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## POINTS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

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## **PUBLIC POLICIES FOR TERRITORIAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

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### **1. The current situation: What is happening?**

Over the last three decades, there has been a substantive change in policies to increase production in the different urban, rural, industrial, agricultural and service sectors, tending progressively towards a design in which territorial aspects have become increasingly important, with the goal of achieving greater efficacy and efficiency in the actions taken. Likewise, the design of these policies has sought public-private co-operation, stimulating the participation of the different agents involved and civil society as a whole in the different territories.

In this way, old sectoral policies defined by the central administration have progressively incorporated a territorial design, since substantive issues of economic development, such as the introduction of innovation in productive methods, the training of human resources for employment and the inclusion of environmental sustainability, are aspects that require a different approach in different territories since, respectively, they require the supply of technical knowledge to be linked with producers, that training be oriented towards productive needs in each territory and a search for sustainable means of production and consumption.

As indicated, in both urban and rural areas, the focus of territorial economic development has grown in importance and, as a result, organisations have also appeared which are responsible for the application of the policies agreed by the different agents in the different territories. An example of these are *Local or Regional Development Agencies*. This document attempts to organise the main ideas involved in these processes, which have been implemented to a much greater extent in developed countries than in less developed countries.

In general, the widespread predominance of policies of deregulation and free market forces have considerably set back a learning process which, in practice, requires coordinated action by the different actors in each of their territories or, in other words, it has delayed the inclusion of the territorial dimension in the design of policies to increase production. These policies must overcome the sectoral focus in order to gain efficacy and efficiency in their implementation. It should be recalled that those approaches -guided by the conventional economy- have, in practice, had a very negative impact, contributing to the destruction of a large part of the business fabric, especially local micro-enterprises and SMEs, and this has considerably limited progress in the fight against poverty and inequity.



## 2. Challenges to be met

The new focus of policies to increase production and for business development is related to the factors to be found in the current restructuring and structural change being seen in the world economy, based on the spread of new information and communication technologies, which are a “key factor” in the new techno-economic paradigm (Pérez, 1986). This structural change is oriented towards the incorporation of innovations in production (technological, management, social and institutional innovations) which represent a greater added value of knowledge and backing for quality and differentiation through production organisation models which complement the traditional generalised, sectoral focus, with growing valorisation of *territorial environments*, in order to ensure local conditions which favour the incorporation of productive and labour innovations.

The identification of sectoral clusters of companies in the territory, the creation of networks and cooperation between companies and the search for *economies of scope* based on the quality and differentiation of products, the efficient operation of the local labour market and the creation of territorial innovation systems are, among others, fundamental aspects of this new policy to encourage production and business development, which attaches decisive importance to the incorporation of innovation, business cooperation, development of the skills and capacities of workers, companies and territories, business and technological management and the training of human resources in line with the requirements of the different territorial productive profiles.

The interaction between these factors has, then, given rise to a new focus of policies to encourage production in which the institutions representing business and trade unions have new functions which they perform together with the micro-enterprises and SMEs which are present in the territorial clusters, with central, regional, provincial and municipal government authorities, and with the knowledge sector, that is, universities, education and technical assistance.

In short, the structural change and the greater competitive demands arising in the context of globalisation, together with the international economic integration processes under way, have altered competition, leading to the emergence of a new focus on the improvement of production and business development, which raises the question of the new role of territorial public administrations and the need for public-private agreements as components of this new policy focus.

In this context, the new policy to increase production and for business developments must, in the widest sense, and looking beyond the problems of large companies, offer a vision of the future aimed also at *local productive systems* as a whole, in order to create and guarantee conditions that will lead to the strengthening of the productive base in the different territories, without being limited, therefore, to traditional sectoral policies aimed at the conversion, promotion and improvement of specific sectors.

### 3. New ideas, strategies, proposals and tools or instruments in the territories

Over the last few decades, international experience has shown a number of changes in industrial policy<sup>1</sup> which include new contents, new mechanisms and new strategies of intervention.

#### a) New content of industrial policy

With respect to the *new content of industrial policy*, the following should be noted:

- The importance of *micro-economic industrial policies* as a complement to macro-economic actions, which are usually the main focus of attention of countries' economic policies and the media.
- The *proactive nature of public actions* in the field of industrial policy, rather than its traditionally passive nature, based on financial incentives and subsidies.
- The growing *interdependence of industry and services*, which means that industrial competitiveness depends as much on direct productive activities as on the services related to production.
- The relevance of *cross-sectoral policies*, aimed at creating territorial environments which are favourable to the competitiveness of companies.

The most important *cross-sectoral* policies are:

- The *training of human resources* and professional qualification and specialisation in line with the potential and opportunities of each local productive system.
- The priority given to the *promotion of micro-enterprises and SMEs*, which form the greater part of the business fabric of all countries, and which have a very significant impact on the growth of the internal market, on job creation and on the generation of

income for a large part of the population.

- The establishment of permanent links between the knowledge sector (universities, consultancy and technical assistance services, among others) and micro-enterprises and SMEs, which demand those services. In other words, the establishment of relationships which ensure the incorporation of innovations in all territorial spheres.
- Adequate attention to the specific environmental characteristics of each territory, in order to design environmentally sustainable policies which are not limited to preventing environmental impacts and the provision of natural resources, but which promote *eco-efficient production*, *organic production* and the *recycling* and *reuse* of waste, as a decision of the territory, in the conviction that the current model of production and consumption is unsustainable.

As can be appreciated, these are measures which are aimed at creating *territorial environments* which are favourable to innovative development and the promotion of new companies and employment, an area in which organisations representing business and workers are able to promote productive articulation and development actions in a wide range of policies, participating actively in the public-private elaboration of territorial development strategies and facilitating inter-institutional coordination in policies to improve production.

Other cross-sectoral measures in the framework of the new industrial policy refer to aspects such as:

- The improvement of *access to information* about innovation, technology, products, production processes, markets and competition and technical assistance for the evaluation of project viability in micro-enterprises and SMEs in the different territories.
- *Technical assistance for micro-enterprises and SMEs* in order to facilitate productive partnerships between them, and the assimilation of new technologies, the incorporation of productive and management innovations and access to more exacting markets.

<sup>1</sup> The term "industrial" is understood in the wider, Anglo-Saxon sense of productive transformation, whatever the sector of economic activity. The expression *industrial policy* is therefore used in this document as a synonym for policy for increasing production and for business development.

- A *tax structure* that encourages investment in research and development for innovation, the acquisition of new equipment and which encourages eco-efficiency and clean production.
- Increasing the number of students and their level in technological specialities, and greater *social standing for occupational training and the role of innovative entrepreneurs*.
- Improvement of *basic infrastructure and facilities* which improve the productivity of companies in the territories.
- An *appropriate legal framework* for the development of micro-enterprises and SMEs.

As can be seen, “multilevel” policies are needed, together with efficient coordination between the actions taken by the public administrations at different territorial levels, in cooperation with the private sector.

The importance attached to the deployment of cross-sectoral policies does not detract from the relevance of sectoral policies nor that of other policies that central governments must continue to apply (regulation of the labour market, environmental protection, etc.). However, it can be seen that the concept of the sector is increasingly being replaced by a more integrated perspective of the elements on which business competitiveness depends. These are productive clusters, on the one hand, and the characteristics of an *innovative territorial environment*, on the other, which requires the traditional sectoral focus to be complemented with a territorial approach in order to encourage the spaces for public-private collaboration that this needs.

## b) New mechanisms

Together with the changes in the content, industrial policy has also seen significant transformation in the *mechanisms* used for its implementation, among which the following are of note:

- The use of territorial *decentralisation* mechanisms in the design of the policies to improve production and business, and in active employment policies.
- The relevance of *institutional coordination* between the different territorial levels of the public administration (central, regional, provincial and municipal).
- The importance of *public-private co-operation* between the socio-economic factors in the territory.

*Decentralisation* facilitates better knowledge of the socio-economic and business reality in the territory and enables greater proximity between the stakeholders, their needs and specific circumstances. Likewise, this also increases their capacity to influence and mobilise, and facilitates territorial agreements for economic development and employment.

The more comprehensive knowledge of the economic, social and cultural reality that is gained from the proximity to the different territories makes it possible to design more specific policies to improve production and employment, based on the cooperation of large companies with local micro-enterprises and SMEs, and with support institutions, trade unions or associations of workers and all of the regional and local authorities. In this way, it is possible substantively to increase the capacity to mobilise existing human and material resources more efficiently, allowing the exploitation of the advantages of policies designed to meet the needs and potential of each territory.

The territorial authorities (regional, provincial and municipal) become potential players in the conception and implementation of policies to improve production and for business development, so that it is no longer the exclusive monopoly of the central state governments.



We must repeat, however, that the fact that regional or local governments take responsibility under mechanisms to reinforce the efficiency of policies to improve production and for business development does not mean that central government actions are any less relevant. This is why *institutional coordination* between the different levels of the public administrations is a fundamental issue in the new mechanisms for policies to improve production and business development, especially in the context of globalisation, which is more competitive and, therefore, requires efficient organisation based on a greater degree of coordination and cooperation in the field of technological, organisational and institutional innovation.

Specifically, some of the strategic responsibilities in the field of policies to improve production and business management can remain at central government level, sharing some of the functions aimed at creation of territorial environments that are favourable to business innovation with regional or provincial authorities, while those functions which require a more direct, fluid contact with the companies can be more easily taken on by territorial authorities in order to achieve the greater efficiency that this brings and the definition of the *public-private co-operation* that is needed between the public sector, the private business sector and the knowledge sector in each territory.

This approach will require, therefore, sufficient maturity in relationships between the public sector and the private business sector, with each party taking on their respective roles. In the public sphere, it is a matter of facilitating, among other things, decisive aspects such as:

- The opening of spaces for dialogue and agreement between the actors in the different territories;
- The mobilisation and participation of those actors to discuss the territorial development strategies and the construction of the *social capital* and *governance* required by these processes;
- The provision and quality of basic infrastructure and facilities;
- The construction of territorial human resource training systems and territorial research, development and innovation (R&D&i) systems.

For its part, the private business sector and workers' organisations must play their roles in the organisation of production, seeking the efficiency of existing relationships in the productive chain and clusters in their respective territorial spheres. None of this occurs spontaneously through the action of market forces, but neither can the design and launch of an industrial policy be conceived without the active participation of the users, that is, entrepreneurs and trade unions, who are those who must, in practice, face the demands of today's structural change in a context of greater market demands for competitiveness.

This naturally requires that priority be given to *public-private co-operation* as another of the fundamental mechanisms of the new industrial and business development policy, which in practice means the introduction of changes in the predominant culture and social dynamics, since all of these tasks are a general question, not a private interest.

And so, the application of new mechanisms of the business development, employment and industrial policy is translated into actions aimed at constructing *territorial environments* which are favourable to the incorporation of innovations in the different local productive systems, thereby generating productive opportunities. In turn, this requires an active employment policy at territorial level, which ensures the capacity of the human resources to exploit those opportunities.

In this way, the quest for business and territorial efficiency must be guided by the objectives of *social inclusion*, that is, the improvement of the working conditions and the quality of human resources. These are functional objectives for the achievement of future advantages by today's knowledge-based society.

The importance of public-private co-operation between the mechanisms of the new business development and industrial policy requires, therefore, that we recognise the opportunity to promote the necessary *all-party territorial agreements* and the creation of intermediating institutions in order to facilitate the identification of the underlying demand for innovation in the business fabric of each territory and to offer an efficient supply of business development services and employment services at all times.

### c) New intervention strategies

As indicated previously, together with the traditional sectoral policy, the new focus of industrial policy for business development and employment pays special attention to cross-sectoral policies for the improvement of the territorial environment where the networks of companies and productive chains are located. As we have seen, of special importance in this respect is the introduction of productive innovation and the creation of new companies and new business cooperation networks, the training of qualified human resources and accompanying active employment policies, in order to ensure economic and social cohesion.

All of this is further reinforced, in view of the growing number of challenges facing *energy and environmental policies*, by the need to progress more resolutely in the field of *renewable energies*, given the demands of the new industrial and technological conversion process that is occurring with the increasing incorporation of *eco-efficient production*, clean production and ecological production (Fussler, 1998).

In this regard, being aware of the importance of technology as a key factor in competitiveness, we can summarise some of the main lines of action of the new policy strategies:

- The importance of policies to support *innovation and sustainable development*, at both central and territorial level.
- The creation of *Local or Regional Development Agencies*, as mixed, public-private organisations of an essentially technical nature, to apply the strategies adopted by agreement between the different territorial actors, in order to implement measures to diversify and transform production in the territory, and also measures related to observatories of local labour markets and employment service provision.

With regard to the former, there is a clear need to guide the potential offered by national Science and Technology systems towards the strengthening, promotion and coordination of *territorial innovation systems*, attempting to avoid the frequent disconnection between activities to incorporate and apply productive innovations, on the one hand, and the habitual routines

of scientists, which are often focused exclusively on the production of articles for publication in journals of supposed academic excellence, but which are of little or no practical application in the incorporation of specific innovations, since they do not ensure the relationship between the territorial actors.

As we can see, regions or territories in general can use new instruments to enhance production and employment, such as *Local or Regional Development Agencies*, for the purpose of incorporating their specific productive and employment profile into their development strategies. This strategic selectivity is particularly important in order to achieve greater efficacy and efficiency in the application of instruments to promote local productive systems and prioritise investment in business infrastructure and innovation support networks.

#### d) The link between industrial policy and territorial development

Business development and industrial policies have, then, the final aim of broadening business activities and improving the competitiveness of the business fabric. These policies therefore include a wide variety of actions, such as the regulation of certain markets, specific training to improve the qualification of human resources, the provision of specific infrastructure and business development services for small and medium-sized enterprises and the establishment of financial, tax or other incentives to promote innovative entrepreneurship.

But, together with the wide range of *supply side* actions, there is also the aim of identifying the needs of the demand for modernisation and transformation of production among micro-enterprises and SMEs, which, on their own, would have great difficulty in meeting those needs.

Experience in Western Europe in the design of this kind of policy, coming under the more generic expression of *industrial policy*, can teach some very useful lessons, not in order to imitate them, but in order to consider an integrated approach to business and territorial policies.

Over recent decades, the different countries of the European Union have implemented an active industrial and business innovation policy (focused mainly on SMEs) and rural development and sustainable development policies *in combination with a renewed territorial development policy*. In practice, this matrix of policies and instruments condenses into a learning process in which the main lesson learned has been, very possibly, that of the territorial contextualisation of business development, employment and industrial policies, to bring greater efficacy and efficiency.

In other words, this has brought the need to progress from the traditional *sectoral* approach of these policies to a fundamentally *cross-sectoral* and *indirect* approach, attempting at all times to encourage the efficient operation of markets and sharing responsibility between companies and the public sector, with the latter taking the leading role, the role of creating a territorial environment that is favourable to improved production, moving beyond simple sectoral approaches.

This *cross-sectoral and territorial approach* deploys a series of priority actions to reinforce business competitiveness through different fundamental strategic axes:

- *The promotion of intangible investment* to introduce quality and technological and management innovations, and to facilitate the qualification of human resources in line with the requirements of local productive systems and the local labour market.
- *The development of business cooperation and expansion into external markets*, facilitating the framework so that the economic agents can find areas for collaboration, especially between SMEs.
- *The promotion of equitable rules of competition*, which justify the priority given to support for SMEs, not just for reasons of equity and regional development, (given their importance from the employment and income-generating perspective and their presence throughout the territory), but also in order to match their competitiveness in the market with that of large enterprises.
- *The modernisation of the Public Administrations*. Traditional administrative practices and public management organised through sectoral Ministries with a centralised structure do not meet the requirements for competitiveness demanded of business and productive activities, nor the cross-sectorality of policies that this supposes. This requires the modernisation of the structure, operation and means of intervention of public bodies, which implies greater decentralisation, the redefinition of the objectives of public service, greater agility in administrative procedures and greater transparency, among other measures to reform public administration activity, with the purpose of finding areas of joint responsibility together with the private sector so that the greater objectives of improved production, business development and employment in the territory can be achieved.

## 4. Local/Regional Development Agencies

For several decades, *regional policy* in developed countries has been applied through actions whose design and implementation usually involve the participation of the different territorial levels of the public administration, attempting also to involve the private business sector and the “knowledge sector”, which includes the areas of education, skill-building and technical assistance. Regional development policy therefore includes actions arising at the municipal, provincial, regional and central state levels as well as, in some cases, supranational involvement as occurs in the countries of the European Union.

In the implementation of these policies, Local and Regional Development Agencies are very important *instruments*. They are not-for-profit organisations funded by public money and whose purpose is to promote the development of a certain area or region, for which they are provided with skilled technical personnel to act as intermediaries and deliver the offer of *business development services* to the local business fabric, especially micro-enterprises and SMEs, in order to encourage the diversification and transformation of production and job creation in the territory.

*Local and Regional Development Agencies* are, then, intermediary organisations which operate between the different public and private territorial social agents which, in this way, participate in a new way of implementing production development policy in the different territories. The goal is to provide micro-enterprises, SMEs and local co-operatives with advanced technical infrastructure which provides a raft of solutions and services that they, alone, would have difficulty in accessing, given their size, reluctance to cooperate and the inappropriate design and remoteness of the promotion instruments offered by the central government.

The main objective of the Agencies is to promote territorial development through the activation and valorisation of local human, natural, technical, economic and financial resources. This does not exclude the possibility of attracting other external resources. For this reason, the Agencies and strategic territorial plans are important instruments for channelling inward investment towards activities which strengthen the dynamics of endogenous development, that is, that each territory or region should

make the most efficient use possible of their socio-economic development potential.

All in all, the Agencies are essentially technical organisations whose mission is local economic development and the creation of jobs in their area of activity, to which end they promote meaningful bonds between the public authorities and the different actors in the territory, in order to implement local or regional development strategies which have been agreed by consensus with those stakeholders.

Experience shows that the Agencies which enjoy greater solidity and institutional legitimacy are those which are mixed, public-private agencies, since this facilitates their conditions of governance, leading to the creation of the *territorial social capital* necessary for territorial agreements and trust between local actors.

There are also, however, exclusively public or private agencies. In the case of public agencies, they face the difficulty of generating complete trust among the business community and the danger of falling into a bureaucratic mode of operation subject to the political interests of the party in power. In the latter case, they run the risk of becoming consultancy companies which, under the pressure of the ever-difficult financial sustainability of agencies, end up biasing their actions towards medium or large enterprises, whether or not they are local companies, which devirtues their initial function.

The expenditure of the Agencies is usually a small percentage of a region's budget. Despite the low cost, agencies have a fundamental impact on qualitative or intangible aspects in different regions, since they promote the improvement of the environment for entrepreneurship in the region and, especially, among local micro-enterprises and SMEs.

With this type of investment to support the Agencies, territorial governments promote conditions favourable to the creation of positive environments for innovation, which brings significant multiplier effects for production and employment in the territory. These are not direct subsidies for production, but investment in the “conditioning” (or construction) of the territory.

All of these considerations help us to understand that the Agencies have an essentially technical profile with public-private participation, but which are almost always presided by the institutions, which are usually the respective regional or local governments. It is, however, important to underline the importance of bringing the active participation of the private business sector into the agencies. This contribution can be achieved in different ways, such as direct participation in the capital and management of the agencies, presence on their consultative organs or specialised expert advice by persons representing the different economic and social sectors in the region. The most important thing is, above all, that the private institutions provide the leadership and business orientation that the agencies need, that is, the talent, objectives and resources that will make them attractive to their specific targets, the innovative entrepreneur.

Furthermore, as shown by international experience, the supply of business development services in a territory makes it possible to combine economic and social objectives, since Agencies prioritise smaller enterprises which cannot meet the costs of these business development services and, moreover, are not always aware of their need. This demonstrates the important role of the Agencies as intermediary bodies for the construction of *incomplete markets* (Stiglitz, 2000), such as the markets for business development services for micro-enterprises and SMEs and employment services in the different territorial spheres.

The ultimate objective of Local or Regional Development Agencies is, then, the promotion of economic development in their territory, for which a common feature of all of the agencies is that their activities are intimately related to the promotion of the endogenous potential of the territory.

The specific objectives or habitual *functions* of Regional Development Agencies include the following, which depend on the characteristics and circumstances of the different territories where they operate:

- Action as an intermediary to ensure access to business development services by local micro-enterprises and SMEs<sup>2</sup>.
- The provision of infrastructure with technological and organisational components which facilitate the introduction of innovation in the territory.
- The encouragement of the creation of new local enterprises, especially micro-enterprises and SMEs.
- The internationalisation of local companies.
- The attraction of inward investment.
- The dissemination of business information and information about the local labour market.
- To stimulate the creation of jobs in the region. The Agencies sometimes perform this function in collaboration with specialised bodies providing employment services at territorial level.
- Training in business and technological management.
- Promotion of a local enterprise culture.
- Processing of and intermediation in different lines of financial aid, loans and funding for micro-enterprises and SMEs.
- Intermediation to ensure access to funding and the provision of risk capital to micro-enterprises and SMEs.

Each Agency usually combines these functions in different proportions, depending on the territorial development strategy drawn up by the different agents, since the Agency is simply the technical instrument charged with implementing the territorial development strategy.

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<sup>2</sup> The Agencies usually play a subsidiary role with respect to private initiative, that is, they do not attempt to take the place of existing business development service companies in the territory, but to match the supply of such services to the underlying demand for innovation among local micro-enterprises and SMEs.



Another important task of the Agencies is the coordination of sectoral programmes (education, employment, agriculture, innovation, industry, tourism, trade, etc.), acting as an intermediary to achieve the greatest possible synergies in this respect. This demonstrates the existence of a fundamental component of intermediation, persuasion and consensus between diverse positions, in order to achieve maximum coherence in territorial development actions.

The Agencies, then, perform an important function as *intermediaries* in order to ensure the provision of important services to local micro-enterprises and SMEs, helping to create territorial environments favourable to the incorporation of productive innovation.

As we know, most of the companies in any country are micro-enterprises and small enterprises, and they are very important from the point of view of employment and, consequently, the generation of income for wide segments of the population. These companies are also fundamental to the dynamism of the internal market and social and political stability. According to Inter-American Development Bank data, the size and workforce of companies in Latin America demonstrates the importance of micro-enterprises and SMEs, as they represent an average of 99.4% of the total number of formally incorporated companies and over 68% of employment.

If we take into account, furthermore, that this fabric of enterprises is dispersed throughout the regions of the country, the strategic importance of micro-enterprises and SMEs is obvious, from the economic and social perspective, and also for the territorial dissemination of technical advances.

Agencies can, therefore, facilitate the construction of a territorial supply of integrated services of strategic information, technical assistance, business management training and project management, as well as financial assistance. They also attempt to ensure joined up governance between strategies and local, regional and national actions, and they also encourage the internationalisation of local productive systems.

## 5. Success factors and new issues for Local/Regional Development Agencies

Christian Saublens, Director of EURADA, believes that the success factors of Regional Development Agencies are based on the fact that they do not reproduce a rigid model, but that they adapt to the specific needs of each territory, for which they have three important elements:

- a) The association between different agents which affect the economic development of a region, which normally act independently and, sometimes, against each other.
- b) A strategic vision of development.
- c) The mobilisation and valorisation of locally available resources.

In effect, an Agency is able to mould together into an organic whole the local economic development strategy and its implementation with the territorial services needed to sustain it. These territorial services include the creation of and support for companies, training, the performance of studies, the search for funding and coordination between public and private resources.

The Agencies have, then, created a new economic development methodology, new identities and a new power of negotiation for local stakeholders, allowing each territory to find and to follow its own development pathway, taking into account its culture, potential and the needs of its specific historical moment. They are, therefore, a reference point for a new type of territorial governability.

Another of the factors for the success and sustainability over time of the Agencies is their participation as bodies which can grant loans locally, not being limited therefore to the implementation of business, technical or commercial viability plans. This power to make financial contributions, which depends to a large extent on the institutions that promote the Agencies, makes it possible to set up rotating credit funds which can be run by local banks under appropriate agreements. The alliance between the Agencies and local banks will overcome the usual limitations on banks, basically related to the financial part of company projects and

the solvency of the client, leaving aside the technical quality of the project and the evaluation of its technical and market viability.

The Agencies can also help to incorporate the gender perspective into local development strategies. Women have a significant presence in micro-enterprises in activities with low entry barriers, which generates precarious employment, with frequent situations of market saturation and low income in those sectors. Territorial economic development strategies must take into account, therefore, the specific situation of women, who perform vital functions in the local economy, home management and childcare.

The Agencies can also facilitate territorial bonding with analogous structures and establish international networks. In this way, they can promote trade, create quality labels for the marketing of local products, encourage cooperation between different territorial stakeholders, promote territorial marketing campaigns and establish international connections, among other aspects of interest.

Likewise, as the design of *UNDP Art* programmes shows, Agencies can also be prime interlocutors for decentralised cooperation. This refers to new forms of cooperation which create permanent and cross-sectoral channels for collaboration between local groups, providing financial and technical resources and know-how for the operation of these local development instruments. The Agencies and decentralised cooperation agents can undertake joint activities or strategic alliances to implement initiatives for the valorisation of local resources which benefits local development.

Recently, Local or Regional Development Agencies have started to incorporate new issues into their agenda, among which we should mention the identification of clusters in the territory, support for the creation of regional innovation systems and the inclusion of approaches guided by the principles of environmental sustainability.

#### a) Identification and promotion of clusters in the territory

Cluster analysis is a conceptual approach which goes beyond the sectoral focus since it incorporates all of

the existing links between companies and institutions within a given productive segment which are localised in a specific territory. This type of analysis has been popularised through the contributions of Michael Porter (1991), and a cluster may be defined as a reality made up of a group of interconnected companies and associated institutions, linked by common and complementary activities and interests which are in close geographical proximity. In this way, together with the analysis of the territorial environment, we can incorporate the identification and analysis of the relationships that exist within the cluster.

The existence of clusters constitutes a process of the formation of groups of companies which takes place, generally, in a logical or natural manner as part of the quest for advantages derived from productive collaboration or partnership between firms which are similar or in close proximity. Naturally, clusters can be deliberately promoted by *Local or Regional Development Agencies* or other bodies whose objective is the promotion of business competitiveness in the territory.

Since the late 1990s, regional policies have incorporated the detection of clusters in the regions and the promotion of *clusterisation*, since endeavours to strengthen territorial groupings of companies notably improve business efficiency and competitiveness. The diversification of the regional productive fabric and training for local employment can find a decisive guide for their actions if they take advantage of the opportunities offered by processes to strengthen existing clusters.

The existence of dynamic regional clusters not only encourages the diversification of production in the territory, but it also improves the capacity to adapt to change, given the greater capacity of companies in clusters to innovate and raise their productivity. The existence of clusters facilitates the creation of positive external economies for the companies and institutions which form part of them, such as the development of the workforce, local suppliers and specialised infrastructure, among others. Likewise, the cluster focus makes actions more efficient, since measures are designed and executed on the basis of demand, that is, on the needs of the members of the cluster. Consequently, territorial and business competitiveness is improved.

## b) Territorial innovation systems

Innovation is the driving force that moves companies, organisations, institutions and territories to renew their productive and management structures and leads to the rise of new sectors of economic activity and employment. Innovation is expressed in:

- The renovation and improvement of the methods of production.
- The renovation and expansion of the range of goods and services produced.
- Changes in business management and organisation.
- Changes in working conditions and employment qualifications.
- The socio-institutional, environmental, cultural and territorial changes and adaptations that the above bring with them.

The capacity to introduce innovation in the productive base and in the business fabric of a territory constitutes, then, a crucial question with respect to development. The investment of financial resources, on its own, is not sufficient to bring about such development, since it depends on the use of those resources in real productive investments, which are both sustainable and which create jobs, and this is very different from speculative investment.

Likewise, for innovation to take place, it is necessary for the users of the innovations to be involved in the adaptation and use of the results of research and development activities in different specific productive and management processes in the territory. This is why *territorial innovation systems*, which guarantee the bonds between companies, innovation support institutions and key public and private actors involved in territorial economic development, are becoming increasingly important.

Theoretical and empirical work on the economy of innovation and industrial organisation indicates that innovation is not a linear process in which new products and processes are generated by research and development centres working in isolation from the market. On the contrary, innovation is a *territorial and social process*, it is cumulative and interactive,

and the users of the knowledge interact with those who produce the knowledge. In this way, both parties (users and producers of knowledge) learn from each other through their interaction.

Innovation does not take place only in radical leaps and bounds, but also progresses continually, following the line of the productive process, which is where numerous improvements in products and processes are introduced. Given the social nature of learning and innovation, these processes work better when the parties involved are in close proximity, allowing frequent interaction and the easy, rapid transfer of knowledge. Likewise, territorial clusters of companies often share a common territorial culture and identity which facilitates the process of social learning.

A large part of the knowledge transferred between these local actors is more *tacit* than *codified*, and this brings advantages to members of these territorial networks. This common code or language of communication, which facilitates interaction, can also be complemented by the creation of territorial institutions which help to produce and reinforce the norms and conventions that govern the behaviour of local companies and the interaction between them.

The group of territorial institutions that contributes to the innovation process make up, then, a *territorial innovation system*, composed of public and private institutions which produce systemic effects that stimulate local companies to adopt common norms, expectations, values, attitudes and practices and the end product is an innovation culture that is reinforced by the learning processes mentioned previously.

A *territorial innovation system* is, then, an interactive network made up of companies of different sizes forming a cluster or a group of companies, the relations between those companies within the cluster, the higher education and research facilities linked to the productive sector, public, private and mixed research and development centres and technology transfer agencies or centres, chambers of commerce and business associations, human resource training centres and government departments and agencies (Lundvall, 1995).

Among the institutions involved in territorial innovation systems, we must mention those related to the research and development infrastructure (universities, technical

schools and laboratories, among others), technology transfer and market analysis centres which provide services to companies, territorial training centres, business associations and chambers of commerce. As can be appreciated, Local or Regional Development Agencies have ample space in which to promote the construction of these territorial innovation systems.

This focus of the territorial innovation system highlights, therefore, the relevance of the institutional, social, political and cultural aspects of economic and working activities. And so, though the process of globalisation lays down new challenges for the different territories, regions and districts, at the same time it creates a scenario of new opportunities which demand the incorporation of an endogenous capacity for learning and innovation in which Local or Regional Development Agencies can be an important catalyst.

### c) The quest for environmental sustainability in production and consumption processes

Lastly, mention must be made of the need to introduce the environmental sustainability focus into local production and consumption processes in order to address the problem of the current unsustainability of these processes.

In this regard, Local or Regional Development Agencies could be an important instrument for the valorisation and conservation of local environmental resources. The Agencies can give priority to projects which valorise the natural environment and the local cultural heritage, which use non-contaminating procedures or which introduce clean technologies, promote the efficient use of water and encourage renewable energies in the territory. They can also encourage the use of quality labels to certify the natural origin of local products, reserving preferential lines of credit for ecological products or products which guarantee clean production processes. All of these requirements can, therefore, become a relevant action for the creation of new companies and jobs locally, aimed at improving the quality and the differentiation of products to meet the demands of increasing consumer concern for the environment, health and food safety.

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## CLIMATE CHANGE AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

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### A. WHAT IS HAPPENING ? : A NEW INTERACTION BETWEEN THE ENVIRONMENT AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

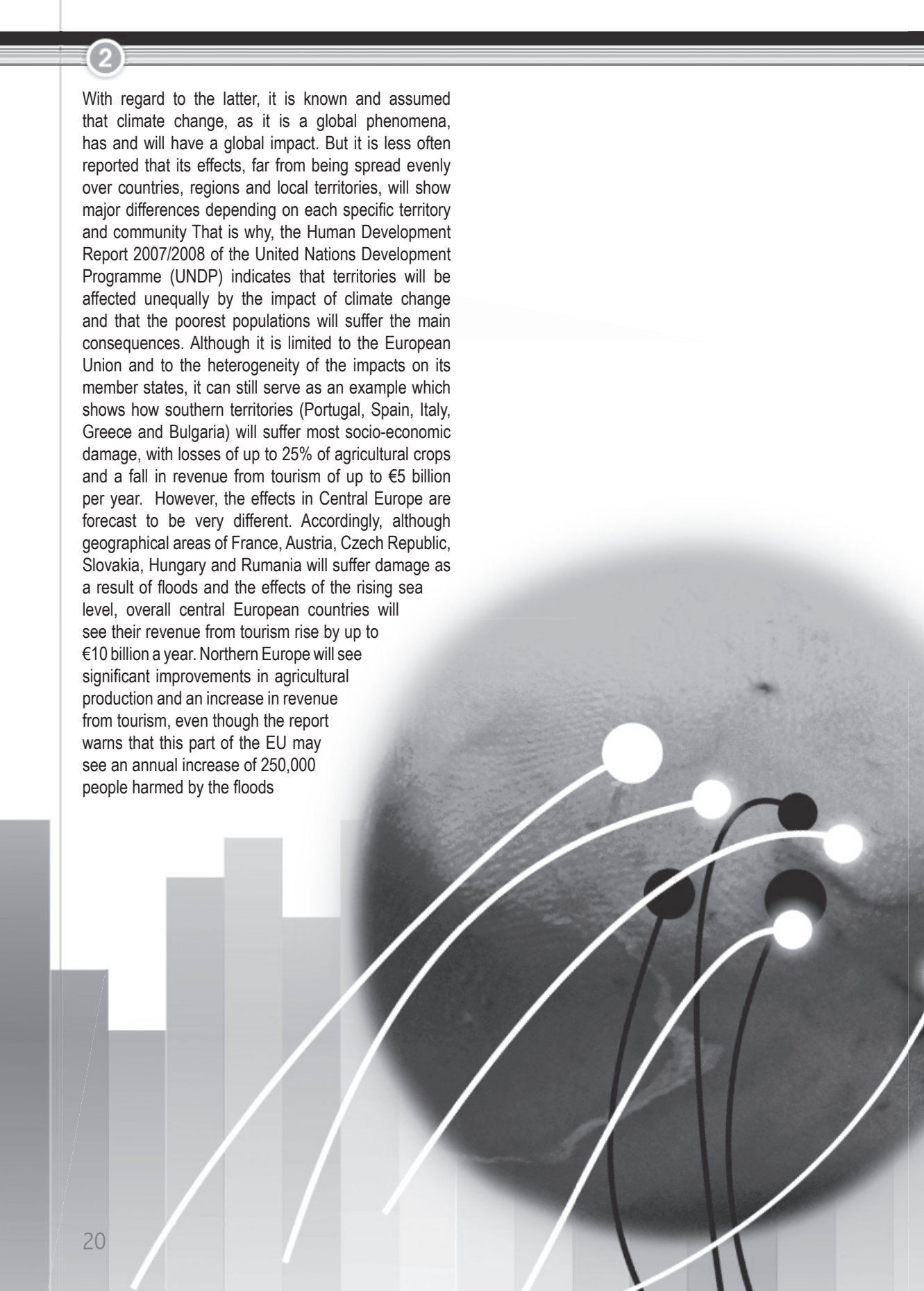
#### 1. Multiplicity and variety of the impacts of climate change

Climate change is an indisputable phenomenon and we have known about its existence for a long time, at least a quarter of a century. It was with good reason that in 1987 the Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development warned about this issue, and one year later, in 1988 the first Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change was created. Although it is true that there are still numerous doubts about the diagnosis and exact weighting of its causes and the factors which produce and induce it (there is a lively debate focused on the greater or lesser role played by humanity and the current economic-productive system in this respect or the role of ecological variations of the planet, as well as solar cycles and other cosmogonical factors), it is no less true that we now know many things about climate change. There are two main aspects which concern us here:

- that its dimensional consequences are not only environmental, but also social and economic, and
- that its impact is and will be very uneven based on the specific characteristics (geographical, orographic, socioeconomic etc) of each territory.

The former is clearly demonstrated by the conclusions, published in autumn 2009, of the study which the European Commission entrusted to the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies of the Joint Research Centre about the effects of climate change in Europe. Following the requirements of the Commission, the research focused on the socio-economic impacts, not measuring catastrophic impacts, or the economic costs associated with the loss of biodiversity and the increase in diseases (which is why their calculations offer results of a lower magnitude and significance than the results given by David Stern in the report he prepared for the British government). Even so, the data are spectacular: examining up to the year 2080, the evaluation which the report makes (given as a range as it considers different alternatives based on how temperatures eventually turn out) indicate as an average for Europe losses each year of €2.5 billion (0.35% of annual gross domestic product), a fall in farming production of 10%, a rise in sea level which will annually affects 2.5 million people and floods which will cause damages of €11 billion a year.

With regard to the latter, it is known and assumed that climate change, as it is a global phenomena, has and will have a global impact. But it is less often reported that its effects, far from being spread evenly over countries, regions and local territories, will show major differences depending on each specific territory and community. That is why, the Human Development Report 2007/2008 of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) indicates that territories will be affected unequally by the impact of climate change and that the poorest populations will suffer the main consequences. Although it is limited to the European Union and to the heterogeneity of the impacts on its member states, it can still serve as an example which shows how southern territories (Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece and Bulgaria) will suffer most socio-economic damage, with losses of up to 25% of agricultural crops and a fall in revenue from tourism of up to €5 billion per year. However, the effects in Central Europe are forecast to be very different. Accordingly, although geographical areas of France, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Rumania will suffer damage as a result of floods and the effects of the rising sea level, overall central European countries will see their revenue from tourism rise by up to €10 billion a year. Northern Europe will see significant improvements in agricultural production and an increase in revenue from tourism, even though the report warns that this part of the EU may see an annual increase of 250,000 people harmed by the floods



## 2. Local development as an active agent in response to climate change

Therefore, the repercussions of climate change extend beyond strict environmental aspects to include socio-economic aspects, and they vary qualitatively and quantitatively for each specific territory. This demonstrates that, in order to evaluate the impacts and to define necessary measures, it is essential to address climate change from the "GloboLocal" perspective coined by the United Nations. That is, understanding that climate change has general and global impacts, but also specific and local impacts, and that, therefore, it is not only necessary to have global measures but also local measures to be implemented in each territory and community. And it is precisely here where there are such resounding shortages as although progress has been made in the knowledge about the consequences of climate change globally, very little has been done to determine and calculate its local impact and in defining and applying the corresponding mitigating and preventive measures.

Considerations and recommendations which, on the other hand, are absolutely coherent with the reflections and contents both of the Territorial Approach to Climate Change (TACC), created under five United Nations agencies (UNPD, UNEP, UNITAR, UN-Habitat and UNCDF) in the World Summit of Regions on Climate Change held in October 2008, and of the Integrated Territorial Climate Plans (ITCP) especially Promoted by the UNDP.

All of which defines the perspective from which local development strategies have to focus their future directions and proposals. A perspective which is coherent with Human Development, with the values of sustainable comprehensive development and with the fact that "local governments have a critical role to play in the fight against climate change" (Ban Ki-moon, United Nations Secretary General). These lead to a wide and rich range of disruptive ideas which make it possible to rethink the discourse and actions of local development strategies and force local development, far from remaining indifferent or bewildered by the size of the phenomenon, to become an active agent in response to climate change - all the more so when urban areas account for almost 50% of the world's population and 5 billion people are expected to live there in 2030.

Therefore, not as a fashion, but as a real necessity, local development strategies and the Agencies which implement them are categorically called and forced to get involved in the issue and to assume and exercise their responsibilities through promoting and adopting local initiatives in response to climate change. Initiatives which must be directed at preventing and mitigating its effects, which, at the same time, may become a significant source for generating entrepreneurial activities and new jobs, transforming what was a threat into an opportunity to promote the dynamism of territory and community development.

The current worldwide crisis, with all its significant multiple causes and impacts must be seen as an incentive for Local Development Agencies to deploy their efforts as presented above. However, they should not involve a self-willed course of action, but behaviour and intervention there is congruent and in accordance with the work which local development has been carrying out for decades with regard to the environment and which relating to climate was well defined in the Nagoya Declarations signed in the Cities for Climate Protection World Summit and the Local Government Climate Change Leadership Summit held in that Japanese city in November 1997.

### 3. A “Third-generation” interaction

The development vision which clearly prevailed at the end of the 1970s neglected the limits and ecological effects of economic growth and development itself, ignoring the risks of degradation of nature and paid no attention to the scarce nature of natural resources. In opposition to this, the appearance and progress of local development in the first part of the 1980s involved a radical change of direction as from the start it was aware of the connection and interaction existing between development and the environment, defining and setting programs and actions which sprang from this awareness.

However, the exact manner of approaching the environment from local development strategies has not always been the same, but has evolved and been perfected over time and with the accumulation of experience. It is possible to distinguish two general major stages: A first stage in which a logic solely based on sustainability took priority, and a subsequent stage in which the prevailing point of view was completed and enhanced with the understanding of the environment as a development factor in itself.

In order to understand the background to this evolution, it is necessary to highlight that the incorporation of the concept and notion of sustainability has been one of the major advances in the theory and practice of development in recent decades. This has led to the spread of the belief that producing also involves destroying and so a relation between the two needs to be created, and that no economic system passes the “ecological border” freely without leading to worsening quality-of-life and a certain danger of self-destruction. A framework in which development dynamics have assumed the requirement to protect the ecological environment. In this regard, it is important to refer to a “passive attitude” - not in a negative sense, but in the descriptive sense (for a sense of defence and conservation) - which for a long time formed the exclusive pivot of local development actions with regard to the environment.

But this “passive attitude” was gradually enriched with another perception which does not simply settle for the protection of the ecological habitat, however important that may be, but also aims to complete that defence with an “active attitude” which sees the conserved

environment as a magnificent endogenous resource of the territory, and understands environmental quality as a spur for development and a strategic opportunity to promote new entrepreneurial initiatives-rural tourism, waste recycling and treatment, new energies, water cycle management etc- which generate income, employment and improve the business sector in the territory. In addition, this avoids the risk that public actions protecting natural areas and places makes them sites of guaranteed habitability for all species of fauna and flora except one: human beings, which are forced to flee from the territory in question as it becomes impossible to exercise there the activities which provide them with the indispensable resources to survive.

This is how territories throughout the world had deployed a large quantity of local development experiences and good practices which show its capacity to move deeper into the sustainability of development and to make that sustainability of strategic resource development itself, contemplating and expanding the concept of sustainability from a multi-dimensional point of view: social, environmental, economic constitutional, and transcendent (ethical and, even, spiritual values). And, precisely, the excellent experiences of all of these offer a wealth of knowledge for the attention placed on climate change from the perspective of local development strategies and the promotion of local initiatives in response to climate change. This represents a “third generation” of local environmental programs and actions which prolong, mature, complement, renew, polish and innovate the “passive” and “active” attitudes which had been implemented up to now.

What are the current challenges which must be responded to and which make up the specific objectives and contents of the “third generation” of local environmental programs and actions promoted by local development strategies? Providing a rigorous response to this issue means re-taking the aforementioned “GloboLocal” perspective and focusing efforts both on the territory model and on its governance, in the belief that they are challenges with a similar background in the different territorial areas throughout the world (Europe, Latin America, Africa, Asia etc), however much each specific territory has unique characteristics.



## B. ESSENTIAL CHALLENGES TO BE FACED: TERRITORY, LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND CLIMATE CHANGE MODEL

### 4. Globalisation and new local responsibilities

Many people in the 1980s and at the start of the 1990s forecast that the expansion of globalisation would inevitably be accompanied by a loss of importance of the local level, which little by little would be absorbed into a vast, complex and deep globalising process. However, nowadays there is wide agreement that the opposite has occurred: globalisation does not only not undermine or question the role that the local area has played for centuries, but it places it with a commitment to take on and exercise new responsibilities in addition to its historical responsibilities.

This fact, which has been very well summed up by the United Nations on coining the repeated “GloboLocal” perspective and proposing “think globally, act locally”, represents an express recognition that with globalisation municipalities and cities have become actors which are increasingly necessary to meet the requirements of these new times. The aforementioned reference to climate change, with everything that it brings, is paradigmatic: a global phenomenon with general impacts which demands global responses, but which also presents clearly local impacts which require specific measures in each territory according to their specific characteristics. The migratory flows or the economic crisis itself follow the same scheme and a pattern in which global and local aspects do not oppose each other, but rather go hand in hand.

In this context, local governments have to be up to the task of responding to the new circumstances and simultaneously covered two facets which mutually interact: managing and governing. This vision embodies what has been referred to in Spanish as “Double G Perspective”<sup>1</sup>. A global comprehensive approach which assumes the management of the institution-Administration and the governance of the territory of the community as two sides of the same coin, aiming for effectiveness, efficiency and quality in managing

daily issues and providing basic local services and the capacity for strategic and daily promotion of the territory and the community. Under this perspective, local governments must address a work agenda which goes beyond bureaucratic and purely management tasks and which includes setting up a new framework for relations with civil society, focusing attention much more on these citizens - active group of rights and duties - than in what is administered - passive receiver of public services-.

A framework in which local governance must establish and find its basis in a participative and collective design of the “territory model” or “city model” to which the community wishes to advance and on which to sustain and execute the urban, social, environmental, economic, technical and cultural development in the short, medium and long term. This should be done irrespective of the demographic volume of the municipality in question, as while the “large cities” are identified by a purely quantitative criterion -the number of inhabitants-, “great cities”, which is what is of interest to development strategies, are defined by a qualitative criterion: their capacity to provide quality of life and to establish themselves as the space of social cohesion, co-existence and balanced, dynamic and comprehensive development.

<sup>1</sup> For the Spanish words: *Gestionar* and *Gobernar* (manage and govern).



## 5. Territory + local governance model: ITCO + LIC

Reflections and requirements which must be linked together with what has been indicated in the above sections about climate change and responding to it through local development strategies. This link leads naturally into the need for said strategies to focus their efforts in this area both on the territorial model and on its governance:

- on the territory model: promoting strategic planning and, in interrelation with planning, Integrated Territorial Climate Plans (ITCP),.
- on governance: by designing and executing local initiatives in response to climate change (LIC).

A twofold central line which, as we shall immediately see, leads to the specific objectives and contents of the aforementioned “third generation” of local development actions in relation to the environment. It must be articulated from the vision of the territory as a place for integrating the climate activities supported in the “towards climate change resilient territories” initiative, the result of the joint partnership of the United Nations (UNED, UNDP) and different territorial associations. This initiative in turn revolves around five key points which should be remembered here:

- Territorial communities are an indispensable level for implementing climate policies. Fair application of the principle of subsidiarity has to define the significant and complimentary nature of each territorial decision step, which links with the 2008-2011 Climate Change Strategy of the UNDP when it recognises the importance of supporting each decision level with regard to climate governability.
- Local governments do not only implement national regional policies, but they also have responsibilities with regard to territory regulations and planning. They are simultaneously policy-makers and places for investment in a number of sectors responsible for emissions and/or vulnerable to the impact (basic services, transport, construction etc). Because of its proximity to the population, the territorial level help to overcome the obstacles of institutional logics through the search for commitment, awareness-raising of

the population and social integration of the most underprivileged groups.

- The challenge of bringing together local concerns and reducing climate vulnerability must be addressed in a decentralised manner. Implementation of climate policies determines the choice of the investment and the behaviour of the local level. International and national frameworks must be strengthened through decisive actions for the populations and territories concerned.
- With regard to adaptation to climate change, the future of the territories is dependent on the integration of the territory in long-term decisions, taken on a decentralised level, with regard to agriculture, territorial planning, infrastructures, training, water resource management etc. Mitigation policies involve reducing energy consumption, mostly local consumption, and systematically using decentralised modes of production, especially using renewable resources.
- Climate change generates risks, but at the same time it generates development opportunities. Promoting energy efficiency and local energy production offers territories in development the opportunity to reduce their dependence on importing fossil fuels and facilitates the population's access to energy. Similarly, it creates new economic opportunities and reduces the environmental and health impacts linked to exploitation of fossil energy. If territorial groups bring about climate policies, it will allow them to access new sources of funding (carbon finance, funds for adaptation, specialised insurance products, innovative funding for adaptation etc) which will benefit territorial development in those countries.

## C. NEW IDEAS AND STRATEGIES AND NEW ACTORS AND INSTRUMENTS: STRATEGIC PLANNING, CLIMATE PLANS AND SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS

### 6. On strategic planning

Strategic planning is not made up of the statistical and socio-economic studies and reports, however large and rigorous they may be, with which it is often confused. Beyond its technical aspects, strategic planning is a way of governing locally in a climate of consensus and collective participation. It makes it possible to overcome lack of foresight, to conceive the desirable future and to define the real means to achieve it. Consequently, strategic planning can be conceptualised as a response from the territory to “the three whats”: what are we like?, What do we want to be like?, What do we do to manage change? (What do we do to move from what we are like to what we want to be like? ).

We can see that human beings innately, as a consequence of their intellectual capacity, spontaneously apply these three “whats” to their daily, personal family and work life. Therefore, strategic planning means taking this way of acting to the collective level. However, whilst individual strategic planning deploys it and each person resolves their situation, that relating to the group has to be channelled and materialised through citizen participation, as only the community as a whole and from a truly democratic perspective has the legitimacy to respond to the “three whats” when these refer to the group and affect the local society as a whole.

In this regard, it is important to highlight that strategic planning as an overall idea can and must be divided into two areas which are interrelated but with a different conceptual and operational nature: socio-economic strategic planning (productive, technological, business etc), and physical, territorial and environmental strategic planning (spatial, urbanistic, territorial organisation, sustainability, ecosystem etc).

On the one hand, strategic planning is of a socioeconomic, productive, technological and business nature. It provides an overall vision of the city in a permanent process of change and therefore establishes priorities, concentrates efforts, systematises objectivists, defines infrastructure and entrepreneurial projects aimed at development and generating income and employment, encourages public-private collaboration, creates a strategic culture, strengthens different leaderships with the community (institutional, social, economic etc) and, finally, leads to an action programme.

However, on the other hand, a city is above all a physical reality. Therefore, the “city that we want” has to be specified in the “territory and habitat that we have”. Consequently, the city model, its effective materialisation, requires physical urbanistic and environmental planning which is coherent with the aforementioned model, suitable for making it a reality and capable of being at the helm of development towards the place where citizens want to go. A policy which configures an ecological habitat and a responsible and rational urbanism capable of redirecting the urban system towards a more sustainable basis and to greater territorial balance, which acts in a joint integrated manner over the territory, environment, local culture, technologies, social effectiveness, economy and intangibles with an impact on development with the essential aim of maintaining and improving the quality-of-life of its inhabitants.

Therefore, what is so commonly and so inappropriately called strategic planning - socio-economic strategic planning - and that which is officially normally called urban planning - which must be understood and executed as a physical, territorial environmental planning - are two sides to the same coin, two components of a whole and of the same planning framework.

## 7. Integrated Territorial Climate Plans

It is precisely in this strategic framework in which Local Development Agencies must develop innovative strategies. This must also form the framework, as a result of points mentioned in reference to climate change and the corresponding local initiatives, for the so-called Integrated Territorial Climate Plans (ITCP). Consequently, as summarised by the UNDP, the current logic towards climate change, which is inclined towards acting through small disperse and fragmented projects, must be replaced by a new approach based on the territory and one which promotes a new dynamic for local strategic planning. Accordingly, committed to development and socio-economic transformation, communities must integrate climate difficulties into their local master schemes, which involves multiple challenges. These challenges, whose main goal is to reduce the vulnerability of the territory to climate changes, must be translated into each silent and specific area in a Integrated Territorial Climate Plan.

To begin with, the ITCP must include among its priorities the framework of the so-called sustainability criteria, which may be very different depending on each specific case: redistribution of resources and services over the territory and within the city, decentralisation of services and equipment, with suitable hierarchies, creation of service and information networks which help to reduce travelling times, commitment for sustainable mobility etc. In this regard, the ITCP and the sustainability criteria which arise from it must make up an authentic ecosystem strategy for the territory linked to a thorough review of the current production and consumption model and to significant levels of participation, creativity and changes in the currently unsustainable ways of life.

Based on the sustainability criteria established for each territory, the ITCP must be valid in order to identify the Climate Change Profile of the territory and:

- define, configure and boost local initiatives in response to climate change,
- identify in detail the projects to be implemented and the appropriate regulatory and financial instruments (public policies/investment projects),

- provide local support to the access to energy services, as well as the creation of new economic and entrepreneurial activities thanks to the development of clean means of consumption and production, and
- favour the exchange of experiences and good practices worldwide.

We are therefore referring to a new territorial strategic approach which must address and consider such relevant questions as:

- promoting a new vision (cultural change and change of expectations), moving from unlimited and unreasoned urban growth to urban sustainability and to a territory as a scarce asset which is the central point of the city model, whatever its population size.
- truly responsibly defining demographic growth -"how many do we want to be" - which is truly sustainable for the territory from a sustainability perspective, being aware that although in another time size was important when extracting competitive advantages (as a result of economies of scale), in the "infoglobal" era this strategy simply does not make sense,
- following on from the above point, sustainable growth in residential and tertiary areas and areas of economic activities,
- promoting environmental culture from the patterns of urban and metropolitan mobility to those of energy saving, including the generation of public spaces and green areas to ensure the ecological quality of the urban habitat,
- showing clear commitment for decentralisation at all levels, including the management and governance of the territory itself, providing local areas with new capacities and instruments, and
- recovering and extolling the true value of the city: being a space for coexistence and social cohesion.

## 8. Sustainability Indicators: between the model and governance

All of this, as recommended by the aforementioned “towards climate change resilient territories” initiative, will mean that preparation of the Territorial Climate Plans will be accompanied by implementing frameworks of action which aim to develop the capacities of territories in three areas: local governability, climate change and funding. In short, the idea is to support the implementation of a strategic management which is able to transform the territory and to establish a programmatic and comprehensive approach. This strategy is articulated around four action areas which take into account the set of factors necessary to define the climate strategy: the existence of structures and manners of governability which ensure articulation between the actions carried out locally and national policies, participation of local actors and coordination of the persons and partner entities which collaborate in the project; planning with regard to mitigating and adapting using diagnoses, analyses, methodological tools etc; identifying forms of funding to implement the plan; and a framework of governability which ensures coordination and participation of the actors.

It also important to pay attention to the recommendations of the initiative itself for the purpose of implementing a territorial approach in the line of ART GOLD. In this regard, it is necessary to establish institutional mechanisms which guarantee: articulation of local strategies with those defined nationally; participative management through local working groups set up with the aim of allowing ongoing participation of the local actors involved throughout the planning process; their coordination in management and funding; and a planning process in the areas of mitigation and adaptation facilitated by making available methodological and decision taking tools.

Finally, the Integrated Territorial Climate Plans will formulate the Sustainability Indicators which will act as a link between the ITCP and local initiatives in response to climate change.

Halfway between the territory model (strategic planning: ITCP) and local governance (initiatives against climate change) we can find the so-called Sustainability Indicators, which are a set of guidelines - indicators which allow evaluation and monitoring - defined in the ITCP and which must be applied in daily management to achieve a sustainable urban context and development strategy and to provide the local area with instruments which make it possible to constantly monitor the territory and measure the scope of the transformations in the urban fabric.

The UNESCO Chair of Sustainability (Josep Antequera and Enric Carrera), has provided generic definition of the indicators as a measure over time of the variables of the system which give us information about the trends and specific aspects which we are interested in analysing. They may be simply made up of one variable (e.g., number of vehicles in a municipality, or by a group of variables (for example, square metres of green areas per inhabitant), and maybe interrelated, forming complex indices.

With regard to the specific content of the indicators applied to the area of sustainability, good practices deployed so far demonstrate their breadth and variety based on the levels of analysis, from diverse territorial configurations, such as those used globally and nationally (indicators which accompany the Human Development Index, the United Nations Programme for Sustainable Development, those of the Agenda 21 of the CDS and those of Habitat Etc) up to batteries of individual indicators for cities (such as those designed for the local Agenda 21) also including regional indicators (an example of these is the system of sustainable local development indicators for Andalusia prepared by the Regional Development Institute Foundation of the University of Seville).

On a local scale, sustainability indicators boast a wide diversity and can be seen from different levels of intensity based on the specific objectives, as can be deduced from reading the technical report issued by the European Commission by the Working Group for Measuring, Monitoring and Evaluation in Local Sustainability under the title “Towards a Local Sustainability Profile: European Common Indicators”.

In fact, there are too many examples of the use of sustainability indicators to be covered in this paper. As a mandatory reference, refer to the work “Indicadores de sostenibilidad ambiental y de desarrollo sostenible: estado del arte y perspectivas” (indicators of environmental sustainability and sustainable development (Rayén Quiroga, M; 2001) published by the United Nations through CEPAL.

## D. THE ROLE OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES: LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND INITIATIVES IN RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

### 9. Critical components of local initiatives in response to climate change

The Integrated Territorial Climate Plans, formulated in the framework of the strategic planning and definition of the territory model, and the Sustainability Indicators defined therein provide a rigorous framework for local governance with regard to climate change and the corresponding local initiatives. Local Development Agencies must play a fundamental role in promoting, designing and materialising the ITCP and in defining the Sustainability Indicators and delimiting and executing the LIC.

Specifically, the work and actions of the Agencies must be based on the aforementioned belief that the impacts of climate change are not only environmental, but also economic and social of the highest magnitude. They must also be based on the knowledge that acting is much cheaper than not acting as the costs of prevention are significantly lower than those arising if the potential risks and damages take place. Moreover, the initiatives which are adopted in advance will have added value for the territory in terms of investments, entrepreneurship, income and job creation.

At any event, the LIC must be aimed at supporting in each territory implementation of the project defined in the Integrated Territorial Climate Plan, encouraging better quality and development of the local capacity necessary to formulate them. The Local Development Agencies must know how to articulate a series of critical components and basic contents which are essential for building a strategy for open transformation aimed at sustainability and around which the local initiatives against climate change will revolve. Such components have been collected in the text “Ciudad, Cambio Climático y Sostenibilidad” (City, Climate Change and Sustainability) (Carrillo, E and Cuerda, JC; 2009), of which we may highlight the following:



- Preparing for each territory the corresponding Catalogue of Specific Impacts from Climate Change (CSIC), which is the result of a detailed and thorough diagnosis of the local effects of this global phenomena.
- Based on the CSIC, the Sustainability Indicators and, in general, the ITCP, implementing the corresponding mitigating, preventive and response initiatives and measures: designing them, purchasing them, scheduling them (examining priorities and evaluating the dimension of the possible impacts), weighing up possible sources of funding and, finally, executing them.
- Support for establishing new regulations and public policies: regulation of buildings with high thermal performance, review of land occupation plans, extension of the emergency system, green taxation etc.
- Promoting very diverse material investments: infrastructures, Water Works, building insulation, recovery of gases generated by waste, small solar, wind and geothermal electric power plants etc.
- Dealing with conservation, rehabilitation and re-qualification of the existing city, of the consolidated city against the imperative demand of more land to develop, which has been the most usual trend of the 20th century. The size of this change makes it necessary to have coordinated action of different urbanistic, legal and financial instruments, as well as strong political leadership. In highly populated cities, very useful instrument for this is the polycentric consideration of the city, as well as the use of the “neighbourhood-city” dimension as a basic point.
- humanising the city, its neighbourhoods and its historic centre. The right to sustainability leads us towards a recovery of the human scale of the city in the interest of the general public and the exercising of individual and collective rights: looked-after public spaces, pedestrianisation of roads and squares, and accessible urban environment for disabled people, games for children, trees, gardens, car parks etc.
- Decisively opt for mobility which is sustainable, energetically more efficient and able to disassociate mobility from its secondary effects (congestion, accidents and pollution): optimising the specific possibilities of each mode of transport, especially public transport, promoting forms of transport which do not pollute and the use of transport which is safer, more ecological and effective from an energy point of view, building a network of new infrastructures for sustainability, energy efficiency and renewable energies.
- Within the framework of the above paragraph, it will be necessary to implement a series of measures which are related not only with the modal change (urban mobility plans, business transport plans, improvements in collective means of transport etc), but also through more efficient use of transport (better management of infrastructures, fleets, efficient and more sustainable driving etc) and, above all, increasing the energy efficiency of vehicles, promoting the use of alternative fuels (increasing the use of bio-fuels and other more efficient fuels, improving vehicle technology etc) and promoting intermodality.
- Understanding that greater or lesser potential sustainability of an urban environment is implicit in its urbanistic design. For example, it would be impossible to meet ambitious objectives of more sustainable mobility if the pure mobility policies do not fit in with the urbanistic measures and model design of the city. The central concept of this coordination is accessibility by means of creating closeness in proximity. This is achieved through two main elements: compact urbanisation (although not too built-up) and the diversity of urban uses. In this regard, the above-mentioned concepts of a polycentric city and the “neighbourhood-city” include these ideas, opting for a habitable city model. Only in this way, and always from specific urbanistic actions, is it possible to make “savings” in the motorised mobility needs of the population.

- Opting for energy efficiency and sustainable management of resources in residential, commercial and institutional sectors. The energy efficiency of buildings correctly introduces criteria which, in the design stage, will contribute to implementing minimum energy efficiency requirements. The long life of buildings and their fixed installations, the high number and spread and relatively small consumptions mean that the economic profitability of the technical measures aimed at savings on existing buildings are low and difficult to implement (facades and covers, HVAC installations, boilers, low consumption lamps, electrical appliances, kitchen etc). Decisive actions from the Local Administration will strengthen the preparation of rules which encourage implementation of measures which make buildings more efficient in energy terms and the gradual introduction of new criteria for responsible energy consumption.
- Moving forward in efficient management of waste and the reduction of emissions. Its objectives must include stabilisation of the production of urban waste, establishing selective collection, reducing, recovering, reusing and recycling waste packaging, as well as valuing the organic material of urban waste. At the same time, it must not be forgotten that saving plays an essential role in streamlining consumption, having an impact on the responsibility involved in the act of consuming.
- Promoting a new sustainable architecture which transfers to citizens the clear perception that a different city model is possible with the noteworthy characteristic of sustainability. Nowadays, there is a sustainable architecture capable of being defined and measured objectively on the basis of a full system of indicators.
- Intensely promoting protected housing. The current model which prevails in most territories is clearly unsustainable and it is essential to act firmly in promoting and building dignified public housing at an affordable price. Housing is a basic citizen right, not an instrument for speculation or getting rich easily.
- Diagnosing and creating value strategies for future activities and jobs which derive from all the above points: water works and infrastructures, climate adaptation of housing in buildings, specific sectoral actions (agriculture, tourism,...) etc. Climate change is a serious threat, but at the same time, as paradoxical as it may seem, an opportunity for generating new future activities and jobs in the territory based on the local initiatives adopted to prevent and mitigate its effects.
- In line with the above point, there are many possible preventive actions, from hydraulic infrastructure works in order to route in a programmed manner any possible increases in the level of seawater, to the climate adaptation of housing as studies carried out demonstrate that the cost of adapting a 70 m<sup>2</sup> apartment may be between €4500 and €5500 and involve 25 hours of work.
- Understanding the requirements of a truly metropolitan governance with regard to the other processes which require such a dimension and exceed the traditional city and municipal administrative limits to cover through different types of spatial articulation, territories and towns which are increasingly wider.
- Monitoring, evaluation and ongoing updating of the Catalogue of Specific Impacts of Climate Change and Sustainability Indicators set for the territory.
- Awareness raising and citizen commitment for a new vision: sensitisation, motivation, information, training

## 10. Communication, citizen sensitisation and networking of the LDA

In order to materialise the critical components mentioned above and to achieve a greater level of institutionalism, participation and consensus, local governance in response to climate change, in general, and Local Development Agencies in particular, have to promote both a correct communication and citizen awareness policy with regard to sustainability and networking by the LDA.

With regard to the communication and sensitisation policy, it is clear that executing many of the actions in favour of sustainable urban development which have been mentioned above will be much easier with the support of public opinion. This policy will gain credibility if it has the support and participation of social associations, ecological groups and business associations and is aimed at citizens who are informed about the real situation of their territory in terms of sustainability. In our global scenario, information is the backbone which explains power relations and, therefore, the real capacity to have an impact on the urban fabric, to transform it. The concept of “soft power” put forward by Prof Joseph Nye may be very useful to know how to act and to accelerate this change, as a city may obtain the results it wants in terms of sustainability because others want to emulate its achievements, as this provides feedback to the process itself: the sustainability of an urban system will increase to the extent that its capacity to make others want the same sustainability increases.

In short, the idea is to mobilise citizens in favour of a change for sustainability and to materialise a major current of favourable opinion which is committed to this change. This mobilisation is ultimately expressed through political participation understood in the widest sense. This means the consideration of different levels of emotional commitment and different levels of social and institutional interweaving. In this context, the capacity to involve and mobilise citizens around a common project, to establish relationships of complicity with key agents in the territory and to know and integrate the perspectives and positions of different citizen groups are not only desirable aspects of government function, but an intrinsic and crucial part of local governance.

Networking by Local Development Agencies is essential with regard to the points mentioned above and given the characteristics of climate change and the profile of local initiatives in response to said change. It involves communication between LDA, the search for strategic consensus between them and the exchange and transfer of information, training, experience and knowledge. It is necessary to make an effort so that this networking leads to organisation and institutionalism, generating multi-dimensional territorial networks (on a local, regional, national, supranational and world scale).

## 11. Local initiatives in response to climate change and environmental phenomena: there are no natural disasters.

To finish these reflections and notes about local development and climate change and the role of Local Development Agencies, it is essential to refer to natural phenomena which provoke disasters in territories and communities and which on many occasions are caused by climate change itself.

In this regard, everything which has been mentioned above has made it possible to verify that LIC respond well to 2 characteristics of climate change that were highlighted at the beginning of this paper: that its dimensional consequences are not only environmental but also social and economic, and that impacts are and will be very uneven based on the specific characteristics (geographical, orographic, socio-economic etc) of each territory. However, the above does not mean that local development and LIC are isolated from strictly climate and environmental effects of climate change. These effects will only increase the risk of disasters which already hangs over humanity and the planet.

The balance of disasters in recent decades is terrible: the people affected on average each year stands at 250 million, the number of deaths per year stands at almost 60,000, and the material losses are quantified at around €40 billion per year. And the horizon for the future seems to be worse. The United Nations has made a forecast in which it estimates that for the year 2050, disasters will cause 100,000 deaths per year and losses of around €200 billion annually.

With all of this, the true impact goes beyond what has been mentioned. Its consequences extend to the physical and mental health of the people affected, to economies, the means of subsistence and production of the local population, to families who lose the people who generate the daily sustenance, to territories with a low Human Development Index, who have little or no possibility of recovering after a disaster. In addition, the impact caused by so-called small disasters is not usually taken into account and this may drastically increase the aforementioned figures.

How is it possible that the world and humanity, despite having major resources and scientific-technical progress, instead of advancing in reducing risk, is going backwards at alarming speed and cannot even protect the life of its citizens? And why is it always the poorest populations which suffer the worst consequences of disasters? The answer to these questions is obvious: both of them result from the enormous mistakes of the prevailing economic and productive model, the priority given to economic, financial and geopolitical interests of the few and the crazy and unsustainable rate of devastation of the ecological habitat and natural resources. This all increases exponentially the risk that natural phenomena lead to collective disasters and that these fall specifically on the most underprivileged groups in society and on the planet.

Therefore, it can and must be reiterated that accumulated experience demonstrates that the theory of so-called natural disasters is a fallacy. In summary: there are no natural disasters, but natural phenomena (earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, torrential rains, droughts, landslides etc) which become disasters due to the actions or lack of actions of humans.

In this regard, it is recommendable to examine the work prepared and disseminated by the United Nations, such as the monograph which the "Revista @local.glob" (Number 3; Year 2006), published by the Delnet Programme of the International Training Centre of United Nations in children (Italy), dedicated to "Disaster risk reduction: good practices, good policies". From examining this paper, we can conclude that Local Development Agencies must incorporate the following points to the understanding of climate change and their corresponding responses:

- The risk of disasters is a cumulative process in which natural or anthropic threats combined with human actions create conditions of vulnerability. Disasters are a product of a complex mix of actions linked to economic, social, cultural, environmental and political-administrative factors which are related to unsuitable development processes, to structural adjustment programmes and to economic investment projects which do not consider the social or environmental costs of their actions.

- Although it is true that the impact of disasters is greater in poor countries and territories, especially those with a low HDI, responsibility for the reduction and also the generation of the risk does not only fall on local national patterns, but also on supranational and even global patterns (as is the case of the policies of economic globalisation, desertification and environmental degradation and, of course climate change referred to herein).
- Many populations which live in subsistence economies have no alternatives which allow them to live without contributing to the exhaustion of local natural resources and, therefore, generating factors of vulnerability in the territories. Unfortunately, this is the source of survival for close to 1/3 of the world population.
- However, the greatest problem does not lie in wearing out the means of survival of the least privileged population: the states, international financial institutions and large multinational corporations, in their attempt to generate short-term income and economic profit, promote megaprojects or development projects which do not consider the risk factor in the implementation, nor do they foresee the generation of new vulnerabilities that threaten their projects. They do not take into account a principle which should be basic in every social process: economic productive growth cannot be at any price, nor can it be placed above sustainable human development, the environment and the life of people.
- Reality, local experiences, the wisdom of communities and scientific knowledge have shown us that most disasters can be avoided and that these are not natural, but that the threats may be natural. It is the factors of vulnerability which we ourselves generate, together with threats and the lack of capacities and the poor handling of risk, which cause the disaster. An inadequate development often strengthens the dangers or build new threats.
- People are not the problem, but the solution and the main resource which territories have in the development recesses. It is clearly demonstrated that the local community and the people in the territory are the first line of defence against emergency situations and form the basis for reconstruction. There are many examples in Africa, Asia and Latin America which ratify this statement.
- External help is not always appropriate and is not adapted to the real needs of the territory after a disaster, responding more to the offer of the institutions which give and finance it rather than the true needs of the affected people and territories.

This battery of conclusions leads to a twofold objective that the Local Development Agencies and local initiatives in response to climate change have to own: reduction of existing vulnerability (accumulated by historic processes through the implementation of unsustainable development practices), and the promotion of processes which impede the building of conditions which generate new risk scenarios in the future. It is necessary to act on the structural causes of development which generate the risk and not only on its symptoms, as has been the prevailing tendency up to now. States and the international community should trust and promote much more local capacities, the participation of all sectors: strengthening the use of endogenous resources of the territories and communities and basing the reduction of the risk of disasters in their own reality, considering the environment, the natural habitat and people as the main resources to carry out these processes.

Experience shows us that the key to preventing, mitigating and, in the best case scenario, avoiding the impact of disasters is firstly to reduce the risk before it happens. In the event of the occurrence of a potentially destructive event, good preparation guarantees fast, effective and appropriate reconstruction. And reconstruction can be considered as a window of opportunity and one of the best moments to introduce the reduction of the risk of disasters in the planning of sustainable development and in order to promote proactive permanent strategies which make it possible to consolidate safer societies. It should be focused towards strengthening the capacities of the key actors in local development and the affected communities, but also towards improving quality-of-life, reducing poverty, creating dignified jobs and social economic development, as well as guaranteeing in the future a greater level of security for assets, means of subsistence and especially, the lives of people.





GENDER EQUALITY IN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

## **INCLUDING, COMPLEMENTING, TRANSFORMING: MEN AND WOMEN CREATING THE NEW SCENARIOS FOR DEVELOPMENT TOGETHER**

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*“Keep in touch with life –  
not so much with practical life  
as with the ideal background of life,  
which is ever so much more important;  
and, keep life in touch with you”*

Erwin Schrödinger.

1933 Physics Nobel Prize and one of the ‘fathers’ of quantum physics

### **1. What is the standpoint from which I’d like to share my view of equality with you**

Dear fellow travelers in this enthralling and indispensable adventure of local human development:

I have heard some of you say and reiterate that this issue of gender equality is something old and out of fashion. You must be thinking, “Oh dear! Here they go again, what a pain to have to listen to them so as to be politically correct and, above all, to comply with the orders of international organizations.”

I have also felt the uneasiness of more than a few brave women (those who have come out of their comfort zone to go and brace the survival and dreams of their fellow human beings in any remote corner of the planet) when they feel questioned by feminist discourses, the need to implement quotas or the perennial ‘issue’ and the chronic deficit suffered by women. To a certain extent I can understand them: at the end of the day these fighters are not, neither do they want to be, part of a pile of problems, just like they do not want to be treated like victims, illustrious members of a vulnerable collective or underage subjects in need of care and protection.

Well, it is these people in particular that I want to address today, because I am fully convinced that I will be telling them about an absolutely essential dimension of development and, even more, about the future of the human project, which is what I think is at stake today.

I want to start by placing my standpoint into context.

I am a woman in my fifties; of Spanish and Panamanian nationality and, above all, a migrant; who has made stopovers in trade unions, the Public Administration, the voluntary sector and the business world; who lives in a permanent state of tension between thought and activism; whose trajectory includes themes like employment, business, return migrations, information technologies, cultural diversity and the amalgam of all these things put together, which in the end is what we call local development. Being a 'mature' woman—nothing we can do about that – I have managed to accumulate some experience in these areas, and not from one single theme area or specific point of view. And, indeed, I have done so through plenty of wise and wrong moves and based on fieldwork together with shared reflection and personal experiences; and all this has convinced me about the fact that the only way in which this challenge can be tackled is with a wide awake head and heart beating in unison.

From this perspective, I can tell you that I experience equality between women and men as **an aspiration and a need which is integrated in a much broader aim**, because we cannot isolate this objective from the rest and look no further. For me, gender equality is an **opportunity to begin to heal many of the major diseases of society**, of which inequality is both a symptom and a cause. And, of course, I see it as a venture involving women and also men.

I think that equality is, at the same time, imperative for justice. It is also giving talent a chance: this generation of women is the best qualified in history and we cannot afford to waste this talent (which is what we are doing). At the same time, it is a condition for life, because life is diversity and a world that excludes the experience, abilities and demands of one of its two halves makes no sense. It is also **the great hope for development**, because it represents bringing in the experience of those who are most specialised in the essential aspects of human existence at every level (gestation, feeding, care of the young and the elderly, child education, psychology, humanities, voluntary work...) in world governance. In the same way, we should question ourselves about what is the sense in carrying on excluding men from the experience of constructing themselves as whole beings, enjoying, sharing and improving with their invaluable contribution the most relevant task we have as a species: taking care of ourselves and of others, taking care of our

environment, of our relationships and cultivating values that can make the blessed mystery of our existence significant or at least feasible.

**I understand equality as a hope and a horizon to be constructed, as a personal project and a common project.** I see it as a complex task, because it entails putting a stop to many reflexes that have been internalised in our psyche, our cultures and our social structures for a long, long time. Thus, this venture requires courage, intelligence and a good deal of passion and love for the human being.

**More women in development so that persons can take centre stage.** This could be a good motto to summarise the view that I want to transmit. **And more real men with the courage to rebuild themselves, to reinvent themselves in order to truly be themselves** and, along the way, clip the wings of macho men who are inflicting such harm to the "gross domestic happiness" of the planet and the feasibility of the human project in general.

In short, this is all about launching a transforming movement that can offer real alternatives to the serious differences that exist and that can provide new action lines for life based on the needs and the full potential of human beings.

The other ingredient that I would like to add with regards 'that standpoint from which I'm speaking to you' refers to the specific form that these principles have 'here and now', that is, to the context and time in which we must make the roles of men and women and, therefore, the challenges of working in favour of equality, make their entrance into development.

As we very well know, this is a **difficult, uncertain and dangerous context**, marked by a systemic crisis in which practically all models are being questioned: growth and accumulation; allocation of resources; social coexistence, family and culture; demographic agreements, the role and the organisation of companies; our relationship with nature; the ways in which knowledge is built; and, obviously, the model defining the ways in which politics are conducted. Well, **everything is at stake**, we are right in the middle of a convulse shift of paradigm and we cannot face the challenges of this new and complex environment which is unfolding before us without questioning our old ideas

and practices which, amongst other things, are strongly and persistently androcentric.

In the midst of this pandemonium, the local environment plays a key role. And the moment is very favourable to **redefine the role of the territories in these new contexts**.

Taking into account that we socialise, learn and unlearn, weave, express emotions, project shadows and inject light, boost or waste talent, discover opportunities and that we have the option of growing bigger by bringing small elements together in the increasingly open territories of our current world, it is urgent to introduce alternative views on the agenda and the coordination of development. This is where an energy which flies far while remaining close comes together and overflows. This is where that which is local becomes global, as what is global becomes local because, after all, when human diversity builds a network by standing shoulder to shoulder, the truth of what we really are becomes apparent: a great big family of unique beings who, at the same time, are one and the same. **The “globalisation of the hearts”, which represents the great power to change the world and make it more humane, is developed and promoted by an interconnected local environment.**

Some days ago, in a workshop that I had the privilege to attend, I said that, in my opinion, the three great verbs for local development in current times were **‘construct, deconstruct and resist’**: construct values and opportunities; deconstruct ways of thinking, mental boundaries and obsolete paradigms; and resist this unbridled wave of voracity which crushes the hope for a decent life of most inhabitants in the planet in favour of the interests of a minority. In fact, it was only yesterday that I read in a recent issue of FP magazine that oil has developed a split personality (as a tangible good and as a financial asset), that the daily trade of ‘paper barrels’ – crude oil futures – is 30 times greater than the daily consumption of physical barrels, or that in the last three years 600 million hectares have been purchased by foreign companies in Africa in order to speculate with food products (by forcing millions of poor farmers to leave their land), and I reasserted my view that the new interconnected local spheres must develop, above all, network resistance strategies in favour of human life to save us from this destructive dementia.

Precisely for all these reasons we cannot afford to allow the local sphere to turn its back on equality, despising it as a rhetoric, bureaucratic or, worse still, “mainstreamed” objective, which is an elegant way of dumping it in the attic free of guilt. It would be a great mistake not to understand that, in order to get out of the tremendously awkward situation we find ourselves in, we need to urgently strengthen the local dimension which, on the other hand, will not progress much if local human development itself does not take up the commitment of equality with renewed energy, investing deeds and not just nice-sounding words.

In line with this, I remember some words that I heard years ago from the former mayor of Barcelona, Pasqual Maragall, who asserted that **“the local sphere and equality represent the great alliance of small powers”**. Thus, this forum is a great opportunity to revalidate, update and revitalise that message. That is my challenge and, hopefully, the challenge that each and every one of you undertakes.





## 2. How far have we progressed? And where are there still obstructions?

### 2.1 I wouldn't want to be a wet blanket but...

Look: we cannot deny that **there have been impressive steps forward in the last few years with regards equality** (in terms of life expectancy, education, rights, employment, health...), even if this process has taken place unevenly in different countries and amongst women themselves.

However, these achievements, amongst which it is worth highlighting the great educational reform staged by the younger women and the thrust shown by women all over the world in their path towards financial autonomy, do not compensate for the large amount of searing problems which most of the female population still suffers and which **systematically create worse conditions for women in comparison to men**.

It makes no difference whether we talk about the impact of poverty or lack of freedom, about economic or reproductive rights, about work sharing or labour over-exploitation, about social recognition or political and business impact, about the collateral effects of armed conflicts or the impact of droughts and mass migration, about the lack of safety on the streets or domestic violence... In each and every one of these fronts, women always bear the brunt, that is the harsh reality, and the figures – which you can look up in any international or national reliable source – are as unequivocal as they are overwhelming.

**We are talking about a deficit, yes, but it is not a women's deficit but a deficit of society as a whole.**

An old UNO statistic, which is sadly still valid and which I often quote in my speeches, summarises this fact much better than any other piece of data: *"Women constitute half the world's population, perform nearly two-thirds of its work hours, receive one-tenth of the world's income and own less than one-hundredth of the world's property"*. This is a devastating economic fact that shows (this is the only good thing about it) that inequality will not be solved by working harder, but by obtaining a different kind of acknowledgement for the value contributed by men and women to the economy as a whole, and through a more equitable distribution

of profits and resources. This sentence contains a big economy lesson which defines one of our greatest challenges.

However, there are others, which are generally absent from local development agendas in spite of being prevalent in a large number of countries. These are very painful issues, which affect millions of women for the simple fact of being women, but which are generally silenced as soon as they go beyond the boundaries of specific policies (where these exist), be it because nobody really knows what to do about them or because we are ashamed to look into the eyes of the more savage side of the human condition or, perhaps, because it breaks the linear way of thinking we apply to our view of progress.

However, those are the facts, stubborn and harsh, like a slap in the face, **questioning our false idea that gender inequality is a thing of the past** and, furthermore, reminding us about our duty as men and women who lead development processes to allocate a lot more resources, know-how and energy towards putting an end to shameful situations such as the following:

- **Gender violence** is the main cause of death amongst young women between 15 and 44 years of age in the whole world and its victims outnumber those of cancer, malaria, road accidents and wars (WHO). This is a world pandemic which has grown in the last few years, given the social invisibility, impunity and permissiveness surrounding this blight which puts an end to the lives of women and children. To give an example, and according to several sources – both official and unofficial, due to the fact that there is not even a sufficiently verified set of data – in El Salvador, since 1999 to date, feminicides amount to 3,928, out of which 90% remain unsolved; 15,000 Nicaraguan women were victims of sexual violence between 1998 and 2008; almost three thousand women were murdered in Guatemala in only five years; in Mexico 35% of the women suffer physical violence, in Bolivia the figure is 52%, in Colombia it is 39% and in Peru it is 42%.
- Up to one fifth of women in the whole world report having suffered **sexual abuse** before the age of 15 (WHO).



- Every year two million girls are in danger of suffering **genital mutilation** (WHO).
- In the case of victims of **sexual exploitation**, 98% are women and girls (ILO).
- The use of **sexual violence as a weapon at war** is still worryingly common, while the percentage of women with access to family planning, the right to lodge an appeal or land rights is intolerably low (UNO Women).
- We also know that **sexual violence** is a common practice in migratory routes towards Europe, United States and other destination countries. This fact is visible for organisations and NGOs working directly with this population but absolutely invisible for the rest.
- In Latin America, **teenage pregnancies** have practically doubled their contribution to overall fertility in the last 55 years and, in Spain, the fertility rate of underage immigrants is six times the national average.
- Despite the fact that **maternal mortality** has dropped, there are still 130 maternal deaths for every 100,000 live births, a figure which is much higher than the fifth Millennium Goal, but is coherent with the fact that 80% of poor women in Bolivia or Haiti, for example, give birth outside the hospital system (WHO).

Does all this have anything to do with the local human development agendas? Judge for yourselves. And if the answer is yes, do you think we are giving these social and ethical blights the priority they deserve?

Oh well... I am only going to give you one more fact to think about: **the Millennium Development Goals (MDO) which have the lowest fulfilment rates are precisely those relating to women's progress.** Indeed, they are undoubtedly the hardest to undertake, which makes the temptation to focus on issues which obtain greater recognition and are more visible, gratifying and achievable in the short-term, rather than dive into what seems to be a bottomless pit, understandable.

Having said all this, I can assure you – and this is

something that those who have already dared know very well – that **no other dimension of development can boost profound and sustainable transformations, results and learning like this one can**, just like **no other poses such a challenge for us to advance in our own self-transformation and improvement as persons.**

## 2.2 As the Spanish proverb goes, “We all have skeletons in the cupboard”

Obviously, these facts come together with other inequalities (class, origin or ethnicity). However, now I want to focus on some aspects of gender inequality which are best understood by considering what takes place in the more developed countries, where many of the problems quoted in the previous section have fortunately been solved.

As the European Commission points out, **“there is a point at which advances become desperately slow”** and obstructions start to accumulate so that it is impossible to climb the next step. We know the impacts, the data, but we know very little, we cannot grasp the ‘hows’, the processes which, most of the time imperceptibly, wear us down, so that when you think you are getting closer to your aim, the goal moves away, as if it were a **‘moving target’**.

I could go on for pages and pages talking about our achievements, which are plentiful and worthy of recognition; in fact, they have traced a path of conquests which are a reference in other countries of the world. However, I would rather focus now on **what we can learn and share about our struggle with obstructions**, because they are **the “lowest common denominator” of all countries** and because, perhaps, if we incorporate this experience to our local-global development agenda, we may be able to take an exponential leap forward based on implementing a wonderful and challenging process of **“open innovation in favour of equality”**.

Allow me, then, to stay for a while longer on the ugly part of this story, even if, now, it is fortunately a lot less ugly. And I ask you not to give up reading (yet), because I promise that, once we finish with this essential review of the shadows, we will focus wholeheartedly on the light. And there is a great deal of light!

Going back to the thread of our story, the question is: what happens when women represent 60% (or more) of recent university graduates, academic failure or dropping out of school affects boys far more than girls, there is comprehensive anti-discriminatory legislation, maternity is a scarce social good, gender parity in electoral lists has been established by law and there are women in charge of the Treasury and the Health Ministry? Does all this mean we have achieved our goal?

The answer is: No!

As you will have guessed, I am talking about Spain, whose characteristics in this matter are not far removed from the European profile as a whole, at least in terms of the main trends. This is a country which has an **Equality Law**, approved in March 2007, which has represented a very important breakthrough in issues related to gender equity in a variety of ways: reinforcement of anti-discriminatory legislation, promotion of equality plans in companies, protection against sexual harassment at work, development of paternity leave, female participation in politics and in boards of directors, mainstreaming of the principle of equality in public policies, a framework of administrative action in favour of equity, etc. There can be no doubt that this law has been one of the most important milestones in terms of consolidating steps forward in this subject, which, as you will all understand, does not mean that we can afford not to pay constant attention in order to guarantee its de facto application.

Let us then look very briefly at some of the obstructions which we suffer in these latitudes, illustrating them with examples from different statistical sources (most of them available through the Observatory of the Women's Institute):

## A) Scarce and unbalanced female presence in different public spheres

- **Worse labour conditions** (both in terms of lack of compliance with the law and temporary employment) and **worse pay**, with a pay gap per work hour which, according to the Salary Survey carried out by the National Statistics Institute, reaches 16%.
- **Persistent sectorial segregation**, with over two thirds of women employed in catering, personal and protection services and sales. And **occupational segregation**, as women are overrepresented in sales and administrative positions.
- The education sector is a good example of segmentation: women make up 64% of the teaching staff, and reach 81% in pre-primary and primary education, but this proportion falls drastically in the case of activities considered to be "male", (such as sport disciplines, where female presence amongst teaching staff falls to 10%) or managing positions (they never represent more than 30% in secondary schools or 50% in primary schools).
- If we consider the sectorial distribution in the immigrant working population, segregation is even more pronounced than in the case of the autochthonous population, and there is very strong female concentration in domestic help services.
- In general, labour segmentation concentrates more women in activities in which labour conditions and salaries are systematically inferior, so that women are economically and socially undervalued as a result.
- Furthermore, when men and women occupy the same positions, the same activity is valued more highly 'if it is carried out by a man'. This is the case of dressmakers, hairdressers and cooks. Did you know that, despite the fact that most of the cooks in the world are women, **there is not one single woman amongst the 20 top chefs in the world**, they hardly participate in gastronomy fairs and congresses, they do not receive awards and they are hardly mentioned on the Internet?

- **Educational segregation persists.** In Spain, as is the case almost everywhere, girls tend to choose Humanities and Social Sciences (almost half of upper secondary education students) and Nature and Health Sciences (40%). On the other hand, boys study Nature and Health Sciences (39%) and Technology (almost a third of the total). At university, women choose Health Sciences (72% of the students in this branch are women), Social and Legal Sciences (62%) and Humanities (61%), but they only represent 27% in Technical degrees. One more thing to note: these proportions have remained practically unaltered for many years.
- **Female presence in decision making** (vertical segregation) **is very limited** and growth is anaemic:
  - Members of Boards of Directors in large companies: 10% (no chairwomen). Since the Equality Law was approved, there has been a certain growth but, according to the experts' estimates, at the current rate it will take 100 years to reach parity.
  - Female staff in senior management of large companies in comparison with the total: 7%.
  - Chamber of Commerce chairwomen: 2% (and decreasing).
  - Female leaders in the financial sector: 1% (more or less the same as in the USA).
  - Female members of Royal Academies: 7%.
  - Female judges in the Supreme Court: 12% (as opposed to 65% of female judges on active service).
  - No women leading any of the 172 Knowledge Areas.
  - University professors: 16% (this proportion has hardly changed in the last 30 years, despite the fact that almost 40% of university teachers are women).
  - *Honoris Causa* doctorate degrees: 10%.
- Women who have received medals from ministry departments: 12%.
- **There are excellent female employers, but in general...** they tend to be concentrated in the traditionally female sectors of trade and services, the businesses are usually small, and have a low turnover, they find it difficult to grow and enter the more dynamic sectors and they resort to external financing to a lesser extent.
- **There has been remarkable progress in political representation**, and women represent 37% in the National Parliament, 42% in regional parliaments and a large proportion of 47% in the Council of Ministers, all of which is the result of large scale mobilisation and the implementation by the Equality Law of compulsory quotas in order to obtain parity.
- The truth is that, **in those cases in which quotas are not applicable, these proportions drop drastically**, as is the case with mayors (15% women), state secretaries (22%), subsecretaries (28%) or presidents of autonomous governments (5%).
- Where quotas are applicable (such as in the electoral lists that are being drafted in our country at this moment), women in politics raise their voices to denounce convoluted applications of the quota mechanisms which result in playing down the importance of women on the lists while actually complying with the law.
- **The new Internet world is more male than it seems.** According to recent data from the e-Equality Observatory based on the ICT-Homes Survey, the digital gender gap is getting smaller, 9% in terms of access (what we call the 1st gender gap), but this figure increases sharply as tasks become more technical or complex (this is the 2nd gender gap, which includes the intensity, skills and uses of ICT's).
- The gap is very obvious if we look at the type of use made by men and women: the gap reaches 44% in favour of men in the sales of goods and services or 39% in software downloads, whereas the proportion of women is greater than that of men in

uses related to health (17% more), education (16% more) and job search (8%), all of them, by the way, are multipliers in terms of their social value.

- Differences become extreme in the use of advanced applications (3rd gender gap) in which the difference between men and women amounts to 50%, without taking into account the scarce female presence in engineering degrees and decision making spheres in the ICT sector.
- Thus, **the more intensive and advanced the use of technologies, the wider the digital gender gap becomes**, particularly amongst the youth, which refutes the misconception that eliminating the gap is just a matter of time or a generational issue.
- A curious fact is that, whereas girls are the 'queens of social networks' (Facebook, Tuenti...), they nevertheless make a more passive use of technology, as becomes evident in the different Campus Party editions, programmer forums, the world of digital entrepreneurs (overwhelmingly male) or with regards the contents (a curious fact, amongst those who upload contents to Wikipedia, only 13% are women).
- **The sphere of money is "a man's thing"**. The business world, for example... that space where money moves around today and which is usually identified with being permanently available and endlessly mobile, relations, investment, uttermost risk, thinking/getting it right/getting it wrong big time, money as an object... in a context in which the money economy has less and less to do with employment, which, in turn, contributes less and less to the GDP all the time.
- And women in general terms do not get involved with business. What women do is work in reproduction for free and in production for an excessively low wage. That is why there are only two women amongst the twenty richest people in the world and only one amongst the twenty successful young entrepreneurs (companies set up between 1999-2008), why they represent the majority of micro-credit beneficiaries but are very rarely involved with conventional credit and hardly ever own any property (or if they do, they usually register it under their husband's name).
- **We do not even exist in the sphere of economic thinking and policies (IMF, ECB, G-20, G-8...)** with the permission of Ms Christine Lagarde, recently appointed Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund thanks to the unfortunate male-chauvinistic blunder of her predecessor, the famous DSK. I will spare the references to the great – and small – summits or forums where decisions are made or opinion is created about any topical subject in the global agenda that you can think of (political, technological, environmental, military...). Of course, never social subjects!
- **The profession of "guru" is clearly masculine.** I have not found solid studies about this, but I have taken my first empirical steps by analysing the programs for seminars and congresses and systematically visiting web sites specialising in the supply of lecturers and speakers on a wide variety of subject matters. And, after this journey, I would dare put forward a magic figure: women are not more than 10% in those profitable spaces which, by the way, mark the guidelines of future thinking.
- **Neither do we participate (hardly at all...) in criminal offense.** Spain is no exception in this trend (which in this case is positive for women), which generates extreme female underrepresentation in the prison population, where the percentage of women does not even reach a tenth of the total (9.4%).
- **Nor in religious positions of authority and visibility, despite the fact that women make up the majority of the base of religions.** A good example is found in the figures for Catholicism, the majority religion in Spain. According to the Centre for Sociological Research, 35% of women (and 21% of men) declare themselves to be practicing Catholics, and 77% of members of religious orders are nuns. In spite of this, there is not one single female priest (and it does not look like there is going to be one in the near future...).
- **In the culture sectors women are the biggest consumers**, they represent the majority in classical music, dance, ballet, museum visits, use of libraries and book reading, except when they are technical. However, **in production, direction and the sectorial representation of cultural**

industries our presence is much smaller, and this proportion drops even more if the degree of visibility and participation in the arts market is measured, which is almost none, for example, in the field of auctions where the situation can be summarised as “men’s work bought by women”.

- **Women represent 63% of all voluntaries in Spain** (according to data from the Ministry of Health, Social Policy and Equality), but we are still a minority in the leadership positions in the sector.
- **Social exclusion factors affect women to a greater degree**, in particular the risk of poverty (almost three points higher) and the vulnerability generated by undertaking family duties single-handedly within a context of a strong increase in the number of one-parent families in Spain, amongst which 86% are led by women.
- **Immigration and the crisis are also contributing to the female profile of social exclusion**, and recent studies show that gender gaps are growing.
- **Gender violence** (73 women were murdered in this way in 2010, almost 40% foreign), and the processes of personal and social destructuring which it generates are also exclusion factors affecting all members of the family unit. However, it is worth pointing out that the Organic Law for integral protection measures against gender violence, approved in 2004, is proving to be a very effective lever to promote knowledge, reporting, punishment of the culprits and protection of the victims of this huge personal and collective tragedy. Spanish citizens find this issue very disturbing, despite the fact that it is one of the countries with the lowest incidence at international level. For example, **in Central America, the absolute figures of feminicides can be up to ten times higher than the Spanish figures; even though the population can be 3, 4 and even 5 times smaller**, and social awareness is not proportional to the gravity of this bloodshed.

## B) An even more scarce and unbalanced presence of men in the family and the home

We have seen that, **in the so-called public space, the representation of men and women is a mosaic of presence and absence which can be synthesised as a strong and hardly functional imbalance**. However, probably the biggest imbalance of all is the **traditional division which exists between the public and the private spaces**, the main boundary along which the rigid environments and roles that the patriarchal system assigns to men and women stand. In other words, as we say in Spain, ‘that is the crux of the matter’.

According to this division (which, watch out, today is more unreal than ever), women are in charge of duties at home (private space) whereas men are in charge of the state and market duties (public space), which generates a false separation between these spaces which, really, cannot work or be understood independently.

In Spain, for example, women dedicate 5.58 hours a day to household chores, whereas men dedicate only 2.20 hours. Another revealing fact is that 84% of all carers (of children, ill people, and elderly people) are women. That is to say that, if in the last few years we have witnessed, in spite of it all, a change in the profile of labour markets, politics or social life thanks to a strong female presence which is experimenting with new spaces and roles, **in the private sphere this change is a lot slower and less noticeable**.

Such an unbalanced distribution of the gender roles and, above all, this scarce male involvement in domestic and family life, has crucial consequences for human development, out of which I will only mention three:

- **Economic blindness**, given that care, which is an essential pillar of the economy, is excluded and made invisible, as professor María Ángeles Durán (undisputable reference figure on this subject) rightly points out, turning the economy into voluntary work as if it were a market equivalent.
- Thus, **an important part of women’s economic contribution is not paid for, acknowledged or made visible, despite the fact that it is**



**supporting human life.** This generates a very heavy load that is never given a money value.

- The unobserved economy, according to Ms Durán, amounts to 25% in Spain. Despite the fact that here and in other countries 'satellite accounts' are being produced to generate data on the weight of household economies on the GDP, the fact is that we insist on not seeing and managing 'the full picture' of our economic reality and we remain firm in this fallacy.
- For example, are you aware of the role that families play, that is, the women in families, in a crisis situation such as the one we are living through now? Would you be able to calculate how much work is shifting from the market to the private sphere (care, eating at home, mending clothes, taking in children that have lost their flat, etc.) thus preventing the whole economy from caving in? Where is all that accounted for when the total workloads are calculated or when it is said, as is happening now, that men are the main victims of the crisis because male unemployment is on the rise?
- Well, this determination to only see and manage "the tip of the iceberg" would be enough for a whole paper.
- Chronic female poverty in terms of the most important good of all: time. There are more and more institutions and experiences that give time use a central role in development indicators, as this is what best defines the degrees of democracy and wellbeing in a society. Therefore, we could introduce the interesting concept of '**time democracy**'.
- **Being rich or poor in time terms is very important**, and in this sense, there can be no doubt that women do not profit particularly from the allocation of this intangible good that can then be exchanged for very tangible opportunities and resources.
- The agreement seems to be that women should go out to assume labour and political duties on a 'presumed equal footing' with men, but meanwhile the private sphere continues to be a woman's thing... **What a deal!**: "poor in time and money and rich in duties".
- Furthermore, if we take into account the demographic variables, which point towards an **important increase in the dependent elderly population** and the emergence of the so-called "care mortgage" (according to UNO estimates, in 2050 the demand of the elderly will be greater than that of the youth, especially in Europe and Asia).
- Thus, women have to respond to a growing demand to generate income in the market (two salaries are necessary to keep up the family income, accelerating transformation of family models where breakups, changes of partner, female heads of household, etc. are common), and to the equally pressing demand of taking care of three generations (underage children, young people who do not leave the family home and elderly parents) within the home.
- Important losses for men too. Studies and interventions on masculinity are highlighting the consequences of the systematic exclusion of men from domestic and care activities, both for men and for society as a whole.
- Emotional losses, because not participating (or participating very little) in what is the main laboratory and school for relationships of affection and for contact with the on-going flow that sustains human existence (for example, exercising a close and responsible paternity), keeps men out of touch of an essential dimension of their development as balanced and whole human beings.
- And social losses, because the consequences of that scanty male relationship with the field of care – which is often encouraged, it has to be said, by women themselves – weakens these activities as it pushes them into the background, makes them invisible and prevents them from benefiting from the contribution of men.
- At the same time and on the other hand, it leaves the interests of society in the hands of a sector of the population which has much power but not much background or experience in the essential aspects of life. And that, as one might expect, entails a high social cost.

2.3 In spite of all this, women's revolution (and that of the ever-growing number of men who question this model) is still there, generating energies for life and change

There is so much imbalance! Is there not? And how much unequally distributed testosterone and oestrogen in every field! Do you not think?

In spite of it all, this X-ray of all the obstructions is coming to an end, although I will come back to it later on in order to search thoroughly for some keys to help unblock the situation.

Now we are going to look at the bright side, at the impressive amount of energy that has silently been expanding in all these years of unquestionable progress for women and for the men who are transforming and diversifying the traditional notion of masculinity.

When we talk about women in this case, we cannot talk – as is often automatically done – about defenceless beings or about a vulnerable, fragile and disadvantaged collective in need of protection. We are talking about **half, or more, of the subjects of development**. We are talking about women who need rights, opportunities, spaces, prominence and amplification for their voice. That is the female energy which we have to take into account, which is right there, within view if we tear off the blindfolds. We are talking about the main people in charge of the needs of the community. The ones that contribute most of the work. The total number of those who give birth and most of those who feed, care, encourage, accompany, educate, clean and heal body and mind.

And, besides all this, many are the sole or main financial contributor for their families, while an invisible care chain made up by women supports them while remaining completely invisible.

Those who are administering justice more and more all the time. Those who buy cosmetics while also working on themselves internally. Those who fill the classrooms at all academic levels (except in those places where they are denied the right to get an education). Those who read most in Europe and those who carry water on their heads in Africa. The soul of voluntary work and cooperation. The biggest travellers. The war

correspondents who are changing the way in which information is delivered on the wars that are devastating our world. Half of all the migrants that are moving all over the planet and also those who are left taking care of their children in the countries of origin. The professionals of local development who are sweating blood along the way, but who are not happy with a false egalitarianism that portrays women as victims or that is used as a pretext to question the legitimacy of their own merits. The employers who are fostering and supporting female employment with their small – and often fragile – companies. The hard-working young students with a brilliant record who embark on getting a job and having a family with hardly any experience that will allow them to identify the invisible barriers that they will run into as soon as they finish their education. The geographers who reinvent the maps. The rappers who look for venues and producers that will help them make their work known to the public. Those who are in a continuous juggling act to manage everything, now and perfectly! Always feeling guilty because nothing they do is ever enough for them.

Those who, in spite of all this, are not in charge, have no property, are not seen, but not because they are 'the weaker sex', but because society, that is, its structures, regulations, mandates and customs, pushes them away from power and wastes their talents, consolidating a deficiency which does not belong to women but to society itself which, sometimes without meaning to, excludes them.

Mature women still invent their own lives, transgressing, embarking on ventures and playing an important role as well with younger women, not as leaders but as 'masters of experience'.

In spite of this, **let us dare see women as resistant, rather than absent, beings. Let us build foundations on those spaces of presence and resistance**, acknowledging that there is a large stock of wisdom in this position that enables the necessary change to be made.

Women are the big specialists in development.

And engaging in development for them, but without them, is like wanting to build a bridge while keeping the engineers away.

Therefore, a commitment towards equality involves listening, accompanying, making visible and helping to articulate all that **female energy which is being deployed today by so many women** who are transforming their lives and their environments directly – and even secretly – while they keep the cyclic wheel of life turning, bringing together a broad, plural and creative movement that takes into account and favours the role of all those women who are capable of strongly exercising a transforming leadership.

**Making an entrance into places where we are not present using the places where we are as a lever.**

In this sense, I think there are three things that bring together all the women in the world and it is from that angle that we must be taken into account as architects of change, together with men.

The first one is the female capacity to contribute original and powerful proposals to solve the priority problems that set the present and future agenda for human existence on the planet, **placing life sustainability at the epicentre of social and economic energy**, a task whose wheels and secrets we are well acquainted with and which is undervalued, thus producing the main imbalances of the contemporary world.

The second one is engaging, hardly being aware of it, in a **powerful transformation and self-transformation movement** because each one of us, in our small worlds, is playing a silent leading role in impressive change processes (in families, in companies, in life projects, in personal identities) that we may almost consider to be real social micro-revolutions.

Having said all this, and this is the third point, **all this intellectual, social, economic and cultural female capital has not yet achieved enough critical mass** to have a real incidence on the core issues affecting the transformation of our societies. And today that is the great task for equality.

Can you carry on talking about human development without actually taking into account all that wonderful energy? If the answer is no, then we must start trying to attract and retain them, to revise the agendas, to open up spaces to them and, first of all, to understand how to decipher those mechanisms that hinder, in spite of our best efforts, a joint approach to the challenges of change by men and women.

I will speak later about the revolution of **men who reconstruct their identity beyond the “macho, man, male” mould**, because they are also out there and it is important to also take them into account in this heroic, intimate and essential adventure.



### 3. Taking a leap from symptoms to causes and profound manifestations

#### 3.1 A first recapitulation

I would like to bring back some of the ideas I have mentioned up to now.

The first one is the **coexistence of impressive advances and prevalent gender inequality in the midst of the 21st Century**. And this does not seem to affect poorer women only, given that **asymmetries can be seen to be systematic in any collective**, both above and below, both here and there, although they may be more prominent in more disadvantaged sectors, where there is a crossover with other types of inequality (class, ethnicity, race, disability).

The second one is the fact that **much effort has been made to achieve that progress** (particularly by women), but **there comes a point where it becomes desperately slow** and it is difficult to further and even maintain the results.

The third one is the fact that **change is not just a “matter of time”**, given that although the conditions that women belonging to the younger generations face have improved in general terms (up till now), we cannot say categorically that young women today are free from labour inequality, or a greater responsibility for household chores (as daughters, sisters or, even worse, adolescent mothers), or from assaults against their sexual integrity and freedom, or from persistent educational segregation. **There are also issues** (such as horizontal segregation, the pay gap or access to decision-making posts) **where the passage of time and the educational effort of women** (for example, professors at university) **have hardly made any difference in the relative position of genders**. And this without mentioning the share of household chores!

You will all agree with me that all this does not happen because we, women, are stupid, do not work much, one of our chips is faulty, we are burdened with children, we are lacking training or we have no will to progress, because it has been proved that, wherever cultural conditions, reproductive health, access to education etc. are good, the situation improves, of course, but not completely, and definitely not at the pace one would

expect. Apart from this, have you stopped to think for a minute about how crazy it is to strip everything relating to maternity of social value (or even treating it as an 'obstacle'), explicitly or implicitly, within the conventional discourses and patterns to integrate women in the productive sector? Is this not something absurd that we should start questioning in our agendas for human development?

To continue with our brief recapitulation, we have to say that, at least in many places, **remarkable efforts are being made through public policies and by NGOs** (legislation, programs, services, campaigns, quotas...), although we must admit that **equality agendas have not yet found the place they deserve in general policies**, despite the many attempts made in this sense.

In the midst of all this, we have arrived at a **"no man's land" of sorts** where many agents who are indispensable for this task are not very sure about what to do next, or maybe they are just not interested in doing it. Some of them have simply installed themselves comfortably on the idea that equality has already been achieved and they oppose it becoming a central issue of present and future agendas (an attitude of rejection or negation, together with high doses of formal rhetoric). Others would like to do more but they are not sure about how to obtain results that are proportional to investment, that is, greater return in the short-term, which is how the success of this kind of programs is measured. Quite a few have become discouraged, after a long time sweating blood and seeing how resources are wasted along the way due to lack of sustainability in this commitment, which seems to be like Penelope's tapestry, being continuously woven and unravelled. Some have advocated the dangerous discourse that holds that, at this time of crisis, this equality thing is a luxury we cannot afford, seeing as there are so many urgent problems that need to be solved.

And, meanwhile, there are still people working hard from very different perspectives, but almost always in isolation: the woman who understands equality as fighting against poverty. The one who focuses on community work. The one who believes that it is necessary to foster women's individual empowerment and their access to power, from a talent management perspective. The one who thinks that there is an abyss between the agendas of the women on top and the women below that must be bridged but cannot find discourses or resources to create opportunities in this sense. And, to finish, the one who considers that it is urgently necessary to bring all these efforts together and place them at the service of today's demands and challenges, transcending our small spaces, reviewing our background and revitalising our practices and discourses.

In line with this, I want to convey to you an **irrepressible sense of urgency**. Because change in gender relations is one of the main factors in the necessary social and economic change and we cannot go on arguing about what came first, the chicken or the egg. We must accelerate the conditions for this transformation to take place. That is the key for us to better channel our thought and action. Even if this requires that we start by delving deeper into the profound manifestations of inequality, as that is the only way in which we can stop working on symptoms and consequences alone ('the tip of the iceberg') to start tackling the causes directly. Perhaps this will enable us to achieve our aim sooner.



### 3.2 A belief system (based on hegemonic models) in which our socialisation as men or women leads us away from our real human essence

Sociologist Ulrich Beck says that *“a transformation project is always a self-transformation project”*. Therefore, we cannot talk about social change if we do not incorporate the dimension of our own subjectivity in the lot.

**We create based on what we believe** and, from this point of view, **mind and emotions, thoughts and feelings, make up the main territories for inequality and equality**, the remote and unexplored inner world where opportunities, barriers, successes and failures breed. Science says so, and so does our experience: everything is in the mind.

That is why we need to understand what it is that underlies subjectivity and apply this finding to our strategies, because inequality is manufactured with a mental and emotional basis and, therefore, equality can only be built in the same way. The well-known phrase in *The Little Prince* (by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry) also supports this view: *“This is my secret: One sees clearly only with the heart. Anything essential is invisible to the eye”*.

In the case of gender inequalities, they are learnt, expressed and reproduced by means of complex, subtle and often invisible psychological and cultural mandates and inertias which trap us, sometimes without us even noticing. By means of conventions, expectations and social stereotypes which determine what is expected from a man, because he is a man, and from a woman, because she is a woman.

In fact, as we have indicated, once the important steps forward are achieved by applying infrastructures and introducing rights there is always a point at which progress is arrested. We call it cultures, barriers, stereotypes, but it is an intangible and dark matter (just like the dark matter and energy of the universe which, together, make up 96% of its total composition), which is **difficult to tackle with traditional policies**, in any field related to inclusion and in gender equality in particular.

Elena Simón, an education expert, states in her book *‘Democracia vital’* (Vital democracy), that *“the construction of identity is related to the more social aspects of the individual. The models to conform to come from the outside, through staggered addition, by summing up possibilities that have been seen and experienced in other people, with whom we start to identify, creating around us that which is the same and that which is different, that which brings us together and that which pushes us apart, that which we like and that which we dislike and that which we consider to be possible or impossible, convenient or inconvenient for us. Finally, we become men and women, we identify with gender, with what every human group or culture conceptualises as masculine and feminine”*.

And our culture is still based on **stereotypes which assign women attributes and roles** like “weak, beautiful, emotional, intuitive, passive, submissive, coquettish, tender, delicate, reproductive, dependent, obedient, receptive, tolerant, patient, insecure, unstable, cooperative, voluble, moody”.

Whereas men are supposed to be “intelligent, logical, rational, active, aggressive, dominant, assertive, tough, aggressive, productive, independent, strong, determined, confident, stable, competitive, persistent” (Cabral and García, 1998).

It is true that these roles are undergoing a transition process but, still, they remain lodged in the depths of our social DNA. And, what is more important, **they affect all kinds of relationships between the sexes**, as they condition those between:

- Women and themselves.
- Women and other women.
- Women and men.
- Men and themselves.
- Men and other men.
- Men and women.

That is, **not one, but six different areas which are affected by gender relations and in which we must work simultaneously**. Areas which encompass a very complex fabric of psychological, family, cultural, economic, political and institutional interactions. However, as they operate from below, they have become more invisible all the time and, thus, difficult to tackle.

Let us look at some of the factors that can often be found **'within the I' (female) and in relationships between women**:

- Lack of confidence and a feeling of not deserving. Human societies are divided between those who think "the world is in debt with me" and those who feel they "must pay". This is strongly gender-biased. The "I don't know, I'm not worthy, I don't deserve it" song.
- Blame. You did not stay behind for the dinner that the boss held; you seem to be a stepmother, rather than a mother; you do not devote enough time to your parents; you have not repaid the favour to your neighbour; your house looks like a pigsty; you hesitated three times in today's presentation... You are to blame for everything you do, for everything you do not do, for doing everything, for not doing anything...
- Pathological perfectionism (everything, now and perfectly!)
- Together with what I call the "ancestral debt" (always owing and always paying).
- Difficulty to express anger, which is channelled through self-inflicted violence, medication or the use of relatively subtle forms of 'soft violence'.
- Female networks work incredibly well when it is necessary to solve any family or social issue. However, there are often short-circuits in power networks (mistrust, formalism, naivety, acknowledgement of merit and legitimacy when it is male, but not female...).
- There is a direct and complex relationship between profession/partner/family, which is crucial in explaining female behaviours and changes in them, but it is scarcely taken into account within the framework of investigations and policies.

I am briefly going to give some specific examples, most of them connected with my experience in the field of the economy and employment:

## Money

- "We find it hard to get paid, we cannot bear to be in debt, we run to pay", that is my summary. Together with an even more intricate mechanism: the inverse relationship between value and price, because love relationships – and almost any activity in the case of women is tinged with love – are worth so much that, if they are paid for, then they lose value, whereas, in the case of men, there is a direct relationship (the more valued it is, the more that is paid for it). Do you remember that traditional song that says, "True love cannot be bought or sold"?
- Women who do not get a loan because somebody asked them the lethal question: 'Really? Are you sure?' (That is enough...).
- Or who do not negotiate their salary because they are afraid that "they will think I am too ambitious".
- Those who feel bad if they earn more than their husbands do.
- Those who find it hard to price a service that they provide fairly, because they cannot see much economic value in it and they are more concerned with obtaining recognition.
- Those whose work is vocational and feel that they degrade their activity by introducing a transaction
- Those who are usually involved with sectors in the 'maternal economy'... (Where everything is so valuable that it should be practically free).
- Does all this have anything to do with the fact that 16% of the gender pay gap in Spain can be broken down to 8% basic wage, 69% overtime, 48% variable annual pay and 47% payment in kind?

## Self-assessment

- There is a subtle play between the way in which many men "give themselves airs" and many women "belittle themselves". I often tell a very revealing anecdote involving a female employer. She placed an advertisement in the press looking for a marketing director that she described using the words 'high level'. Only men replied. A fortnight later she placed the same advertisement in the same newspaper, with the only difference that she eliminated the words 'high level'. What happened? Only women replied!

## A different measuring stick

- Female cooks/male chefs, female dressmakers/male designers, female hairdressers/male stylists... a difference based on availability, leadership qualities, creativity, business ownership... As opposed to 'everyday' nutritional home cooking where women are still a majority. The consequence is that today, yes, today, women are still a minority in professional kitchens and cooking schools.

## Employers

- It is impossible to analyse the sense of risk within the male individualistic construct that has been imposed to mean risk, but, goodness, do women take risks! Of course, we need to use other categories that will allow us to give the word risk a broader and more collective sense.
- Family businesses. When the new generation takes over these companies, which make up the larger part of the productive fabric, women will only take part if they are an only child or if all the children are women. Otherwise, the son's right will prevail, sometimes out of custom, but sometimes because there is fear that 'the family will lose the company' (to the son-in-law).
- Another example that I like to use to illustrate the different perception that men and women have of themselves is that of Carlos Slim, the Mexican who is the richest businessman in the world and who declared to El País newspaper (obviously, in the Business section, the salmon-coloured pages): *"I see companies like modern armies that conquer markets"*. Some time later, I read an interview with Sara Navarro (in *Mujer Hoy* Corazón, of course, the gossip magazines or 'pink' press in Spain), our most international businesswoman in the shoe sector, who introduced herself in this way: *"I am a very entrepreneurial designer, I accept challenges and I take risks. I am very creative and I am not scared of competing. I have distant objectives... I do not consider myself to be a businesswoman"*.

## Decision-making environments

- A preference for exercising "power behind the scenes", influencing, being the second on board, but feeling uncomfortable with being visible or taking a position if the space is not completely empty.
- Although, obviously, I also know plenty of cases in which

women have launched into exercising an alternative power, and others in which they have chosen the worst possible forms of traditional male power. Clearly, within the pattern, we are also very diverse.

- In these spaces I perceive a certain degree of discomfort regarding equality discourses, except if they relate to the recognition of talent and the need to reconcile personal and professional life. It is assumed that equality involves making a fresh start or that it is similar to saying "I am not worthy enough and I need help", as opposed to referring to strength, merit and ability. These women who fight to prove their worth generally dislike being "questioned" by "egalitarian" actions (for example, quotas) which they think undermine their legitimacy. Undoubtedly, a remarkable pedagogical and communication effort is required in this respect, in both directions

## Educators

- Very little is said about the essential role played by women in socialisation and the reproduction of gender roles, both in the family and at school, two environments where they are an overwhelming majority and which are crucial in order to establish an equitable horizon for human development. Perhaps this is where the paradoxes of inequalities and the complexities of the challenge we are facing become more visible. You will say: but women have a great responsibility and power to change this! And I agree with you, but that is a power, a great power, that is still to be awakened from the outside and, above all, from within, given that women are still in charge of passing on the values of the patriarchal system. Approaching this task, particularly in key areas such as education, is particularly urgent.

Many walls and ceilings are built by **cultures and organisational mechanisms**:

- Systematic denial of the existence of discrimination (it is not 'politically correct' and it does not 'look good').
- Ignorance and belittling (explicitly or subtly) women's merits.
- Decision making outside work places and hours.
- Excluding symbols relating to power and prestige (the centres of power in effect work like "clubs where they reserve the right of admission").
- Negative perception of family issues as an explicit

topic of conversation or concern at work.

- Scheduling meetings late in the evening.
- Career emphasised at women's reproductive age.
- A demand for attendance rather than productivity (perhaps motivated by men who do not want to go home?). Although it is true that a growing number of men are now actively questioning this model; we must bear them in mind.
- 'Networking', which represents access to opportunities, an informal territory which is almost out of bounds for diversity: "the boys' club", the club of those "who are like me and will understand me".
- Merit system in academic and research degrees, which favours male curriculums.
- A teaching model in technical degrees which progressively 'drives out' the small proportion of women who choose to register.
- Lack of social and economic recognition of activities and jobs related to the preservation and the quality of life.
- Assumption that women's professional/business commitment is not as strong.
- Families (parents, husbands...) often represent an obstacle for women's aspirations, and it is possible to draw a profile of the most professionally successful: only children, those who have a good partner and divorcees.
- Typecasting women as a minority, making them bear the 'deficit'.

All of the above are merely examples that take form and multiply in the spaces in which everybody lives their own experiences. What is interesting is how they show the existing tension between the different gender mandates (in this case female) and the way in which specific women manage to make their way through this cumbersome labyrinth of direct (or veiled) impositions and expectations, which sometimes takes us back to the dinosaur era and sometimes propels us to the age of flying saucers, or, rather, interacts with us internally and externally at the same time.

But, **what about male gender roles?** How do these mandates manifest themselves on them, our other half?

Unfortunately, the male question has scarcely been treated until now and, at the most, it is men's role as '**victimisers**' that has been pointed out.

However, the trend is changing, mainly for two reasons. First, due to the growing concern in some sectors of feminism and in the institutions that participate in equality with overcoming the limitations of an approach which is exclusively based on women, and which has proven to be insufficient. Second, due to the exponential growth in recent years of men's forums and groups willing to question the heavy burden that the hegemonic model of masculinity imposes on their lives.

It seems obvious that, just like we, women, are subordinated in thousands of ways to the imperatives of a patriarchal system which is very dynamic and is recreated according to the historical context, so are men.

A system that defines identities by opposition: **being a 'real' woman means being the opposite of a man, just like being a 'real' man involves being the opposite of a woman.**

So much so that the model of male socialisation is based on the constant repression of emotions and behaviours that are considered to be feminine: crying, appearing sensitive, expressing fear and the need for protection, taking care of one's physical appearance, taking care of others, expressing affection to other men through physical contact (unless it is a rough slap on the back), worrying too much about details... Together with the active promotion of attitudes that are considered to be masculine: confidence, passion for sports, emotional containment, individual risk, physical roughness, comradeship with other men (but not with women, who are there 'for something else'), not taking any interest in the home, which is women's business, permissiveness to express anger, etc.

The worst insult for a boy or an adolescent who is different is to call him 'soft' or 'a nancy' or 'a poof' (I apologise for using this horrible word), which implies, not only **mutating the feminine part in every man** (just like women also have a masculine energy which the dominant model does not allow us to express), but also **socialising through the systematic belittling of feminine attributes and, therefore, of those who are their main holders: women.**

The consequences are varied and in several fields. I myself had never imagined that I would have the immense privilege of discussing this with a wonderful



group of men from Honduras and Salvador (led by three exceptional human beings: José Roberto Luna, from Guatemala, Julio González Pagés, from Cuba, and Mildred Tejada, from Honduras), with whom we are working in a project called “Peace at home, peace on the streets”, with the participation of Spanish Cooperation and UNFPA. We have reviewed many important points with them, that I cannot help myself from sharing with you. For example, we talked about how men take less care of themselves and their **health** (self-inflicted violence), reaching an extreme point in the prevention of diseases such as prostate cancer (due to their reluctance to submit themselves to the ‘suspicious’ process of rectal examination). The existence of an enormous and growing contingent of **‘absent fathers’** (or ‘present but absent’) is another of the issues we talked about, analysing the effects that all this has on women’s opportunities (as they have to assume all the duties on their own), on their daughters and sons (who grow up without that essential figure), on themselves (who miss a profoundly humanising experience of love and responsibility) and on society (which must deal with the immense surplus of male energy which is excluded from the circuits of life and, from that point of view, which is potentially dangerous for social wellbeing). **Misogyny and homophobia** are also fostered in this way. And **violence on the streets** (against men) **and in the homes** (against women, girls and boys) are, likewise, two sides of the same coin, which can be explained ultimately in relation to a notion of masculinity which compromises people’s happiness, a healthy channelling of their energy, social balance and the possibility for human beings to be who we really are, in our splendid diversity.

Along these lines, I want to quote a recent statement by Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir, prime minister of Iceland, extracted from an interview published in El País newspaper (27-7-11) and in which she affirms that *“In the years before the crash, the financial sector had broken all the limits and was running huge risks, accumulating debt... we could say it was a ‘game’. It was a young men’s culture where women were completely missing. And many other actors contributed to exacerbate that ‘culture’ by attributing the prominent personalities of the financial sector qualities which were closely related to the stereotypical notions of masculinity. On the other hand, studies show that a more balanced representation of women and men in financial management positions generates more unbiased and sensible decisions.*

*Thus, we could clearly talk about a crash of ‘masculine values’”.*

A phrase which could be used to open a forum about a subject that should not be passed over in our discussion: **masculinity and crisis**. A very substantial topic, do you not think?

At the end of the day, my dear friends, it is true that it is not easy to generate practices and policies for subjectivity, to deconstruct the gender roles inside and outside every man, every woman, every community, every company or every institution. It cannot be denied that it is much easier to organise a course or build a bridge. But, what can I say? Simply that working with that invisible material which is buried in the individual and collective unconscious is essential if we want to really transform people’s situation, if our agenda is really committed to promoting human development, equity and peace in the midst of this rapidly changing context which is unfailingly taking us towards a change in our civilization.

This strategy can find a great ally in the movements for organisational change that are currently so much in vogue, particularly in the corporate world.

*“From doing to being. A change of consciousness towards wisdom. Freeing the soul of organisations. Appropriating one’s personal power. Support diversity. Participation. Connection. Conversation. Movement driven by what is genuine. Approaching transpersonal needs. Self-realisation. Co-creation driven by what is authentic”...* These are phrases I have gathered from recent lectures and seminars about innovation and the adaptation of organisations to the new social and productive scenarios which put special emphasis on diversity, that magic word.

Let us incorporate a powerful proposal for equality which is transforming and self-transforming, in the midst of the main current of this movement. Society, companies, local institutions and each and every one of us will win if we build this **new approach to equality/ diversity** jointly.



### 3.3 Beyond stereotypes and roles: the traps and opportunities hidden in the human brain and mind

No, I swear I am not going to talk now about the differences between male and female brains. However, I do believe that, in order to progress in this great personal and social movement which must be stimulated in order to break with all those invisible inertias, we must talk about what science has discovered about that mysterious organ which represents only 2% of total body weight but consumes 25% of total oxygen intake.

I will just mention some ideas which I think are very interesting in order to approach this topic.

#### A) A still point in the midst of continuous movement

Every time I think that the Earth travels at a speed of 10,800 kilometres per hour, that the Milky Way (one amongst the estimated 100 billion galaxies that exist in the universe) races at 600 km per second towards the constellation of Virgo and, while this frenzied dance is taking place, the different processes of living and inert bodies, cells, atoms, everything, absolutely everything that exists take place in parallel, I am literally fixed to the spot.

Well, it seems like that is precisely what happens to the human mind (the brain's software), a very complex programming mechanism full of powerful automatisms.

These automatisms are responsible for resistance to change and for processing information in view of previous reference frameworks, to the point that, apparently, if the facts confirm that framework, we accept them but, if they do not, we tend to ignore them. So, in a universe which is permanently moving, and more specifically in the spacecraft which is our small planet, **our mind is what moves least.**

This is a mind that makes us believe that only what we perceive is real, so that we tend to forget the infinite time and space scales in which we live, as well as the many circumstances that are there even if unseen by us. This is what the writer Anaïs Nin said: *"we don't see things as they are, but as we are"*.

From this point of view, it could also be said that our mind is programmed to undertake wonderful missions but, also, to fall prey to blindness and obstination, as is often the case.

Numerous experts agree that the framework that determines what our (so-called) identity will be is formed very early on in our lives (before the age of three) through certain socialisation mechanisms which both culture and the mind itself will later on consolidate and reinforce. What does this mean? In terms of gender relationships, for example, **stereotypes are installed at very early ages** and, later on, it is very hard to uninstall these stubborn and obstinate mechanisms – both cultural and mental – which come into play and distort our perception with regards what we are and what we can be.

Undoubtedly, **our freedom project involves becoming acquainted with this luggage** and also taking our ego down a peg or two, by extensively sowing openness, doubt and, above all, humility.

#### B) The good news is called 'neuro-plasticity'

However, just like there is an inner force that binds us to resist change, there is another one that, when changes are unavoidable, helps us adapt to them very quickly.

Science refers to this mechanism as "neuronal plasticity", which **allows neuron networks to be extremely sensitive to the ways of thinking and acting of other people, as well as to the environment.** Thus, the relationship between experience and neuron circuits is very dynamic, as noticeable brain modifications can take place as a result from a change in behaviour in a very short period of time. This **contradicts the traditional dichotomy that has been applied to nature and culture** in favour of a view of dynamic interactions, which has even been the origin of new disciplines such as epigenetics. Can you imagine what it means to transform even the neuron circuits in our brain by changing the way we think, our mental programming and our unconscious beliefs?

You can guess that the conclusion I extract from all this is that we have to involve philosophers, psychologists and neuroscientists in order to learn in depth about the

mental inertias that support cultural immobilism and, above all, to apply the knowledge on neuroplasticity to stimulating change and to overcoming the cultural and organisational resistance that manifests itself in gender relations. We are moving along a difficult transition between the old and the new, between the thirst for discovery and strong acquired automatisms, between enormous knowledge and an equally overwhelming ignorance. And my impression is that it is on this field that the battle for equality is being fought.

Mario Alonso Puig, in his book "Reinventarse, la segunda oportunidad" (Reinventing yourself, the second chance), questions us with a phrase that might very well be used for our cause: *"We need to have the courage to advance into a different space, that which cannot be seen. If we do so, we will discover two things: the origin of our automatic behaviours and our unexplored potential... Our consciousness would be like the captain of a sailing ship, and the unconscious would be like the wind that propels the sails"*.

## C) Left and right: two brains, two minds, two ways of understanding the world

One of the many fascinating things about the human brain is that it has **two hemispheres with two different sets of mental software**.

The left hemisphere works sequentially, it deals with logic, language, analysis, the establishment of ideas and concepts and it is the one we use to learn routines and process conscious information. It is also in charge of our linear sense of time (past/present/future).

On the other hand, the right hemisphere is more subtle, it governs our imagination, creativity and spatial tasks. It is in charge of integration, of processing sensations, feelings, art, colour, music, shapes. It deals with total thinking, simultaneity, parallel tasks, synthesis, and identification of interrelations. In short, it is the vehicle to experiencing unity and to a place where time does not exist because it manifests itself as an eternal present.

Two complementary hemispheres that offer us two very different ways of understanding and relating to the world and also of relating to others within it.

However, many specialists point out that, within the framework of the extremely difficult survival conditions that primitive human beings faced, men and women have developed the capacities of one side of the brain more than those of the other. Men's left hemispheres are more developed, while in the case of women, there is a greater integration of both.

It is not difficult to infer that the **evolution of western culture has had a lot to do with a much greater development of the faculties governed by the left hemisphere, in detriment of the right hemisphere**, which our cultural patterns have systematically inhibited. And, perhaps, the change of era which is being born (if we do not finish with the planet first), is pointing towards **a much more balanced government of both our hemispheres**, so that the left hemisphere gives up its supremacy and the right one takes over in certain tasks in which the former cannot progress any further.

Therefore, integrating our right hemisphere and giving it a new space is an urgent task if we do not want prevailing dichotomies to quash the energies required for the necessary transition to a new conscience.

And now, before going on, I suggest taking a break to savour a thought by the great writer Maria Zambrano, who – without meaning to – brings us closer to all this much more beautifully than I can:

"The look of a woman who looks at herself is different from the analogous look in a man. The need to know oneself, or to know something about oneself, is an essential part of human life, but man, almost always, acquires this knowledge in the form of an idea, a definition; the definition is the most virile form of knowledge. However, a woman tends to see herself live from within, without a definition, directly, doing without the character that the man needs to create in order to see himself live. It is very masculine to see oneself live based on an idea or based on a character; it is feminine to see oneself live inwards, as if one's look came out of a centre located beyond the heart".

Maria Zambrano  
From 'Eloisa o la existencia de la mujer'  
(Eloisa or woman's existence)

### 3.4 A perception and management of the world based on the dichotomy paradigm

Segregation, stereotypes, belief systems, mental automatisms, the dictatorship of our left hemisphere... These are all areas in which the difficulties and aims of equality come together with those of social change, and in the face of which we are required to embark on some important learning.

However, now I would like to go one step further in this set of 'disruptive thoughts' (that was the challenge, was it not?) in order to establish a relationship between all these issues, particularly the historical predominance of the functions of the left hemisphere in our culture, with **the dichotomy paradigm that supports the mental, cultural, economic and social building that we have equipped ourselves with**. This is precisely what is hindering our progress at the pace demanded by the challenges we are facing.

The underlying issue is that **we are trapped in an exclusive management of dualities. Everything in the universe and in nature is dual (also in human nature), but this duality is based on complementarity**, on inclusion, on the coordinating conjunction "and" (addition), and not on the disjunctive conjunction "or" (choice or opposition). However, **in our social structure** (that enables us to think, act or organise ourselves) **everything is based on space fragmentation** and on fixed specialisation criteria, with hardly any space for thematic connections, for actors to agree on aims and for the cultivation of multidisciplinary approaches and teams that can transcend the systematic and antisystemic segregation of thought and action in watertight compartments.

Let us look at some illustrative examples of this:

- Circularity – linearity.
- Light – darkness.
- Body – mind.
- Nature – culture.
- Life – death.
- White – black.
- Unconscious – conscious.
- Left – right.
- Reflection – action.
- Right hemisphere – left hemisphere.
- Fusion – competition.

- Love – power.
- Chaos – order.
- Feeling – thought.
- Recurrent – unique.
- Chaos – order.
- Intuition – reason.
- Prevention – healing.
- Causes – consequences.
- We – the others.
- Invisible – visible.
- Past – future.
- Childhood – old age.
- Theoretical – practical.
- Humanities – Engineering.

And in their application to development areas

- Social dimension – Economic dimension.
- Micro – macro.
- Tradition – innovation.
- Solidarity – competitiveness.
- Saving – investment.
- Inclusion – internationalisation.
- Vocation – transaction.
- Employment – business.
- Consumption - Production
- Local – global.
- Supply – demand.
- Need – opportunity.
- Collective – individual.
- Dependence – autonomy.
- Integration of people – productive change.
- Handicrafts – technology.
- Fighting against poverty – wealth promotion.
- Immigrant – emigrant.
- Working with people – management of contexts.
- Technical – political.
- Political – bureaucratic.
- "Pink press" – "salmon-coloured press".
- Care chains – value chains.
- Reproduction – production.
- Private – public.
- WOMEN – MEN.
- MASCULINE – FEMININE.

I could go on and on giving examples, but I think it is more important for you to add your own. And for you to think about to what extent is it possible that an opposition, a boundary or a corporate island will emerge in any area that we can imagine, which will immediately

start hoarding arguments, languages and reasons that will construct a recognisable identity separate from the other, by opposition to the other.

What are the practical consequences of the validity of this model in our social life? I will list four.

## A) A factory of 'othernesses'

In this dichotomy model **everything is meant to segregate us**: you belong to a party, a team, a town, a religion, a discipline...

This corporatism is built upon ignorance or 'against' the other, separating us from the other because it is precisely based on this game of oppositions that our (false) identity is modelled: "I am because I am in comparison with the other", that is, the other is the measuring stick I use to measure myself. Thus, we learn to see the rest as 'others' that we have to ignore, keep away, defend ourselves from or confront, in a process which sows the seeds of violence in the depths of each and every one of us.

**Everybody is the other**: the member of the opposite team, the inhabitant of the neighbouring village, the gay man, the fatty, the one with the earring, the lawyer (for the economist), the economist (for the lawyer), the one in regional government (for the one in local government), the one in local government (for the one in regional government), the employer (for the NGO worker), the immigrant, the black person, the white person, the yellow person, the elderly person...

Besides, this model **systematically leads to exclusion and to the consolidation of hierarchies** because, if being depends on comparison with the other, being "more" or "less" than they are is determinant. And, in this miserable zero-sum way of thinking that we are bogged down in, for you to be more, the other must be less and vice versa..

Also, this combination of otherness, exclusion and hierarchy has gone as far as giving birth to **a concept of universality which leaves almost everybody out**. An excluding universality which is devoid of all concretion and where only the hegemonic subject fits in: a man who is white, western, heterosexual, healthy, middle-aged, well-off and travelled. Boys and girls; black, indigenous and Asian people; elderly people; women

of all condition; people with any kind of disability; ill people; one-parent families; poor people; people with alternative views; homosexuals... in short, almost all human beings, represent an anomaly. We are "the others" within this concept of universality, or rather, we have to disguise ourselves as that which we are not in order to fit into this absurd entelechy which is the result of the otherness game.

## B) Blindness in view of flows

Each of us stands in our own island and, thus, we cannot perceive the lively and dynamic relationships that are generated in between those artificially separate spaces. However, the truth is that the micro sphere has an effect on the macro sphere (and vice versa), that which is subjective on that which is objective, that which is social on that which is public... and real life is actually taking place in the gaps where all these dimensions cross each other.

That is why, when **we fail to see the relationships, the processes and the flows**, we not only impoverish ourselves and our environment, but **we also become blind to the causes and profound manifestations of the situations that we want to have an influence upon**, and in that way we lose our capacity to act, because the processes and the hows become invisible. Under this paradigm there is no interaction, we focus on the task rather than on the process, on the activity rather than on the result. What is striking is that we then try to restore the pieces that have become lose or broken, when what is really important is, not only to alleviate this fragmentation as best we can, but to work in order to restore **"integrality at origin"**.

Even so, the challenges posed by **globalisation and the intensive use of ICTs** in an ever-growing number of economic, political, social and cultural processes is generating **rapid changes in this approach**, from the fast appearance and spread of social networks in all fronts of human activity to the questioning of 'methodological nationalism' (when migrations are analysed from the perspective of transnational flows), the popularisation of viral marketing strategies, open innovation processes in organisations that are giving rise to new and hybrid concepts such as that of the "prosumer" (a consumer who participates in the definition of the product), the questioning of the conventional patents system (see the examples of



Creative Commons and Copyleft) and, of course, the irruption of powerful horizontal initiatives such as the 15-M movement in Spain and similar ones in different parts of the world.

All of them, characteristic of the new “**network society**”, are quickly posing a threat to this obsolete model of compartmentalisation which, nonetheless, stands as a **practically untouched bastion in politics and in the institutional public sector**, and which is proving to be the most resistant to change. Furthermore, there is widespread public agreement that one of the most important obstacles in order to effectively tackle the current crisis is the fact that generating an orchestrated, common and fast alternative is proving impossible for the national political authorities (which keep their physical and psychic boundaries standing) in the face of events that require a global perspective, ambitious agreements and quick responses. The same can be said of other policies which are more local in nature (such as employment policies), which in general terms are still doing very much what they were doing twenty years ago and using similar organisational structures (that is: “everyone do their own thing”). The chances of succeeding in solving the employment problems are fairly meagre unless they go through a real revolution in their way of being and doing.

### C) Extreme difficulty to generate positive synergies in the institutional action

What I have mentioned before, allows me to talk about another negative effect of this model of thought and action, related in fact to the institutional world, where it has been taken to paroxysm. Without a doubt, more because of the weight of historical habits than because of an expressed will of the agents that are part of it.

The world of **public institutions carries dichotomies in its veins**, to the point where a public servant is called in Spanish “**funcionario**” (“**functioner**”), that is, someone that in principle has a duty not towards an objective, a process, a result, a group of people... but to a **function**.

In practice, **all public action is compartmentalised** (bodies, services, sections, departments, units ...) with rigid barriers both with areas and with competences

and hierarchy. All of this makes it **difficult to have a global vision of all the processes** in which each professional individual works. There have been quite a few attempts made by many Administrations in this line of action (and by the way, attention has to be paid as well to the etymology of this word: administration, which comes from administer, an identity defined by a task, more than by the purpose).

With all this and as a part of it, all important institutions include three large categories of actors involved, whose approaches, interests, cultures, priorities and times are completely different (and sometimes even opposed). They are **the male (and female) responsible people in politics, the technical staff and the administrative system**. With regards to the responsible people in politics, these are just “passing through”, depending on election schedules, and their priorities are logically marked by the nature of the situation (term of office). On the other hand, the large number of bureaucratic staff frequently lives in a world which is full of procedures and files, where time does not really exist. But it is precisely them who represent institutions and therefore hold the highest power. And in the middle, the technical staff is a thin layer, subject in many occasions to a permanent tension between the demands of the other two groups and the mark of their cultures from which, even though they might want to, it is difficult to keep out of.

Something very similar happens if we expand the point of view to another domain of the intra-institutional relations, which is the one that has to do with the **specialised units in the different thematic areas**. One example (although I could give dozens more), are those who work in vocational guidance or professional training of unemployed people who do so with their minds on their specific function of guiding or training. The system does not facilitate natural coordination and collaboration with people in charge of issues related to ‘entrepreneurship’ or SMEs, when it is obvious that these environments have to build common alternatives as they face a common problem or challenge. And if we have a look at the **inter-institutional dimension** (for example, local, regional or state cooperation or public/private cooperation) this topic gets even more complicated.

The efforts to transform this dynamic are of course constant, and it is clear that you get positive results by trying, but it also has to be acknowledged that most

of the times it is more a product of the will of people than from the fact that the system 'makes it easy for you'. **The system never makes it easy for you, because of its nature and the way that it is in reality faithful to it.** The opposite would be like asking a wolf not to howl or bite. For this reason, synergy, addition, cooperation and innovation are such arduous tasks in the Administrations, and it is because **dialogue is not easy as it is a dialogue in their domain.** And, for the same reason, **the technological revolution** (most of all its practices of interrelations which are opened, smooth, horizontal, with no hierarchies) has problems to enter into this environment.

All that was about the relation between spaces. But, equally, something similar happens if we apply this exercise **in terms of time** (for example, the connection of a policy or project with its previous or subsequent period). It is **extremely difficult to visualise actions from the flow.** Each project has a time (normally a short time) that has an end, and if lucky, it comes back to life later on, with its unavoidable downtimes included, in which you assume, as something that cannot be helped, the cost of losing a good part of what has been achieved. As it is to be hoped, this dynamic of "interrupted projects" has **direct consequences upon the decrease of pertinence, quality and sustainability of the institutional action**, in particular the one referred to domains which are not related to those of infrastructures and investments. The positive thing about them is that they have objective elements, easier to manage and on top of that, they stay there (not like people with their backpacks, stereotypes and other unmeasurable characteristics).

And you may wonder, what does all this have to do with local human development and equality? Well, actually, quite a lot. Firstly, because **this model has an impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of many areas of the public activity and, specifically, of those that have to do with actions affecting human capital.** And secondly, because **in the domain of equality** (where the actions towards efficiency have to be comprehensive in their contents, in the long run in its timing, collaborative in its management and transversal in its political logic), **this dichotomous model has caused havoc.** I can assure you, and I am aware of many experiences both in Europe and Latin America that prove this, that **equality actions have contributed with a large load of innovation, fresh**

**air and positive results to public policies.** Almost always in the spaces of 'pilot actions' where –within these chain of fragmentations- it is known that they do not have a good communication with general policies, usually dying, being killed or weakening in its path of transference. A path marked by failure, as it would be a miracle to match with success (if it is not done from a very well guided process) logics, agents, cultures, organisational outlines and such different levels. So please take note of another dichotomised opposition to be added to the list: (female) pilot experiences/ (male) general policies.

For this reason, many efforts within equality, which are positive, transforming and self-transforming, have surrendered to this demand of existing within compartments (in topics, organisations, in time) so as to be able to survive, or they have got lost in the way. And I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge all the marvellous people that have done so much for equality and tell them that we were not wrong, we only were ahead of time and the old machinery took with it part of what was built. But all that has been learned is still there, the energy too, and now, **the current times are more favourable for those who have developed the courage and the capacity to build by following the pulse of new paradigms.**

As a summary and to finish with this point, it seems clear that **"an administration based on bodies and functions" has an urgent need to change** (even though it is going to be hard to do so), **and it has to change because the role of the state is now more essential than ever and we cannot allow it to go wrong now.** We have the ability, the strength and the will of many people waiting out there, for a long time, for this mandate and this opportunity. This process of change has to include a comprehensive commitment towards equality made from life and mixed cultures, with a longer and richer path than what it would seem. A comprehensive commitment towards equality which is built from the knowledge of the left hemisphere and also from the right hemisphere which represents a generous beam of light that can help this very necessary change (so wished by so many people within the institutions) to be possible also in the short-term. Because we cannot forget that **the miracle of neuroplasticity also exists in the Public Administrations.**

## D) What's feminine, recurrent and vital is pushed into the background

As a way of closing this part of the document properly, I urge you to have a closer look at the relation of false opponents which I have used as an example of my reflections on dichotomies. This will allow you to confirm that, in general, if one of the two territories is lacking in men, the other is lacking in women.

Of course, men concentrate in the kingdoms of economy, opportunities, whatever is macro, innovation, technology, competitiveness... while women get not only what's private but also what's small, local, what goes around, what's recurrent, tradition, poverty, craftwork, vocation, what's social, solidarity, humanities...

Subtle borders are created even inside of the assigned spaces: for example, immigration, the kitchen, or care (which are areas traditionally feminine) if analysed from an economic perspective, are a matter of men. The same applies to technology (a real and symbolic masculine space), if looked from a social perspective (digital literacy, education/health use, the Internet and human rights...) then it is a matter of women.

Do they think that we are talking more about concepts rather than about realities? If that is the case, I would challenge you to make a map of specific presences and absences in your own territory, based on these dichotomous parameters, and then share the result.

The thing is that it is impossible to work in an efficient and sustainable way in favour of development in equality, if we do not break this binary logic and we go towards a new paradigm. This system constitutes the invisible thread of inequalities and affects us all, men and women. It is **a very deeply pathological system**.

Within this framework, the cause of equality is enclosed in the dimension of poverty and social exclusion (bottom) or in talent and diversity (top). Each one is absorbed in their own planet, doing "their own thing". Of course, the so-called transversality is conspicuous by its absence even though it is formally mentioned. This segregation takes power and capacity away from us to be able to influence in an effective manner upon reality, which is never in compartments. For this reason, the mixture is today the main value for sustainability, innovation, the social responsibility of businesses and the exercise of human intelligence.

Another aspect that I would like to outline is the point to which **this model of development takes us away from life**. Because we frequently forget that its secret is in a strange –and still impossible to decrypt– dance of 'sparks', apparently sudden, that transport us to new territories and other processes which are more repetitive and subtle, that happen in a continuous flow and are those that shape the spiral of the big changes. Their constant repetition makes them invisible to our eyes but, whether we perceive them or not, what's clear is that **the main basis of life is cyclical**: day and night, seasons, tides, photosynthesis, heartbeats, breathing, blood circulation, food digestion, being born and dying... It is so much like this, that scientists are even questioning more and more the existence of an only Big Bang, this mysterious explosion that is said to have originated the universe. Other theories that talk about the existence of a cyclical or circular universe are being proposed, according to which each new universe is built on the rests of a previous one, which at the same time, is partially part of it.

Then, if we establish a parallelism with what happens in the social world, one should wonder if this so-called society of 'knowledge' is in line or not with what is truly relevant for the success of the human project. I sincerely do not believe so, because **in its cocktail of information, technology and speed, there is hardly any space for repetition, everyday things; to sum up, the vital magma**. This large portion of knowledge, that in a secret way sustains our circular universe and which has been traditionally an asset of women, gets avoided and even disregarded.

It is obvious, that one of its effects is the **social relegation of matters of everyday life** and the scarce social and economic value of the '**economy of life**', very inferior to that of any other space of activity, including, as incredible as it may seem, the '**economy of death**', which is much more profitable.

From this point of view, for equality to exist, it will not suffice for women to hold positions which are held by men. For equality to exist, **the activities related to care, traditionally undertaken by women, have to get a new acknowledgement, a new value and a new level**.

And in the same way that we have to revise the false idea of "universality", we should also do it with a concept of citizenship that starts from the situation of a balanced

relation between free and autonomous people when, as the sociologist María Jesús Izquierdo very well says, human beings are, above all, fragile and **the traditional notion of citizenship has systematically hidden this harsh reality of fragility, need and human interdependence**. We must not forget that we are born with no capacity of autonomy whatsoever, that we get ill, that we have the bad habit of eating and getting dressed, that we get depressed, that we have no option but to get old (if we get there...) and then we die. **Human condition is built up of autonomy and dependence, of individual freedom and collective solidarity, of people who look for their own space and of independent beings.**

Can any of those dimensions be mutilated? No. Or to be more precise, can one of them be hidden in a black hole without causing a tremendous social pathology in our coexistence systems and in our personal life, without women having to pay an extortionate price for it? These women would especially be the poorer ones who take care of their many children and provide alone for them with a very low income. The answer is no again.

Of course, women have always been closer to this second dimension (devaluated and buried), while men have always been more present in the first one (socially valid). But the problem with inequality, of course, is not only going to be solved by women abandoning massively what's private to take a place in what's public. That is neither possible, nor desirable.

I will close this point with a message that summarises everything that has been said on this part of the document.

We have to apply our awareness and our will to overcome our inertias, by promoting the progressive establishment of **a comprehensive thought and practice** aimed at the following: (The contributions of Ken Wilber are very interesting and applicable in this way).

- Sharing responsibilities and opportunities.
- Keep up with the flow of life.
- Link what's separated.
- Put an end to false dichotomies: life does not work that way.
- Encourage thematic connections; innovation is in the mix.
- Multidisciplinary approaches and teams that allow

us to see all the parts of the whole thing and 'put all the pieces together'.

- Dialogue between policies and its agents (politicians/technical staff/administrative staff) so as to get a flow of ideas, experiences, results...
- A comprehensive approach based on the logics of the process and not on enclosed areas of speciality.
- Creation of a critical mass.

### **A progressive substitution of or... or... by and... and...**

We are united by what is separating us.

I tell my colleagues that **we need wings, and not only hammers, to demolish those false barriers. We need full time (and spaces) to be able to be full individuals, and achieve full organisations and full policies.**

As well as looking in an open way at other disciplines that can provide us with new and more enriching perspectives, I also tell them that we have a large learning school in the **spiritual currents that secretly contain the reserve of our ancestral knowledge**, so many times disregarded or placed in anthropological boxes of cultures to be preserved because of being "in danger of becoming extinct".

As more and more people, I am part of the group that believes that what many of those cultures teach us is **extremely current, universal and valuable** to face the serious problems that all of us are suffering. For example, the Mayan culture, which I have been very lucky to get close to thanks to my friends from Guatemala, that organises us with their sense of unity between the parts and the whole, its inclusive and harmonising approach between human beings and nature, and between the male and female energies of the sun and the moon... While, in a sad and absurd way, those who hold that knowledge have to fight everyday against the economic, social and cultural exclusion which they are subject to in systematic manner.

There is no doubt that we have to talk much more, building in the way the great **orchestra of development in equality and diversity**. That is, for me, where the real 'crux' of innovation can be found and moreover, the hope that future times could be better for a majority of human beings, as that is the horizon of the hopes that we are here sharing.



## 4. And to conclude, some notes for the new agendas

In which way could we visualise the new agendas for equality? In my opinion, some of the elements to consider in such task would be the following ten points:

- Equality agendas that are open and linked coherently to those of the economic and social change.
- Holistic, inclusive, interdisciplinary and participatory agendas that incorporate all dimensions of gender relations, all its agents, and all its spaces.
- These agendas should mitigate the consequences of the imbalances that the patriarchal system generates, and look at the causes and the root of the problem.
- Agendas of women and men.
- Agendas that are personal, economic, social, political, cultural, intercultural and intergenerational.
- Agendas with a powerful transforming leadership.
- Agendas with priorities, which have a privileged place in public policies, with the will and the real commitment of all agents involved and the provision of enough resources.
- Agendas that are fast enough, because we cannot wait for the social dynamics to operate at their heavy and misleading pace.
- Innovative agendas that make the most of all the opportunities offered by the “network society”. They have to be filled with spaces for dialogue, creativity, communication, closeness, vitality and created with the right hemisphere!
- These agendas have to be institutional but also individual. They have to systematically combine experience and cognitive elements.

