CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND PARTICIPATION MODELS IN SECOND LEVEL ORGANIZATIONS

Emma Juaneda, Carmen Marcuello, Pilar Pujol

1GESES-Zaragoza University, Zaragoza, Spain, 2GESES-University of La Rioja, Logroño, Spain

The creation of platforms, federations and/or coordinators as second rate organizations, is performed so as to create spaces of cooperation, meeting, debate and strengthening of the organizations that along with their “equals” take position in society. These platforms can be formed formally, according to the usual legal figures, or can be established informally just as expressions of emerging social movements. In both cases specific structures of governance and cooperation are shaped to make possible the coordination and the debate so as to achieve the proposed purposes. In this moment of crisis, the role of platforms is essential to strengthen and support the entities.

In most of the processes by which a platform is created we can realize there is a common motivation: the need to form an entity that defends/represents/channels the interests of the promoting organizations. However it is obvious that these platforms perform some other roles. Along their own space and evolutions, they keep on assuming more tasks. The usual and traditional functions can be assembled in 1) To act as representatives; 2) To provide a common space of work and dialogue; 3) To supply the obtention of resources; 4) To sensitize the different agents; 5) To establish bonds of collaboration.

However, the platforms and social entities that have created them have come to occupy a position more and more outstanding in the social, political and economic processes in our society. In each of these dimensions stand out the increasing movement of persons, of material and financial resources, the creation of intangible elements regarding its prestige and relevance and the incidence in common matters (Anheir, 2009; Manne, 1999). In this way the general exigencies have also multiply not only in the behaviour but also in the precisio in the acting and the commitment with the aims to which they are linked.

And so we find new functions arise as: 1) To establish the values and principles shared among the entities to shape them trough a code of common behaviour, and at the same time watching that the application and fulfillment is accomplished; 2) To establish the standard rules of acting and rendering of accounts; 3) To define the proceeding to measure and observe the acting of the entities as a whole and their control. These functions are performed following certain values, among them the democratic principles, searching, first of all, the interest of the collective and with a participative method of work. And so, the platforms also become places where common rules of work and cooperation are established, encouraging different models of work in a net, and so being able to create social capital (Bryce, 2006). As Hooghe (2003) says, the voluntary associations have a major importance in the establishing of a democratic culture. Smith & al. (2004) suggest that the social interaction in the voluntary organizations develops in persons the assumption of democratic and cooperative values and attitudes.

From this focus of the rules the academic literature is wide (Alexander and Weiner, 1998; Bishop 2008; Hansmann, 1980 and 2006; Ostrower 2007) And obviously, this also gives answer to different focus. On one side, one of the currents is based in the traditional vision which defends hierarchy-based models where specific roles and tasks are given to the different actors making great differences between those who are able to make decisions, those who are able to put them in practice and those who suffer the consequences and results of them. On the other hand, the stakeholder theory claims the need and obligation to incorporate different actors in the process of making decisions. In this sense should be noted the proposal of the definition of governance shown in some documents of the UNO (Sheng, 2006). “Governance is the process of making decisions and the process by which this decisions are implemented” and we must understand by this that it is created a group of relationships among the several actors in the different government levels and the several actors of the civil society.
Having all this in mind, the aims of this work are: 1) To define the main functions of platforms (second-level organizations); 2) To analyze the organizing structures and basic elements from the perspective of the process of their internal organization; 3) To study the development of nets focusing the process of external participation and the relationship with the public administrations as actors taking part in public affairs; 4) To express proposals to improve the governance and participation of the second-level platform from successful experiences.

This analysis is performed from a sample of 200 entities in Spain. The analysis methodology is the analysis of the indicators of governance and participation coming from interviews performed to federations. In this sense different backgrounds are proposed about the main characteristics and functions observed in federations from the point of view of the challenges they face.

Referencias:


