

ENGAGED ANTHROPOLOGY AND CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING

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The aim of this paper is to present engaged anthropology and its methodological tools with a specific perspective of the research field and the position of the researcher with regard to research subjects.

The study focuses on corporate volunteering as one of the forms of collaboration between the non-profit and the private sectors seeking solutions to social problems and community development. Volunteering projects contribute to the interlinking of the knowledge, skills, experience and resources of corporate employees and the representatives of the non-profit or the public sector. It is a part of the philanthropic strategy of companies which are willing to present themselves as entities responsible towards the environment in which they run their business, and towards their employees, partners and customers.

Engaged anthropology can bring, through its methodological tools, a new perspective of corporate volunteering. Community-based participatory research on the process of knowledge creation includes all partners on an equal basis and identifies their unique contribution to problem solution and community development.

Key words: engaged anthropology, community-based participatory research, volunteering, corporate volunteering, corporate social responsibility

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to present engaged anthropology and to provide an overview of the possibilities of corporate volunteering research through methodological instruments offered by this branch of anthropology. Corporate volunteering represents one of the possible forms of inter-sectoral collaboration used to form relations and create social networks between the representatives of the private, public and non-governmental non-profit sectors. It is an institutional form of volunteering entailing the involvement of companies and their employees in voluntary activities carried out by non-governmental non-profit organisations. Volunteering activities provide an opportunity for the sharing of different types of experience, knowledge and resources (time, per-

sonnel and finance) with the aim of facilitating community development. Community development means the enhancement of human resources, the raising of awareness about problems in a community, and the ability to solve them by the very citizens.

Through its specific relation to the research subjects and the methodology used, engaged research enables involvement in the process of inter-sectoral collaboration and facilitation of the setting of its model for the purposes of community development. This manner of academic engagement and the specific position of all stakeholders (researching and researched ones), however, brings ethical dilemmas which must be constantly reflected on during research.

This paper does not present a concrete application of this type of research, but seeks to discuss the possibilities of its use through a concrete example of inter-sectoral collaboration. Besides research possibilities, the paper also discusses their possible impacts and ethical dilemmas related to the engagement of the researcher.

In the first part, the paper presents engaged anthropology as a branch of anthropology, the importance of which implies the need of active engagement of the researcher in public affairs with the aim of contributing through his/her research and knowledge creation to an active resolution of social problems. The paper continues with the presentation of community-based participatory research, the essence of which is based on equal involvement of all stakeholders, the interconnection of knowledge and experience, and their application in addressing particular problems.

The next part deals with volunteering. Several authors point out the vague character and unclear definition of this concept, which does not take into consideration the development changes in the forms of voluntary engagement, volunteers' motivations and barriers or in the development of the non-profit sector and the types of inter-sectoral collaboration. Through an example of one of its forms – corporate volunteering happening through collaboration between the non-profit, private and, in some cases, also public sectors – I discuss the possibilities of engaged research with the aim of defining an effective form of inter-sectoral collaboration meeting the needs of the community. I use data from participant observation conducted in Bratislava during the biggest corporate volunteering event *Naše Mesto* (Our Town) in Slovakia and from my own experience as coordinator of this event and as a part of the organizing team. Some of the data I obtained by informal interviews with corporate volunteers who participate in this corporate volunteering event. As an additional source I use information from an online survey which was a part of the evaluation process after the previous year of this volunteering occasion.

ENGAGED ANTHROPOLOGY

The term engaged anthropology is slowly becoming a part of our vocabulary, though we can find among Slovak ethnologists and anthropologists several examples of research and outputs which are at certain points interlinked with different forms of engaged research (e.g. in the field of human resources comprising old and new minorities, in education or community development).

As noted by S. M. Low and S. E. Merry (2010) in their study on diversity and dilemmas concerning engaged anthropology, the growing engagement of anthropology is accompanied by its ever increasing visibility in public (through the example of the U. S.). According to some authors, *engagement* constitutes an integral part of anthropology pred-

estined to address social problems (Low, Merry 2010: 203, according to Bennet 1996; Rylko-Bauer, Singer, van Willigen, 2006). S. M. Low and S. E. Merry (2010) point out examples from the history of this discipline in the U. S. environment, e.g. the period of colonialism, the addressing of the issue of the native population of North America, the world wars and the research on “national characters”; at present, it tackles human rights, public health, education or different kinds of social movements.

