Community Catalysts for Transformative Economies

THEORETICAL GUIDELINES

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1. Introduction

These guidelines are the outcome of the professional experience and participatory research carried out by the *Community Catalysts* consortium. This consortium is working on accelerating change by mapping patterns related to catalysing *emergent* and *disruptive processes* at the community level. This is primarily centred around hacking the *systemic crisis* and specifically the *structural violence* it generates upon communities, which has imposed specific behaviours that block the emergence of community patterns.

These guidelines provide the theoretical background to the different learning modalities available on the www.catalysts.community e-learning platform. This platform is being designed to become a digital hub for rural catalysts to be able to learn from and share with each other. It will have entry points for users to explore the four pillars of *resilience*, which the Stockholm Resilience Centre outlines in its "wedding cake" perspective of the United Nations' *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*: biosphere, society, economy, and governance.

The focus of these guidelines is on the third ring of the SRC's wedding cake, in which we explore the theoretical foundations of economic dynamics of rural communities. The e-learning platform Community Catalysts and these guidelines on Transformative Economies have been developed for people committed to generating and accompanying lasting change in rural communities, so that collectively we can build a *regenerative* and resilient present and future.
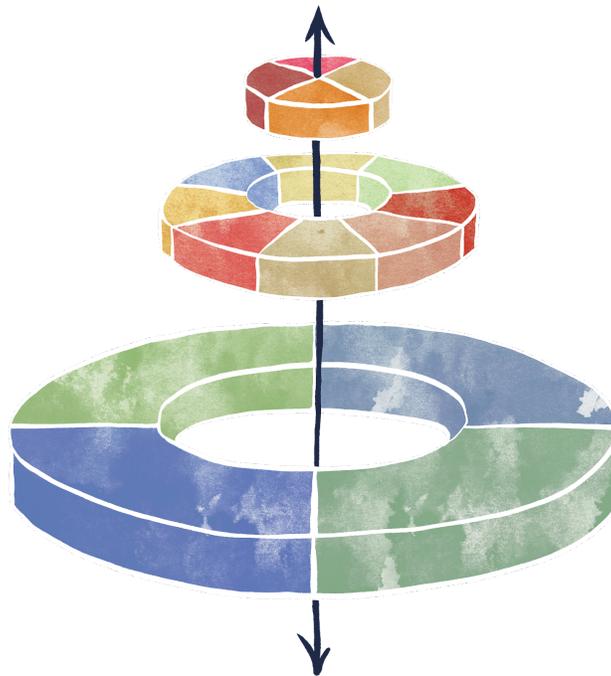
Image 01: **Wedding Cake of the United Nations' SDGs** (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

2. Context

The development of life on Earth, since its appearance some 3.5 billion years ago, has been based on confronting some extremely inhospitable conditions, collectively generating conditions more suitable for life on our planet. In the Precambrian era, the conditions were extreme; the solar radiation, the meteorites, or the low temperature, were limiting the evolution of more complex organisms. So, it was necessary to develop an atmosphere that would regulate these conditions. It has been a slow process, in which a series of methane and oxygen-generating bacteria began evolving in order to generate the planetary homeostasis that has prevailed until the present day.

The process we have undergone to inhabit this spherical rock revolving around our sun is an incredible history of challenges and difficulties, of trials and tribulations, of beginnings and endings. During this evolution we have had five episodes of mass extinction where more than 50% of the species have disappeared.
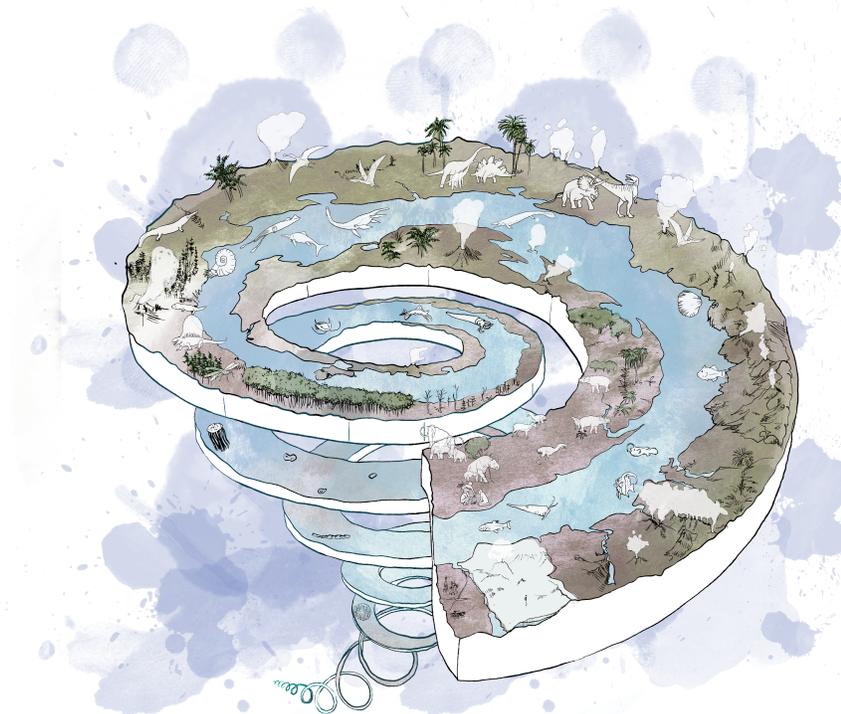
Image 02: Evolutive Spiral (Dolors Quiles , 2022)

The evolution of planetary homeostasis has made possible the increase in the complexity of the biosphere and its organisms. There are countless biological or cultural processes essential to our personal and collective lives which we carry out in a completely or partially unconscious way, as they are deeply integrated into the evolutionary process. It is easy to be surprised by the results of such evolutionary processes, with many examples of biological adaptations to extreme conditions: tree frogs capable of freezing and unfreezing while alive; desert ants that can withstand temperatures above 70 °C; and red beetles that can live at 60°C below zero.

What also captivates society are the technological advancements that the human species is capable of, which is an expression of the development of innovation and creativity we have as a species and the potential derived from it. This capacity is inherited from the evolutionary process of our cultures, wrought over hundreds of generations. But just as there are no giant redwoods in the Russian steppes, there is no technological development in a situation of hunger and precariousness. Fertility and the conditions for the existence of a complex organism are sustained by the ecosystem, and this implies that promoting innovation, adaptation and creativity to generate complex human proposals, is a systemic and generational challenge.

3. The Community Catalyst approach to nurturing Transformative Economies

\From this evolutionary perspective, the Community Catalysts consortium considers its work according to an axis where at one end we have complexity and at the other we have simplicity. When communities move towards greater complexity, they are evolving their processes to adapt to local contexts and to regenerate life. When communities move towards simplicity, they are facing constraints that generate oppression and structural violence in the system, degenerating it. These are *autopoietic* processes (Maturana and Varela, 1973), where life creates the conditions that determine its evolution. Which means that when we degenerate our environment, the environment degenerates us, in a feedback loop that leads us towards collapse.

Image 03: Symbolic illustration of *autopoiesis*
as applied to the personal or social collective scale (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

Community catalysis seeks to accelerate the evolutionary processes of human communities, in relation to their territories, towards a more complex dynamic equilibrium. Therefore, Community Catalysts consortium and platform as a learning community focuses on the conditions necessary for the transformation and not the transformation itself. If the conditions

are there, the transformation will happen, and can manifest in an infinite number of different ways. This spares us the need to control the process, basing ourselves on the trial and error of self-managed collective processes, which follow the same patterns as Precambrian bacteria. In cyclical processes such as evolution, the secrets of the future, and the challenges of the present, are buried in some layers of the past that define the causes of the present challenges.

When we focus on the conditions instead of on the actions, we need to work with patterns. That is, with the identification of contexts which tend to enhance actions with specific qualities. For example, in some cultures, parents do not try to control the actions of their descendants, but rather create the conditions for them to express their potential. Sometimes the path to be followed is not as straightforward as it might appear to be at the beginning. When we force them to follow the path that we envision for them, the results may not turn out as expected. In the case of communities, the processes also need to be emergent. When we block or impose changes, we are exerting structural violence by simplifying the structure of the community. When instead, we listen to the emerging process, and we position ourselves as a resource, improving contextual and structural conditions, we can channel the evolution of sociocultural dynamics.

Image 04: Examples of pattern language as applied to urban design (Image: Alexander, 1977)

This approach emphasises the importance of the reproductive part of the evolutionary process: the influence of fertility conditions on the forest soil have in the growth of the tree; family structure and educational process of a child in their learning; contextual and structural conditions of a community in its evolution.

That is why it is important to identify patterns that allow the process of change in a community. In these guidelines, we focus on the economic patterns of rural communities to provide a way of mapping an evolutionary path towards resilient communities. To begin the *pattern* identification, it often helps to look at the philological roots of what we are exploring. "Economy" comes from the Greek word *oikonomia* and refers to the management of the family and its goods. From a fractal and community perspective, it is significant to identify the patterns of the oikonomia, meaning the behaviour that defines our economic systems, as for example being extractive.

As we begin exploring the basic patterns that move towards community catalysis, through the regeneration of our economies, in a rooted, evolutionary and regenerative manner, incorporating disruptive economic patterns. Some of these patterns are conflict resolution, accountability, personal initiative and cooperation, among others. In this learning community we are developing a language of patterns inside a reproductive framework because we consider that it is the best way to identify and catalyse community and territory transformation processes, through the economy.
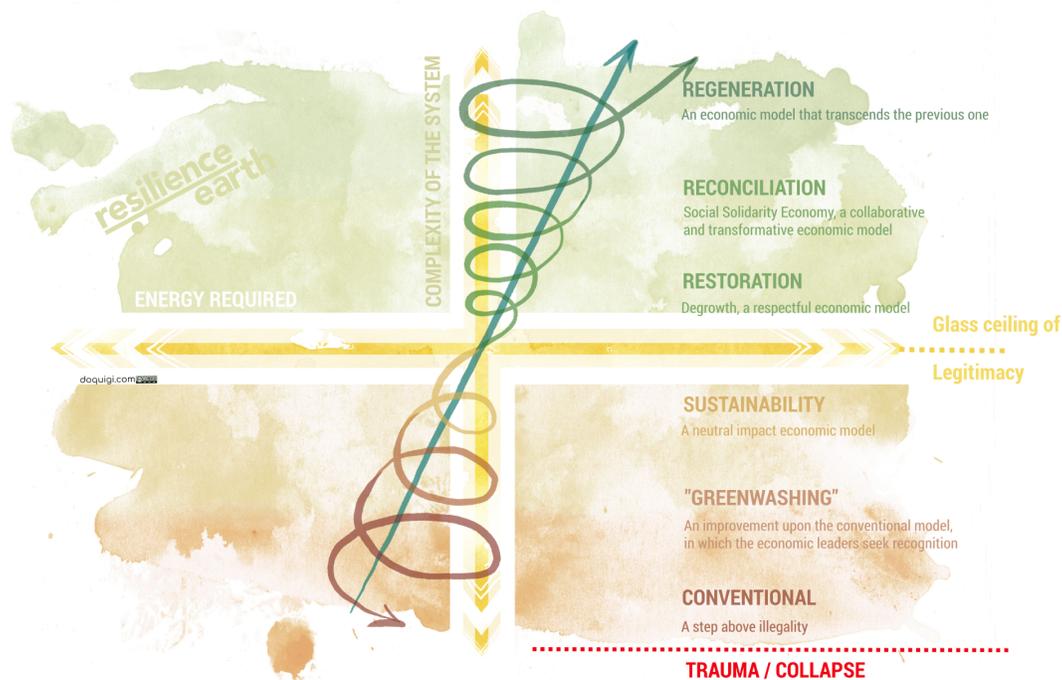

Image 05: Regenerative Spiral (Original Reed, 2010; Adapted by Resilience.Earth, 2022)

4. What are transformative economies? A systemic community perspective

4.1. Socioeconomic change is from the inside outwards

4.1.1. The egg came first

What came first, the chicken or the egg? The truth is the first eggs that we know about appeared in evolution 340 million years ago, and the emergence of the first chicken took place only 10 thousand years ago, so definitely the egg came first, which is the same as saying that productivity is derived from reproductivity.

