

The Sustainability of IAI

The positioning of the organisation for popular urban social movement on a global level, which was decided to be carried out in Madrid in 2003, has shown over time and through the experiences and achievements developed to have been a success.

During the first years we focused on the efforts of each organisation and with important partnerships such as the FPH. Each of the organisations that make up IAI have collected resources, not only money, but more importantly our knowledge and accumulated experience, i.e. our social capital say NGOs. This "investment" has resulted in the socio-political positioning of our network at a local level in each of our countries and has, on the other hand, allowed a global articulation to organise contra hegemonic efforts to neoliberal capital which strive to invest their interests, destroying social fabrics and ecosystems.

The IAI has been able to see through these years with important campaigns: the Zero Evictions Campaign, the Urban Popular University, the constitution of the World Assembly of Inhabitants as a social, organisational and political reference and we prepared ourselves with a long term strategy and extent to continue our fights.

We continue "investing" our knowledge, experience and social capital, but it is important to reflect on how to strengthen our sustainability and with that our autonomy.

In recent years the range of partners has increased and we now work under a perspective of construction of alternative proposals with different partners and not only with the FPH. The Government of the Basque country, the European Voluntary service, FAMSÍ and local democratic governments have been added, amongst others.

Nevertheless, the work of IAI, which has 53 allied organisations in practically all 5 continents, acquires an important dimension when faced with the growing territorial and community urban problem, a consequence of the crisis of civilization in which we live. In this context IAI supports the definition of a long term strategy, where definitively we are not able and nor should we avoid the topic of financial sustainability.

In this sense, we can suggest the following lines of work:

Strengthening of financial diversification and an increase in the range of partnerships. This work has been developed by the coordinator of IAI, to which we have added a Review Committee, through which we are trying to share the responsibility and to formulate proposals to different bodies, with complete transparency.

We believe that in the coming periods it will be necessary to rely on a more defined participation from the Antennas, sharing their knowledge and contacts with other partners in a transparent form of solidarity, driving forward an organisation which comes from the local with common axes but with a global strategy.

An example of this mechanism is the proposal of the Popular Fund for Land and Housing which takes up again the particularities of the financial problem of access to land and housing in several Latin-American countries, converting it into a global fight strategy and a proposal for IAI to develop in the coming years.

This line of work involves collaboration between the partners and the global coordination in order for mutual strengthening.

Self – financing. In my opinion, however, it is not enough to achieve partnerships above our initiatives, we have to invent or re-invent mechanisms of self financing which can

develop on different levels and in particular those which offer thoughts on mechanisms from solidarity economy.

By way of ideas, I put for consideration the following proposals:

1. Introduction of an annual quota: Defined as a sum of contribution in agreement with specific conditions of each organisation. If we consider a minimum of 200 Euros, this would amount to 10,600 Euros annually, by virtue of the fact that we have 53 organisations registered as part of IAI.

2. Local projects, considering the management of our local projects as a departure point for the spending of the general coordination of IAI.

3. To work on a line of IAI products: books, diaries, t-shirts... and other items that we could sell in order to gain funds for the general coordination.

4. To analyse the possibility of a line of services: some comrade could provide services, advice, workshops, related to IAI activities and could channel 15% of their income to the general coordination of IAI.

5. To organise cultural art festivals in each country in order to gather funds, this could be related to the annual World Days for housing rights.

6. To organise campaigns for responsible consumption, inviting our friends to "barter", for example to claim the cost of a coca-cola (1.25 Euros in Mexico) for the recipe to make a biodegradable detergent... Other "barthers" in accordance with the cultural identity of each country.¹

7. Others: Use your imagination!!!

With this reflection we are trying to initiate a serious and considered process to determine action for the self financing of IAI, which we deserve.

In solidarity.

Cristina Almazán.

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As a figure, in Mexico a family can consume up to two coca colas per day, i.e. 2.5 euros a day.