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## **An approach to codevelopment**

**The transnational migrating community:  
protagonist of codevelopment**

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## Contents

1. Abstract .....	3
2. Key words .....	3
3. Objects and Methodology .....	4
3.1 Objects.....	4
3.2 Methodology .....	4
4. The concept of codevelopment .....	5
4.1 Previous considerations.....	5
4.2 Current vision.....	8
5. Actors of codevelopment .....	10
5.1 The transnational migrating community: protagonist of codevelopment .....	10
5.2 Other actors of codevelopment .....	11
6. Conclusions .....	15
6.1 Value and distinction of codevelopment .....	15
6.2 Main challenges of codevelopment.....	17
7. References .....	21

## 1. Abstract

The term codevelopment refers to the connection between immigration and development. Since several years this term becomes more and more important. In fact, the increase of intercontinental immigration in the past years is the main reason for the current presence of themes about immigration and related to this, for the improvement of codevelopment.

When we talk about codevelopment today it could mean the following: to control and manage the flow of immigration, integration and formation of the immigrants, projects focussed on their return, to favour well-regulated migration, a mutual profit between the countries involved, to look for the rational use of consignment, development in the country of origin, interculturalism, acknowledgment, collective work between similar parts... all this, various actions with different aims that are covered by codevelopment.

But the particularity from codevelopment, different from the classical view of international aid and immigration, is the involvement of the immigrated people as protagonists who contribute to the development of their country of origin based on their transnational experience of two realities: the one from their origin and the one from their destination.

With the inclusion of codevelopment in policies of international aid and of immigration, civil services, NGOs, universities and others non-profit organizations started to meet interlocutors in the organizations of the immigrated people. Together with these entities, the most frequent form of organisation of the immigrated community, they contribute actively to the development of their regions of origin and at the same time work for their integration and for living together in the societies of reception.

## 2. Key words

- Codevelopment
- Immigration
- Development
- Transnational migrating community
- Mutual enrichment

## 3. Objects and Methodology

### 3.1 Objects

The analysis of the situation of codevelopment allows visualizing that development is very much connected to the consolidation of the organizations of immigrated people. Therefore it is important to consider right from the beginning how they understand the codevelopment in order to define and finally realize the needs and actions more properly.

The people attending the congress provide a space for reflection and debates about the reality of codevelopment and are also able to contribute their point of view from the perspective of their country of origin. This space offers the possibility to deal with a theme which is very present in many countries in these days.

### 3.2 Methodology

#### **Phase I:** Bibliographical review

Collection of the existent information about codevelopment taken out of web sites, magazines, articles, literature and from non-profit organizations which work in this field.

#### **Phase II:** Workshops about codevelopment

Work hand in hand with organizations of immigrated people through the development of 21 workshops (unit I and unit II) which were realized between the years 2006 and 2008. These spaces count with the participation of more than 200 entities of immigrated people.

#### **Phase III:** Publication about codevelopment

This is the generated result based on the bibliographical review and the knowledge derived from the direct contact with the organizations of the immigrated people in the formative workshops.

The publication is the product of a very participative process and grants a big importance to the entities of the immigrated people.

## 4. The concept of codevelopment

### 4.1 Previous considerations

The move of the population is one of the key factors that determined changes and the development of history. The migration throughout the century is described as a flow of population of all kinds which influenced the events and development of history.

Before one first talked about codevelopment it already existed a previous concept for a great amount of time which, without being named with a specific term, connected development and immigration. This concept was based on solidarity and commitments and linked the network of immigrated people with their communities of origin. But with regard to codevelopment it includes the existence of a common work that is of advantage to the country of origin as well as of reception of immigration. And exactly this is one of the principal elements that incorporate in the concept of this term.

One of the first countries where they talked in terms of codevelopment is France. The need to link policies for development cooperation with policies of immigration appears to be one of the priorities of the French government since the first interpretation of codevelopment was proposed by Sami Nair (1997). He defined codevelopment as *"a proposal to integrate immigration and development in a way that both the country of origin and of reception benefit from the flow of immigration. That means to create a relationship by consensus between the two countries in which the contribution of immigrated people in the country of reception doesn't mean a loss for the country of origin."* In fact the genesis of the current concept is from a request of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs made by Sami Nair (1997) who got a consulting position by the French government for questions of integration and development. The document had the title *Balance and orientation about policies of development linked to the flow of immigration*. His intention was to set a theoretic frame, some specific objects and a methodology of action concerning the administration of the flow of immigration for codevelopment.

