

1st IASC on the Urban Commons

Enterprising the common goods: modelli di *policy design* oltre la CSR

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Thematic conference

n.6 "Designing and governing the city as a common"

Track 3

Keywords

enterprise, CSR, territory, community asset, social innovation, urban regeneration, impact investing

Abstract

The growing interest generated by the paradigm of "common good" in terms of theoretical reflection on the changes of democracy goes together with the increase of attention to the possible innovations and more appropriate tools of governance and management in different fields of policy, directly or indirectly related to the promotion of the welfare of society.

The idea that the collective interest can be met through research of direct - and unmediated - synergies between resources and the expectations of different stakeholders, marks a reversal of perspective that involves not only the sphere of public policies in the strict sense, but in general all the tools that organize and regulate the relationship between the different actors and between them and the respective context. Even the business entity itself is called to respond to these stresses, but so far the majority of business entities has fulfilled this function through CSR initiatives that are largely "passive" in the outside world (including "certification" of ethics or of business conduct and philanthropic contributions granted to actions designed and carried out by local actors), without a direct responsibility with respect to the development of new and more effective devices of action for the production of social impacts in local contexts.

This work aims to explore trends and innovative guidelines production in the processes of social value that exceeds the traditional corporate social responsibility, to stand in the space of intersection drawn from three keywords that monopolize the debate on growth patterns and theory of change: social innovation, urban regeneration, impacting investing. The re-combination of these keywords, in fact, gives rise to different models of the relationship between enterprise and local authorities that will be explored through case studies in which the enterprise has reformulated its development strategy, moving away from the speech patterns of the mold more traditionally philanthropic and trying to incorporate the production of social value in its business model. One aspect, the latter, often overlooked in the recent debate on the commons although it is clear that the governance of the commons involves the management of sui generis economies which, thanks to the technological infrastructures, scale to the global (or multi-local) level.

Introduction: the commons as a new paradigm?

The emphasis on the search for a new paradigm – i.e. a structure of meanings from which an overall vision and an organisational model of the society are generated – is indicative of momentous transformations redefining relations between individuals and the basis of institutions. It is in this perspective that we may frame the growing interest on “common goods” as an archetype to interpret the changes in political systems and economic models and, therefore, to identify the necessary innovations of the tools of government and management in different fields, directly or indirectly related to the promotion of a new model of development based on a more complex notion of “well-being” and “integral human development” (Zamagni 2013, 2014). In particular, the idea that the collective interest may and must be satisfied through the search for direct synergies between the resources and different stakeholders’ expectations leads to an overturning of perspective, which involves not only the domain of public policies in the strict sense, but generally all those tools regulating and organising the relation among different actors and between them and their context of reference.

The objective of this paper is to analyse the solicitations to which the social function of enterprises is subjected within this emerging paradigm. It is clear, in fact, that traditional Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies show the limits of a mostly “passive” attitude towards the external world (between the “certification” of the ethical nature – or lack of ethical nature – of business behaviours and the philanthropic contribution of actions promoted and led by local actors), without a direct accountability as far as the implementation of new and more effective systems of production of social value in localised socio-economic contexts (“territories”) is concerned (Avanzi 2015). It is also clear that the time is ripe for forms and processes of production of social value based on a more systematic cooperation between multistakeholders enterprises, thus putting at stake not only mere externalities, but rather their core-business in order to increase efficiency and competitiveness. Nowadays, enterprises are fostered to adopt a long term strategic approach overcoming corporate social responsibility in order to create a value that can be shared by all stakeholders (Magatti and Gherardi 2014).

The field of urban regeneration, understood as a field of re-organization of relations between space and actors in the city by creating synergies unpublished, clearly it offers the space to cultivate this perspective. Indeed, given the new orientation of the enterprises lens to the territory, the intervention for the renovation of heritage of real estate and abandoned or underused spaces is an extraordinary opportunity on which companies could invest to pursue forms of integration and synergy between their mission and goals of “general interest”. Specifically, considering the case of recovery of assets for use as a community railway stations unused promoted by the Ferrovie dello Stato Italiane, is possibile to highlight both the limitations of an approach inspired by logical damages of philanthropic inspiration and the elements of challenge and added value that could result from the adoption of the recovery for a “social” use of such property within the new chains of value production. A value that is multidimensional in its internal composition and better distributed (or shared) by a number of different actors. The scope of this challenge increases because of the need to acquire financial resources, whose goal is to scale up the social impact of initiatives that, at present, are extremely localised and specific. Impact investing represents, from this point of view, another variable in the understanding of the conditions to which the social goal of entrepreneurial action in the domain of common goods is attributed. Not only because of an evident availability of resources, but also because financial products include evaluation tools that can assign value to intangible resources playing a key role in regeneration processes and, in addition, following social entrepreneurship experiences that, in these

processes, are often recalled but not always put into practice. These topics are undoubtedly ambivalent, but they are also introducing positive discontinuities in a field scattered with good practices, which are now becoming a real industry. Not only because of efficiency issues and scale economies, but also in order to face the challenge of a growing offer of spaces, whose state of abandon or lack of use coincides more and more often with a deficit in their collective use.

