
The Basic Concept of the Resource-Potential Approach in Social Security in Russia and International Experience

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Abstract:

This paper provides an overview of the resource-potential approach in the modern system of social security in Russia and examines its key development trends: the potential of the state to organize the social security work in accordance with the changing social conditions and needs of the population, development of mechanisms required to change social values and norms, enact legislation, build infrastructure, provide funding and human resources that correspond to the resource potential of the social security object (an individual, a social group, a community), inconsistencies in this process and techniques used to support the population in need.

The results of the study confirm that the population protection system in Russia is built primarily on the principles of distribution, characterized by underdevelopment of social insurance mechanisms, as well as forms of self-sustainment of the population.

One of the tools for alteration of the current situation in terms of resource-potential approach is a technology, which, on the one hand, increases the level of responsibility of state social security structures for creating the necessary conditions of economic, organizational, technological and social nature, among which financial assistance, consultations of specialists, education of family members, children's medical treatment, health improvement and rehabilitation, regular monitoring of the results of individual programs implementation are of particular importance.

On the other hand, this technology promotes the increase in the degree of individual responsibility for a real change in the material and social status of the individuals and their families.

Keywords: Social security, social protection, social welfare, resource potential.

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1. Introduction

Transformation of the social structure in Russia at the end of XX – beginning of the XXI century is closely linked to the changed approach in defining the optimal development scenarios for the country. Researchers have taken a particular interest in the role of the modern system of social security in this process. Having analyzed a number of sources, the authors of this paper believe that the objective of the social security system is to meet the needs of an individual and those of the society, increasing living standards of the object of social security (individual, group, community) through realization of their resource potential to ensure their effective adaptation to the new environment.

The authors propose to define the above as a resource-potential approach. The subject matter of this paper is related to a number of contradictions in the process of development, transformation and reformation of the Russian system of social security.

The main contradiction is based around the discrepancy between the needs of low-income groups of population, their social status, expectations and the actual state of the social security system. The attempts to resolve this contradiction have led to a decrease in the living standards of the population by more than 50%, according to the national statistics. The actual income of 60% of the respondents constitutes 20-25% in comparison with the beginning of the 1990s (Social legislation in Russia and in the UK, 2015). The society was divided into the rich and the poor over a short period of time. In this respect, it is quite logical that the population expects the social modern security system, primarily, to cater for their basic needs without investing their own resource potential in this process. The authors define the resource potential of an object of the social security as a sum of the individual's resources that are available in two conditions: actual (active) or potential (passive). The integral criteria for assessing the resource potential take into consideration the current state of this potential of the individual, on the one hand, and, on the other, their capacity to activate it, which, in its turn, encourages a proactive behavior and contributes to the growth of a social status and the role of the object in the society.

The second contradiction defining reformation of the modern system of social security in Russia is related to the inconsistency of its processes. On the one hand, the requirements for updating the structure, functions and activities of the social security system are governed by the national legislation, strategies, programs and other regulations and are mandatory for all the regions of the Russian Federation. On the other hand, the conditions for implementing the above are far from identical, depending on significant differences between the regions and irregular development and distribution of social services across the country.

The third contradiction is associated with the inefficiency of the national forms of social security implementation that are mainly represented by monetary allowance

that, as it happens, does not protect individuals from difficulties but achieves quite the contrary and weakens their desire to solve problems themselves and, as the level of support from the state increases, the individuals are even less motivated to improve their financial situation. This contradiction demonstrates the value of the individuals' own resource potential and ability to increase their level of independence and responsibility for their welfare.

The purpose of this study was to analyze the content and essence of the resource-potential approach in the context of the modern system of social protection of the population, as well as the current state of the social security system in Russia, the existing contradictions and trends in the aspect of the resource-potential approach. The results of an expert survey of the employees of the Perm Krai Social Protection System (2013) and a comparative analysis of the level and quality of life of the participants in the Self-Sustainment Program (2014) were used as the research materials.