Suitable life conditions are what allow the emergence of specific organisms, clearly in an infinite iterative cycle. In any case, life conditions are what defines in which direction they evolve, as they are the result of the interaction of all organisms on Earth *(planetary homeostasis)*. Actions and products themselves do not define much, but rather it is the interaction between all actions and products which define tendencies and general behaviours (patterns). Understanding this can allow us to recreate the conditions for the emergence of new actions and products with specific qualities.

According to Marxist theory, *reproductive economy* refers to the iterative processes that recreate the conditions necessary for the economic activities or productive processes to be carried out. This framework focuses on the dynamic nature of how the economy evolves, instead of focusing on the balance derived from the management of the supply and demand of products. That is, by assessing economic processes from a reproductive perspective, we can begin to understand the evolutionary patterns of the economy.

The reproductive perspective challenges the need for economic growth. At the same time, it questions that most of the investment of the profits of production go towards the improvement of the efficiency of the production process and that this investment decision is often only decided by the management.
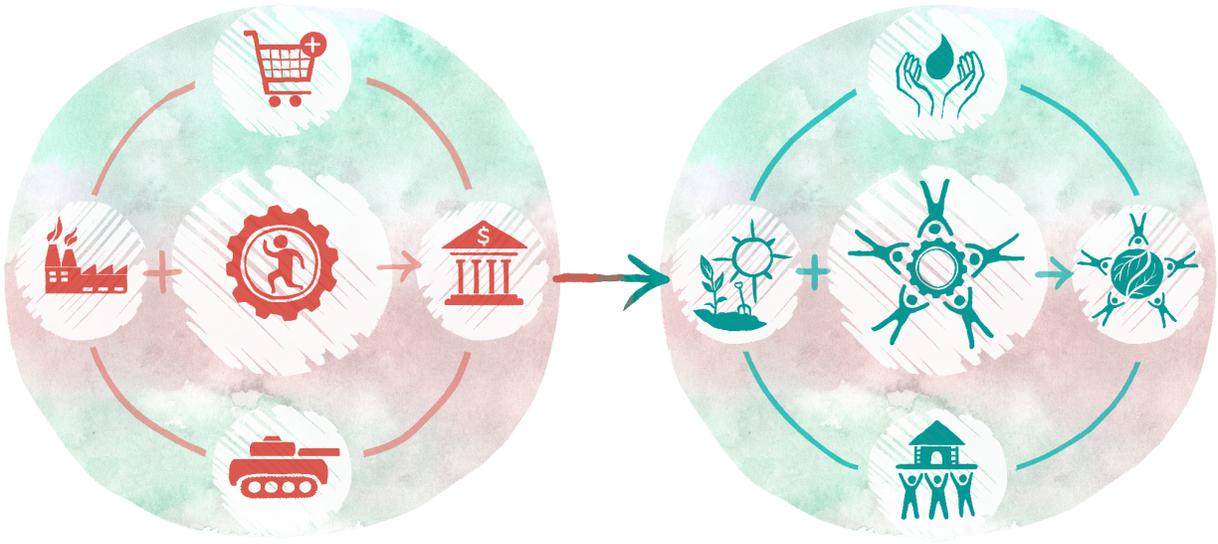
Image 06: Productive and Reproductive perspectives of economy (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

Instead, the reproductive perspective proposes the democratisation of the decision-making process of both economic production and reproduction, for example in a framework of public-private co-management. It also prioritises investments that take into consideration the quality of the *externalities* of the production process. That is, it tries to ensure that economic production generates a positive impact rather than a negative impact on the community and the territory, generating regenerative externalities instead of degenerative ones. An example of a degenerative externality is the sheer quantity of waste imported by supermarkets into rural territories, especially single use plastics. An example of a regenerative externality could include community relationships that emerge and develop in local farmers' markets between producers and consumers, and which could lead to other synergies that are positive for the community.

When we go deeper into the discussion to understand and hack the structural violence, some questions emerge like: can the necessary work be defined as something static? Or, can we address human needs based on constant patterns? Marx always rejected the tendency of the economists to treat the needs of the workers as naturally determined and immutable. As points out Lebowitz (2003) "To assume the needs to be constant allows highlighting what is not constant, what varies, the unnecessary labour, producer of surplus value, that is, the rate of exploitation suffered by the worker". In stating this, Lebowitz makes an interesting distinction with regard to the labour necessary to cover basic needs of subsistence and the necessary labour to cover basic needs as a social individual.

It is important to reference the Marxist theory of value and understand well what it tells us with regards to necessary labour, as doing this leads us directly to the centre of the mystification of capital. It is essential to reveal the nature of capital and to encourage workers to go beyond capital. In the words of Harnecker on the text of Lebowitz: "Wage is perceived both by the

capitalist and the workers as the price of the work, as the money paid for a certain quantity of work. It remains unnoticed that the capitalist is only paying the labour force, believing instead that all labour is being paid, without taking into account the needs of the workers (or of the ecosystem) which has generated the extracted resources, necessary for the productive process. There lies the base for the total mystification of capital" (Harnecker, 2005).

Exploitation and extraction are hidden, as are the evolutionary processes that generate the necessary resources and labour, and the character of this labour, be it individualised, collective or cooperative. Harnecker continues, "Considering capitalism as a whole, the means of production are recognized as the products of other members of the workers' collective. If there is an increased productivity as a result of the existence of certain means of production, it is not, then, an intrinsic hidden power of things, but the activity of workers who produced this means of production. More specifically, this increased productivity results from the coordination and cooperation of social labour". In other words, the increase in the production of the extractive process from nature is based on the exploitation of communities.

To change this mainstream perspective, we must take into account both the productive work carried out as well as the socially necessary reproductive work (i.e. administration, cleaning, caregiving for dependents, etc) and the natural resources used by these two processes. It is then that we can understand that it is essential for a workforce to rest, recover and strengthen for tomorrows' work in an environment in which they have access to the services needed for this to happen. It then becomes obvious and necessary to give value to not only the hours we dedicated to the productive work, but also to the hours of reproductive work and ecosystem services.

4.1.2. The drift of patriarchy

On the other hand, it should be pointed out that reproductive and care work is not the result of a choice, but of a social allocation that does not come together with a price. Being a non-market activity, it barely adjusts to the concept of wage labour as it is socially understood. By not having an assigned price, there is no direct remuneration for domestic labour, and therefore, it is excluded from state accounts, and this is a consequence of a concept of labour seemingly neutral and limited to the field of production. To the extent that these reproductive tasks, and especially caregiving tasks, do not have an established value. Whoever can, and this must be emphasised, only whoever can, ignores them.

The only way we can become conscious of the value these reproductive tasks have, is to look into how much time they take. Time is not only limited and scarce, and has important value, but is also constructed. This subjective construction of time changes the function of the position each person has in the community structure, their power and *privilege*. It is this differentiated occupation of time that will generate different consequences in the different fields of life: personal, community and work.

The most direct and present consequences of this different occupation of time are reflected in the cases of the covid19 pandemic, where the data showed a higher rate of infection in women. This was not due to a different immune system of men, but rather because the highest percentage of people who dedicated their time to be at the front line of covid19 were women. As Matxalen Legarreta explains in La Directa (Fayos, 2020), in the area of public health this has been more obvious, but also in the nursing homes or in the housework, where women have a more direct contact with people.

"This health crisis shows the importance of work related to caregiving and the sustainability of life", says Castro (2020) also at La Directa. She adds, "We can see the conditions of extreme precariousness and social and economic vulnerability of the people who carry out these jobs, paid, unpaid or in a standardised way, as in healthcare services". The use of time dedicated to reproductive and care work emerged strongly during the lockdown and its invisibility has become evident. We can speak now of a double gender gap: in the level of exposure to the virus and in the workload for the sustainability of life. Georgina Monge (2021) spoke of this widening gap when she analysed the consequences of the previous global economic crisis and warned about the serious situation to which women would be exposed if urgent measures were not taken.

In this line, feminist economy exposes the reality of how we use our time. To achieve empirical results we can rely on time-use surveys, which have been very useful to make largely unregulated areas of daily life more visible, as well as highlighting gender inequalities. These types of surveys have been handed out to the public administration since the 1995 United Nations Conference on Women in Beijing, where they were recommended to member countries in order to track Household Production Satellite Accounts. Through these satellite accounts, the aim is to be able to determine the monetary value of housework in relation to the GDP of each country.

And it is also feminist economy that starts the debate about the need or not of giving a price to the unpaid work. The importance of this work can be established quantitatively to determine the enhancement of welfare, according to two models; time or money. And it is in this dichotomy where its suitability or complementarity of both models is considered. Unpaid reproductive work opens the door to a qualitative perspective which brings as close to the expansion of welfare, as says Amaya Pérez (2014), "through the generation of an immense quantity of personal services, the emotional and relational needs of peoples' lives are covered". If we focus only on the perspective of the market, we stay limited to its vision of an abstract person. We will not be able to see the subjects with all their particularities and differences when leading significant lives. In the market field, not all lives contribute the necessary value for the development of all dimensions of the life of a person needed to live a significant life.

Image 07: Tree half alive representing the values necessary to thrive (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

Pérez warns about not idealising the reproductive sphere as if in this field there weren't inequalities or structural violence, "...neither are all tasks in this sphere essential to sustain life and can even be mechanisms of control. Keeping the home excessively clean is clearly unnecessary to sustain life, but it is essential to subjugate women to the ideal of angel of the hearth".

In the same market logic, the social behaviours of people are removed from the sustainability of their lives. Be it voluntarily, delegating daily care to third parties, so as to advance in professional development, or because the labour market demands full availability and leaves no time for anything else, Pérez continues, "Without caregivers, there can be no people going to the market or anywhere else. It is not just a matter of hiding a key area of socioeconomic activity, but of imposing a vital model of self-sufficiency, which cannot be universal, as it is only maintained by hiding the dependencies and the people who solve them. This violent discourse created by the patriarchy *paradigm* is the basis for a socioeconomic system in which life is put at the service of the accumulation of capital. Self-sufficiency is a chimaera, the violence of which we see in the functioning of care, in its crises and in the injustice of global care chains."

