

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS FROM THE JIU VALLEY AND THE NEED FOR DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT NETWORK FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE FROM PETROSANI

FELICIA ANDRIONI, MIHAELA CAMELIA SCHMIDT *

ABSTRACT: *This paper explores a few aspects of social and economic problems in the Jiu Valley, issues that have led to a priority need for the development of the share of social support network in this area. The needs of the population generated by economic and social problems existing in the Jiu Valley has led the development of social services in response to these needs. Also the paper contents a case study about necessity development of social support network for elderly from Petrosani area.*

KEY WORDS: *socio-economic problematic; the Jiu Valley; network of social support; elderly.*

JEL CLASSIFICATION: *Z10.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Years of transition - after the post-December 1990 - have been accompanied by an explosion of poverty in Romania. The Jiu Valley located in Hunedoara County was a hard tried. Various reforms after 1990, made the early years of transition, that socio-economic problems to register a real growth on affecting directly the population of the Jiu Valley and also elderly from this area. In what follows we will examine only some aspects of socio-economic problems in the Jiu Valley, aspects that have led to a priority need for the development of social support network segment in this area.

2. THE CONTEMPORARY SITUATION OF THE POPULATION JIU VALLEY. CONTEXT. PROBLEMATIC. NEEDS

* *Assist. Prof., Ph.D., University of Petroșani, Romania, felicia_andrioni@yahoo.com
Lecturer, Ph.D., University of Petrosani, Romania, schmidtcamelia@yahoo.com*

The Jiu Valley located in Hunedoara County includes a series of cities Lonea, Petrița, Petroșani, Aninoasa, Vulcan, Lupeni, Uricani, all of which are mining centres. Jiu Valley is a monoindustrial specifically area. Jiu Valley demographic rate is fluctuating and difficult to follow because of the comings and goings percentage of population to suggest the image of transit zones, even if mining companies were closed, and a lack of other employment alternatives. Government Ordinances 9/1997 și 22/1997 led to massive layoffs in the mining industry. The impacts of these economic measures are currently being felt in full, amplified by the lack of alternatives for ensuring jobs for unemployed.

Successive stages of economic restructuring operated in the Hunedoara County and implicitly in the municipality Petrosani lack of alternative investments that have generated a continuous major negative impact among the population. Economic consequences have been reflected on the social, accentuation deficiencies damaging quality of life in the area. These accumulated negative aspects induce an economic and psychological discomfort to the individual, family and community level.

According to the statistical situation (Source Petrosani City Hall) made from the 2002 population census, the Jiu Valley population was 176086 inhabitants of the city population was 51,850 inhabitants Petrosani. Evolution of Petrosani city was influenced by the dynamics of economic activity in this area in 1998 recorded 53,195 inhabitants and in 2000 recorded 50,586 inhabitants and in 2006 (01 July) 44 658 inhabitants suggesting a decrease demographic processes as a result of restructuring industrial mining in the area.

In recent years following the closure of state institutions and massive personnel layoffs, Jiu Valley people are facing serious social problems: poverty, the number of families with many children who have a minimum source of subsistence, lack of employment alternatives, very low level of education and public information. (Source: SPLAS Petrosani). Directly affected by these problems are the people who live in the Jiu Valley. Poverty population, reduced costs for social protection and other issues mark on the population.

In post-revolutionary transitional period have increased some social phenomena with important events in the community, namely:: increase number of single parent families because of the family abandonment and divorce; lack of family planning activities leading among poor families to increase the number of children in these families; were developed forms of protest aggressive, brutal-strikes, which have conducted to obtain material aid from the Government ; among Jiu Valley poor families increased dependence on existing social services; elderly from Jiu Valley do not face the higher housing debt: water, sewer, electricity, heat (these people to cut off from the thermal network of the city because of the high costs)

3. THE NEED TO DEVELOP SOCIAL SUPPORT NETWORKS IN THE JIU VALLEY

At present the mining sector continues to be in the process of restructuring, there is a big problem for fired staff because the staff no has viable alternatives fact which conducted at social pressures. As we said previously the biggest social problem in the Jiu Valley region is the lack of jobs, problem that generates a sequence of other

social problems of population in the region: increased number of people (families) receiving the guaranteed minimum income, increasing dependence on existing social services, leading to increasingly high costs from local budgets for social services.

