



INTRODUCTION

For more than 50 years, the CIDSE alliance and its member organisations have been striving for global justice, for a life in dignity for all, with fair access to resources and participation, in freedom and peace. In our work, we have endeavoured to address many structural causes of injustice and poverty. However, we are also increasingly aware that “we are losing the battle.” Inequalities within and between societies are deepening, and more people are facing hunger. Despite all climate action, overall greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise and planetary boundaries are being stretched. False solutions are put forward, that still put corporate interests before people and planet.

Since 2008 with the global crises in finance and economy, climate, food, and energy, with shifting power dynamics between countries and a rising global middle class, it has become increasingly evident that a paradigm shift is urgently needed in both North and South. And yet profound social and political reforms towards systemic change are slow in coming. The re-thinking has started: politicians and economists are starting to question old recipes, like GDP growth as the main measure of progress in society. And public opinion has created some windows for change, for example in international financial regulation and corporate transparency.

There are many initiatives and examples of alternatives that support transition to more sustainable and equitable models of society and economy. What this transition should look like, and how to get there, was at the heart of the CIDSE workshop “Bringing about a paradigm shift towards a just and sustainable world,” 14-15 May 2013 in Brussels, which gathered 70 participants from across CIDSE membership and among our partners on all continents.

Church and faith-based organisations have been amongst those actively speaking out on the need for transformation: this essentially echoes the missions and key values of CIDSE agencies. As faith-based organisations, we have a strong mandate to increase the public’s questioning of the way our current system is functioning. Catholic Social Teaching is one important source of great potential for value-based alternatives and lifestyles that give greater prominence to community and solidarity.

We know we break new ground, and we must walk together. Change will only come with strengthened collective action, with deepened partnerships and alliances across actors and countries. The workshop created a space for a challenging debate on the alternatives for which we stand, the common values that inspire our vision, and our strategies to continue building on our efforts for a better world for all.

Bernd Nilles, CIDSE Secretary General
Denise Auclair, CIDSE Senior Policy Advisor

Main outcomes of the workshop

FOR A PARADIGM SHIFT TOWARDS A JUST AND SUSTAINABLE WORLD, WE NEED...

The workshop showed that a value-based approach and Catholic Social Teaching, already at the heart of CIDSE's work, have particular importance for work towards a paradigm shift.

KEY VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

Human dignity, rights, freedom and responsibility

All human beings, women and men, have the right to fulfill their potential, making their contribution to society, and to live a dignified life. Human dignity demands that people act according to a knowing and free choice that is personally motivated and prompted from within.

Justice, equity, solidarity, and fair distribution

Equality between women and men is a precondition for social justice, while solidarity recognizes that the well-being of all peoples is interlinked. There must be priority attention to the poor, marginalised and discriminated in the quest for the common good, with fair distribution of goods and services to all.

Care for creation

We love, depend on, and are a part of creation. As human beings, we are stewards of creation, and are called to manage the earth in a responsible way so as to pass it on to future generations.

Participation and subsidiarity

Women and men must be empowered individually and collectively to assert their rights, to fight against unjust power structures and to participate actively in political, cultural and economic life. Systems should be built from the bottom upwards so as to guarantee the maximum development of smaller communities.

▶ **A prophetic new narrative, inspired by our Catholic faith and option for the poor, of human well-being within creation, gender equity, and solidarity, with an economy at the service of society within planetary boundaries.**

For all to live well requires the realisation of human dignity and rights, and access to resources. With our constituencies and broader education efforts, we work to set an example and promote the freedom to live simply as an alternative to consumerism; sufficiency and 'being' in community as an alternative to 'having'; and economies based on commons as an alternative to individual self-interest and commodification of nature.

▶ **Transformation of the dominant GDP growth & development paradigm, towards just and sustainable societies and livelihoods.**

In view of transition, we build on work towards reforms of the current system, where processes and our proposals have transformative potential that match the urgency of inequalities and ecological limits. We seek to question the harmful sides of globalisation, and to reveal the flaws and dangers of false solutions to systemic crises. We support innovation and experimentation towards a diversity of locally contextualised alternatives and decentralised ownership.

