

## **THE STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE THIRD SECTOR OF SOCIAL ACTION**

**To contribute to social development and the effective structuring of society, encouraging full participation, the defence of freedom and equality, social inclusion and cohesion for all the individual and groups in society.**

**SPAIN 2006**

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## FOREWORD

*This book is a work of great importance to our sector. It deals with the Strategic Plan of the Third Sector of Social Action, developed by the Working Group of the National Council of the Social Action NGOs, which has been approved and supported by this Council, and which provides in addition the response to a need first identified in 1999: the need for a strategic plan in which it would be possible to organise the measures necessary to modernise and encourage our sector and so meet the demands of society.*

*In this foreword, inevitably brief, we ought to do justice to the work and its results and emphasise its most significant aspects.*

*First, I would like to stress something which is a reflection of the most important element of the third sector itself, the existence of intangible values which give strength, sense and a future to this sector. And the first of these, which is also almost symbolic of the whole sector, is the value of participation - participation which has been constant, voluntary, prepared to listen to different or even opposite views, creative, respectful, dedicated, with a large working group, consisting of many different members, committed to making progress with the work.*

*This work in itself is a metaphor for the sector itself, as it has its roots in the capacity for creativity, co-operation and voluntary and supportive contribution of the organisations which make up the sector.*

*Furthermore working on this plan has facilitated the organisation and participation of those involved in an extensive and varied network, since carrying out this task has required closeness to and contributions from all the social action groups which make up the sector. Therefore there has been involvement by means of the virtual forum, the workshops held in a wide range of locations and the survey which sought and found expression of the activities of the smaller scale organisations in the third sector.*

*Finally, it is reflected too in the faithful and open collaboration between social action organisations and the authorities within the working group of the National Council of Social Action NGOs, as a result of a dialogue which has sought depth in all discussions, points of agreement in what has been proposed, and respect where there are differences of opinion. This has all demonstrated that it is possible to work constructively in spite of the differentiation of roles and functions which each of those involved has, by finding bases for collaboration. These have been constructed by complementary contributions to the promotion and protection of the rights on the most vulnerable in society.*

*Intangible values - the involvement of all examples of social action, organisation to further the aims of the sector, collaboration between the different social agencies - based on the nature of each one, and on what each one can and should contribute - these are the elements which the process itself of drawing up the Strategic Plan has made stand out, and which I should stress as the co-ordinator of this working group and as President of the Platform of Social Action NGOs.*

*Juan Lara Crevillén  
President of the Platform of Social Action NGOs.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Strategic Plan of the Third Sector of Social Action is an important step forward in the self-examination of the non-profit-making organisations involved in social action in Spain.

The initiative which started in the National Council of Social Action NGOs became reality when the Working Group for the Strategic Plan<sup>1</sup> was formed in November 2003, where the methodology which those involved were to follow in developing the plan was established. First came a period of consultation and agreements to clarify the mission and aims of the sector and how it defined itself, as well as the examination of outside sources in order to make a preliminary assessment of the sector. On the basis of this preliminary assessment a process of consultations was established which used the very large number of techniques available (in-depth interviews, surveys, workshops, internet forums, to ensure that as many organisations in the sector as possible would be involved. In order to accelerate this phase of the process, a consultancy team (Folia Consultores S.L.) was brought in. This served to improve the methodology which had been agreed and provided an assessment of the third sector of social action which has served as a basis for establishing agreed priorities within the Working Group. This work, which took more than a year, was a complex and rewarding task - as had been expected.

We can finish by saying that this plan is the result of agreement and discussion within a diverse and disparate community, which is made up of a large number of organisations and bodies of different nature and size, and that fundamentally it reflects the agreements on the direction of the sector over the next few years, and on what its nature should be, and on how it would like to be viewed.

As we have indicated, in order to achieve this agreement on the methodological process, it was regarded as necessary to involve all those individuals and organisations within the sector with expertise in it, and with opinions, uncertainties, ideas and suggestions to express. We wish to thank all of them for their co-operation, and at the risk of causing offence through omission or inaccuracy we would like to list the organisations which have taken part in the discussions.

AIPC-PANDORA  
ASOCIACIÓ LLUITA ANTI-SIDA DE LES ILLES BALEARS (ALAS)  
ASOCIACIÓN DE MINUSVÁLIDOS FÍSICOS DE JUMILLA (AMFITU)  
AMIGOS CONTRA EL SIDA  
ASAMIS  
ASOCIACIÓN AUTISMO  
ASOCIACIÓN DE AMIGOS DEL MAGREB  
ASOCIACIÓN DE AYUDA A VÍCTIMAS DE AGRESIONES SEXUALES (ADAVAS) DE LEÓN  
ASOCIACIÓN DE FAMILIARES DE ENFERMOS MENTALES GAZA  
ASOCIACIÓN DE PADRES Y AMIGOS DE SORDOS  
ASOCIACIÓN EMPRENDE ORENSE  
ASOCIACIÓN MUJERES PROGRESISTAS DE MIRAFLORES  
ASOCIACIÓN NOU-SUD  
ASOCIACIÓN PARA EL FOMENTO DEL EMPLEO DE LOS JÓVENES  
ASOCIACIÓN SOCIAL Y CULTURAL MANANTIAL  
ASOCIACIÓN SOCIOCULTURAL UTOPIÁ  
ASOCIACIÓN PARÁLISIS CEREBRAL Y PATOLOGÍAS AFINES (ASPACE)  
ASSOCIACIÓ MALLORCA PATRIMONI

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<sup>1</sup> The Working Group of the State Council for the Strategic Plan of the Third Sector consists at present of: Caritas Española, CEAR, the Spanish Red Cross, the Federation of Progressive Women, UDP, COCEMFE, the Platform for Infancy Organisations, the Platform for Volunteer Work in Spain, the Spanish Confederation of Organisations for the Mentally Disadvantaged, UNIVER-SIDA/CESIDA, the Federation of Women in the Countryside, The Union of Associations for the Family, the Federation of Spanish Scouts, the Federation of Pensioners in the Canary Islands, and the General Council for Social Inclusion. It is coordinated by the Platform of Social Action NGOs, and works in cooperation with ONCE and UNAD.

ASOCIACIÓN DE DAÑO CEREBRAL ADQUIRIDO DE VIZCAYA (ATECE)  
BIDEGINTZA ELKARTEA  
CÁRITAS ESPAÑOLA  
CESIDA  
CIMO  
COLECTIVO EDUCACIÓN EXPERIMENTAL (CODEX)  
COLLECTIU LAMBDA  
COMISIÓN CIUDADANA ANTISIDA DE ÁLAVA  
COMISIÓN ESPAÑOLA DE AYUDA AL REFUGIADO (CEAR)  
CONFEDERACIÓN COORDINADORA ESTATAL DE MINUSVÁLIDOS FÍSICOS DE ESPAÑA (COCEMFE)  
CONFEDERACIÓN ESPAÑOLA DE ORGANIZACIONES A FAVOR DE LAS PERSONAS CON DISCAPACIDAD INTELECTUAL (FEAPS)  
CONSORCIO ESTATAL DE ENTIDADES PARA LA ACCIÓN INTEGRAL CON MIGRANTES (CEPAIM)  
CRUZ ROJA ESPAÑOLA  
DIAGRAM  
FAMILIARES DE ENFERMOS DE ALZHEIMER Y OTRAS DEMENCIAS SENILES  
FEDERACIÓN DE ASOCIACIONES DE MAYORES DE CANARIAS (FEMAC)  
FEDERACIÓN DE ASOCIACIONES DE SCOUTS DE ESPAÑA (ASDE)  
FEDERACIÓN CATALANA DE VOLUNTARIADO SOCIAL  
FEDERACIÓN DE MUJERES PROGRESISTAS (FMP)  
FEDERACIÓN DE LA MUJER RURAL (FEMUR)  
FUNDACIÓN BALIA  
FUNDACIÓN CHANDRA  
FUNDACIÓN DE LA SOLIDARIDAD Y EL VOLUNTARIADO DE LA COMUNIDAD VALENCIANA  
FUNDACIÓN ESPLAI  
FUNDACIÓN LEALTAD  
FUNDACIÓN ONCE  
FUNDACIÓN PRIVADA A RED  
FUNDACIÓN SÍNDROME DE PRADER-WILLI  
FUNDACIÓN TOMILLO  
JOVES PER LA IGUALTAT I LA SOLIDARITAT (JIS)  
LIGA ESPAÑOLA DE LA EDUCACIÓN Y LA CULTURA POPULAR  
MINISTERIO DE TRABAJO Y ASUNTOS SOCIALES  
ONG HELSINKI  
PLATAFORMA DE ONG DE ACCIÓN SOCIAL  
PLATAFORMA DE ORGANIZACIONES DE INFANCIA  
PLATAFORMA DEL VOLUNTARIADO DE ESPAÑA  
PLATAFORMA VALENCIANA DE ENTIDADES DE VOLUNTARIADO SOCIAL  
PLATAFORMA VALLISOLETANA DE VOLUNTARIADO SOCIAL  
PROCOMAR  
RED ARAÑA-TEJIDO DE ENTIDADES SOCIALES POR EL EMPLEO  
RED EUROPEA DE LUCHA CONTRA LA POBREZA Y LA EXCLUSIÓN SOCIAL (EAPN-ES)  
TAULA DE ENTIDADES DEL TERCER SECTOR DE CATALUÑA  
UNIÓN DE ASOCIACIONES FAMILIARES (UNAF)  
UNIÓN DEMOCRÁTICA DE PENSIONISTAS Y JUBILADOS DE ESPAÑA (UDP)  
UNIÓN ESPAÑOLA DE ASOCIACIONES Y ENTIDADES DE ASISTENCIA AL DROGODEPENDIENTE (UNAD)  
UNIÓN ROMANÍ

## INTRODUCTION

### DEFINITION OF THE THIRD SECTOR OF SOCIAL ACTION

*The third sector of social action is the entity comprising non-state, voluntary and non-profit-making organisations, which, starting from independent initiatives of individuals, work independently and supportively, attempting by means of activities of general interest to foment the recognition and the exercise of social rights, to achieve social inclusion and cohesion in all its aspects, and to prevent certain social groups from being excluded from acceptable levels of well-being.*

### AIMS

*The third sector of social action is an independent social entity which works to define and extend social rights, strengthening the possibility of society's participation in a structured and co-ordinated manner, which is respected by the different sectors, and which participates actively in the determination, execution and evaluation of state policies, insisting on openness, participation, and increasing awareness, on making complaints and demands, and on effectiveness in its actions.*

The social sector organisations are, along with other social and public agencies, actively contributing to **social development** in a genuine and effective manner, aiming to create a society which is open in its defence and extension of human rights, in particular those of vulnerable and excluded groups. This should be encouraged by greater social participation.

Social development therefore should not be a simple declaration of rights but should become viable and visible through its guarantee of the exercise of those rights, the encouragement of the conditions for that exercise to become a reality, and the achievement of a society which is open to those groups which are most vulnerable, without exclusion or discrimination for any reason, and where all can participate. For this reason the social sector is increasing its ability to take a proactive role in the determination, creation and assessment of policies.

The organisations within the third sector of social action are a part of the larger number of institutions which influence the social development of individuals and optimise participation in society and the satisfaction of human needs, especially in the case of the most vulnerable groups in society.

Therefore non-profit-making organisations in the social sector foment social development by means of what is a part of them, that is by **means benefits**, such as those of increasing social capital or the development and promotion of social rights, or in other words, what is normally referred to as creating society - which is made of intangible social assets, the proven contribution of the social sector. These values are of prime importance in the activities of the social sector.

The third sector of social action is then an institution which satisfies the needs of production, distribution and integration within society, led by the values of solidarity, equality of opportunity, the absence of discrimination, and by participation. Therefore it intervenes in the social arena with its own identity, occupying its own space and assuming a leading role.

The consolidation of the sector as an **independent social entity** has increased its ability to make known the *intangible social* benefits which are essential for social development. As a result, what is referred to as the third sector of social action is now recognised as an institution or a group of institutions which, unlike the state or the market, is focused on social development in its own particular way.

Non-profit-making social organisations carry out their functions with *social development* as their starting-point, and as a result they should not act as a back-up or a substitute where the state has obligations. It is necessary to create therefore a suitable framework for allowing social sector initiatives to develop without the state reducing its obligation to guarantee social rights. It is not a matter of balancing an equation - more society, less state, but of synergic organisation of the capabilities of all those involved.

As soon as the **status and the role** of the non-profit-making social action organisations has been agreed upon, relations between the social sector and the other two sectors need to be strengthened, establishing the principle of *responsibility to the public* and the principle of *social responsibility*, and linking each of these with the principle of corporate responsibility. This makes clearer the nature of the relationship of the social sector with the other two sectors with regard not only to collaboration, co-operation and complementarity, but also to proposals, demands and complaints. To sum up, the social sector is involved in the effective structuring of society, a role which is recognised and supported by all sectors in society and in particular by the authorities.

To achieve this, important progress has been made in giving structure to the range of groups and organisations. This has come not only from the groups themselves, but also from their shared strategic objectives. Therefore the problems of diversity, overlapping and a lack of co-ordination are being addressed. And this is being done not only where there are particular problems in society or in individual social groups, but also in the different levels: state, regional and local.

