

## Introduction

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CCFD-Terre Solidaire (the French Catholic Committee against Hunger and for Development – Terre Solidaire), a major actor among French development NGOs, puts Man at the heart of its project. It works to make him a stakeholder in his own story and his own life. However, Humanity is currently incapable of proposing a future that's livable and viable for all, forcing us to carry out in-depth reflection to further the metamorphosis that's required<sup>1</sup>. How can we take up the challenges and threats hovering over this evolving entity that is Humanity? Based on its experience of 50 years of partnership – the keystone to relationships it intends to develop with development actors on the six continents – CCFD–Terre Solidaire proposes starting up discussion with the world of researchers and decision-makers, so as to better identify paths of hope for participating in the building of the future.

The starting observation is that of a multiple crisis affecting Man in his relationships with others and with nature, as well as his very essence.

It's the concept of development held by international institutions that is now being questioned, from its foundations. Over the past decades, development has been based on successive paradigms that expressed the representation its designers had of progress for Humans in their relationships between each other and with nature. After World War II, it became embodied in the project for modernization. It was at that time perceived as a series of stages through which all nations, in the North as well as the South, unavoidably had to go through. After 1980, under the influence of the neoliberal current that had then become dominant, development was redefined as "a continuous process of adapting to the demands of the liberalization and globalization of markets."<sup>2</sup>

Today this concept, like that of governance, must be redefined in order to open up to initiatives that can provide meaning and value, even though financialized capitalism tends to destroy them. Yet, enhancing the image of these terms that have fallen into disuse inevitably requires putting into question today's dominant model of growth, so as to make it compatible with the finiteness of our planet's natural resources. The issue thus arises for part of Humanity to renounce certain established benefits and to engage in a process of "abandonment." This process will see the emergence of a new responsibility on the part of citizens, conscious of what is at stake in maintaining the resources needed for life on our planet and for fairer sharing of these resources among Humanity.

By organizing the conference ***"Governance and Responsibility: ideas for a human, solidarity-based development"***, CCFD-Terre Solidaire wishes to start a forum for dialogue and debate on proposals stemming from reflection work. These reflections have been taken from three reference documents and have been structured into three themes, detailed below.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Edgar Morin

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Jean-Philippe Peemans

## Theme 1 –The other economy

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The current abuses of financialized capitalism in the extreme are due to the fact that capital has become its purpose, an end in itself, and no longer a means of creating value through labor. In economic tradition, the role of the latter has been neglected. The result is a vision of the production process that overlooks the context and social actors enabling this production. As Karl Polanyi explains in "The Great Transformation," the market is "disembedded" from the hold of the social and political spheres and has been erected by the same political and economic elites (who maintain quasi-vassal relationships) into an autonomous institution. Economic life has replaced the State.

This supremacy of capital over politics, among other things, has been rendered in different ways on the historical level and with regards to national accounts. In a recent speech, Patrick Viveret explained, for example, that accounting choices have always been linked to choices by society. This is how industry was valorized as representative of wealth, to the detriment of agriculture, after World War II. The interpretation of certain figures and the choice of valorizing certain sectors of activity rather than others imply choices by society, which are implicit more often than not. Yet, the consequences of these choices remain tangible and verifiable – and disastrous today. The extreme acceleration in financial transactions, in cycles of obsolescence of technologies and innovation, and in outsourcing is furthering precariousness, uncertainty, and losses in the name of support for sacrosanct growth. Entrepreneurial spirit no longer characterizes capitalism; speculation has replaced it. This is why it's necessary to devise an economic transition towards a new theory, whose outline could be represented by the following points.

### → Social and solidarity-based economy (SSE) as a global alternative

SSE is developing more and more. In a recent article, Danièle Demoustier and Nadine Richez-Battesti stress that SSE companies lay claim to a dual socio-political and socio-economic dimension. They explain that these companies "have become a **durable aspect** of the economic landscape and make their contribution to the **development** of territories."<sup>3</sup> Sustainability must be the first constituent factor of a new economic theory based on "finiteness." The other essential element to take into account is justice, which must be at the very heart of economic practice. The community must reappropriate the economy, and hence its very "essence," which capitalism has stolen from it. What form can "human" economy take on at the planetary level?