▶ **Confrontation of unjust power structures, making common cause with those most affected by inequalities and unsustainability in both North and South.**

Our work is rooted in the historical and current struggles of our partners against political oppression, inequalities, discrimination, and unsustainable models of development, and we learn from experiences and realities on the ground. We challenge the concentration of power in the hands of transnational companies and vested elite interests, connecting with affected communities and sectors of society.

▶ **Bold actors for change, challenging ourselves to deepen our partnerships, and to engage in alliances with those who share our goals of transformation.**

We re-examine our role and organisational strategies as a network of Catholic organisations and seek to enhance the voice of the Church, in dialogue. We build our work together with social movements, faith-based and civil society partners, identify broader allies across sectors, and take leadership in view of strengthening our collective action.

CHANGE HAS COME TO BRAZIL, SOUTH AFRICA, GERMANY – **BUT IS IT ENOUGH?**



Moema de Miranda
Contradictions in Brazil

Changing a paradigm doesn't happen in days or weeks. Still, the apartheid system was, after years of struggle, brought down in South Africa, one day a trade union leader was elected President in Brazil, as was an indigenous leader in Bolivia. There was a week when the German government made a u-turn committing to the 'Energiewende', a shift away from nuclear and towards renewable energy. While each was very different in scope and importance, these were all events that CIDSE, members and partners had been campaigning and fighting for, and all carried immense expectations.

Few would deny the positive changes brought by these events, yet they are still not enough. In Germany, despite the shift to renewables, the amount of energy people consume remains almost the same. New cars may consume less petrol, but few question that a family still can have two or three cars. More people shop in organic supermarkets but consumption and food waste is not going down. The underlying philosophy of maximising freedom through consumption remains unchanged.

In Brazil, after the election of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in 2003, living conditions improved in line with growth in the formal sector and social programmes. The poor are doing better, while the rich are not losing out. But where is the money coming from? There has been a 'reprimarisation' of the economy, with dams and roads being built to exploit natural resources quickly. This is destroying the Amazon forest with global impact. There is euphoria – a sense that Brazil has now joined the 'party' and can keep growing forever – so it is difficult to talk about the need to change models.

With the democratic election of Nelson Mandela in 1994, South Africans achieved freedom, but at the same time South Africa has become the most unequal country in the world. Unemployment doubled and at the same time it became the twelfth largest greenhouse gas emitter, due to its mineral-based economy. Land reform and agrarian issues are among the unfinished business of apartheid.

Social movements that believed they had overcome neo-liberal agendas have instead discovered a new struggle against 'developmentalism' agendas that are unsustainable. Other paths must be found.



"The 'sweet poison of the new good life' is still uninterrupted consumption, only now based on 'green growth.' We must ask instead, how can we live so that the poor and all others in the world can live well?"

Markus Büker, Misereor

Struggles

HOW CAN WE BRING ABOUT **TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE?**

Mercia Andrews
Impulsing change in South Africa



Entraide et Fraternité (Belgium) is working for new models of agriculture, both in the South and in Belgium. In the new Walloon code of agriculture this has meant promoting short rather than global supply chains, local products in collective catering, participation of farmers in decision making and installing young farmers on public land as an alternative to land concentration. An event was also organised where local and indigenous seeds were sold on local markets to protest against regulations on seed exchange that favour large multinational corporations.

CCFD-Terre Solidaire (France) has intensified its work on tax justice and regulation of transnational companies. In doing so, they have addressed impacts in France, related to missing tax revenues which should be used for social purposes, and negative impacts on workers in France of multinational corporate behaviour. CCFD-Terre Solidaire is increasingly arguing for changes in France and globally, not just in the South.

Social movements and development organisations have engaged in many struggles and won some important victories: at national level, these include democratic participation, access to leadership for those previously marginalised, and women's rights; at the global level we see debt reduction and, more recently, progress in financial regulation. Yet this good work has not been, and is not, enough to bring about a paradigm shift. We have long been working to reform unjust power structures and policies. Now, we need to measure and choose our strategies according to their ability to plant the seeds of transformative change. Like David with Goliath, we need to find the right stone.