The independence of the non-profit-making sector has increased as its ability to intervene in those social problems which affect most the general well-being of society has continued to strengthen, particularly with respect to social groups which are excluded; its ability to acquire resources from a variety of sources, which results in greater economic independence and financial security, should help to guarantee its social effectiveness.

Without wishing to damage the improvements in management of this sector, it is necessary to have an **appropriate financial framework** to guarantee its independence, which will strengthen its ability to influence social policies. Therefore it is felt that clarification of the financing of this sector's activities is one of the key points in achieving its strategic objectives.

The creation of awareness of **social responsibility** is being practised by the sector as a whole and its organisations as something which is valid in itself and not only a means to an end. What is being proposed is in effect awareness that the community as a whole needs to participate, through the organisations of this sector and as one of its strategic objectives. It is well understood that it needs to do this to improve its *credibility in society*.

Social responsibility, therefore, is developing in two directions: from the social sector as a channel for society's commitment, and from society itself as a response agreed upon by all. In this way a social awareness has developed which is active and effective. It also:

1. *shows* the level of social development;
2. *identifies* what is necessary to satisfy the needs for social rights and for their development;
3. *demands* public and corporate responsibility;
4. *demands* participation by members of society to develop co-operation and responsibility from that society as a whole.

Seeing clearly that social responsibility has different sides, the third sector of social action encourages the participation of citizens in social organisations and in voluntary work in general. It addresses society as a whole, **creating information, awareness and opinion** about the development of social rights and about the role of an organised society, while also demanding participation and a response in these areas.

This influence on society is actively carried out by publicity in the different media and by being in the public eye, and also by encouraging activities which involve finding out more about the third sector, increasing knowledge of it and making it more widely known - its size, its activities, the changing trends, the issues which concern society as a whole, and the types of participation, collaboration and support that society can give to the organisations which give it structure.

With regard to the **organisational principles** of those groups which make up the third sector of social action, we believe that they are an expression of the values which give them their identity within all the existing networks, and that they are fundamental for their activity:

1. The work of the third sector of social action is based on collective strategies. The ideal organisation makes collective actions more important than individual ones, because of values such as responsibility, solidarity, commitment and generosity.
2. In order to advance its work, the third sector of social action tries hard to develop synergy between its aims and its work methods which will favour the development of the social fabric by means of such values as solidarity, co-operation and progress.
3. The third sector of social action encourages non-discrimination of groups which are at risk for reasons of gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or other beliefs, handicap, age, sexual orientation or social class. All organisations belonging to the third sector of social action must guarantee the dignity of persons and groups which are vulnerable and must follow the values of respect, equality of opportunity and tolerance.
4. Openness, based on standards and an ethical approach, is fundamental for the control of activities carried out by the third sector for social action and the groups which comprise it. The sector organises its work democratically and transparently, respecting the methods of work of each group.

## MISSION

*Social action organisations in the third sector in Spain have the following as their mission: To contribute to social development and effective structuring in society, by promoting full participation, the defence of freedom and equality, and social inclusion and cohesion for all the individuals and groups within society.*

Social action organisations in the third sector work to promote and defend the freedom and equality of all individuals, and of all the groups of which they are part, so that freedom and equality are realities in fact and by right; they work to promote **full participation in society** in order to achieve social **inclusion and social cohesion**; and they are committed to **fight social exclusion** and to eradicate situations where there is discrimination or marginalisation.


The effective **structuring of society**, which contributes to social development, is the fundamental objective of the third sector of social action in Spain; and so it is necessary to create and promote the conditions whereby society in general and also its individual elements can meet their objectives at the level of the state and of the regions by independent social action - to realise the commitment of a participatory society to achieve a social structure which does not exclude and where people show solidarity.

The **independence** of the third sector of social action must keep increasing its importance by being able to involve itself in those problems of society which are of greatest relevance to the common welfare, and in particular to that of the most vulnerable social groups; by improving its acquisition of resources and its economic independence; and by being socially effective and honest. Being **socially responsible** and taking social action in a **transparent and open way** will constantly be matters of concern since they are a test of the social credibility of the sector.

Finally, the achievement of these objectives requires that social action organisations in the Spanish third sector foster the **mutual exchange** of experience and information among the

organisations in the sector and also **collaboration between government bodies, the business world and other third sector organisations.**

The Strategic Plan of the Third Sector of Social Action is based on the values of:

- The pursuit of social justice
  - Equality
  - Inclusion
  - Social solidarity
  - Social participation
  - Social change
- 

## SUMMARY OF ACTION

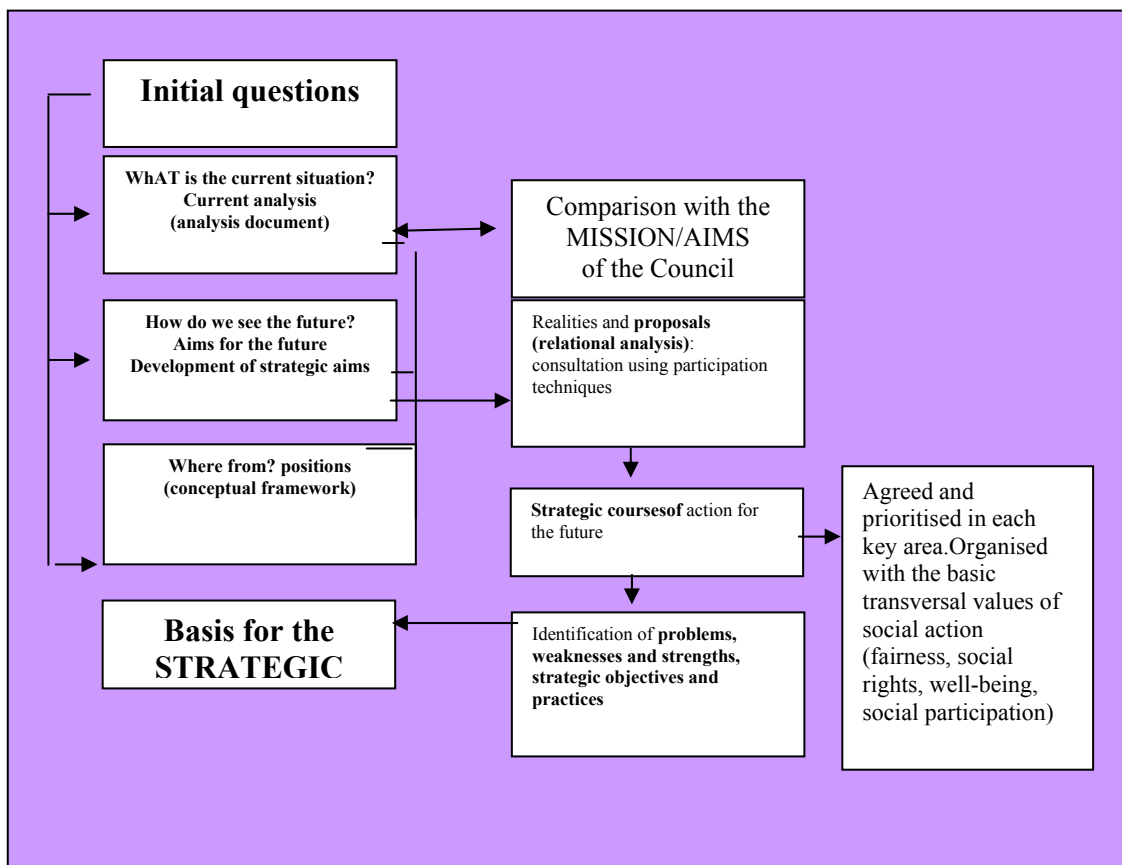
Strategic objective	Objectives
1. To strengthen social construction in the third sector	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The sense of the organisations belonging to the sector is increased, and an appreciation of the value of its diversity and of its ability to give greater benefits than other sectors.</li> <li>2. The sources of finance are made clearer, making sure that, whether public or private, they are compatible with the nature and the aims of the sector.</li> <li>3. The public image of the sector is consolidated and its credibility increased, thus allowing a wider social base.</li> </ol>
2. To provide the third sector of social action with a clear framework for self-regulation of its general activity and in particular of the provision of services by individual organisations.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. The sector takes a position within the area of social readily, defending social rights and providing services, and not abandoning its non-profit status.</li> <li>5. The sector should make sure that it can finance its activity and so achieve autonomy and independence for its objectives and its patterns of work.</li> <li>6. From the involvement of all three sectors a model of corporate social responsibility is developed.</li> </ol>
3. To improve the level of agreement on the basic principles of organisational approach in the third sector of social action.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. The sector has organisational structures compatible with the management of its activity, which have a common approach, in which the most important elements are the principles of quality, social justice, solidarity, responsibility and independence.</li> <li>8. The sector is equipped with the necessary methodological tools for the strategic analysis of the current situation and for planning, sustaining, then evaluating its actions in order to achieve inclusion and the promotion of social rights.</li> <li>9. The sector has a policy of human resources for the purposes of selecting and contracting staff, training, for career development, and for constant evaluation and renewal and an organisation of the volunteers which is compatible with its principles.</li> <li>10. The organisations within the sector are grouped by area of work and</li> </ol>

	<p>geography in democratic networks for the purposes of consultation, learning and co-ordination in taking action or being represented in dealings with the authorities or private enterprise.</p> <p>11. There is renewal of the practices, the ways in which participation inside the sector functions, and its methods of working, in particular where the State Council of NGOs for Social Action is concerned, with the purpose of improving internal democracy in the sector.</p>
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## THE METHODOLOGY FOR DEVELOPING THE PLAN: THE PROCESSES

The methodology has been guided by a desire for participation, and was agreed upon in the State Council's Working Group for the Strategic Plan of the Third Sector of Social Action. This has maintained a continuous follow-up in order to give appropriate guidance, to foresee necessary alterations, to analyse each phase individually and as part of the whole, to judge whether results have been achieved in each phase, and to evaluate technically if it was carried out properly and meet the expectations and needs of the relevant strategic analysis. In this sense, the co-operation of the organisations in the sector to establish analysis and definition from within has been of great significance. Over all, it is thought that this method has for the sector been beneficial to the project, and that from it lessons can be learnt for future planning processes.

The starting-point was the analysis of the current situation using secondary sources, internal reflection, and sharing opinions with the Working Group which was co-ordinating the project. This gave a general picture of the situation, of the principal areas needing debate or studies, previously carried out, and of the questions.



## STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

A process of **strategic analysis** has been developed in which three key areas of special importance have been identified. All the elements of the analysis revolve around them:

- Identity
- Social action
- The organisational approach of the third sector of social action

Question for the sector	Areas of special importance
Who are we, and why?	1. The identity, image, and regulation of the third sector of social action
What do we do and with whom?	2. Social action in the context of relations of the third sector of social action with the state and private sectors. Responsibility and financing of the area of social services.
How do we do it?	3. Organisational approach and challenges in the planning and management of resources: quality, communication, new technologies, volunteers in the third sector of social action. Representation and strength of representation.

This strategic analysis was intended:

- to discover the current situation of development in the sector in the context of the State and of Europe
- to identify needs and demands in the sector
- to make an account of weaknesses and strengths, risks and opportunities in the third sector of social action

### Phases of the strategic analysis:

This diagnostic phase involved:

- **Analysis of the current situation** (written submissions)
  - a. The identity, image, and regulation of the third sector of social action. Models of relations and representation
  - b. Social action in the context of relations between the third sector of social action and the public and private sectors. Responsibility and financing of the social services sector.
  - c. The organisational approach and challenges in the planning and management of resources: quality, communication, new technologies, volunteers, relations within the third sector of social action. Models of representation and of the strength of representation.
- **Relational analysis** (based on questions)

This was intended to determine the principal weakness and strengths of the sector, its opportunities and risks. It allowed the detection of challenges and difficulties when prioritising courses of action for the future.

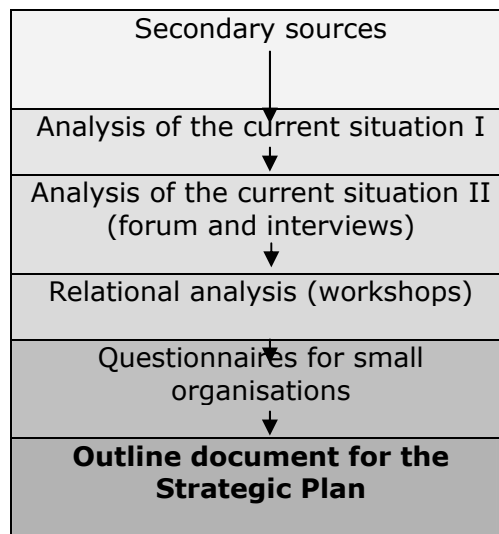
### Tools for analysis

A virtual forum was used in a zone set up for people to meet and debate on the web-page of the Platform for Social Action NGOs <sup>2</sup>, which became a source of information and a means of gathering opinions, ideas and proposals, expressed personally by representatives of nearly fifty organisations.

In addition, we carried out interviews with qualified sources, workshops for members of organisations in different parts of the country and questionnaires aimed directly at small groups in the sector.

### Tools for analysis

#### Phases, methods and results of the analysis



### Strategic plans for action

After the strategic analysis, the strategic courses of action were worked out for each of the three key areas of importance to the sector. The analysis of the current situation and the relational analysis which had been carried out led to the drawing up of objectives taking into account the analysis of strengths and weaknesses, the recognition of challenges and commitments and the desirable conditions for each of the areas of importance identified as strategic.

Meanwhile, and at the same time as the analysis of the current situation, work was done on the shared aspects (part of the strategic conceptual framework) understood as the common theoretical basis.

Through the conceptual framework we were attempting to suggest some replies to the questions which the third sector of social action should be asking, such as “Where are we?” and “Where do we want to go?” i.e. possible scenarios and choices for the future. It is this framework which will establish the meaning of the strategic plan by bringing in a common approach and shared principles both in the dialogues within the sector and in future actions which result from this.

Starting from all of this - and from the problems which were detected - it was possible to propose general strategic objectives and future courses of action.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.plataformaongs.org/>

## THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### Introduction: towards consensus

The Plan of the third sector of social action seeks to achieve agreements which will allow us to establish what the ideological framework is for strengthening the sector, what is the social ideal for which the sector is prepared to work, what courses of strategic action it is adopting and what methodological and organisational criteria it has for putting them into practice. In other words:

- What does it want to change and from where does it want to do this?
- What model of society is it defending, and what values and principles does it have?

Its overall strengthening will depend to a large extent on the answers to these questions, since the more the organisations adhere to this model, the more certainty there will be that it is working with a common identity for an efficiently structured and aware society, in which social rights are guaranteed.

This consensus is essential if we are to move forwards together. We sincerely believe that with a common point of reference and agreement on the strategic approach of the third sector of social action, the ongoing process of planning in which all participate to adapt the organisational objectives of each group and of the whole sector in a co-ordinated fashion will be easier.

In accordance with our mission and aims, we can draw up the following table:

<b>Working from these ideological criteria (or premises):</b>	<b>The third sector of social action aims for a scenario of....</b>	<b>What the third sector of social action can do (principal courses of action):</b>	<b>Criteria for the methodology of its activity in order to embark on the courses of action:</b>	<b>Organisational criteria for the courses of action:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. To defend freedom and the equality of all persons and of the groups of which they are part</li> <li>. To fight to eradicate marginalisation and discrimination</li> <li>. To defend a society to which all have access and which is supportive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Social development which guarantees human rights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Take action to create the conditions which make the exercise of human rights a reality, particularly for the most vulnerable groups</li> <li>. Take action to solve the problems seen in the exercise of human rights, particularly for the most vulnerable groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. To make more visible the need to guarantee human rights which avoid exclusion or discrimination for any reason</li> <li>. To facilitate social participation. To guarantee the dignity of individuals in any involvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. To increase the capacity for organisations to participate in the formulation, carrying-out and evaluation of social policies.</li> </ul>

<p>. The third sector has its own legitimate identity - its own position in society. It is not a back up or substitute for other sectors.</p> <p>. The network of those involved must be responsible, supportive, committed, and generous. The state must guarantee social rights.</p> <p>. The private profit-making sector must develop its <i>corporate social responsibility</i></p>	<p>. Social development in which a society is constructed (effective structuring of the population and co-operation between sectors)</p>	<p>. Include in its activity those benefits which are its own: solidarity, equality of opportunity, an absence of discrimination, and social participation.</p> <p>. Increase the level of awareness that society needs to participate through the organisations</p> <p>. Defend the commitment by the state to guarantee social rights</p>	<p>. To organise synergically the potential all the sectors have to take social action</p> <p>. To organise public, corporate and social responsibility.</p> <p>. To give collective actions priority over individual ones, based on values such as responsibility, solidarity, commitment and generosity.</p>	<p>. To organise its work democratically and openly, respecting the particular nature of each group.</p> <p>. To increase its ability to attract resources from different sources.</p> <p>. To guarantee openness in the financing of the sector's activities.</p> <p>. To increase the level of social responsibility in the organisations.</p> <p>. To improve social acceptability and effectiveness</p> <p>. To co-ordinate the groups in the sector on the basis of shared strategic objectives and to promote the exchange of experience</p>
<p>Society as a whole must be aware of its social responsibility.</p>	<p>Development of social awareness</p>	<p>Research in order to spread awareness. Increase public presence. Create information, awareness and opinion concerning the development of human rights and about what role an organised society has in their guarantee.</p>	<p>To demand social participation and a response from the public.</p>	<p>Openness in management, based on standards and an ethical approach</p>

This view of the analysis makes it clear that there is a need to define the theoretical framework for the activities of the third sector of social action and to open a debate on the key concepts which point towards shared objectives. The identity of the third sector of social action will be strengthened as soon as common ground is found on what its social role is and what is behind concepts which are considered as benefits, such as:

- the pursuit of social justice
- equality of opportunity
- inclusion
- social participation
- solidarity
- an ethical approach
- social change

## **The framework for the guarantee of social rights**

### **Introduction**

Welfare and social rights are inseparable, since those two rights satisfy basic needs and also provide a social context which allows them to be exercised. Equally, without a basic minimum level of protection the exercise of these rights cannot take place. In the regulations applicable in our country, it is laid down that the state is responsible for guaranteeing them. However, there is currently a fierce debate about this matter, which centres fundamentally on two points:

- the extension of rights and the way to produce and manage social welfare
- the limits of the state's responsibility

#### **Article 10**

1. The dignity of the individual, the inviolable rights which are part of it, the unimpeded development of the personality, respect for the law and the rights of others are fundamental for political order and social peace.
2. The regulations referring to fundamental rights and liberties which the Constitution recognises will be interpreted in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the treaties and agreements on these matters ratified by Spain.

**Chapter 1. On fundamental rights and duties. Spanish Constitution 1978**

#### **Article 11**

The States parties to the present Covenant recognise the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions.

**International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. UN 1966**

## Article 8

1. States should undertake, at the national level, all necessary measures for the realisation of the right to development and shall ensure, inter alia, equality of opportunity for all in their access to basic resources, education, health services, food, housing, employment and the fair distribution of income. Effective measures should be undertaken to ensure that women have an active role in the development process. Appropriate economic and social reforms should be carried out with a view to eradicating all social injustices.
2. States should encourage popular participation in all spheres as an important factor in development and in the full realisation of all human rights.

### Declaration on the Right to Development UN, 1986

The third sector of social action contributes to the recognition and exercise of the social rights of the groups on whose its activities are centred, from the perspective of a broad view of social rights, regarding as such all those which are necessary for the achievement of dignity, and of the full and free development of the human personality, without distinction for reasons of gender, race, colour, age, handicap, sexual orientation, political or other views, national or social origin, economic status, birth, or any other factor.

In this sense, the organisations of the third sector of social action aim their work with groups at risk of social exclusion at achieving their full inclusion, which, as Dolors Renau<sup>3</sup> makes clear, "presupposes, first of all the possibility that each citizen can realise his or her potential as a human being. In other words, one can put into practice one's rights and one's human obligations. And secondly, one should be able to be involved in the life of the community in order to participate in all those processes and decisions which are going to affect the life of the community as a whole and the life of the individual." At the same time an individual who is socially integrated not only takes an active role in his or her community, whether on a small or large scale, but also receives in return a certain personal satisfaction through feeling that he or she is someone, from the point of view of the community. This satisfaction is an aspect of one's life experience, without which no one can feel fully human. It allows one to be a part of the world, realising that this is where, as Hanna Arendt indicates, one communicates, one interacts, and one sees our shared destiny, and where for that reason each individual can develop to the maximum his or her human potential.

Fundamental rights are:

Universal Declaration of Human Rights	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Declaration on the Right to Development
. The right to equality and freedom from discrimination	.All peoples have the right of self-determination and to dispose freely of their natural wealth and resources.	. Every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realised.
.The right to life, liberty and security of person	.The right to the enjoyment of just and favourable conditions of work (and to found and join trade unions, and the right to strike).	.This implies the right of peoples to self-determination.
.The right to freedom from torture	.Among the measures to be	.The human person is the central

<sup>3</sup> Forum of Barcelona 2004. Title of discussion: "The Forum of Local Authorities in Porto Alegre" (8th May 2004)

or subjection to slavery or servitude	adopted by each state there should be programmes, policies and techniques to achieve economic, social and cultural development under conditions safeguarding fundamental political and economic freedoms of the individual.	subject of development and should be the active participant and beneficiary of the right to development.
.The right to impartial justice and presumption of innocence	.The right to social security, including social insurance	.All human beings have a responsibility for development, individually and collectively.
The right to move freely and to migrate	.The widest possible protection and assistance should be accorded to the family, which is the natural and fundamental group unit of society, especially protection of mothers, children and adolescents.	.States have the right and the duty to formulate appropriate national development policies that aim at the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population on the basis of its active, free and meaningful participation in development and in the fair distribution of the benefits resulting from this
.The right to asylum	.The right to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions.	.States have the primary responsibility for the creation of national and international conditions favourable to the realisation of the right to development.
.The right to a nationality	.The right to be free from hunger.	.States have the duty to co-operate with each other.
.The right to marry and have a family	.The right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.	.States shall take resolute steps to eliminate violations of human rights.
.The right to own property individually and collectively	.The right to education	.States should undertake, at the national level, all necessary measures for the realisation of the right to development and shall ensure, inter alia, equality of opportunity for all in their access to basic resources, education, health services, food, housing, employment and the fair distribution of income. Effective measures should be undertaken to ensure that women have an active role in the development process. Appropriate economic and social reforms should be carried out with a view to eradicating all social injustices.
.The right to freedom of opinion and expression, freedom to meet and have peaceful assembly and association	.The right to take part in cultural life; to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications; to benefit from the protection of the moral and material interests which belong to an individual	.States should encourage popular participation in all spheres
.The right to take part in the government and public service	.Steps must be taken by states to achieve the conservation, the development and the diffusion of science and culture	.All human rights and fundamental freedoms are indivisible and interdependent.
.The right to social security	.The states undertake to submit reports on the measures which they have adopted and the progress made in achieving the observance of the rights recognised herein.	
.The right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.		
.The right to join trade unions, to rest and to free time		

.The right to have a standard of living adequate for health and well-being, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control		
.The right to free education		
.The right to have access to culture		
.Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth can be fully realised.		

Source: Produced by Folia Consultores, 2004

### Terms of reference for rights in Spain

At present, in Spain, the framework for referring to rights is:

Area	Reference
Spanish state	The Spanish Constitution 1978 Constitutional law 14/2003 on the rights and freedom of foreigners in Spain and their social integration
European Union	European Charter of Human Rights (European convention on Human Rights, 1953). European Social Charter. (Council of Europe, 1961). Community Charter of Fundamental Social Rights for Workers 1989. Charter of Fundamental Rights of The European Union (Nice, 2000) European constitution project
UN members	Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966.
	Declaration on the Right to Development, 1986
	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families, 1990
	Norms on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises with Regard to Human Rights, 2003

In spite of the clear absence of concrete mechanisms, the existing documents leave no doubt of the **responsibility** of the state at least formally for guaranteeing and recognising these rights. This is the case because in the Spanish state our terms of reference include not only in the constitution, but also by reference to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Declaration on the Right to Development. These three documents, of which Spain is a signatory state, make clear the formal role of the state. It must be remembered that "the regulations affecting the fundamental rights and freedoms which the Constitution recognises will be interpreted in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international treaties and agreements on these matters, which have been ratified by Spain" (Article 10.2 the Spanish Constitution).

The current debate must centre on the extent of this responsibility: should the state guarantee the exercise of these rights to all the citizenry or only to those individuals who cannot or are not capable of satisfying certain basic necessities by themselves? This question leads to another: who then have the right to have rights? Or to put it another way, who make up the citizenry?

Broadly, by well-being one understands a situation where an individual has his needs satisfied and is able to exercise his rights. For most people it has become associated with the system to provide well-being known as the Social State or the Welfare State. And so, "Welfare State" is associated with the idea both of rights and of needs, and its development is linked to the level of democratic and economic development achieved in the West since the middle of the 20th century. This comes from the premise that the government of a state should carry out certain social policies to guarantee and ensure the well-being of the citizens by encouraging a process of redistribution of wealth. Moreover it is based on certain elements: the sexual division of work, the social contract, full employment, the protecting universalism of public institutions and the definition of social needs by the state in regulations and by technocrats, which relegates the citizen body to secondary importance. Depending on the ideology of power, there exist different models both for the concept of well-being and for the relevant social policies.

### **Citizenship with rights**

At the centre of this debate about the model of the Welfare State we must consider also the current model of citizenship. Since the end of the Nineties the concept of citizenship and its elements have acquired a special relevance, with a basic triangular relationship: rights-citizenship-social cohesion. Furthermore this concept has a range of dimensions: political, social, economic, civil and intercultural.

Within each of these dimensions of citizenship, there would be three basic elements: a legal status (a collection of rights), a moral status (a collection of responsibilities) and also an identity (knowing that one belongs to a society). In any case, the integration of the five areas with its corresponding basic elements produces a dynamic notion of citizenship.

In the following table there is a summary of the components and elements of dynamic citizenship.

#### **The different dimensions of citizenship**

Political	<p>The relationship between an individual (with full rights) and a political community in which he is involved in public matters. Bi-directional: the citizen towards the community and the community to wards the citizen.</p> <p>Participation legitimises public life. Two models: representative democracy and participatory democracy.</p> <p>Democracy as protection against the rulers</p> <p>Belonging to a nation state (nationality = legal status / nation state = free democratic state)</p>
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	<p>Because having laws is a basis for claiming rights It generates dynamics of inclusion/exclusion with regard to membership (as opposed to difference)</p>
Social	<p>A political community in which one enjoys civil rights (individual liberty), political rights (participation in politics) and social rights (housing, education, work, health, social services) Democracy as collectivism (which is harmful) Membership of the social and democratic state (State = Welfare-state = State with social justice) Because having laws implies protection and a guarantee of well-being It generates dynamics of inclusion/exclusion with regard to the satisfaction of needs (equality of opportunity as opposed to the rights of the individual)</p>
Economic	<p>Meaningful participation by members of society in economic decisions and social wealth (political and economic sharing) Democracy legitimising the demand for control and decision-making (stakeholder capitalism). This transcends the centralist model of the worker (particular interests with regard to production as opposed to universal and objective interests) Membership of a liberal capitalist state (State + business = social, economic and political order) A citizen business = a business with social responsibility</p>
Civil	<p>Human beings are above all members of a civil society. A community organised in groupings which are not political or economic, and are essential for living together and for the everyday development of its life. Democracy as being citizens, social participation (self-organised and voluntary) and solidarity.</p>
Intercultural	<p>Pluralist participation which regards different cultures and sub-cultures in a political community in such a way there is only one class of citizen status. It is a bond between different social groups (groups which have traditionally been disadvantaged, national minorities, ethnic groups, and religious groups)</p> <hr/> <p>Membership of a community which admits and recognises the different cultures which comprise it (multi- and inter-culturalism) A state of different nations, different ethnic groups = protection of collective and distinctive rights)</p> <hr/> <p>It generates dynamics of inclusion/exclusion with regard to the conflict between individual rights and collective rights.</p>

Source: Folia Consultores, 2004, based on the classification of A. Cortina, 2003

In spite of this conceptualisation, it is certain that today, and in particular from the perspective of the authorities both in individual states and in groupings of states (in our case the European Union) that there is still a very restricted model of citizenship which is preferred. There seem to be two key components to this: the status of "worker" as a criterion for access to social and economic rights; and the status of "national" as criterion for access to political rights (and participation) and to cultural rights. In other words, while this establishes the criteria for membership (inclusive criteria), it also encourages dynamics of exclusion (non-membership, non-suitability)

The model of citizenship based on the "worker/national" is principally being questioned because of changes in socio-economics in recent decades.

The third sector of social action needs to take up a position with regard to the concept of citizenship which it wishes to defend, perhaps even to go a step further and to include in its programme all the dimensions of citizenship and to advocate more inclusion.

## Principles of social action

### Inclusion as an objective

The sphere of action of the organisations in the third sector of social action affects the most vulnerable groups in society:

- a. Those who suffer general disadvantages in terms of education, abilities, employment, housing, economic resources etc., namely those associated with the enjoyment of social rights.
- b. Those who have little chance of access to the institutions which provide those advantages.
- c. Those groups in which problems of disadvantage and access persist over time.

The "risk society" demonstrates that any group or individual can be vulnerable at a particular moment, that the risk factors change with time and context, that exclusion has many dimensions, and that the economic/work factor, though significant, is not the only relevant one. The consequence of this vulnerability can be social exclusion, which as a concept, is not simply poverty, since we can define it as being unable or finding it difficult to have access to the mechanisms of personal development and insertion in the social community, or to the established systems of protection. Therefore the areas where exclusion can occur are heterogeneous, as are the conditions in which it is produced, as vulnerable groups change.

Areas of exclusion	Elements of exclusion
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizenship, participation in decisions</li> </ul>
Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification with the key values of the model of development. These refer basically to consumption, youth, aesthetic values and leisure</li> </ul>
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient income to guarantee a quality of life at the minimum level according to the European model</li> <li>• Insufficient social involvement</li> <li>• Inequality of opportunity</li> </ul>
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Levels of productivity in traditional economic sectors or in the weakest areas of enterprise</li> <li>• Level of human resources, levels of technical, social and personal skills</li> </ul>
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ineffective education system and with high drop-out rates and information</li> <li>• Lack of access to different sources of information</li> <li>• Insufficient ability to decode analyses</li> </ul>

SOURCE: Adaptation from: Isabel André and Patricia Rego (2003): «Redes y desarrollo local, la importancia del capital social y de la innovación» in the bulletin of the "Asociación de Geógrafos Españoles" (AGE) nº 36

We can say that the objective of the third sector of social action is to work for **the inclusion of the most vulnerable individuals and groups**. This opens up an enormous range of possibilities of which groups and individuals are in principal need of intervention, because one can only speak of vulnerable groups or individuals after a concrete analysis of the factors involved in exclusion at a particular time and place: situations, areas and factors which combined with the location (urban or rural), and also with those circumstances which make exclusion worse (gender, age, race, origin), will decide which are the groups experiencing exclusion in particular area or time.

Inclusion implies the achievement of social rights and in order to achieve these rights the following are required:

Guarantees	Conditions	Development
Refusal/Exercise	Processes and factors	
Macro/micro	Dynamism/exclusion	
Protection/security	Independence/participation	Economic-social
	Integration/Social insertion	

1. **Guarantee of basic rights:** what is at stake achieving full independence for all citizens and overcoming any situation where the exercise of social rights breaks down or is refused and a group of vulnerable individuals is denied access to society. Thus, the achievement of individual and social independence requires the exercise of fundamental economic and social rights, not just the covering of basic needs.
2. **The conditions for exercising these rights:** it is essential to provide guarantees of the rights, but this is not enough. If we do not wish to be tied to social assistance (and a reliance on assistance), we must consider and sort out the conditions in which these rights are exercised and can be exercised. The achievement of individual independence cannot be separated from the structural processes (macro conditions) and from the social factors (or micro and anthropological conditions) which help or hinder the exercise of basic rights. Therefore it is essential to establish conditions for the exercise of basic rights which will empower as members of society those affected by poverty and exclusion; in other words ones which make possible their full integration in society, or - and this is the same - their full social participation.
3. **Inclusive social development:** achieving full independence and full integration can only come as a result of structuring based on actions to promote social development, where the type of socio-economic development is decisive. That is to say, a distribution of wealth to satisfy needs is a necessary action, but bound to remain as purely an act of distribution to provide assistance if socio-economic development does not include the development of rights and of the independence of those involved, and translate this into viable socio-economic courses of action which will make the exercise of basic rights possible.

To sum up, the elements which form these objectives go beyond the limited framework of social policy, as they touch and affect the fundamental elements of social cohesion. And this is not only a theoretical structure but also a basic necessity and the starting-point of action which embraces all decisions and therefore all policies and most important of all economic policy itself. "It is a duty of the authorities to promote conditions where the freedom and equality of the individual and of the groups of which he is part are genuine and effective; to remove obstacles which hinder or make difficult their fulfilment and to facilitate the

participation of all citizens in political, economic, cultural and social life.” (Article 9.2 of the Spanish Constitution)

In other words:

1. to establish conditions for genuine freedom and equality;
2. to remove obstacles or guarantee their fulfilment;
3. to facilitate participation, or to have individuals active in all aspects of society.

What then are the elements of social integration/insertion/inclusion? Those which establish the ability to exercise membership of society as a citizen and the conditions for this. Therefore as far as we are concerned integration/insertion require as a necessary condition the guarantee and the opportunity to achieve independence and social acceptance, as individuals who are active and able to develop for themselves the way to live their life.

The identity of the third sector of social action is determined by what the consensus will be, not only on the factors which cause a risk of exclusion or on the best remedies or on the discovery of new models of social exclusion and new individuals caught up in them, but also on the question of which are the social rights that need to be claimed for those groups in risk now or in the future and of how a policy to encourage their active social participation can be set in motion. Strategies such as a guaranteed minimum wage or the creation of social capital are courses of action towards inclusion which need to be debated.

## **Focusing on gender**

### **The third sector of social action needs to rethink its activities and its organisation from the perspective of gender.**

“Gender inequality is a background variable for the effects caused by other elements which generate inequality (race, age, level of education, social class, income, living in city or countryside), in that the obstacles and influences in the area of gender affect the other areas and vice versa.

“Gender relations are not just one more variable in the analysis of the situation, but rather they give a structure to society as a whole and also to the world of exclusion. The women in any group are more vulnerable than the men when there is risk of exclusion. Poverty and social exclusion are in short forms of structural violence in which gender is one of the factors which increase social vulnerability.”<sup>4</sup>

Poverty is not only a matter of income: it has a much more general effect on the ability to control one’s own life, to develop, to make personal choices; poverty especially affects women because women are the ones who have been most excluded from the possibility of control of their economic situation and also of their own lives (the “feminisation” of poverty, which happens all over the world)<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Tortosa, J.M. (2001)

<sup>5</sup> Amartya Sen (2002): Desarrollo y libertad. Editorial Planeta. Barcelona

The following is a brief list of the additional difficulties increasing the risk of exclusion by virtue of being a woman:

1. When employed women are paid lower wages for doing the same work.
2. Their unemployment rate is higher than that of men.
3. Women take on caring and support, and this responsibility has increased with the growth of single-parent families.
4. Violence towards women is a direct consequence of the way social power and roles are distributed.
5. Women are the ones who suffer directly - and through their sons, daughters and families, from the reduction in resources available for education, health and public transport
6. This situation is worse in the case of women in the countryside: isolation, lack of education, health infrastructures etc.

To apply the gender perspective to the analysis of the situation faced by the third sector of social action requires an insight which detects and analyses both the differences between men and women in their access to resources and their use, and the power relationship produced, and also the inevitable differences in their treatment and in actions taken, and the focus with which these are thought out. In addition, the third sector of social action should include the element of gender in its educational activities.

But it is not enough for organisations to observe the situation from outside with a new insight; it is also necessary to examine their own structures and work cultures by applying gender analysis. Who holds power in organisations, how roles and powers are allotted, how important different jobs and tasks are seen as etc. are questions whose answers could put in doubt such principles as fairness, participation in internal decision-making; one objective is a balanced participation in bodies within organisations, and especially in their overall administration.

Because the causes of inequality which comes from distinction of gender are so deep-rooted, it appears logical to think that this situation is not going to put itself right over the years by mere social evolution, but rather that it needs systematic and thorough intervention by the state and by society. To plan for changes is a way to prepare for the future. For this reason, it is important to focus on empowering women to increase the ability of women themselves to take decisions and to act.

The organisations of the third sector of social action are calling for an important role in deciding public policy, and its identity should in part be defined by its position on policies which are to encourage the creation of a society built upon a balance of equality and responsibility between men and women. It is the duty of the sector in general and of its leaders in particular to promote the inclusion of a gender perspective and to work for the eradication of inequality in its own methods, its forms of organisation and its activities, making gender analysis a key element in all its component organisations.

### **Social participation as a strategy and voluntary action as an area and model of social participation**

“The third sector of social action works for inclusion and social cohesion by promoting full participation in society and by effective structuring of society - a function which is recognised and supported by all social sectors and especially by the authorities. The creation of awareness of social responsibility is being practised by those in the sector and its organisations as something which is valid in itself and not only a means to an end. What is being proposed is in effect awareness that the community as a whole needs to participate, through the organisations of this sector and as one of its strategic objectives. It is well understood that it needs to do this to improve its credibility in society.”

Social participation, effective structuring and social responsibility and credibility - concepts which are relevant to the strategic objective of strengthening democracy. This and the guarantee of social rights are two twin supports for maintaining the identity of the sector. That given, the immediate question is why (looking at social participation as a means) and how (looking at the methods of social participation) we should encourage social participation of the various protagonists in the third sector of social action: the activists in the organisations, the beneficiaries of their actions and the organisations themselves as part of society. Only in this way will it be possible to propose courses of action to make progress along the lines intended.

<b>PARTICIPATION: FOR WHAT?</b>	<b>PARTICIPATION: BY WHOM?</b>	<b>PARTICIPATION: BY WHAT MEANS?</b>
So that, with a democratic system in action, organisations can be schools of democracy.	All individuals committed to the objectives and goals of the organisations: paid and unpaid staff entitled to work	Democratic participation internally
To guarantee social citizenship and social rights ↓	All individuals committed to the objectives and goals of the organisations + individuals and groups with whom they work	Social participation as citizens
So that the public agenda guarantees social rights ↓	All groups with a proper organisation	Social participation as institutions

The objectives of participation in each case are different although complementary and its protagonists are different, as are the strategies to achieve the objectives.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Means of achieving it</b>
Improve the level of democracy in the organisations and at the same time ensure that they become learning zones for responsibility and participation in taking decisions.	Arranging internal channels of participation for those who work (paid or unpaid) in the organisations.
Ensure that the individuals and groups with whom we work are involved in society, citizens who have the opportunity to exercise every one of their rights, in other words to ensure the social inclusion of every individual or group.	Mechanisms in the organisations for learning and involvement in citizen participation; these should be accessible to any of our target groups and to the volunteers taking part in activities.
Include in state policies all that has been learnt from the activities of the NGOs, and to include in the state agenda the best ideas to guarantee social rights.	A better organisation of the third sector of social action, which will create, lay claim to, defend and constantly improve its own areas of participation in state institutions.

Therefore as part of a strategy to improve social participation in the third sector of social action it would be necessary to put in motion at the same time:

1. Mechanisms for internal participation in organisations to ensure democracy within them.
2. Mechanisms of social participation encouraged by the organisations to ensure social respect and genuine exercise of social rights among the individuals and groups with whom we work.
3. Mechanisms for institutional participation which allows the involvement of organisations of the third sector of social action in public policy decision-making.

## **The institutional framework of social participation**

The European project is clearly committed to strengthening representative democracy, given that the citizens of Europe as it is have two (almost unique) tools for participation in decision-making, each involving delegation: as an individual a European citizen has a vote, and he can be represented in areas of consultation through organised social organisations.

Alongside this view which is exclusively centred on representation, there is another one which hopes that the members of society can form a collective presence in the community (or the citizen body) where each citizen has civil, political and social rights.

Social participation in this view is not the preserve of one or two groups or organisations, but represents the opportunity for every individual to be involved and actively to take part in public matters, with his interests and abilities being the only limiting factors: each person will be involved to the extent that he wishes (militancy is not the only option), on those themes where he has an interest, using formal mechanisms and channels (for example associations) or informal ones (for example, groups without a formal organisation which are formed to deal with a problem and disappear once it is resolved). However, unlike simple actions of social participation, citizenship in this view implies that all social participation is part of a framework of political activity, actions of an aware citizenry.

It is essential for the third sector of social action to strengthen the idea of awareness in public activity as a means of social mobilisation, since it contributes to making society more sensitive to the problems of exclusion.

## **To encourage the social participation of groups at risk of exclusion**

The opportunities for social participation are part of the European policy of fighting exclusion. (We have highlighted one section in bold.)

“The full scope of the challenge (of fighting exclusion) may only be realised if its multi-dimensional and structural nature is identified and addressed. Thus, a comprehensive and co-ordinated policy approach to social inclusion should go far beyond the redistribution of prosperity by means of passive benefits paid to those left out by economic and social change – the challenge is not so much to increase redistribution but to manage our economies and societies **in a way which maximises the potential for full participation and quality living for all. The focus should be on fostering active participation**, so as to reduce the waste of human resources and to achieve a fair distribution of opportunities. It should also be focused on ensuring that the objective of social inclusion is incorporated into economic and social policies.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Communication From The Commission: *Building An Inclusive Europe*  
COM(2000) 79 final. Online document: [http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2000/com2000\\_0079en02.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2000/com2000_0079en02.pdf)

In Spain the National Plan for Social Inclusion<sup>7</sup> puts forward as one of its goals: "To establish forums for debate with the NGOs in which the participation of individuals affected would be guaranteed and their contributions would be heard"; and among its policies are:

- "The participation of those affected in the programmes of social inclusion and encouraging them to join associations at a regional and local level."
- "Encouraging the participation of individuals affected and the associations which represent them in forums set up by the authorities to debate social exclusion."
- "The development of activities to guarantee the presence of those affected in the areas of participation and decision-making in the organisations which represent them."

The legal framework and the approach of institutions recognises and defends therefore the means to participate: through associations at a regional or local level and with an objective which could be expressed as **"listening to those individuals and groups at risk of exclusion, who are represented in organisations"**.

What do organisations of the third sector of social action do, and what can they do, to improve or ensure participation by citizens from the groups which are most disadvantaged and most vulnerable?

Often stress is placed on the **publicising** role of organisations, one of the most generally accepted: for example it is one of those given by the Plan for Inclusion when it regards them as spokesmen for those who are excluded or who are at risk of being so.

For its part the sector has also placed an emphasis on its role as an area for participation by citizens and for publicity. Thus, in the Ethical Code of Voluntary Organisations it states that the goals (among others) of voluntary organisations are:

- To establish channels of communication and areas for debate to create ways of resolving conflicts
- To stimulate the citizen body in matters which affect it and to strengthen the basic values of democracy.
- To promote a social and democratic state, ensuring its continuation and making possible the development of social justice reminding the state of its obligations and making it clear that the voluntary sector is not taking over any of the responsibilities of the state.
- To encourage a culture of solidarity which will help to create among citizens a genuine social awareness of the need for solidarity.

Increasing participation of the NGOs in the planning, implementing and evaluation of state policies should be encouraged. In this sense in considering the construction of the third sector of social action, participatory councils (such as the State Council of Social Action NGOs, and other councils in the sector concerned with vulnerable groups<sup>8</sup>) should be encouraged as examples of participation by the third sector of social action and its voice in the process of making public policy.

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<sup>7</sup> **Plan Nacional de Acción para la Inclusión Social del Reino de España** On-line document  
<http://www.mtas.es/SGAS/IncluSocial/PlanNacional/II-PNAin.doc> (Consulted August 2004)

<sup>8</sup> The State Council of Senior Citizens, the Royal Council on Disability, the Council for Youth, the State Council for Schools, etc.

But also authors like Cefaï D. suggest that organisations can encourage the participation of individuals and groups with which they work inasmuch as they are and are recognised as **means of empowerment**, which allow the sharing-out of opportunities to give opinions and take action which are normally only given to those who have greatest economic, social or cultural influence, and who also have the resources, the contacts, and the knowledge necessary for this commitment.

To achieve this it will be necessary to *strengthen* the genuine and effective participation by the beneficiaries in the implementation and evaluation of projects, so that they are able to control their own situation and the recognition of their rights and duties.

Working to increase the extent that individuals and groups are empowered requires strengthening **three powers among individuals and groups**:

- The power to create independent ideas
- The power to communicate and have dialogue
- The power to take action

This involves three challenges for the third sector of social action which must be faced by the State Council of Social Action NGOs. But they should also be challenges for the authorities, both at the state level and in Europe.

This is the moment to wonder: Is the new vision of the European Constitution encouraging inclusion or simply accepting it? Is the social model of Europe in danger?

The European Anti Poverty Network (EAPN) warns both of the danger of seeing the European project as principally something economic which makes less likely the promotion of a social model of Europe founded on high levels of social protection, and of the risk of worsening such problems as racism and xenophobia.<sup>9</sup>

As far as democracy and the place in it of excluded groups are concerned, the EAPN proposes going beyond representative democracy, and in its declaration it calls upon Europe's leaders to "strengthen **participatory democracy** approaches and in particular to ensure that those experiencing poverty, exclusion and inequalities have the necessary organisational capacity, participative frameworks and financial support to ensure that their voice can be heard in the development, implementation and evaluation of all relevant policies".

## **Voluntary action, an area for social participation**

We start from the view that voluntary action is an important form of citizen participation in public matters and that it is organised as a clear example of solidarity with individuals at risk of social exclusion.

It is important to clarify the view of the voluntary sector as the totality of activities of public interest, based on the principles of solidarity and pluralism and on democratic coexistence, and carried out by individuals intent on improving the quality of life of other individuals or groups.

These activities should be:

1. of an altruistic nature and acts of solidarity;

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<sup>9</sup> 356 Final Declaration "The EU we want - Strengthening the EU Social Model" EAPN, 15th General Assembly, November 2004 Groningen (Holland)

2. a response to a free, personal decision and not the result of a personal or legal obligation;
3. one which is carried out disinterestedly and without financial recompense;
4. one which is structured and carried out within an NGO or NPO as part of a particular programme

Activities should not be considered as voluntary if they are remunerated, or if isolated or occasional, carried out on the fringe of NPOs or if carried out for family reasons.

Voluntary activity cannot in any circumstances be a substitute for professional services which are remunerated, which are provided by public or private organisations.

Other distinctive features of the voluntary sector:

- It is organised through the participation of citizens carrying out collective action.
- It aims for social change and hopes for an improvement of the most disadvantaged individuals and groups.
- It has the ethical obligation to report injustices and infringements of the rights of the weakest, even when those situations result from poor practices on the part of the authorities.
- It has a cordial but questioning relationship with the authorities, but will not permit intervention or manipulation, particularly not in the name of solidarity or social justice.

The Voluntary Law states that individual volunteers have the right to "participate actively in the organisation in which they work, helping with the planning, design, implementation and evaluation of programmes of action in accordance with their statutes or particular rules", but then should leave to the organisations themselves the extent to which individuals may be involved.

These organisations reflect the values of society, and in this sense matching their goals with the means to achieve them is one of their distinctive features and one of the benefits they bring.

## **Associations and the voluntary sector are distinct areas of social participation, equally valid.**

If **associations** allow a group of individuals freely and voluntarily to share objectives and to take action in some shared field, **a voluntary sector group** is a framework where individuals undertake free and altruistic activity in activities of public interest, through private or public-sector organisations and in accordance with particular programmes or projects." The voluntary sector can exist without organisation.

The Voluntary Law ( June 1996) gives each individual involved in voluntary work the right to "participate actively in the organisation in which they work, helping with the planning, design, implementation and evaluation of programmes of action in accordance with their statutes or particular rules" but it is appropriate for organisations to create suitable frameworks in their "statutes and rules".

The voluntary sector seen as an area of participation in matters of public interest must therefore accept that organisations where it is involved should make the necessary arrangements to facilitate this participation.

To achieve this voluntary organisations should:

- Make sure that they have a flexible structure which will increasingly allow the integration of the volunteer force in the organisation. The organisations will encourage ways for it to identify with their style and values.
- Strengthen the genuine and effective participation of the volunteers within their organisations, encouraging them to take on particular responsibilities.
- Agree with each volunteer on his initial commitment and the time he will work, his responsibilities and his duties, and also expect their fulfilment
- Create and offer educational programmes for the volunteers which take into account their maturity and personal development. Therefore organisations should establish permanent educational areas, with diversity depending on the needs, content and fields of activity etc., and adapted to the complexity of their situation and to new methods of social intervention, to the way the organisation works, and to new challenges presented by socio-political reality.
- Prioritise the working methods in a team in the area where it is carried out, not only as a technique in itself, but more importantly as part of the democratic and participatory style in order to face real situations which demand responses with higher standards and more dedication.
- Make volunteers realise the particular value of activity which is seen as:
  - Showing an aspect of the individual which goes beyond the task itself, and which helps to improve society
  - Part of a group of activities involving themselves and other organisations
  - A modest, but significant contribution in a global context where much remains to be done.
- Ensure the fulfilment of rights and responsibilities which are part of current regulations.

But it is not the case that this model of the voluntary sector is generally shared in practice, and it is commonly thought that certain models for the voluntary sector are supported by the authorities which are contrary to the values shared by the NGOs.

In short, there are basically **two concepts of the voluntary sector**:

- One sees it as an area of social participation, organised therefore and with consistent principles and objectives, and which is also secondarily a resource when it fulfils some **task in society**.
- The other sees the volunteer as an **individual resource** for the organisation, who can only participate in a very controlled way, and not in the area of decision-making.

From these two views different models are developed of participation by the volunteer force in the decision-making of organisations.

In general terms, from the information received, the model of the volunteer sector satisfying need for social participation is the generally accepted one and the one defended by the organisations themselves. Thus the likely debate would be on how in the future to avoid:

- Social participation being reduced to a system of individual volunteers seen as a work-force to benefit from in each organisation;
- The volunteer being interested in immediate results, without any vision of social change;
- The voluntary sector having a low profile politically and being turned into a tame servant of the organisations and of the state

To cope with the challenges and the courses of action which we have envisaged it is essential to make use of two theoretical and practical supports:

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1. The existence of a Code of Behaviour for Organisations in the Voluntary Sector, which should be the benchmark for all activities and areas of involvement of the voluntary sector, whether private or public initiatives.

2. The existence of networks in the voluntary sector which give structure to voluntary action and serve as points of reference. We believe that these networks should be supported, recognised and financed. The independence of voluntary action which gives assistance to individuals at risk of social exclusion needs to be guaranteed, and we should ensure that the voluntary sector is not used by political or economic interests.

The crux of the matter is to make it clear that it is possible to talk of different models for the voluntary sector and that the organisations of the sector have to define themselves according to one of them. Choosing their own definition of how they see the voluntary sector and what its importance is must be a short-term objective for the organisations, so that they can make clear to public opinion what their distinguishing features are and how they see their model for participation.

## **The principles of organisational culture of third sector of social action groups**

The organisational culture can be defined as a **system of concepts which are shared**, or in other words a combination of symbols, beliefs and ideas (beliefs are individual ideas which are held as a result of life itself, which are in existence inside us before we consider a problem. They are taken for granted and do not have to be formed. Ideas on the other hand are formed from a process of reasoning and only exist inasmuch as they are thought), rules (general expectations which have been established and should be followed, values (justifications and aspirations based on ideology) and premises, all of which are followed by the members with regard to the organisation and which distinguish it from.<sup>10</sup>

However if the organisation has been in existence for a long time and maintains its system of concepts rigidly, without possibility of change, it will have difficulty both in embracing both new members who bring with them fresh ways and in facing the demands the general environment is making. In both respects the existence of the organisation itself is in peril.

Three forces act to maintain the organisational culture:

1. **The practice of self-identification** with the sector, in this case, that of social action.

Why would an organisation wish to belong to this sector? Groups can aspire either to belong to the second level organisations or to join the sector per se, in this case the social action sector. This will happen if they have a clear common interest with what the sector represents and if it will maintain their organisational culture. The perception of benefit from a reasonable investment - or the perception of efficiency and effectiveness - within the sector will be the strongest motivating factor for an organisation to identify itself as part of the third sector of social action.

It is the objectives of the sector which can motivate organisations to consider themselves as belonging to it.

2. The **deliberate actions** of individuals or organisations which are seen as leaders in the sector

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<sup>10</sup> Fernández Ríos, Manuel y Sánchez, José C. (1997): Eficacia Organizacional: Concepto, desarrollo y evaluación (Organisational efficiency: Concept, development and evaluation). Publishers Díaz de Santos. Madrid.  
And Beckhard, Richard (1973): Organizational Transitions. Addison-Wesley

These associations and individuals are the ones which act with greatest influence in this sector, and they create and transmit a certain culture: the images, the symbolism, the language, or in other words, the way the culture is expressed affect the rest of the organisations. The nature of the sector's culture will be determined by who its creators, promoters and leaders are. The image which the sector projects in its communications and from its leadership is the second element which identifies and transmits the organisational culture.

### 3. The **forms of social relationships** within the sector

Meetings, working groups, formal and informal contacts between the organisations in the sector are areas of creativity for internal rules, explicit or implicit, which form part of the organisational culture of the sector.

Alongside these forces the sector can make use of its history, rituals, material symbols, and language to transmit its culture to its members. In this way the culture adapts itself to each organisation. But there is also the reverse process - which should be encouraged. The organisations in the sector help it to acquire particular traits which come from the sub-groups of which they are part.

The culture of the organisations develops from a double relational process involving the individual and the organisation, and the organisation and the individual; and in the case of a sector between each organisation and the group as a whole. In theory, the stronger the influence of the organisation over individuals and groups - without its implying loss of individuality for its members, the stronger the organisational culture. Presumably if there is powerful influence of some members over others, it suggests that systems of control are in play and a certain danger of excessive authority or of selfish attitudes which ultimately damage the culture of the organisation.

## **The organisational culture of the third sector of social action**

In its organisational culture the third sector of social action has some values clearly defined (solidarity, commitment), some ideas (participation linked to internal democracy, openness of objectives) and some rules (openness, standards, internal participation), some of these values better supported than others.

Remembering Gregorio Rodríguez Cabrero, we can say that the features which in part at least have historically defined the organisational set-up of social groups have in some cases been shared with public or private sector commercial organisations (flexibility, decentralisation, proximity to the customer, quality as a principle) and in other cases in theory are its own (internal participation and democracy, solidarity and commitment, and openness of objectives).

There is still no definition of what protection each of these principles provides, but ideas can be suggested to give a framework to the debate.

- There are values which seek to make visible what is portrayed as the **mission of the sector: solidarity and the commitment to social rights and to their guarantee**. It is the final objective for which each organisation was formed and the final objective of the sector which holds them together. These values are complemented by others which are essential to satisfy the demands of society: **openness and responsibility**.
- These are values which are widely seen, but they have to be reflected in others aimed at **internal organisation: democracy and participation in decision-making**. The

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idea of making the sector and each organisation more democratic, in addition to encouraging new ideas, stops power struggles and the dangers of egoism and individual ambition. But internal participation in each organisation and group in the sector is more than just a means to make decision-making more democratic. It is also intended to help transform the organisational culture and adapt it to social changes and the requirements of society as a whole (the citizen body, individuals and groups with whom work is done, or the authorities) without losing its force.

Since there has been exponential growth in the third sector of social action, growth of its oldest organisations and ever-increasing social demands - without the sector having in general terms made profound changes in order to adapt to new circumstances, it is essential to input some stimuli into its culture to steer its activity towards its principal goals and values based on ethics.

To achieve this, each organisation should take on board - with everyone in agreement if possible - these ethical values and a working practice based on ethics which can be incorporated in the everyday work of the individuals and groups within each one of organisations of the third sector of social action. This working system will include ways to evaluate ethical content in order to encourage changes and improvement.

If the third sector of social action wants to work for its consolidation, it should speed up a process of reflection on its principles and its organisational values. While there is respect for each group and a conviction that the variety of groups and organisational approaches will enrich debates, it is essential to agree upon some shared distinctive features, which are clearly seen and can be made known so that the community as a whole has a coherent image of it, but mainly so that there can be genuine self-regulation of the sector itself, which needs to be based on these values: the pursuit of social justice, equality, inclusion, social participation, solidarity, ethical practice and change.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND COURSES OF ACTION

Establishing a set of strategic proposals for the third sector of social action is a welcome step forward. First, it comes from an initiative which sought to achieve it and is the result of analysis and debates in which the sector has taken part; secondly, it provides a framework and platform which can help to bring a culture of dialogue and co-operation to the third sector of social action once and for all.

These proposals are then the result of agreement, achieved through participation which has undoubtedly contributed to the strengthening sought by the third sector of social action.

The third sector of social action has before it different challenges with a variety of possible solutions:

- The challenge of moving from an enormous range of associations, foundations, collectives, organisations, groups, which deal with situations in different ways, to a stronger position with a common approach shared by all.
- The challenge of achieving independence and autonomy which are essential if it is to improve its effectiveness in meeting its objectives, while also working with the authorities, co-ordinating with other sectors, being active in the area of provision of services and having the necessary influence with the media
- The challenge of having within each group and between all those groups which comprise the third sector of social action an organisation based on their own principles and values, and ensuring at the same time an increase in genuine opportunities for inclusion and for the guarantee of social rights of individuals and groups currently at risk.

The conceptual framework leads us to two conclusions: it is necessary to improve some areas, necessary changes to make the third sector of social action a more effective arena to achieve its objectives, and there should be no delay in introducing dialogue and greater participation.

These objectives and courses of action should affect all instances of activity within the third sector of social action: organisations, leaders, voluntary workers, paid employees; also groups and individuals responsible for promotion of the sector on behalf of the authorities. In particular the State Council for Social Action NGOs has to be involved, as an organisation which can promote this process and give it a lead. One thing is clear, that this will only be possible if there is co-operation between the different agencies which manage the well-being of society.

The framework here put forward is a proposal which needs to be encouraged – commitments must be accepted, opposition must be overcome, the widest possible agreement must be reached, achievements must be charted and publicised. In other words, a major effort, fully thought through, is needed.

Therefore defining even more clearly the challenges and commitments which can be seen in the future of the sector is the purpose of this section.

The analysis which has been completed leads us to propose the pursuit of three objectives:

1. Strengthen social construction in the third sector of social action.
2. Provide the third sector of social action with a clear framework of self-regulation of all its activities and in particular of how its groups provide services.
3. Increase agreement on the basic principles of organisational culture in the third sector of social action.

For each of these strategic objectives there are courses of action which will help achieve it. The proposals for courses of action for each objective have been made bearing in mind the particular strengths of the third sector of social action, which has then made possible the choice of the best alternatives when considering which methods are most appropriate for achieving the objectives.

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: TO STRENGTHEN SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION IN THE THIRD SECTOR OF SOCIAL ACTION**

We can draw attention to the following weaknesses in the area of identity and image of the third sector of social action:

- Difficulties in finding a place for social activity in the unstructured welfare state
- An image in society which is blurred and fragmented
- A regulatory framework which is excessively interventionist; a lack of self-regulation
- Financial weakness and dependency

These weaknesses in turn have causes which derive from the circumstances in way that the third sector of social action works (the regulatory framework, for example) or from the way the sector has organised itself (for instance, the absence of debate with other sectors to establish its role in society). The relation between causes and effects in this area is very complicated, reflecting a complex situation where the cause-effect relation is a vicious circle from which the third sector for social action needs somehow to find a way out.

Based on this analysis the main problem which has been identified is the **inadequate social construction of the third sector of social action**, which is weaker than its administrative construction or its social credibility.

This problem has the following main consequences:

- A weak sense of belonging among the organisations which form the third sector of social action, and this in turn is both cause and consequence of the lack of reliable data for example on the sector, given that there are no up-to-date lists kept, nor do organisations request them.
- The sector's weakness in attempts to achieve financial independence by adopting a firm position with private and public organisations, and while it is predicted that providing services is the panacea to achieve this, not having a clear position for the framework of that provision.
- The use of communications, commercial and marketing strategies which have as a goal short-term funding or giving information on particular activities, but do not result in increased awareness among the general public of the aims of the organisations nor the difference between their role and the role of different branches of the authorities or that of private-sector organisations from the commercial world involved in the provision of services.

As a result of this, the third sector of social action wonders if its organisational models are the right ones to take up the challenge of selling their services. Organisations (sometimes from choice, sometimes forced to) have a tendency to overvalue the organisational models of the market or group themselves in networks which cannot easily strengthen smaller organisations.

The lack of financial independence weakens the third sector of social action, which chooses either to seek more regulation, stricter rules of the game, or to have no links, on the pretext of mistrust of the channels of communication with the authorities.

The lack of financial independence, caused by the weakness of social construction in the third sector of social action, also provokes an excessive use of the media or of other publicity to achieve funding in the short term without an open explanation of the aims and objectives of the activity to be financed. This has a negative effect on its image in society and makes it more difficult to see the organisations as areas of social participation.

### **CHALLENGES FOR THE THIRD SECTOR OF SOCIAL ACTION IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN ITS SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION**

<p>With regard to identity and finding a place for social activity in the unstructured welfare state</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Third Sector of Social Action needs to grow in quality, to consolidate, and to achieve greater independence without damaging its relationship with the authorities             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Its independent activity should make use of the organisational experience of the diversity of groups which could be regarded as part of the sector.</li> <li>• Dialogue within the sector: the desire for greater social dialogue in general on the changes the welfare state is adopting to encourage the joint provision of welfare.</li> <li>• Cohesion and strengthening starting with clear expression of and involvement in social causes, and a greater identification with problems of access to social rights.</li> <li>• Political standpoint and seeking a social base.</li> <li>• Careful review, as a means of self-evaluation, of how it is affected by commercialisation, patronage and bureaucracy.</li> <li>• Definition of a model for volunteer participation in accordance with the goals and social causes of the third sector of social action.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>With regard to image, a clearer definition of the motivation of the third sector of social action and the awareness of social responsibility.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality, transparency and ethical responsibility (codes of practice).</li> <li>• Improve the social image using a perspective which suits its causes ethically and socially.</li> <li>• Self-criticism of the use of mass-communication as a tool to achieve short-term financing benefit, and the pursuit of a communication policy intended to achieve:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o sensitivity to allow more efficient involvement in society, in accordance with the principles and social causes of the third sector of social action.</li> <li>o an increase in awareness of social responsibility as a matter valid in itself and not just as a means to an end.</li> <li>o the creation of awareness of the involvement of all society as a strategic objective of the sector, necessary to improve its social credibility.</li> <li>o an improvement in the level of representation at a public level before society and the authorities, to improve credibility and internal and external confidence concerning the nature of the sector's leadership.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>With regard to regulation, proposals for more effective collaboration and for self-regulation,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The search for formulas for establishing types of relationship with the authorities which are based on genuine collaboration.</li> <li>• Review of the way voluntary participation is instituted, when it involves groups and platforms collaborating in state-run activities which use public funds, and thereby suffer financial dependence.</li> <li>• Review of the way the legitimacy of social assistance policies for the least favoured groups is instituted and the forms of action currently</li> </ul>

in the interests of the independence of the third sector of social action	practised. • Establishment of a survey and efficient register of groups in the third sector, with clear criteria for membership.
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As a result of these challenges the following **objectives and courses of action** are proposed to achieve the strategic objective of strengthening the social construction of the third sector of social action.

**OBJECTIVE 1:** INCREASING THE SENSE OF BELONGING AMONG THE ORGANISATIONS, WHILE RESPECTING THE DIVERSITY OF THE SECTOR AND THE PRINCIPLES WHICH GIVE IT AN ADVANTAGE OVER OTHER SECTORS.

Courses of action:

1.1 Intrasectorial debate about:

- Current social rights and the role of organisations in the third sector of social action in protecting them.
- The shared provision of welfare and the role of organisations in the third sector of social action in providing services.
- The role of social participation in the strengthening of the third sector of social action and the models resulting from this (the voluntary sector in particular).

1.2 Institution and diffusion of good organisational practices, taking into account the range of legal formulas involved (individual groups, associations, foundations), and the range of areas of action, of values and of organisational cultures.

1.3. Co-ordination within the sector, based on an effective guarantee of the social rights of the population in an area: genuine and comprehensive inclusion, co-operation between associations of different sizes, working as a network, co-ordination of demands made to the authorities at different levels.

**OBJECTIVE 2:** CLARIFYING SOURCES OF FINANCE – ENSURING THAT THEY ARE COMPATIBLE WITH THE IDENTITY AND THE AIMS OF THE SECTOR WHETHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE.

Courses of action:

2.1 Intrasectorial debate about:

- Frameworks for self-regulation (codes of conduct, and terms for negotiation with the authorities) of the participation of the third sector of social action in the shared provision of welfare
- Frameworks for self-regulation (codes of conduct) of the relationship of the sector with private organisations based on the necessity for corporate social responsibility.

2.2 Establishment of good practices in financial collaboration with private organisations.

2.3 Search for formulas for financing of groups from the authorities which would make it easier for the third sector of social action to function.

2.4. Open and permanent provision of information on the mechanisms of financing and the publicity about organisations.

**OBJECTIVE 3: CONSOLIDATION OF THE PUBLIC IMAGE OF THE SECTOR AND INCREASING ITS CREDIBILITY, WHICH ALLOWS IT TO INCREASE ITS SOCIAL BASE**

Courses of action:

3.1 Intrasectorial debate about:

- Ethical codes for publicity in the third sector of social action

3.2 Working with the media, using information which emphasises the identity of the third sector of social action, making clear its role in society and its view of social participation.

3.3 Defining a strategy for publicity and information which includes an increase in awareness of social participation, as a means of improving public policies and generating social awareness.

3.4 Developing criteria for a clear, open, inclusive and regularly updated system for making a survey of the organisations in the third sector of social action, which will help the social construction of the sector.

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: TO PROVIDE THE THIRD SECTOR OF SOCIAL ACTION WITH A CLEAR FRAMEWORK FOR SELF-REGULATION OF ITS ACTIVITIES AS A SECTOR, AND IN PARTICULAR FOR THE PROVISION OF SERVICES BY ITS ORGANISATIONS**

In analysing the **activity of the organisations and of the sector**, it is seen that there are the following weaknesses which are especially relevant:

- There are different views of the role of the third sector of social action in the modern welfare state. There has not been enough debate within the sector on this topic
- There are different approaches when organisations in the third sector of social action provide services as a part of their activity (or as their sole activity)
- There is not a clear vision of what the relationship should be between the third sector of social action and the market.

The roots of these weaknesses lie in a national and international environment which is not favourable to a public debate on social rights and their protection, and the way the state has adopted a model of shared provision of welfare at a time when the demand for social services has risen and social organisations are short of resources.

All this contributes to an air of competitiveness in the provision of social services when social organisations have still not defined clearly whether they see themselves as secondary or complementary – which helps the authorities to make use of use the third sector of social action through their financing of its services.

The consequence of the lack of self-regulation of the activity of the third sector of social action and in particular of its provision of services, is clear from the competition which there is internally and in the realm of the market, and from the way there is confusion between the objectives of the different areas of the administration which ultimately finance the organisations, and those of the organisations themselves.

Competition and lack of self-regulation allows those outside the third sector of social action to give it definition: the market, which leaves the organisations to deal with marginal areas where there is no chance of benefits being seen, and the authorities, who determine the objectives and the means. In the medium term, organisations run the risk of losing their own values and objectives, and their perspective on new social problems, or in other words their function of innovating and of publicising new situations where there is a risk of exclusion or of the loss of social rights.

### CHALLENGES FACING ACTION

<p>Concerning the definition of social action, with reference to the third sector of social action:  <b>to locate the third sector of social action openly in the area of social activity</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The concept of citizenship and social well-being which is held by the sector is often ambiguous and contradictory. A debate intended to achieve a consensus on basic criteria would facilitate, amongst other things, an easier relationship with the state in the area of making demands, and a clear public position of the sector on the system of well-being which it encourages</li> <li>• The position of the sector on social rights should be more specific on individual rights, especially on third-generation rights. A debate about rights and social responsibility would give the sector the opportunity to demonstrate its range of postures very clearly.</li> <li>• It would be interesting if the sector as a whole made the effort to identify transversal themes concerning social well-being and social rights That would encourage joint action by the groups, the achievement of common objectives and a more coherent model of social well-being</li> <li>• The debate on the provision of services should include formulas for collaboration with profit-making organisations in social action and differentiation from them.</li> <li>• Action for inclusion: the third sector of social action demands a non-commercial role, and a role alongside the state to promote the guarantee of inclusion and other social rights within the model of shared provision of social well-being. Therefore we should insist on:</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Objectives for social action: a) to make exclusion obvious, b) to mobilise agencies, c) to play a part in the provision of necessities in support of and alongside the state, which should guarantee social rights.</li> <li>o Which rights are we talking about? What do we mean by well-being? The reply to these questions should come from the nature of the third sector of social action.</li> <li>o The participation which the third sector of social action should have in the development of social policies. This should be satisfactory in both quality and quantity.</li> <li>o</li> <li>• Non-profit-making organisations offer quality in their services not only because of competition but because of their identity, since they offer benefits which they wish to maintain and encourage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Proximity and flexibility</li> <li>o Local knowledge</li> <li>o Less bureaucracy (not being agencies).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Effort to confirm and improve the tendency to adopt commercial business methods in the pursuit of efficiency and quality, even in small organisations.</li> <li>• In the face of privatisation of social services and the resultant changes in social and political structure, there are several challenges: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o not abandoning non-profit-making status as many organisations become in effect businesses which provide services</li> <li>o debating and from the conclusions making a political and social contribution on the political model which is needed.</li> <li>o improving and defining better the understanding and the practice of social action as a provision of social services to prevent the exclusion of individuals, combining it with the exercise of demands by citizens for rights and guarantees.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The creation of enterprises to provide services (social or otherwise) by groups in the sector should be preceded by a moral debate and agreement on rules of conduct, where it also seems necessary to include a</li> </ul>
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	<p>distinction between social enterprises, ones with social goals (co-operatives, companies which take on marginalised employees, fair trade companies), and profit-making enterprises (e.g. a Plc)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to find a model agreed upon and compatible with the nature of the sector, between the liberal model of welfare provision and that of enterprises in the social economy (once a distinction between them and profit-making enterprises has been made)</li> </ul>
<p>Concerning relations with the private sector:  <b>the system of financing as key in defining, clarifying and strengthening the third sector of social action.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The challenge of independence and autonomy which are compatible with a complementary role. For this a model is needed for a system of financing social services compatible with the role of the third sector of social action as provider of those services, and maintaining its special nature.</li> </ul> <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Less financial dependence (state-financing)</li> <li>◦ Less ideological dependence</li> <li>◦ Less importance given to grants and general agreements than to state contracts for providing services</li> <li>◦ New forms of self-financing.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preservation of the mission and goals of the third sector of social action</li> <li>• Need for co-ordination despite decentralised organisation</li> <li>• Imposition of quality control</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Associations (as opposed to foundations) which have a greater dependency on grants should strengthen their ability to attract donations (from individuals or institutions) and to generate income through services carried out themselves with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Efficiency and a good reputation in society</li> <li>◦ Quality and openness</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Proposals concerning organisations in the sector:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The model of grants</b> which the third sector of social action should be</li> </ul>

	<p>turning to should be based on a thorough rethink of the current practice, which involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Analysis of the bureaucracy, in order to remove it.</li> <li>o Sufficient human resources</li> <li>o Review of the terms and requirements involved in making a request, its presentation and explanation, compatible with the circumstances of the request.</li> <li>o Offers from the authorities should be properly aware of the variety of characteristics of organisations (the extent of flexibility in criteria).</li> <li>o Following closely the progress of projects as a basic constituent of any evaluation</li> <li>o Budgets granted should be transparent, long-term and sustainable, not subject to political changes, and not dependent on fund-raising from the public.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An effort is needed to improve the mechanisms for approving grants, contracts and agreements, and other formulas with reference to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o their lasting for several years.</li> <li>o the criteria for acceptance or rejection</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage a positive approach to giving contracts (agreements, contracts etc.), in any area or at any level of the state, to organisations involved in social action (for example businesses which employ the marginalised).</li> <li>• It would be interesting to explore new formulas for partnership with the authorities</li> <li>• Review, improve, change, and develop appropriate legislation concerning the fiscal treatment of the third sector of social action, particularly in respect of general taxation, expenses and investments, maintenance of the structure and the workforce in the organisations, donations (greater tax incentives for donations), investment/access to products of the ethical banking sector.</li> <li>• Encouragement of a new organisational culture in the sector to</li> </ul>
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	<p>generate its <b>own income</b>: fund-raising, transparency, innovation, sensitivity and good communication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Seek other forms of financing</b>: work with businesses, encourage corporate social responsibility.</li> </ul>
<p>With regard to relations with the private sector and the provision of services:  <b>overcoming the idea of corporate social responsibility as a donation from a business to the sector, and going beyond the tensions of demand generated by the profit-making sector and by the non-profit-making sector</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The sector should promote explanation, knowledge and debate concerning corporate social responsibility among the organisations in order to overcome the view that corporate social responsibility is simply a donation to the sector by a business. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Fully inform both the organisations and businesses about the concept of corporate social responsibility, and explain it.</li> <li>◦ Make both sides realise the advantages of being “strategic partners” in the improvement of the social cause.</li> <li>◦ Identify and evaluate the different forms of collaboration and the implications which they have, particularly for the organisations in terms of planning, resources, management of donations, irrespective of their form: voluntary work (human resources) donation of unwanted products or used assets (e.g. supplies) etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Make businesses aware of the social role of the third sector of social action in order to prevent the search for collaboration becoming a search for a brand or an image. Encourage them to know us openly.</li> <li>• Explain the destination of the funds particularly with regard to the financing of structures (to businesses, profit-making sector, and to the authorities). Include clearly the structures of organisations as requiring finance.</li> <li>• Overcome ignorance and mistrust of the third sector of social action among businesses. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ We should make sure that in the sector and its organisations those people who are responsible for developing collaboration with businesses are trained</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>and have professional skills. To assist this the sector needs previously to define its position on the type of legal framework which will encourage a socially-aware attitude in businesses and will regulate corporate social responsibility (in accordance with current international legislation)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Examples of successful collaboration (real cases involving good practices) should be made known publicly.</li> <li>o Also examples of initiatives (whether involving institutions or private) to encourage corporate social responsibility, in institutions or privately</li> <li>o It is necessary to encourage places – virtual or real – for possible parties to meet, at local, or regional level.</li> <li>o Openness among organisations towards businesses must be encouraged.</li> <li>o The customer-supplier relationship needs strengthening.</li> <li>o Control-mechanisms for donations must be developed by the donors.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create the third sector of social action's own mechanisms for encouraging transparency as a basic element of the organisational culture, using for example courses of action which imply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Going beyond financing in relations with the other sectors. Establish internal procedures or protocols which fix the criteria for collaboration between the organisations and businesses.</li> <li>o Encouraging internal openness with regard to organisation, activities and finances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o The simultaneous use of two criteria a) where do the money and the other resources come from (sources) and b) what use is made of communications, images, accurate messages.</li> <li>o The financial authorities could encourage workshops, mechanisms, manuals, indicators etc to encourage openness.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Persuade the authorities to provide funding for audits and evaluations of organisations in order to strengthen this aspect of the organisations</li> <li>• Establish ways of working to</li> </ul>
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	<p>encourage learning within the sector, so that each organisation has mechanisms for self-diagnosis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen to ideas from the market, if only to start a dialogue which increases knowledge of business initiatives.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Involvement of the business world</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a commitment in businesses to work on social action alongside the third sector of social action.</li> <li>• Establish dialogues for the sector with unions and business, first to encourage a better mutual knowledge, and then to develop formulas for collaboration, while avoiding the formation of new structures within the third sector of social action and making use (more energetically) of those which already exist.</li> <li>• Study in depth the effect of these inter-sector relations and those concerning particular projects.</li> <li>• Explore new roles for the business sector with regard to the third sector of social action, for example the financing of part of the Strategic Plan or of some the development of second-level structures.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Establish appropriate training about corporate social responsibility with the sector of social action</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management of collaborative action</li> <li>• Logistics and planning.</li> <li>• Increasing awareness and observation of, and respect for the differences of organisation and of rhythm in the work of social action organisations compared with a business.</li> <li>• Assessment of the economic costs of collaboration.</li> </ul>

The problems and strengths identified in the analysis – and one has to stress principally those which refer to the sector’s ability to offer benefits in any activity – lead to the following **proposal for objectives and courses of action**, which have the aim of creating a clear framework for self-regulation of the sector’s activity in general and of the provision of services by individual organisations in particular.

**OBJECTIVE 4:** THE SECTOR EXISTS IN THE AREA OF SOCIAL ACTIVITY, DEFENDING RIGHTS AND PROVIDING SERVICES WITHOUT ABANDONING ITS NON-PROFIT-MAKING STATUS

Courses of action

4.1 An inter-sector debate on:

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- The concepts of citizenship, social well-being and social rights, identifying transversal aspects to encourage joint action (for example including in any analysis gender as a variable affecting the structure of society and situations of exclusion).

4.2 Recovery and organised institution of good practices in the provision of services by organisations, which give evidence of the benefits brought by the sector and which are not provided in competition with business initiative or work by the authorities.

4.3 Approval of a Plan for Development of Quality for the Third Sector of Social Action, with the aim of favouring good management. It would include criteria of compatibility with the principles, values and objectives of the NGOs.

4.4 An inter-sector debate on:

- Formulas for collaboration with and/or differentiation from businesses in the social economy which provide services similar to those of the NGOs, so that the NGOs can assert their position in a non-commercial area.

**OBJECTIVE 5:** THE SECTOR SHOULD ENSURE THAT ITS ACTIVITIES RECEIVE FINANCING, WHILE ACHIEVING INDEPENDENCE AND AUTONOMY IN ITS OBJECTIVES AND WORK MODELS

Courses of action:

5.1 Reach agreement on models for public financing in order to offer greater rationalisation and flexibility by means of deals which are transparent and reliable and recommending systems for the follow-up of projects.

5.2 With regard to the provision of services, public financing should be subject to objective criteria which guarantee its maintenance.

5.3 Define new models of partnership with the authorities at its different levels: local, province, region, state.

5.4 Review and make proposals concerning the legislation on fiscal treatment as it especially affects the sector: general taxation treatment, costs and investments, maintenance of the structure and workforce of organisations, tax incentives for donations, investment and access to products of the ethical banking sector.

5.5 Guarantee through systems of quality, put in place by the NGOs, observation and control of activities.

**OBJECTIVE 6.** BASED ON PARTICIPATION FROM THE THREE SECTORS, A MODEL OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IS DEVELOPED.

Courses of action:

6.1 Support opportunities for meetings between businesses and the third sector of social action when they are geographically close, to improve mutual knowledge and confidence.

6.2 Share experiences of the encouragement of social action, good practices and actual examples of collaboration between businesses and the third sector of social action.

6.3 Increase openness in relations between the third sector of social action and businesses, developing mechanisms for transparency and control.

6.4 Achieve new forms of collaboration between the third sector of social action and businesses, using a concept of corporate social responsibility based on the "strategic alliance".

- Initiate action with the banking sector and the savings banks with the purpose of developing a Financing Network for the Third Sector of Social Action.

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: TO IMPROVE AGREEMENT ON THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE OF THE THIRD SECTOR OF SOCIAL ACTION.**

- The weaknesses which stand out when the management, the organisational culture and level of participation within the third sector of social action are analysed, are the following:
- Little cohesion in (or adhesion to) the organisational culture of the groups in the sector, and other organisational weaknesses.
- A lack of strategic and practical cohesion.
- The visible aspects (whether things laid down by rules or parts of procedures) are often not transparent enough or are inadequate in terms of the quality, the effectiveness and the coherence of the activity.

The weaknesses mentioned are part of the diversity and complexity of the organisational culture of a sector in which there are, side by side, structures of what are almost business organisations, and voluntary organisations, and participatory practices in decision-making where no agreement has been made on the criteria for managing human resources which are varied and have many different functions.

This complexity is also linked to the need for the sector to meet a growing demand, both from society and from the authorities, for a provision of services for which its organisational models are not prepared.

In this way the invisible aspects of the organisational culture of the sector are not yet established and settled (the gender perspective, for example) and the visible aspects are still insufficiently consolidated (the culture of quality, for example) because the necessary criteria and basic principles are not transparent.

These reasons lead us to identify as a problem the **insufficient consensus on what are the identifying features of the organisational culture of the sector.**

As a result of this, some organisations are tending towards business-style cultures as they seek efficiency to meet the demand, but at times they adopt organisational cultures which are not compatible with the objectives and principles expected of non-profit-making organisations.

Aspects such as quality are influenced, inasmuch as they do not have the sector's own criteria for evaluating actions and they place an emphasis almost exclusively on business-style evaluation.

This situation involves risks such as projecting a distorted view of the goals of organisations where the benefits are invisible and of the social effectiveness of the sector, the loss of the principles and values which created the social organisations, the worsening, as a result, of social participation, and the loss of accumulated social capital.

## CHALLENGES FOR THE THIRD SECTOR OF SOCIAL ACTION IN ORDER TO CLARIFY ITS ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

<p style="text-align: center;">With regard to strengthening structures and organisational cultures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater integration of planning systems, and of economic and financial management</li> <li>• Identification, interiorisation and exteriorisation of criteria and values shared by the organisations of the third sector of social action with regard to organisational principles. Diffusion of these values and of the identity of the sector in order to strengthen the social fabric.</li> <li>• Incorporation of the gender perspective in the activity and the organisational cultures of the third sector of social action</li> <li>• Systematisation of organisational experience as starting-point and learning tool for the sector: making possible movement of information, a store of methods, increased awareness and encouragement of reflection.</li> <li>• Changes in the internal management of organisations to promote greater participation in decision-making.</li> <li>• Modernisation of the management of organisations without loss of strategic direction, with more evaluations and audits.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;">With regard to planning for inclusion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategies for social inclusion:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic planning of solutions to problems, since inclusion is influenced by structural causes, which need to be recognised previously.</li> <li>- Strategies for prevention and for insertion, to strengthen and re-establish links and networks in the workplace, in society, and within communities and families.</li> <li>- Practices within networks (integrated, transversal and personal), participatory (construction and regeneration of citizenship) and innovative (response to social dynamism)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;">With regard to the management of human resources and decision-making</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the basic criteria for personnel management in the third sector of social action</li> <li>• Aim for an integrated policy of human resources in the sector: selection and contracting; training, career-planning, continuous evaluation and renewal.</li> <li>• Criteria for contracting staff. Minimum conditions in labour contracts. In this area, examine the salary and professional structures in order to improve them.</li> <li>• Reconcile commitment with proper systems of reward, which are properly managed, personal qualities with skills, and enthusiasm with responsibility.</li> <li>• What is needed? More staff? More volunteers? More hours of voluntary work from members or from collaborators? To reply to these questions is the challenge.</li> <li>• Reduce unnecessary bureaucracy to avoid rigid structures and unfriendly treatment, both in formal structures (staff) and in the informal area of volunteers.</li> <li>• Strengthen internal democracy in any participation in planning, in management and control of social organisations as a benefit of the third sector of social action or of the social organisations.</li> <li>• Renew the rules and working methods of participation-, decision- and representation-structures (for example the State Council of Social Action NGOs)</li> </ul>

<p>Concerning professionalisation and systems of quality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professionalisation of organisations: why is it necessary? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Problems of quality or quantify or both? Better training for the employees? More recruitment of professionals?</li> <li>- Training of the volunteers: why is it necessary? What criteria can prevent an unequal competition between professionals and, basically, unemployed individuals who are unsuccessfully trying to sell their labour in the market.</li> <li>- Should those who run the organisations be professionalised? In many cases it is individuals who are members and volunteers that run the organisation. According to some writers, it is essential to evaluate the actions of management by checks on the institutions, the professionals and the services.</li> <li>- Members of government bodies should also improve their level of training in order to face changing situations and adapt.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Long-term and critical review of the sector's own quality controls to introduce clear commitments on transparency and social responsibility.</li> <li>• Reduce interference from external agencies such as the authorities and the market where they might alter the criteria, and reinforce internal processes of checking quality. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek viable solutions for financing the quality system</li> <li>• Avoid distorting effects of an excessive proliferation of social stamps of approval of this kind.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>With regard to inter-sector communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is proposed to carry out and/or to deepen studies of the quantity and quality of the composition of human resources in the sector in order to provide an up-to-date picture and allow the development of methodological and strategic proposals for the future. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To attempt to alter the level of public knowledge of the sector, through a careful design and development of communication strategies and policies which pays regard to all the entities involved – from groups in society to organisations in the sector, and including volunteers and employees.</li> <li>• To seek self-identification through codes of conduct in messages and images which could help clarify social problems and their causes and create ethical and responsible courses of action. Codes of conduct also to strengthen the image and identity of the third sector of social action starting with a binding recommendation on the principles of openness, responsibility, independence, internal democracy, honesty, efficiency and quality.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>On the encouragement of networks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After a debate within the sector, work to bring about networks which can reflect the diversity and spread the identity (aims, mission) of the sector and can be an arena for ALL groups in the sector to meet, not just in the area of work and the geographical area where each finds itself.</li> <li>• Strengthen networks with sensible use of new information and communication technology, appropriate for each situation, and increase awareness of the value and utility of networks by reference to successful experiences, in order to achieve the creation of new areas of collaboration within the sector.</li> <li>• Increase awareness of the value or utility of networks, while avoiding superstructures which make them more generally</li> </ul>

	<p>attractive but reduce the desire to take part in them, and making a continuous effort to change responsibilities and procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase awareness of the value or utility of networks in discussions not only with the organisations in the sector itself, but also with the private sector, the authorities, and the citizen body, explaining their significance and motivation, and protecting their image.</li> <li>• Evaluate and organise the work of the network as a way of sharing values, work methods and services, based on formulas of for management which is open and subject to internal self-evaluation and external auditing.</li> <li>• Extend the forms of voluntary collaboration by means of the networks which give the members of the sector in area the opportunity to cooperate (e.g. in the Autonomous Regions)</li> <li>• Establish a framework for democratic regulation of relations between the organisations making up a network.</li> </ul>
<p>On the workings of the State Council of Social Action NGOs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop, with democratic rules for the internal management, the objective of improving the structure of the third sector of social action, based on the Royal Decree of March 2005 which modifies and brings up to date the regulations governing the State Council of Social Action NGOs, in order to encourage a greater participation from the sector and efficiency in its organs.</li> <li>• To renew constantly the arenas in the organisations and groups for decision-making, to avoid ideas becoming stale, power struggles, worsening participation and loss of social capital.</li> <li>• To seek better methods for co-ordination of the working groups of the State Council.</li> </ul>

These challenges combined with strengths, such as the accumulated experience of the sector which can be instructive, the existence, ever stronger, of a culture of quality and constant evaluation, the growth in the skills and the professionalism of the individuals working in the sector, the self-belief of the sector as an innovating force in the fight for social inclusion, and the increasing interest generated by new experiments in collaboration between sectors, lead to the following proposals for objectives and courses of action which aim to generate a consensus on the principles and values of the organisational culture of the third sector of social action.

**OBJECTIVE 7:** THE SECTOR HAS ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES WHICH ARE COMPATIBLE WITH THE MANAGEMENT OF ITS ACTIVITIES, WITH A COMMON CULTURE IN WHICH THE PRINCIPLES OF QUALITY, SOCIAL JUSTICE, SOLIDARITY, RESPONSIBILITY AND INDEPENDENCE ARE OF GREATEST IMPORTANCE.

Courses of action:

7.1 Systematisation and diffusion of good organisational practices, taking into account the diversity of legal status (individual groups, associations, foundations), of areas of activity and of organisational cultures.

7.2 Elaboration of internal codes of conduct with which the organisations can identify and which are based on the fundamental principles of the sector.

7.3 Encouraging the incorporation of systems of quality in organisations particularly if small.

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7.4 Organise the institution of systems of quality on the basis of the principles of transparency and social responsibility.

7.5 Incorporation of strategies for internal communication to facilitate the spread of information and the consolidation of the particular organisational culture.

**OBJECTIVE 8:** THE SECTOR IS EQUIPPED WITH THE METHODOLOGICAL TOOLS FOR THE STRATEGIC ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION, PLANNING, FOLLOW-UP, AND EVALUATION OF ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE INCLUSION AND THE PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Courses of action:

8.1 The NGOs develop their own strategic plans for areas of intervention.

8.2 Analyse the strategies of prevention and insertion to assist inclusion, equipped with guidelines on good practices.

8.3 Include the gender perspective in the organisational culture and in action.

8.4 Include the culture of follow-up and continuous evaluation in the actions of organisations.

8.5 Train the personnel in organisations in the use of methodological tools for the analysis of the current situation, planning, follow-up, and evaluation of their actions.

**OBJECTIVE 9:** THE SECTOR HAS A POLICY OF HUMAN RESOURCES FOR THE PURPOSES OF SELECTION AND CONTRACTING, TRAINING, CAREER DEVELOPMENT, CONSTANT EVALUATION AND RENEWAL, AND IT HAS A VOLUNTARY SECTOR COMPATIBLE WITH ITS PRINCIPLES

Courses of action:

9.1 Intrasectorial debate on:

- The objectives of professionalisation, working conditions (job-security, fair pay, balance between family life and work etc.), the objectives and the consequences for the different groups working in the sector: volunteers, members, employees, management etc.
- The objectives and principles for the management of the volunteers: the voluntary contribution sought by the sector.

9.2 Proposals for agreements on how to reconcile proper levels of pay with careful management, personal qualities with skills, and enthusiasm with responsibility.

**OBJECTIVE 10:** ORGANISATIONS IN THE SECTOR ARE EFFECTIVELY ORGANISED INTO DEMOCRATIC NETWORKS WITHIN THE SECTOR ON A GEOGRAPHICAL BASIS, FOR PURPOSES OF CONSULTATION, LEARNING, CO-ORDINATION OF ACTION, AND REPRESENTATION BEFORE THE AUTHORITIES AND PRIVATE COMPANIES.

Courses of action:

10.1 Strengthen networks among the organisations, for them to participate, with a democratic management and innovative responses.

10.2 Develop these networks in co-operation with the other sectors and make possible networking either by geographical area or by zone of activity.

10.3 Make good use of new information and communication technology for learning and information exchange within the sector.

**OBJECTIVE 11:** THERE IS RENEWAL OF THE RULES FOR THE STRUCTURES OF PARTICIPATION IN THE SECTOR AND THEIR WAYS OF FUNCTIONING AND THE WORKING METHODS OF THE SECTOR COUNCILS, THE NATIONAL COUNCILS AND THE STATE COUNCIL OF SOCIAL ACTION NGOs.

Courses of action:

11.1 The State Council of Social Action NGOs is recognised as the area for NGOs to participate, follow their interests and make their demands in the development of public policy.

11.2 Increase the capacity of the Sector and National Councils to consult and make decisions in the area of social policy.