Thus, the authors consider determining the level and nature of the individuals' resource potential for the purpose of activating it and transforming it into self-sustainment, self-development, self-actualization resources to be the main task of the resource-potential approach, as exemplified by the Russian and international realities to illustrate the differences. The integrated use of technologies that take into account both the resource potential of those in need and the resource potential of the social security system itself seems the most effective method for implementing the resource-potential approach. Methods of research that have been used when writing this paper include analysis, synthesis, specific empirical observations and generalization.

The possibility of implementing a resource-potential approach in the practice of social security of the population was analyzed by the authors of the study on the basis of comparing the results of the introduction of the "Self-sustainment of families living in rural areas" technology successfully implemented in the Perm region and the Tyumen region, the author of this article being one of the developers of this technology. The above technology contributes, on the one hand, to increasing the level of responsibility of state social security structures for creating the necessary conditions of an economic, organizational, technological and social nature, among which financial assistance, specialist advice, training of family members, medical treatment, health improvement and rehabilitation of children, regular monitoring of the results of individual programs implementation. On the other hand, this technology helps increase the degree of individual responsibility for a real change in the material and social status of individuals and their families (Zamaraeva, 2014).

Comparative analysis of the level and quality of life of the program participants at the time of joining the project and at the time of completion of participation in it showed that the participants' quality of life has improved markedly by every measure. For example, the proportion of participants significantly limiting

themselves due to a shortage of funds in meat or fish products (reporting almost no consumption or consumption no more than twice a week) has decreased from 72% to 33%; the proportion of participants, who could not afford to provide themselves with clothing and footwear, has decreased from 71% to 33%; the proportion of participants, who had to refuse to buy necessary drugs because of lack of funds, fell from 63% to 35%. The program participants generally began to assess their own well-being more highly. The study presents the acquired knowledge, skills and abilities that contribute to raising the standard of living and social status in people of the working age who, for many reasons, are not inclined to change their resource-dependent position as the indicators assessing the changes in the average level of the resource potential of social security objects (Zamaraeva, 2014; Vasin *et al.*, 2017).

When assessing the conditions for implementing the resource-potential approach in the current social security system, the authors of the study relied on the results of an expert survey of the employees of the system for social protection of the Perm Krai population, conducted in 2013. The research approach was built with the focus on the practitioners (Austin *et al.*, 2014). This survey enabled to find the key factors influencing the growth or reduction of the ability of the social security system to act simultaneously as a public resource, which will be available to the needy citizens. Conducting sociological studies is necessary within the framework of social protection, which facilitates the search for solutions to the problems (Lindblom and Cohen, 1979). In this research the authors proceed from understanding of the social work as an integrative discipline, where it is supposed to use comprehensive methods of sociology, statistics and psychology (Brekke, 2014; Fook, 2002).

2. Research results and discussion

The phenomenon of social security as described by academics and field practitioners in Russia turns out to be rather complex and ambiguous and is primarily associated with the application focus, whereby social security is viewed either in its wider meaning, as a set of national measures providing social protection of the whole population in the key spheres of life (a wide approach), or, in its narrow sense, as a system of national social security measures aimed at the low-income and most deprived groups of population. Both in theory and in practice this approach is conditioned by traditions, culture, organizational, political and historical backgrounds, and economic development of a particular country (Cristea and Thalassinos, 2016; Thalassinos and Pociovalisteanu, 2019; Stroeva *et al.*, 2016).

Starting from the 90s of the last century, the structure of the social security system in Russia became fragmented and represented a number of activities associated with social insurance, social security, social services, and social aid. In such conditions, it was difficult to single out any particular trends in the formation of the social security system, because it was far from being organized and structured which is accounted for by a number of factors.

Firstly, the process of the social security system formation is heavily affected by the state and does not receive enough support from civil society institutions, particularly the population itself.

Second, the infrastructure of the social security system in Russia has a random nature, is contradictory and does not follow the trends of the international practice.