4.1.3. A community is the sum of self-realised people and their relations

It is necessary to determine the needs inherent to human beings, especially those which enable the reproduction of life. Equally necessary is how to work with them, their importance and the conflicts they generate. In section 4 on evolutionary patterns from the Guidelines of Community Catalysts for Regenerative Development, we address the importance of stratifying human development according to its needs. Maslow depicts this scale of needs as a five-level model: the first four levels can be grouped as deficit needs; he called the higher level self-realisation, motivation for growth, or need to be.
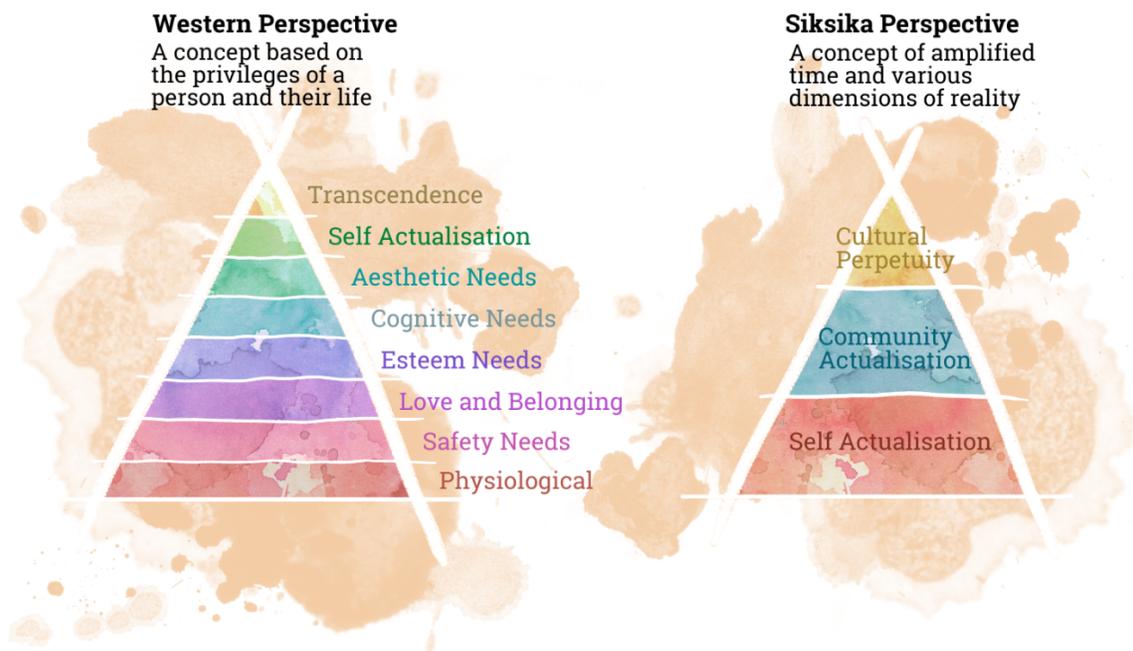
Image 08: Maslow Triangle and Siksika (adapted by Resilience Earth, by Dolors Quiles 2022)

The basic idea is that higher needs are only addressed when the lower needs have been met. According to the *hierarchy of needs* of Maslow (as he interpreted the teepee of community development by the Siksika indigenous nation), we have different needs which are scaled from basic needs to a self-actualisation process. The basic physiological needs ensure the individual's homeostasis (referring to survival): to breath, drink water (hydrate) and feed oneself; sleep (rest) and eliminate body residues; avoid pain; keep bodily temperature, in a warm atmosphere or with clothing.

After those come the need for safety and protection, which appear once the physiological needs are met: physical safety (guarantee the integrity of our own body) and health (guarantee

the proper functioning of the body), need for security of resources (house, money, car, etc.), need for housing (protection).

Once these are satisfied, social needs appear (affiliation), those related to our social nature; function of relationship (friendship, partner, colleagues or family); and social acceptance. And just below self-actualisation is the need of self-esteem; both the high esteem that refers to self-respect and the low esteem that refers to respect from others.

Finally, the need for self-actualization, which Maslow named in various ways, is the need that gives meaning to life through the potential development of an activity and not in reaction to an external system, and therefore can be more creative. This one is only reached when the rest are satisfied, or at least to a certain degree.

In the face of the current systemic crisis (unmet physical needs; loss of friendships, connection; unstable economy; affected health), the fact of inhabiting communities becomes a preventive measure so as not to go down so many steps in the hierarchy of needs. Community helps maintain the conditions to satisfy our higher needs. This enables us to act from our own selves and not only in reaction to an external context, and so, be more authentic and creative. By this, we are talking about being more permeable to the violence of the system; empathy is essential and anger empowers and strengthens us, but getting stuck in anger limits us.

Similar processes go on inside communities, and may even parallel the ones that come to them from the outside, at the regional or continental scale. So it is important to gain skills, techniques, and tools that enable us to work in depth on these patterns. It is essential to create conditions for a satisfactory development of the processes lived inside groups, developing reproductive patterns of a regenerative character. People do not start to be able to sustain reciprocal relationships until they overcome the four deficit levels, and have the motivation to be, which involves you giving back to the biosphere and the community what they have given you to become who you are.

4.1.4. Social tendencies not based on experience generate hypertrophy

The evolutionary process of an individual throughout the hierarchy of needs depends on caregiving, as understood as caring for wellbeing. Amaya Pérez Orozco (Pérez, 2014), explains how the concept is now in a process of hypertrophy, implying that nowadays, caregiving can mean almost anything. Unfortunately, when a concept becomes so widespread, it eventually becomes nothing and means nothing. As a result, it is impossible to turn caregiving into something specific, which makes it difficult to create demands, such as public policies or specific tools, to cultivate them. At the same time, the idealisation of caregiving is also criticised, especially in context of the current market processes, which commodifies it, associating it to a natural pattern of femininity.

Subsequently, we speak of social reproduction, a broader concept which refers to the

maintenance and reproduction of life. First the term was domestic work, later housework was preferred, but these two terms delimited a space that was not real. This type of work, traditionally done by women, is carried out in large part inside the house. Nonetheless, the moment women go out to the market or pick up the kids from school, the action takes place in the public space and involves socialising with people; with the woman doctor, with the woman teacher. Therefore, a slightly broader dimension had to be included, and so we started speaking of reproductive work.

But the use of the term reproductive work seemed to refer to the act of repeating the same action permanently, and that is not correct. Care work goes far beyond repeating actions mechanically. Maybe wiping the dust is mechanical; regardless, cooking is not and affections, definitely, are far from being so. So a whole other current appeared arguing that, when speaking of reproductive work we imply all work that can be commodified, and that is also incorrect.

Large parts of reproductive work can be externalised and taken to the market or public space, but there is a part that cannot. Care and affection have great revolutionary potential, because they escape from the logic of the market and because it is work that has been done by women. This helps us understand that the concept of economy must be broader and more comprehensive, to include the sustainability of life. But it is not only sustaining life, there is even more work involved. And that is how the term was brought down to: social reproduction.

Social reproduction encompasses all work that generates and recreates people. Work that generates them, enables them to be alive and to keep on living and reproducing. That is the central level of a regenerative economy, which makes it possible for people of a community to stay at the top of Maslow's pyramid and, in that way, stop reacting to structural violence and instead provide reciprocal value to the community to which they belong. Thus generating a virtuous cycle towards the growth of complexity, and in consequence increasing the *regeneration* and resilience of the community.

Image 09: Upward Spiral (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

4.2. From countenance to hope

4.2.1. The collapse is already here, but it is unevenly distributed

From the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to the White Paper on Growth, Productivity and Employment of the European Union (DATA) and the creation of the Sustainable European Cities Project, the United Nations Conference on Urban Settlements - Habitat III or the COP26 Summit in Glasgow we find three clearly stated premises. In the first place, we live in a climate emergency which requires deep and urgent actions both in the political and economic spheres. In second place, this situation is closely related to the model of global production, distribution, and consumption due to the growing demands of energy and natural resources. And, thirdly, this model and its impacts have an unequal effect on populations and countries on a global scale (both in the socioeconomic and geographical fields) that must be taken into account when putting forward the necessary transformations.

In accordance with these premises, Human rights organisations, environmentalists, trade unions, and academics around the world have raised the need for a change of paradigm. This is necessary both for the design of new urban and economic policies that contribute to transforming the model of production, distribution and consumption, and for the critical

analysis of the current model and calculation of its impacts on the climate and quality of life of people.

In this regard, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing, Raquel Rolnik (DATA), notes that "the current model does not have the capacity to respond to the environmental, social and political crisis." In her view, it is based on the "utopia of unlimited growth and toxicity." In an interview with Crític, Rolnik also points to the fact that 19th-century Socialism was based on the same logic. She considers that proposals such as degrowth, agroecology, or other proposals on the ecosocial agenda, help us rethink the way we relate to the planet. This approach is also defended by Nancy Fraser, who argues that beyond the capital-labour contradiction, which has historically defined the analysis in critical economy, other substantive conditions of capitalism must be taken into account; like its extractive relationship to nature, the relationship production versus reproduction, and the conceptualization and relationship between the private and public spheres.

From this perspective of analysis, UAB associate professor and technician in sustainable development at the Generalitat de Catalunya, Roc Padró, points to the need of moving towards an ecology that is not conservationist but social; taking a reproductive approach. To this end, according to Padró, it is necessary to break away from the psychological anchors of infinite growth, unlimited human needs and techno-optimism (green economy) to move towards an ecosocial transition. What Kate Raworth defines it as, "a long (nonlinear) process of profound and integral changes in our socioeconomic, cultural, and political system. Once this process of paradigm shift has taken place, we can generate a development within the limits of the planet and which sustains the life of humanity, that is, the safe and fair space for humanity," where we begin to develop a regenerative perspective, stop thinking about humanity and start thinking about the biosphere, take responsibility for our own evolution and understand better our role and co-responsibility for the future of life on earth.

That's why it's important to understand that if care goes to the heart of the economy, the biosphere goes to the heart of care, because the planet is the reproductive ecosystem that creates the conditions for our existence. All species we live along with have been made largely invisible despite providing the oxygen, water, food and absolutely everything we need to live on earth. Their workforce is invaluable, and taking them into account and co-creating new futures together is called regenerating

4.2.2. From climate change to climate emergency

The summary of the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2021, states that we are already immersed in climate change and that this is irreversible. Adding that what is at stake now is either transformation or collapse. A situation for which it gives only a twelve-year scope for action. This report and similar ones have been

prepared by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and promoted by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) by scientists from 195 countries. They point out that there has recently been a change of narrative from Climate Change to Climate Emergency. This document is a summary of major advances in climate science, specifically advances in understanding climate dynamics, the current state of the climate, the assessment of human influence, and predictable consequences.

This report will provide the basis for the work of the other IPCC groups, which presented the sixth climate review report in February 2022. Reports that have warned, more categorically each time, of the terrible consequences of climate change. The latest report warns that "the decisions society makes now will determine whether our species thrives or simply survives as the 21st century unfolds," the difference between Maslow's four levels of deficit and the fifth of motivation. We have to decide if we want to be individuals in a human society, or human communities within the biosphere.

The IPCC summary warns with great concern how processes of planetary degradation are being activated that will accelerate climate change and make us go beyond points of no return. The report outlines five scenarios designed to illustrate plausible paths through which temperature rise and carbon dioxide emissions may develop. In all scenarios, from the one with most emissions, where humans do little to change their current behaviour, to the most drastic alternative, where humans act urgently, temperatures will probably rise by 1.5 °C over the next two decades. That is the result of a simple fact: the warming we are experiencing today is the result of emissions from decades ago and we will suffer today's emissions in two decades time. Therefore, from here onward the situations diverge significantly.

If humans act with urgency, temperatures will reach a peak and then drop, helping to stabilise the planet and life on it. If we allow emissions to continue unchecked, temperatures are likely to rise by more than 4.4 °C by the end of the century; a level that would make life uninhabitable in large areas of the planet. According to Ko Barrett, vice president of the IPCC and deputy director of research for the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), "it is still possible to prevent many of the most serious impacts." Adding, "but it really requires an unprecedented transformational change, (...) a fast and immediate reduction in greenhouse gas emissions." In this regard, it should be noted, although it seems obvious, and is central to all reports and negotiations (policies), that these emissions are closely related to the consumption of fossil fuels, which sustains the bulk of production and distribution of state economies and the global economic system.

