

THE INNOVATIVE MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES OF RURAL SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT⁵⁰

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Abstract

This article describes management of rural social infrastructure (hereinafter referred to as the RSI), provides the analysis of RSI management processes and determination of main principles required in order to achieve efficient management of rural areas and sustained development of the region. The main research objective, namely, creation of a modern rural social infrastructure management approach has been reached. The main elements of the modern RSI management conception were identified: determination of consumer demand for RSI services and strategic development goals; RSI development (planning of services, means and results); organization of RSI services supply; horizontal and vertical coordination of RSI activities; assessment of RSI services consumers' opinion and community sustainability; supervision and evaluation of RSI activities. The main principles for RSI management were defined: coordination of principles "from top to bottom" and "from bottom to top"; satisfaction of social needs and local initiatives; partnership and division of responsibility; involvement of local residents and decentralization of decision making processes; continuous study, professional development and stimulation of self-esteem; Integrity and hierarchy; innovations, readiness for changes, efficiency; ecology. *The main research methods were used:* analysis and generalization of scientific literature, logical and systematical reasoning, graphic presentation of comparison, abstracts and other methods.

Keywords: Infrastructure, principles of rural social infrastructure management, results - based management

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Introduction

Lately, rural areas are deemed as an essential part of State infrastructure, predetermining quality of life of both rural and urban citizens. Analysis of rural areas with prevailing natural environment and lower conglomeration of population being not only the rural territories with natural environment intended for growing of agricultural products was started just at the end of XX century. Today rural areas are treated as complex territorial socioeconomic system the appropriate development of which should be managed applying integrated approach foreseeing creation of favorable conditions for living, working and raising future generations. Proper level of essential commodities, every-day and periodic services availability, periodic and episodic services accessibility shall be maintained within the rural areas showing up high level of social infrastructure. Though Lithuanian rural areas show the increase only in number of partially used premises of rural social infrastructure (hereinafter referred to as the RSI) organizations with rather insufficient designation and professionalism of their coordination, moreover, functions performed by RSI organizations are imbalanced. Weak local market could be named as the main reason preventing entrepreneurial initiative from development of service sector in rural areas. Consequently, rural citizens face less favorable conditions as compared to citizens of urban territories. Conventional RSI development solutions could not form particular opportunities for sustainable development, vitality, and strength of rural areas. Solutions promoted by the nature or relying on and named as solutions in consensus with biological biodiversity (ecological engineering), require lower energy, preservation and supervision efforts to be made and are much more efficient and stable (opinion of the Regional Committee..., 2013).

Scientific Problem: RSI management is inconsequential and unsystematized. Conventional RSI management solutions are insufficiently incorporated and are not directed towards the development of rural areas; they are made and implemented without paying reasonable attention to the long-term perspective, needs of citizens and future generations. All theoretical fundamentals formed up to this day are unusable for creation of innovative RSI management opportunities. For this reason multicomponent definition of RSI management principles shall defined and justified.

The object of research – management of rural social infrastructure.

The aim of research – to analyze peculiarities of rural social infrastructure management and justify innovative management principles of rural social infrastructure development.

The tasks:

1. To generalize theoretical aspects of rural social infrastructure management.

2. To identify management principles of rural social infrastructure in terms of integrated development.
3. To identify elements of newly developed RSI management approach.

The research methods: analysis and generalization of scientific literature, logical and systematical reasoning, graphic presentation of comparison, abstracts and other methods.

Scope and targets of rural social infrastructure development

Conceptual framework of the article is formed by different scientific researches conducted at various times and data included into them, which have analyzed social infrastructure and its management principles. Generalized research data of rural social development...(1996), L. Zalimienė (2003), V. Atkociuniene (2000; 2008), M.A. Benedict and E.T. McMahon (2007), V. Snieškus and I. Simkunaite (2009), G. Torrisi (2009), P. Williams & B. Pocock (2010), V. Atkociuniene, K. Vabolytė (2011), V. Snieškus, I. Zykiene (2010; 2011), as well as a Social Infrastructure Plan...(2006), Neighbourhood changes (2011), Gladstone social infrastructure... (2011) programmes and many others programmes on rural social infrastructure shows particular development trends of RSI conception.

