



Network for the co-construction of expertise on gender, sustainability and fighting poverty

Gender and sustainability – a design for transition

Flora explained in six figures

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1. Contextualisation and justification

1.1. The need for women's organisations

In the 1960's and 1970's women's roles were largely limited to 'reproductive' work in the family sphere, or to social work in non-productive sectors. Women generally did not take part in the economic life and did not participate in important sectors of public life. For many women this was a frustrating situation; they felt like they were not contributing to society, lacked personal goals in life (apart from their children) and were deprived of real social capital as citizens. As a response to this 'social malaise' women entrepreneurs in different parts of Belgium set up small initiatives to give (especially lowly schooled) women a professional training and/or a job. The mission of these organisations was/is mainly a social one, helping women to play a fulfilling role in society and have a purpose in life, in balance with the care for their family. Since it is the economy that largely determines how roles in different life domains are organised and valued, these initiatives inscribe themselves within the (social) economy; even if their mission is primarily to contribute to a more just (less exclusive) society, 'gender aware' economic activity is their means of achieving this. Their aim is to realise a social added value rather than a private profit.

1.2. The impact of ESF : a paradox

In the 1980's many of these initiatives for women receive ESF subsidies. This allows them to develop their projects fully and within a longer time frame. The importance accorded by ESF to gender gives the organisations access to extra funds which enable them to grow. The other side of the coin is that the emphasis shifts away from the social and personal empowerment aspects of their mission towards the productive and competitive one. Since in economics subsidies are merely seen as 'unfair competition' with private profit companies, they are limited in time and defined as a 'compensation for the loss of productivity' that working with poorly schooled women entails. This forces the organisations to restrict their actions to increasing the women's 'productivity and competitiveness' against the lowest possible cost (tendering); they see their mission reduced to enabling women of the target group - within the shortest time and against the lowest cost possible - to find a job in what is called the 'regular' economy (i.e. economy with a private profit rationale). And so, in order to be 'competitive' for ESF-subsidies they are forced to exclude from their actions those women that are the furthest removed from the labour market (e.g. coming from immigrant backgrounds, generation poverty, or victims of domestic violence...). Instead of fighting social malaise and exclusion, they are now forced to obey the laws of competitive economy and thus reproduce the very exclusion mechanisms they set out to fight in the first place.

So, on the one hand, the ESF subsidies allowed the organisations to develop. On the other hand, the regulations that go along with ESF subsidies restrict the notion of 'development' so as to make them congruent (streamlined) with the rules and values of private companies. Subsidies are merely seen as a distortion in the (monetary) competition between companies, and thus are restricted to 'making people productive for the private labour market'. In accordance with (monistic) economic theory, only one value can be applied to the two types of enterprises, viz. the one embodied by private companies: competition, measured in terms of money. The European Social Funds never seriously considered the opposite option - for private enterprises to 'streamline' their values with those of the social organisations and make Corporate Social Responsibility an objective on a par with making private profits. The dominant economic

model (traditionally favouring men) was not questioned; women were just encouraged to take their place within this 'masculine' model. The notion of gender mainstreaming became restricted to 'encouraging women to compete with men'. As a consequence it was increasingly seen as only an issue of 'frustrated women', not infrequently eliciting in men (or within masculine structures) a defensive reaction.

1.3. Networking as a response to this paradox

The women's organisations that were initially created as a solution to a social malaise, increasingly find themselves in the same malaise. They have to 'compete' with an economy that works well for men at the expense of women, and are forced to play along with the rules that have always favoured men above women. So in the 1990's some of these organisations bundled their forces and created a network that would support them in their fight for a more 'equal' and 'inclusive' economy, aiming at equal opportunities for men and women. In 1994 Flora is established as a network of organisations that aim at fighting gender inequality, poverty and exclusion through social, participatory and solidary economic initiatives. With the support of (among others) ESF Flora has developed several projects of action research that 'investigate' how networking can help organisations and companies to go beyond the 'competitive' logic and provide them with a structure that increases their impact (at the 'macrolevel') on politics and society with a view to fighting gender inequality and poverty.

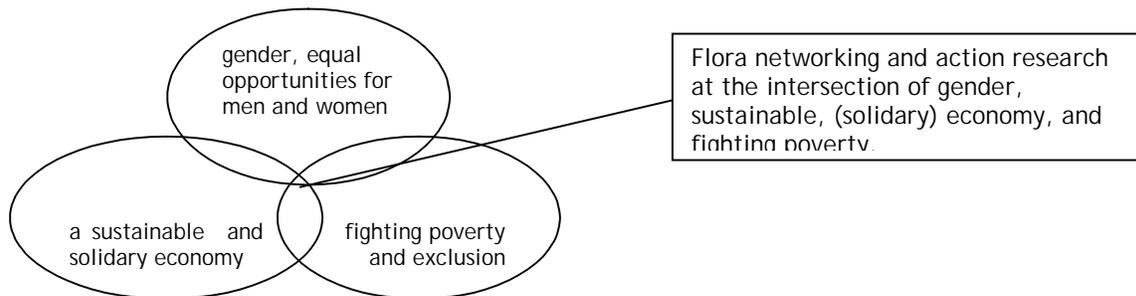


Figure 1: Flora operates at the intersection of gender, sustainable, (solidary) economy, and fighting poverty.