Image 10: **Global Temperature Warming** (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

That is why the report states, or demands, that in order not to exceed the average increase of 1.5 ° it is necessary to reduce emissions to zero in the next twelve years (from the publication of the report of the Panel of 2008).

4.2.3. Transitioning as a species from adolescence to maturity

The change of paradigm for such a striking transition goes from a fragmented and individualised perspective to a community and territory one. This implies a perspective that emerges from the dialogue within communities and that takes into account the relations to the land, where all our economic activity is used to support the territory, and is organised around care.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is just a timid approach to a responsible economy. We move on from an economic model that accumulates profits in a small percentage of the population, extracting resources from nature without taking responsibility for any externality or impact on ecosystem services, and exploiting the working class as we explained in the previous chapter. CSR keeps governance in the management. Therefore, the territorial strategy defined by the economy despite assuming a percentage, usually minimal, of the externalities of the production process, remains in the hands of a few people who have not gone through any democratic process.

There is a growing number of models which work on the responsibility of the economy, such as B corporations, Teal organisations and others. All of them promote the democratisation of *governance* and accountability for externalities, and many propose transition processes from conventional to responsible companies. Hence, the transition generally involves a top to bottom process, although there are also organisations arising from these models that follow a bottom-up approach.

There are also proposals focused in community formats, such as the social and solidarity economy (SSE), which is organised in ecosystems, in a very organic and decentralised way, in emerging structures of a *mycelial nature*, with great diversity in forms of leadership. An economy that transcends the public-private duality, to generate a model for a community economy. SEE proposals follow a bottom-up approach or, at the least, work on the democratisation of their internal governance.

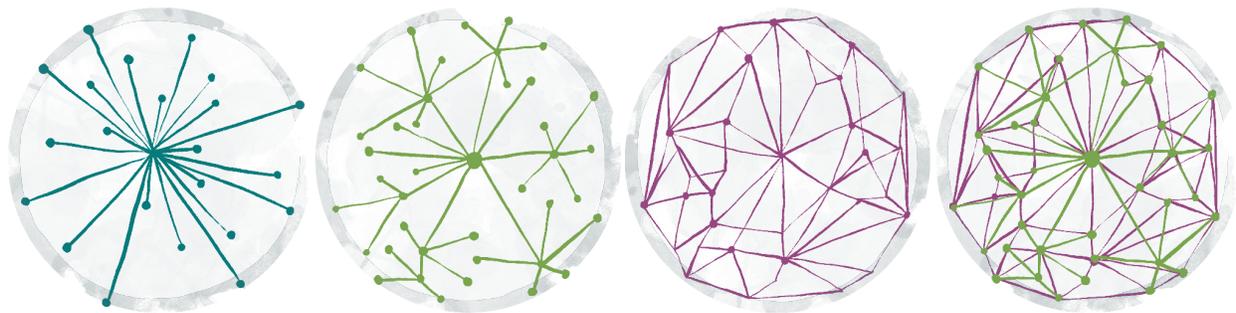Image 11: Decentralisation and Distribution (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

In indigenous cosmovisions we can see how the democratisation of the economy includes and is subjected to the will of the natural ecosystem, a cultural technology which we have lost as a society due to the various *colonisations* and structural violence. These patterns are the ones we need to retrieve if we want to reverse our destiny.

4.3. From sustainability to economic regeneration

4.3.1. Economic transformation requires democratic growth

Internal democracy is one of the elements that characterise and define economic activities that are part of Transformative Economies. It is just as important for members to be able to participate and take control of the activity as is to share ownership of the project. One without the other will undermine the sense of belonging of the members and weaken the potential for transformation.

To accomplish internal democracy, a series of well-established and community consented structures and mechanisms that enable maximum participation are needed. If these structures do not exist, a legal structure defined within the Social and Solidarity Economy and designed to promote the participation of members as much as possible, may slowly, but inexorably, transition to a simpler structure such as the conventional business model. (Section 4: Evolutionary Patterns, Guidelines of Community Catalysts for Regenerative Development.)

An organisational member will only show their highest level of complicity with the project if they are involved and their voice is of significant importance in decision-making concerning their responsibilities. Therefore, power must be distributed within the initiative in an equitable way, that is, applying the principle of subsidiarity, distributing decision-making based on the implications of the issue, be it personal, involving the group, organisation or community, and including all relevant voices in the process. (Section 2.3: In the end it turns out that people were not lazy, Guidelines of Community Catalysts for Regenerative Development).

Image 12: *XYZ Theory*: The most common 'people are lazy and don't care' vision of the world. It represents traditional hierarchical systems based on control (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

There are different organisational structures, both for business or communities. If we move from simple to complex following the regenerative spiral (Section 4: Evolutionary Patterns, Handbook of Community Catalysts for Regenerative Development), we will notice that we can have structures: extremely vertical like a dictatorship; more representative as the pyramids of social democracies; horizontal such as popular assemblies; decentralised as flat organisations; or distributed as SSE ecosystems.

Each of these structures behaves differently, the more complex the structure, the more complex its behaviour and, therefore, more capable of generating inclusive and resilient democratic patterns. At the same time, complex structures have the ability to behave like simple structures when convenient, which doesn't happen the other way around. For example, a distributed structure can behave like a vertical structure in an emergency, when a clear and defined leadership is needed. And it can also behave horizontally when important issues for the organisation or community need to be discussed. Hence, to evolve the economy into a transformative economy, we need to transform it internally.

4.3.2. Size matters

Many initiatives of the Social and Solidarity Economy are small in size, as their growth pattern is ecosystemic in nature, which promotes and facilitates internal democracy, and increases its resilience. However, when they reach a considerable size, participation processes can be affected unless internal distributed governance structures are adopted as proposed by Federic Laloux, mimicking ecosystem structures, like some multinationals or large companies such as Buurtzorg. We-Q or Sun Hydraulics do. These do not reach the democratic levels of SSE ecosystems, but they are surprisingly high for companies of such magnitude.

The main difference between a large, decentralised and distributed organisation, and a decentralised and distributed ecosystem of organisations, is a matter of membranes. In a large organisation, the most impermeable membrane is between the system and the world, and having highly permeable membranes internally between the parts of the same organisation increases the agility and efficiency of production processes. Instead, in the ecosystem of organisations, the outer membrane is very impermeable as it is that of the ecosystem with society, and the inner membranes, those that limit organisations, are more defined. The advantages of this system is that it is adaptable, as sovereignty is greatly distributed and so is the ability to generate disruptive proposals. At the same time, it has a more open relationship with the community thanks to the permeable outer membrane, which creates the possibility of working from a community economy perspective. It may not be as efficient as large organisations, but it is clearly more adaptive, resilient, complex, and rooted, which are the characteristics we need to be able to deal with the systemic crisis.

These types of more complex community and organisational patterns that are currently being developed are not new, we can find them in all indigenous communities, from which we can learn emerging patterns really adapted to the territory that take on all externalities and generate positive impacts. The difference is that today we need to extrapolate these patterns to digitalized mycelial networks that interconnect the entire planet, in structures that are neither very little interconnected, where communication is lacking, such as small isolated communities, nor too interconnected, where they become rigid, such as in cities. For instance, a rural territorial structure can grow in complexity, increasing resilience.

Image 13: **Rural Resilient Town** (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

4.3.3. Power is not passed on, it is shared

Power is paradoxical, the more we accumulate it the less of it there is, and on the contrary, when we distribute and share it, the more abundant it becomes, and here we could talk about leaderful organisations. In the SSE there is a need to control and distribute power, although this can be done using different patterns. Some of these patterns can be the rotation of roles, the generation of collective systems of evaluation, the generation of indicators, or the employment of external evaluators. And to manage power we can use coordination space patterns, decision making through consensus in operational decisions, annual retreats, among others. If few people take decisions, the organisation has very limited power, but if the power is distributed and everybody participates in the decision making process, power multiplies. But for that to happen we must be able to accept disagreement, as if decision making only happens in plenary collective spaces, the process may be horizontal but it is not distributed nor decentralised, and it limits the management of power due to a lack of trust.

The first step to enhance participation is to get rid of the concept that some members think and decide, and others simply act. This vertical concept is counterproductive, as it creates professional and emotional differences between people and motivates and demotivates them differently depending on their roles. The capacity, or how easily the project allows for people to develop both roles, will increase their sense of belonging, and engage them in the decision-making process.

The participation and engagement of a significant part of the group in decision-making and development of strategies will represent an excellent use of all the human potentialities that constitute the project and encourage cooperative behaviours. This will increase the efficiency and well-being of people who are part of it, as well as the plurality and uniqueness of decisions. The participation and decision-making process must have a real and genuine effect on the course of the project, by influencing the organisation or community. Hence its eminently cooperative element, which many commercial companies are introducing into their structures, as it generates a quantifiable improvement in welfare and productivity.

Participation in the workplace or in community structures allows members to develop the skills and confidence necessary to participate in society. Initiatives within the Social and Solidarity Economy framework are forums where people can learn to participate in decision-making processes. In turn, this helps develop habits of political involvement that create a democratic union of equal and engaged people who support a stable democratic order. Thus, democratic participation in entities guarantees a more successful business decision-making processes and stronger communities.
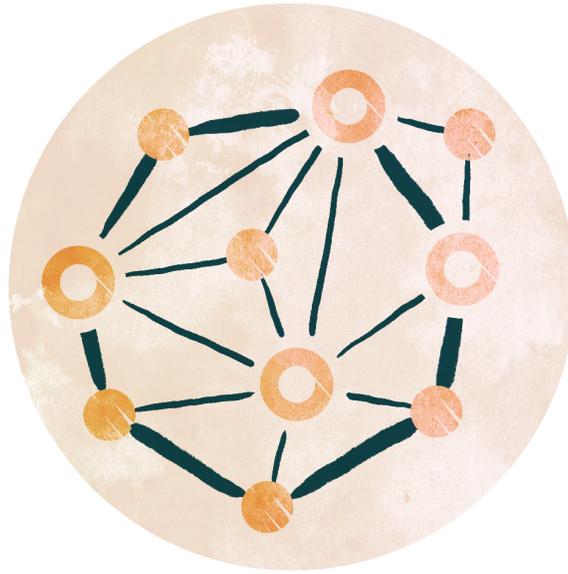
Image 14: **Decentralised Power** (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

The participation of members must be enhanced and reinforced by entities. To this end there are several actions that can be taken, such as: collecting and organising information about different patterns and best ideas; identifying negative or harmful trends and creating tools or techniques to improve them; compiling and making accessible information that demonstrates how the different patterns generate suggestions for change on a wide range of indicators that include, for example, financial success, employee engagement, social relationship and others; examining and assessing current patterns of internal democracy; gathering examples of innovative patterns; promoting the testing of alternative approaches; and organising information.

As a result, the organisation chart of the entity will act as a reflection of its democratic will and an expression of participatory spaces. From the moment when groups or communities are given precedence over individuals, a qualitative leap is made in the organisation. Group work, with spaces for inquiry and decision-making promotes satisfaction and well-being, while enhancing learning and commitment, and grants better quality products and services.

