



The Florida State University
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2280
International Graduate Program in Urban and Regional Planning
Department of Urban and Regional Planning
(850) 644-4510

“Seeds of Hope 2011”

A pro bono basis contribution to the Republic of Panamá Boca La Caja, Panama City, District of Panama

The “2009 **Seeds of Hope**” program provided a participatory **revitalization plan** for the Community of Boca La Caja in the Republic of Panama. The **Boca la Caja Revitalization Plan** emphasized four distinct components derived from a sustainable development approach on urban revitalization: **social capital strategies** to strengthen the community’s collective capacities and development values aimed at conquering the common good; **economic development** initiatives by residents to ensure economic sustainability and their access to opportunities; **public-private partnerships** between the community and the public and private sectors; and an **urban design and urban re-engineering** concept that seeks alternatives for the revitalization of the existing community.

Conclusions from the 2009 program suggest the success of the redevelopment plan will be determined by the community’s capacity to mobilize its residents and embrace the challenges set forth in the plan, including titling, safety, and a unified effort to bring the vision of the community to fruition. Central to the long-term economic improvement of the community is its future growth as a tourist destination and successful formulation and implementation of strong partnerships with public and private sector institutions.

The “2011 **Seeds of Hope**” program will attempt to provide the community of Boca La Caja with additional technical support and to further advice on key issues related to the implementation of the plan. A weak self-organization and consensus building; a stagnant titling program; increasing safety concerns and crime activity; and difficulties experienced by community leaders to communicate the concepts and specific alternatives related to the proposed plan, currently continue to challenge Boca La Caja, limiting its conditions to bring the vision of the community to fruition.

The 2011 program will further explore current conditions regarding social cohesion and will propose strategies and develop tools to help strengthen **social capital**. This component will provide support to help structure the **Junta Local** and to organize a **community cooperative** as proposed by the 2009 Seeds of Hope program. The component will also address issues related to public participation in **safety and crime prevention** programs.



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A strategy to further help establish institutional mechanism to reactivate and formalize the titling program is also expected to be offered by Seeds of Hope 2011. Similarly, specific mechanisms to promote favorable conditions for developing public-private partnerships are expected to be formulated.

A Spanish version of the 2009 report is currently being distributed among community leaders and a physical model of the revitalization plan will be provided to increase public participation in the urban design process and in the development of a community sustainable development strategy guiding such process. This particular component will play a crucial role in creating favorable conditions for increasing public participation and for sharing the vision of the community with key stakeholders and potential partners.

Proposed Teams¹

Social Capital

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