This concept is based on the conviction that immigration is a real enrichment and that is why the policy of immigration should recognize the stability of the settled immigrants, social integration, the control of admission to the country and the respect of the rules of the stay. They

talked about a "*real development of conscience*" that wished the legitimate integration of the legal settled immigrants and help for the development of the countries of origin.

On the European level, after France, Spain turned to be the most active country and the one that shows the biggest concern to incorporate the term codevelopment in the plan of the migratory politics and in the ranges of the international aid, especially the decentralized cooperation. This concern emerges for a great part from the need to accept the challenges that arouse because of the recent increase of the migratory flow in the last years and also because of the growth of the entities that gather immigrated people.

Carlos Giménez (2002) proposed one of the first references in terms of codevelopment in his essay *Migraciones y Desarrollo. Estudio de dos casos particulares: Ecuador y Marruecos*" (Migration and Development. Study about two particular cases: Ecuador and Morocco). There he defines the term codevelopment as the following: "*the initiatives of codevelopment are those promoted and developed for mutual benefit and with mutual support, by two or more organizations placed in two or more countries linked by the flow of migration. Those organizations carry out actions together both in the country of reception and of origin. The main actor is a group of immigrants in the country of reception*".

In this proposal Giménez emphasizes three necessary aspects for the consideration of actuations of codevelopment: the existence of a mutual benefit, the migratory community as protagonist and the desire to act in both communities. With regard to the main interest which is not the regulation of the migratory flow, they do not talk about quotas, return or about the control of immigration. This vision is centered in the benefit aspects which result from codevelopment for the parts involved.

Another action which marked the progress of codevelopment in Spain was the first convocation of subventions for projects of codevelopment which was realized by the city council of Madrid in 2004. Since this funding codevelopment is defined as a "*collection of bounded actions to strengthen the connection of the communities of the immigrants through a social and economical development of their countries of origin and to favour new relations with them and with the country of reception through the active participation of the immigrants.*"

The civil council of Madrid promoted this support, which was different from the general subventions of cooperation, in order to consider the distinctive aspects which entail the projects of codevelopment in view of objects, protagonists, participators, location of activities and the justification for costs. Since then the countries and geographical areas agree with the priorities of political cooperation and exterior actions by government although they prefer the regions of origin of the majority of immigrated people in Madrid.

In 2005 the *Documento de Consenso sobre el Codesarrollo* (Document of Acceptance about Codevelopment) was created by the Council of Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation together with trade unions and second level organizations of development, Secretary of State for Immigration and Migration and the Spanish Confederation of Companies of Social Economy, amongst others. The document expresses that the object of codevelopment strengthens the human development and the integration in a context of well-being.

In 2005 was also published the *Plan Director de la Cooperación Española 2005-2008* (Director's Plan of Spanish Cooperation, 2005 – 2008) by the Spanish Agency of International Cooperation. In this document appears a chapter exclusively dedicated to codevelopment which showed the direct relation between policies of immigration and those of cooperation for the first time.

This plan establishes lines of action which help to focus the actions of codevelopment. One of these are the following: prioritization of areas and countries and establishment of strategies of codevelopment with regard to the flow of migration, promotion of integration of the immigrated people in Spain through the improve of participation in associations, agents of cooperation and strategies of codevelopment, involvement of the migrated people as agents of the social, economical and cultural development of their countries of origin, rational use of consignments, encouraging the initiatives of information and advice in this field for the immigrated people.

In 2006 the book *El codesarrollo en España. Protagonistas, discursos y experiencias* (*The co-development in Spain. Protagonists, speeches and experiences*) was published by the University Network of Investigation about Cooperation for Development in collaboration with the Council of

Madrid. This publication was created by various university experts: Carlos Giménez, Julio L. Martínez, Almudena Cortés y Mercedes Fernández who developed a reflection about the connection between migration and development in order to establish a general idea about the situation in Spain.

Based on a theoretic frame they analyze the speeches and reports of the different public administrations, the canalizations of remittances, the actions of formation or programs for returning and actions of different organizations involved in projects and in the principal fields of activity. It is for the purpose of demonstrating a first multi disciplinary approach about the concept of codevelopment and its situation in Spain. The received result is important not only due to the new focus but also because of the affirmation for the necessity to continue developing a theoretic debate. This debate confines and supports the concept as well as prefers the coordination of the actors as a basic focus for the development of the projects.

