1ST 2011 BIANNUAL MEETING

COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL INCLUSION, PARTICIPATIVE DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

10 FEBRUARY 2011, DAKAR (SENEGAL)

MINUTES

The 1st 2011 Biannual Meeting of the Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights (CSIPDHR) of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) was held at the Hotel des Almadies in Dakar (Senegal) between 6pm and 8pm on 10 February[1].

The meeting was chaired by the CSIPD President, Mr Ricard Gomà (Deputy Mayor of Barcelona, Spain) and was attended by 34 people representing 26 cities / institutions. The meeting had a single subject for discussion, which was the work done in 2010 within the framework of the **International Observatory on Local Social Inclusion Policies**[2] *:*

The President of the Committee, **RICARD GOMÀ**, welcomed all those attending and invited them to briefly introduce themselves.

He then listed the Committee's strategic priorities for the period 2011 – 2013, including the desire to create a powerful platform for social research. The creation of the International Observatory on Local Social Inclusion Policies is a result of this objective. Its first phase was implemented in 2007, but it was not until 2010 that this initiative achieved a higher degree of consolidation. The President of the Committee pointed out that within this Observatory, the Committee has promoted the production of two research studies: the first on a conceptual framework for the relationship between social inclusion policies and participatory democracy; and the second consisting in an international search for benchmark cases of social inclusion.

RICARD GOMÀ said that the first research study concluded that in urban societies, inclusion is impossible without participation. This is because although there may be powerful social policies which achieve some degree of income and wealth redistribution by means of transfers, there will be no real transformation without an effective involvement of those excluded in the inclusion process, because it will not be based on personal autonomy. The production of a map of specific approaches for implementing this strategy in a local context has led to the emergence of a vast range of alternatives in which the solution is not to apply a model based solely on the market -which has led to many failures in this field-, or to return to the protective social State -which is too rigid and suffocates social autonomy-, but instead a model which enhances the value of the best of the public sector, the market and social sector to reinforce the public sphere -public values, public services, public spaces- as the basis for social inclusion. A strong public realm must be constructed on a day to day basis, including participation with various formats adapted to each context, to institutions, to businesses and to social initiatives.

The study, produced by the Institute of Government and Public Policies (IGOP) of the Autonomous University of Barcelona is currently being translated into Spanish, English and French and will soon be available on the Committee's website.

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[1] The meeting began an hour later than scheduled due to the accumulated delay of the 2nd Assembly of the Global Platform for Participatory Budgets, which was also held in the same hotel.

[2] The full documentation of the meeting can be consulted at: Documentation of the 1st 2011 Biannual Meeting of the CSIPD.

2. PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS UNDERTAKEN BY THE SOCIAL STUDIES CENTRE (CES) OF THE UNIVERSITY OF COIMBRA

The executive coordinators of the research, **GIOVANNI ALLEGRETTI** and **MARIA PAULA MENESES** (CES) then presented the results of the work done in 2010 by a team of 12 researchers with the cooperation of various experts at other research centres. All of them have worked under the supervision of Prof. Boaventura de Sousa Santos in order to review the 15 policies found in 2007 and to undertake a new search for 50 social inclusion policies built on a participatory basis in dialogue with local or regional governments. At present, it appears that the final selection of cases is distributed geographically as follows: Africa – 11 cases; Asia and Oceania – 14; Europe - 12; Middle East, Eastern Europe and Western Asia – 11; North America – 7; South America – 12.

In general terms, the policies selected share the following characteristics:

- They are not "best practices", but instead experimental initiatives aimed at providing a broader and more structural response to social problems.
- They are policies based on a local or regional government's initiative or public momentum. In the latter case, the policy must have involved collaboration with a public institution at some point in its life cycle.
- They are policies designed with some type of participatory process.
- They are policies aimed at promoting changes in social relations and an enhancement of the value of social and professional abilities, and/or which contribute to ensuring equal access to resources and decision-making spaces.
- They are policies that have been internalised by the government and which have led to changes in the technical or political organisation structure (they are not merely "externalised" services).
- The policies which originated in pilot projects and trials are initiatives that have been subsequently reformulated within more structural frameworks.

Approximately half of these cases have been documented and are currently being translated. The remainder will be presented in late March.

