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*Community Development: Community Educating and Role Of State in Russia*

The Russian history of community development (CD) started in 1988. This process received an active support from Western donors in the 90s and 2000s, but did not get much attention from municipalities. When Western donors left Russia, only few cities demonstrated positive relationships between authorities and community-based NGOs (territorial self-management committees - “TOS” in Russian), and very few municipal programmers of financial and technical support existed. During the last 10 years the TOS network was created (about 30 000 organisations), and infrastructure for supporting CD also appeared at all levels: new laws, community centers, websites, and education for community leaders. In the situation of municipal finance shortage, the local residents’ activism was considered as an important problem solving resource based on engagement of local people. In 2016 the Russian National TOS Association was established (http://www.oatos.ru); and in 2017 President Putin accented the role of the population in local self-government and issued special instructions (Orders ) in support of CD. Now municipal authorities consider people’s concerns and response to problems as a tremendous asset and a good reserve for improving quality of municipal services. The attitude to local initiatives became more positive. The state recognises the importance and encourages community work in many ways: information, programmes to educate community leaders and managers, President’s Grants and local subsidies for local projects. This “pink” picture however cannot hide serious problems and key barriers: lack of trust to local authorities combined with local populations’ paternalistic expectations, deficit of community management skills and professionals, and no university BA or MS programmes in CD. The recognition is still not enough, and more initiatives by residents are needed. Nevertheless, the CD’s and TOSs’ role became more visible, and their actual scope and scale became much broader.