Range of infrastructure issues influencing economic and social development of various countries and regions has been initially revealed in world scientific literature at the very beginning of XX century. Motivated by functional approach scientist unanimously point out social and industrial infrastructures. Emphasizing of social infrastructure is predetermined by its main assignation, both direct and indirect impact on human evolution, national development. G. Torrisi (2009), while considering the direct impact of infrastructure, has pointed out territorial infrastructure which directly influences attractiveness of particular place and ensures dynamic development. Rural social infrastructure has been highlighted in terms of functional and territorial criteria. Applying social infrastructure description developed by L. Zalimienė (2003), the RSI means a system of social infrastructure services institutions of various types and subordinacy oriented towards various customer groups and their relations in the course of functioning within certain territory.

Former descriptions of rural social infrastructure place greater emphasis on services and tangible objects, i.e. services meeting social-spiritual needs of residents of a certain territory. It should form proper conditions for human capital assets creation and public social progress. Tangible objects are deemed as fundamentals of a whole social infrastructure, which are intended to build up conditions required for human activities and meet needs of public, political, and spiritual life (Kaimo Socialines raidos,... 1996). Frequently, particularly in design and strategic

documents, social infrastructure is described by the following RSI elements: water supply and sewage treatment systems, rural communications systems (roads, IT, electric power supply, post services), exhibition and conference halls, health care, education, leisure establishments, residential buildings, hospitality, tourist industry (Gladstone social infrastructure... , 2011).

Elements of social infrastructure, which have been determined by British scientists and experts at a NUTS 2 level (A social infrastructure plan..., 2006) community facilities, community development, groups and organizations, grant funding, learning and skills development, volunteering and other mutual support, show that SI could be managed by application of results – based management conception.

However, there are various established classifications of RSI which depend on classification purposes. Scientists (N.J. Miller (2001); Jasaitis, J., Ratkevičienė, V. (2012)), had analyzed RSI development in various sectors and determined that RSI is a result (consequence) of community evolution the state (reason) of which depends on the level of society development, its industrial, technical and social potential.

RSI development is a formation of strong societies through the ongoing territorial development and public engagement activities, allocation of resources, enhancement of competences and trustworthiness of human society groups, empowering them to take effective actions and take up dominant attitude (Firm Foundations...2004). While creating strong rural society, the abovementioned description shall be complemented in terms of service availability and accessibility, and the RSI development target itself should be considered.

The Sustainable Communities Plan’ published by the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional decision makers in 2006 suggests that there are a number of important components to new and established communities if they are to be judged sustainable (Figure 1).

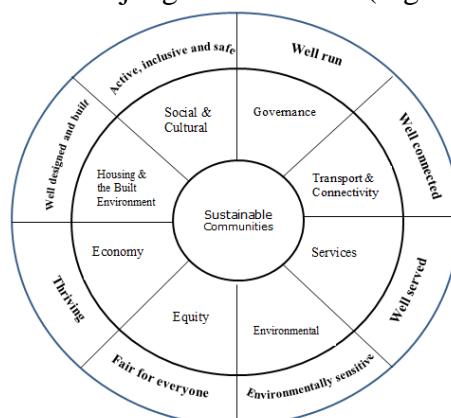


Fig. 1. Sustainable Communities

Source: author’s construction based on A social infrastructure plan..., 2006, p. 20.

V. Snieska, I. Zykiene (2011) highlights the fact that social infrastructure level influences region attractiveness to investors, residents and tourists. Development of physical infrastructure cannot usher in overall development at the desired level if the social infrastructure is not simultaneously developed. The capacities and technical refinement of the physical infrastructure like roads, sewers, electricity, open spaces, gardens, the evolving requirements of social infrastructures like shopping complexes, restaurants, medical facility zones, schools etc. are clearly delineated. Education, Health, Social security, public entertainment etc. has to be developed to ensure proper social infrastructure.

Specific functions and the role of rural areas within spatial extent should be considered while analyzing peculiarities of the RSI management. Rural territories differ from urban ones almighty; they are sparsely-populated, but greatly used. Consequently the greater part of preserved natural territories suffers from excessive loading and invites fragmentation hazards. Since ecosystems require space in order to prosper and function properly, it influences efficiency of ecosystems. It becomes obvious that clear understanding of the society by sustainable development of ecosystems and localities could play essential role in the development of society competencies and social capital, and, vice versa – society competencies and social capital due to their social infrastructure could form firm basis for the sustainable development of ecosystems and localities.