Flora offers organisations a platform for exchange and expertise where broader social (societal) objectives can be kept on the agenda. Flora creates a 'public forum', a space for networking between organisations that aim at contributing to a just society in which everyone regardless of sex, class, ethnicity (or other social dividing lines) can lead a fulfilling life ⁽¹⁾. Since 2000 Flora is opening up its networking activities to all kinds of organisations and services that share these aims and vision, both at the local, national and international level. The recent financial and ecological crises have made it increasingly clear that not only women have an interest in creating a more egalitarian and sustainable economics. Organisations active in other domains increasingly turn to Flora to learn how from a gender perspective a more sustainable model of socioeconomic development can be conceived and co-constructed.

¹ As a general rule we use the term 'microlevel' for all actions that include women (and men) in poverty themselves; e.g. actions aiming at their participation and strengthening their empowerment. The 'mesolevel' concerns what happens at the level of organisations, the way they define their role and organise themselves in order to realise their mission in the socioeconomic context. The macrolevel concerns political and academic processes that define the notion of socioeconomic development (e.g. economics, labour market politics...).

2. An innovative paradigm and intellectual infrastructure

In the course of the past 15 years, Flora has set up projects of action research with women in poverty and with the organisations that work with them. On the basis of these experiences Flora has developed a specific frame of analysis and an intellectual infrastructure based on gender.

2.1. Sustainability curve : reinforce resiliency !

The paradox described in the above paragraph can be understood on the basis of systems theory, which has investigated the factors that determine the sustainability of different systems. Sustainability turns out to be dependent on two parameters: Efficiency and Resilience (Ulanowicz et al: 2009).

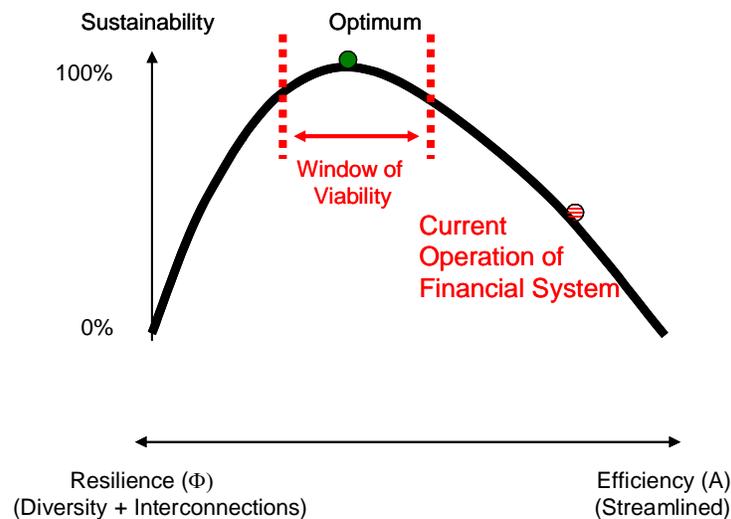


Figure 2: System's analysis sustainability curve

An example can clarify this. An exploitation of oak wood will be maximally efficient if it grows only oak trees and kills all other 'weeds' (streamlining). However, if disease hits the oaks, the nursery goes bankrupt. To be resilient against shocks and crises, a certain 'inefficiency' is needed. If for example also beech and chestnut are grown, the exploitation can temporarily shift to those kinds of wood (diversify); moreover the presence of biodiversity and microorganisms can restore the balance in the soil thus letting the oak recover (interconnection). On the other hand, if the score on the 'resiliency' parameter becomes too high, the exploitation becomes a jungle and is not sustainable either. A balance between both parameters is needed.

In the dominant socioeconomic system, all organisations (social as well as private) are measured by means of only one standard: competitiveness (efficiency). Even social economy is forced to work with groups and individuals that can be 'streamlined' into the dominant model at the lowest possible cost.

Organisations that work with target groups that can be made productive (i.e. generate their own labour cost) within a limited amount of time will get more opportunities (and funds) than those working with the more vulnerable target groups. The sole measuring unit of productivity and competition is bank money. If

social organisations receive public funds to work with vulnerable groups, this can only be seen by the dominant model as 'unfair competition'. So, social organisations are forced to move to the right of the curve, at the expense of their social and empowerment roles which are necessary for (social) sustainability².

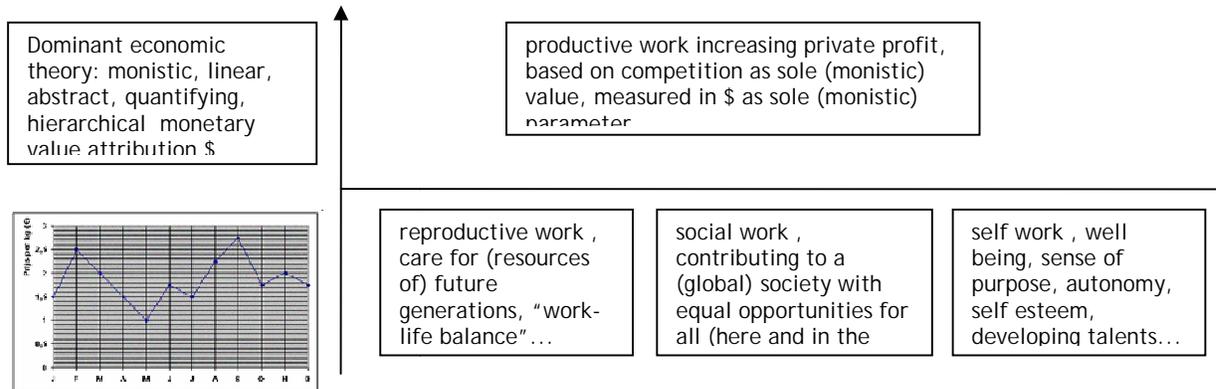


Figure 3 : Monistic model of development leading to a hierarchy between different types of work