In the Slovak context, we can observe different kinds and degrees of engagement throughout the history of science. In different historic periods, various ethnographic methods were used in an effort to achieve economic development and social progress before the establishment of ethnology as a science. The practical focus of ethnology can be observed in the period of national revival, industrialisation and collectivisation (folk culture documentation, research on workers’ environment, collective management, etc.). After 1989, research with an application nature targeted, for example, the processes of Roma integration, inter-ethnic relations, poverty, social exclusion or regional development. Similar to the U. S. environment, Slovak ethnology was to a certain degree also under the yoke of the state ideology in different historic contexts (Janto, 2013). For example at the beginning of the second half of the last century, there were political authorities who made the key decisions and researchers who had to make compromises. Implementation of the political tasks depended on the ability of researchers to find a balance between political directives and the role of science. At that time two main research focuses were held, research on culture and way of life in the collectivized village and the main goal of the second one was to highlight the role of the working class on the creation of national culture (Beňušková, Jágerová, Nádaská, 2013: 39). S. M. Low and S. E. Merry (2010) appeal for the need to get rid of negative deposits which our science acquired during its development – not only by reviewing its research methods but mainly by changing from a hierarchical approach to the object to co-operation. In engaged research, it is also necessary to act cautiously and in a self-reflective way towards donors or sponsors (public administration, private sector), as well, mainly with a view to the possible misuse of obtained data or a possible slide of the researcher to satisfy the expectations of the sponsor.

With her study on the social responsibility of anthropology, B. R. Johnston (2010) tackles the issues of division of power in the research field. She points out the need for a joint participatory research focusing in a single moment of the research problem and on the possibility of identifying and implementing a remedy to such problem. The relationship between the researcher and the research object is not hierarchical, and the common interest of the researcher and of the representatives of the given community is not to work within the community, but to understand and identify the problem.

In the engaged research process, researchers find themselves in a new position. B. R. Johnston talks about *anthropological citizens* who document injustice, give advice and defend, take over responsibility for the potential consequences of knowledge that they produce about people, and contribute to the decolonisation of the relationship between researchers and the object of research (Low, Merry 2010: 211; quoted according to Speed, 2006: 67). This is inevitably accompanied by reflections on such a position and by the realisation of the extent of intervention in the everyday reality of the objects of research of which the researcher becomes a part. The position of the objects in a research field is also reflected by the methodology related to engaged research.

COMMUNITY-BASED PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

In this branch, authors differentiate between various degrees of engagement, from support through public education, social criticism, co-operation, advocacy, up to activism.

An appropriate level of “collaboration” seems to be suitable for research on the process of defining strategies of corporate volunteering which aim to increase its impact on community development either on the basis of preferences, motivations and expectations of employees and employers, or those resulting from and responding to community needs. This is linked to a concrete type of research with its particular methods, called *community-based participatory research*.

As far as community-based participatory research (or community-oriented research) is concerned, several authors offer different definitions, which is also due to its possible application in various fields of research. According to M. Minkler and N. Wallerstein (2003: 4), it is a collaborative approach which involves all partners in the research process equally and identifies the unique contribution of each of them.

Community is characterised by a sense of identification and emotional links between members, and the sharing of common symbolic systems, values and standards, interests and commitments towards shared needs (Israel, Shulz, Parker, Becker, 1998). A community does not have to be necessarily geographically demarcated; it can be dispersed individuals who share the same interest, topic or problem which they want to tackle.

At the beginning, it is necessary to define the topic of research that is important for the community. A combination of different kinds of knowledge and activities can be used to attain a certain social change aimed at supporting and developing the community. Community development in this context means the enhancement of human resources as a part of local development entailing economic, environmental and political-administrative progress (Janto, 2013: 18)

An important feature of research is mainly collaboration between partners and the contribution of their expertise to a comprehensive understanding of the problems of everyday life and to proposing solutions and the integration of the acquired knowledge for the benefit of the community with the aim of educating and changing (Israel, Shulz, Parker, Becker, 1998).

The position between the researcher and the research object acquires a new quality. As mentioned above, Low and Merry propose the need to get rid of the hierarchical approach toward the research object and to replace it with equality, reciprocity and responsibility. Participatory research breaks the difference between researchers and research objects. The subject and object of produced knowledge are involved in the process of acquiring and creating such knowledge through participation. Research is not only a process of creating knowledge, but also represents a form of education, development of awareness, and mobilisation to some kind of activity (Gaventa, 1988: 18). This position requires constant reflections on the position of individual actors of the research process, clear definition of the relations, discussions and clarification of their functions and roles, and also ideas about future steps or proposed solutions.

