

Workshop 1 - Report



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Building « living togetherness » in societies around shared values and principles

1- Why the « living togetherness »?

- Concept **definition** and quotation marks explanation, referring to Fustel de Coulanges and Ernest Renan.

Idea generated: We are obliged to live together, let's do it in a harmonious and not conflictual way.

- **Stakes**: one participant from Burundi attending the workshop did remind us Rwanda (genocide), another participant from Ivory Coast spoke about the Ivory Coast conflict origin and the Mali situation was also discussed...

Obviously, numerous examples did remind us that the stake is to accept differences, the other, the otherness...otherwise living in societies will be impossible.

- **Challenge**: Since we are condemned to live together why not doing it in a harmonious way.

2- How to « live together » in a harmonious way?

- By accepting otherness, difference, the other, through conceiving « the other as ourselves ».
- Our differences could become **advantages**, mutual enrichment source, but also (unfortunately) source of conflicts: it depends on us. Take a look at the Cap-Vert example who is welcoming us (which story was revisited with brightness at the opening ceremony by His Excellency the president of Cap Vert Republic and other Cap Verdeans participant did refer to it. One can observe in the street how they did succeed in transforming diversity into worth).

- There is a need to put in order the multiple, pluralism without denying diversities, through preserving each community own identities.
- How to proceed? (**STRATEGY**) : through nobody's exclusion. All actors should be involved in decision making to feel involved and concerned: the "institutional" and the "non institutional", the "weak" and the "strong".
- In short, **CITIZENRY SHOULD BE REBUILD** to make it a concrete reality, because beyond our differences, beyond the difference between universal and relative aspects, there is the « irreducible human thing » which is the same everywhere and do aspire to inherent dignity of every human being.
- How to rebuild citizenry (to allow a harmonious « living togetherness »)?

During the workshop the citizenry notion has been debated with passion. We did reach a consensus: « etymologically, citizen is from the latin word *civitas* which means « to have the right to live, to settle in the city », today this implies obviously rights given to a state inhabitants; and therefore the right to participate to the collective project of "living together".

- **Findings** : there is a citizenry crisis because :
 - The decisions elaboration (laws) does exclude most part of the population.
 - Official languages are not understood by a huge category of the populations.
 - There is a gap between « dynamics from the top » and « dynamics from the bottom », between the top and the bottom of society.
- **Recommandations** :
 - « Co-develop » with the bases (here civil society actors role is crucial)
 - On the issue of languages: the debate was passionate and fascinating, we do reach a consensus. There is a troublesome lack of pertinence in desiring to organize "the living togetherness" in societies when in the meantime populations do not understand the official language of their own countries! That's why local languages or national ones should be utilized to build with populations. At the 2060 horizon, we should ensure that African languages are counted up in the international arena. In the meantime, it will be absurd to deny that languages that were initially European ones have become ours. This conference could not take place at a right manner without our respective uses of Portuguese, French, and English. By the way the Alliance philosophy is rooting and openness. We should use our fluency in many languages as an enrichment that allows us an opening to the world.
 - Following this perspective, education does play a crucial role: it helps overcome in the midterm elementary problems of subsistence. It is also through education that citizen feeling is transmitted.

And this cannot be done without **shared values and principles**.

We underline the word « shared » implying that citizens, inhabitants, individuals, actors will identify together and when appropriate, build together these values and principles. (In the idea of sharing are included ideas of knowledge, acceptation and participation).

3- What are these shared values and principles?

- How to identify or eventually build, « invent » these values and principles?
 - The workshop response: (**STRATEGY**) « by getting the best out of tradition and modernity ».
 - the « exercise » **result** : the following values were selected are being « African » ones :
- Solidarity: it is the commitment and mutual dependence between people hold toward others.
- Tolerance: it is the virtue to accept what one should not accept spontaneously. (Respect for the other and his convictions).
- Justice : legal and moral fundamental principle that enable to provide positive or negative sanction based on the merit rooted in law and moral(this involves social justice, equality, chances equality, equity, ethics...)
- Responsibility (individual and collective...): the duty to be accountable (to be « co-developed » with populations. Governance is only possible at this condition).

- How to share these values and protect them?
 - An obvious **finding**: One cannot protect and share efficiently in exogenous language and concepts. It is imperative to call for local endogenous knowledge without losing languages and concepts initially imposed but ours today.
 - **Strategies** :
- **Co-build** values and get populations involved in the need of **diffusing** and **protecting** them.
 - How to do so?
 - By using traditional channels and structures: traditional and religious chiefdoms...
 - Involving women and youth...

- **Formalization**: it is necessary to write the results in a declaration that could lead to a code of conduct, a charter and give birth later to standards (constitutions, laws and rules).
- Diffusion: the creation of a network of civil societies organization (binding to these values) was proposed (a Convention) in order to share and consolidate the workshop outcomes.
- Protection
- **Institutional regulation** is unavoidable. There is a need for a « lobbying » to obtain national legislations improvement to better protect these values. Courts could be seized in cases of non respect.
- **Non-institutional regulation** should be « invented »:
- An African civil societies Convention could implement cells to measure regularly the principles respect; organize dialogues and conciliations when the “living togetherness” is threatened, being ahead of conflicts and alerting public opinions, public powers and traditional authorities where appropriate. (Example of Rwanda, South Africa, Ivory Coast).

Final drop :

- Objectives: Good governance, democracy, state of law, human rights respect ...to lead to a better collective and individual well-being
- **A « living togetherness » example of success : the Cap Vert**

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you....

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