Agendas that associate **four essential verbs: integrate, include, add and complement**. With the philosophy of not thinking so much about the matter, thus wasting a precious time –and wasting the time of others as well- in constantly giving legitimacy to something that is very obvious: inequalities exist and they are not going to be corrected by themselves. There has to be will, conviction, and wish, not only from women, but also from intelligent, committed and aware men.

There is a beautiful story that reports this vision and which the current president of Grupo D a, Ana Mar a Llopis, an innovative and committed woman, tells us like this:

*“Back in the 70s, the proportion of musician women in the US Orchestras was of around 5 to 10%, and it was relatively stable, without significant progress. This was a surprise for some of the members of the Orchestra in Boston, given the growing number of women with a musical education, which however would not pass the initial test to become part of the orchestra. Was there a gender prejudice? Trying to make the selection process more democratic, they had a very appropriate idea: as music was noticed by hearing and not by seeing, if a blind selection process was started, then the prejudice against women and the discrimination that they could be suffering would be eliminated. So, the judges would know neither the identity nor the sex of candidates, which would be hidden behind a screen, and they would make their decisions on the only basis of the music that they were listening to. What do you think the result was? Eureka, exactly: women started entering the orchestras like mad, first in Boston, then in Chicago, Philadelphia, and then the rest followed. At the beginning, the proportion of women entering the orchestra was of around 30%, and in time, it went up to 50%. In 1999 a historic study of this phenomenon was made in 11 orchestras, which was published in 2000 by Goldin and Rouse (from Harvard and Princeton, respectively). The results showed that there were significant differences when the first tests were done without seeing the candidates. “When the tests were carried out that way, approximately 28.6% of female*

*musicians and 20.2% of male musicians went ahead to the next round. However, when the preliminary tests were not carried out without seeing the candidates, only 19.3% of women went on to the next stage, compared to 22.5% of men. By studying the information collected during the tests, researchers came to the conclusion that the tests carried out without seeing the candidates increased the chances of women to move forward in the selection process by 50%. The probability for a woman to be selected for the orchestra increased a great deal, in spite of the competition and the fact that the probabilities of success were still small. In some cases, if candidates wore high heels, they were asked to take them off, so that there was no noise when walking. If this was not done, the gender of the candidate could then be identified and anonymity would disappear from the preliminary tests”.*

For me, this initiative of **“orchestrating impartiality”** is an excellent example of a clear idea which, is technically very easy to apply, is oriented to results, and what prevails in it is a shared, fair and functional objective, which doesn't need any unnecessary justification or going around. I wish that this example, of putting into practice clear ideas that don't waste time in false rhetoric, grows also in our countries.

Encouraged by this inspiring experience, and without wanting to be exhaustive, I am going to propose now some topics (old and new) that in my opinion should not lack in the commitments for local human development when talking about equality. I will only refer to the areas that I know best, and should be then interpreted as illustrative examples based on my experience. In any of them, there is a great deal that can be done from a local point of view, only by breaking the compartments to **put into play and orchestrate all the synergies of the territory**: male and female educators, businesses, the associative sector, the media, public services...

#### 4.1 A personal agenda

It seems clear that it will not be possible to move forward towards a transforming leadership at a collective level without making aware and questioning the gender rules and mandates in our inner space. Also without having, defending and projecting an own vision of the world that is coherent with our inner knowledge, with the engine of our desire. Only in this way will we be able to be an example for other women (and for other men), which is the best method to pave the way for women and for men too.

Paving the way means contributing to **the courageous disclosure of the macro and micro-machismos, and the creation of new role models**. New models of a balance of interests, of realisation in multiplicity, of full rights, of creative capacity, of risk, of experimenting new forms –also valid- of knowledge, of legitimate ambition and, of course, of opening to a wide diversity. These would be models where other people can recognise themselves and where society as a whole can recognise these new women and men as a rich and powerful social group, and as an unstoppable vital engine of change.

The equality project is then, in the first place, a **‘person to person’ project**.

## 4.2 An educational and cultural agenda

*"Wouldn't it be more convenient to provide the next generations with the necessary competences to focus their attention, resolve conflicts, manage the diversity of a globalised world, suggest them how to sharpen up their decision mechanisms, educate the heart of citizens and not just their mind?"*

Eduardo Punset

*Excusas para no pensar (Excuses for not thinking)*

Over anything else, **education is the key to economic progress, and personal and social welfare**. It is also the preferential tool, along with the family, to pass on a legacy of values and opportunities to the next generations, to which we are leaving a planet which is very complicated to manage, something that will force them to stretch their capacities as much as possible.

Right now, when more and more countries are questioning their education models with the need of promoting new contents, methodologies and support in the teaching-learning processes, it seems that it is the ideal moment to incorporate with a greater energy, all the proposals of **education in equality and for equality** as a crucial aspect of the agendas of human development. An innovative education in competences and values, which is based in holistic and interdisciplinary perspectives, and that doesn't leave aside what psychology, neuroscience and sociology have recently incorporated to our baggage of knowledge about the way in which we build our representation of the world and of ourselves. Also about the way in which we can manage barriers and opportunities better (whether they are external or internal ones) that allow us, or prevent us, from living our lives in harmony and to the full.

Some of the topics that would have to be promoted or consolidated in this area are the following ones (I will just outline them):

1. **Equality in the access** to education for boys and girls. This has to continue on being a central objective wherever it has not been reached yet.
2. Promote in the curriculum (even from a preschool stage) the development of **transversal competencies** about management of emotions,

promotion of self knowledge, comprehensive practice and thinking, as well as the introduction of topics related to education for peace, equality, intercultural coexistence, active citizenship and collaborative work. Not only with cognitive approaches, but also with experiential and practical ones. Training in masculinities should be part of the educational offer.

3. **Comprehensive (and integrating) training and awareness of teachers in these areas** and, in a special way, in gender equality, from a perspective not only related to the topics, but most of all to experiences. Dissemination and training, also, of female (and male) teachers in the **use of new technologies for teaching** and the promotion of **social networks of teachers for equality**.

4. **Sexual and reproductive health** education, with a special emphasis in the prevention of teenage pregnancy and STDs, as well as to guarantee the full exercise of sexual and reproductive rights.

5. Awareness and intensive training towards equality in the frame of the **schools of fathers and mothers**, also under an integrating approach.

6. Strategies of **information and orientation to finish with the sex segregation** of the professional options at school and university. It would be very interesting, in this line, to work in collaboration with telecentres and technology parks when creating a basic territorial resource to create awareness and disseminate innovative options and examples within future sectors.

7. Encouragement of **female scientific and technological vocations** and a revision of the curricula of those degrees so as to make them more inclusive and attractive for girls.

8. Strengthening of the interdisciplinary curriculum and implementation of management initiatives, and make the most of the talent of **female students and with a degree in Humanities**, so as to promote new opportunities for employment to this large group of qualified girls, promoting through it, on the other hand, more open and social approaches in the economic, scientific and technical environments.

9. Support the **academic careers of university researchers and teachers**, as well as the establishment of spaces for their visibility and for the creation of enough critical mass.
10. Incorporation of **businesses as a privileged space for training** (through practice programmes, grants, etc.), so that they contribute to promote transversal, entrepreneurial and international competences of young women, opening at the same time new opportunities for their employability.
11. Designing of **intergenerational coaching and exchange programmes**, with the aim to promote new role models amongst young women from their contact with the experience of women with successful careers.
12. Development of **informal educational strategies** in all these areas, from the large amount of resources offered by the local environments.
13. Active integration of women (in particular those more affected by educational and social exclusion problems) in the spaces of **permanent education of adults**; and inclusion in these centres of a strong digital agenda, adapted to the uses of bigger interest to this group of people.
14. Promote the **role of women in the artistic and cultural world**, opening spaces of creation and visibility, contributing to strengthen their entrepreneurial profiles, providing them with resources for production (for example, rehearsal and exhibition rooms, digital tools, etc.), supporting network dynamics and accompanying them in the insertion of their work in the art markets, both public and private.
15. Active and systematic use of **cultural participation, creation and expressions in the actions aimed to change values and attitudes** with regards to peace, intercultural coexistence, gender identities, social participation... There is no other tool or language which is more powerful than culture to work with inner transformation and inclusion processes in any area of human life.

#### 4.3 An employment agenda

Employment and the fact of obtaining an economic independence for women is the great challenge that is being worked upon at a global level. Within western societies and, progressively, in the rest of regions and countries, more and more women make a decisive commitment for entering the productive world, as a way to economic independence, but also as personal fulfilment.

However, as it has been seen, the investment in training, the improvement capacity and the contribution that women are making to economy, are not being translated by themselves, in a fair and balanced situation in employment with regards to men.

The incorporation of women to the productive world has to go hand in hand necessarily with actions aimed to:

1. **Improve the insertion and employability of women**, in particular of those more affected by situations or risk of social and employment exclusion, with comprehensive actions and programmes that include:
  - Information. The difficulties of people with a risk of social and employment exclusion must not be worsened by a limited access to information, systems, training and occupational mediation. Actions of dissemination, recruitment and encouragement to participation have to reach the groups which are a priority and must be adapted to their characteristics making sure that there is a balance of participation between men and women.
  - Training plans that match the offers and the demands of the market up, making sure that all designs of curricula incorporate not only the necessary technical competences but also personal and transversal competencies, including new technologies skills.
  - A professional guidance that is personalised and focused on the offers in the labour market, based in emerging professions and jobs and/or of high opportunities of employment. It is more and more necessary for women, to have a vocational training that takes their characteristics into account and that allows them to discover and value their own



knowledge, skills and qualities, as well as the application to an active employment search in professions with a higher demand.

- Personalised occupational mediation, in accordance with the needs of the market with the final aim of getting a contract and/or professional experience.

## **2. Improve the quality of jobs held by women and encourage their access to decision making positions in companies and organisations.**

Women are subject to worse conditions than men in terms of irregularities and informal work, contracts, working days, professional classifications, promotion and wages.

Another one of the great challenges to achieve equality has to do with the improvement of employment conditions of working women, as an essential and not properly used resource of human capital.

For this reason, a line of action in this area would be to create plans to take irregular work to the surface and offer opportunities of quality employment to women that develop their work in the informal economy.

A second area would be the promotion and the execution of equality plans in businesses and organisations (for example, those in the tertiary sector), aimed to correct the existing discrimination, in relation to several action areas:

- Specific diagnosis on the organisation, the barriers that prevent equal opportunities and its impact in the quality of the employment for men and women.
- Revision of human resources policies and advice to companies and organisations so as to achieve that their selection processes facilitate the contracting of women in terms of equality with men.
- A proposal of training plans throughout life that include the specific needs of those sectors where women are underrepresented and also allow access to information on the offer, which at the same time, guarantees a flexibility that is adapted to the needs of reconciliation.

- Promotion and development policies of professional careers, advancing on the fact that companies and organisations of the tertiary sector eliminate the “glass ceiling”, as well as certain stereotypes and aspects within the culture of organisations that prevent women from reaching certain positions. All this, for example, with the creation of inclusive practices of talent management, the sharpening up of selection systems, the encouragement of codes of good management, specialised training and support mentoring, the promotion of interest groups, initiatives of ‘women who think about women’, the creation of networks, directories and stable forums of directives, etc.. All this in the framework of promoting equality plans in businesses, sectorial strategies based in the territory (technological parks, clusters, etc.), and exemplary actions that take into account the leading role that the organisations in the tertiary sector must have in order to achieve this objective.

- Business policies that allow a reconciliation of family and working life, aimed towards new models of work organisation where productivity prevails over presence, and where the personal dimension of the male and the female worker is taken into consideration (people as the main asset in organisations).

- Contracting and wages policies aimed to reduce temporary and unstable jobs of women, as well as the gender difference of wages in jobs that have the same value.

- Internal communication policies in companies that assure processes of universal information –to both male and female workers- with no sexist aspects.

- Innovation policies aimed to promote a larger presence, both in quantity and in quality, of women in research environments and R, D & I: encouraging management training programmes within the group of female scientists and Doctors with medium or large professional experience, promoting positive actions to achieve a position in these sectors (in view of their leadership in programmes, the financial side of their proposals, the publication of their contributions and results, etc.), supporting the creation of networks of female scientists and researchers, and disseminating their contributions and careers to society.

### **3. Diversify the professional options of women and give more value to the jobs they hold.**

Men and women, as we have seen, find their work choices and options being subjected to a variety of professions and jobs, which constitutes occupational segregation. Women are concentrated in the activities derived from their gender role (in teaching, health, personal care, etc.), while men do so in those linked to the providing and public role (construction, engineering, industry, etc.). Also, the sectors with a larger number of women characterise themselves for having a smaller social and economic value, because, amongst other things, they were jobs that right up until very recently were carried out in an invisible manner, for free and in private.

The following is needed so as to be able to modify this reality:

- As it has been mentioned before, a development of programmes, starting right at the schools, and aimed to diversify professional competences and choices of boys and girls.
- Encourage professional opportunities of young women and the contracting of women in emerging sectors which are neutral to gender in origin, and with large opportunities of employment, present and future. Such as, renewable energy, IT, biotechnology, business services and activities for leisure and free time. Activities in which an equal participation of women and men should be looked after, both in terms of volume and position (women and men being leaders and managing sectors for a new economy).
- Awareness for a social and economic recognition of jobs carried out by women, as well as the development of sectorial improvement plans, where there is a larger concentration of women, especially within the sector of community services.
- Acknowledgment of the economic contribution of the free work carried out at home (for example, "satellite accounts"), so as to make visible both the contribution and the importance of this work for the economy and the welfare of our societies.

### **4. Facilitate reconciliation between personal, professional and family life** within the context of equality models, because modifying the sexual organisation of work is a key matter to be resolved so that women can incorporate themselves in the labour market with equal conditions.

These would be the primary areas of action so as to achieve this objective:

- Availability of care to dependent people and community public services, and adapt all these to the real needs of men and women.
- Implementation of new ways of work organisation that allow men and women to combine public, family-home and private areas, with the aim to guarantee a better quality of life.
- A change of mentality for a new social organisation. It is essential to raise new ideas and ways of behaving towards co-responsibility in the sharing of family/home tasks, accepting them and acknowledging them as a responsibility of the whole family and avoiding that they continue on being considered as an obstacle for the profile of women that wish to enter or develop professionally in the labour market.
- Work on reconciliation also for those women who reconcile. It is important to take the specific and serious problems of immigrant women into account, as they are doing many of the tasks designated to the private space (care of boys and girls, the elderly, people with an illness). This work is generally carried out in very unstable conditions and with no time to solve their own reconciliation needs. Getting to know the aspects of that reality and proposing new alternatives of 'reconciliation for women who reconcile' is, nowadays, essential so as not generate an unfairly dual society with regards to this aspect, and to avoid situations that reflect a very important family and social destructuration of this group of people.

#### 4.4 A business agenda

A primary and essential objective of the employment policies is, of course, the creation and development of businesses.

Businesses represent, in fact, an important environment to promote economic empowerment of women and their access to power and decision making positions. This dimension has to do with the activity of the local bodies of economic development.

In my opinion, there would be eight critical points to be addressed in this area:

1. **Promote the entrepreneurial spirit of girls and young women right from schools**, approaching both the educational and the business systems. Promote vocations, show examples, develop practices, and incorporate business simulations and games. Encourage female university students, as the team of female business of the future, by promoting intergenerational links between them, offering them coaching support and opening spaces for them within business so as to carry out practices of business management.
2. **Support the creation of new companies headed by women**, with a decisive investment in competencies, resources, support, encouragement of networks and a solid sectorial orientation. Creation processes have been largely worked upon in Spain (I would say that they are the only ones where resources and energy have been placed with good results), which doesn't mean that there is not a long way left to achieve optimal impact both in quantity and quality. In fact, and using a very curious and revealing example, one of the reasons why there is only one woman in the list of the Top 50 best chefs in the world, is that there are only a few women who own their own restaurants (although cooking has always been considered as a female activity). So, just imagine how this translates to other sectors with a more masculine base...

3. **Consolidation, growth, diversification and internationalisation of female businesses**. The main challenge of these businesses is their growth and their incorporation in the more dynamic sectors of economy. **More knowledge, capital and contacts** are necessary and need, in my opinion, an orchestrated combination of several ingredients and lines of work. I will mention, amongst them, an element that we must never forget and that we tend not to talk about too much, but which I think is essential: the family support of fathers, mothers, sons, brothers and partners! My experience tells me that a successful businesswoman has either a supportive and encouraging partner or... doesn't have a partner at all. Along with all this, the strengthening of technical capacities and, most of all, they need to be transversal so as to go beyond barriers and get hold of the opportunities available. The provision of support services, financial help and the channelling of investment and private capital towards the expansion of women's businesses. The encouragement of support networks (whether personal, family, local, sectorial, global, in pairs...), of business groups and effective associations. A proactive approach to new markets and channels of distribution (especially in exporting economies), oriented to the reality of small businesses. I cannot stop myself from proposing, within the context of this Forum, how great it would be, for example, to create a map of specific sectorial spaces of opportunities to be explored amongst women's businesses close to this local network, not only from the point of view of opening markets but also as a way of channelling investment flows.

**4. Promote strategies of sectorial strengthening in the more female areas.** We have to end, for example, with the false idea that the activities of a more social type, where there is a large number of women, don't need to have an economic strategy and consideration, as it is the case in the care sector. A lot has been learned around the favouring of synergies within one same sector, or within similar sectors (cluster dynamics, platforms of products and services, quality marks, common logistics, etc.). Well, none of this is applied to the sectors of female employment and business and it should be systematically done like that, adapted to each specific sector, making the most of the knowledge that has been generated in other productive sectors.

**5. Promote the full digital inclusion of business women.** We find ourselves in the era of information society and when we face a global market, businesses cannot be aside from the active use of IT in management, trading, communication and often in production. IT is a privileged tool to drastically reduce the limitations of time and mobility affecting the life of women in a chronic way, allowing them to combine in a more flexible manner, their different personal, professional and business sides (if the supports and contents are aimed towards it).

**6. Increase female leadership in family businesses.** An overwhelming majority of the existing businesses (not only in Spain) are family businesses. And yet today, after everything that has been achieved, women's participation in the heart of these businesses is still very limited. It is also the case of new generations. Developing specific strategies is essential to change the habit: strategies of communication, training, advice and application of new protocols of taking over, etc. Also because the family business is a privileged environment for employment, economic opportunities and social change. Both women and businesses have a lot to gain if an agreement on new balances is achieved. These balances have to be fairer within its social aspect and, without any doubt, more profitable economically speaking.

**7. Encourage the participation of women in the decision making environments of the business world.** A participation that has to clearly grow in the short term, otherwise business federations and chambers of commerce are going to consolidate themselves as enclosed corporate spaces (which are masculine) and less representative of the diverse reality of business. It also has to be expressed in other types of spaces (social networks, think tanks, opinion forums, media...), where our hesitant voices have to be heard loud and clear, and have to become more authorised voices to counteract the hyper-masculine form of the 'guru'.

**8. Improve the knowledge of reality and the social recognition of women entrepreneurs.** There is not a lot of information about the demands and the factors of success (or failure) of these businesses, of the composition of their employments, their profiles and careers of their leaders. Also, female businesses are still very hardly visible, and if this visibility is not encouraged, it will be much harder to generate the necessary critical mass and offer positive examples that can serve as a driving factor for other potential female entrepreneurs, especially the younger ones. Knowing and acknowledging, these would be our last (our maybe our first) pillars for action, in what I summarise as our enormous economic agenda.



## 4.5 A social and environmental agenda

Let's move on now to a fourth, and also decisive agenda: **the social and environmental agenda**. I will briefly outline the challenges that I consider more important, but this time in a more general and open way. What I would like to highlight here is, most of all, the need for women to be more present than now in the form of objects –and more than anything else as subjects– of these agendas, which means an effort to **include the voices and interests of women systematically, and a look from equality in all spaces of debate, political action and public resources** in relation to these topics, as well as **strengthening the profile of specialised organisations in equality issues** in a deeper knowledge of the challenges of global agendas.

These are some of the most important challenges:

**1. The demographic challenge** that the UN brilliantly summarises with some data. This year there will be 7 billion inhabitants in the planet and by 2050 there could be an estimated 9.3 billion, 85.8% of those will be in poor countries. How are going to feed, take care of and educate all these new people? **Will women, in a framework of exponential growth of one-parent families, be able to carry on their shoulders the enormous accumulation of productive and reproductive work that they will have to take on if the current sexual division of work doesn't change?** It is also expected that by 2050, the number of children under the age of 5 will decrease by 49 million people, and at the same time, the number of people over 60 will increase by 1.2 billion, mostly in Europe and Asia. Who's going to take care of them and how? Maybe exhausted daughters with a feeling of guilt who are trapped in this hard task? Or maybe a large army of immigrant women from poor countries forced to live far from their families to come and take care of ours? Will our elderly population continue on being mainly widows of a 'bad good health' that have limited savings and/or an equally limited public income? How are they going to take part in the social life? And what type of businesses –and businessmen– would take advantage of the opportunities generated by this large demand of all types of services?

Male entrepreneurs managing women who work very hard at the base of the pyramid? All of them are key questions, not only with regards to equality issues but also with a view to ensuring the feasibility of the great human project in its more general meaning. And it seems clear that it is urgent to redefine the gender agreements without wasting any more time, because the reality that we can see in the horizon, if designed on the current basis, is not compatible with life, with the life of men, but, most of all, with the life of women and the large number of dependent people (boys, girls and the elderly), which under this model, see themselves condemned to chronic exclusion.

## 2. The challenge of the model of growth.

Another element that appears in the 2050 horizon is an economic/financial power which is more and more separated from the productive activity. And two countries (China and India) which will hold between 40% and 50% of the global GDP (they currently account for 12%). What is going to be their role in the international set up? Will this growth mean an improvement in the welfare and equity standards, as well as in the distribution of income? Or maybe instead, will this distribution be more unequal, widening the gender gaps and favouring rich people to be even richer and poor people to be even poorer? (Please note that at the start of the economic crisis, there were 10,100,000 millionaires – mostly men– and that there are 11,000,000 today). Will the power of speculative capital continue to grow indefinitely when compared to productive capital without us all falling apart? And women, from Spain, Latin America, from the different countries in the world will we be agents of the change of this unsustainable model, or apart from an exclusive minority, the largest part will fall behind? As said by the renowned Spanish sociologist María Ángeles Durán, **our big dilemma will be whether to "produce more goods or produce more welfare"** and, only a relevant increase and not a symbolic one of female participation in the matters of global governance will be able to contribute to tip the balance in a positive manner. To achieve all this, there is an urgency to strengthen awareness, knowledge and competencies of women leaders

so that they can play a more active role in the female economic empowerment and in the questioning of an economic theory and practice that consolidates a fallacy which is further and further from its authentic basis (οἶκος, *oikos* "house" and νέμω, *nemo* "administer") and which appears, now more than ever, as a social construction at the service of male elites.

**3. The environmental challenge.** The well-known American biologist Edward O. Wilson states that the predatory model in which we find ourselves is turning us into "the meteorite that drives us to the sixth massive extinction of the species". We forget that the resources of the planet are limited and both the energetic challenge and the climate change, as well as the deterioration of our life spaces seriously question the models of production, consumption and growth that, in spite of that, we do not seem to want to abandon, both in the more developed countries and in those which are stretching very strongly to grow in their productive and consumption capacities. Will the planet be able to support such pressure? Will we be able to adjust the privileges of some people to the expectations of others with values based on a shared aspiration of a greater balance? Will women continue on being **the more affected by the effects** of the growing number of draughts, flooding, hurricanes, earthquakes and other natural disasters? Should women have **a more active role to play** in a process in which we depend on? The answer is an emphatic yes, but the agendas of the climatic change and environmental crisis should bring it about in a more decisive way.

**4. The challenge of social inclusion.** Besides poverty, we can also see the emergence of **new axes of social fracture** which make what some male and female experts call "liquid societies". New axes that are expressed in a context of changes in family relations (couples breaking up, a diversity of coexistence models), in employment (saying goodbye to stable employment) and in the mechanisms of distribution of resources, including not only private capital but also public transferences. And in the case of our country, the greater danger of exclusion takes place today, as it has been

mentioned before, in **one-parent families, children** and amongst **immigrant population**, where there is a build-up of a great deal of factors of poverty, of exclusion and of violence, whether this is intimate or social. Women are, at the same time, direct victims and engines to overcome these gaps, considering their cohesive role within the family and community areas. But this role will not be fully exercised if there is no strengthening approach of their rights and opportunities (of employment, with the creation of structures of care, through the comprehensive support to one-parent families...) and will not have the desired result if 'the other half of the population', i.e. men, don't get clearly involved. As it has been said by the historian and specialist in new masculinities Julio González Pagés, **"society urgently needs our men, but there is a growing excess of our machos"**. This commitment in favour of men and against machos has to be a central part of equality agendas.