Up-to-date statistical data gained by the European Environment Agency show the importance of the abovementioned trends. At least 8000 km² was concreted during the last decade of the past century, which means that within ten years total area of artificial territories has increased by 5 per cents. Moreover, in 1990–2003, the European Union laid about 15 000 km of highways. Urban development, vigorous forestry and agricultural activity, transport routes could be named as serious and sometimes inextricable difficulties on the way of species migration. They induce hostility of the environment and its isolation from wild vegetation and animals (Zalioji infrastruktura, 2010).

Creation of green infrastructure will help to interconnect existing natural environment, for example, with the help of corridors or junctions and ecological bridges; moreover, it would improve general quality of ecology of the entire environment, and the environment would become more favourable and permeable for wild animals and vegetation. Accordingly, investment in green infrastructure becomes highly profitable. Replacement of functions that are gratuitously performed by the nature by human-made decisions could become a baffling and priceless engineering problem. It means that RSI management should foresee the creation of green rural social infrastructure.

Particular mutually beneficial or causing trivial expenses highly efficient methods would be favourable for both parties – the one using the land (farmers, foresters, suppliers of travel services, etc.) and the other – society itself, using valuable functions of ecosystems, for example, water treatment or soil enrichment, and creating attractive to people leisure conditions.

After the analysis of literature sources and strategic documents, author of the article had developed the opinion on the following description of the rural social infrastructure: Rural Social Infrastructure (RSI) means territorial and spatial system of interrelated economical and social activity types (which are not directly related to production industry) and relations, establishing proper conditions for ecosystem performance, creation of human, physical and social capitals to be used by individuals and the society itself for their private and social needs.

Results - based management of rural social infrastructure

RSI development is an ongoing creation of sustainable societies throughout territorial development, integration of rural and urban territories, public engagement activities, and allocation of resources, enhancement of competences and trustworthiness of human society groups, empowering them to take effective actions and take up dominant attitude.

RSI development is not a spontaneous process. This statement foresees the necessity to introduce particular changes into management process, which lately turns into the management solution and its implementation, redirecting the RSI and other activities towards the right direction and ensuring proper implementation of stated objectives (Kvedaravičius, 2008). SI management in rural areas could direct the development of the aforesaid territories or ensure the RSI development in the right direction, and maintain the sustainable development process.

Analysis of A. Astrauskas and G. Česonis (2008), J.A.F. Stoner and D.R. Gilbert (2005), S. Teriman and T. Vigitcanlar (2011) and other opinions enabled new description of the RSI concept. RSI management incorporates planning of SI facilities, services and employment size within particular territory, coordination of capacities and development, balancing of the supply and demand for services required in order to ensure social evolution of rural area residents, provision of opportunities to meet social needs, sustainable development of the territory and involvement of local development players to organization of the RSI service network management and hierarchical pattern in accordance with the changing social needs. RSI management is a complex concept, where the management principles are rather complicated and requiring the involvement of both service suppliers and initiators, and consumers. Residents of rural areas perform various

functions. Their diligence and involvement in the RSI management decision-making process assists in balancing of the supply and demand for RSI services.

According to V. Snieska, I. Zykiene (2010), social infrastructure ensures social need satisfaction and makes a contribution to the national economic growth. Development of social infrastructure provides opportunities to residents to acquire an education and professional skills that could be applied for work. Social infrastructure development, especially in rural residential areas, predetermines life quality, which, according to J. Jasaitis, V. Ratkevičienė (2012) is related not only to satisfaction of basic social needs, but to self-actualization both at work and in private life. High living quality requires presence of various assumptions, such as financial well-being, health, education, social integration, etc. (Juozulynas et al, 2010). Though, rural infrastructure development conditions are rather complicated. The most serious deficiency in social-purpose facilities quantity is faced at marginal lands and territories located far away from regional centres (Jasaitis, Ratkevičienė, 2012).