RESEARCH ON CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING

The engagement of social scientists outside the academic sphere has been observed in the history of our science for a long time. The development of society is constantly

accompanied by new opportunities, areas and topics which provide space for the application of new methodological approaches. One of the areas where an anthropologist is active outside the academic sphere is the *corporate environment*. Scientific methods and procedures can be applied, for example, in employee satisfaction surveys, but also in the field of customer-oriented marketing.

In the recent years, the private sector in Slovakia has focused to an increased extent on the social responsibility of companies and on their role as “fair market players” responsible for their conduct with regard to employees, suppliers, customers and their environment. This topic is detailed mainly in the field of economic sciences, management, marketing or human resources. It is mostly viewed from the perspective of the company and the possibilities of its development and prosperity which entail, besides other factors, also satisfied employees¹. The growing degree of employees’ loyalty towards the employer is also stressed, which enables involvement in volunteering projects, improvement of the corporate image as a company responsible towards its environment, and professional and personal development of the participants. These outputs are also mentioned by employees in the evaluation survey of a researched corporate volunteering event. They are proud of their employers who are engaged in these kinds of events and who have corporate volunteering implemented in their strategies.

Volunteering projects include a wide range of activities from simple manual work, such as painting, planting, management of green zones and public spaces through the accompanying of disabled people on outdoor trips or to cultural events up to the use of professional skills and knowledge contributing to strategic solutions to specific social problems, such as legislative proposals addressing the problem of homelessness². According to research data, one of the main benefits for volunteers from this participation are the good feeling that they could help, the possibility to spend even a few hours out of the daily work stereotype and meaningfulness of this spent time. They also recognize that due to this engagement their social awareness is growing.

In this context, we also encounter terms, such as good or responsible community partner. During the implementation of volunteering activities, it is often necessary to establish co-operation with non-profit organisations which play the role of recipients of voluntary help. According to O. Samuel, P. Wolf and A. Schilling “corporate volunteering is almost exclusively studied from the point of view of companies, while the perspectives of non-profit organizations are neglected” (Samuel, Wolf, Schilling, 2013: 163).

During the past decades, the *non-profit sector* became the centre of attention mainly in connection with the development of the civil society with research concentrating on the functioning of organisations, setting of relations with other sectors (private and public) and their function in the changing political and social environments. According to M. Bútorá, they represent an institutional response to the deficiencies of the state and the market, fulfil the role of intermediaries between them, provide services and public goods which are usually not ensured by the state or the market, encourage in people leadership, creativity and individual responsibility, shape and present their ideas, develop co-operation between themselves, seek to contribute to conflict prevention and control the functioning of the state and compliance with rules in society (Bútorá, Majchrák, Strečanský, 2004: 12–13).

1 i. a. see Grant, 2012; McAllum, 2014; Evans, Saxton, 2005, <http://fi.fudwaca.com/mi/files/2015/07/2015-MillennialImpactReport.pdf>

2 <http://www.nadaciapontis.sk/clanok/zakony-na-slovensku-nedavaju-ludom-bez-domova-sancu-nanavrat/1263>

Non-profit organisations often face problems which prevent their development and, in many cases, the efforts to satisfy the elementary needs complicate the achievement of the objectives of their mission. According to D. Ondrušek et al. (2012), inter-sectoral collaboration represents a key role in their institutional development. Collaboration, however, does not always occur on the basis of equal positions of partners, mainly in the complex relationship between donors and recipients, whether it comes to financial assistance or support in the form of implementation of volunteering projects. Yet, support does not always conform to the local context and ideas about resolving specific problems. As noted by W. Fischer, an unbalanced relationship gives rise to dependency on the donor, as a result of which non-profit organisations may shift away from their target group and would place greater emphasis on meeting the donor's conditions (Fischer, 1997: 454). The conditions of collaboration should be set so as to constantly reflect the equality of the positions, the acceptance of benefits and the taking over of responsibility for the conduct of individual parties. R. Tandon (1991) focuses in his study on the deconstruction and revaluation of the roles of individual sectors and their mutual relations. He observes certain trends, such as ways non-profit organisations are perceived by donors (representatives of the public or private sectors) as transition service agencies with limited competences. He points out the growing politicisation and bureaucratisation of the relations between the donor and the recipient which often do not act as equal partners. The support to non-governmental organisations also brings a certain level of management and control which can be manifested in the set conditions of granting financial subsidies or at training seminars (selection of teammates, main topics, language of the donor, etc.) (Ishkanian, 2004).

Corporate volunteering contributes to the creation of the identity of the private sector and of its individual actors. The company produces an image of being a responsible partner to the community. The interests and the motivations behind such form of engagement, however, are often questioned. What is in the centre is the company's reputation, the defence of its own interests and the achievement of success. Corporate social responsibility, as an umbrella strategy of companies, including corporate volunteering as one of possible form of this responsibility has become an integral, albeit controversial, part of business practice (Muthuri, Matten, Moon, 2009, quoted according to *The Economist* 2005: 18).

CONCEPT OF CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING

Different authors have different opinions on what can be considered volunteering and what is beyond its limits. Many of them point out that there is no single definition and even that the existing definitions are vague, as they do not cover the complexity and variability of this phenomenon.

As noted by K. McAllum (2014) in her work on the meanings of volunteering, its conceptual limits are very vague despite a multi-disciplinary focus which views volunteering from various perspectives (McAllum, 2014: 84–85).

Many of these definitions suggest three recurrent features which characterise volunteering: people's engagement *of their own will* (voluntarily, not obligatorily), *without claiming a reward* (unpaid) and *for the benefit of others* (outside own family or household). Each of these features, however, can be interpreted in different ways or can be completely negated, as the collision of the different features is often not taken into con-

sideration. On the other hand, some definitions are based on what is not volunteering, placing it in opposition to full-time paid work, household work, spare-time activities and also spontaneous help (e.g. in the case of natural disasters). According to L. A. Penn, “volunteerism involves long-term, planned, prosocial behaviours that benefit strangers, and usually occur in an organizational setting” (Penn, 2002: 447).

The definition of volunteering excludes help to family and household members, others also add closest friends and even help provided to an organisation of which the provider of voluntary help is a member. They appeal on the high degree of obligation and commitment which is contrary to voluntariness and one’s own will (Frič, Pospíšilová, a kol. 2010).

K. McAllum notes that one of the causes of such inaccuracies is the fact that the definition of volunteering should include a more and more diverse group of individuals engaged in a wide range of activities within formal and informal structures. The non-profit sector thus becomes more complex, as well (McAllum, 2014: 85, quoted according to Van Til, 2009), with the growing number of partnerships with the private and the public sectors (McAllum, 2014: 85, quoted according to Eisenberg, Eschenfelder, 2009) and with new forms of community participation supported by social media, new technologies and a mobile life style (McAllum, 2014: 85, quoted according to Bimber, Flanagan, Stohl, 2012).

The common volunteering patterns are changing, the definitions stop being valid, and the basic characteristics are replaced with new ones. Some authors point out the turn of the millennium as the period of many changes, not excluding volunteering, when in addition to the traditional model a “modern”, institutional model arises through organisations offering volunteering opportunities in which people can engage, or organisations acting as platforms for the offers of different non-profit organisations and associations seeking voluntary help (Frič, Pospíšilová, et al. 2010).

Employees’ participation in voluntary activities mediated by their employers is an example of questioning the characteristics mentioned above. As A. M. Grant points out, organizational scholars explain corporate volunteering as a form of corporate social responsibility, “these programmes are thought to be strategic responses to community, institutional, and normative pressures for an organization to create and maintain a reputation as a good corporate citizen” (Grant, 2012: 590, quoted according to Marquis et al., 2007).

In their corporate philanthropy strategies, companies define the basic principles of why they are engaged and what their priorities are. The form and size of support provided to community projects are defined in their budget through the number of volunteering hours or the number of employees engaged throughout the year. The type and the topic of volunteering activities is often chosen according to their strategic priorities (beautification of public spaces, environment protection, preservation of historic monuments, socially excluded communities, disabled people, education, etc.). Specific topics receiving support relate in many cases to the field of the corporate donor’s business activities.

The engagement initiative does not always come from employees. In some cases, companies do not provide employees with the opportunity to freely choose the area in which they want to be voluntarily involved, the time of involvement, and whether they want to be involved at all. As one of the participants at the corporate volunteering event said: *The activity which is chose by the company I work for does not correspond with my preferences.* Or another one pointed out: *Our company chose activities and it was good*

choice, but there was no place for me, because of the limited number of available places. There are also companies which choose different kind of activities to be sure that everybody will find something suitable (external and internal activity, in natural environment and also connected with some social interaction, in bigger and smaller groups of volunteers). Engaged companies have their own individual volunteering programmes and established contacts with non-profit organisations, or their employees participate in major corporate volunteering events. And even in the case such initiative is supported by the company, managers can prevent their employees, at their discretion, from participating in it according to their employees' duties.

Another characteristic feature which can also be put in doubt is the rewarding of volunteers. A common question is whether working for consideration, for example, in the form of food or reimbursement of expenses (travel, accommodation, etc.) can be considered volunteering. Organisations in which volunteers help often offer some souvenirs; for example, if the organisation includes a protected workshop, volunteers' work can be remunerated by clients' products.

Employees are involved in voluntary activities during their work time for which they get regular pay. The employer allocates a certain number of hours during a year (a day, for example), during which employees can focus on voluntary activity (perceived as a form of employee benefit). In some companies, this works on a half-half basis, which means that employees use, for example, two or three hours of their work time for voluntary activities and the rest is invested from their spare time. In addition, the employer may provide them with further benefits, from refreshments, transfer (in case it is necessary to travel to the venue of the activity), or a reward (if it serves to encourage employees to get involved, such as a competition for the most active volunteer). Each company is specific in this regard. The models of their volunteering programmes are set individually, according to the area of their business, the number of employees, their time capacities and the work load.

The definition of volunteering does not reflect the specific features of corporate volunteering. As mentioned above, studies dealing with corporate volunteering are mainly on management, human resources or marketing. They focus on the benefits of this form of volunteering for the employer and the employee, such as development of employees' skills (in particular soft skills, such as communication, conflict resolution, team management, co-operation), as well as enhancing pride about the company and loyalty towards the employer engaged in community development. Emphasis is placed on having a good feeling from helping where needed, the meaningfulness of the time invested, knowing new people and consolidation of the work team.

The definition of corporate volunteering must take into consideration the individual approach of the representatives of the private sector. Hence, it is defined through its tools and objectives, such as time, knowledge and professional skills dedicated to community support. The flow of resources is bidirectional. It is not only companies and their employees who dispose of resources. Different kinds of experience, knowledge and resources (time, human resources, and finance) are interlinked and exchanged between corporate employees and non-profit organisations.

NAŠE MESTO AS AN EXAMPLE OF CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING ENGAGEMENT

In my work, I have used the information obtained from informal interviews with the representatives of the non-profit and also corporate environments who attended the corporate volunteering event *Naše Mesto* (Our City) and also from participatory observation of this two-day event held in the middle of June³. This 9th year of *Naše Mesto* took place in 28⁴ different towns around Slovakia, including Bratislava, where my research was conducted. It is the biggest corporate volunteering event in Slovakia, where 80 companies and more than 200 non-profit organizations participate.

During these two days I participated in this event, I monitored some of the nine activities that took place in Bratislava. These activities were organized by different non-profit organizations or municipalities around Bratislava and corporate volunteers from different corporations participated. At each activity I interviewed the organizer of the activity and some of the volunteers who were available, that means they were not working at that moment and wanted to talk to me about their experience. Sometimes people who I asked for some information recommended me to ask another volunteer who was a coordinator of their company group. In two cases I was talking to groups of volunteers after their activity and shooting group photos. As an additional source I use some of analysed data from evaluation of this event from the previous year which was conducted through online questionnaires with corporate volunteers and also representatives of non-profit organizations immediately after the event⁵.

According to the organizers, the main idea of *Naše Mesto* is not only to connect corporate and non-profit sector and to build relationships but mainly try to find solutions of different kind of social problems through these interconnections. The Pontis Foundation was the first organization which systematically started to develop programmes of corporate volunteering, building partnerships with corporations and non-profit organizations. The first opportunity occurred after the calamity in the High Tatras in 2007, after which some corporations offered not only financial support for restoration of natural environment but their employees also participated through several volunteer

3 *Naše Mesto* is organized by Pontis Foundation which is the umbrella organization and intermediary in communication and connection between non-profit organizations and companies (to a lesser extent also municipalities) which want to develop the idea of corporate volunteering as a possible tool for solving particular social problems.

I was a member of the organization team for three years, responsible for communication with municipalities, non-profit organizations and companies – especially from towns in Western Slovakia. For two previous years I monitored volunteer activities in towns from this region. This year I stayed in Bratislava because of my research interests. As a member of the organizational team I was in touch with many of participants and representatives of non-profit and corporate organizations and from municipalities. I was fully involved in the process of preparation, organization, development, communication and evaluation.