GIOVANNI ALLEGRETTI and **MARIA PAULA MENESES** also described some of the conclusions they have drawn from the work done:

- The local authority is included in the implementation of the policy in various ways and at different stages in its development, which suggests that public policies are not necessarily "policies promoted by public actors", but are instead policies that are focused on redefining and consolidating public interests.
- The concept of the "city" or "urban" has more than one meaning. The cases include initiatives implemented in very diverse contexts: large urban agglomerations, peri-urban settlements and even rural villages. However, in all cases, there is a local authority heading the government.
- New forms of social exclusion are emerging, making it increasingly necessary to think about new ways of combating them.
- The meaning of public participation varies greatly according to the context and actor upon which it is based. Participation therefore covers initiatives as varied as informing, consulting, involving, associating or deciding.
- The "innovative" nature of the policy depends on the context in which it is implemented (something may be very new in an authoritarian political context and not so new in democratic societies).
- The same objective can be achieved by means of various areas of intervention (the eradication of poverty can be sought by means of policies for community development, water supply, urban agriculture, etc.) and on the contrary, a single policy can achieve various objectives (a policy for the promotion of urban agriculture has an environmental, social and economic impact).
- It is preferable to use the term "adaptation" of cases instead of "replicability", as transferring policies from one context to another is not a mechanical exercise. It involves "creatively adapting a specific experience to a new social, political and territorial environment.

CONCLUSIONS OF GROUP WORK

After these two presentations, two working groups were created in order to provide constructive criticism on the two research studies undertaken. Each group chose a spokesperson, who passed on the conclusions regarding the work done by his/her group[3].

GROUP 1

Participants: Ricard Gomà (Barcelona, ES), Nurbai Calú and Natacha Morais (Maputo, MOZ), Eduardo Mancuso (Canoas, BR), Dora Gomes (Contagem, BR), Jose Araujo Silva (National Council on Social Assistance, BR), Silvio Barros (Maringá, BR), Eduardo Tadeu Pereira (Várzea Paulista, BR), Yebrail Haddad and Ángela Castellanos (Ocaña, COL), Alejandro Luévano (Iztapalapa, MX) and Rocío Lombera (México, MX).
Spokesperson: Vanessa Sousa (IN LOCO, PT)
Facilitator: Maria Paula Meneses, CES (Coimbra, PT)

a. Is participatory democracy a prerequisite for social inclusion?

The discussion started from the idea that it is taken for granted that democracy in itself guarantees social inclusion. However, democracy is not a sufficient condition: it needs to be deepened by those mechanisms provided by the so-called "participatory democracy".

At the same time, free citizen participation is impossible without guaranteed basic rights.

The group also highlighted that citizen participation is also necessary for social inclusion, although it is not -again- sufficient. Moving towards social inclusion requires bringing back concepts such as "the individual", "political action" and "self-emancipation", because the implementation of rights goes beyond its formal recognition.

b. Consideration of the meaning of citizen participation

Working group participants started from the premise that public participation increases when social problems persist: as they are resolved, participation declines. This presents challenges from the point of view of political action.

The group concluded that it is necessary to conceive participation not only as a right, but also as an obligation. Taking into account people participate when they have a need, a way of strengthening this participation is to make it compulsory.

c. Social exclusion versus social inclusion

The need to promote active public policies to fight against exclusion was identified, but it was also stated that this requires specific financing.

Participants acknowledged the multifaceted nature of the problem of social exclusion, and they added that developed countries do not escape from it.

It was also noted that social inclusion involves an important emotional dimension. It was proposed to take specific actions from schools in order to promote (more inclusive) ways to build the world.

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[3] The conclusions presented below have been written by these spokespeople.

As social exclusion has a multi-faceted nature, the following aspects were identified: i) the socio-economic dimension; ii) the socio-cultural dimension; iii) and the socio-political dimension. Deriving from all these dimensions emerges the issue of the autonomy of individuals, the quality of life, and social and human development.

d. Questions raised regarding the Observatory

The group considered that one of the problems of the project, that aims to have a worldwide scope, is related to the difficulty of building concepts that can be useful in different contexts. The concept of emancipation was given as an example: its meaning is built in a different ways according to the country chosen.

The group referred to the possibility that the Observatory tried to answer the following question: what does being a citizen mean in the different contexts analysed?

The facilitator clarified that the project does not aim to develop models, but instead to explore narratives and to create a dialogue platform between different type of experiences.

e. The Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City as an instrument for the Observatory

Participants proposed to analyse to what extent policies included in the Observatory are examples of how the Charter-Agenda could be implemented.

It was stated that the Charter also mentions the right to citizen participation as the starting point of the rest of rights. Finally, several suggestions were made: i) disseminating the Charter; ii) fostering its implementation; iii) assessing to what extent Observatory policies illustrate practical ways of implementing the Charter.

GROUP 2

Participants: Monique Rabin and Aunette Soizic (Pays de la Loire, FR), Delphine Bouffenie and Séverine Calza (Nantes, FR), Gérard Perreau-Bezouille and Antonio Aniesa (Nanterre, FR), Bernard Calabuig (Pays d'Aubagne et de l'Étoile, FR), Souleymane Thiam (Dakar, SEN) and Robert Gaby Florent (Antananarivo, MDG)
Portavoz: Franck Barrau (Nantes, FR)
Facilitador: Giovanni Allegretti, CES (Coimbra, PT)

The discussion was structured in two parts:

a. Political considerations.

Before considering the topics related with the Social Inclusion Observatory and the work done by the Centre for Social Studies at the University of Coimbra (Portugal), the participants in the working group considered the concepts of social inclusion and participatory democracy. **BERNARD CALABUIG** (Head of participatory democracy, Pays d'Aubagne et de l'Étoile) highlighted the importance of political will: *"Participatory democracy does not exist if an alternative to the liberal system is not constructed."* An example is the free transport provision implemented in the town of Aubagne. This decision was the result of a political debate in response to the predominant discourse of the liberal economy, because it is not free of charge for a privileged group of citizens, but is available to all, and not only to residents of the city of Aubagne. It is a political statement that is expressed as a play on words with this new slogan: *Liberty – Equality - Gratuity.* It is also important to show ambition in the field of participatory democracy, i.e. to apply participatory democracy not only in the immediate context of citizens, but also to make it to cover their entire life and its complexity, in both "micro" and "macro" policies. We do not have to fear undertaking political and economic analyses as they will have a clear impact on employment. Finally, social inclusion and participatory democracy are connected with the subject of power: "*There is no participatory democracy if rulers do not give up part of their power."* concluded **BERNARD CALABUIG**.

This latter observation was taken up by **ANTONIO ANIESA** (Head of International Relations, Nanterre), who noted that this relationship with power is essential and that the Committee must become capable, with time, of influencing the "international municipal development movement" regarding this issue.

GÉRARD PERREAU-BEZOUILLE (Deputy Mayor, Nanterre) mentioned that the emancipation project must be promoted by means of inclusion policies and participatory democracy processes: *"All experiences must be allowed to reach their culmination, even in countries with highly developed public services. The objective is also to reinforce the inhabitants' capabilities: It is necessary to work towards them "acquiring strength", and "acquiring confidence", creating successful spaces that will subsequently enable a shift from the local to the global.* **GÉRARD PERREAU-BEZOUILLE** wondered, as well, if we should be satisfied only with voluntary-based participation: *"I am not against the implementation of "juries" with some form of remuneration if that improves the quality of the work".*

> a.1. Various: **SOULEYMANE THIAM** (ADEGY – Dakar) raised the subject of Africa's representation on the CSIPDHR, taking into account the few African participants at a meeting held in Dakar. **MONIQUE RABIN** (Vice-president of the Pays de la Loire Regional Council) mentioned that "wealthier" local authorities could provide financial aid to cities with whom the have cooperation projects in order to enable their representatives to participate in the work of the CSIPDHR.
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> **EVA GARCIA CHUECA** (Executive Secretary of the CSIPDHR) then mentioned that participation in the work of the CSIPDHR is free and open to all the UCLG member cities. Those local governments wishing to register and commit themselves to participate in the Committee's activities are most welcome.

b. Role and objectives of the Social Inclusion Observatory

MONIQUE RABIN asked about the possible interest for the Social Inclusion Observatory of carefully studying decentralised cooperation, by means of research and analysis, and the subject of training for elected politicians.

FRANCK BARRAU (SPIDH, Nantes) proposed that the Observatory be equipped with enough resources and that it disseminates those case studies that can inspire other cities. To that end, he suggested using online video resources. The organisation he represents, the SPIDH, aims to position itself as a centre of online resources and information about the implementation of the Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City. An initial experience has been carried out on the issue of the right to vote for foreigners who are not European Union nationals in French local elections: http://formatlibre.fr/doc/

ANTONIO ANIESA mentioned the need to continue working on reflection and political analysis of social inclusion. From his point of view, this work should be a priority of the Observatory.

4. CLOSURE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 2ND CSIPD 2011 BIANNUAL MEETING

The President of the Committee, **RICARD GOMÀ**, expressed his thanks for the quality of the work done by the groups and especially for the role played by the two spokespeople.

He then closed the 1st 2011 Biannual Meeting of the Committee by inviting all its members to the following meeting, which will take place in the autumn during UCLG's World Council, in Florence (Italy).

Ajuntament de Barcelona

APPENDIX 1. AGENDA

Date: Thursday, 10 February 2011
Time: 5 pm - 7 pm
Venue: Hotel des Almadies, Dakar

SINGLE-ISSUE SESSION ON THE SOCIAL INCLUSION OBSERVATORY

5 pm – 5:40 pm

Welcome and introduction of the participants

Presentation of the study *Social inclusion policies and participatory democracy*, produced by the Barcelona Institute of Government and Public Policy (IGOP) – Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB), by Ricard Gomà (Chair of the Committee and 2nd Deputy Mayor of Barcelona)

Presentation of the research undertaken by the Social Studies Centre (CES) of the University of Coimbra to expand the Observatory's data bank, by María Paula Meneses and Giovanni Allegretti Giovanni Allegretti (executive coordinators of the project)

5:40 pm – 6:40 pmh

Debate in groups with participants

18:40 am – 7 pm

Groupwork idea-sharing session

Closing session and convening of the 2nd 2011 Committee meeting

APPENDIX 2. LIST OF THE PARTICIPANTS

AFRICA			
Madagascar	Antananarivo	Robert Gaby Florent	Swiss Cooperation Development Program
Mozambique	Maputo	Nurbai Calú	Councilor for Health and Social Action
		Natacha Morais	International relations advisor
Senegal	ADEGY - Development Association for Grand-Yoff region, Dakar	Souleymane Thiam	Secretary General
LATIN AMERICA			
Brazil	Canoas	Eduardo Mancuso	International Relations Director
	Contagem	Dora Gomes	International Cooperation Director
	National Council on Social Assistance - Ministry for Social Developement and against Hunger	Jose Araujo Silva	Councilor
	Maringá	Silvio Barros	Mayor
	Várzea Paulista	Eduardo Tadeu Pereira	Mayor
Colombia	Ocaña	Yebrail Haddad	Mayor
		Ángela Castellanos	Advisor on social issues
Mexico	Iztapalapa (Mexico D.F.)	Alejandro Luévano	Participatory Budgeting Coordinator
Dominican Republic	FEDOMU - Dominican Federation of Municipalities	Francis Jorge	International Relations Director and Chief of Participatory Budgeting Unit
EUROPE			
Spain	Barcelona	Ricard Gomà	Deputy Mayor for Social Action and Citizenship. CISDPDH President
	Cordoba	Marian Ruiz	Councilor for Gender Equality and Cooperation
		Paula Estebaranz	Gender Equality and Cooperation Director
	FAMSI - Andalusian Fund of Cities for International Solidarity	Felipe Llamas	Director of the International Networks Department
	Getafe	Carlos López	Coordinator of Participatory Bugdeting
	Santa Cristina d'Aro	Joan Bou	Deputy Mayor for Finances and Participatory Budgeting
France	Aubagne / urban community Pays d'Aubagne et de l'Étoile	Bernard Calabuig	Advisor on Participatory Democracy
	Bobigny	Djamel Sandid	International Relations Director
	Nantes	Delphine Bouffenie	Deputy Mayor for Integration, Equality and Citizenship
	Nanterre	Gérard Perreau-Bezouille	Deputy Mayor for International Relations, Finances and Urban Life
		Antonio Aniesa	International Relations Director
	Pays de la Loire, Regional Government	Monique Rabin	Vice-president
		Aunette Soizic	Assistant to the Vice-president
	Int. Secretariat for Human Rights (SPIDH)	Franck Barrau	Secretary General
		Séverine Calza	Project Manager
PARTNERS			
Mexico	COPEVI	Rocío Lombera	President
Portugal	Social Studies Centre (CES) - University of Coimbra	Giovanni Allegretti	Researcher
		Maria Paula Meneses	Researcher
	Association IN LOCO	Nelson Dias	President
		Vanessa Sousa	Advisor
UCLG			
CISDPDH		Eva Garcia Chueca	Executive Secretary