The negative effects of the dominance (in academics and politics) of this monistic model of economics on other societal concerns (such as the interests and needs of future generations, an inclusive social tissue, global justice and the sustainability of the economic and financial system itself) have been documented extensively by others⁽³⁾. The 'damage' done in other domains of society generally does not show in the business results of companies; these costs are shifted to the government or the social welfare system. On a macrolevel, the dynamics are even more infernal. Damage to the environment or to the health and wellbeing of people are reduced to new 'needs' for a market. The more people get depressed, the better the business results of pharmaceutical companies producing antidepressants. This again shows that a linear logic aiming only at competition and efficiency cannot be sustainable. The solutions to the social problems in this model are just 'more of the same', or what can be called a 'Hyper Efficiency' (or HE) strategy⁽⁴⁾.

With the sustainability curve, systems theory clearly shows that for society to become more sustainable, it has to learn to 'walk on two legs', one directed towards efficiency, the other allowing for resilience (absorbing shocks, adapting to changing social contexts and adjusting the course of development). Solving social problems (exclusion of the vulnerable from the economy) by 'more of the same' is a Hyper Efficient strategy which forces social economy organisations into the competition model and thus installs 'social

² The fact that ESF-money was used to reintegrate (schooled) workers that lost their job after car assembly factories closed down is an example of this tendency; if small women's organisations working with vulnerable groups have to compete with large companies with 'schooled' (and mostly male) groups, it is clear that the latter will be seen as more 'productive' and thus 'justified' attribution of subsidies. This decision scores high on the efficiency parameter, but low on resilience; it just strengthens the already dominant division of roles.

³ See for example Henderson (1978); Lietaer (2011); Wilkinson & Pickett (2009); Lanchester (2010); Robertson (1988); Klein (2011).

⁴ Robertson uses HE as an acronym for 'Hyper Expansionist' strategies; we use the term 'Hyper Efficiency' to make the connection with the sustainability curve visible, but basically we take this to mean the same. Robertson uses SHE for Sustainable, Holistic and Ecological; Flora uses the same acronym for 'Sustainable, Holistic and Egalitarian' which, as will be shown, covers largely the same concerns. Ecology in the model of Flora is to be found in 'care work' (taking into account the needs of future generations) but also in 'productive work' (not exhausting natural resources needed to provide for the material needs), in 'social work' (e.g. taking into account how climate change mitigation may have different impacts on various social groups) and in self work (the impact of pollution or the risk of technological developments on the health of people).

exclusion' even within the social sector. Therefore, Flora invests in developing the Resilience side of the curve, exploring SHE strategies. Only if both parameters are in balance the socioeconomic system can become sustainable. So, the transition towards a more balanced model requires a 'double' set of models and parameters, intellectual infrastructures and institutional constellations.

Flora positions itself as a network of expertise on the 'resilience' side of the curve. This is not because Flora is 'against' the efficiency of the dominant (neoliberal) model; on the contrary, the curve clearly shows that a balance (or cooperation) between both sides of the curve is essential for a system to be sustainable. In the present socio-economic system, however, most existing institutions (including ESF) invest mainly in the efficiency parameter, whereas the resilience side is much less systematically elaborated and supported. A lot of feminist organisations (or bodies active in gender mainstreaming) aim at reinforcing women's participation in socio-economic development, but without questioning (the sustainability of) the latter notion itself. These organisations or public bodies aim at 'Women In Development' (WID-strategies). Flora on the other hand, questions the dominant model of development from a gender perspective and aims at institutionalising a more sustainable and egalitarian notion of development (Gender As Transition or GAT-strategy). As Caren Levy clearly shows, both WID and GAT strategies are needed in order to 'institutionalise' gender. It is important for women to acquire positions of power within the political, academic and economic system; but once they've reached those positions, they should also use their power to make these systems more egalitarian and sustainable⁵.

2.2. A multilevel approach defying the (linear) top-down model

The societal structures behind the 'monistic' orientation towards efficiency can be described using a hierarchical model of individuals and organisations on the micro-, meso- and macrolevel. Streamlining (increasing efficiency) implies that complex social phenomena are divided into different 'departments' or 'disciplines' which each follow their own linear logic. This is the case both for intellectual (academic) and political structures. Each department or discipline has its own monistic, linear objectives and parameters for measuring progress. Within their respective field, there is a hierarchical vision of progress; the more the specific aim is obtained, the better. Negative impacts on other fields or parameters are simply considered 'externalities' and thus do not appear in the records of the sector concerned. If a nuclear power plant causes environmental damage (e.g. by raising the temperature in natural waters thereby disturbing the ecological balance), this does not appear as a cost in their balance sheet (unless there is a political decision to make a company pay for the cleaning up of pollution, e.g. caused by an oil spill; in that case the company has direct costs which will appear in the balance sheet).