Reported to the diversity and complexity of social problems in the area, social services are not enough face to magnitude to the social needs of disadvantaged population groups. Thus, according to the government of the city parts of the Jiu Valley is necessary - in addition to existing services - creating social structures for prevention and social protection: residential care centres for elderly persons - considering population aging; home care services for people of the Third Age, counselling and support services for abused and maltreated women; creation of social housing for disadvantaged groups, development of community development services; development services specializing in the protection of persons with disabilities and child protection.

In Jiu Valley, social work represents an activity area in continuous attention to local government. In Petrosani and Petrila operates local public social services through are provided social services with basic character: activity information, counselling, monitoring, social benefits, allowances, social assistance (VMG), maintenance allowances, salaries for personal assistants, aimed at reducing vulnerability or difficulty situations with risk of marginalization and social exclusion.

On the initiatives in social services field and social support networks during 2006-2009, has been taken into account to continue the attenuation social impact project has been developed the socio-economic regeneration project of mining areas, financed by the World Bank which included: projects for income and social services, municipal infrastructure projects, small grants for the disadvantaged: women, youth, elderly.

4. SOCIAL SUPPORT NETWORK FOR THE ELDERLY OF ROMANIAN ORTHODOX PARISH LIVEZENI I PETROȘANI - CASE STUDY

4.1. Particularities socio-economic needs and problems of older people social assisted by the Romanian Orthodox Parish Livezeni I Petrosani

In Jiu Valley and also in Petrosani ageing is a major problem for the future which must be taken into account today. Growth numbers of older people has increased the number of those requiring assistance and protection in specialized institutions, especially those structured on medical and social assistance. Demographic rate of our country shows the increased number of elderly people.

A statistical analysis conducted in Petrosani, showed us that from total city population, 14.9 % of population are represented by third age persons, the sex structure of this category is highlighted as follows: population between 55-59 years- 2592 persons, from which 1210 are men and 1382 are women; population between 60-64 years- 1945 persons from which 858 are men and 1087 are women; population between 65-69 years- 1888 persons from which 851 are men and 1037 are women. (Source: Petrosani Hall) So we can see that the number of women is higher than number of men.

Local Public Social Work Service Petroșani social supported in 2006 a significant number of disadvantaged older people. Thus, approximately 400 cases of families in need of Petrosani benefited by minimum income from which 55 cases belonged to the people of the Third age (over 55 years) which represented a rate of 13.75% from being eligible disadvantaged. Another number of 109 people aged over 55 were pensioners with low incomes who have requested support from the Social Assistance Public Service Petrosani the various social components. This fact was a warning, continuing concern for a policy social life.

Also, today, in Petrosani exists a large number of elderly people in need, alone, with an income less than the Minimum Income on economy and sick. These people often request support from local authorities, are currently the largest consumers of health and social services because they confront with complex social and medical needs. (Source: SPLAS Petroșani, 2011)

If for other disadvantaged social categories there were some social actions for the reduction of social problems, for elderly person (as a percentage of 14.39% of Petrosani population) number of social services for their needs is very small.

Until 2005, in Jiu Valley region there was only one Home for the Elderly has subordinated the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Child Protection Hunedoara, in city Petrița whose rate of occupation is always highest for the lack of other specialized services for the elderly in the Jiu Valley. Following this the Romanian Orthodox Parish Livezeni I Petrosani created a social support network at home that came to meet the needs of older people from Petroșani.

From the data analysis of Narița E. (2008) on socio-economic situation of older people socially assisted by social support network at home in Romanian Orthodox Parish Livezeni I Petrosani (PORA) resulted some issues relevant to describe the needs and problems they face. Thus in 2008 a total of 60 elderly people benefited from the services support network of Romanian Orthodox Parish Livezeni, from which 18% were aged 61-66 years, 52% were aged 66-75 years, 25% were aged 76-80 years and 5% were aged 81-90 years. From institutional document analysis resulted that the main problems facing the elderly beneficiaries are loneliness, lack of correlation between the biological or extended family, health issues, monthly housing expenses, administration costs of medical treatments, housing, carrying shopping, making housework, care plan personal.

From the persons beneficiaries 65% living alone being widow / widower, single people, divorcees and 35% live with husband or child or one with another partner. (Source: Romanian Orthodox Parish Livezeni I Petrosani, Internal social documents). "In general, these people feel the need to have long discussions, evokes memories of youth, they like to remember the successes of them. They believe they belong to a generation working, deserving, but the injustices of life and especially those who are young and strong now. Their family members, if any, live far away or even abroad. Others no longer had any close family members." (Narița, 2008, p.75).