Urgent problems could be solved in the way of effect-oriented management. Effect-oriented management could be distinguished as management based on cyclic approach which joins a strategy, people, resources, processes, and measurement in order to ease decision making process, ensure transparency and precise determination of responsibility (Canadian International Development Agency, cit. pgl: I. Segaloviciene, 2012). I. Segaloviciene (2012), while generalizing various approaches, had specified the effect-oriented management concept as follows: effect-oriented management means specific management methodology, paying the main attention to timely achievement of the established corporate objectives and proposed corporate results. Then, it is essential to orient activities towards the result, not towards formal procedures. It is relevant and for RSI development.

RSI and its management is a complex process characterized by the hierarchical pattern (see Figure 2).

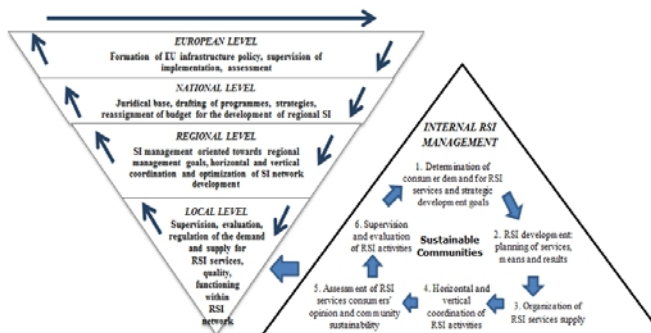


Fig. 2. Social infrastructure management logical model

Source: author's construction based on Jakubavicius, Strazdas ir kt. (2003); Augustinaitis (2003), Planning Sustainable Communities- A Green Infrastructure (2005); A social infrastructure plan... (2006); Segaloviciene (2012).

RSI and related facilities are the elements of social infrastructure integrated management (Fig. 1). Social infrastructure management logical model has been developed in accordance with cyclic approach. Internal RSI management foresees 6 stages as follows:

1. Determination of consumer demand for RSI services and strategic development goals. Formulation of the strategic RSI development goals in terms of social needs within the particular territory, enables determination of specific goals to be achieved in the course of the RSI development, indication of proposed target service consumer groups, financing sources, involvement of local entities to the provision and organization of the RSI services.

2. RSI development: planning of services, means and results. Naming of RSI and services development opportunities; determination of precise RSI development execution sequence, means and content during the implementation plan drafting. Assessment of internal and external environmental factors and stipulation of proposed resources and technologies to be used in the future. Provision of RSI facility operation (attraction) area required for predetermined number of residents, i.e., the territory to be used for existing or planned activities, or establishment of one or another RSI facility.

3. Organization of RSI services supply means continuous management process, related to sustainable operation process of the RSI facilities. Operating results and communications, resources, applied RSI management and service provision technologies required for their achievement plays essential role during this stage. Initiative shall be demonstrated by local authorities, employees of the RSI facilities, local public with the help of local resources and on the basis of existing valuables and green infrastructure principles. Organization of RSI services supply shall be carried out in accordance with the plan of innovative activities.

4. Horizontal and vertical coordination of RSI activities means coordination of rural development goals and activities of local entities and companies in the course of RSI development plan implementation at residential areas. During this stage special attention should be paid to the subsidiary, partnership and decentralization principles intended for stimulation of all local entities to assess each opinion and used in order to understand that the supply and demand for RSI services will comply with social needs provided that network of rural social infrastructure facilities is optimized under the joint agreement of the authority, local residents, and rural social organizations.

5. Assessment of RSI services consumers' opinion and community sustainability. Assessment of RSI services consumers' opinion is intended to reveal the needs of rural residents analyze and assess rural social infrastructure services. Quality of consumed services, their availability and accessibility predetermine quality of life of rural residents, service consumption frequency, and increase in productive efficiency of performed work, incomes of households and gain in health. It enables individuals to create their own life in accordance with their needs and ability to achieve the abovementioned goals.

6. Supervision and evaluation of RSI activities incorporates processes that include analysis and determination of the compliance of performed action results with the proposed RSI development results and their evaluation principles (number of consumers of RSI services, service consumption frequency, investments in one or another sector, cooperation with local and foreign SI institutions, etc.). According to I. Segalovicene (2012), supervision and evaluation are the main elements of the effect-oriented management due to their primary importance for the achievement of goals and results, transparency and responsibility, decision-making process, etc. Activity progress shall be monitored in order to solve issues related to activity efficiency, productivity, etc.