Within civil society, there is growing recognition that new strategies are needed. For example, a network such as Smart CSOs Lab is encouraging organisations to engage in systemic rather than issue-based thinking, targeting connections between policy changes, transformation in values and mindsets and supporting emerging system innovations.

We are called to confront powerful actors and vested interests, particularly transnational companies and large corporate agendas. Transforming the dynamics of power implies raising political awareness about issues and mobilising people. We should be seizing opportunities to connect with those suffering most from the system, such as the 'indignados' in Spain and similar movements which have grown in response to austerity measures. Mindsets and systems are interlinked – it is the doing that brings about changes. This dual approach is particularly important with regard to gender equality.

Alternative models apply not only to the South. We must also challenge our societies and models in the North: change starts at home. Within our own organisations, this implies re-examining our political strategies, engagement with citizens, partnerships for social transformation and change, and funding. In light of the global nature of the crises, we must aim to strengthen both the prophetic voice of the Church community and our joint action in new alliances. We do not have a blueprint for transformation – it requires experimentation, so we must allow ourselves a margin for error and prioritise learning.



Together

DEBATE:

TODAY'S POLITICAL CONTEXT: TIME FOR CHANGE?

Panel debate highlights
Incremental or transformational change?



Peter VIS (Head of Cabinet of Connie Hedegaard, European Commissioner for Climate Action): The European Commission is trying to make the model of growth sustainable, through resource efficiency, regulatory standards and carbon markets, which is a start in making polluters pay and is politically more feasible within the EU than a carbon tax. The Commission is focusing on incremental change, because radicalisation of the resource-efficiency agenda means marginalisation in the current economic context. Since politicians are conscious of electoral pressure, convincing the public is vital.

Chris BAIN (President of CIDSE and Director of CAFOD): The economic and financial crisis has not only raised questions about how to overcome such crises, but, even more fundamentally, it has also shaken our way of thinking. CAFOD has supported local communities in their efforts to create alternative economic models like cooperatives that put people and their dignity at the centre. Through ethical investment, communities have been encouraged to work together and reform their local economies in creative ways. Living simply and personal action are also vital.

Pablo SOLÓN (Executive Director, Focus on the Global South): We are far from the reductions in greenhouse gas emissions needed: the current climate debate admits there is a 'gap' but provides no concrete proposals to resolve it. Those countries that have a historical responsibility have to do more; binding commitments, with stronger compliance mechanisms are necessary.

The EU will be judged by concrete changes, such as prioritising climate over trade rules by not going to court over domestic subsidies for renewable energy or by banning imports of oil from tar sands.

Barbara ADAMS (Senior Policy Advisor, Global Policy Forum): Confronting finite resources will require redistribution and regulation – this will take us to the sufficiency option. Following the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, those who have profited most from the current approach must shoulder the most burden in the change. The technical focus on mitigation, carbon and clean energy is necessary but we do not have to 'cut and paste' existing proposals. Instead, we shall continue pushing for structural change. Government, private sector and civil society are misrepresented as 'boxes'; instead we have to find and work with those who want to move ahead.

Tina MUSUYA (Executive Director, Center for Domestic Violence Prevention): The problematic capitalist approach to development is intertwined with a patriarchal approach. In order to bring about structural changes we need to target the root causes of gender inequality and resource allocation. Existing norms and behaviours are factors that hinder the promotion of issues of fairness and access rights. We must stimulate participation by all stakeholders, promoting their role as agents of change and raising awareness of the fact that we can't grow at the expense of others.

Xavier RICARD (Director for International Partnerships, CCFD-Terre Solidaire): The challenge for society is to go beyond the notion of labour productivity, mass consumption and the quest for growth. 'Growth' in Ethiopia has been focused on export-based sectors such as biofuels, linked to land grabbing and human rights violations. Considering that economic downturns have worsened unemployment rates and the social situation, we need to look to 'jobful' de-growth rather than jobless growth as an answer to the European crisis, making the shift in Europe without waiting for the rest of the world, basing it on carbon taxes rather than carbon markets.