#### **4.2 Current vision**

A present definition of codevelopment that implies elements of the definitions that were explained along the publication can be like the following: *“a concept that involves the connection of activities, policies and approaches between immigration and development in a dimension in which immigration acts like the source of economical, cultural and social development. The transnational migrants are active protagonists in their community of origin as well as in the one of reception since they form the bridge between the societies involving two or more agents for the mutual enrichment of the community of origin and the one of reception.”*(Observatorio del Tercer Sector, 2008)

The current idea about codevelopment is concentrated on the contribution of the transnational community of migrants which are recognized as the bridge between the societies. This bi-directional involvement is the base since understanding the essence and uniqueness of codevelopment.

Due to the agreement of the migratory community and the realities in which they interact it does not only exist a monetary flow in the codevelopment but also an exchange of experience and knowledge that converts into an essential part of the process. The actions that were created since the common work orientate towards the mutual enrichment that usually include the economical aspect, but is not limited to it.

The intuitive and appealing link between immigration and development is the starting point of codevelopment which allows understanding the efficiency of the concept. However while the migratory phenomenon works in the short term, the processes of development work in the long run. This difference of time may stand for a greater complexity with regard to the implementation of the projects.

Resuming the previous idea of connection between the communities, codevelopment appears as a decentralized reality which moves into a local field (district, community and municipality).

## 5. Actors of codevelopment

### 5.1 The transnational migrating community: protagonist of codevelopment

During the last years the profile of the immigrants has changed. The advanced technology and the improvement of the accessibility of transport allow this group to keep a direct and fluid contact with their community. Therefore it combines the increasing number of immigrants and also the consolidation and integration of the collective who arrived in the first migratory wave. The conjunction of these factors caused the emergence of the transnational migrating community who lives halfway between “here and there”, who collaborate and get involved in the development of their community of origin and of residence.

The transnational migratory community is an important social actor in the state policies as well as in the third sector with regard to the transnational links and social networks that were generated with the rest of the organizations involved. This is acknowledged by the word “transnationalism” since due to this connection there are benefits for all the actors and communities involved. These benefits are based on the flows that move bidirectional and that include economical, familiar, ideological and political transfers. The dominant aspect of codevelopment is the mutual benefit which is recognized “as a whole we need ourselves for developing” (quoting Carlos Gómez Gil, Encuentro sobre Codesarrollo, Madrid, April 2007).

The importance that the topic of immigration is gaining day by day in an international prospect causes that it is impossible to continue considering the immense movement of people as an isolated fact since migration changes societies in a global way.

The term of codevelopment offers the migrants the opportunity of being recognized and to act as the main social actor. The revaluation of the immigrated people and their contribution to the economical and social development of the societies of reception together with the consolidation of the migratory communities, favoured the increase of associations of immigrants. Although this collective is able to exercise this role in informal groups and organizations of cooperation, the associations of immigrants are the common spaces for the emergence of practice of codevelopment.

The interest of the migrated people in their communities of origin continued with regard to the collaboration en ONL of cooperation or of social aid to the collective. Nevertheless it is due to the associations of immigrants that a great part of initiatives of codevelopment did emerge. This importance of codevelopment in practice proves the need of deepen the knowledge and analysis of this entities. For that reason in 2006 the Observatorio del Tercer Sector (Observatory of the Third Sector) realized a diagnosis about the situation of the association of immigrated people in Spain.

## **5.2 Other actors of codevelopment**

### **-NGOs of Development**

The NGOs turned into a relevant actor concerning the reflection of the role and the sense of codevelopment in the international aid. They recognize codevelopment as a positive strategy but the majority still doesn't work on projects that specifically deal with it.

Their motivation is to complete the cooperation with a greater involvement of the migrating community in order to generate contribution in both countries. In this way, they want to round off the classic view of cooperation which is more orientated towards the development of the countries of origin with migratory flow. It's a manner of working that aims at the improvement of efficiency, participation and the shared responsibility of actions which are key concepts for all agents connected to cooperation and immigration.

This role of collaboration between different types of organizations is another significant contribution of the NGOs for codevelopment. These organizations have a greater capacity of administration of projects and a structure which is used to their own tools of cooperation. Consequently the collaboration between organizations with different degrees of history and formation is not always easy with regard to the role of the transnational migrating community as a protagonist.