Regarding health status 85% of the elderly have different cardiovascular, respiratory, psychiatric and other diseases conical, requiring medical care, prolonged or permanent treatment, recovery, periodic medical examinations or palliative care. (Source: Romanian Orthodox Parish Livezeni I Petrosani, Social documents).

Regarding to the needs which have the elderly assisted, 18% think that the priority need is the need for communication and 15% of elderly people assisted have identified the need for security / safety. The elderly want to be appreciated (16%), as they were during the active life. A third felt the need for affection, belonging, family and social. (Narița, 2008, p.79). Necessity this network of social support appeared as a result of needs identified.

Expenses are a problem for most of the community, especially elderly people. For these problems are more pressing, sometimes difficult to resolve. The main expenses identified at elderly assisted are housing expenses (39%). He paid maintenance on time (current water, gas) for fear of penalties. Another priority for 32% of the elderly is the expenditure on medication.

Regard to living conditions 32% of assisted elderly have major damage the installation sanitary, another problem is difficult for them is house painter, which in some cases was not resolved for many years; walls are damaged, the house is unkempt. 22% from elderly assisted are living without heat because of costs or installations inoperable and 6.56 % from them are living in spaces disconnected from electric lighting.

In connection with the shopping, payments and housekeeping, 70% of the assisted elderly make their own shopping. Regarding options for supporting older people in their situation when they are / will be unable to be cared, 70% would choose for home care, if only a few hours a day. They feel attached living space for a long time, things, furniture, even the view seen through the window and 25% of the elderly would choose hospitalization in a residential centre/ home and 5% would choose a different solution: to stay in a monastery or other person to care for them (Narița, 2008, p. 89).

Analyzing monthly income and source, for elderly assisted finds that more than half (53%) obtained a pension for the years work, 32% obtained survivor pension, 10% of them obtained illness or disability pension, 5% is represented by those who do not have secure income benefits, obtained guaranteed minimum income from the municipality, perform rare, occasional light work (Romanian Orthodox Parish Livezeni I Petrosani, social evaluations documents).

4.2. Brief history of the social work actions from Romanian Orthodox Parish Livezeni I

For the first time an Orthodox church in the Jiu Valley after the post-December period were initiated and developed social actions focused on community needs. Romanian Orthodox Parish Livezeni built between the years 1994 to 2000 a Church entitled M.Mc.Varvara a equipped with a partitioned basement for future complex social activities. The parish priest has purchased the necessary equipment and introduced utilities: electricity, gas, running water and he ensure that the hygiene conditions permitted obtaining functional authorisation (Romanian Orthodox Parish Livezeni I Petrosani, 2008).

Were made step by step minimally preliminary conditions strictly necessary for the preparation and implementation of social programs based on projects financed from

EU funds. "Initially, since 2000 have developed a counselling centre services with voluntary participation of lawyers, psychologists, physicians, having characteristics of centre charitable and a casual distribution of aid materials activity (clothing, non-perishable foods, hygiene products) provided by local sponsors or European associations and foundations. "Setting up services that led to the formation of the first volunteers (church dedicated people) and community needs were increasingly well known" (Priest Patrascu O.).

At the first time there was a first form of social radiography of the parish, shall be drawn first non-formal statistical records of individuals in need. Such evidence, improved later based on social evaluation and other documentary evidence of beneficiaries (identity card, proof of income, medical documents, etc.) then proved extremely useful to meet a wave of requests for welfare support from community members. In the same context is a contoured target group: elderly people with poor financial resources, children from families with higher socio-emotional and material problems, people mentally mark the successive restructurings industrial area, people in crisis situations.

The population most seriously affected social, identified by volunteer centre was the elderly population (elderly with low pensions, elderly with no income, poor health, elderly who had not family, elderly who could not householders, elderly with health problems). Based on the requirements and needs of elderly people has been formed the social support network at home for older people from Petrosani.

4.3. Necessity social intervention in social support network for elderly

From the analysis of documents Romanian Orthodox Parish Livezeni it is established that beneficiaries of social support network within the organization are elderly people from the "Airport" area, belongs the category of people affected by severe poverty, or social problems, or health problems and presents different degrees of dependence, or are affected by social exclusion, being deprived moral and material support from their family, or they are isolated in community, also includes beneficiaries and elderly homeless and people who live in improvised shelters.