4 This year, *Naše Mesto* took place in 28 towns around Slovakia – Bratislava, Košice, Žilina, Trnava, Trenčín, Hlohovec, Partizánske, Prievidza, Stupava, Svätý Jur, Senec, Pezinok, Galanta, Šaľa, Sereď, Nitra, Nováky, Levice, Zlaté Moravce, Topoľčianky, Nové Mesto, Žiar nad Hronom, Hurbanovo, Poprad, Spišská Nová Ves, Veľké Kapušany, Michalovce, Banská Štiavnica.

5 An online questionnaire was distributed by organizational team to the addresses of volunteer coordinators from each company who sent it to their corporate volunteers. The questionnaire contained questions connected with the motivation of volunteers to participate in, barriers, expectations and experience with the volunteer activity and cooperation with particular non-profit organization. Final number of volunteers who participated in *Naše Mesto* was 8 532. Last year this number was more than 6000 volunteers. During the evaluation the organizational team of *Naše Mesto* obtained 573 filled questionnaires.

events. These companies wanted to continue developing their corporate volunteering engagement which led to the first year of *Naše Mesto* in Bratislava in 2009. Year after year more corporations, non-profit organizations and municipalities are involved. It is connected with increasing expectations from companies not only to be profit-oriented but also community oriented, take responsibility for their actions, and behave according to social and ecological standards (Samuel, Wolf, Schilling, 2013: 164, according to Carroll, 1991; Habisch, Schmidpeter, 2003; Windsor 2001).

The process of preparation starts with collecting of projects from non-profit organizations which contain the detailed description of volunteer activity (meeting place and time, duration, number of volunteers needed, type of activity, description of activity, what is necessary to bring, to wear, type of refreshments, what to do in a case of bad weather, and photo of the place). These projects are financially supported by small grants to cover basic expenses⁶. The main conditions of supporting projects are their necessity, public benefit and clearly described plan and goals.

According to evaluation research, for many corporate volunteers, participation in these activities represents their first experience with volunteering. One of the main expectations is that volunteer activity is really needed, that they, as volunteers, are an essential part of the solution to the problem, and their help is necessary. If these expectations are not fulfilled, and the first experience is negative, the corporate employee may not participate in any other activities⁷. As one of the organizers of volunteer activity from non-profit organization working with socially excluded persons pointed out: “we have learned from our previous experience that it is important to say not only what the volunteers will do during the activity, that they will paint or plant... We have to explain the idea of our work and the situation, why we need these volunteers and how will it help our clients”.

While non-profit organizations are working on their projects, companies are actively reaching out to participate. Companies are from different areas of business activity (lawyers, consultants, financials, factories, trading companies, communications...), different size and amount of employees, national and international. They have to pay for this volunteer engagement for each employee involved. This financial support is distributed between non-profit organizations to cover their basic expenses and to organizers to finance the printing of T-shirts which are the symbol of this event. These T-shirts are for every volunteer who participate, from companies, from non-profit organizations and also for some active citizens who want to be part of this event. According to the organizers, it supports the common identity and the sense of common purpose of this event. It is forbidden to have specific companies branding t-shirts.

A few weeks before the event employees from registered companies can register for particular activities proposed by non-profit organisations which they can choose on the website of this event (www.nasemesto.sk). They can select by place (towns, villages), whether it is external or internal activity, area of support (social area, public

6 It is really individual what kind of expenses is covered by grant. Every project is different. It depends on the kind of activity. Non-profit organizations can buy paints, paint brushes, garden tools in the case of manual activity. If the main activity is a walk with seniors, disabled people, non-profit organization can ask for money to buy coffee, cakes, bus tickets or tickets to museums, in the case of some skill-based activity such as workshops at schools or organizations they can buy some office supplies.

7 This statement is supported also by research and many studies focusing on motivation and sustainability of volunteering. E.g. Grant, A. M. (2012), McAllum, K. (2014), see also another researches: <http://fi.fudwaca.com/mi/files/2015/07/2015-MillennialImpactReport.pdf>;

spaces, nature environment, workshops and education), the time and duration⁸ of activity and organizer.

During these activities, actual assistance is provided to concrete organisations, either in the form of manual work or through the transfer of knowledge and skills in particular areas promoting the development and improvement of personal, social and professional skills of participants. As J. N. Muthuri, D. Matten and J. Moon point out, non-profit organizations are motivated by their resource dependence which can be addressed with relationships with corporations. For companies, the main motivation “in the terms of corporate social responsibility agenda (we are involved as a way to put something back to into the community) and business development and performance objects (licence to operate, reputation and image building, staff development)” (Muthuri, Matten, Moon, 2009: 81).

According to organizers and what respondents confirm during the informal interviews, the aim of such events is not only to personally cover the activities which the given organisations are unable to cover with their own capacities, but also to support the establishing of volunteers’ links to the location, the taking over of corporate responsibility for the environment in which the companies run their activities, or to support citizen engagement in what happens in their surroundings.

These events represent an opportunity for establishing contacts and developing cooperation between representatives of self-governments, private businesses and non-profit organisations. As one representative of a non-profit organization working with children mentioned: “It is hard to find a story behind painting a fence or bench. But I think there has to be something more because we join this event another year again. It is not just because of the financial support. We need to find also other financial sources to prepare this volunteer activity. But we managed to do a lot with support from volunteers. And besides more beautiful seating and space for children we strengthened the mutual relations and trust.”

ENGAGED RESEARCH ON CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING

The aim of engaged research is, in collaboration with partners from the private and non-profit sectors and often with the participation of public authorities (e.g. permission for activities in public spaces, legislative obstacles), to set up a model of the corporate volunteering strategy for effective use of employee capacities for the benefit of community development, while reflecting its actual needs.

Long-term qualitative research based on participation and collaboration between different stakeholders and the engaged researcher may bring a new perspective of the involvement of companies and their employees in volunteering activities in other areas, as well.

D. Ondrušek et al. distinguish between the perception of collaboration as a relationship and as a process. Collaboration as a relationship requires the sharing of common values, the perception of responsibility as an identical problem, where such a relationship is equally beneficial for all stakeholders and leads to common achievement of the objectives. On the other hand, when we talk about collaboration as a process,

⁸ The duration of activities is normally 3-4 hours, in the morning and in the afternoon on Friday, and 3 hours in the morning on Saturday.

common interests and objectives are shaped during discussions in which each stakeholder proposes its own alternative to problem resolution. All collaborating parties learn from each other, create relationships and build mutual respect (Ondrušek et al., 2012: 17-20).

My reflections on inter-sectoral collaboration are also based on my experience as coordinator of corporate volunteering projects (including *Naše Mesto*) in an organisation which creates links between the non-profit and corporate sectors with the aim of supporting responsible entrepreneurship and companies' responsible approach, among others, to the community in which they are active.

On a daily basis non-profit organisations face a certain lack of capacities, financial, time-related, personal and organisational problems, the need for legal assistance or increased visibility, and many other minor or major problems. The creation of links between them aimed not only to engage employees, but also to build capacities of non-profit organisations, thus increasing the impacts and the effect of their activities.

The corporate and the non-profit sectors are often considered two different worlds, cultures and differences in the manner of communication, perception of time and responsibility. This relationship of theirs cannot be generalised, but one of the main factors characterising their position is the relationship between donors and recipients, whether it comes to financial support or support in the form of employees' volunteering.

For a researcher it is important to reflect not only upon his/her position, but to also perceive the relations of their research partners. The company provides its resources – finance, time and personnel, but also its knowledge and skills. The non-profit organisation is the beneficiary which, however, also offers its resources, just like the company does.

According to A. Pollard, non-profit organisations have close and intimate relationships with the local community in which they are active. They build their professional reputation on the basis of knowing the local context, interests and needs of the community (Pollard, 2004: 1). Hence, they represent an important local community partner which knows the environment and mediates relevant projects in which companies and their employees can be involved and invest their resources.

Research can focus, for example, on establishing a relationship to a public space, location or town through volunteering activities. A corporate volunteer is not only in the position of an employee, but is also a community member. Corporate volunteers identified as one of their clearest preferences in the choice of activity the location in which the activity is carried out – the place of residence or workplace. Their common motivation is the possibility to contribute to a change which is visible and can become a part of the space in which the volunteer is present on a daily basis.

Moreover, engagement in this type of activities contributes to the taking over of responsibility for the surroundings, educates and increases the sensitivity of employees towards social problems concerning people with social or health handicaps, public spaces, the environment, animal protection or cultural heritage.

Corporate volunteering contributes not only to the enhancement and mobilisation of local human resources and capacity building of the non-profit sector, but also develops the responsibility of private sector representatives towards their environment, increasing the sensitivity of employees to social problems and, hence, to greater openness and empathy. However, many issues and ethical dilemmas arise not only in the reality subject to research and in the relations established between the stakeholders.