Hence, the organisation chart will have a horizontal structure, in contrast to the characteristic verticality of commercial businesses or other simple forms of organisation. As mentioned, horizontality leads to self-organisation, which in turn leads to an increase in participation and to the decentralisation and distribution of power. As the horizontal structure decentralises and distributes, it enhances the autonomy of people who are part of it and appreciates their diversity, being it cultural, learning (dyslexia, ADD, Asperger…), genders, ideologies, beliefs and others.

4.3.4. Leadership involves all of us

In Social and Solidarity Economy projects, especially democratically managed ones, leadership exists, but unlike commercial companies or other simpler forms, these forms of leadership are participatory or open. Participatory leadership is characterised by being like a two-way street, in which the leader is inspired by people around them first, so that they can positively influence the group afterwards. While this form of leadership is also open, leadership has traditionally been eminently patriarchal and authoritarian, and involved behaviours such as manipulation and coercion, among others. Subsequently, it developed into a more empathetic leadership and included forms such as coaching, delegation, and others. And in emerging structures, leadership can take almost any form, from an emerging leadership to a leadership in altered states of consciousness, or a silent leadership.

Image 15: **Geese** (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

It's important to mention that leadership in these democratic structures does not have to be absolute, meaning there must be different leaders with diverse leadership styles in all spaces, creating a mosaic of ways of working and seeing reality that complement each other.

The role of a participatory leader is to model and set an honest, consistent, and committed example; shining light on what direction to follow, promoting tactics and strategy, and facilitating the entry of new contributions; enhancing skills, creating spaces for training and group work and helping others to meet goals.

4.3.5. Community technologies

The most suitable and democratic space to discuss strategic and transcendent issues of the organisation or community is the assembly or any other plenary space. It is where, through different systems of participation, be it one person - one vote, or more dynamic and deliberative systems, members can use their voices and reach democratic spaces. These meeting spaces must be properly regulated and facilitated to avoid any voices from being omitted.

These assemblies must serve three purposes at once: efficiency, democratic participation, and personal relations of cordiality and cooperation. In this sense, there is a need for a rational distribution of assembly time: we will find the opening space, the inquiry space, the decision spaces, and the closing and celebration space.

Inquiry processes are especially beneficial for organisations and communities, as they are a place to share knowledge and enrich themselves collectively. These spaces need to be managed effectively, with tools such as brainstorming, rounds, forums, open spaces, or separate work spaces.

For the proper management of the inquiry processes, it is necessary to have someone who facilitates the process, favouring the flow of discussions, promoting dialogue and participation of all people. They must also navigate tension, summarise points of view and encourage a constructive and positive spirit of the group. The facilitator will never play a leading role or intervene excessively in the debate, but will be both outside and inside, noticing the feelings of the group from the internal space, but with the perspective of what is also happening in the external space. The role of the facilitator also requires maintaining an order with flexibility and being neutral in the debate. Hence, they will need to set clear rules for discussions and focus on managing emotions during the assembly.

The facilitator's role is important to get the groups' relationships flowing and to reach agreements. In order for the facilitator to understand the internal dynamics, it is necessary to refer to the three realities, described by Arnold Mindell (Process mind, 2010), that play an essential role within the group.

First, there is the consensual reality, which corresponds to the reality that can be measured and quantified and is related to our daily, objective and shared experience. These are aspects of reality on which we can all reach consensus, and include everything that we normally consider to be real and in which all polarities manifest. It is the space for diversity of races, nationalities, gender, beliefs, social levels, wealth, sexual orientations, political views, etc.

Second, there is the reality of dreams, experiences that we do not pay too much attention to, which are our beliefs and values. Here we also find our external and internal prejudices and judgments and our internal dialogues, as well as the ambivalence in receiving or sending information. Here lie as well our dreams and projects, fears and worries, and emotions and feelings.

Finally, the reality of the essence, from which we can observe our reality and ourselves, without judgement, and understand what is happening. From here, we can respond to the "why" of what is happening; connect with the source of our wounds and emotions; discover unexpected and creative solutions from this perspective. It is the most transpersonal, spiritual and transcendental reality.

Being aware of, recognizing and deepening these realities will be necessary for the group to have a good internal functioning; but it will even be more necessary for the facilitator to be aware of this to guide the group during meetings and assemblies.

If we take a closer look at the roles, we find that groups and initiatives are made up of people, with a mix of visions, emotions and experiences that combine efforts to carry out a project with a shared vision and mission. That is why it is not uncommon, and is also necessary, for discrepancies to appear that could end up in conflict. Although conflict is frowned upon, it is an element that enhances growth and evolution of the group, but only when managed with the necessary tools and time.

We can describe different types of conflicts. On the one hand, it can be a clash or tension between two parties or two points of view; or parties with genuinely different interests. It can arise from experiencing diversity as a threat; the opinions, perceptions or experiences of the other party. Or from moments of discomfort, trouble or stress, or scenarios perceived as dangerous or as opportunity. When we change our perspective, we can start to have conflicts in a creative way.
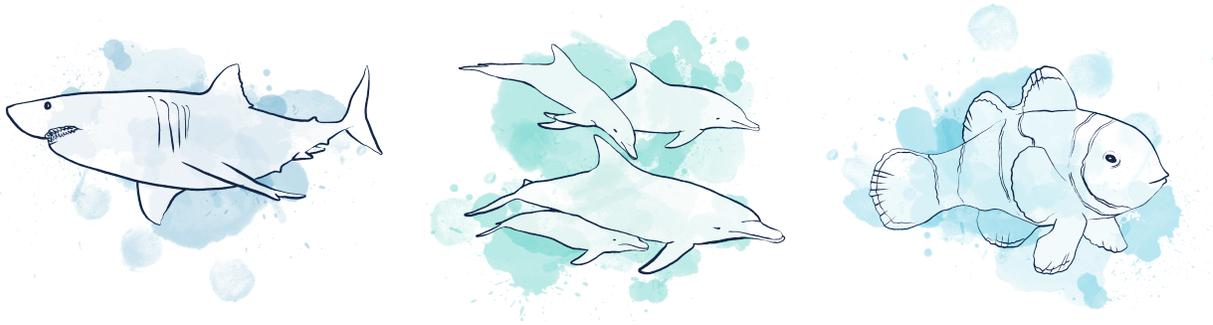
Image 16: **Different approaches to conflict** (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

The organisation must have the tools to manage this conflict and attain all four phases of Mindell's conflict resolution theory. In the first phase, conflict is not yet perceived and there is apparently no need to address it; however, at this stage it is interesting to see how this affects the way we build our opinions and positions. In the second phase, the problem is already detected, but it is polarised, and there is a feeling of discomfort; at this stage it is interesting to see and detect how these conflicts affect people's behaviour. The third phase is reached when the challenge of managing the group begins, where parties try to understand one another and begin to value the positions that come from the other side. The fourth phase is transversal, enabling the other three phases to be expressed in a deep way. Following these phases doesn't guarantee that a challenge in an organisation is reconciled in a way that brings equilibrium back, as sometimes *reconciliation* is expressed through splitting or forking the organisation in a damage controlled way.

4.3.6. The plurality of forms is the beauty of SSE

A social and solidarity project can take different forms. In the previous sections, we discussed the organisational and internal characteristics that a project should take into consideration. This gives a scope that includes a wide variety of forms, from more informal ones, such as time banks and underground economy, to legal forms less inclined towards economic activity such as associations, or the most formal versions such as cooperatives.

It is not necessary for these initiatives to have a legal form, nor is it indicative that their social impact is going to be less if they don't. They need to have the form that best suits their needs at a given time and place. Regardless, Social and Solidarity Economy projects can be described as groups of people who meet voluntarily to satisfy their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations. Therefore, the legal form they adopt must allow this to happen.

The legal form is not an element that unequivocally determines whether an initiative falls within the Social Economy, but it is important in facilitating or hindering the dynamics that make it possible to democratise its internal management. Democratic practices can be carried out in

different legal forms depending on the country. And new legal forms are appearing, adding to the range of options.

The cooperative is one of the leading legal forms that best suit the Social and Solidarity Economy framework. The first cooperatives were born during the second half of the 19th century and quickly spread around the world, and in 1895 the *International Cooperative Alliance (ICA)* was created. During this meeting, the 7 principles that would govern the cooperatives that were part of the ICA were elaborated. The following are the cooperative principles:

1st Principle:
Voluntary and open participation

Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political, or religious discrimination.

2nd Principle:
Democratic management

Cooperatives are democratic organisations led by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership.

3rd Principle:
Economic participation of the members

Members contribute equitably to the capital of cooperatives. Part of this capital is common property of the cooperative. At the same time, members receive limited compensation in relation to the capital contributed, and allocate the surpluses for the development of their cooperative by setting up reserves, part of which will be indivisible, benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative and for the support of other activities that are approved.

4th Principle:
Autonomy and independence

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organisations controlled by their members. If they reach agreements with other organisations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their co-operative autonomy.

5th Principle:
Education, training and information

Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperative. They inform the general public, particularly young people and opinion leaders, about the nature and benefits of cooperation.

6th Principle: Cooperation among cooperatives	Cooperatives serve their social fabric in the most effective way possible and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional, and international structures.
7th Principle: Concern for community	Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their social fabric.

According to the International Cooperative Alliance more than 12% of the people on earth are cooperators, with more than 3 million existing cooperatives, and these provide jobs or work opportunities to 10% of the employed population.

On the other hand, another legal form that complies with the ideology of the Social and Solidarity Economy is an association. Associations are groups of people formed to carry out a collective activity in a stable way, organised democratically and non-profit.

4.3.7. With zest for life (Not for profit, but for life)

In regard to these characteristics, it should be clarified that non-profit includes the possibility of obtaining profits, but with the obligation to reinvest them in the social purpose, without distributing them in any case among partners or transferring it to other persons or for-profit entities. Associations can hire staff and carry out related economic activities if this helps them achieve the social goal of the project.

These principles give clues about the fundamentals of Social and Solidarity Economy. The first thing that may come to mind is about the ownership of the initiative and about where the power lies. The second, third and fourth principles are very clear in this regard, indicating that the property resides in the people who make up the project.

In projects within the SSE framework, regardless of where the capital needed to start off or operate the socioeconomic initiative comes from, the decision-making power is in the hands of people directly involved. It is essential to define the centre of activities, and what will make this a social initiative, and this centre is the people. Project members must be above capital, and so capital must not be a factor in determining power or ownership.

We are talking about collective ownership, where decisions are made according to membership, not capital contributed. From this derives a decisive reality, that the element that must guide decisions within a project framed within the Social and Solidarity Economy is the well-being of people, replacing capital as a central element.

Putting people at the centre means providing decent working conditions for both members and workers. It is important that these jobs are stable, that they are paid fairly (with a higher

salary than the sector agreement) and that the accorded tasks are in line with the agreed working hours. Needless to say, that is not always possible as the structural violence that these organisations confront, lead to precarious and self exploding circumstances.

The issue of wages will be one of the factors to consider in a project that wants to be framed in the Social and Solidarity Economy. The balance between the wages of members and employees must be fair and reasonable so as not to create differences that could affect the harmony of the organisation. A ratio between the highest and lowest salary is considered fair when it is less than 5 in ratio.