Third, the mechanisms for providing support to the population are not fully developed. The objects of social security mainly include low-income individuals, whose average income is lower than a minimum living wage resulting in social complacency and discouraging the individual from achieving self-sufficiency. At the same time, this means that other individuals who have potential to achieve self-sufficiency but are currently facing certain challenges in life have limited opportunities to apply for social aid.

Fourth, the social security system is characterized by a lack of forms of its implementation. The most popular forms are related to providing support to single elderly people (as opposed to children or disabled individuals). The more efficient and cost-effective forms of social security implementation that help individuals to adapt to new conditions and recover as well as preventive measures are not fully developed. The “on demand” nature of the social security services has prevented them from being duly marketed and promoted. Available social services, including specialized infrastructure, are not being offered to the general public as paid services.

Fifth, staffing policies in the social security system remain rudimentary and are characterized by a low level of professionalism amongst the personnel (Zamaraeva, 2014).

To illustrate the above, the results of the following expert survey could be used. When asked “How do you evaluate the potential of the staff in the social security system?”, 10% of the respondents gave it a high mark, 82.5% assessed it as average, and there were no low estimates. The “I do not know” answer was provided by 2.5%. The main reasons for these results were as follows: low wages (63.6%), a lack of national, federal and regional staff training and retraining programs (45.5%), a lack of motivation amongst the personnel to continue their professional development (27.3%), a low level of satisfaction from performing their duties (13.6%), insufficient staff rotation (4.5%) (The results of the expert survey of the personnel in the social security system of the Perm region, 2013). Thus, the system of social security in Russia is predominantly based on distribution is characterized by the basic nature of the mechanisms of social insurance as well as forms of self-sufficiency.

The above list of factors that affect the modern social security system is not exhaustive. According to the authors, the key factor is that the social security system activities are not sufficiently targeting social and individual needs of the population in its own right; it is only aimed to satisfy the needs of the state. To resolve the above problems the social security system needs new forms and strategies of development. The authors believe that applying the resource-potential approach in managing the social security system shall contribute to its ability to transform and focus on the results.

The authors of this paper describe their own concept of the resource-potential approach viewing the social security system as a relatively sustainable form of collaboration of individuals, social organizations and state authorities, authorized to provide social aid and social insurance, meeting individual and social needs of the population with a view of increasing the standard of living of the objects of social security based on fulfilling their resource potential. The phenomenon of a resource approach in sociology is not new. First and foremost, it is represented as an alternative concept of society stratification as opposed to the traditional views and was expressed mainly by Bourdieu (2004) and other researchers. According to this theory, all these concepts are explicitly or implicitly based around resources like assets and capital.

Bourdieu's idea of the forms of capital is the most popular concept in the literature analyzed for this research in the context of the resource approach to the theory of stratification (class distinction). Continuing the search for new forms of capital that was initiated by Becker (1993) and that reflected their condition in the modern age, Bourdieu (2004; 1992) singled out three main forms of capital – economic, cultural and social. He defined the social capital as *“the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition”* (Bourdieu, 1992).

It should be noted that Russian sociologists Shkaratan (2003) and Tikhonova (2006), amongst others, are currently defining the resource approach as a modern framework that provides a theoretical and methodological foundation to separate the resource potential from the forms of capital in relation to the theory of social stratification.

However, methods that help an individual or a social group to fulfill their potential are becoming more and more valuable in establishing social independence. Studying life situations and challenges that the population is facing by applying scientific, methodological and theoretical frameworks, scholars have recently been turning to qualitative methods of research. The works that have made the biggest impact on the development of the scientific thought in this direction included the concepts of independent living by Kim (1997), social constructivism by Berger (1995) and Luckmann (Berger and Luckmann, 2005) incorporating and synthesizing the ideas of G. Simmel, M. Webber, G.H. Mead, E. Goffman, A. Schutz. In the authors' opinion,

the most attractive works are those focusing on the problems of challenging life conditions in the context of activating the potential of a particular individual. The authors point out the research conducted by Schukina (2001), Yarskaya-Smirnova (2002) and Mironova (2004) as most interesting.