1. The “cooperative race” for social value

The structural transformations characterizing the current historical phase are determined by institutions and different organisations’ capability to acquire new chains of value creation, wherein the elements of social value acquire an ever growing importance. In particular, the social dimension is less and less an “oligopoly” of public and nonprofit institutions and is becoming closer to the varied world of enterprises, not only by those which are motivated by an explicit social mission, but also by enterprises representing the mainstream economy: i.e. “profit oriented” and active on a global scale (Porter and Kramer 2006, 2011). This opening of the field of social value creation fosters not only juridical and organisational forms, but also underlying regulatory mechanisms: in this perspective, the social dimension can be generated not only through mechanisms of public redistribution and informal reciprocity (Polanyi 1971), but also through market transitions, particularly in the domain of services economies. This new “great transformation” redefines, with remarkably ambivalent features, the relationship between the market and social dynamics: in fact, it is not clear to what extent the market as an institution will recover those elements of sociality it progressively abandoned or, on the contrary, whether an efficiency-driven process market institutions led to progressively integrate a significant element of sociality into their business models (Pais and Provasi 2015). The origin and probably the outcome of this process is largely linked to the changes occurred within consumption models which, in a more and more systematic and wider way, are expressing a question about quality influenced by variables of social and environmental sustainability (Arvidsson 2008). Those transformations in consumption are, on their turn, connected to not exclusively individual choices but rather to the development of new social matrix concerning: i) the adoption of new styles determined by new forms of vulnerability (Venturi and Rago 2012); ii) the emergence of new forms of collective action aiming at the “voice” but also at the production on a cooperative basis (Manzini 2015), iii) the spreading, as an element of transversal empowerment, of information and knowledge technologies which are now usable as commodities and which function as facilitators of networks within society (Calderini and Chiodo 2014).

The combined effect of these factors allows, in the first place, to segment the social component into three macro dimensions, from which a framework emerges, in which new ways of producing economic value are shaped.

The first segment corresponds to a declination of social value as the production of collective interest goods with accentuated features of meritocracy (Borzaga and Zandonai 2009). This is the field where non lucrative organisations operate which in time have acquired an entrepreneurial asset making goods and services allowable, whose character of “social utility” is linked to the existence of a relatively widespread consensus on the fact that these goods satisfy requirements of social justice and thus may be enjoyed especially by people who, for one reason or another, do not own sufficient resources (in monetary terms or as far as competences are concerned) to acquire them by normal market exchanges. This is the case, for example, of social enterprises particularly in the field of work inclusion (WISE) which, progressively, spread both on an

Italian and European level thanks to a *sui generis* entrepreneurial model characterised by the following features (European Commission 2014):

1. Enterprises specify their function, by claiming their social nature through the pursuit of a “general interest” objective.
2. Inclusive models of governance are adopted, thus allowing different stakeholders to participate to the management, with the aim not to maximise a specific (economic, professional, political) interest, but rather on the basis of a relevant objective which is the outcome of a sharing process: inclusion increases the concept of sharing and creates the ground to realize a real social impact whose shares may be redistributed on a wide scale (Yunus 2008).
3. The long lasting character of production, which is linked to the capacity to intercept and combine a mix of resources: economic and non-economic ones, market-based or donations, public and private (Nyssens 2006).

The second feature into which the social dimension may be articulated concerns the economic contribution to the creation and strengthening of social cohesion, especially on a local scale. This field is especially characterized by small and medium enterprises, capable of valorising the material and immaterial assets included into specific geographical, social and anthropological contexts (Putnam et al. 1993). An action that, the more is pursued through an intentional strategy of opening towards the territory – in particular by redistributing and generating positive externalities – the more it contributes to a mere business dimension, as shown in some recent surveys on Italian enterprises, whose “cohesive” nature contributed to the realisation of better economic and occupational performances (Fondazione Symbola 2014).

The third sociality feature stems from the progressive spreading of co-production paradigm, based on a systematic participation of all users, consumers, beneficiaries as co-producers of the goods and services used. We are referring to complex processes concerning different areas of intervention, where an important element is the participation strategies adopted by enterprises, usually large companies with a high investment on technologies, able to exploit as much as they can prototypes of devices and software, thanks to an immediate feedback system and to the opportunity to have access to information and source codes fostering the shared nature and bottom-up production (Ardivisio and Giordano 2013).