Management levels are interrelated due to the direct impact of one or another decision made at one level on the balancing of supply and demand for RSI services required in order to ensure prosperity of consumers. One of the most important goals of the RSI management at the local level is to satisfy social needs of rural residents in order to ensure provision of high quality services in terms of the distance, flexibility and price, and at the regional and national levels to establish proper requirements for implementation of abovementioned actions in the course of sustainable environment creation. European level means the EU policy, for example: Lisbon Strategy (2000) pays the main attention to the Lifelong learning, however, while considering the national management it could be said that education sector faces minor changes. More and more study institutions are being closed without undertaken new functions or providing training services oriented towards public development, or paying attention to the needs of future generations. There is insufficient number of functions performed or concentration on traditional and narrow range of social services suppliers and consumers.

Generally, it could be stated that efficient management of the RSI facilities could ensure sustainable development of a territory. Significant attention should be paid to conditions for the development of social and economic public activities, vision, mission and performed functions of rural

territories, management principles, social development of existing and future generations, and satisfaction of the demand for RSI services.

Management Principles of Rural Social Infrastructure in terms of integrated development

Rural territories gain more and more functions which had been allocated to urban territories, i.e. residential (place of residence), diversified multisectorial economic activity, cognition and development, relaxation and rehabilitation, etc. Rural territories face particular difficulties in execution their functions due to the “thinning” of the RSI facility network, reduction of financing for their maintenance, inactivity of service consumers and local entities, RSI service suppliers and consumers.

Initiators and suppliers of the RSI services at rural territories face particular indicative difficulties induced by decreasing number of rural residents and broader facility network in rural areas. Some difficulties are faced by service consumers and depend on the availability and nearness. Other problems that are preconditioned by the following factors are met by service suppliers: frequency of service consumption, isolation of a territory, competition with urban services. In order to prevent the occurrence of the abovementioned difficulties it is essential to maintain high-quality functioning of rural social infrastructure and draft local sustainable development strategies to be applied for insurance of balancing of the supply and demand for RSI services, and fulfilling of social needs of existing and future generations.

RSI management principles have not been analysed in the Lithuanian literature yet. To a wide extent they could be described as proper rules, standards and codes of behaviour to be observed by local RSI entities and societies, initiators of the RSI services, supplier of services and society under the influence of certain conditions.

Rural development success depends on principles, applied for formulation of action plans and implementation of rural efficiency and development goals (Kaimo bendruomeniu..., 2004). Accordingly, residential areas, such as rural territories, townships, and municipalities should solve their problems in the way of cooperation, coordination and integration. L. Zalimiene (2003) highlights that provision of social services, being the direct interaction between supplier and consumer, establishes the requirements for application of certain principles, the fulfilment of which enables high quality of provided services, preservation of consumer rights, achievement of higher service impact on quality of life of the consumer.

Scientific literature emphasizes the public management concept, which is described as “a system of valuables, programmes and institutions, assisting the society in management of economic, social, and political

activities in terms of the state, resident and individual sector cooperation” (Domarkas, 2011, p. 10). According to A. Guogis, A. Silinskyte (2013), modern public management highlights the transparency, openness, public spirit, pluralism, democracy, absence of corrupt practices, and active activities of nongovernmental organizations. V. Domarkas (2011) presents various designation of the abovementioned management principle in literature: modern public management, good management, cooperation management, corporate management, etc.

Specialists of a public management sector states that innovative process management and development took the leading position in terms of reformation and development of modernization processes in public sector (Raipa, Jurksiene, 2013). According to A. Raipa, L. Jurksiene (2013, p. 227) “target reforms, modernization of public sector and development of innovations became the key indicators of efficient management”. All changes in social life forces state institutions, involved in creation and implementation of SI policy, to apply innovative management methods.

Principles of rural development, provision of social services, management and good management were compared and analyzed in order to describe RSI management principles (see Table 1).