From a societal point of view, it is important to understand that because of this linear logic, even sectors that profess to pursue the same societal objective (e.g. fighting poverty and exclusion) may paradoxically work against each other. Let us explain this with an example. Socio-economic politics (backed up by economic theory) focus on activating the unemployed, whereby 'activation' is defined as increasing their professional skills and attitude so as to make them 'productive' for the private sector. In order to receive 'tenders' of unemployed, organisations are required to offer jobtraining at the lowest cost. In order to keep costs low, maximum efficiency and streamlining is required. For example, a person who is oriented

⁵ Caren Levy (1997) uses the abbreviations 'WID' (women in development) and 'GAD' (gender as development). Because in the latter case, the notion of 'development' is redefined, Flora uses the abbreviation 'Gender As Transition', to make visible that from a gender perspective, the dominant notion of 'development' will (have to) be redefined and the socioeconomic system will have to make a 'transition' towards a more sustainable model. See also Snick & Demunter. 1999)

towards a cleaning job will not get the opportunity to learn how to use a computer; from an economic point of view, this would be an inefficient use of (human and financial) assets. Investment in computer training for the cleaning ladies (microlevel) will not result in a return on investment for the company (mesolevel), and thus is considered as a 'loss' of time or money, and as an inefficient use of public subsidies (macrolevel). Social economy initiatives that want to include social and e-participation activities in the trainings they offer, risk being evaluated as 'inefficient' by the financing structures (e.g. ESF).

This linear 'social policy' leads to a digital divide which in turn is the domain of yet another discipline and political department. For banks, schools, public services etc, communicating with or delivering services to customers/citizens online is cheaper, so the digital divide presents a loss of efficiency. In order to make more people use the computer and internet services, a separate sector is developed. Computers and internet are made available at low costs to families (microlevel). Public computer spaces, libraries and sociocultural organisations (mesolevel) are supposed to convince the very same cleaning ladies (microlevel) that learning to use ICT is important for them and worth the investment of their time and energy. The fact that the (implicit or explicit) messages at the macrolevel are contradictory is not taken into account; each discipline or department remains within its own territory and has no authority to criticize or influence other fields of expertise. Only the processes at the meso- and microlevels are taken into account; so if the digital divide appears to keep growing, the perception will be either that the organisations (mesolevel) are not delivering or that the citizens (microlevel) make the wrong 'choices' and that 'consciensness raising campaigns' are of the order etc.

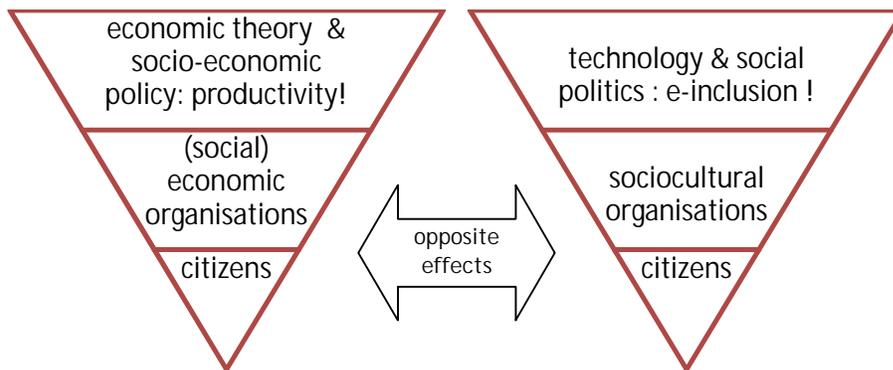


Figure 4. Efficiency model of science and politics and the paradoxes it creates

The above figure shows why an intellectual and political infrastructure which is based solely upon a logic of efficiency cannot be sustainable, creates paradoxical effects and exclusion as an 'externality'. As the sustainability curve clearly shows, a more 'resilient' intellectual and political infrastructure should make room for diversity and connectedness.

2.3. From implementation to co-production

Instead of a linear model, in which social organisations are seen as 'instrumental' for streamlining citizens into the politically and scientifically imposed 'model' (e.g. of the worker or the e-citizen), Flora proposes a different model of the relationship between socioeconomic actors, a model of co-production in which the micro-, meso- and macrolevel are approached as equally important components. That fighting poverty requires a multilevel approach has been argued by others. However, the intellectual and political infrastructure for multilevel processes that defy the top-down model has not yet to be fully developed.

The linear approach reduces 'citizens' to objects of specific lines of politics, without taking into account (a holistic view of) other domains. It does not take as a starting point the complex and interrelated 'experiences' and life domains of men and women, nor their interpretation of their situation. A more resilient approach therefore should rest upon an intellectual infrastructure which takes these experiences and interpretations (of different groups) of men and women as an essential component. Moreover, a process of co-construction of knowledge is necessary to 'balance' the negative effects (externalities) caused by the top-down (efficient) model.

If low schooled women are 'convinced' that it is not worth the investment for them to learn to use computers, they will not be able of their own account to overcome that conviction. In the Flora model, it is exactly the role of social organisations to bring these women together, and on a small scale (mesolevel) create participatory processes that strengthen the women's empowerment and self confidence through collective action. This in turn requires for the macrolevel (political and economic structures) to make room for the experiences, expertise and mission of these organisation and co-construct with them the necessary conditions for them to fully play their role in driving back poverty and exclusion.

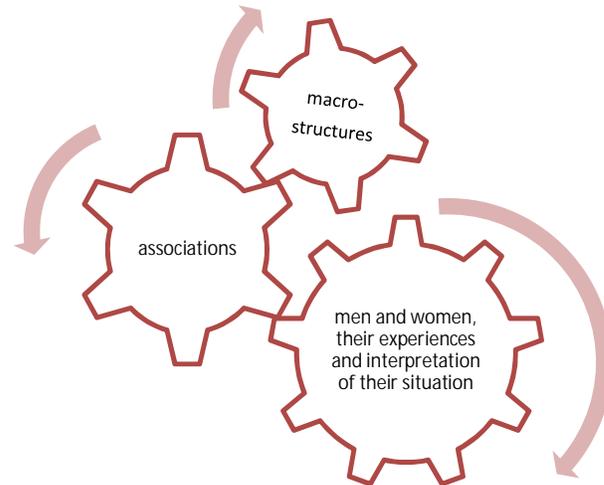


Figure 5: Resilient model of science and politics (After Levy : 1997).