These macro areas are characterized by a number of peculiarities and they all emphasise a model of “social enterprise” or “social business” declined in a rather different way, which may lead to terminological and conceptual misunderstandings. In the case of production of collective interest goods, for example, a model of social enterprise is proposed, which has an explicit influence on the objectives, the governance, and the production, thus acquiring the features of a *sui generis* institution with specific juridical forms (Borzaga and Fazzi 2001). In the case of the social element as generator of cohesion, the enterprise is social because it adopts orientations and behaviours where stakeholders do not pursue interest maximisation through “low profit” models and, thanks to an *ad hoc* impact benchmark, it maximises the impact of those positive externalities which were realized by juridical models such as that of Benefit Corporation. Finally, the systematic application of co-production strategies recalls a model of “social enterprise” that, on the other hand, makes reference to the use of technologies capable of developing the relations between various stakeholders in a dialogical sense, thus impacting, in many cases, on the organisational assets (Grandori 2015). Besides relevant differences, all these experiences of social entrepreneurship generate a common effect of disorientation as compared to traditional policies of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

The first element of disorientation consists in the fact that these different ways of organising and managing social value production are seeking elements of continuity and centrality within business models. If the goal of CSR politics is to play an advocacy role within the enterprise and with the main stakeholders, by emphasising the positive outcomes of the entrepreneurial activity, in the processes of social value creation these externalities are less extemporary and more systematically sought in core-business, thus breaking the duality between on the one hand traditional management oriented to interests maximisation both of stakeholders and management, and on the other hand the CSR with redistributive / compensation functions characterised by discontinuity and residuality. A break that leads to a process of change in organisational and governance assets (Grandori 2015), from which new hybrid subjectivities are originated, that combine profit, nonprofit and public elements (Venturi and Zandonai 2014). The second element of disorientation of traditional CSR concerns the action of the enterprise within its “reference environment”, overcoming on the one hand classic engagement and stakeholder procedures characterised by prebuilt identity categories (customers, workers, investors, local authorities) and on the other hand a relation with indefinite “crowds” (customers, users etc.). The final outcome is represented by complex forms of “community building” contributing to making boundaries less defined and to recombine the roles, because these communities are founded on identity substrata and common values – though of a different origin and intensity – enabling not extemporary cooperation forms, i.e. aiming to share the means and the aims of economic action.

The spreading and the relevance of these processes of a cooperative nature which do not only overcome traditional CSR models, but also “go beyond” classical forms of cooperative mutualism, is deeply questioning the forms and the contents of production (Laval and Dardot 2014). From this point of view, the fact that the concept of “common good” is experiencing, together with social enterprise, a growing diffusion (and confusion), may be used as a sort of “variable proxy” compared to the existing change with the aim to measure its effective scope (Mattei 2012). In other words, will the change we are witnessing be processed by the entirety of classical models of social responsibility through their “upgrade” or are we experiencing an overall transformation of the economic paradigm and, with it, of the institutional models and forms, particularly those of an entrepreneurial nature, thus causing a new cycle of organisational hybridisation and institution building (Venturi and Zandonai 2014)? In order to provide an answer to such a complex question, it is necessary to operationalise the concept of common goods, by demystifying the nature of “buzzword” applied in the most varied contexts and situations, which leaves the most important and problematic issues unsolved, i.e. the implications at a productive, managing and governance level (Vitale 2013). In this sense, the analysis suggested in the book edited by Ottone and Sacconi (Sacconi and Ottone 2015) allows to apply a large scale cooperative action to the management of the so defined common “infrastructures” characterised by the following distinguishing features:

- The existence of discursive processes of a pre-deliberative kind and of an informal but not extemporary nature (cheap talk) fostering cooperation between actors.
- Economies based on the intentional research of externalities (spill-over) through the creation of infrastructures suggesting different ways of using the good (even not calculable ones, both in space and time).
- Multistakeholder governance of an inclusive nature, shaped on the beneficiaries of the good, and balancing openness (open access) and sustainability (in order to avoid exploitation of goods: overconsumption, obstruction etc.).

This definition succeeds in underlining the importance of producing social value in the field of common goods, or the need to create new platforms of a cooperative type (Conaty and Bollier 2014), particularly at the moment when a correlation between entrepreneurship and social value, community and social social

transformation is clearly sought (Daskalaki et al. 2015). From this point of view, the regeneration of properties and spaces to pursue social goals represents nowadays one of the most relevant “epicentres” of the observed dynamics, because it questions the effective nature of these infrastructures (not only in a concrete sense) and because it defies the actors – public, private, civic – who apply for the role of developers and managers on economic models and governance assets which are returning “common goods” their authentic value. To sum up, this represents is a favoured observation point in order to grasp the potentialities and the deviations of the cooperative “race” to the production of social value in the field of commons, by looking at the intersections between regeneration initiatives on a social scale and the role of finance to foster the scalability of these localised innovations.