Table 1. Comparison of rural development, provision of social services, management, and good management principles

Rural Development Principles	Principles of provision of social services	Management Principles	Principles of good Governance at Local level
Balance Locality Preservation Equivalence Integrity Subsidiarity Partnership and division of responsibility Innovation Decentralization “From bottom to top” directed vector	Voluntariness Adequacy Stimulation of self-respect Collectivity Flexibility Succession Normalization Cooperation	Division of activities Authority Discipline Unity of teams Unity of direction Relation of individual goals and common prosperity Reward Centralization Hierarchy Order Justice Staff stability Initiative Esprit de Corps (team spirit)	Fair conduct of elections, representation and participation Responsiveness Efficiency and Effectiveness Openness and transparency Rule of law Ethical conduct Competence and capacity Innovation and openness to changes Sustainability and long-term orientation Sound financial management Human rights, cultural diversity and social cohesion Accountability

Source: author's construction based on Kaimo bendruomeniu..., 2004; Zalimiene, 2003; Stoner, 2005; Saparniene, Valukonyte, 2012.

Analysis of principles provided in scientific literature (Kaimo bendruomeniu pletra (2004), L. Zalimiene (2004) and J. F. Stoner (2005), Saparniene, Valukonyte, (2012)), as well as the assessment of RSI development goals (*Planning Sustainable Communities – A Green Infrastructure (2005)*; a social infrastructure plan... (2006); *Strengthening communities...*(2006); Segaloviciene (2012)) enabled the determination of 8 key RSI management principles (see Table 2) which should be followed by entities interested in SI development.

Table 2. Rural social infrastructure management principles

RSI management principles	1. Coordination of principles “from top to bottom” and “from bottom to top”
	2. Satisfaction of social needs and local initiatives
	3. Partnership and division of responsibility
	4. Involvement of local residents and decentralization of decision making processes
	5. Continuous study, professional development and stimulation of self-esteem
	6. Integrity and hierarchy
	7. Innovations, readiness for changes, efficiency
	8. Ecology

1. Coordination of principles “from top to bottom” and “from bottom to top” applying holistic approach. The key role in planning and implementation of local development projects is taken by local community deputed the particular local development within their competencies (Kaimo bendruomeniu..., 2004). Managers and employees of SI companies should form the approach oriented towards involvement, promote initiatives of local communities by cooperation of the above principles. Various local authorities should inform, consult, supervise, sponsor, and represent public interests. Balanced RSI principles could form resilience, distinguishing among other territories, and attracting additional investment and human capital.

2. Satisfaction of social needs and local initiatives. Needs of local residents should undergo periodic assessment; initiatives of local residents should be promoted in order to enhance the quality of provided services and bit internal and external adjacent environment. Local residents should be involved in change management and taking actions (voluntariness, new ideas) processes in order to improve the state of existing SI.

3. Partnership and division of responsibility. Formation of the equivalent partnership of local development entities in the way of communication, consultation, searching and finding new solutions. Division of responsibility in rural areas enables the application of knowledge and resources; the most powerful local SI entities, which maintain ongoing cooperation and promote the partnership, play the main role in this activity.

4. Involvement of local residents and decentralization of decision making processes. Provided services should comply with the assessed social needs (Socialines paslaugos, 2003). Accordingly, residents and suppliers should be involved in decision making process in the context of RSI management; their requirements should be considered and service consumption and provision processes should be stimulated as well. Planning, drafting, and implementation of a strategy, the same as SI development, should include the entire community of the exact region and authorities. Local public organizations while drafting and implementing projects could play important role in RSI management in the way of service provision and involvement of local residents to public activity, which would help to form the responsibility and partnership for local residents.

5. Continuous study, professional development and stimulation of self-esteem. Suppliers of the RSI facility services, straining after the provision of quality services and achieving particular results, should study and develop their professional skills all the time. It is important to look for innovative methods of the sustainable RSI development. Educated local community and SI facility personnel could make proper decisions and represent their community. It is important to stimulate social activity of rural residents, mutual respect, voluntariness, unity in order to increase the availability of the RSI services to all age groups.