The main problems which have the elderly are: social isolation, poor health, poor financial situation, impossibility to provide daily food, loneliness. The main requests for counselling and therapy, focused on overcoming difficult life situations: partner's death, chronic illness, relationship conflicts with family members, care partners immobilized, etc.. In terms of affective condition, the elderly had an average level of emotional stability, anxiety and depressive tendencies.

Selection of elderly beneficiaries is based on the following selection criteria: elderly have no family or member of family abandoned them; they are homeless or not able to secure living conditions on their own resources; elderly have poor financial resources (pension less than the salary minimum in the economy); have poor health status, can not households and require specialized care; they are unable to provide socio-medical needs, due to illness or physical or mental condition, etc. (Priest Patrascu O.).

The right to social assistance for the elderly is assessed by social evaluation will be developed based on following data: ability to administer and fulfil normal requirements of daily life, living conditions, medical situation, psychological situation, financial situation, familial situation.

From the analysis of documents Romanian Orthodox Parish Livezeni it is established that in realization individual socio-psychological support for elderly persons are traversed the six phases of social support network within Livezeni Romanian Orthodox Parish:

1. Meeting phase. Takes place first meeting with elder person who need help and request support from social network. This is the phase the registry of elderly.

2. Psycho-social study Phase. Through this phase, social worker of social network obtained preliminary information about elder to help him (for example family situation, material situation, bio-psyho-social factors, aspirations, significant elements of individual history, current problem identification and assessment of its causes).

3. Evaluation of elder people situation. It is the psycho-social diagnostic phase in which beneficiary must to answer a few questions: How do perceive this problematic situation?; What are the environmental conditions that gave birth the Problem, What are the goals and expectations regarding Elder solved? This phase has a dual perspective assess the elderly person's personality and his social environment and the problem faced by elderly people.

4. Develop and implement action plan. At this point the multidisciplinary team of social support network of the Romanian Orthodox Parish Livezeni sets objectives and ways of implementation and next steps to address elderly issues. Develop and implement the intervention plan involves three steps: a) Identifying problems and which level of intervention (individual, group, community restricted) b) determining the specific targets of intervention, in order of importance and / or in chronological order of implementation; c) the choice of strategies, methods and techniques for working with older people

5. Evaluation results. At this stage takes place measurement produced results The implementation of the intervention plan. Evaluation combines three perspectives to measure performance: his own assistant, the elderly and the perspective of the institution's own welfare.

6. End of intervention. This phase assessing elderly involved to see if objectives have been achieved or that, contrary, that social support network has failed. Regardless of finalization intervention whether is successful or failed it will not remain without consequences for the partners involved.

In the first case, the elderly person who has received welfare support, recover their functional normality, will find a new role, that of independent and responsible.

In the second case, the elderly person who has not which has failed to overcome the problem from the aid provided by social service, will seek another partner to support him or assistant recommendation will be taken over by another specialized service.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Social support network has grown visibly in the Jiu Valley after the post-December 1989. Social and economic issues caused the segmentation of social services in specialized areas: primary social services and specialization social services which currently meet the needs of the population of the Jiu Valley.

Data analysis showed that the Jiu Valley population was a difficult tried in post-communist transition period, especially that being a typical mono-industrial mining area has not held levers effective alternative development, following the reform of Romania's socio-economic development. A major problem for the Jiu Valley was poverty generated by the closure of unprofitable enterprises on the one hand, and on the other hand, the massive staff redundancies in the mining sector. During the transition took amplitude social phenomena with important events in the Jiu Valley community high unemployment due to industrial restructuring, accelerated growth in the number of persons assisted social, degradation of living standards, etc., phenomena which have generated the development of programs to increase employment of labour and default reduction of social problems existing in the area.

In Jiu Valley and also in Petrosani ageing is a major problem for the future which must be taken into account today. Growth numbers of older people has increased the number of those requiring assistance and protection in specialized institutions, especially those structured on medical and social assistance.

The need for social services in this area is determined both by elderly people's needs and requests for help from vulnerable persons.

It is obvious that the population needs generated from social and economic problems existing in the Jiu Valley has led the development of social support networks in response to these needs.

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