonstrating that there is more to the Algarve than its coastal area".

The recognition of a deprived rural area in a region that is known mainly for its ability to attract tourists to the "benefits" of its coastal areas was an indirect result of the local cooperation promoted by "IN LOCO". Indeed, on the basis of the collaboration developed by the association, the area and its problems were recognized as priority targets. Interest was also raised in containing the causes and processes of local poverty, as well as putting an end to the continuing neglect and lack of priority accorded to the region by policy makers.

On another level, mention might be made of more direct impacts, that is, those that have been more closely concerned with the various forms of exclusion experienced in the area. For example, the partnerships created (including those based on European programmes - for example, LEADER and NOW) made it possible to implement practical initiatives associated with employment, training and the promotion of local products, which have provided short-term "solutions" for the most urgent problems and areas. In this process, advantage has also been taken of local resources and skills and every effort has been made to give voice (or at least listen) to people who are socially, politically and culturally excluded.

Also worth mentioning, though in connection more with promoting social cohesion than combating social exclusion, are the initiatives that have made a contribution to prevention strategies, particularly by reviving a solidarity network in the Serra do Caldeirão and developing an interface between the Serra and the rest of the region. This interface has served both as a "borderland" space (defined by local identities) and also as a space for the coordination of diversity.

Impact of the partnership on social policy and the broader context

The work performed by "IN LOCO" is now an ideal point of reference at national level, both as regards local development processes and in connection with the promotion of local development on the basis of shared responsibility. It should also be pointed out that the association has

emerged and developed in a deprived rural area whose problems are shared by many other similar areas in Portugal. This fact recently served as a ground for setting up initiatives for the exchange of experiences at national level (in coordination with similar actions in other European countries), in the form of debates, publicity and written communication networks.

The localized approach underlying the initiatives developed as part of the project have had clear implications for local intervention policies, particularly in the field of social policy. Indeed, to focus on a geographical unit also implies calling into question the segmentation of policy measures and raising the possibility of coordination on the basis of a commitment to local development. The association's interest in local development processes has been a vital ingredient in the implementation of social policy measures, both by bringing together a broad range of areas of intervention and by coordinating its activities in accordance with local needs. It might, for example, be claimed that the local project raised the possibility of redefining fields of action and competence so that, without actually being entirely excluded, the contribution of Central Government would have to provide a response appropriate to the features of the area concerned. In other words, the local nature of the association's actions have illustrated the ability to relate global and structural issues to specific local characteristics and the "lived experience" of local problems.

Another contribution to the area of social policy has been the distinction drawn between urgent aid initiatives and others which are more promotional, more preventive or more long-term. What is relevant in this distinction is the fact that the decision to make this dual investment was made not on the basis of rules and regulations but, once again, in accordance with the perceived priorities in and for the local area.

Debate is currently under way on the tension between an increasingly internationalized economy and a social policy that is based virtually exclusively on national decisions. The transnational nature of some of the partnerships developed by "IN LOCO" have provided opportunities for analysing this tension, though the most substantive contribution derives mainly from the exchange and comparison of experiences. It might nonetheless be argued that a significant step forward has been taken in the transnational understanding of social policy and, more specifically, of the various forms that policy takes in European societies and States.

Conclusion

In this case study, we have identified a partnership model that we have labelled as mixed or "oscillating" between an "agency" model and a "brokerage" model (in the terminology used by Craig, 1994). We have analysed the way in which this mixed model makes it possible to operate, in a context of tension, a local development approach that takes account of "local populations and outside professionals" (...), "grassroots organizations and the public services" (...), "long-standing traditions and modernity" (...), and "the requirements of the enterprise approach and of social solidarity". In reconsidering the characteristics attributed to Portuguese society, which generally define it as a country whose situation is somewhere between that of central and peripheral, we can see the potential for adapting to this situation a type of cooperation that oscillates between what are sometimes very disparate needs. In the case of this integrated rural development project, the structure of the partnership is based on investments as varied as:

- the building of bridges between cultures (oral/written, urban/rural, local/global, masculine/feminine), which demands a communication-based approach or, to use the words of Paulo Freire, "dialogic relations";
- the promotion of local cultures;
- the capacity to make people aware of difference;
- the capacity to mediate (between authorities, statuses, interests and world views) and to stimulate local dynamics;
- the adoption of an ethical approach that remains constant over time and produces trusting relationships based on considered reflection among "peers".