6. Integrity and hierarchy. RSI services should be developed both in rural and urban areas. The RSI management or development strategy, applying distributive management principles integrates all specific actions and means. While drafting the RSI strategy it is required to pay additional attention to the integrated development strategy of a particular territory, social needs of local residents, development of small and medium business services, utilization of natural resources, peculiarities of SI facilities and their spatial location. Precise balance should be maintained between the provided SI services and demand for them, in order to meet the requirements of both SI services consumers and SI services suppliers. All decisions required for the RI development should be made at various hierarchical levels applying effect-oriented approach, and the implementation of the abovementioned decisions should be allocated to employees or local residents. This approach would stimulate a partnership, required for rapid implementation of decisions. SI services, considering size of the territory, social needs of consumers and distribution of SI facilities, should be developed gradually (SI services of prime necessity and every-day services should be as near as possible to local residents, i.e. at the centres of townships, villages; SI of periodic or episodic necessity could be located rather far in regional centres, cities). The success is preconditioned by the cooperation performed at all management levels, by the implementation of multistep management, by all

entities, concerned parties and the entire community, taking part in the development and implementation process.

7. Innovations, readiness for changes, efficiency. RSI development and its management requires the implementation of innovations in order to ensure the variety of services provided in rural areas and to utilize social capital, financial, natural sources. According to V. Giedraitytė and A. Raipa (2012), innovative processes mean the trend aimed at changing the existing activity methods, structures and dynamics, management models, work scope, powers of authorities and relations of rural entities.

8. Ecology. Social infrastructure should be based on green infrastructure concept, preservation of natural capital, landscape, provision wild vegetation and animals with the opportunity to live at unprotected areas, to develop friendly relationships both with humans and environment. Integrated development of the RSI and green infrastructure would ease the preservation of valuable ecosystems; integrated territorial planning would provide greater space for nature.

Finally, it could be stated that particular attention should be paid to the involvement of residents to the RSI management process due to their ability to impact the supply and demand for RSI services and efficient functioning of the RSI facilities. State of the RSI should be investigated, analysed, and assessed on a continuous basis in order to ensure sustainable development of a territory, preserve rural areas for future generations. Synergic functioning of the RSI ensures the demand for the RSI services meeting the requirements of existing communities and future generations.

Conclusion

1. Rural Social Infrastructure (RSI) means territorial and spatial system of interrelated economical and social activity types (which are not directly related to production industry) and relations, establishing proper conditions for ecosystem performance, creation of human, physical and social capitals to be used by individuals and the society itself for their private and social needs.

2. RSI management incorporates planning of SI facilities, services and employment size within particular territory, coordination of capacities and development, balancing of the supply and demand for services required in order to ensure social evolution of rural area residents, provision of opportunities to meet social needs, sustainable development of the territory and involvement of local development players to organization of the RSI service network management and hierarchical pattern in accordance with the changing social needs.

3. Ecology should be named as one of horizontal rural social infrastructure management principles, whereas the green infrastructure is the

main mean to eliminate hazards to biological species due to fragmentation of their areas, changing of a land type and disappearance of dwellings in the course of RSI project development and implementation. Ecological level of the RSI should play the key role in the introduction of biological species to other policies, for example, in the field of agriculture, forestry, water, sea, fishing, regional, cohesion, climate changes and adaptation to it, transport, energy, and land use.

4. Character of a green infrastructure concept includes not only administrative and territorial units, its development, protection or potential impact depend on the policy of state, regional, local institutions in the sphere of territorial planning and preservation of natural resources. In order to implement the green infrastructure concept, it is recommended to start broad information dissemination campaign, to be carried out by EU institutions along with other social infrastructure management levels. This campaign should be developed for local and regional institutions (associations, companies, etc.), and represent the triple benefits of green infrastructure, i.e., environmental, economic and social, and good practice applied in member-states.

5. The main elements of the modern RSI management conception were identified: determination of consumer demand for RSI services and strategic development goals; RSI development (planning of services, means and results); organization of RSI services supply; horizontal and vertical coordination of RSI activities; assessment of RSI services consumers' opinion and community sustainability; supervision and evaluation of RSI activities. The main principles for RSI management were defined: coordination of principles "from top to bottom" and "from bottom to top"; satisfaction of social needs and local initiatives; partnership and division of responsibility; involvement of local residents and decentralization of decision making processes; continuous study, professional development and stimulation of self-esteem; Integrity and hierarchy; innovations, readiness for changes, efficiency; ecology.

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