

## **Interview with Isabel Álvarez. Member of the Baladre Coordination and Vice President of the URGENCI international network for Community Supported Agriculture.**

### **Why an observatory on the fair distribution of wealth?**

We live in a globalized northern territories immersed in a mirage of what has been called the "welfare state" with multiple tools to feed the illusion that we are in the best of all possible worlds.

I think it is important to have spaces that help to show the real world, the inequality that exists and, above all, how inequality is a necessary condition for the existing economic model to reproduce itself, prioritizing monetary benefits over people's lives.

The denunciation of the "malaise" that this system entails, its ecological cost and inequality, I think is an activity necessary to try to counteract the prevailing narrative. Likewise, that the groups that work for the transformation of this unjust model meet in a common space to exchange what we do in our daily work is essential for good articulation and good use of the energies we have

### **Why is the accumulation of wealth and the inequality it generates a problem?**

Fundamentally they are a problem because of the consequences they have for many people and because their perpetuity is the necessary basis for this system to be maintained.

Today, in this territory that is presumed by the administration as a development model, we have people in poverty and with great needs. The calculations and the values that move in the big phrases, the GDP, the Income per Capita ... These are values that prioritize and benefit activities that sustain certain capital without taking into account whether or not they penalize the sustainability of life.

In these inequalities, the invisibility of reproductive work is particularly important, which is what really sustains the lives of people, invisible because they are not monetarized and historically attributed, the result of the sexual division of labor from the patriarchal system, to women. The capitalist system tells us about employment, making work invisible, it speaks to us on a large scale, making invisible all the artisanal activities that sustain fairer economies, and prioritizes urban environments and cities over the rural environment that has historically fed us and maintained our territory. All this sustained in an illusion that makes invisible the interdependence that we have as a species of the rest of the people but also of the ecosystem and the planet in which we live.

In the same way, the perversion of the system itself means that for greater benefits you have to squeeze your own tools to the fullest and nowadays precarious employment is normalizing by leaps and bounds, making people aspire to mere survival instead of to be able to achieve a

dignified life. All this accompanied by a growing individualization of society that has led to forgetting what it means to have communities and support networks that can accompany us and sustain us both economically and emotionally.

### **What are the proposed solutions?**

The solutions must be considered from different dimensions but basically they go through weaving ties and networks of social cooperation. Breaking the dynamics mentioned, can not be done from a single point of view but requires different actions that address the problem from its multiple faces.

From our work in Baladre we have been talking about Basic Income for many years and specifically about the proposal of Basic Income for Equals. For us, part of the rupture with the centrality of employment, which has also proved to be ineffective in getting out of a precarious situation and poverty, and of putting sustainability of life at the center means having enough income for all people but also working on processes that build, rebuild or maintain social ties and community spaces. All this includes an important debate on the definition of what public goods are from a common and not merely management perspective.

The reconstruction of these ties must be accompanied by a feminist perspective that makes visible the tasks necessary for life and proposes fair paths for all people. The problem, to the extent that it is economic, has a monetary part but fundamentally it has a structural and social support necessary for its permanence in which it is essential to influence.

To make visible the precarious situations that occur in our environment and all the part that the system ignores and makes invisible is a necessary step to begin to move towards fairer models. Models in which we resignify what the economy is and relocate both the real needs in a territory (human and ecological), and the roads that can really satisfy them.

The break with the narrative of the "welfare state" and the "general interest" must happen by making visible and sharing another that speaks of the common and the satisfaction of the needs in a sustainable way for both people and the planet, dismantling the mirages, being realistic and moving towards the worlds that we really do have the capacity to make possible through collective participation and collaboration.