2. Investing in territory as common good

Various examples of the whole heritage of abandoned areas and unused buildings are recurrently dominating the debate on innovation of the approaches to urban management. In the majority of cases, it deals with issues and suggestions that, though in different ways and connotations, recall the perspective of common goods in relation to the “territory”. To simplify, we can distinguish two types of representations. On the one hand those claiming that “the territory *is* a common good”, which are originated and mostly used in contrast with the logics and interests of bottom up (re)appropriation of these spaces (Salzano, 2009). On the other hand, those looking at the “territory *as* a common good”, aimed at suggesting and conveying an orientation in the exploration of spaces, sharing opportunities and ways of recovering these spaces so that they can satisfy multiple needs and interests (Donolo 2007).

This essay does not go into depth of these topics, nor does it express value judgements or a position as far as these different representations are concerned, since this would require a far more specific treatment and the implementation of a sophisticated conceptual framework (Maddalena 2014). Otherwise – as it is often the case in the public debate – the whole issue would be reduced to the mere juxtaposition between those who deny the ideological nature of the positions according to which “everything is in common” and those who criticize the opening to interests other than the public one in a strict sense, as a way of refusing the project of public city. It may appear more interesting to grasp the stimulus this juxtaposition provides in order to question the notion of “territory” and its use within the debate on public goods (Cottino 2009). The second representation mentioned above, in fact, recalls an idea of territory that is substantially different from the one we are currently using in everyday language, where territory is defined as a set of material resources (spaces and products) representing the “objective” variant on which social relations are built. In the second case, instead, since the treatment of the territory as a common good is considered as a possible alternative, the idea of the territory as a variable depending on the (“subjective”) way of using those goods as a vehicle to social relations becomes possible. In the first case case, territory is a data (the background or the container of social customs), in the other it is made-up (activated by social customs).

As argued by Crosta (Crosta 2010), the difference between the two standpoints becomes clear in terms of “policies”, i.e. the actions we wish to embark on with the goal to influence on the relation between society and territory. Traditionally grounded on a Stalinist culture, urban planning identifies in the (preventive and binding) allocation of certain resources (spaces and/or products) to certain uses, the necessary and sufficient condition to ensure the pursuit of public utility objectives. The ghost of all negotiation practices and social interactions that are activated around those goods, may only confirm the accomplishment of those objectives. A different approach to planning policies considers the realisation of public utility objectives through a certain use of material resources as a possibility that cannot be predetermined and which may be

influenced by many different actors. From this point of view, the creation of collective benefits represents the combined effect of governance multistakeholders action (intentional and, sometimes, not completely intentional), contributing to organise the territory as a system of common resources. It may be particularly effective to build a bridge with the definition on common goods provided by Sacconi (Sacconi and Ottone 2015), as physical-material resources subjected to a model of management that transforms them into “infrastructures”, i.e. means to generate additional activities and social benefits and, at the same time, externalities which cannot always be determined ex ante.

From this point of view, common goods contribute to re-orienting the scope of urban policies, shifting the focus of planning on the best use of the spaces, on the management of the urban resources transformation into infrastructures that are functional to the production and the spreading of collective benefits. Urban regeneration, in particular, may be redefined as a field of intervention specifically aimed at conceiving, negotiating and testing possible reformulations of the “social contract” that once regulated and organised the use of spaces and structures which are now in a condition of abandon or under-use, by designing and exploring various opportunities to activate actions of social resilience (Colucci and Cottino 2015) and win-win mechanisms.

Urban regeneration defines a policy field that has recently experienced (together with the growing interest in common goods) a significant success within government policies at different levels. Looking at the concrete developments of this policy field, we can notice that the integration of policies of reintegration of available spaces to the redefinition of relations between actors who in the past were engaged at different (sometimes even contrasting) levels is occurring in a bidirectional way: on the one hand, starting from the need of giving new life to the spaces, new interlocutory processes are opened between cooperating actors (according to a trend “from the good to the common”); on the other hand, starting from the need to implement forms of governance that are different from the past, we are exploring the opportunities offered by the conversion of unused territorial resources to make partnership opportunities effective (according to a trend “from the common to the good”). E.g., we may consider as an example of the first category the recent norms conceived to fight against the abandon and provide a new destination to the unused public heritage (from the norm on Demanial Federalism to the rules provided by the decree Sblocca Italia – articles 24 and 26 – in order to foster the intervention of non-public actors); as an example of the second category, we may consider both the widespread interest on the hypothesis of a public-private partnership fostered by the crisis and by the impact of the economic downturn (Fregolent and Savino 2014), as well as new ways of allocating European resources aimed at supporting urban and territorial development, and implying preliminary evaluations on the level of “development of infrastructures on the territory” (and here we are hinting at the approach of ex ante conditions, which require as a necessary condition to allocate resources to territorial projects the existence of coalitions of actors ready to share resources and visions, and of strong networks linking them (Ministero per la Coesione Territoriale 2012)).

In any case, regardless of the origin of this combinatory process, its positive and effective finalization is still dependent on the capacity to imagine, plan, create models and integration strategies between the actors, spaces and opportunities. The complexity of the systems where this activity is performed, justifies the implementation of innovative approaches and methods for the management of complex processes and for a multi-actor policy design, together with the competences that traditionally represented the tools for territorial planning. Recent developments of project theories in the field of planning (Cellamare, 2012) – integrated and fostered by studies in other disciplines, e.g. that of political sciences and organization – go in the same direction.

For example, the thoughts expressed by Mantysalo, Balducci and Kangasoja (Mantysalo et al. 2010) hint at this perspective. They suggest a re-examination of Lindblom’s negotiation theories grounded on the concept of mutual partisan adjustment, i.e. on the research of efficient solutions to solve collective problems by

combining various actors' interests – starting from the use of two key concepts, that of trading one introduced by Galison (Galison 1999) and that of boundary objects, which Galison himself recalled from Susan Leigh Star and James Griesemer. It is interesting to notice how Galison, in his thoughts on the conditions favouring the development of exchange relations between different actors, underlined the local and “localised” dimension of the trading zone: “it is a specific site in a specific time – partly symbolic, partly special – in which local coordination between theory and action takes place”. With the concept of boundary object, instead, the mentioned authors hint at all those “tools allowing the use and the exchange of information between different communities, even though they do not necessarily share the same system of meanings, values and strategies; objects that are flexible enough to conform to local needs and to the users' requirements, but also resistant to the point that they can keep their own identity” (Mantysalo et al. 2010). However, accepting the framework of common goods should lead to the pursuit of more ambitious results concerning the synergy between the parts: the type of sharing at the heart of the managing model of common goods, in fact, implies a level of interaction that cannot be reduced to a mere relation of exchange (as it happens in the case of private goods), but it is rather to be understood as a social contract based on an economic relation of a cooperative kind (this is another reason why it makes sense to talk about “social enterprise”). In the perspective of common goods, the collective value is not reducible nor comparable to the “exchange value” of material resources or to the performances needed to the realisation of that common good. Conceiving the territory “as” a common good entails the creation a different and superior type of value because it takes into account not only the production the infrastructure, but also and most importantly other activities, the benefits/social impacts and, at the same time, the externalities determined in the long term by the implementation of the infrastructure. It can be defined as a “shared value” (Porter and Kramer 2011) because all the elements are contributing to its creation and its enjoyment: it is a sort of collective investment aimed at generating interesting returns for all the implied actors.

The change towards a new way of conceiving social investment is not to be taken for granted, a change that nowadays represents the main focus of attention on the part of multiple actors and fields of intervention, even those belonging to the private sector in a strict sense. One of these domains is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), which in general represents an interesting and current topic, and whose particular evaluations on how tool can be improved and made more efficient progressively became a topic of interest on the part of both scholars and enterprises. To support what has been stated until now, recent researches (Guida and Maiolini 2013) emphasise the evolution trajectory of CSR from being a tool improving the reputation of the enterprise and helping stakeholders “gain private benefits” (CSR as a necessary cost), to transforming into an investment aimed at improving the performances of the enterprise (CSR as an incentive for value creation) through investments implying a strategic cooperation with other stakeholders on the topics of social innovation and urban regeneration.

3. Beyond the CSR: the impact investing approach

In recent years, as a consequence of the economic crisis/downturn and of the crisis of confidence towards the current financial and production model, the need to launch/promote innovative approaches in the building of relations between business, community and the territory developed within the for profit sector, to such an extent that enterprises are now beginning to pursue sustainability and societal objectives through their own core business and business strategies, thus showing that investing in business models in favour of that communities leads to take concrete action within stronger markets (International Finance Corporation 2012).

Therefore, recombining economic and social dimensions within the enterprise allows to foster the approach of the so-called “impact investing”. The term “impact investing” was coined at the Rockefeller Centre on the Como Lake, in Italy, in 2007 (Rodin and Brandeburgo 2014). The aim of the American Foundation was to “invest in projects with a fixed social or environmental outcome” (Rockefeller Foundation 2012). The main idea was that social enterprises lack access to capitals in order to build large scale projects and face new social and environmental challenges. In 2009 the Monitor Institute, founded by Professor Michael Porter, started to deal with impact investing in 2009 and, from then on, this term aroused the interest of a number of different institutions and developed particularly among financial institutions such as JP Morgan and Credit Suisse until 2008 when, on the wake of the financial crisis, these organisations launched the Global Impact Investing Network. Impact investing came under the spotlight when it became clear that the G8 task force was on Social Impact Investment, which officially started working on the development of an international framework, capable of promoting the market of high social impact investment and emphasising the need to look for tools fostering the use of social impact investment on an international level.

There are various theoretical contributions on this topic tackling impact investing or a new approach to social enterprise (Austin et al. 2006), as a combination between social impact and financial return or as an evolution of the dynamics of corporate social responsibility and stakeholder engagement to the added value (Porter and Kramer 2006, 2011).

Keeping in mind these two branches of research (which cannot be thoroughly dealt with in this paper due to the lack of space), we would like to investigate on the topic of impact investing not as much as a set of financial tools that the enterprise may or may not use depending on its strategies, but rather as an approach to investments applied on the territory by the enterprise or, even better, and a lens through which the enterprise chooses the type of investment and action to adopt.

Therefore, we will try to synthetically define hereinafter the conditions necessary to invest and go beyond a traditional logic of Corporate Social Responsibility, and identify the models of impact investing whose main actor is the enterprise.

The underlying conditions to the impact investing approach are:

1. Intentionality as an approach to investment aiming at generate both a social impact and a financial return. The intention to act on purpose and to develop a non-extemporary strategy involving the core business of the enterprise represents the distinguishing feature of impact investing compared to other traditional approaches to investment. The territory plays an fundamental role, as a system of available resources to recombine in actions and policies redefining the role of the enterprise.
2. Additionality: in this case the investment has to increase the quality of the social outcome as compared with the traditional investments of the enterprise (this means adopting a theory of change within the enterprise implying the need of asking questions on how and why to invest on the territory, and requiring the enterprise to undergo a change in organisational and governance terms).
3. Generating a financial return, which represents the main difference with respect to an humanitarian approach.

Therefore, impact investing becomes a lens allowing value generation in a way that is totally different from the past because it requires the enterprise to rediscuss its business model and to play a role that is more than a financial tool attached to a *modus operandi*. To this aim, in 2012 the United Nations Global Compact published “A Framework for Action: Social Enterprise and Impact Investing”. This document defines for the first time the term *Corporate Impact Venturing* as an innovative model of corporate philanthropy. The Corporate Impact Venturing may develop along three different models corresponding to three ways of action within the enterprise:

1. Investment Model: based on the cross-functional competence to create investments in a social enterprise other than the for profit enterprise. Through the investment in a social enterprise in a market

different from the core-business of the enterprise, new markets for the for profit enterprise may be found.

2. Incubation Model: it consists in a combination of internal and external innovation aiming at transforming the selected ideas into pilot projects which can regenerate the core-business of the enterprise.
3. Strategic Partnership Model: the corporate structures, such as the union of sustainability/CSR, establish a partnership with an already existing social enterprise in order to cooperate, share the risk and foster mechanisms of hybridisation between organisational dynamics.

The three models require an approach to the territory implying a partnership, sometimes not so recognisable on a contractual level, where there is another variable in addition to the traditional “financial risk”, i.e. the variable of “trust” between partners playing a role in the game. Not only must the enterprise show it is able to create external social value, but also that it invests in activities generating social and economic value for the surrounding community, in the perspective that an economic gain is grounded in the partnership towards the common good.

It is a concrete value, not a mere financial one, a positive impact guaranteed for the community, for the PA and for the direct beneficiaries of the supplied product or service.

What substantially changes under the perspective of impact investing is the strategic approach characterising the enterprise, which implies:

1. The intention to adopt different organisational dynamics: opening up to the territory and being ready to invest require an hybridisation with other actors, such as nonprofit organisations, whose actions are usually linked more to sociality than to profit management.
2. A reflective behavior: if enterprises use impact investing as a lens to approach the territory, then they have to activate a whole process implying an organisational and cultural change starting from more and more complex interactions with the actors involved in the process. Thinking about it may lead to the discovery of more resources than those used to tackle problems and provide effective answers.
3. How to understand development: if it is true that we are talking about impact investing not only as a series of policy tools but also as a way of understanding development, then it is necessary to adopt an holistic vision on the strengths and actors present in society, requiring a new perspective on the relations between the State, the market, philanthropy, third sector and civil society and considering the enterprise as a “social actor” managing to learn and rediscuss current investment processes.

In conclusion, impact investing represents an approach striving to go beyond the established segmentation of concepts on which our social and productive systems has always been grounded in order to recreate a new correlation between enterprise, community and sociality, and to develop new economies based on the intentional research of “spill-overs” producing different ways of using the territory as a common good.