Transformation

HOLISTIC TRANSFORMATION:

RETHINKING DEVELOPMENT

In Nigeria, the Justice, Development and Peace Commission (JDPC) has created a 'Citizens Wealth Platform.' In the context of misuse of national revenues from natural resource caused by the opacity of extraction contracts between the government and oil companies, JDPC's conviction is that Nigerians should realise that the country can be self-sufficient and deal with its problems of violence and inequality through their own participation. The platform enables citizens to feel personally responsible, to monitor budgets and to ask questions about oil revenues that the government should be collecting.

Trócaire (Ireland) and the Center for Domestic Violence Prevention (CEDOVIP) work together in Uganda to increase the participation of discriminated groups, and more broadly of citizens, to bring about structural changes and evolution of norms in view of ending oppression. In Uganda, CEDOVIP works to mobilize women to demand their spaces in decision-making processes, and undertakes community education and awareness raising of opinion leaders to address women and men's roles across domains including health and agriculture. In Ireland, Trócaire's Power Up campaign – "Real Power Lies Within Communities, Within Individuals, Within You" – addresses values such as equity, community, and solidarity to enable citizens to actively engage, and to demand safe spaces for people to advocate for their rights.

Tina Musuya

Gender equality in Uganda



CIDSE is convinced that global justice demands that failures in current models of development and sustainability are addressed. The workshop showed that by 'rethinking development' we need also to acknowledge that the very term of development is problematic, associated with GDP growth and consumerism. Today it is widely recognised that GDP growth does not automatically translate into a better living situation for all and that after a certain point, consumption of non-essentials does not increase well-being. For people living in extreme poverty, the main question is how to ensure they can live in dignity.

The limits of today's models which give primacy to markets have become clear. The untenable concentration of power and resulting inequalities, destructive phenomena such as patriarchy and individualism, and devastation wrought by extractives industries and climate change must all urgently be addressed.

This means seeking holistic transformation, including the cultural and spiritual dimensions. Such a transformation shall democratise power relations in ways that break down divisions between the ruled and the rulers, men and women, humanity and nature, North and South, and East and West. People are at the centre of this transformation, particularly those most deeply affected by the dysfunction of the system, as well as those with aspirations to access and those benefiting most from the current models. The change will need to begin at the level of individual transformation, adapting lifestyles to respect ecological limits, and giving value to community and sharing. It will demand that people organize themselves in popular associations and struggles for change, with the participation of communities in public life.

Dignity and Rights

"Everyone counts and contributes, thus there is a need to accept diversity and innovation. We need to inspire both women and men to work towards justice and fairness, as opposed to creating hierarchies of power and control."

Tina Musuya, CEDOVIP

ECONOMIES AT THE SERVICE OF JUST AND SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES

In South Africa, the One Million Climate Jobs campaign by social movements and trade unions led by the Alternative Information and Development Centre (AIDC) and others, takes as its starting point both the urgent need to change economic systems in order to prevent disastrous climate change and the pressing issue of livelihoods and dignified work as a contribution to society. Through a process of just transition, moving from a mineral-intensive, low-wage economy to building new industries in renewable energy, public transport and building efficiency, the campaign challenges vested interests, questioning ownership of industries and intellectual property rights in international trade regimes. The cost of creating climate jobs is to be funded by increased taxation on the rich, and a carbon tax.

SCIAF (Scotland) and the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) work together in Zambia to promote sustainable agricultural models through the Kulima programme. JCTR is engaged in evidence-based advocacy towards the Zambian government and traditional leaders for a policy framework supporting organic farming and gender equality. They publish quarterly data on food grown using agro-ecological methods showing greater yields compared to food grown using pesticides. Two Scottish agricultural institutes are partners in the programme. Through the 'Enough Food for Everyone IF Scotland Plays its Part' campaign, SCIAF is stimulating debate on how the specific Scottish model can confront the global, systemic causes of hunger.