THE ETHICAL DILEMMAS OF AN ENGAGED RESEARCHER

Ethical issues influence the position and the conduct of a researcher acting as engaged anthropologist actively involved in the process of interconnecting the private and the non-profit sectors with the aim of addressing community problems.

One such source of ethical dilemmas is research conducted in a corporate environment. On one hand, it is necessary to keep a high degree of anonymity. Employees may feel distrust against a type of research in which they are expected to present their experience in implementing their employer's volunteering programme. Fears from possible leak and misuse of data can influence their statements or discourage them from joining the research. Entry into the corporate environment, the establishing of trust and access to necessary information are influenced by multi-level decision-making processes.

The way of functioning of a non-profit organisation includes increased flexibility, the willingness to provide information to make its activities more effective, simpler personnel structure and a less hierarchical environment. The researcher may face from both sides certain expectations and ideas about the research setting, objectives and concrete proposals for problem resolution. Throughout the research, the mutual positions, responsibilities and expectations need to be clarified.

The hierarchical position resulting from the donor vs. beneficiary relationship is also a source of ethical dilemmas. The researcher must reflect not only on its position, but also on the mutual relations between his/her partners and the representatives of the non-profit and private sectors. As part of his/her self-reflection, the researcher has also to cope with potential emotional engagement, especially in the case of sensitive topics.

The participatory engaged type of research represents a certain form of intervention into the environment with an aim of achieving change (for example, in the form of defining the manner of collaboration, resolution of particular problems, or support to community development). This requires continuous communication with the representatives of the community, individual sectors and partners.

Another one could be the interests of the different parties – the company and the non-profit organisation which may, as an entity which knows the environment or is specialised in the particular topic or issue, claim its right to decide on the suitability or unsuitability of specific procedures and interventions. In such form of engagement, the representatives of the corporate environment can see an effective tool for self-presentation as a responsible company, while seeking their own interests and the fulfilment of the strategic objectives which would overshadow the actual needs of the community. For example if there is a company's request to participate in volunteer activity with a group of more corporate volunteers than is required from an organizer, the non-profit organization tries to regulate a prepared activity and add some other activities which are not so necessary at that time. There can be a problem with excess volunteers who have nothing to do during the activity or the organizer does not have sufficient number of tools.

A lack of commitment is highlighted by some authors. Strong commitments are necessary for strategic cooperation and partnership (Samuel, Wolf, Schilling, 2013: 165). In some cases some amount of volunteers is registered but only a few of them or nobody comes on the volunteer activity. Organizers spent money and time to prepare everything necessary and they counted on this aid. There is no compensation.

The question for the researcher is how he or she could step into the discussion bet-

ween partners to avoid any conflict situation and position themselves within the relationship and different expectations of each partner.

CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this paper was to provide an overview of collaboration between the private and the non-profit sectors through corporate volunteering. It is an institutional form of volunteering which, however, is beyond the definition of volunteering due to its characteristics and specific features. With its course, form and type of participants and involved actors it undermines the basic features of volunteering. The approach by the representatives of the private and the non-profit sectors is individual, which would hardly be covered by a single definition. Corporate volunteering can therefore be defined through the objectives and tools used for this purpose, such as employees' time, knowledge and professional skills dedicated to community development. In the background of this process, non-profit organisations are granted assistance and are helped with the building of their professional capacities, which can increase the effects of their activities and help achieve their objectives. The representatives of the non-profit and the private sectors should act in this as equal partners jointly involved in the addressing of social problems. On one hand, there is a non-profit organisation acting as an expert in the particular topic or environment, on the other hand there is a company which provides the missing resources and which can obtain benefits through professional and personal development of its employees, building of the identity of a responsible partner and the promotion of the loyalty of its employees.

The position of the researcher in community-based participatory research acquires a new quality. Such a researcher becomes an equal partner to the research subjects who act as project partners sharing knowledge about the research topic and proposals for solutions. The research subjects thus become the co-creators of knowledge about themselves. What are essential are constant reflections of the researcher on his/her position in the research field and towards the research objects and their mutual relation. It is essential to clarify the power relations, ideas, expectations of the different partners and their responsibilities.

Engaged anthropological research which includes the representatives of all stakeholders in the process of creating knowledge can represent a tool for setting up an effective form of co-operation between the private and the non-profit sectors.

The paper is an outcome of the project VEGA 2/0024/14 *Občianske aktivity ako determinant udržateľného rozvoja mesta (etnologický pohľad)* [Citizen activities as determinants of sustainable urban development (ethnological perspective)].

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