As organisations today are 'forced' into a linear, top-down logic, it is not possible for them to implement more sustainable strategies. Especially if they are working with people in poverty, in order to survive financially they have to 'mainstream' themselves into the dominant view of economics. Many organisations do try on their own to find the balance between efficiency and resilience; social workers often take it upon themselves to do everything possible not to exclude the most vulnerable people (at the expense of a high level of burnout and turnover among workers in the sector). If they manage to develop actions that address 'other' needs of people, it is often with punctual project subsidies. The result is that many of these actions and initiatives remain isolated and are not sustainable in time. Flora as a 'network of expertise' offers them a common frame of reference and a platform of exchange, and thus in turn increases their 'efficiency'. Rather than defining itself as a 'centre' of expertise (implying a 'closure' which excludes others and diminishes its resilience), Flora works towards an open methodology of networking (or 'creating a web of co-construction') that can reach all sectors of society.

In the Efficient model of science and politics (figure 4), citizens are the 'object' of science and policy, and the organisations are merely instrumental in the implementation or application of views developed at the macrolevel. In the Resilient model of science and politics (figure 5) the relationship between actors at the three levels are defined as co-construction or co-production ⁽⁶⁾. Flora develops projects of action research in which the women (and men) in poverty are implied as co-experts. Their experience and interpretation of their situation are crucial in order to avoid the pitfalls of a streamlining (efficiency) model. This co-construction is not to be misunderstood as a 'bottom-up' process in which people in poverty can express their needs (via intermediary organisations) to the political powers. If this does not lead to a significant change in policies, it could create the perception that the people in poverty simply did not make their needs clear enough, and so are responsible for the lack of change in their situation. Figure 5 also shows that participation via co-construction is not to be mistaken for political services to individual citizens (potential voters).

In the resilient model, the organisations at mesolevel are not just a 'connecting piece' between the macrolevel and the citizens, but they have a specific role to play. They are small enough to be able to meet people that live in situations of poverty with all its complexity (without reducing them to objects of one-dimensional analysis or action). At the same time they are large enough to give people a collective voice and increase their impact on their own situation. Flora has developed a methodology that allows people in poverty to collectivise their needs and talents and pursue common objectives which they would not be able to realise on their own ⁽⁷⁾. A similar process of co-production should also be implemented between the meso- and macrolevel. Co-production has to be recognised by academics and politics as a process essential for resilience, creating 'different' approaches of social needs and strengthening 'interconnections'. Only if science and politics leave room for 'walking on two legs' can citizens be seen as actors and not just as objects of research and policy. Social organisations therefore should not (only) be considered as subcontractors for 'implementing' social policies that are designed by (economic) science and politics, but at the same time as partners in the process of co-constructing a sustainable society.

2.4. From monistic to 5-TWIN

In the Efficiency model research and politics focus on one dimension at a time, and 'dissimulate' negative effects on other fields as externalities (figure 4). Science can only quantify complex social and physical processes by making abstractions and building models that only apply in 'ideal' (or unrealistic) circumstances. Complexity is reduced to ideal type situations and the phenomenological description of social (and natural) reality is considered less important than abstract mathematical models ⁽⁸⁾. In co-construction on the contrary, it is in the 'encounter' with the other, in participatory processes with people

⁶ See also Cahn (2008) and Stephens, L., Ryan-Collins, J. & Boyle, D. (2008) in which the monetary preconditions for coproduction as a paradigm for a more sustainable economy are explored.

⁷ This methodology is called 'From I to We' and is available in French and Dutch. See www.florainfo.be.

⁸ Elinor Ostrom (2008) describes the prisoners dilemma as an abstract theoretical model that nevertheless has played an important role in how economic theory is conceived and put into practice by political decision makers. Lanchester (2010) analyses how the financial crisis of 2008 was largely 'produced' by mathematical models developed by academic economists that made subprime loans look like good investments but denied the empirical reality of the people these loans were given to. See also Popper (1990:24) and Ulanowicz (1997 & 2009) for a similar critique of natural sciences.

in poverty as co-experts and co-producers that the basis for resilience and for a more 'just' knowledge can be found ⁽⁹⁾.

On the basis of 15 years of action research, co-constructing knowledge with low schooled women and 'their' organisations, Flora has developed a model for a more holistic approach : the Five Types of Work Integrating Network (short: 5-TWIN) model. This model can be applied on the micro- as well as the meso- and macrolevel. If activation politics only tell people to improve their skills and motivation (self work) allowing them to 'compete' for productive work, they put people (women) with care work (children, elderly parents,...) at a disadvantage and may even cause environmental damage depriving future generations of the necessary resources (care work); moreover they create social inequality between people which in turn damages the well being of citizens in society as a whole (Wilkinson & Pickett 2009).



Figure 6: Five Types of Work Integrating Network (5-TWIN) as a framework for analysis of complex social realities.

Since the dominant scientific and political paradigm of socio-economic life is linear (oriented towards Efficiency), changing the paradigm and restoring the balance between the different types of work is added as a fifth type of work. As a matter of fact, restoring the balance is the key to gender mainstreaming: not only does it valorise male and female roles more equally, but it also offers a support for a Sustainable, Holistic and Egalitarian approach to complement or even correct the Hyper Efficiency dynamics that a monistic monetary economy is caught in.

For people to have a quality life, for companies to find the balance between efficiency and resilience, for society to be sustainable, a balance has to be found between the productive work (with its dominant monetary logic) and the other types of work. The typically 'masculine' roles are to be valorised more equally with the roles which have traditionally been ascribed to women. For 'activation' to be sustainable, the different roles should not be considered merely as a 'cost' or a 'loss' which puts them in 'competition' with productive work in the monistic pursuit of monetary profit, but should be 'internalised' within the socio-economic model.

⁹ Cf Levinas (1997); Hellemans (2007:81-82). Note that co-production is not the same as interdisciplinary research, in which different scientists exchange their specialised views of a given social domain or phenomenon.

Flora has explored and tested this model in different contexts (pensions rights, cultural participation, sustainability of work in the domestic cleaning sector, the role of social organisations ...). It is clear that the 5-TWIN model should not be considered as yet another 'normative' scheme into which people (or organisations) have to be 'streamlined'. Rather, it offers a frame of analysis for situations in which some kind of injustice is recognised. By analysing that situation in terms of (the imbalance between) the different types of work, it is possible to understand why certain social problems are so persistent. The digital divide, for example, is usually analysed in terms of 'productive' work (do people have access to computers or internet in their homes?) or self work (do they have the right skills and motivation for using the computer). The possibilities of using 'social' and 'care work' (e.g. the needs for people to participate in events in their neighbourhood or to help their children in their school work) are much less explored as possible roads towards e-inclusion.

3. Gender mainstreaming

3.1. Walking on two legs: balancing HE with SHE strategies

The concept of gender was 'invented' by feminism to make the distinction between 'biological' characteristics of people (microlevel) on the one hand and social positions of power or powerlessness (macrolevel) on the other. It is not because women can have babies that they should be confined to educating children for the rest of their lives; the fact that men cannot breast feed does not make them incapable of taking into account the needs of future generations. As a prompt, we offer the formula $G = s.p$ (whereby G = gender, s = sex and p = position of power/empowerment/powerlessness). The fact that gender is a 'multilevel' concept, and thus defies the monistic and linear paradigm dominant in science and politics, makes it a promising notion for co-producing a more sustainable view of 'socioeconomic development'. On the other hand, since we are so used to monistic thinking as the 'sole' road to scientific knowledge, this also makes the concept vulnerable for misinterpretation. Very often it is simply reduced to the microlevel, where it is used as synonymous for 'sex'. Gender mainstreaming then is simply taken to mean putting 'equal numbers of men and women' in certain societal (or economic) positions, but without analysing the power mechanisms inherent in those positions. Others focus neglect the differences (in experiences or interpretations) on the microlevel, and consequently consider all differences between men and women merely as social (macrolevel) constructs that are unjustified. Mesolevel structures are seen as instruments that should contribute to the 'correct' formatting of women, i.e. to mainstream them into the dominant (masculine) model. Gender mainstreaming is then seen as the way to putting 'Women In Development', without questioning the notion of development itself ⁽¹⁰⁾.

3.2. The concept of gender as the key to a sustainability paradigm

Interestingly it was Afro-American women that brought the multilevel aspect of the gender concept back to the attention. They pointed out to the first (white, middle class) feminists that it was very well that the ladies could now make careers and hold power positions, but that they could only do so because they had put (low schooled) women of colour in the position they had 'liberated' themselves from. As long as gender was interpreted on the microlevel only, putting equal numbers of women into power positions

¹⁰ For an outline of the complex history of the gender concept, see Snick & De Munter (1999).

could dissimulate the power structures at play at the macrolevel. And so these very same mechanisms could pop up again, this time between different 'classes' of women. The power games that drove the first feminists to fight against male dominance continued unchallenged among groups of women. The lesson these Afro-American women taught was that the concept of gender can only sustain the emancipation of women if it also 'deconstructs' the power mechanisms in society (politics, academics, economics). These power mechanisms not only divide men and women, but also different groups (of men and women) in terms of ethnicity, level of schooling, migration background, age, sexual orientation and so on. Gender thus should always be defined on the 'intersection' of sex with other social divides, in order not to lose sight of macrolevel power mechanisms. The 'formula' for gender thus becomes $G = S \cdot p^2$, whereby (capital letter) S stands for 'social divides' (in the first place sex, but always crossed with other characteristics of groups or individuals). If one is on the 'vulnerable' side on more than one social divide (e.g. women, low schooled, migrant and single mother), the powerlessness increases exponentially (hence the p^2). Of course this formula does not suggest that exclusion could be 'measured' and 'correlated' in a mathematical way to certain social characteristics of people; its only purpose is to visualise the fact that power mechanisms are at work at many levels (from micro to macro) and at the intersection of different social divides. Note that the social divides not only concern groups of people 'here and now', but also men and women in the South as well as future generations.