"By quantifying the jobs potential, the carbon savings, the cost of creating jobs and how to fund this, we make the just transition as compelling as mother's milk."

Brian Ashley, AIDC

Today, the term 'economy' is often narrowed to the industrial sector, GDP growth is seen as the key policy serving and measuring economic progress and self-interest is perceived as freedom. In the worst case, it is shorthand for profits for large companies based on resource extraction to serve unbridled, advertising-driven consumption. Today's economies function only for the benefit of the few, not the many. The economic, social and environmental 'pillar' approach in the concept of sustainable development is flawed and ecological limits are not taken into account. New 'green economy' and 'green growth' approaches do not fundamentally change this equation.

CIDSE's vision is instead based upon a relational understanding of economy, situated within society and nature: one economy in one planet, with social justice at its heart. Alternative approaches already exist today, such as viable economy, gift economy, economy of communion, and solidarity economy. Whilst moves towards cooperative banking, ethical investment, or fair trade are certainly steps in the right direction, the global economic system does not allow local initiatives to fully flourish. We need to work towards global, systemic changes – such as those offered by financial regulation – that will create the conditions for true alternatives to emerge.

The economic alternatives we support are based on principles and values, informed by Catholic Social Teaching. Ownership, organisation and management of economic structures are decentralised and driven by the 'commons', rather than by profit based on consumerism. Redistribution mechanisms address inequalities and the immorality of extreme wealth. Unjust power structures and the concentration of power in the hands of large transnational companies are addressed through regulation, transparency and strong accountability mechanisms.

Power

Daniel Mutale

Sustainable agriculture in Zambia



LIVING SOLIDARITY: BETWEEN LOCALISATION AND GLOBALISATION

Ajay Jha

Localisation of solutions in India



In South Korea, the Korean Catholic Farmers' Movement is developing alternatives that include agro-ecological models of production and solidarity-based economic models such as direct marketing systems that aim for shorter chains, thus bringing producers and consumers closer together.

DKA (Austria) and Fastenopfer (Switzerland) work with the Rural Women's Assembly (RWA) of the People's Dialogue to mobilise rural women around local alternatives to commercial agriculture. RWA promotes a regional platform in Southern Africa and Latin America for learning, sharing, and developing solutions, relating to rural livelihoods, agroecology and exchange of indigenous seeds. Together with DKA and Fastenopfer, the RWA attended the 2011 international climate negotiations in Durban, and the 2012 Rio+20 conference on sustainable development, to build relationships to form a global solidarity movement in the context of globalisation.



Today's societies and economies, with their patterns of consumption and production, are organised according to an international (and often gender-specific) division of labour, with emphasis on global markets and the interests of transnational corporations. The failings of this model are particularly evident in the area of food security, with hunger increasing despite sufficient global food production and in parallel with massive food waste.

CIDSE's vision gives priority to local, socially-orientated, gender-sensitive and small-scale models and actors. We support agricultural production which guarantees adequate food for all and which recognises the role of food producers as stewards of the earth, as well as the earth's own capacity to produce sustainably. This is underpinned by values enshrined in human rights, particularly the right to food and the right to dignified livelihoods. More broadly, we seek to build resilient communities which are able to self-organise in their struggles to challenge the structural causes of the shackles that bind them, permitting equal participation, particularly of women and the most marginalised.

Communities must be at the forefront of innovation to bring about change, empowered to seek solutions applicable to their realities, as well as to consciously participate in the policy processes that affect them. In line with subsidiarity, local innovation and solutions must be interlinked with those elements best addressed at the global level, such as human rights standards. Solidarity is a key means by which to achieve this vision. It is important to contextualise and adapt approaches to each situation, with the creation and nourishment of linkages critical to fostering solidarity and learning, while avoiding isolationism and protectionism. Many examples already exist that prove the viability of such an 'alternative' system, such as local currencies.

"Land, life, love and seeds represents the feminist perspective we want to struggle for."

Mercia Andrews, Trust for Community Outreach and Education



Innovation