4.3.8. Information is the sap that runs through the conduits of power

In transformative socioeconomic activities, transparency must be one of the central elements of the organisation, as it is essential for decision-making and participation. Making information accessible and being transparent generates trust and a positive perception within the project, such as with clients, users or employees.
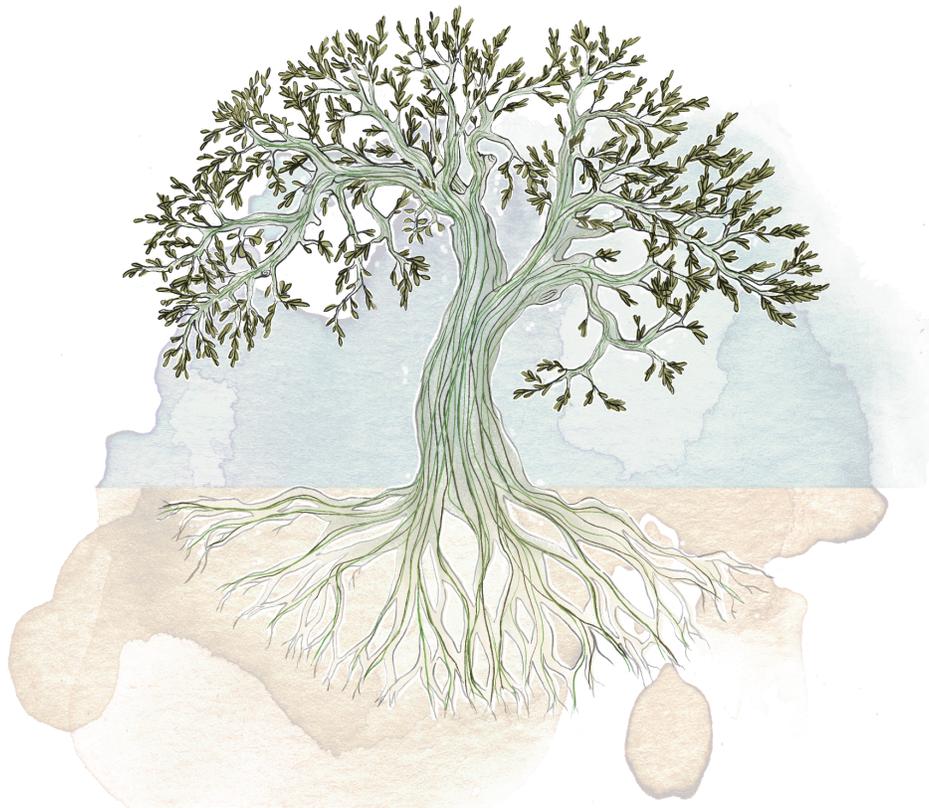

Image 17: Tree (power) with flowing sap, called information, visible for transparency (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

According to a study carried out by the Federation of Work Cooperatives of Catalonia: transparency improves management and efficiency; improves internal and external confidence; makes participation and dialogue possible on conditions of equality; facilitates good governance and accountability; it is a preventive factor of bad practices and encourages innovation and continuous improvement.

The first step to transparency in the project is good internal communication. The information must be conveyed constantly and effectively, so that the people who are part of the project have access and can participate in the spaces for debate and decision. Lack of information is one of the factors that can most limit participation, undermining the internal democracy of the organisation.

This information must be tailored to the needs of the people, as over-information can saturate its members and have a counterproductive effect. Therefore, it must be relevant and applicable, in accordance with the established goal, and objective and not biassed. Consequently, the information must be accessible to the people who are part of the project, and available for them to use when they may need it. This information will empower participants and make discussions more fruitful.

Two elements of transparency can be distinguished. On the one hand, access to information to make that important information available and easily accessible to its members. And, on the other hand, accountability, which is a way to build trust and credibility, and also to promote democratic quality.

There are two types of information that should be available so as not to diminish the career prospects of the members. On the one hand, everything about the organisational structure (organisation chart, company information, internal regulations, project history, decision processes, economic situation, etc.) and on the other hand, information related to work activity (production process, innovations, market situation, etc.).

The Laboratory of Journalism and Communication for Plural Citizenship (LPCCP) in Catalonia, proposes the following criteria to promote quality of information:

- The information must be comprehensible to everyone.

- Information should be easily accessible.

- The principle of universal accessibility must be facilitated.

- Information must be published in a timely manner.

- It is necessary to publish and identify the appropriate documents to explain the information.

- It must be free and open access; it must be submitted in standardised, free-licensed formats.

- It must be contextualised and avoid dehumanisation; it must be verified and verifiable.

Transparency must be both internal and external. Internal transparency is intended to provide all the necessary information to workers and members of the project to achieve equality of conditions. External transparency will show the attitude of the project towards its environment, providing information so that the social and business ecosystem receives feedback from the positive and enriching actions of the different projects. The actions that can be carried out internally are: to provide employment information (salaries, schedules, etc.); describe the decision-making bodies and the ways of accessing each of them; produce quality information that is as clear and understandable as possible to the project members; have criteria for internal evaluation and improvement. And externally, display the organisation chart; show the statutes and internal regulations; present the production methods; keep the information up to date on social networks offering an appropriate dissemination and using the different information technologies to make the information extensive; and have a space for feedback.

Information by itself is not indicative of transparency, as we have seen. The information must be accessible to all employees/working people, but they must be able to understand it. This leads to two important elements: on the one hand, the information must be written in an understandable language. However, preparing information in that way requires specific language and editorial skills, as well as awareness of the background and of the target groups. This requires a specific professional skill set that many small transformative initiatives cannot afford to create and resource. Also, on the other hand, the organisation must ensure that all staff have sufficient knowledge to understand the information.

For this reason, the project must provide training spaces to all the employees to address relevant aspects of business management such as economics, business and finances, while keeping in mind that every person will grasp different specialities, and only some members will get a holistic perspective. In summary, it's important to create spaces where information can flow, and all members get the information they need and want.

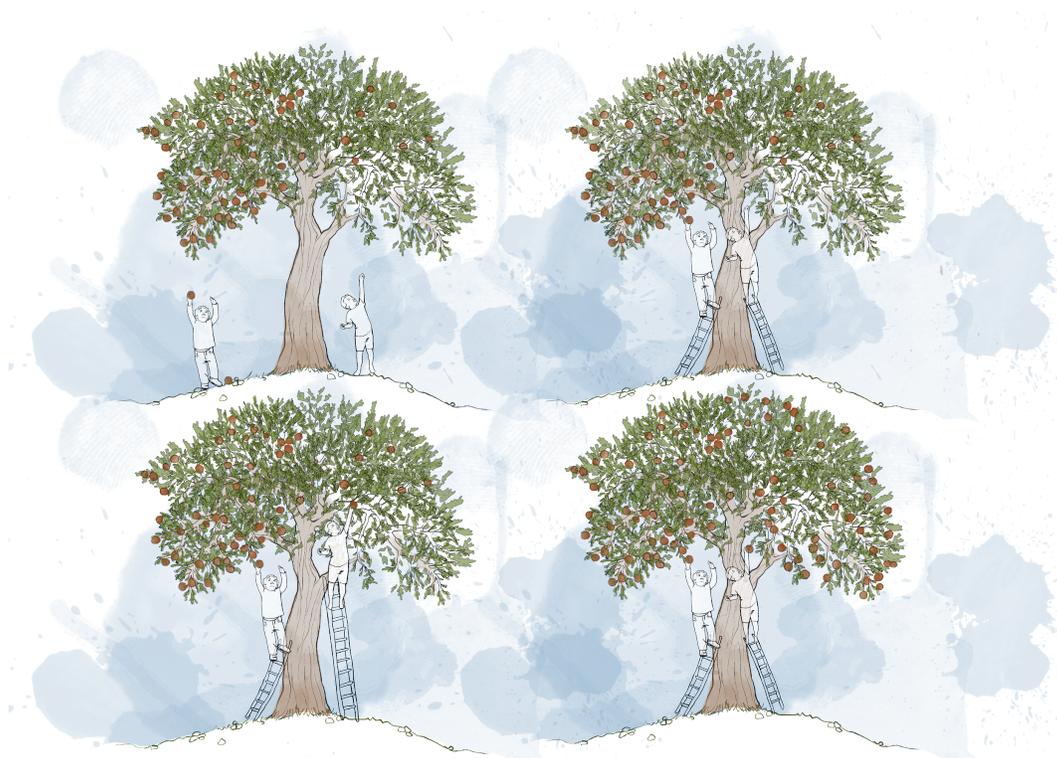## 4.3.9. Difference + Equality = Equity

Image 18: Equity (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

Another element that a project of Transformative Economies must guarantee is inclusion and parity. Equality is one of the most crucial principles and hence, the project must devote efforts and time to ensure that all people who are part of it have the same opportunities to develop professionally and personally.

Most social projects have masculinized workforces, especially in positions with higher responsibilities, producing a vertical inequality that blocks people, especially women, who seek to develop professionally. At the same time, other minorities find it difficult to express their full potential, as they are not allowed to access certain spaces, and when they do, the conditions are not optimal.

The challenge of social and solidarity economy, as well as other organisations, is to balance the proportion of women and men as much as possible, as well as to facilitate access to minorities and minority sectors. And not only in absolute terms, but taking into account all areas and spaces of the project, like decision-making spaces, governing bodies, reproductive spaces, among others. This should always happen in line with the organisation members' will and not be forced upon for the sake of parity.

There are several actions that can pave the way for parity and inclusion. Working conditions affect inequalities either positively or negatively, so it is highly recommended that they are adjusted to facilitate access (fewer forced part-time jobs, more compact working hours). It is also important to regulate staff selection processes, balancing the number of candidates by gender or minority and to create direct policies in the selection or promotion of the least represented sectors in the company or initiative.

4.4. For humans, the community is home

4.4.1. Indigenous communities have preserved the memory

Life generates clusters between similar organisms, then generates clusters between compatible organisms, and later generates clusters of ecosystems, to finally self-manage the homeostasis of the biosphere. As the South African term, Ubuntu, says, I am because you are, or what makes me human is the relationship with humanity. This rushing journey against time that we are making, is a return to the origins. Once we were communities spread across the planet, today we need to become a global community, we need to reclaim indigenism reconciled with contemporary technology, so as to overcome the global challenge of development.

The violence and colonisation of the last millennia has fragmented local cultures, and it is time to _decolonise_ or regenerate our communities, having learned to maintain reciprocal relationships with other communities to generate a global community. Just as South African indigenous nations had to go through a considerable challenge to understand and culturally consolidate the concept of Ubuntu, today we need to consolidate the concept of a global indigenous community, taking into account the different development processes and awareness of cultures of the world.
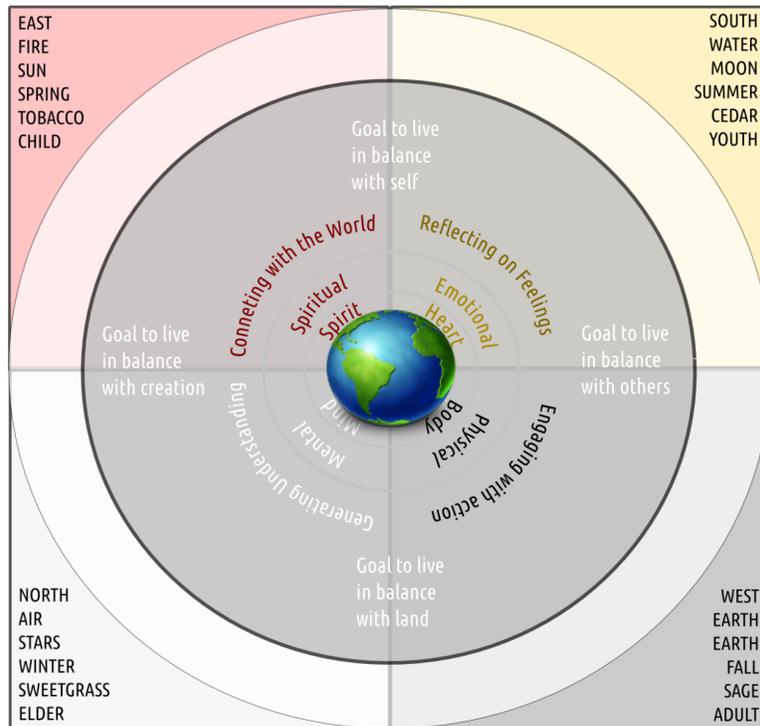
Image 19: Medicine Wheel (Haudenosaunee Nation, adapted by Resilience Earth)

Communities are not defined simply by what shapes them internally, but also by with whom they interact externally, generating a territory with other species of the (bioregional) ecosystem. We need to stop underestimating other forms of life, and begin to relate to them more consciously and with more care. This also means reconciling ourselves with death. Our society turns its back to death, which entitles it to do cruelties such as the massacre that is happening today with farm animals. If we reconcile ourselves with death and the rest of species, we can continue to feed ourselves with meat if necessary, while reaching a sustainable level of consumption and with the respect all animals deserve.