### → Sharing of wealth through regulation of the world economy and finance

Globalizing the SSE requires tackling the tricky question of transitions. An intermediary stage (whose duration will probably last decades) will undoubtedly see today's dominant economic and financial actors forced by rules to respect rights (of workers and local populations), profit-sharing, and transparent accounting. Such transparency will make it possible to give meaning and truth back to the instruments and indicators for regulating and managing the world economy. Under what conditions is such a transition possible?

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<sup>3</sup> "Les organisations de l'Economie sociale et solidaire : gouvernance, régulation et territoire ," *Géographie, Economie, Société* 12 (2010) pp.5-14

→ The notion of finiteness at the heart of economic theory

It's also a question of reintroducing new variables other than labor and capital into the classic theory of value. Primary resources such as energy and matter must be incorporated into the production process. This thus implies, prior to any startup of economic activity, local analysis of not only the available resources required, but also calculation of the impact of human activity on the existing ecosystem.

In the North as in the South, changes can be made: in the first case it's a matter of carrying out initiatives that seek to massively reduce the ecological footprint per inhabitant and to relocate economic activity at a local level; in the second case, it's a matter of moving towards a transition from models based on specialization towards economies that are likewise relocated and thus diversified.

What would then be the characteristics (productions, flows, jobs, etc.) of an economy of finiteness at the planetary level?

→ Rehabilitation of agricultural activity

Many initiatives supported by CCFD-Terre Solidaire are linked to the rural world and to family agriculture. This sector has been the victim of loss of prestige compared to the industrial and then tertiary sector. But we must now realize the incredible potential represented by the agricultural sector within an economic vision based on the principles of solidarity, fairness and justice. We must rehabilitate agriculture in general – and polyculture food crops in particular – in the collective unconscious. It's not a question of putting a practice considered archaic by Western societies "back into fashion," but of becoming conscious of the hope that agriculture represents as an integral part of an alternative model of development.

What role will these alternative agricultural models have in the new economy?

## **Theme 2 – From global to local: governance and role of territories**

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The notion of world governance appeared in the 1970s, and for Bertrand Badie "good governance" was thought out according to capitalistic and neoliberal principles, since it was imagined by the West according to a vision of its own and that gave rise to the "G"s that we know: G5, G8, and then G20 – bodies whose legitimacy for governing the world is challenged. The world governance promoted by the United Nations is becoming increasingly weakened and deprived of resources faced with the consolidation of governance that works, via deregulation, according to the logics and for the benefit of globalized economic and financial actors.

But other meanings and above all other conceptions of governance exist. CCFD-Terre Solidaire structures its own around the principle of subsidiarity, which we find in the Church's social teaching. Pope Pius XII defined it this way: "every social activity ought of its very nature to furnish help to the members of the body social, and never destroy and absorb them." It's thus, as Henri Madelin says, a question of "respecting what happens as close to people as possible and not giving priority to larger circles unless they can do 'better'."<sup>4</sup> Of course the notion of local governance has also become stronger in the last 20 years along with proactive policies of decentralization. But neoliberal world governance imposes its choices on local governance. CCFD-Terre Solidaire wants a change in paradigm, which involves a reversal in the order of priority. Often marginalized, the "local territory" is viewed as archaic, traditional, and a symbol of the informal economy. It's perceived as the place for "concrete" and short-term action, with everything that entails in terms of perverse effects. It is here that the change in paradigm to carry out resides.

For CCFD-Terre Solidaire, world governance must above all rely on the local level and the notion of proximity. It's a question of not depriving citizens of the opportunity for them to work at their level on the problems that concern them. This involves taking into account the real necessity of conforming to common guiding principles stemming from the exchange of experiences in networks, whose implementation – specific to the local level in order to preserve diversity – would be verified collectively.