Ten years after its accession to the European Union, Portugal is still faced with a two-fold need: the need to attend to the specificity and development of its internal dynamics and the need to coordinate with a broader context of integration. This is why the principle of action so emphasized by "IN LOCO", that of "thinking globally and acting locally", seems to have particular significance in the case of Portugal, in view of the vital need for investment in these two areas.

CHAPTER V

Conclusions and recommendations

In this final chapter of our report, we present our conclusions and the implications of the national context and of the three case studies as regards the design and operation of partnerships to combat social exclusion in Portugal.

This chapter is divided into two parts: the first part deals with issues associated with the functioning of partnerships at local level, both in terms of structure, objectives and resources and in terms of results. It also covers the relationship between the partnerships studied and the national and transnational contexts.

The second part of the chapter provides a set of recommendations concerning the diversity of partners, policies and programmes at local level. In addition to these specific recommendations, we also offer another set concerning regional and national policies and programmes, as well as programmes and initiatives at European level.

I. Partnerships at local level and combating social exclusion in Portugal - Conclusions

Our analysis of the recent national context enabled us to identify the main orientations that have, over the past few decades, motivated and shaped the mechanisms for cooperation in socio-economic development and in actions concerning poverty and social exclusion. An important point of our analysis was the identification of features of the Portuguese situation that reveal the tradition of a centralized State, despite (and sometimes because of) poor social provision. One of the outcomes of this tradition has been the production, by this State, of mechanisms of social control rather than scenarios of concertation with other agents, which has made it difficult to develop a constructive relationship between the State and other social actors. Curiously, this centralized approach has co-existed with a "welfare society", essentially based on relatively informal, small solidarity networks.

The strong presence of social initiatives associated with the Catholic Church has, in recent years, been joined by other grass-roots initiatives in the field of social provision (examples of which are the cooperative movement and community associations). It might be argued that, despite the contribution that all these initiatives have made (particularly in terms of the number and range of activities they have undertaken), their existence is heavily dependent on State support - a fact that raises doubts about the real autonomy and identity of the "other" interests represented. The parallel existence of these two major groups of initiatives has led to the development of cooperative relationships, that might best be described as "inter-institutional", whose presence has been felt, with varying intensity, since the mid-1970s.

In the case of Portugal, the consolidation (still incomplete) of the Welfare State has been based on three distinct and interconnected courses of action: moving towards the recognition and hallowing of social rights; moving towards the regionalization of measures and policies (a trend that is common to other national contexts but is, in the Portuguese case, also justified by the specific nature of socio-economic imbalances in the country); and a movement away from fragmented policy perceptions and interventions and towards an integrated conception of measures and initiatives in the field of social policy and local development. This means that, in addition to the vital strengthening of the State (the body that sanctions and defends rights), another focus is emerging, concerning the facilitation, recognition and emergence of locally based initiatives that are, in the main, multi-dimensional and multi-disciplinary. It has also been pointed out that Portugal's accession to the European Union has been a factor in strengthening, or even imposing, multi-sectoral, multi-partner initiatives. In fact, virtually all actions to combat exclusion or promote social cohesion and, of course, all investments associated with European programmes, are now based on criteria concerning the *institutionalization of partnerships*, nearly always taking the form of *projects*. In this respect, the supra-institutional nature of initiatives is also accentuated, as is the (supposedly) binding form of formally agreed collaboration²³.