When we become a community we put ourselves at the service of the rest like an organ, as the liver does for the whole organism, or like an ecosystem, as the phytoplankton does, cleaning the atmosphere.

4.4.2. From co-management to community economics

For the evolution of the economy, the community approach is essential to face the intrinsic cyclical crises of an innovative process such as the economic process. The SSE brings the community to revalue its own DNA, as it is a proposal that emerges from the community itself

as a healing, facing the global extractive economy that is leading us to collapse. The community, hence the network of projects in the Transformative Economies, cannot ignore – by its very definition – the impact on its environment. It is clear that all actors involved are structured according to the values and principles of the SSE and, consequently, their network is aware of what is happening around each of these projects and as a whole. The rooting of the Rural SSE is a clear example of this process, where many initiatives are emerging with proposals that solve community challenges and add value to the territory. This implies an integrated relationship with regenerative processes.

The territorialization in the immediate, local, environment of the projects of the transforming economy has always been a key pillar for its implementation and relationship with the territory. Some of the elements that have made it a key factor range from greater knowledge of the actors, issues and needs, and the creation of synergies. Living our lives and relationships, and developing projects in the same local environment adds the necessity to care for and respect the environment, not only from an environmental point of view, but also thanks to the social relationships that are established. The reproduction of life and relationships compels us to work to minimise any negative impact that the activity of a project generates, in a very different way than if the activity did not take place where people who work on the project live and thrive. The premise is simple: Having a negative impact where you live affects you, and having a positive impact does too!

Much of this idea is captured by Ostrom in the management of the commons, which, let us recall, is based on the premise that the management of common resources is exploited in a sustainable way because they are common, breaking away from the idea that common resources are overexploited (Hardin). To do this, Ostrom takes many examples, such as management of water in regions that have historically required irrigation, an example that is valid in almost every part of the world we look at. When the responsibility for management is shared, the interests of the individual are taken into account but not prioritised over the collective agreement that guarantees meeting them as best as possible in the long run. This collective management means that restrictions that a priori, in an individually managed resource, we would have no motivation to accept, are accepted (Fairclough 2016). Ultimately, the sustainability of resources takes precedence over the level of current individual use.

After all, to maintain the activity that these resources allow users to engage in, initial conditions need to be maintained, or even improved. This is a way to co-evolve with the territory at the same time. In order to maintain these social structures, the regenerative capacity of the environment must be upheld. Yayo Herrero (nexus46) points out that the elimination of flora and fauna comes with the extinction of cultures and established social ways of relating. And it is very important to be aware that the deterioration of the environment not only sweeps away species, but also changes everything radically, affecting us not only in the long term, but also in the short term. Hence, the author establishes an inseparable link between environmentalism

and feminism, as feminism is the extractive approach of patriarchy. Also, because Transformative Economy projects do not have the need to grow to increase individual well-being, but to cover collective needs, they have a positive impact as they solve community challenges. The landscape itself becomes an inseparable social relationship (Harvey 2012), as it becomes a common good. In fact, Harvey argues that the city can become a key space for resistance and political reorganisation, precisely because it is an environment in conflict with political values and economic pressures. Rural territories must be able to find a way to manage their own skills and resources, generating a more distributed governance for a more balanced territory, where the ruralization of cities is an intrinsic need.

Image 20: **Mother Nature Knitting** (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

In his book, *Invitació a l'economia Solidària* ("An invitation to the Solidarity Economy"), Jordi Estivill reflects "As stated in the manifesto of the Founding Congress of the European Solidarity Economy Network, held in Barcelona in 2011: 'every time the smallest village of the old continent has gathered men and women and given a liberating collective response to meet their needs, they have advanced the social and solidarity economy'".

Following up on this idea, it is necessary to highlight that the activity of Transformative Economies has kept its objective, as we will be reiterating, in responding to vital needs. It has sought to regenerate negative externalities in its own territory, where it produces, develops and grows; reducing the need for global supply chain extractivism, and therefore reducing its impact. The growth of initiatives on this same basis has led to a local and supralocal net that

becomes a network of support and growth of the same productive and reproductive environment that shapes the Transformative Economy, a safety net for projects themselves. When assessing the needs of a particular community in a specific territory, it is necessary to evaluate how our activity is causing problems and how to regenerate them.

Intercooperation, the joint work between different initiatives, has been a key element and has strengthened the social market in all its areas (production, distribution, consumption, financing) under shared principles, with a desire to turn around and transform the hegemonic system that is based on wealth inequalities, with a desire to transform it.

4.4.3. Marginalised informal activities are a potential for the social market

This desire of transformation can be practical but let us not forget that it can also be found reflected in the articles of association of different cooperative projects. In any case, it is a desire that must be public and shared. The fact that it can be a formal element must not exclude all informal activities or familiar and autonomous projects, such as informal neighbourhood associations and the social movements that nurture the joint work and their real effect on the territory.

It is important that the formal sphere is not a limiting factor of cooperation or we will leave out not only the informal economy but a good part of caregiving for wellbeing, making it invisible. In addition, there may be entities and collectives that due to tradition, lack of resources or will, do not match this need of formalisation. We also cannot exclude freelancers and small family businesses that, although being constituted as commercial businesses, have a cooperative soul and behaviour.

With regards to the social market generated by the SSE from a collective point of view, it includes a wide range of activities, some of which have great l*everage point* potential in the current context, such as ethical finance, social currency, or technological field; which, if framed within the SSE and at the service of the community, can catalyse processes of change.

Ethical finance and local currencies are becoming a key element to make projects grow in the transformative economy, helping individuals and collectives to avoid feeding into capitalist banking, especially its systemic redistribution and concentration effects upwards. They are therefore an alternative way of financing and lending, savings and operations.

A local currency has the virtue of promoting local consumption and the money it generates is spent in the same territory, establishing an element of strengthening of the local economy networks and the processes of cooperation in this field. It avoids outward and upward channelling of wealth generated regionally.

We have also placed here the whole technological field linked to the cloud. The technological field in general, has an impact on ways of generating content, consuming technological

products within the ethics and values of the Transformative Economies. Particularly noteworthy is the area of free and open licences as an example of collective work, which also often reflects the rooting of territories, especially with regard to the relationship with language. For instance, the problem of *Free/Libre Open Source Software (FLOSS)* is that the value generated by co-creation of voluntary contributors is often monetized by big corporations and doesn't flow back into the community of co-creators, or at least not enough. So, even though it makes tools available to end users in a distributed and freely accessible way, it also feeds a digital economy of concentrated power of private ownership driven prime movers/platforms.

4.4.4. Origin and proximity generate belonging

From the community field, it is also worth mentioning projects that can be leverage points of change for ecological sustainability, like energy communities through which not only a responsible consumption is established, but which also make obsolete the unjust framework of the energy market of big international energy corporations, their commercial interests, lobbying and massive uncovered externalities. At the same time, these fractures expressed on 3.4.3, aim to turn the current and mainstream functioning upside down under the premise of the decommodification or commune of life, at least of everything that makes life possible.

Image 21: Leverage Points (Dolors Quiles, 2022)
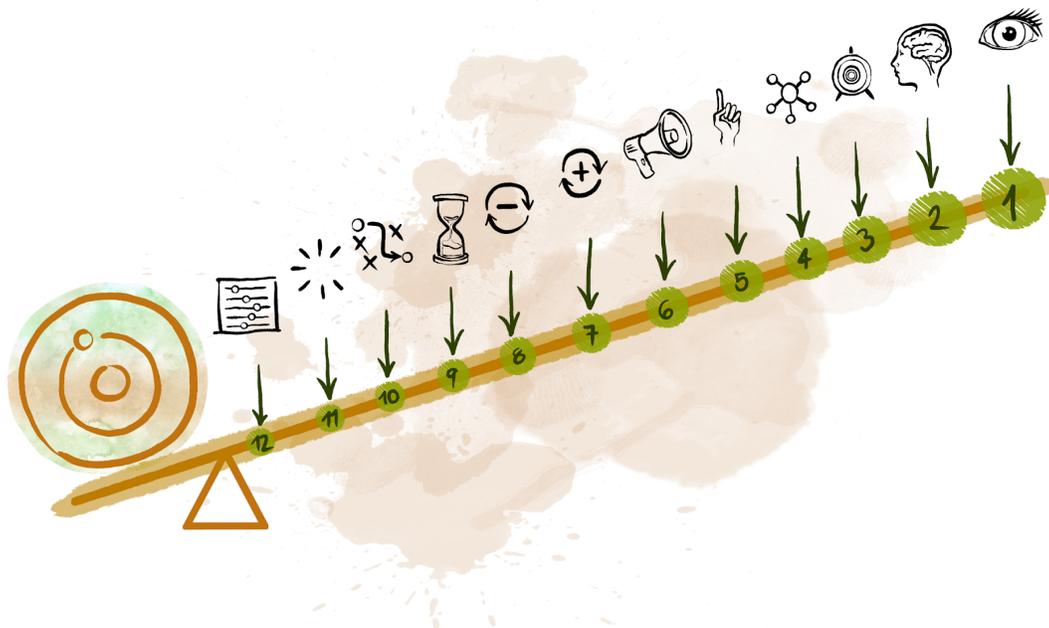
To guarantee this premise, the origin of products as well as ethics of producers and their projects are essential for the transformation. It is important to remember that for production to be ethical, the whole circuit of the product must be taken into account, from the very start. That is why, the final product or service that a project develops is also impregnated by all the

previous steps that other actors of the supply chain have made or developed. In this aspect, labour rights, fair commercialization, origin of the products must be taken into account… And it is here where the SSE and its local ecosystems bring something unbeatable by any capitalist proposal, as the idiosyncrasy of this reality cannot be covered by marketing, only the real trust in the people who are behind the end product can achieve it. Nevertheless, a true commitment from local governments to monitor and value externalities of the capitalist economy is also necessary for an even competition.

4.4.5. Reinventing public administrations

But we need to take into account one more element and ask ourselves what role administrations play in the community economy. Despite being external actors in transforming economies, there are confluent spaces to generate joint strategies around the common good and social problems, and depending on government teams, also the desire for a more equitable distribution of resources.