Recent crises also remind us that 'just' putting more women in development does not necessarily lead to a more just or sustainable society (¹¹). If women have participated less in the (scientific, technological, economic and political) processes that have resulted in economic, ecological and social disasters, it means they have less (power) to lose. Women can develop 'other' (resilient) answers to changing contexts (¹²). This shows again that gender mainstreaming only makes sense if WID strategies are complemented with GAT strategies. The intellectual infrastructure for WID (analysing what mechanisms keep women from taking the same power positions as men) and some political strategies (e.g. quota) have been explored extensively. The intellectual and political strategies for GAT require specific, complementary structures (and budgets). Gender mainstreaming can only be sustainable if it is developed 'on two legs'. The 'efficient' strategies (mainstreaming women into the dominant model of economic development) should be complemented by 'resilient' strategies of 'institutionalising Gender As Transition'. The institutions contributing to GAT cannot be imposed or controlled within a top-down approach, but must necessarily consist of horizontal 'webs' of co-construction. Social organisation should not be forced into a competitive logic (for acquiring tenders) but should be given the responsibility and the means for operating at the intersection of different types of work, for building partnerships and for cooperating (instead of competing) with other organisations. Caren Levy has outlined the different 'knots' that can constitute a web of gender mainstreaming, implying men and women, social groups, representative politics, administrations and research institutions, and so on. It is crucial for politics to recognise this strategy as a necessary and complementary one, and to provide the means allowing (or obliging) organisations to inscribe themselves in this kind of web. Only when focused on co-production, "the prism supplied by a lens of social justice highlights the varied hues of racism and sexism that have historically undermined efforts ... to address economic disparity" (Cahn 2008).

¹¹ In the long list of people (bankers, economists, politicians, mathematicians...) that played a role in bringing about the financial crisis of 2008, Lanchester (2010) mentions only one woman: Margaret Thatcher.

¹² See for example the project Climate Wise Women: "All over the world, communities are counting on women ... to find bold solutions that insure their very existence while the world continues to debate whether climate change actually exists" (<http://www.neweconomics.org/events/2011/03/21/climate-wise-women>).

3.3. Breaking the monopoly of bank money : the importance of complementary currencies

In the above analysis it has been made clear that monetary economics play a predominant role in maintaining social inequality and conflicts of interests (between groups of people in Western societies, between the North and the South, between present and future generations). The fact that bank money has become the only (monistic) parameter by which value is measured, plays a crucial role. Banks give money to rich people (who get an interests on their savings) which they take from poor people (who pay interests on their loans or debts). In this monetary system the rich need the poor to get even more rich. It simply is impossible for everyone to be rich, because interests do not grow on the trees. So, as long as the monopoly of bank money is maintained, crises and social inequality will be inevitable. Gender mainstreaming therefore is unthinkable without breaking the monopoly of bank money. Only then can the dominance of productive work over other kinds of work (figure 3) be corrected and a more balanced view of work (or roles) for all men and women be brought into practice (Lietaer : 2011). Many types of complementary currencies already exist and have proven their potential value for coproducing a more sustainable society. Yet, as long as science and politics only pursue HE strategies, these complementary currencies will remain marginal. A politics of gender mainstreaming can only have an effective impact if several currencies are implemented for different types of work, and if citizens and companies would be taxed in different currencies. Only then can social organisations that work with the most vulnerable groups have a 'competitive advantage' over companies that work only with the most productive people. If the ESF would allow (or even require) part of the co-financing to be in complementary currencies, organisations could step out of the infernal dynamics of the HE strategy and really contribute to more equal opportunities for all groups of men and women in society.

3.4. A gender mainstreaming agenda for the near future

Flora has developed its intellectual infrastructure and an onset for a new paradigm through 15 years of networking and co-construction. That is to say as much that Flora, as a small NGO, could never have realised this on its own and is indebted to countless others. In the first place Flora is indebted to all the organisations that work with vulnerable target groups and that refuse to have their mission distorted by the dominant Efficiency strategies. They have not only created Flora and turned to Flora with their needs and wisdom, but they have also invested a lot of time and energy to co-construct with us the expertise on many different themes. Without this coproduction Flora would not have been capable of developing its specific approach of gender mainstreaming.

Neither could we have developed the models presented here without building on the work of other visionary authors and research groups. The Five TWIN model and the justification for our approach of co-construction are heavily indebted to the work of Caren Levy and Caroline Moser. The work of Emmanuel Levinas, Mariette Hellemans, Elinor Ostrom and Robert Ulanowicz gave us the conceptual tools for justifying our epistemological approach and for explaining why and how our work is innovative and necessary for a sustainable and just society. The work of Bernard Lietaer on the gender bias inherent in bank money offered the deeper explanation of what Flora had been revealing through all its work: that the dominance of 'productive work' over the other types of work was the key to understanding the subordination of women (and especially of low schooled and immigrant women). His work explains why the 'type' of money we have come to see as the only possible one is in fact a historical construct of relatively recent invention that would (and should) be called into question in a society where male and female values (or 'gods and goddesses') are revered equally, where masculine and feminine roles are

recognised as equally essential for the survival of the planet and the well-being of those who inhabit it. Other authors, such as Wilkinson & Pickett, Klein and Lanchester strengthen our discourse by analysing the threats presented by the current monetary-economic and technological system. It is impossible for us to pay tribute to all these and other authors whose work we build upon.

What is important is that more and more organisations, in all sectors of society, come forward and ask Flora to share its expertise, methodology and analytical tools with them. As Lietaer (2011) states, the 'cultural creatives' - men, women and organisations that are reinventing human relationships because they refuse to believe that the HE-system proposed to them is the only valid option – are numerous. In fact, like the organisations that first established Flora as a small network, they are the social and cultural capital without which Flora would remain just a small and insignificant player. All we had to do was decide that we would recognise and valorise their capital and offer them a common discourse and framework that would allow them to join forces. This work of co-construction is an ongoing process. As figure 5 shows, society is not to be considered as a machine in which all elements interlock without openness, without gaps in the interactions. 'In accounting for the reasons why some particular event happens, it is often not possible to identify all the causes, ... there will always remain a small open window that no cause covers. This openness is what drives evolution. It is only by acknowledging such lacunae that we embark upon the pathway to a solid "evolutionary theory of knowledge"' (Ulanowicz 1997 : 37).