A complex approach to the problem of resource potential of the individual, in the authors' view, can be found in the concept of vital forces of the individual developed by Grigoryev (2006). In terms of the discussed theory, vital forces have two sides – internal and external. The external side reflects vital forces of the individual in various forms of their activities. The internal side reflects the overall energy potential that is later used in various types of external activities of the individual.

In view of the above, this concept, on the one hand, brings our attention to the state of the resources of the individual as a bio-psycho-social living being characterized by certain biological, psychological and social potential, respective health, and, on the other, as a subject of life-sustaining activities in all major areas of social activity, i.e. those related to industry, economics, society, politics, everyday life, culture and environment.

Nevertheless, the analysis of relevant sources shows that most scholars, when studying the mechanisms for projecting social behavior of the individual in different life situations are less concerned about any particular technologies and methods used by the individuals to fulfill their resource potential, particularly from the point of view of the social security system. For a long time, the most popular social security paradigm was the principle of national paternalism that cultivated such values as equality in receiving benefits, expecting support from the government, etc. However, in the last few years, scholars are more focusing on a different set of values and norms, which are applicable in a liberal market economy whereby encouraging the individuals to fulfill their potential, regain independence and self-sufficiency, have become most valuable.

According to the authors, the national system of social security is aimed at individuals who tend to expect free social aid and are not prepared to make any efforts to improve their financial situation. To activate the individuals' resource potential, the objects of social security should be restructured in accordance with the criteria used to assess the individual's resource potential (low, average, and high) and a new set of methods should be introduced to ensure simultaneous application of the respective forms and technologies for social security implementation.

The resource-potential approach in the context of the social security system is viewed as a combination of techniques related to social activities that define the level and the nature of the resource potential of the individual with a view to activate it and transform into resources of self-sufficiency, self-development and self-realization aided by the potential of the system and of the society (Zamaraeva, 2014).

The resource-potential approach is designed to affect the development of values, norms, structure, functions and other elements of human life aimed at encouraging individuals to fulfill their resource potential, i.e. change their social status as well as their role in society by acquiring new values, norms and behavioral patterns as a basis for socialization (internalization).

When creating conditions to provide social aid to the disadvantaged, this approach addresses individual needs. This is achieved by ensuring a balance in relation to interests and needs, values, unity of mind and action that encourage an objective assessment of this or any other type of activity that an object of social security is involved in, the influence of the level of consciousness on the development of this activity, uniqueness of its form and consequences, etc.

For example, individuals that have a low level of resource potential (age, health, independent living and self-sufficiency skills, employment and profession, motivation to be self-sufficient, earning, etc.) receive social aid from the government in the form of a resource – monetary and non-monetary. This mainly includes such forms of social security provision as social benefits, allowances, accompanying services, independent living and self-sufficiency training.

Individuals with an average level of resource potential (the same list of criteria as above) are given an opportunity to achieve self-sufficiency and self-realization by implementing active measures that will help them adapt to the new circumstances and recover. In this instance, the most important forms of social security are those based on resource activation, namely acquiring a new profession, professional training, additional training, self-employment, etc.

Individuals with a high level of resource potential, but disadvantaged due to certain circumstances (temporary disability due to a long-term illness, loss of a job due to being laid off, migration, etc.), will benefit most from resource-developing forms of social security, for example, those that encourage transformation of the resource potential not only into an active resource, but into a resource of development (additional education and additional training for the purposes of promotion, entrepreneurship, etc.).

As a passive reserve, the resource potential of an individual can be calculated by assessing the potential that has been activated by the individual and the potential that has not been activated. The following criteria can be used to assess the resource potential of a disadvantaged individual:

- employability (unrestricted);
- education (higher, college, etc.);
- financial security (low, average, high);
- willingness to acquire new expertise and new skills;
- motivation to increase their level of self-sufficiency;

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- motivation to find employment;
 - motivation to support others;
 - support from friends, relatives, children, neighbors;
 - support from social services and other social organizations;
 - support from communal organizations, etc.