4. The case of railway community assets

Besides the railway network, Ferrovie dello Stato – a limited Company entirely owned by the Italian State – also manages important property assets which are nowadays excessive with respect to the real needs of its mission as an enterprise (i.e. managing the rail transport of both passengers and goods). From this consideration stems a medium-long term restructuring strategy aimed at “demobilizing “ and “attributing value” to properties of different nature and dimensions owned by the Society. This strategy was largely implemented through market initiatives: assets alienation and the change in their intended use so that they could host commercial business activities, especially in railway stations. This operation adopted on a large

scale – e.g. by the society Centostazioni which, together with private actors, requalified Italian main stations – led to relevant negative externalities.

The first problem consists in the lack of spaces dedicated the victims of social exclusion, especially homeless and migrants, in railway stations. We are dealing here with phenomena that, because of evident economic and geopolitical reasons, are spreading and increasing, and for which stations – especially those near important railway junctions – represent a “pole of attraction” for their needs of both shelter and transport. The result is a real and perceived decline generated by the presence of an increasing number of needing people in stations that were regenerated mainly as spaces of commercial activities and which, therefore, worsen their condition of social marginality. The second negative externality is due to the presence of many stations and other railway assets (unattended stations and the “dry branches” of neglected railway lines) that are close to market failure, meaning that they cannot be neither alienated nor regenerated according to purely market logics. A problem that, in this case as well, is emphasized by the fact that they are structures in a state of progressive deterioration from an architectural point of view, but especially because they need a new intended use, since their original aim linked to the functioning of the railway system is no longer current. To make things worse, these assets are not located in definite places (e.g. near important railway junction), but are rather scattered on the territory, as a sort of “antennas” of a widespread degradation related, in this case, to the abandon and lack of use.

In order to face these problems, the Society adopted two strategic projects:

1) The first one concerns the introduction of “help centers” in the main stations: i.e. desks aimed at helping needing people by providing them with information on the local system of welfare services (reception centers, therapeutic communities etc.) in order to create targeted recovery initiatives and social reintegration. A counselling service open to everybody organized in specific spaces managed by third sector organizations and/or local agencies, created thanks to the economic and material support of the railway Society and foundations. Nowadays there exist 16 help centers and 7 are opening; they are connected to a national network called ONDS – Osservatorio Nazionale sul Disagio e la Solidarietà (National Observatory for social Disadvantage and Solidarity) in Italian stations – which is the outcome of a partnership between Ferrovie dello Stato and the Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI), managed by the social cooperative Europe Consulting. The Observatory plays two important functions: first of all, it provides real time reports on the number and the characteristics of the people who enter the help center, thus generating an in-depth and updated informative system on the phenomena of social marginalization and extreme poverty. Secondly, it owns the knowledge and management know how on this type of service, thus fostering the startup of new help centers (Onds, 2014).

2) The second strategic project concerns the regeneration of unattended stations and railway lines by entrusting their management to public local authorities and third sector organizations. There are more than 1.700 stations on the whole Italian territory, in particular in rural areas, 345 of them have already been assigned to host social activities. In the case of unused railway lines, of the almost 3 thousands km, 325 km have already been transformed into “greenways”: cycle paths, green itineraries etc. The use of these assets for activities of collective interest was made possible thanks to an agreement between the owner and important networks representing and coordinating local public authorities, the third sector and the cooperative movement (Torella and Coltellere, 1999).

Some recent surveys on help centers (Borzaga and Zandonai, 2013) and unattended railway lines (Jona Lasinio, 2014; Zandonai, 2014) allow for an update in the knowledge framework, particularly with reference to the possibility to analyze the effects of this combined strategy as the evolution of corporate social responsibility towards a model of production of shared value in the paradigm of common goods. In this sense, the results of the research outline a process clearly oriented in this direction, but not completely

realized, since the elements qualifying social regeneration of property assets as commons were only partially identifiable (Sacconi and Ottone, 2015).

- First of all, there is not a systematic way of involving local communities, and especially beneficiaries, in defining the new intended use of railway assets, e.g. through test of temporary reuse of unattended stations, or through service design sessions targeted on users' needs (in this case of the help centers).
- Secondly, it was impossible to retrieve the existence of external economies capable of strengthening the productive and entrepreneurial dimension, in particular with regards to the abandoned stations that are often regenerated as the mere headquarters of charity organizations and only in few cases were assigned to host activities belonging to the real social economy (in agricultural, cultural, social, touristic field etc.).
- Finally, in most cases the governance of community assets appears to be rather simplified, focused only on the actor managing the structure and with a weak involvement of other stakeholders, institutional interlocutors, informal groups, citizens.