Once we had analysed the internal and external contexts in which initiatives in this area are currently operating, we could then explore the situation(s) that serve as a backdrop for the case

²³

Many current programmes in Portugal have institutionalised structures and mechanisms of cooperation. Examples include the Conselhos Locais de Educação (provided for by the *Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo*, 1986), Projecto de Apoio à Criança e à Família (with regional scope), Comissão de Protecção de Menores (with municipal scope), Comissões Locais/Regionais de Acompanhamento Técnico de Programas ("technical partnership") and, more recently, Comissões para a Implementação do Rendimento Mínimo (initiative legally launched in May 1996).

studies analysed. For this purpose, we described the partnerships associated with the three Portuguese case studies (see the table in Annex III) on the basis of their geographical location, origins and dynamic, institutional form, model of cooperation (according to Craig's classification), structure and action base. On the basis of this analysis, we tried to analyse the nature of the trends we have perceived as prevailing in the case of Portugal. We thus discovered that, in urban areas (associated with a strong presence of European programmes), the most common form of partnership is the top-down model (it should be recalled that partnership is a vital and fundamental principle of many of these programmes). In the urban project we studied, which we defined as being based on the "delivery" model, with a tendency to veer towards the "brokerage" model, an attempt is being made to coordinate a two-fold reference as regards the action base, which is divided between focusing on members of a target group and embracing the whole area in which they live. We referred to this model as "partenariado" or "formal partnership".

The project whose model we have called "parceria" or "informal partnership" is based in a mainly semi-rural area (that is, a "transition" area, in which agricultural activities coexist with developing small and medium-sized industrial units), where there is some local solidarity, though mainly among individuals or small groups, and where resources are notoriously inadequate. In this context, the "agency" model (Craig) is the one that emerges as being most sensitive to local needs and can be constructed on the basis of these needs, whilst also making the most of and giving value to local resources.

To illustrate a third form of partnership, our third case study is of a project in a depressed rural area which is seeking to establish an interface with the region of which it is a part (the Algarve) and its industrial, tourism and service activities. Legally based on a regional association, this project's model of cooperation blends a focus on "agency" with the development of "brokerage" to coordinate resources and agents at various levels. It is a model that we describe as oscillating between "partenariado" (a formal partnership that takes advantage of outside resources, sometimes adopts a vertical approach and is concerned to guarantee the effectiveness of investments) and "parceria" (a more informal partnership, which is based on processes that are more relational and less contractual and which is oriented towards development of the whole community). The uniqueness of this project lies in its essentially horizontal development, even in the context of processes that were originally designed to be applied vertically. This is why we

describe its structure as being "bottom-up" (that is, the processes developed emerge from the base and converge towards it).

It is possible to draw another set of conclusions from analysis of the behaviour of the various partners. In the Portuguese case, it might be noted that the term "partnership" is being used more and more frequently, but it is an appropriated word associated with various meanings and expectations. For example:

- public services tend to use the term without matching it with a clear framework of guidelines concerning its practical application. It is probably this sector more than any other that has appropriated the term, but it is a passive appropriation (both in terms of the distance between words and deeds and because this sector's behaviour pattern is to wait to be asked to cooperate rather than to promote cooperation). However, the various public services do seem to demonstrate differing levels of involvement, which may be associated with their specific field of intervention and/or the background and experience of their agents (by way of example, it may be noted that, according to our case studies, the social security sector emerged as being more likely to develop partnerships than the Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional, which was open to partnership but in the habit of waiting to be approached). We wondered what were the main reasons for this institutional behaviour and whether they were associated with the broader field of action of the one sector and more specialized field of action of the other, or whether they were to do with the fact that the background and experience of officers and collaborators weighed differently in the two institutions;
- despite the many different understandings of the meaning of the word "partnership", the underlying approach currently being taken by the local authorities is to act as promoters of local cooperation. The expansion of their area of competence (without any equivalent increase in funding) associated with the natural proximity of local interests and needs is probably a good reason for the local authorities beginning to seek cooperation. It should, however, be noted that the local authorities' lack of power has contributed to the poor image and presence of local action in Portugal; in other words, local action flourishes in a context of strong local authorities that define the areas of intervention, priorities and forms of cooperation;

- the traditional social partners (employers and trade unions) are notably lacking in the composition of local partnerships to combat social exclusion. Employers' interest in cooperation has a notoriously corporatist bent and they are mainly interested in increasing coordination with transnational experiences in the business world. The trade unions' have a general interest in the issue but are very reluctant (and sometimes absolutely refuse) to expand their traditional field of intervention. They are, however, beginning to promote various spaces for the consideration of social exclusion. In an overall analysis, it might be said that these partners' positions are similar in that they do not participate in local partnerships, though they have different interests in relation to the issue of social exclusion, with the subject being much closer to the heart of the trade unions. For employers, combating social exclusion is just one element of the overall (but non-specific) context in which they plan their initiatives;

- in the community-based sector (in which we include institutions responsible for providing services, local associations and groups, and local development agencies), local partnership is seen as having a broad range of meanings and implications. Positions range from one extreme to the other, with some seeing partnership as being dependent on and subordinate to local processes and others seeing it as being able to lead local dynamization processes and even (under agreement) assuming responsibilities, including responsibility for promoting the launching of local development projects. The diversity of composition, resources and skills in this sector is matched by different levels of involvement in the processes of setting up and running schemes at local level. It should be pointed out that two of our case studies concerned two associations that also function as local development agencies, which indicates the potential of initiatives coming from this sector for the processes of mobilization and intervention. The body of initiatives from the community sector also includes IPSSs, whose nature and degree of local integration has once more been confirmed by our study. Basically, we can draw a distinction between IPSSs in which the established nature of their initiatives is emphasized and others that organize themselves as units that instigate processes of social solidarity. These two types of IPSS have very different cooperation commitments.

The analysis prompted by the question of the visibility and representation of specific interests, which are traditionally subsumed in the broad heading of general interests, is also elucidating.

Analysis of issues such as ethnicity²⁴ and gender is very revealing. With the exception of existing projects that take these areas as targets for their activities, it can be concluded that, in projects with a more integrated approach, the visibility of specific groups is not particularly compatible with a global approach. There are signs that issues concerning differences of gender and ethnicity are now being given a greater place in policy measures, but this is not being immediately reflected in increased representation at local level.

In all three of our case studies, it may be noted that women, in both the rural and the urban environment, are being particularly affected by poverty and social exclusion. Women tend to enter into partnerships as individuals and/or representatives of technical teams or small groups rather than as representatives of large enterprises or institutions. The nature of their integration in partnerships is particularly affirmed by their communication and dialogue skills, as well as by their persistence and coordination abilities. Their customary contact with day-to-day community life implies that they have the power to take coordinated action on the basis of local issues and with a view to solving problems, for which they need to gather the necessary resources, skills and communication skills. It is not by chance that women's involvement tends to be more associated with the horizontal approach of "parceria" [informal partnership] and that they tend not to participate in the vertical relationships of "partenariado" [formal partnership]. Despite the fact that women are slowly assuming a greater role, they are still more visible in the implementation of activities than in management.

Finally, mention should be made of the dual pressure currently being felt in Portugal, particularly by the public services and traditional social partners - a pressure whose origins lie, on the one hand, in "partenariado", with its capacity to "force" the bureaucrats to look towards the community, and, on the other hand, in "parceria", with its ability to encourage the local community to "look to" partnerships promoted by national and, in particular, supranational authorities, thus reinforcing their effectiveness.

²⁴

The cases analysed do not provide any evidence with regard to this issue. We do know, however, that it is following a course similar to that of women's issues, though with the additional problem that it is an issue that has begun to be tackled more recently and whose geographical distribution in Portugal is uneven.

II. Recommendations

The partnership experiences we have analysed give rise to a set of recommendations both as regards reinforcing aspects that have proved to be the most successful and concerning dimensions that are only weakly present in, or even absent from, the experiences analysed.

There is currently a trend towards the automatic recognition of the advantages of partnership. Even recognizing the potential of partnership, it is important to continue to question its appropriateness, the preconditions for its implementation and the objectives associated with it. It seems to us that the identification of partnership as a mechanism, device or technique risks not only reducing but also altering the nature of its essence: the objective of multifaceted cooperation (between sectors, agents, various administrative levels and varied contributions), based on the final aim, which is to promote social cohesion. We have, therefore, not included cosmetic recommendations or recommendations that concern the more circumstantial aspects of partnership.

Our analysis of the potential and limitations of partnerships has enabled us to draw up some recommendations concerning three main areas: the issues of power, culture and communication/pedagogy. Partnerships to combat social exclusion (and promote social cohesion) imply a theory and practice of sharing and assuming powers that, with a view to achieving certain objectives, are also intended to guarantee the practical realization of broad-ranging coordination (which is at the base of the very concept of partnership). Although each recommendation could be put into practice by different partners, we have identified the ones we consider to be most directly responsible and/or likely to take responsibility for each of the three sets of recommendations. We believe the recommendations focus on the different territorial levels of publicity and influence over the partnerships and therefore fall within the three areas considered (power, culture and communication), both at local and national level (and other sub-national divisions), and at European level. It therefore seems vital:

1. that there be official recognition of partnership as the principle for the coexistence of different interests and as a potential means for their coordination;

2. to ensure criteria and forms of representation that, at various levels, include the diversity of viewpoints, in accordance with the specific nature of the project in question (from this viewpoint, work to combat social exclusion must involve representatives of those who are already excluded or at risk of becoming so);
3. to promote appropriate (and increasing) representation of the community and voluntary sectors - contributors who have proven to be capable of broadening the range of traditional approaches and practices (though they should not be seen as releasing other partners from their responsibilities);
4. to guarantee the specificity of local, regional, national and supranational levels through clear recognition of areas of competence, resources and decision-making based on flexible application of the principle of subsidiarity.

Since these recommendations are related to the area of power, the partners we believe have the best organizational capacity are the national government and the European Commission, plus the usual social partners.

The Portuguese context, as illustrated by our three case studies, demonstrates that the success of a local partnership in combating social exclusion depends on the development of an inter-cultural approach, that is, on promoting not only dialogue between cultures but also recognizing the true value of many of these cultures. Therefore:

1. a partnership whose aim is to combat social exclusion should promote the coordination of the bureaucratic culture (which is prevalent in the approach to service provision) and the community culture (which is essentially built on and for local social needs);
2. a partnership should also undertake to acknowledge the value of the local culture (with its features of perseverance, endurance and grassroots solidarity), interconnecting it with cultures that defend viability, entrepreneurial spirit, contractualized solidarity and agreement-based negotiation;

3. a partnership must, on the basis of the (aforementioned) principle of the coexistence of interests and the potential for their coordination, guarantee the representation of (among others) gender-based and ethnic cultures, thus strengthening its links with the community and the issues on which it intends to work.

As regards this set of recommendations concerning inter-cultural cooperation, we believe the most important partners are firstly the national State and its public agencies, followed by the mediating agencies (at local, regional, national and trans-national level), plus the social partners.

Our third group of recommendations has to do with the conditions of communication that are essential to a successful partnership. Thus:

1. one of the fundamental prerequisites of a partnership is its ability to establish and maintain communication links among the various partners. Since information is vital, there is also a need to ensure that ways and means of providing it are appropriate;
2. dialogue must be developed as a counterpoint to the vertical structuring of interests. This combination would also imply that partnerships simultaneously represent interests and serve as spaces for reflection on those interests - a condition without which there can be no sustainable negotiation. In other words, partnerships are expected to play the dual role of both being aware of "cultures" and generating coordination based on knowledge of those cultures;
3. mediation agencies are vital in promoting the building of bridges between a clear affirmation of interests and negotiation for the coordination of those interests;
4. the pedagogic position of partnerships implies training in human relations, communications and societal models (including an understanding of social exclusion and the values of cohesion).

We believe the professional teams and mediating agencies should play a central role in this group of recommendations concerning improved promotion of communication. Complementary to this the public agencies and community organizations may also be significant protagonists in

institutionalizing and consolidating communication practices which are essential for developing a broad range of cooperation.

The distinction we have drawn between "partenariado" and "parceria" leads us to conclude that, in the Portuguese context, there is a need to combine i) the special features of cooperation that have developed over time as regards dealing with problems and needs and ii) the trends and learnings that have developed in other contexts that have, because of globalization, become partnership contexts.

Partnerships to combat social exclusion, reshaped in accordance with the recommendations made here, would allow a substantial shift from perceiving the local situation as a "problem" to perceiving it as being "full of hope" (to use the words of one of our case study interviewees).

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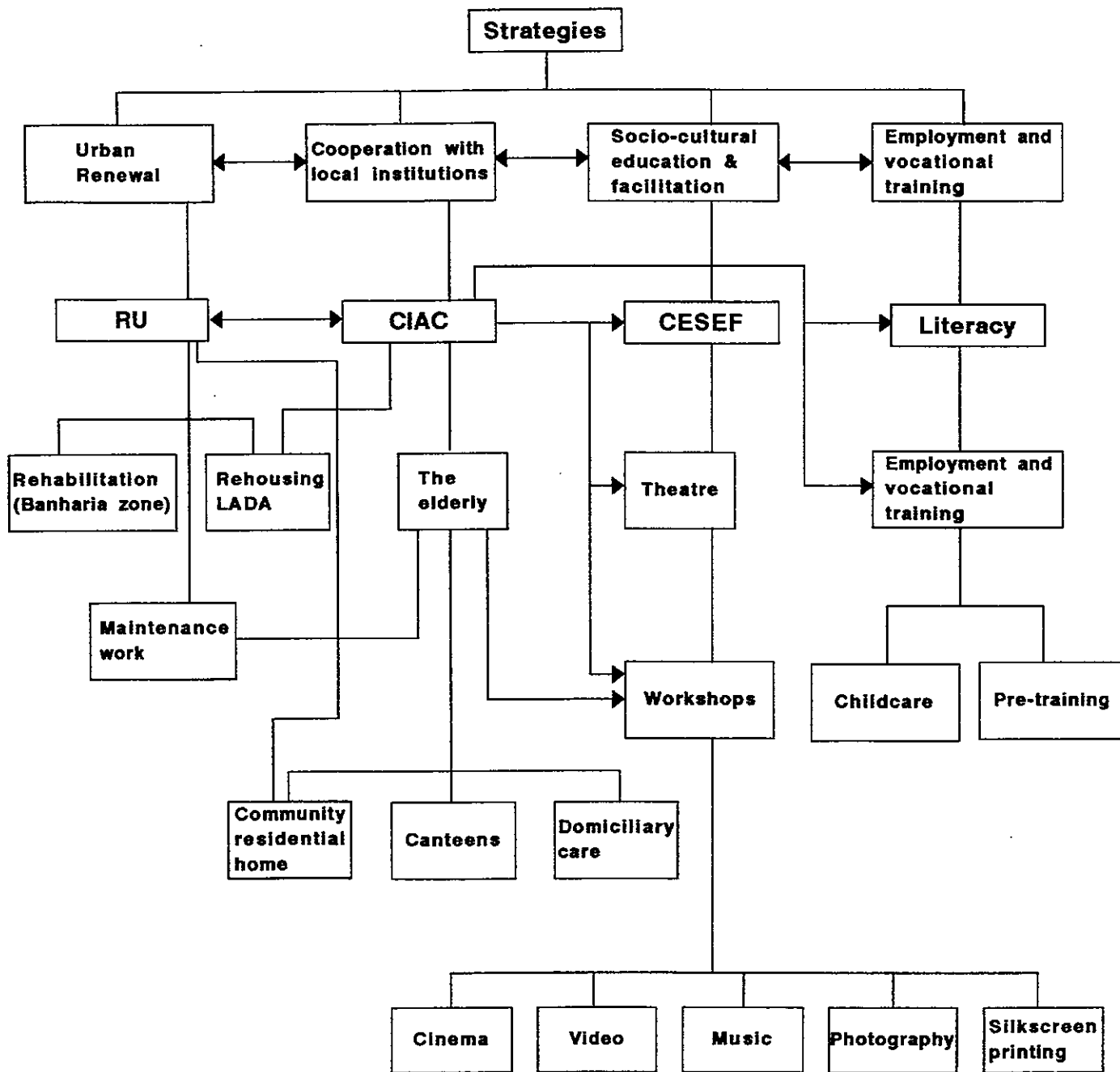
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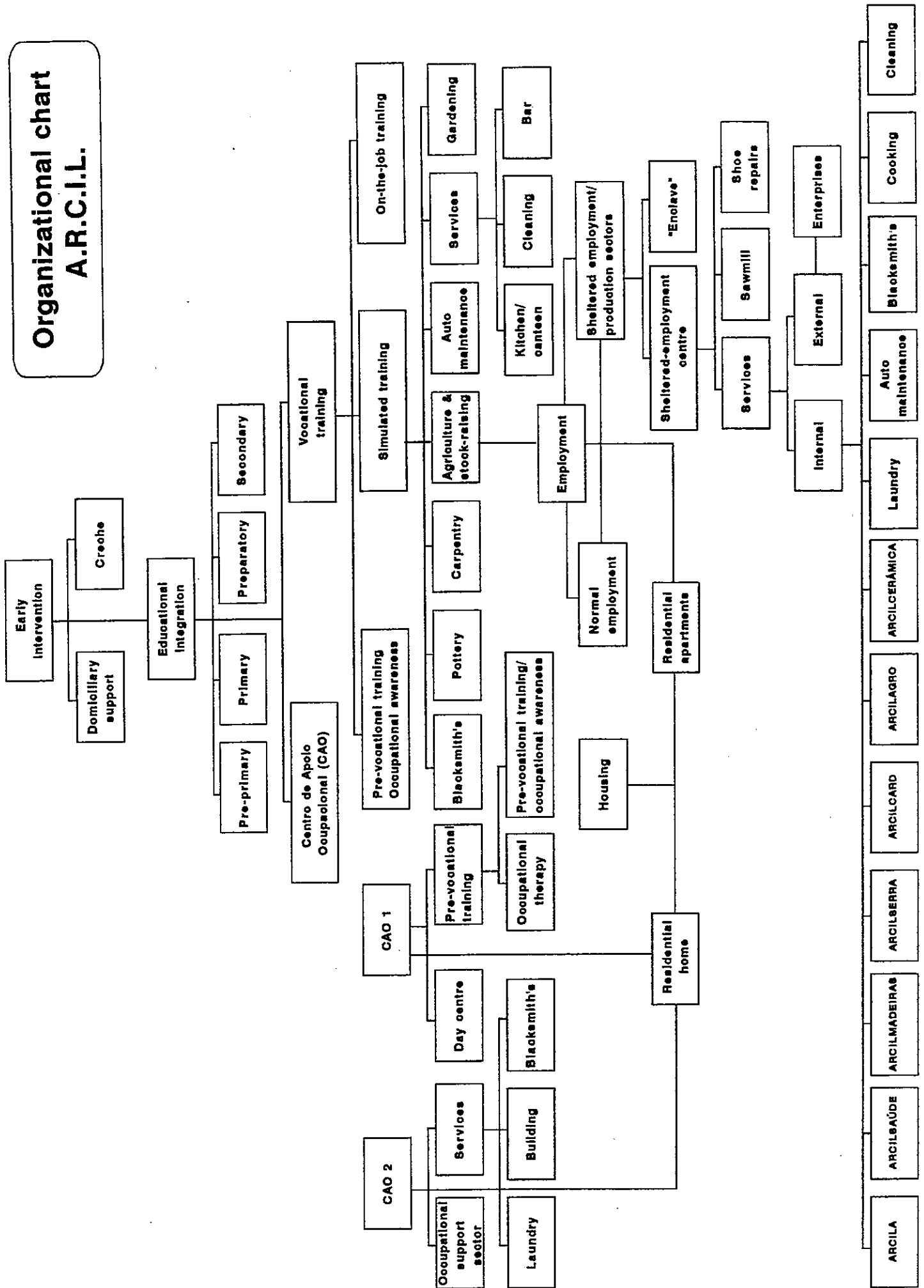
ANNEX 1

**Project structure:
strategies, sub-projects, activities and services
(Projecto Sé e São Nicolau)**



RU - Reabilitação Urbana;
 CIAC - Centros de Informação e Atendimento Comunitário;
 CESEF - Centros Socio-Educativo das Fontainhas

**Organizational chart
A.R.C.I.L.**



Description of partnerships in the three case studies (Portugal)

Case study	Area	Origins/dynamic	Form	Model (Craig,1994)	Structure	Action base
Sé	Urban	"Partenariado" [formal partnership]	Project /foundation	Delivery /brokerage	Top-down	Target group / territorial
ARCIL	Semi-rural	"Parceria" [informal partnership]	Local association	Agency	Bottom-up	Target group
IN LOCO	Rural	"Partenariado" / "Parceria" [Formal/informal partnership]	Regional association	Agency /brokerage	Bottom-up	Territory