The resource potential of an individual as a passive reserve can be assessed using a formula introduced by Dobrokhleb (2004), who used six factors to evaluate the resource potential:

$$P_r = 1/6 (P_h + P_{age} + P_m + P_f + P_s + P_{in}),$$

where P_r is resource potential, P_h – health potential, P_{age} – age potential, P_m – motivation potential, P_f – financial potential, P_s – social potential, P_{in} – institutional potential.

If the resource potential value is between 0 and 0.5, it is low. If the obtained ratio is higher than 0.5, it is deemed to be high. Initially, it was suggested that an average value was calculated for each of the above six types of resource potential taking into account the gender and the age of the individuals and regarded as an average value of all its components which is used to obtain initial figures for each of the six types as well as preliminary consolidated criteria for resource potential. This approach is rather simple, because, when applied, it helps assess the status or integrity of a certain type of potential. At the same time, this data helps identify opportunities for individuals to fulfill their resource potential by implementing respective means in the social security system of the country. An individual's resource potential can be analyzed in relation to the particular technologies employed (resource-saving, resource-activating and resource-developing).

Resource-saving technologies in the social security system can be applied to individuals with a low level of resource potential (the disabled, the elderly, and children). These techniques are designed to develop expertise and skills required to increase their independent living skills and the level of self-sufficiency, and, subsequently, their social status and social role in the society. Implementation of the above techniques requires conditions whereby the elderly and the disabled can make full use of a whole range of services stipulated by law regardless of their previous economic and social contributions, as well as get actively involved in the social communal activities.

On a macro-level, this means developing society-focused laws, targeted integrated programs and implementing policies and strategies in relation to the elderly, the disabled and the children. On a medium-level, it means developing social programs, laws that are relevant to this particular region. On a micro-level, it means taking specific measures in the locations where the affected individuals live, including the actual activities of the social security system. Particularly, the elderly, the disabled

and other disadvantageded individuals or groups of population come together to volunteer and support each other by offering such services as home care nursing, social care, etc.

Resource-activating technologies in social security provision are usually applied to employable individuals with an average level of resource potential. Such technologies are based on the principles of individual and collective responsibility for increasing the level of social and economic security of the individual (family) in accordance with a social agreement that is signed with the social service authorities and the program designed to fulfill the stipulated terms.

An example of the above is a technology called “Self-sufficiency for families from rural areas” that is currently being implemented in the Perm Krai and in the Tyumen Oblast. Among the authors of this paper was one of the developers of this initiative. On the one hand, by implementing the above technology, the social security authorities create the necessary economic, organizational, technological and social conditions for financial support, expert consulting, education for family members, medical treatment, health improvement and rehabilitation for children, regular monitoring of individual programs. On the other hand, the aforementioned technology helps individuals to increase the level of responsibility for improving the financial and social status of their families (Zamaraeva, 2014).

The quantitative analysis of the standard of living of the program participants conducted between the beginning and the end of the project has demonstrated that their quality of life has significantly improved according to all measured criteria. For example, as mentioned above, the number of participants who could not afford to buy meat or fish (either did not buy it at all or only had it twice a week) has decreased from 72% to 33%. The number of participants who could not afford clothes and footwear has reduced from 71% to 33%. The number of participants who could not afford medication has decreased from 63% to 35%. Upon the completion of this program, the participants evaluated their overall welfare higher than before.

The criteria that were used in the above initiative to assess the dynamics of the resource potential of the objects of the social security system are represented by the acquired skills and expertise that contribute to the increase of the standard of living and a social status of employable individuals who, due to a number of reasons, are not prepared to change their resource-dependent condition (Zamaraeva, 2014).

The resource-developing technologies that are used to support individuals with a high level of resource potential are based on mechanisms that help such individuals to increase their level of activity (social, employment, political), enhance their level of competency in all areas, acquire a wide range of skills and expertise and transform them into an active resource, i.e. resource of development. Such technologies are illustrated by national programs designed to develop human resources and aimed to create conditions for living a healthy life style, increasing the

individuals' level of education and professional qualifications, enhancing their motivation for employment and optimization of individual resources. This approach is based not only on the assessment of the resource potential of an individual but also on the evaluation of the resource potential of the actual system of social security and the resource potential of the society itself.

The research of the resource potential of the social security system is significant only when the functioning of the existing authorities (systems) contradicts the social reality and becomes an obstacle for duly fulfillment of the obligations aimed at satisfying the needs of the population.

The resource potential of the organization (institution) is activated only in a situation when it is destabilized and is no longer in compliance with the norms of the system and no longer corresponds to the norms of other systems existing in the same social environment. This means that the resource potential of the social security system in the society can be characterized by the following criteria: intensity (the level of legitimacy of the system in the society), influence dynamics (the increase of influence of the system in the society or reduction of this influence), authority (the level of importance of the values, social norms and social roles that constitute this system in the opinion of the population in general), stability and sustainability (consideration of the factors and resources that help the system function and develop consistently) (Vasilyeva, 2003).

To make use of the resource potential of the social security system means first and foremost to implement a new management style that combines development of respective legislative and financial conditions, new criteria to assess the effectiveness of this work, giving up ineffective conventional measures, supporting methods that lead to tangible results, switching to new financing mechanisms from network-based to individually tailored resulting in more accessible social services, optimizing resources of social security (tender-based distribution of the national budget and introducing other financing mechanisms, restructuring and optimizing the system, identifying priorities in consolidating the infrastructure, etc.), implementing new effective technologies to respond to the needs of the population, being able to find social partners, etc.

According to the resource-potential approach, the resource potential of the society is presented as a result of the changes in the social environment, reduced opportunity for the governmental authorities to provide support, willingness of the disadvantaged individuals to team up with other individuals in similar circumstances. On the other hand, it is a way to increase an individual's motivation to achieve self-sufficiency by participating in groups offering resources of self-help and mutual help, implementing local system resources that constitute a communal model of social security, by making use of the opportunities in the communal sector (Schukina, 2001).

The resource-saving technology can be illustrated by the independent living resource center Ottawa Carleton in Canada that is aimed to support individuals with a wide range of disabilities and provide the means required for them to fully participate in the life of the society and the main objective of this center is to enhance the resource potential of the individual. It is important to note that this organization has been created by the disabled, is managed by and caters for the disabled. The increase of the resource potential of the individuals has always been regarded as an opportunity for the disadvantaged individuals to develop skills that will assist them to make the right choice and take appropriate decisions (Heinson, 2006).

The leading principles in implementing this program included distribution of responsibility (the center is governed by a board of directors), hiring people with disabilities (both on a paid and voluntary basis), inviting the members of the organization to actively participate in the life of the center (the center encourages its members to participate in the development of resolutions, planning of programs and provision of services), involvement of various disabled persons (the center is open to individuals with various forms of disabilities), self-determination of disability (people are free to select a definition of their own disability), flexibility (staff and volunteers help the disabled under any circumstances) (Heinson, 2006). As can be seen, the main objectives of the center are focused on providing information, self-support, and research.

A good example of a resource-saving technology from the Soviet reality is a project called "String bag gives hope" that was initiated in the Soviet Union in the 1980s and is available these days. This initiative is aimed to provide the 100% blind persons with self-employment opportunities. Some people are capable of being useful to the society but cannot fulfill their potential due to the lack of employment opportunities. Traditionally, in the Soviet Union, it was predominantly the blind who were involved in the manufacturing of string bags. Moreover, using string bags means a long-term and environmentally friendly alternative to plastic bags. The social effect of this technology is demonstrated in providing employment opportunities for the blind as well as other categories of the disabled (deaf, people with limited mobility), increasing their living standards, supporting them whilst they are adjusting themselves to the environment, encouraging people to stop using plastic bags or use them less.

Another example of a resource-saving technology is a rehabilitation and employment program for the disabled called JobPath that was initiated in 2015 by the Ministry of Social Security of Ireland. This initiative provided employment opportunities for the disabled that found it difficult to get employed for a longer period of time (JobPath Project, 2015). Selection of a job is based around the potential, skills and interests of an individual taking into account the needs of a particular organization which results in employers equally respecting everyone's work regardless of individual physical or mental abilities. This initiative provided employment opportunities for people diagnosed with autism, Down syndrome,

epilepsy, mentally challenged individuals. This technique enables to involve friends and families who are interested in improving the quality of life of a particular person and contributing to their independence. When communicating with such individuals, relevant specialists assess their advantages, preferences, unique talents that are taken into consideration when selecting a job.

A resource-activating technology is illustrated by an international award-winning charity Working Chance that has been operating in London, United Kingdom, since 2007 and is offering rehabilitation and employment opportunities for women who have recently been released from prison (Working Chance Project, 2014). The unique objective of this organization is not only to provide employment opportunities to socially vulnerable groups of population, but also to change views of the society and the media about former convicts, to help the world get rid of stigmas. During 2013-2014, this organization provided 196 women with employment opportunities, 52 of them were employed on a voluntary basis, which, according to this charity, usually leads to a full-time job.

According to the data presented by this organization, providing employment for the unemployed women who have recently come out of prison is highly beneficial to the society overall. For example, keeping one woman in prison costs taxpayers 45,000 pounds sterling per year and their children – another 27,000 pounds sterling per year per child, whereas the cost of finding employment for such women constitutes only 3,000 pounds sterling which guarantees stability in their life and reduces the risk of re-offending in the future.

A good example of a resource-developing technology from the viewpoint of this concept is a program supporting former drug addicts – the Good Soil Project (2016) – a British work therapy initiative operating on the premises of the Top Barn farm that is located in the suburbs of Worcester, the United Kingdom. It was founded in 1991 and in 2010 it joined forces with two other charities – Worcester City Mission and Worcester Word of Life. This big private farm that is mainly used for agricultural purposes positions itself as a resort and is actively attracting locals from Worcestershire and tourists to come and discover local flora and fauna and spend time together in a fun and active way. Top Barn offers such activities as meeting local animals, kayaking on a local lake, picnics, parties and other types of entertainment.

The Good Soil project is implemented right here offering individuals who need help an opportunity to work on the farm. These are mainly unemployed, homeless, people with a drink and/or drug problem, former criminals and individuals with psychological disorders. The Good Soil initiative is supported by the Hope project and the St. Paul's hostel. This program is aimed to engage people in outdoor activities related to a farm life and to provide them with comfortable conditions giving them an opportunity to be confident and fulfill their potential. Individuals who come to visit this farm are able to make use of the following types of support:

meaningful and useful physical activity, production and consumption of healthy food, outdoor activities, honest relationships that are based on respect and inspiration.

The unique advantage of this program is that the participants of the Good Soil project do not differ from the farmers themselves and that is why they do not feel any inconvenience or discomfort. Moreover, people get paid for their work on this farm. The program is financed by the sales of the produce, charitable activities and organizations that are interested in supporting socially-focused initiatives.

Another example of a resource-developing technology and social entrepreneurship in supporting the homeless is non-for-profit organization DC Central Kitchen in the USA that was founded in 1989 and is responsible for the distribution of hot meals to the homeless and people going through a difficult time, children from low-income families. The unique feature of this project is that this organization employs the homeless (usually former convicts) (DC Central Kitchen Project, 2016). The organization aims at providing employment opportunities for the unemployed and the homeless who then do not only rebuild their own lives but also assist others to do the same. Currently, about 90% of the staff at DC Central Kitchen are former homeless people.

Having gained popularity and reputation, DC Central Kitchen is part nonprofit, part social business, with a multifaceted, multigenerational mission to reduce food waste and unemployment while combating hunger and isolation among older adults. DC Central Kitchen is one of the first organizations to take excess food from restaurants and hotels to create free meals for the hungry. The success of the model, along with several complementary endeavors and social enterprises that followed, made its founder Mr. Robert Egger a celebrity in Washington and beyond. Knowing that DC Central Kitchen offers work to former convicts, many businesses and individuals prefer to use their services.

The most remarkable finding of this research is that the majority of examples demonstrating support provided to the disadvantaged groups of population are represented rather by charities, private businesses, and individuals than by the state authorities. This means that the resource-potential approach is more effective if applied in the conditions of interpersonal relations, mutual support and compassion. It becomes obvious that such assistance is more effective if it is offered by individuals who have a lot in common with the disadvantaged.

3. Conclusions, proposals, recommendations

As the standard of living of the population increases, it becomes apparent that the demand for the resource-potential approach in the social security system in Russia is conditioned by a number of discrepancies in the process of its reformation and transformation. The authors of the paper single out three key aspects: 1) the

discrepancy between the needs of low-income groups of the population, their status, expectations and the state of the social security system overall; 2) the inconsistency of the processes that are taking place in this system, accounted for by significant differences between the provisions of the legislation and regional mechanisms for their implementation; 3) the lack of forms of social security implementation that encourage self-development and self-sufficiency amongst the disadvantaged.

The authors name five factors that have a significant impact on the state of the social security system in Russia: 1) an excessively high level of involvement of the state in the process of the social security system development and insufficient participation of civil society institutions, particularly, the population itself; 2) unsystematic and contradictory nature of the legislation in respect of social security as well as its non-compliance with the international regulations and their implementation; 3) inefficiency of the mechanisms used in social security implementation; 4) a lack of forms of social security implementation; 5) shortage of qualified personnel accompanied by a low level of professionalism amongst the staff in this industry.

The analysis of the selected literature leads to a conclusion that all Russian and international researchers consider resources to be most important for social security adhering to such terms as social capital, resource potential, concept of the independent living, social constructivism, concept of vital forces. With the development of the social security system in Russia, the authors believe that the most appropriate way to solve the problem of individuals going through a difficult time is by making use of their resource potential. This mainly stems from the traditional approach whereby, for a long time, the social security system has been mainly based on the principles of state support that cultivated such concepts as unrestricted public access to the benefits, expectation of assistance from the state, etc.

However, in the modern market economy, a new system of values and norms emerges whereby the most important principle in providing social security tends to be encouraging an individual to become independent and self-sufficient. In the system of national social security, the resource-potential approach is viewed by the authors as a combination of technologies applied to the individuals' social activity that defines the level and nature of their resource potential which can be activated and transformed into a resource of self-sufficiency, self-development and self-realization simultaneously making use of the potential of the system and of the community.

A detailed review of experience gained by the practitioners in Russia and in other countries when implementing the resource-potential approach in the system of social security has enabled the authors to analyze and compare leading international trends in an attempt to identify the most suitable solutions for the Russian environment. As the Russian economic, political and social environments continue to go through significant changes, applying the resource-potential model in the social security

system provides the tools to preserve the invaluable experience acquired over the centuries and optimize the existing processes, develop and introduce new, more effective techniques and forms of social security implementation in Russia.

The most remarkable finding of this research is that the majority of examples of assistance provided to the disadvantaged groups of the population have been demonstrated rather by charities, SMEs and individuals than by the state authorities, as mentioned above. This means that the resource-potential model is most effective when applied on a peer-to-peer basis whereby the disadvantaged are supported by individuals who show empathy, genuine concern and compassion. It becomes evident that such support brings more benefit if provided by people who have a lot in common with their dependents.

Unfortunately, the scope of this research is limited to a selective analysis and a brief description of the technologies used in providing social security to the population. The authors believe that it would be beneficial to carry out a detailed review of the transition of the social security system from traditional forms to those typical of a liberal market economy as a case study of a country that is developing in a way similar to that of Russia. It would also be appropriate to compare two or three countries (entities) that have used different methods to apply the resource-potential approach in managing their social security system, to define the most/least effective forms of supporting the population.

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