In view of a strategic model that is architecturally relevant, but still incomplete in its impacts, it is possible to enhance the role of the financial resources especially targeted to increasing the impact dimension, in a phase when these structures were even more stimulated by the amount of problems they were called to face. It is sufficient to think about long term migratory phenomena and to the spreading of poverty to an increasing part of Italian population (Zancan Foundation, 2012). This is just a potential role, since impact investing in its various forms and declinations is currently almost absent from the projects of regeneration of railway assets. However, the implementation of a targeted ecosystem of financial resources may play a relevant role in supporting an "upgrade" of these initiatives, by acting on the following factors:

- The overall improvement of the project, with a particular focus on the development of entrepreneurial initiatives targeted on the economic sustainability of regeneration actions, but also on the promotion of actions of social inclusion that acts on beneficiaries and local communities empowerment;
- A more efficient analysis of the socio-economic context in which railway assets are located, through due diligence tools capable of measuring their potential social impact and the opportunity to locate them within those local production chains that can endorse the characteristic features of the territory;
- Recognizing social assets as a fundamental part of wider projects of regeneration of railway assets, in order to foster the spread of these initiatives not just as philanthropic activities, but rather as a structural component of a renewed business model, that considers social engagement as an element of creation of social value, and not as a mere reparatory intervention.

5. Beyond the CSR: policy design, strategies and tools

In order to meet the current challenges of urban regeneration, we need to rely on governance mechanisms based on principles of cooperative economy, which can offer many enterprises the opportunity to reconsider the sense and the content of their relation with the territory, thus overcoming traditional CSR approaches. The territory, usually considered as a reputational investment in the domain of business strategies (and for this reason included within business communication and marketing strategies), may be interpreted in the light of common goods paradigm: the fact of establishing and strengthening relations with territorial – and even social – stakeholders may result, under certain conditions, in a potentially strategic

investment for the enterprise, even in a business perspective. Following the discussion on common goods, the social dimension of the territory is now connected not only to a whole set of unsatisfied needs and physical, environmental and cultural resources to be protected, but also and most importantly to “resilience” processes with respect to social and economic changes that have (or may have) direct or indirect relations with the business of the enterprise. From this point of view, sustainable development of the territory may become a strategic objective that the enterprise and other actors have in common. Creating long term perspectives, in which the enterprise itself can play a new and different role on the territory, capable of producing positive social impacts, may offer the testing ground to implement social responsibility initiatives in the short term, as occasions to reformulate and test these “alternative” business models.

There are different ways in which each enterprise can accept and meet this new challenge: they are different both in the level of implication of the enterprise in the creation of the specific content for project initiatives (from the original idea to co-funding, from the allocation of specific competences to the creation of strategic partnerships aimed at realizing certain initiatives), and because of the level of integration between the content of projects and the business objectives of the enterprise.

The regeneration of the enterprise role on the territory is characterized by some essential elements that can be included within the paradigm of common goods:

1. The search for new ways of involving the community, which usually leads to try new solutions, even temporary ones, concerning the use and the function of un-used or abandoned properties.
2. The construction of new market areas or new production chains, which include the social dimension and which may, therefore, influence the core-business of the enterprise.
3. Governance multistakeholder where it is possible to involve multiple actors in the process of value creation and where territory becomes the testing ground to build new relations.
4. The search for new investment opportunities not as an appendix of some extemporary project, but rather as a strategic approach based on the will to create a social impact of the territory.

An important step marking a change in the approach is the possibility to embark in a journey where it is possible to measure the produced social value and the change that is yet to be produced. Not only does this path allow a vision on long-term objectives, but it also prioritizes strategies and actions supporting the change and which, through the adopted practices, may influence the core-business of the enterprise. Innovating usually means opening up to the territory and supporting co-production processes with other actors, on the condition that one’s own interests are no longer determinant, and that one has to be open to a re-definition by adjusting them to the suggestions of other implied actors (mutual adjustment, Lindblom, 1990). In this sense, though the process of co-production, the enterprise becomes an actor and is intentionally available to interact with other actors on the territory, on the basis of a predefined strategy, knowing that convergence is not a predefined outcome and that, therefore, it will be probably led to redefine its own road-map.

Therefore, before acting on the territory, the enterprise does not apply as an actor (Crosta, 2010) and for this reason territory becomes a system of common resources that need to be recombined in order to generate collective benefits. In this sense, urban regeneration is a field of different interventions where multiple resources for the production of common goods are available, and where impact investing leads the enterprise to consider itself in a different perspective and to play a role as a territorial actor. Through the co-production of common goods and the creation of a relation between the enterprise, the territory and the city, new institutions and new modes of action can be generated, which will characterize the development model of contemporary society

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