Cuban Perspectives on Community Development: Building Integrated Approaches to Social Equity

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Community Development in Cuba

- Role of Community Development throughout the revolutionary process (1959-present)
- Creation of local government (Popular Councils) in 1992
- Integrated Group for Community Development at the government level (1996)
- Strengthening participatory local governance (Guidelines for Economic and Social Policy, 2012)
Community development in Cuba

STRENGTHS:
- Equity and Social Justice
- Government Support
- Social Participation
- Social Institutions and Organizations
- Human and Social Capital
- Solidarity and Shared Meaning
- Cultural Identity and Traditions

WEAKNESSES:
- Local actors and programs work in silos
- Predominance of disconnected approaches
- Poor inclusion of equitable approaches in local development agendas
- Centralized-top down culture
- Lack of reflection and evaluation of community development practices and culture
Theoretical-methods

- Participatory Action Research
- Popular Education
- Community Psychology
- Sociocultural Animation
- Community Planning and Development
- Sustainable Development
- Local / Community Development
Approaches to theories and methods

- Holistic and integrated transformation
- Social justice, inclusion and well-being
- Participation and empowerment
- Horizontality, synergy and democratic process
- Knowledge dialogues
- Collective construction of knowledge
- Practice - reflection - new practice
- Articulation of actors and actions
- Emphasis in development of people
- Endogenous and sustainable development
Characteristics of community development in Cuba

- Incremental growth of experiences, actors and places
- Diversity of approaches
  - Sociocultural development programs
  - Comprehensive Neighborhood Transformation Workshops
  - Historic Center of Havana
  - Educational and university extension projects
  - Social work
- Multiplicity of actors and social structures
- Different levels of social participation
Historical Center of Havana
Experience of FLACSO Cuba
Aspects of equity and community development

- Social justice
- Equal access to opportunities, resources, welfare, results
- Recognition of diversity and differences among people
- Treatment on social disadvantages
FLACSO role in Community Development

- Coaching/Workshops on Integrated Neighborhood Transformation
- Academic programs and courses-workshops
- Community program for children with social disadvantage
- Social inclusion project for people with disabilities
- Innovative Management of local development for Strengthening Social Equity
15 Municipalities of the Island
Courses / workshops:

- Social Development and Equity
- Gender equality
- Gaps by skin color
- Disability and social inclusion
- Equity and age groups
- Equity and education, cultura @ information
Design methodological tools

Manual of methodological tools for evaluating development projects with an equity approach

Validation of the manual and training of actors
Multimedia Social Development and Equity
Collection and Dissemination of Best Practices

- Experiences exchange workshops
- Network of Graduates of the Master's Degree Social Development
- Share knowledge and results