Thinking first of all on the local level is indeed thinking first of all in terms of "territories." These were initially eclipsed by the all-powerful Nation States, but even these latter have been weakened by globalization. While this evolution initially made territories even more vulnerable faced with all-powerful neoliberalism, deregulation, and the weakening of national and territorial sovereignty, we are about to witness "the revenge of territories."<sup>5</sup> Economic functioning, the management of natural resources, the renewal of democracy, and the setting up of partnerships among actors of different spheres are all elements that can be made possible and facilitated by the rediscovery of territories. Territories should be considered as a complex system of relations and exchanges more than a simple area defined by legal and administrative borders. It's above all at this level that we will be able to realize the importance of the social universe, "guarantor of collective prosperity and the mechanisms of solidarity, sole true producer of wealth."

Territories are thus a level of development to encourage for several reasons: it's first of all a good level for managing the impact of human activity in the biosphere. It's also at this level that the management and consumption of resources and energies can be best

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<sup>4</sup> Henri Madelin, Jesuit European Office, taken from the report "Droits fondamentaux et gouvernance", published by CCFD-Terre Solidaire

<sup>5</sup> The term is by Pierre Calame

controlled. Finally, there where the "anonymous market [was] the only mediator between the individual and the world"<sup>6</sup>, territories are conceived as a real metabolism whose exchanges with the outside world are much less dense than internal exchanges. This involves not an autarkic withdrawal, but a revaluation of a level that enables the move from (abstract and instant) transaction to (concrete and sustainable) relation.

This also implies a reform of world governance, which involves in-depth reform of the United Nations system in order to give it back a central role. The governments representing Nations must no longer be the only legitimate actors to make decisions in world governance: this is moreover no longer the case, since they are now largely eclipsed by the interests of globalized capital. Future world governance must give the representatives of territories and the organized representatives of civil societies – as distinguished from the profit-making private sector – the role they deserve.

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<sup>6</sup> Pierre Calame, *Essai sur l'économie*, « le territoire : acteur-pivot du 21<sup>ème</sup> siècle », Ed. Charles Léopold Mayer, 2009

### Theme 3 – The rise of a new humanity

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The preeminence and omnipresence of neoliberal thought has shaped human relations around competition and predation and has led Man to be concerned only about his own interest. At the same time, the 20th and 21st centuries are marked by erosion of religion and a spiritual void, and "a gaping void is opening in the souls disturbed by the search for new values," writes Thérèse Delpech.<sup>7</sup> The logic of widespread competition, to which society as a whole is today enslaved, is not making up for this deficit in values and is supported by the political sphere being subjected to the economic sphere.

From this phenomenon ensues an idea of uniformity raised to the status of "universal." The contemporary individual is encouraged to assert his particularity in order to be differentiated and to escape from the "uniform," which is in reality constituted of standardized goods and practices, which will in turn stir up new forms of differentiations, and so forth.

If we must take into account the necessary existence of the "particular," this latter should thus not give way to an abstract universal or a "uniform" created by consumerist logic pushed to the extreme. The universal can only become effective by being in keeping with the particular. The universal fraternity towards which Humanity must aim must thus be well-rooted in legitimate self-assertion as a unique individual and as a member of a special collective.

This is because the challenge incumbent upon human society today is to make the choice between *"growing in obesity or growing in humanity."*<sup>8</sup> This question is not unrelated to that of democracy and its role in the transformations that this world requires. The question of choice indeed implies a high quality of democratic debate. Behind the accounting and monetary issues, fundamental concerns can be seen: the change in democracy on a quantitative but above all qualitative level. The emergence of a global civil society is one of the vectors of this change.

This qualitative leap that humanity must become capable of involves redefining the proper place of man within creation and the realization by humanity of its dependence on all forms of life. Humanity that becomes conscious of itself also becomes conscious of its possible disappearance. This makes an opportunity for putting Man into a new and rebalanced relationship with his environment.

Finally, the humanization of humanity must be conceived as an inter-cultural project, to make up for the risk of uniformization related to globalization. Partnership, at the heart of CCFD-Terre Solidaire's activity and vision, is positioned within this process. It's a matter of putting differences into tension to build new subjectivities "rooted in their special experience and conscious of what connects them to others."

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<sup>7</sup> Thérèse Delpech, *L'ensauvagement : le retour de la barbarie au XXIe siècle*

<sup>8</sup> In the words of Patrick Viveret