### **-Social organizations of immigration**

In the past years some of the social organizations that worked on immigration and exclusively offer social and legal services to the immigrated population reconsidered their role in the sector of immigration and started to be active in the field of codevelopment. These activities were realized by groups of immigrated people to whom they already proposed services and thus are aware of their needs and motivations. The actions provide for these social organizations a way to be involved in international projects which is a new activity in many occasions.

One of the priorities that these organizations usually have is the transnational support to improve the integration of the migrated population and the formation of the agents of development. Consequently the personal capacities and the efficiency of the projects increase.

### **-Social organizations in the countries of origin**

The social organizations of the community of origin contribute a direct knowledge which is present to the local reality and therefore important to ensure the involvement and influence of their environment. In that way the general interest of the projects of codevelopment in their own community is guaranteed.

The participation of the social organizations of the communities of origin serves to settle and strengthen the link of the migrating community with their own community and also expands and improves new contacts and possibilities. On this note it is necessary to integrate these organizations in the projects of codevelopment since the values of participation and collaboration are a basic part of them.

The distance and the direct perception of the everyday experience make this participation difficult but also enrich the content and at the same time strengthen the connection between the transnational migrants and their original background. The measurement in which these links are stable, wide and numerous mark a great part of the continuity of the projects of codevelopment as well as the international value of each network of codevelopment.

### **-Public agents**

The public agents turned into one of the main actors that admitted the emergence of codevelopment with a great enthusiasm and activated the growth and the presence in the collective agenda. The connection of the concepts of immigration and international aid resulted to be attractive for a number of agents as an original and positive way to deal with the subject of immigration.

The lack of a clear and unified concept that gets settled step by step together with different political priorities and focuses of the numerous administrations caused a spreading of focuses. This spreading did not have a positive impact on codevelopment because it contributed to the increase of confusion about the concept. Between those different focuses were found some that emphasize the migratory aspects and some that hardly showed any variation with regard to projects of international aid.

But as the case may be it needs to be recognized that the thrust of the different public agents got a key role for the impulse and the strengthening of this new concept. In fact the nature of codevelopment of actively linking communities is a very suitable instrument for the Spanish decentralized Administration that already proved their activeness in themes of international aid.

### **-Sponsors**

Other relevant actors that have the possibilities to support codevelopment are the sponsors. At the beginning it might seem that their role is limited to the financing of the projects but there is an additional role that is related to the emergent element of consignments.

In these days, referring to the increase of migration, the growth of resources and the emergence of services of transfer of funds caused that the amount of the remittances that they send to the countries of origin rose essentially. They represent an important prospective to generate development and activate the growth of the economies of the countries of origin as well as of reception.

The administration of the remittances offers the sponsors an innovative space for participation and social responsibility. In this way, the interest

and the commitments of these actors in order to support the integration of the migrants include actions like improving and reducing paperwork of the consignments and helping those who want to use it in common initiatives.

### **-Universities and research centres**

The universities and research centres also play an important role with regard to the definition and the concept of codevelopment. They reflect together with the rest of the actors involved and contribute to the strictness and methods of the study. Their work includes theoretical studies, publications and above all participation or realization of workshops, debates and assemblies which form the basis for generating the present way to understand codevelopment.

The universities and research centres that work on codevelopment function as a meeting place between cooperation and immigration. This allowed an enrichment and addition of contribution and reflections.

As well as the tasks which are strictly connected to the concept, the universities and the research centres also support the other actors in relation to codevelopment. They act like evaluators in the different conventions or help organizations with regard to the formulation and the follow-up examination of the projects.

## 6. Conclusions

### 6.1 Value and distinction of codevelopment

- Migrating community plays the main role both in their country of origin and reception.
- Time stability and continuity of the initiatives of codevelopment between the communities linked.
- Additional economic resources (besides traditional international aid resources).
- Facilitates transfer of knowledge between communities and provides an inclusive and integrating vision.
- The actions of the different transnational migrating communities (usually gathered in associations of migrants) increase their self-esteem, social links and recognition.

*By: Observatorio del Tercer Sector, 2007*

#### - Contribution of the transnational migrating community

The contribution of the migrating community in the society of reception as well as in the country of origin is one of the main values of codevelopment. This community is directly involved in both environments, situated beyond the monetary focus and includes exchanges, cultural inversions and formatives, etc.

Regarding the connection between the communities the projects of codevelopment intensified and strengthened these relations that grant the will of continuity. This is beyond other considerations: be a priority country for cooperation or generate an important migration flow for a certain amount of time. The connection of the transnational migrating community is enduring in both environments.

The migrating community established in associations of immigrated people or not, purchases a role as protagonist that increases their recognition and self-esteem. A positive recognition gets transmitted to their communities of origin and of reception and therefore grants the continuity, strengthens the existing links and extends the possibilities of new ideas.

Codevelopment is able to create an integrated vision that arouse of the narrow relation between both communities based on the group of migrants that generate a new knowledge between two realities.

### **- Cooperation and codevelopment**

The lack of consensus with regard to the definition and the concreteness of the concept of codevelopment allow designating actions of different types as codevelopment. Hidden behind the ambiguity of the definition the different actors that activate codevelopment realize varied activities which are related to the implementing of the activities in the countries of origin, the promotion of return of the immigrants, projects of cooperation for codevelopment, formation, legal advice, campaigns of sensitisation in the country of reception and the readdressing of the inversion of remittances.

An interesting consideration is to identify the differences between the projects of international aid and those of codevelopment:

-The migrating community achieves the main role in the projects.

-The share of responsibility between the actors who participate in the projects of codevelopment since only a common work between actors with equal conditions is able to realize the actions of codevelopment.

-Realization of combined actions that contribute to the benefits of the community of origin as well as of reception. On the homepage about codevelopment of CIDEAL (2007), they say that *"the projects of codevelopment should contribute to generate a new culture and perception of migration particularly to improve the integration of the immigrants in the society of reception. It is also important that in some actions of codevelopment organizations of the civil society of the country of origin and of destination participate with common objects and values."*

### **-Impact of remittances**

The remittances rouse interest in codevelopment due to their great appearance as well as to their capacity of contributing to local development based on their inclusion in the financial system and on the commitment and link between the communities they represent.

One of the most significant values is the fact that they aren't conditioned by the economic circle and neither dependent of certain political situations.

Consequently they are a source of access with a high level of stability. This competence of contributing to the complete financing of the traditional cooperation supplies the projects of codevelopment a distinctive value.

Concerning the opportunities of the source of financing there are also limits. Clear marks through the character of private relation respecting their voluntary work and the few experiences they have in Spain.

## **6.2 Main challenges of codevelopment**

Codevelopment is located in a crucial situation in which it demonstrates its own value of contribution and is not a temporary idea.

We think that these elements of different contribution of other activities clearly exist but it requires that the actors involved confront the challenges in a resolute way which they are already doing.

The greatest potential of codevelopment in Spain would be when in five or ten years the migrating community that arrived in the past years in our country settled down and had social and economical stability in order to face the subject with decisiveness and maturity.

In the following there is a list with some of the challenges which are important in order to face the present and the future of codevelopment.

1. Clarify and generalize a shared concept.
2. Activate policies and legislative changes
3. Grant the role of the transnational migrating community in codevelopment as protagonist
4. Involve the remittances in the projects of codevelopment.
5. Realize formative activities about codevelopment
6. Improve the relation and the coordination between the actors
7. Create suitable tools to manage codevelopment

By: *Observatorio del Tercer Sector, 2007*

### **-Clarify and generalize a shared concept**

Codevelopment is a recent topic in Spain at which different entities formulate and realize activities in this field. A great reflection and debate is convenient for the concept and the objects of the actions for codevelopment.

Therefore it is necessary to have forums of reflection in which all actors involved participate: entities of immigrants, non-profit organizations of immigration and international aid, sponsors, public agents and the academic world.

It is a unique opportunity that Spain leads this reflection with a positive focus on the migrating case and cooperation. Therefore they have the possibility to unify the concept of codevelopment and the nature of the actions and evaluations of the marked projects in this model of development.

### **-Activate policies and legislative changes**

The policies concerning the matter of codevelopment are affected by divergence that exists about the definition and the clarification of the concept. This involves that policies and legislation are scattered and thus there is a need for a better coordination between the different agents of the field of immigration and cooperation in order to orientate the focus of codevelopment.

Codevelopment can be used as an instrument of sensitivity and approach of north and south through the migrating communities especially at an autonomous and local level. The independent administrations and localities have an important role because they have a great connection and relation with the immigrated population and the organizations. The local and municipal space converts into a privileged scene to generate initiatives to improve the living together and involvement with the communities of origin.