In reality, regardless of whether the government can establish programs to catalyse the transforming economy, it is important to question the ethics of outsourcing services to commercial companies seeking their own benefit. In fact, we could also challenge that some services are provided by the administration instead of being provided by the local community itself. These are two observations along different lines, but they have the same basis, the local working network that is structured by the transformative economy. There will be a wide range of potential change here with respect to the transformative economy's collaboration with governments for the provision of public services in their own community. The third sector is probably the one that has impacted this aspect the most in the *social solidarity economy (SSE)*, but it is clear that there is still a long way to go.
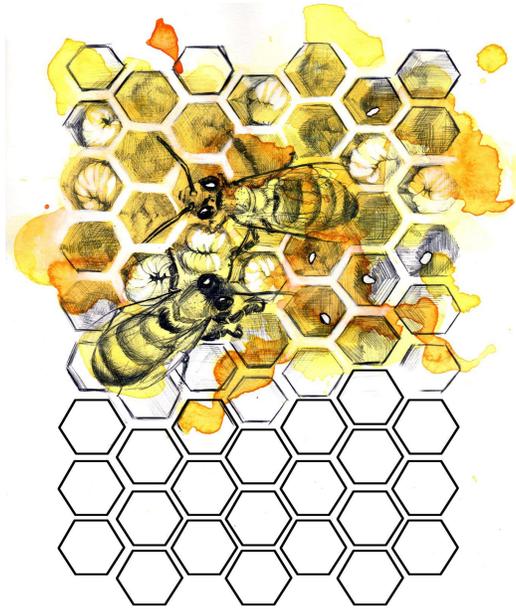
Image 22: Collaborative Beehive (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

The generation of territorial observatories that allow for an updated analysis of the situation of the territory with a cross-sectional perspective is essential to generate cross-sectoral strategies with a community perspective. This can only happen in a promising way if the structure, governance and practices of such an observatory are also cross-sectoral. In particular, the capacity for facilitation can come from transformative community initiatives where participation is already practised; whereas practices of co-creation, participation and according facilitation are yet lacking in the public administration, private sector and research institutions. Also, permanent discussion circles focused on pre-established strategic objectives can speed up and facilitate the coordination and implementation of community initiatives, carried out by the plurality of actors in the sector and across sectors. The public administration could promote the initiative to bring legitimacy, while the respective coordination could be fuelled by the horizontal and dialogical facilitation experience from transformative initiatives and networks involving cross-sectorial actors, and research institutions could support with the neutrality in the analysis of different indicators - thus promoting an articulated and resilient territory.

Overall, this would lead to the rooting of an economy in service of the community and the territory, generating unique and motivating proposals for young people, which could provide them with purpose and inspiration. In this way, it would allow them to develop meaningful and dignified lives, which in turn would generate high value proposals, and consequently have a positive impact on the territory and the community, generating abundance and confronting the global situation on the basis of community resilience.

5. Conclusion

In an autopoietic reality like the one we live in, where life transforms the environment and the environment transforms life in a permanent coevolutionary cycle, economics is the way the human species relates to its environment to satisfy its needs. This creates an impact on the environment by transforming it positively or negatively while, at the same time, the environment interacts with us generating a positive or negative influence on our evolution.

With this in mind, it seems quite obvious that generating a negative impact on the territory is a suicide in the medium term. But once we get into the economic reality of our society, it seems that all efforts are focused on justifying why it is worth it to continue to destroy the territory for some specific purpose. The maturity of our species involves knowing how to prioritise and position ourselves in the place we belong to in the biosphere, wherever that is, but responsibly.

The change needed to avoid the continuum dramatic deterioration of living conditions for human and other species on the planet in the coming decades, leaving a hopeless future for the next generations, is the shift from not taking responsibility and letting power define our fate, to taking responsibility and organising communities to claim and defend precedence of the common good. Abundance emerges from generosity, just as scarcity emerges from accumulation.

Transformative economies are collective proposals that generate space for collective healing, confronting deep and ancient challenges such as patriarchy, extractivism, colonisation, or accumulation. All these patterns are degenerative and lead us to eliminate part of planetary homeostasis that still allows human viability. This is because we are behaving like parasitic opportunists, taking advantage of the riches that life has accumulated over millions of years for our immediate benefit, without giving anything back, in fact not even thanks. We act arrogantly and proudly as if the planet were ours, when it is only a loan made to us by our parents that we have to return to our descendants.

The good news is that a regenerative process can lead us to live one of humanity's most intense and hopeful historical moments, the time when the global community organises itself to become self-aware, and co-create an abundant world for us and the biosphere. What we are facing is a time when human society is called to overcome the traumas of the past and to emancipate itself, taking responsibility for its territories and reconciling itself with nature, opening a new planetary cycle that will lead us to new challenges.
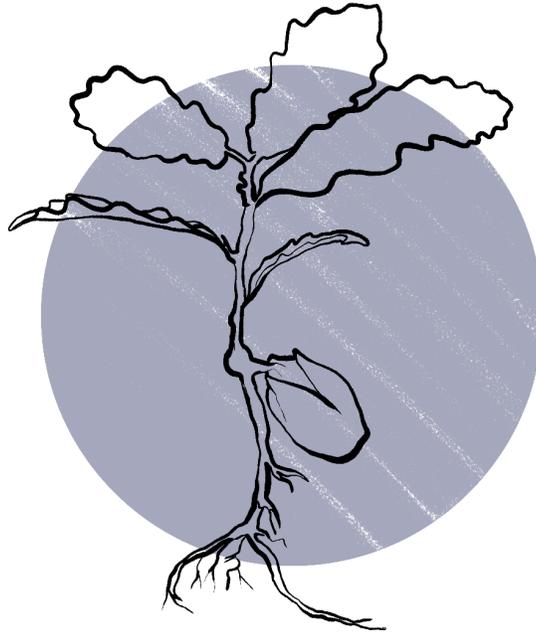
Image 23: **Planting the seed of reconciliation** (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

For this purpose, we only need to put ourselves at the service of the community, generate alliances with people who have similar goals, and face obstacles and emerging challenges with a constructive, creative and fearless approach. In fact, we have nothing else to do until we die, because nowadays, it is clear that the American dream has long since become a nightmare.

We invite and encourage you to participate in this learning community to generate regenerative patterns for local transforming economies in a disruptive, co-creative, and community-based debate that can provide new proposals to keep evolving.

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8. Glossary

Anthropocene   The era in which all the major morphological and geological transformations of the planet are due to humans' impact.

Autopoietic processes   An understanding that the development of life is an ongoing cycle of interaction between the being and the environment.

Colonisation   The imposition of a dominant world view on minority communities.

Community catalysis   The acceleration of the evolutionary processes of human communities, in relation to their territories, towards a more complex dynamic equilibrium.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)   Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a self-regulating business model that helps a company be socially accountable to itself, its stakeholders, and the public.

Decolonisation   The process of reconstructing local community identity and principles, nested in and in reconciliation with our globalised world.

Deep Change   A transformative process that causes a paradigm shift (generally in response to a 'hot crisis' or a 'cold stuckness').

Disruptive process   A series of interconnected events happening at the global scale that directly affect our economy, provoke energy and water scarcity, force millions of people to migrate, change the global climate, and degenerate most of the ecosystems on earth.

Emergent change   Refers to society's constant adaptation to its evolving context over a long period of time.

Externalities	A consequence of an industrial or commercial activity which affects other parties without this being reflected in market prices, such as the pollination of surrounding crops by bees kept for honey.
Free/Libre Open Source Software (FLOSS)	This is software for which the licensee can get the source code, and is allowed to modify this code and to redistribute the software and the modifications.
Food sovereignty	The process through which the people who produce, distribute, and consume food are able control the mechanisms and policies of food production and distribution.
Globalisation	The process of interaction and integration among people, companies, and governments worldwide. It is considered by some as a form of capitalist expansion which entails the integration of local and national economies into a global, unregulated market economy.
Glocal	Reflecting or characterised by both local and global considerations
Governance	The processes of interaction and decision-making among the actors involved in a collective that lead to the creation, reinforcement, or reproduction of social norms
Hands, Head and Heart model	A holistic approach to developing ecoliteracy. It relates the cognitive domain (head) to critical reflection, the affective domain (heart) to relational knowing and the psychomotor domain (hands) to engagement
Hierarchy of needs	A theory in psychology proposed by Abraham Maslow. It is a pyramidal classification system which reflects the universal needs of society as its base and then proceeds to more acquired emotions.
Inter-independent	A network of communities that are knit together while nourishing their distinct local relationships to land.

The International Cooperative Alliance	The global steward of the Statement on the Cooperative Identity – the Values and Principles of the cooperative movement.
Leverage points	Places within a complex system (such as a firm, a city, an economy, a living being, an ecosystem, an ecoregion) where a "small shift in one thing can produce big changes in everything".
Mycelium	Mycelium are a dynamic underground network of fungi that enable biological nutrient cycling. The social mycelium mimics this collective intelligence on a human scale with symbiotic interconnections that support the whole.
Paradigm	A society's deeply ingrained set of beliefs about how the world works.
Pattern-based approaches	Approaches that identify and categorise the contexts and conditions which tend to enhance qualities that are being sought, in order to understand how best to ensure the expression of these qualities.
Privilege	A special, unearned advantage or entitlement, used to one's own benefit or to the detriment of others; often, the groups that benefit from it are unaware of it. These groups can be advantaged based on social class, age, education level, disability, ethnic or racial category, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, and religion.
Reconciliation	The process in which the crisis of the old paradigm is nurturing the emergence of a new one. A global solidarity network of rooted communities who are slowly engaging in ongoing intercultural dialogue, resulting in a complex, resilient and conscious Earth-based global society.
Regeneration	The increase in the complexity of a system rooted to a place.
Regenerative design process	Communities collaboratively design their livelihoods through a nature-based approach.

Reproductive Economy

In Marxian economics, economic reproduction refers to recurrent (or cyclical) processes. Michel Aglietta views economic reproduction as the process whereby the initial conditions necessary for economic activity to occur are constantly re-created.

Resilience

The adaptive capacity of a system in the face of external shock, its ability to maintain its basic functions.

The Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a collection of 17 global goals designed to be a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. The SDGs are intended to be achieved by the year 2030.

Simple Change

Change Tweaks to the status quo, could be projectable or emergent. Projectable change is one that is planned in a very conscious way with specific goals and deadlines.

Social Solidarity Economy

The Social and Solidarity Economy is a set of formal or informal socio-economic measures, which may be individual or collective, that put satisfying people's needs before profit. They are also independent from public authorities, guided by values such as equity, solidarity, sustainability, participation, inclusion and a commitment to the community. They are also promoters of social change.

Structural violence

A form of violence wherein some social structure or social institution may harm people by preventing them from meeting their basic needs. Institutionalised adultism, ageism, classism, elitism, ethnocentrism, nationalism, speciesism, racism, and sexism are some examples.

Syntagma

The emerging new paradigm.

Systemic crisis

The breakdown of several of the systems that support human life at the same time, for example ecosystemic health, the economy, health systems, employment or sets of values.

Systems thinking

A holistic approach to analysis that focuses on the way that a system's constituent parts interrelate and how systems work over time and within

the context of larger systems. The systems thinking approach contrasts with traditional analysis, which studies systems by breaking them down into their separate elements.

Theory X The most common 'people are lazy and don't care' vision of the world. It represents traditional hierarchical systems based on control.

Theory Y Represents an organisational system based on trust.

Theory Z Contemplates self-actualization and fosters our adaptive capacity and the resilience of communities.

Three Horizons model A model that helps to bring clarity to this interconnectedness through complementarity. Horizon 1 is the dominant pattern, fully integrated with the surroundings. H2 is a zone in which society allows new things to be tried. H3 is about working creatively with the unknown.

VUCA context An understanding of the current global circumstances as Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous.