

## THE WHITE BOOK

**It is about an study of the third social-civic sector of the Catalan reality, that is to say, about non-profit private entities**

With the title of this editorial it could be thought that the white book is a book that still has to be written because its pages are blank. It could also be understood as everyone's life that we are writing day after day. This is not the case. The white book exists and is already written, to be exact it is titled "Llibre blanc del tercer sector civico-social ("White book of the third social-civic sector"), edited in 2003 by the Generalitat of Catalonia and created by the research team of the Observatorio del Tercer Sector ("Third sector Observatory"), with central office in Barcelona.

It is about an study of the third social-civic sector of the Catalan reality, that is to say, about non-profit private entities whose main objective is to promote people, to reduce social and economic inequalities and the fight against social exclusion, which is more reflected in the activities they carry out than in their statutes or foundational records. Our profile obeys to these characteristics, therefore, it has sense to echo some of its conclusions, mainly those about the way these third social-civic sector organizations work.

If we focus on the organizations and organs of government, this study exposes three conclusions:

(1) organizational flexibility but lack of organizational clearness, that is, lack of reflection, definition and functions assignment; (2) commitment from the organs of government but risk of absence of external vision, that is, not to facilitate the participation of other people

## editorial

and curb renovation and strategic vision of the organization; (3) wide social bases but few overture to society.

With regards to the human team of the Catalan social-civic organizations, the conclusions are the following:

(1) diversity of groups and profiles, but low reflection and definition of the criteria to manage teams; (2) high presence of volunteers and important level of linking but few dedication; (3) important connection of the people with the organizations but teams instability related to bad contractual conditions; (4) most of the staff is trained but training is not well structured.

Within the section of economic resources, following conclusions should be emphasized:

(1) capacity to carry out activities in spite of economic difficulties; (2) financial troubles of organizations; (3) lack of financial strategic vision; (4) dependence from public financing; (5) difficulty in treasurership management.

Moreover, other aspects such as communication and new technologies are analysed as well as the different legal possibilities within the organizations.

From "Clam per la Dignitat"/"Claim for Dignity e.V." we can for sure make ours some of these conclusions. Now that the year is coming to its end, it is a good moment to evaluate what has been lived and to set up some objectives for next year. General meetings hold in December should help us on that.

In this edition, Ralf thinks about the crisis and Laura shares with us the year she has spent as an international volunteer.

Happy Christmas to all!

The Council

## DEALING WITH THE EFFECTS OF A GLOBALIZED WORLD

### Measures must be taken to give a fair chance of coexistence

Recent developments on the world financial markets made us realize how tight our economic systems are tied together globally. Realizing the impact of this crisis in the wealthier industrialized countries we can only presume how hard global speculation business is affecting people in countries that are not able to fight the power of financial strength. These effects are exemplified by the permanent exodus of Africans by life threatening boat crossings to southern Europe, which are no longer able to make their living with their work due to the import of subsidized agricultural products from Europe ruining the local markets. This does not seem to be haunting enough to provoke any other consequences from European government than more money for optimized frontier "protection".

It is a shame that the implications of the huge financial profit of a few and the related misery of so many people have to be insignificantly absorbed by an immense effort of the ascending voluntary work of non governmental organisations

## thoughts

worldwide. To support these efforts, also on a political level measures must be taken to give a fair chance of coexistence of the "worlds".

To understand the balance of power given, for an example the economic performance of Germany equals the performance of entire Africa, South- and Central America with only 6 percent of its population. Compared to Africa, the economic performance of Germany is more than 3 times higher with less than 9 percent of its population.

As a review of the actual situation Austrian film director Erwin Wagenhofer gives us a shocking glimpse how our world functions behind the racks of supermarkets and high gloss brochures in his documentary movies "Let's Make Money" (2008) and "We Feed the World" (2005). But it also shows how easy it is to unmask the rules of the system if you begin to start to think about it. And it shows that every individual effort is the first step to change the situation.

R. Kammerer

## A DIFFERENT YEAR.....THAT I WILL NEVER FORGET!

### Love until it hurts

Last January started one of the most incredible experiences of my life.

I had decided to leave my job temporarily in order to work as a volunteer with the Missionaries of Charity (the ones from Mother Teresa of Calcutta) in different African countries.

I had previously done something similar in India and Ethiopia but only for short periods of time. After those experiences I came back very happy, with a special positive feeling. However I felt that the time period had been too short and that there are still loads of people to help, many things left to do and many places to visit.

I had considered in many occasions the possibility of going abroad for a longer period of time, but the fear to lose all the "securities" we are attached to, made me reject different opportunities or postpone the decision for the future.

Finally, at the end of the year 2007 I decided to leave....why not?

I have been to Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia and Uganda, always at the centres of the Missionaries of Charity (they have houses in more than 150 countries over the world). Some of the centres are aimed for children, for adults or even for people of different ages....all of them with the common characteristic of hosting the poorest among the poorest.

Like I already mentioned, it was a very complete experience. If I look backwards I can say that I learnt much from the people: the missionaries, a continuous example of happiness, humbleness and unconditional giving....; other volunteers, fantastic people from different parts of the world, sharing the day by day with them was a great support...; the sick people and people from the centres, who are the pillars of everything, and possibly the ones we learnt most from. They encouraged us to wake up and develop capabilities we never imagined.

## experiences

Like Mother Teresa said, "love until it hurts".

I have lived through very hard, difficult and sad moments, since you have to continuously live together with the people's suffering (physical and/or psychological), which does not leave you indifferent. Nevertheless, I have enjoyed very funny, beautiful and emotive moments which made me feel very grateful for being there.

All of it makes you question infinity of issues. You notice how you change in all the aspects concerning you personality: psychologically, socially and spiritually..... It is an integral transformation.

Now back home, I feel happy and extremely lucky of having gone through such a fantastic experience. These months I have become aware of the great amount of people suffering and waiting to be helped. I went far away to a place where the reality is completely different to ours, but that does not mean that it is not necessary to help those who are in need and live close to us.

Laura García-Faria Coll  
<http://www.lauragf.blogspot.com>





## news

### NEWS OF "CLAM PER LA DIGNITAT" – SPAIN

Due to contingencies at the last moment for reasons beyond our control, it has been impossible a meeting in Barcelona with José Álvaro, president of CIESCU-Peru, during his stay in Barcelona in October, and with Pilar Solà, president of CIESCU-Spain. The idea of having a public open act together for presenting the project "La Mansion" was then cancelled.

We still receive offers for people interested in working or having practices with us. We thank all these applications, that we always answer and file in our secretary and we trust to improve our infrastructure in the future to do more.

We also receive applications about concrete project, like our friend in Peru Carla Leguía, who is searching for a job in Spain. Please, contact with us in case anybody can help us about this.

Next Saturday 27th December at 6 p.m. is planned the 5th General Meeting of "Clam for Dignity" that will be held at the Centre of the Parish Church of Sant Vicenç in Sarrià. All the members and friends of "Clam", please, keep in mind the date.

Anyone interested in the volunteer service of "Sostre" (Roof) in Barcelona keep in contact with Javi Laguno (xavierlaguno at gmail.com) or with the Secretary.

### NEWS OF "CLAIM FOR DIGNITY e.V." - GERMANY

On Friday 7th November José Álvaro Ruiz, president of CIESCU-Perú and director of the project "La Mansión: education versus malnutrition" was together with five members of "Clam for Dignity e. V." in the Secondary School Robert Bosch in Langenau (Robert-Bosch-Gymnasium, RBG near the city of Ulm, Germany) in order to show the project and to seal a patronage between the two schools, where there are also present the NGO's CIESCU and "Clam for Dignity e. V." The reception of the teachers and students was excellent. The day culminated with a dinner of friendship paid by the school. Thank you very much and hope to be the start of a fruitful relationship for all the implicated parts !

Also on Friday 7th November in the afternoon in the Parish Church of Saint Michael in Tuebingen José Álvaro Ruiz presented the project to a group of secondary students interested in having a one-year voluntary stay in Arequipa. At the end, we share all together a very delightful dinner.

On last 6th December, the VIII General Meeting of "Clam for Dignity e.V." was celebrated in Sabine Molling's house in Aichtal. Finally we were fourteen people. The meeting was very rich in contents and interchanges. We revised the work of the last year and, moreover, we talked about how to deal with the challenges offered by the project of "La Mansion" and how to distribute the work. Sintetically we can say that Ralf keeps the contact with the school in Langenau (he was a student in this school), Michael keeps the relationship with Prof. Eyerer and the

foundation TheoPrax and Stephanie and Edi keep the topic of voluntaries through Weltwaerts and coordinate the possible offers of new subsidies. A campaign of food patronage for the children of the school was approved.

On the other hand, Annette and Andreas kept up to date about the situation in Kirguizistan and their project "Zuflucht e.V."

Finally, the measures of the year 2008 were approved and the Director Council was again elected, which is formed by Michael Schliep, Stephanie Wildenberg and Édison Fañanás. The economic management, carried out by Sabine Molling and supervised by Sabine Schliep, could not be approved, due to the fact that the year has not already finished. However, it seems that the economic management will be approved in next meeting and they both will be again elected for continuing with this responsibility in 2009. After the meeting, a typical Christmas dinner happened.

Last Wednesday 10th December in the Secondary School Melanchton in Bretten (Melachthon Gymnasium Bretten, MGB, near Karlsruhe) and inside the project of cooperation between the Secondary School and the Foundation TheoPax related to the new subject "Technics and Sciences of Nature" (Naturwissenschaften und Technik, NWT) for student between 13 and 14 years-old (Levels 8 and 9 in the german educational system) the project of "La Mansion" was presented as a real and practical example of new applications that can be developed in the subject. Stephanie and Ralf, together with Prof. Eyerer, president of the Foundation TheoPax, presented the reality of the neighbourhood of "La Mansion" and also the architecture possibilities for gaining a little garden on the roof of the house. Moreover, a physicist took part in order to explain how wind power works. The act was very participating and the valuation of Stephanie and Ralf was very positive.

"Claim for Dignity e. V." joint the offer of BDKL (Bund der Deutschen Katholischen Jugend, federation of young German Catholics of the diocese of Rottenburg-Stuttgart) and the department of "Church of the world" of the diocese to carry through them the two offers to be done to the state program to the promotion of international cooperation volunteer "Weltwaerts" supported by the German Ministry of Cooperation and Development. This means that from August 2009 to July 2010, two German young boys or girls can spend a one-year volunteer stay in Arequipa supporting the project "La Mansion". Moreover, and also in coordination with the Parish Church of Saint Michael in Tuebingen and the organization "Pater Stella e.V.", two more vacancies of volunteer in Eritrea will be offered. By 13rd or 14th February is expected to have a diocesan meeting of all the entities related to the program "Weltwaerts" that works in the diocese of Rottenburg-Stuttgart. "Claim for Dignity e.V." expects to present four people (The Director Council and another member not yet decided).

If any young German boy or girl is interested in collaborate in this program of international cooperation volunteer come into contact with us before 31st January 2009.

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