The actions that encourage the knowledge of codevelopment with an initiative of the civil society are also important because they pursue the mutual enrichment of the society of origin and of reception and for that reason they orientate towards a general interest.

### **-Grant the role of the transnational migrating community in codevelopment as protagonist**

The consolidation of the groups of immigrants in Spain and their social and economical stability caused a clear increase of migrating organizations. The rise of associations expresses a great dynamic between the immigrated population whose object is the satisfaction of their needs and the interest of the country of reception.

Regarding the complexity that the actions of codevelopment involve it is necessary to face sufficient consolidated organizations. For that reason it is important that the associations of immigrated people start a process of strengthening and an institutional consolidation in Spain.

To improve their consolidation and increase their role in the projects of codevelopment they need to advance in a specific form and in the development of work in the network with other actors involved. This will help to grant the role as a protagonist of these organizations in relation with codevelopment. The emergence of entities that assume a certain leadership in this area improves the processes that link migration and development in a theoretical and practical way. They achieve a key role in actions regarding international sponsors.

### **-Involve the remittances in the projects of codevelopment**

The remittances turned into one of the elements that are especially linked to the projects of codevelopment because they involve co-responsibility between both realities. However they move in the field of privacy and of particular relations, there is also the possibility that one part is destined at projects of communal interest.

The economical contribution and mainly the personal commitment that the remittances bring about grant a clear value of implication and continuity for the projects of codevelopment.

Some of the most significant challenges in this field are the following: the sensitivity to achieve a great local impact of remittances involving one part toward the communal development and the other one rather to the individual or familiar field; furthermore the consolidation of the financial products that are adapted to the necessities of the migrated population

which are accessible and with an affordable cost for the communities of origin.

#### **-Realize formative activities about codevelopment**

In order to increase the abilities of the transnational immigrating group and their associations a great formation and training is necessary. The formative processes for the associations of the immigrants have a double perspective: on one side the formation that helps to consolidate themselves as an entity in the third sector and on the other side a specific formation and training in codevelopment.

#### **-Improve the relation and the coordination between the actors**

The challenge is to coordinate the different actors involved and to find spaces for conversation in order to create documents based on the exchange of experiences.

It is necessary to find and create spaces to generate a common speech based on experience and reflection because then the actors who are involved in the process of codevelopment will be prepared to recognize the specifications engaged and detect the shortages or needs of the formation on this respect. In the measurement in which they will strengthen and contrast the experience of codevelopment, the tools and focus will get polished and defined.

#### **-Create suitable tools to manage codevelopment**

The incorporation of the migrating community in the identification, plan, implementation and evaluation of the projects of development might increase the efficiency and the quality of help. Nevertheless it also requires elevated costs and resources which the organizations are not always able to dedicate.

It is necessary to take advantage of the gained experience of projects of other fields in order to adjust them to the specification of a new field and of new projects. Consequently the sources of international aid and of social intervention have to be adapted in order to fulfil this new necessity.

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***An approach to codevelopment***

***The transnational migrating community: protagonist of codevelopment***

By: Observatorio del Tercer Sector

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## Mission

Observatorio del Tercer Sector is an independent and non-profit research centre specialized in the third sector. Its aim is to increase and extend the knowledge on the sector and to work for the improvement of the non-profit organizations management.

## Fields of work

### THE STRUCTURE OF THE THIRD SECTOR

The Observatorio del Tercer Sector was born with the creation of the *White Book of the civil-social third sector*. This study led to a search for the exact structure of the Catalonian social third sector.

This type of research has continued in order to know and understand the working reality of non-profit organizations, as found both in an overall framework and within the various sub sectors of a specific activity.

### HOW ORGANIZATIONS WORK

Non-profit organizations have their own specific requirements due to their goals, values and method of organising.

For this reason, it is necessary to analyze and understand the way they operate with other agencies in order to propose new ideas and improvements in different areas and activities.

### FIELDS OF INTEREST IN THE THIRD SECTOR

The third sector is multi-faceted and its areas of interest and activity are connected to many key topics for society.

The Observatorio del Tercer Sector, working together with various third sector organisations, carries out research in the following fields: youth, cooperation for development, ethical banking, the environment, society and culture.





**Observatorio  
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