**5. The challenge of peace:** Peace is the first condition necessary for human existence. And there is no development without peace. That is why this is an element that has to be right in the centre of local development agendas, but from a much more embracing perspective that includes **peace between countries and peoples, peace in the streets, peace at home, and inner peace**. Women in general, are the **main victims of wars but also the main agents of peace**. For this reason, their role has to be promoted if we aim to achieve the great wish of **a world in peace inhabited by hearts in peace**. UNIFEM data (today UN Women) indicate that *"out of the 24 peace processes in the last two decades, fewer than 8% of the teams were women and fewer than 4% of mediators. Out of 300 peace agreements after the end of the Cold War, only 18 have addressed sexual and gender violence. And a study of the economic plans of recovery after the conflicts reveals that less than 8% of the budgeted funds are destined to specific needs of women"*. This cannot be possible, there is no sense in this at all, and this has to be reversed. But the topic of peace goes even further and **there is no local environment (even if it is not in a war) that does not have**

a very large task to carry out on this matter. **Insecurity in the streets** is a problem that keeps on growing and growing in our cities and, even though statistics show that it is mainly men who get hurt and kill each other, it is mostly women who most of the times are the innocent victims of this crazy show of shootings, knives, rapings and all sorts of intimidation. Women then have to be taken into account (their ideas, interests and needs), and of course initiatives and local networks have to be strengthened, because it is women who are organising them in many places in favour of peace and life, so as to achieve the purpose of having more secure cities. **Intrafamily violence** is, as it has already been highlighted, another essential domain that has to be included in any peace strategy and, sadly, not even the most civilised territory is exempt from it. **Knowing, making aware, preventing, reporting, protecting, supporting, repairing...** are actions that the agenda of a **human development in peace** has to include as a priority in their concerns and in its everyday work, **making all agents part of this task** (whether the media, businesses, associations, social services, groups of young people, therapists, agents of culture, police staff, prosecutors, prison staff...). **Peace, peace, peace, peace... everywhere**, so for this, we must not forget that we need to **address the issue right from its core**. All forms of high intensity violence (practically with no exception) are born and feed back from the **social construction of masculinity** and, therefore, **the comprehensive agenda for peace** has to include a solid and constant work with regards to the topic of **masculinities and cultures of peace**.

- 6. The challenge of democracy of time and care.** There is a lot of work to be done in this area, both personally and collectively, being more and more linked to a horizon of a growing dependant population. This includes not doing long working days when we can. Pushing towards an incorporation to the social and political agenda, of a network of services for care as a priority of public expenditure. These jobs have to be stable, combining a social-care vision with an economic-sectorial one. Trying

hard at home that all members of the family learn how to share time with democratic criteria. Encouraging values and ways of behaving which are less exhausting in our immediate environment, questioning traditional models. Giving value to care in the agendas of human development. Observing the social organisation of the current time, proposing actions to redistribute the total workload (productive-reproductive) and facilitating the quality of life of everyone. Making possible that men use the rights of citizenship to paternity, family care and freely disposable individual leaves. Promoting time and city policies that question the current time schedules adapting to the real demand of citizenship. The creation of urban spaces which are more related to the everyday welfare of male and female citizens. Designing strategies from the "vital cycle" point of view, prioritising those stages and groups to which a lack of time means having to deal with realities of exclusion. Creating initiatives such as the "banks of time". And promoting networks of cities, businesses and institutions for the exchange and increase of shared experiences to make us all, men and women, be richer in time.

#### 4.6 An agenda for migrations and for intercultural coexistence

One of the effects of globalisation, of the extension of transport and communications systems, of the demographic change and of the enormous gaps of development between some countries and others is the **exponential growth of population movements** (south-north and south-south), led by people who look for opportunities of a decent life for themselves and their families, as it has always happened. One of the characteristics of the recent migratory flows has been the **leading participation of women in them**, but not just accompanying the male head of the family as it used to happen, but having their **own projects of autonomous or family migration**. And, in that way, it can be said today that women account for half of the migrants in the world, which implies new challenges in the management of this transnational coming and going that many people call **"the globalisation of the poor"**.

Migrations defy, more than any other process, the

dichotomies to which we have largely referred to in this document. Because **female and male migrants with their geographies, and their times and lives, question the mental walls that we normally raise between past and present, between here and there, between us and others.** The life of migrants challenges, as no other, that false segregation and shows what life is as such: a flow that happens and goes beyond time, space and signs of identity enclosed in an only place. It is a flow that is always of halves, of action and emotion, of overpopulated territories and of times that connect themselves.

They connect themselves because migrants live simultaneously **in the past and in the present.** And that trip that one day any of them, male or female, embarked on because of love, hunger or will of freedom did not stop there, because it started a chain that will never stop growing. It will happen beyond time to lay in the cradle of the coming generations as a birthmark, as a wound in the root in which pieces of new earth get in.

On their side, **what the words there and here** represent, in most cases, for migrants is a distance that hurts. There is always someone that waits for somebody that has left; there is always someone that continues with the chain that somebody else has previously started: fathers, mothers, grandmothers, sons, and peoples, friends whose lives end up embarking on the journey or staying at the port of departure. That is why, the words here and there refer to territories that mix, because they form the two corners of one same family, of one same community, sometimes of one same person that on occasions has the feeling of belonging to the two places and other times wonders whether there is no belonging to any of those places at all.

The same can be said about the words **us and others** because, the man or the woman that migrates, does not take a long time in becoming 'the other' in their own place of origin, and although they are also different in the space where they currently live, there are words that start slipping in, also music, habits and affections that in the end become part of them, without even wanting to. And in this complex game of belonging, there are old concepts that start diluting –with no intention– and there is a creation –without knowing that it is happening either– of a community of widened identities through hard inner trips that give sense, substance and plurality to the human project.

Past and present, here and there, us and others... It is as if usual migrations, along with globalisation and the network society of nowadays, placed us facing the challenge of overcoming the **geographical, productive, disciplinary, time and identity confines,** frequently of no use to understand and manage all this life that beats with a growing strength in the interstices of race mixing and complexity.

Now, if migrant population (whether it is the one who goes or the one who stays) and also the receiving population are having to take in –as they can– this big transformation, the policies addressed to these groups of people also face a great challenge, in a world of barriers and other elements in which one same person gets **a different identity in the country where they come from (emigrant) than in the receiving place (immigrant).** This fragmentation hinders, of course, the application of a comprehensive approach and the effective coordination of these policies, whose nature is both local and transnational.

All this to say that, further from the opportunity to set out new specific measures, we should **open a deep debate on migrations, diversity and local development,** from the awareness of the large task of a global and territorial challenge, that enters fully in the agendas of human development and that questions us on all fronts: rights, risks, coexistence, economy, the new transnational family, exclusion factors, cultural change, the impacts of crisis, the returns, co-development... Because, whether we want it or not, **migrations are going to stay –and will almost certainly grow in the future–** deeply modifying the landscape of people, the families, businesses, communities, networks... It is right now that it is being defined from what paradigm all this will be managed, and if the associated diversity is going to be turned into a resource of opportunities that will be beneficial to all, or in an excuse to raise new and intolerable walls of exclusion.

This document is not the appropriate space to go further than this essential recommendation. But I would like to add some lines of action, in relation to migrant women, that I consider should be present in the priorities of this specific agenda.

## 1. Knowledge

- It would be necessary to extend and go deeper



on the degree of knowledge on female migrations from a local perspective, which means both the systematic disaggregation of data by gender in the indicators and global analysis, such as the promotion of new areas of study about gender and migrations from a transnational perspective.

## 2. Rights

It would be essential to:

- Establish channels of specific information for migrant women about their rights and to actively promote the shared values of equality and human rights in their environment.
- Inform and offer protection to women that travel through migration routes that are dangerous for their lives and their safety, as well as make society aware about the situation that they are experiencing.
- Guarantee a fair, egalitarian and non discriminatory treatment in the administrative and police domains related to migrant management.
- Make an efficient dissemination of public services amongst migrant women (employment, social and legal services, training, return journeys...), establishing channels of access that take into account their distance from the usual channels of information.
- Promote the exercise of sexual and reproductive rights, especially the prevention of teenage pregnancy, which has a large differential impact on migrant girls.
- Provide an egalitarian treatment in the process and support when returning to their places of origin.

## 3. Education

- Guarantee an egalitarian access at all levels of education and to professional training, paying special attention to the problems of integration, failure and school drop-out rates.
- Fight actively against sexist practices and stereotypes that could affect girls and young female migrants, by increasing awareness and providing tools, first to teachers and also to workers in the different structures of school mediation.
- Train migrant women and men on gender (especially the multiplier agents of their communities), from the comprehensive perspective that has been

mentioned in other sections of this document.

## 4. Employment

- Fight against illegal employment, a curse that beats female migrant workers specially.
- Take promotion actions with regards to occupational diversification of female migrant workers.
- Create a system of recognition and correspondence of academic qualifications between countries that allows migrant women and men to exercise their abilities in the labour market and see them quickly recognised.
- Promote the creation of businesses as an option of professional career for migrant women, through the provision of training, financial support and comprehensive help amongst other elements.

## 5. Family

- Diagnose and incorporate in a differentiated way, the problems and the needs associated with the management and regrouping of families, when women have initiated the migratory chain and/or in the cases of a one-parent family. We cannot forget that gender roles have paths and problems that are very different for migrant men and women in this area.
- Recognise all members of the "transnational chains of care", making visible and answering the needs of the carers in their point of origin and of the sons and daughters of migrant women that stay in the place of origin.
- Follow the paths of migrant fathers, promoting their role in the transnational family.

## 6. Culture and participation

- Encourage the expression, the value and the exchange of intercultural actions, promoting the role of female migrants as creators of new cultures.
- Take positive actions of development of associations between female migrants, facilitating the creation of meeting areas.
- Promote a balanced presence of both sexes in the representation and decision making forums of migrant population and in those where the migratory and cooperation policies are designed, both in the countries of origin and in the receiving countries.

- Develop participation spaces for female migrants in the social, cultural and everyday life of the territories, encouraging in a systematic manner the exchange, the relation and the shared construction between migrant and autochthonous people, starting from a commitment towards human and intercultural enrichment.

## 7. Gender violence

- Offer guarantees to migrant women to be able to report situations of gender violence that could affect them, regardless of their legal status and without starting an expulsion process from the country because of this.
- Get migrant women closer to a wider knowledge of the programmes and services of support to women victims of domestic abuse.
- Incorporate migrant men in the actions and campaigns of awareness against gender violence.

## 8. Communication

- Promote a wider knowledge and recognition of the role of migrant women for the welfare of our societies, both of origin and destination of migrations, taking also their opinions, needs and demands into account.

## 9. Co-development

- Promote the role of migrant women as essential agents in the area of co-development, through actions of training, technical and financial support and awareness measures.
- Include the transnational family as a key factor of the strategies of co-development.
- Follow the impact of gender on the deliveries to the countries of origin, also supporting migrants to facilitate them a better management of their deliveries to their families.

## 10. Information society

- Carry out studies about the situation, demands and opportunities of migrant women in relation to the use of IT.
- Start programmes aimed to develop the digital inclusion of migrant women, both in relation to the access to resources as well as to the acquisition of

e-competences and the creation of e-services that favour their full integration.

- Strengthen the associative networks of migrant women, encouraging e-associations amongst them.
- Promote actions that facilitate communications between female immigrants and their origin environments through the Internet, with a special emphasis on the promotion of dynamics of co-development with a female leading role.
- Encourage a more extensive use of new technologies so as to strengthen the links between transnational families, especially those of migrant mothers whose daughters and sons live in their country of origin.

### 4.7 A technological agenda

*"The 'network society' is the result of three interdependent processes that developed from the sixties: the revolution of information technology, the economic crisis both of capitalism and the state and their subsequent restructuring, and the birth of social and cultural movements, such as antiauthoritarianism, the defence of human rights, feminism and environmentalism. The interaction of these processes and the reactions that they caused, were the origin of a new dominant social structure, the network society; a new economy, informational/global economy; a new culture, the culture of virtual reality. The logic within this economy, this society and this culture lies upon the social action and the institutions of an interdependent world..."*... "This is our world, the world of the information age...", in which a new society has emerged because "we can see in it a structural transformation of production relations, of power relations and of experience relations, that entail an equally substantial modification of the social forms of space and time and the appearance of a new culture".

Manuel Castells  
The Information Age

As Castells points out, information society represents **one of the main spaces used by the economic activity, social interactions, cultural creation and the dynamics of politics in the 21st Century in the whole world**, eliminating the gaps of time and space but creating, equally, **new gaps between "info-rich people" and "info-poor people"**. Being present in it is then crucial to promote development

and guarantee a democratic exercise of citizenship. The so-called “network society” is **a bastion to move forward towards equal opportunities between men and women**. Firstly, because it is a new space, and everything that is new, for the simple fact of being new, offers a territory for transformation, for the disintegration of old patterns and inertias, to explore what is new, helping to break the unequal mechanisms that are holding back the advancement, not only of women, but of humanity as a whole. Secondly, because the Internet can offer unquestionable opportunities to women that work, start new businesses, are taking care of others, reconcile, are leaders and fight, with their access to the huge flows of information, learning, exchange, participation, resources or areas of visibility that develop inside of it. And thirdly, because women can, want and must contribute to the enrichment of the Internet, by making it feminine and using it as a tool to increase the value of human life, to redefine the priorities of the global agenda, to take it closer in that way to the real needs and wishes of people. However, we have already said that there are still important digital gender gaps, that not only affect ‘the first door’ (the access) but they maintain themselves, and even get bigger, when they go beyond the following thresholds (intensity, frequency, more complex uses, creation...). Women must take part at all levels as leading roles in the network society, and because of that, there is an urgent task that has to be included with energy and a comprehensive view in the digital agenda:

### Equality IN information society

- **e-Accessibility:** infrastructures, costs, physical and symbolic spaces, motivation.
- **e-Abilities:** basic, advanced, creative.
- **e-Inclusion:** groups of vulnerable women because of age, education, social status, ethnic group and urban/rural environment.

### And an information society FOR equality

- **Co-responsibility and reconciliation**
- **Empowerment, leadership, visibility**
- **Networks and Citizenship**
- Participation in the **decision making process** of the information society

From that double perspective, these are some of the actions that have to be part of the gender digital agenda:

### 1. Participation of women in the definition of public strategies aimed towards the development of the Information Society and the incorporation of the gender dimension in these policies.

This is only way to reflect the needs and concerns of women and make the contribution of women a reality in the process of construction of this new space that is combined and inclusive. In this sense, it is decisive to open, at this stage, spaces for discussion and participation to institutions, organisations and experts in equality, so as to develop and implement the new government plan for the promotion of the information society, backed by the Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Trade.

### 2. Promotion of the access of women to the uses and advantages of the Internet.

Providing their universal access to the technological devices and to high speed connections at a reasonable cost, particularly in rural areas, and strengthening digital abilities (basic, intermediate and advance use). It is very important for this training to be practical, and teach about the services and features of new technologies that can be useful and attractive for women. The way of using all the different functions is more important than the theoretical knowledge.

### 3. A presence, also of women, in the definition, design, supply, dynamics,..., of the contents and services that form the Information Society, promoting a “proximity Internet”.

It is women themselves who know the best way, the moment to do it, and how to transfer that information or to give an answer to their needs through specific services of added value. The main virtue of these services is not only the power to “take us far” but also the help in solving immediate matters (shopping, learning, everyday formalities, advice, company...), in a generalised context of “lives without time”; making with that, one of the areas with a bigger future on the Internet in a female manner: that of being an alley for women to aspire to a richer and at the same time easier everyday life; a type of Internet that is above all, close and practical.

### 4. Technical and financial support to the creation and strengthening of businesses headed by women in the sector of new technologies and/

## or information society.

This support should happen both in the industries of hardware and software, as in the contents and services on the Internet. There has to be a special treatment, as well, to the initiatives, promoted by women or by women and men, with the objective of providing useful alternatives to the professional, business and life development of women.

### 5. Incorporation of more women to the activities of the sector of new technologies...

Through education, research, goods and services production, creation of contents and also in the decision areas of such sector, i.e., board of directors and high management. Promotion of visibility and creation of networks of technologist women.

### 6. Conversion of the Internet in a preferential space of exchange and meeting point to work in favour of equality.

This is essential, because the Internet is the place where the new social movements are taking place nowadays and also because the 'women on the Internet' have an unstoppable positive energy. The financial support, making these initiatives visible and the creation of meeting points between them have to be an important objective in this area.

### 7. Use of new technologies from the public administration to promote gender equality.

As a tool of information, awareness, development of contents, services and promotion of equality networks.

## 4.8 An agenda for the good management of equality

Without local organisations which are truly qualified and committed to equality and diversity, it will be then very difficult to demand public authorities –or directly promote– innovative, significant and sustainable initiatives in these areas. From this point of view, it is essential to “work towards the inside” and dedicate efforts and resources to the own institutional change which fundamentally will have to experience **a more creative and horizontal interaction between the**

**administrations, the economic agents of the territory and the citizenship**, based on the philosophy of **“open innovation for development”**.

**Richard Florida**, the great guru of urban and organisational innovation, provides some very interesting keys about the new challenges of territories that offer very clear clues about the direction of the abilities, cultures and practices on the local bodies. Florida talks about the **three ‘Ts’: technology, talent and tolerance**, which are the base of the dynamism of any creative city, in which there always has to be an element of encouragement –as a previous condition to the information society– for the emergence of an **own creative class**. For this, he points out that it is necessary to open participation spaces, establish networks, promote the creation of associations, spread the use of technology, promote scientific knowledge, stimulate social capital, motivate attitudes of tolerance by cultivating diversity and inclusion ‘of the others’ and incorporate endogenous talent, not only the formal one but the informal one too (‘the creativity that walks in the streets’). It should also be outlined that, within Florida’s approach, incorporating women to the dynamics of innovation is not a desirable addition but an essential condition to achieve results, as it can be understood from his own words: *“What is really necessary is that second and third type cities truly accept the creative era. They have to talk to young people, “connect” with women, with immigrants, with the gay and lesbian community, and with the artistic and cultural community, and clearly pass them on the message that they are truly necessary to reconstruct the city”*.

With that future in the horizon and being aware that the challenge is extremely wide, I will now focus my attention on some specific issues related to gender equality, that I understand have to be part of this ‘cocktail’ of institutional transformation:

**1. Knowledge:** It is necessary to have proper and well organised information (local observatories) that allows having a decision making system about the new task of the development in equality and its results. We know very little and in an excessively compartmentalised manner about the position of men and women in the different spaces, the profound manifestations, the evaluation of programmes carried out or the opinion of the different actors involved. A well based knowledge on quantity and quality indicators, but also in open and interdisciplinary forums for



the shared construction of “**local knowledge for equality**”, is an essential tool for strategic innovation and to achieve pertinence, quality, impacts and sustainability of the institutional action.

2. **Abilities:** Female and male professionals on development have to increase their knowledge profile, both at a thematic and transversal level, stressing on the application of **a comprehensive, systemic, interdisciplinary approach and with a strong base on the command and use of IT competences** (both strategic and functional). In this framework, and in an attractive and focalised manner to the specific procedure that each professional group is in charge of, the **abilities in equality need to be solid, continuous and experiential**, along with a **support** in the work processes by individuals or bodies specialised in the incorporation of the gender approach to the development.
3. **Network organisations:** Active exchange networks of agents and the motivation of horizontal cooperation and learning formulas, both at the territory level as well as between territories and transnationally, are also keys to consolidate critical mass and to plan lines of work for the inclusive development and equality, which should go progressively towards new **action models aimed towards e-development and e-equality**. There should also be a commitment to favour open networks for innovation (incorporating new agents) that allow the incorporation of new and more holistic approaches when creating and applying programmes. For all this to happen, a very decisive investment is of course necessary, not only with the training of human capital (network thinking, networking), but also in the **adaptation of cultures and work processes** (internal management, provision of services, interaction with citizenship, communication, local and global cyber-activism) and of course, in the **provision of the necessary resources** (hardware and software) for which the establishment of links with companies in the IT sector within the territory could be a useful strategy.
4. **Leadership.** It is essential to train and support women for a more active incorporation to local governance, while they learn to go beyond barriers and make use of the opportunities available. For this reason, and along the actions of ability learning and tutoring, there has to be a work **of connection and**

**contribution to the fact that their voices are heard in the main forums** (for example, with the creation of directories of female conference speakers, classified by topics, so that institutions and businesses can make use of them when necessary). It is clear that it is not just about adding women to the quotas, managed by male interests. It is about opening spaces for women who are capable, that have their own criteria and have experienced careers, who are real travelling companions, and have an active compromise in favour of change and equality in this ideal stage to rethink about things and about ourselves. And of course to prepare and get the new people positioned. This challenge has to be realised, in a more specific way, in the **promotion of careers of the female professionals of local development** within their respective organisations.

5. **Transversality.** The gender approach has to be applied in all areas of development, not only in the little area reserved to equality, whose existence is justified only as a factor of promotion of the integration of this approach in all structures and programmes, but not as an isolated cell. **Transversality represents a fascinating and serious challenge** as it forces institutions to revise their own policies, including contents, actors, organisation, models of management and the full cycle of any associated project (from diagnosis to assessment). But it really is worth doing, also placing this strategy right in the centre and as **a primary opportunity** to successfully address the processes of institutional transformation.
6. **Participation.** According to the sociologist Robert Putnam “*there are four dimensions within social capital: the dominant ethic values in a society, its capacity of associating, the degree of trust in its members and the civic awareness. Having more social capital translates into more economic development, less criminal activity, more public health and more democratic governance*”. This is the concept in which citizenship participation has to be continuously encouraged. A participation which is built, not from a hegemonic person but from the active acknowledgement of **diversity**, and that promotes the **visibility** of women in the territory, their demands, their contributions and voices, giving value to their careers and showing examples of success. Based on the strengthening of female **associations** and women’s networks. That stresses on the full development and deployment of **cyber-abilities** of the whole population,

men and women, most of all of the multiplier agents of the social change. That aims to integrate men and women in a balanced way in the **formal participation and decision spaces** of local bodies. Also developing a work with men –particularly multiplier men- in the domain of the **new masculinities**.

**7. Communication.** A communication, as mentioned before, in a much more horizontal and multidirectional manner, making demands and solutions visible, and which includes a creative communication for the positioning of **new values**, that builds **territorial marks** that give value to the commitments for human development, that channel and amplify the **voice** of young people, of the elderly, of migrant people, and of all those “micro-revolutionary” women that feel more comfortable in their “**doing things in silence**”. And we must not forget to mention, that it also has to insist on the fact of using all our intelligence and imagination to communicate the importance of the **recurrent processes**, of those processes that have been made invisible by our culture and which are necessary for development and for life not to stop.

#### 4. 9 In short, an agenda to accelerate equality and development

Privileged women have the responsibility of exercising, side by side with men, a global, effective and transforming leadership, that stresses on the large social, economic, technological, cultural and environmental agendas of humanity. And for this, we have to make our personal and collective powers grow, and move from “**changing ourselves to adapt to the world, to being ourselves to change the world**”.

Finally, I would like to finish my speech by pointing out that the equality agenda in this turbulent and fascinating 21st Century in which we live could be summarised, in my opinion, in the achievement of three big objectives:

**a) Balance**, which means... an equal sharing of employment, power, resources, of acknowledgement, time, responsibilities, freedom, and results. Balance is a magic word, and is the most reliable indicator of advancement, stagnation or backward movements with regards to equality, as it is also of the more or less success, of the degree of good or bad health of humanity as a whole.

**b) Mixture**, which means... men and women sharing all spaces (private and public, social and economic, global and local, the top one and the bottom one, the one related to profit and charity), breaking all the intolerable dichotomies, dualities and false barriers that still form the base of our old psychological, cultural and organisational building. And also diversity, considering that we are different, that we contribute with different things, all of them necessary, and that only with a balanced combination of our knowledge and our contributions, only if men are prepared to learn from women –and women from men- could we then guarantee optimal results. That is what happens in nature as well: would you feel able to arrange in order of importance the value of apples with regards to pears? The value of mountains with regards to the seas? Of lions with regards to dragonflies? Would you be able to imagine a world with just one colour, one flavour, one size, one temperature? It is absurd and unfeasible, isn't it? Well, then think for a moment about the concept of excluding segregation, universality and homogeneity that supports our dominant cultures and imagine again justifying (as I have had to do for example many times) why is it necessary –and even profitable- to have more women in the economic and social life, why gender diversity (as any other) represents an added value element and not what it really is: the condition, the starting point, the path, the arrival.

**c) And life**...because the main task of all of us, men and women, has to be the perfect deployment of human life: its creation, preservation, expression, dignity, reproduction, and protection. And that involves recognising and prioritising within the global agenda, the contribution of value in the issues that really matter: the welfare of people, care, health, education, the creation and enjoyment of culture, peace, freedom, the integrity of the environment and the full and unrestricted expression of human potential. On the other hand, it also entails more than recognising this value and conceiving it as an abstract object, giving it to those subjects who contribute towards it. Taking into account, those that will follow, the next generations, to which we have the responsibility of leaving a legacy that will allow them to build by themselves a dignified and full existence.

Thank you very much!

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