The greatest challenge for the future of gender mainstreaming is to learn how to 'walk on two legs'. Monistic thinking has been presented for centuries as the 'only' way to reach the truth. Only phenomena that can be measured and mathematically analysed are deemed scientific. 'Measuring' social phenomena inevitably means 'reduction' their complexity to one or a few 'countable' parameters, and therefore science alone can never guarantee full control over human wellbeing. Authors like Wilkinson & Pickett (2010) and Klein (2011) show convincingly that the 'promise' that economic or technological 'progress' would automatically entail more human wellbeing has proved itself wrong. Phenomena that are not 'predicted' by the dominant paradigm are indications that it is reaching its limits (Kuhn 1996). Yet no one will deny that science, technology and economy have brought about marvellous inventions. The fact that these realisations do not benefit everyone (here or in the South, now or in the future) to the same extent, shows that a HyperEfficiency strategy alone cannot increase sustainability. For HyperEfficiency structures (in science, economy and politics) to recognise this would be like the Baron of Münchhausen dragging himself out of the swamp by his own hair. Therefore it is of the essence that institutions at the 'Resilience' side of the curve are developed more fully as equally important players. They are not 'competing' with Efficiency institutions, for if they were they would adopt a monistic and hierarchical logic again and so just be 'more of the same'. Rather, finding the 'window of sustainability' (figure 2) requires cooperation and complementarity. Structures and policies pursuing WID-strategies should work alongside networks developing GAT-strategies. Webs of co-production (taking into account the 'phenomenological' life world of all citizens, and the needs of future generations) should be recognised as equally important as classical academic and technological (top level) institutions. Social economy should be recognised and valorised by 'other' parameters than private profit companies; only diversity and interconnection can give the economic system back its resilience. Consequently banks should no longer be allowed to have the monopoly to issue money, but complementary currencies should be actively promoted and even required as means for paying taxes or for cofinancing European subsidies.

3.5. How does Flora define its role in this scenario?

1. Flora wants to continue to work on the resilience side of the sustainability curve. After 15 years of work the outlines of an intellectual structure begin to appear, but these need to be further tested and elaborated, always through processes of co-construction with women (and men) in poverty. The work done so far needs to be consolidated and diversified.
2. Many organisations and networks (e.g. the European Women's Lobby) aim at reinforcing women's position and participation in important structures of society (WID). However, once women get to those positions, they should be able to fall back on models, methodologies and structures allowing them to contribute to a more Sustainable, Holistic and Egalitarian society. Therefore Flora invests mainly in the development of GAT-strategies, not in competition with WID structures, but in cooperation with them. Political support for this (resilient, GAT) dimension of the gender mainstreaming work has to be heightened.
3. Flora wants to contribute to the creation of a 'web' (or webs) of co-production. Many 'cultural creatives', idealistic individuals and organisations are working in the margins of the system to invent more just alternatives. Often they feel like they are fighting a losing battle, many (social workers, teachers, doctors...) give the best of themselves and suffer from burn out. They find themselves too far on the 'resilience' side of the sustainability curve which may not be sustainable. By joining forces, by sharing our methodology and expertise Flora wants to allow them to join forces (interconnection) and increase their 'efficiency'. Politics have to be convinced of the essential contribution these 'resilient' structures have to make to society and should develop appropriate support and monitoring tools for them as well as for the partnerships and networks they create among each other and with other actors.
4. Many 'cultural creatives' can only develop their projects with punctual and ad hoc subsidies; they invest a lot of time and energy in trying to find budgets for their actions. Flora wants to further explore the social and political agenda for the introduction of complementary ways of valorising work. The monopoly of bank money is the cause of the predominance of productive (paid) work over the other kind of works societies need. It also leads to the subordination of (the needs of) certain social groups by (the needs or greed of) others; this "mortgages" not only groups in Western society today, but also peoples in the South and future generations. The introduction of complementary ways of valorising the contribution (or co-production) of all these individuals and groups is essential and requires a specific methodology (itself based on co-production).
5. Flora wants to redefine and reinforce the social role of organisations. '... [M]id-scale elements are the ones most likely to initiate system change. Furthermore, the entire scenario of change becomes different when it is originated by the intermediate powers. ... [C]hange does not have to propagate upward from below, nor must it be imposed from above: its chief agents rise in the midst of the system itself' (Ulanowicz 1997: 159). Too often social organisations have been 'instrumentalised' in a top-down, linear logic of socioeconomic politics. Their potential for the resilience of society remains misunderstood and unused. The 5-TWIN model helps them to clarify their own role in developing a more diverse and connected (resilient) approach to socioeconomic development or to other sectors in society. The dominance of bank money has reinforced competition and individualism; since we cannot all be rich when interest money is the only

currency, the competition is open and unrelenting. Even strategies for fighting poverty focus mainly on strengthening individual skills and motivation (and organisations are instrumentalised to 'reinsert' individual people in the competitive logic). Flora wants to bring back into the picture the strength people can find in social work, in collective and cooperative projects that allow them to realise things they would not be able to realise individually (or in 'competition' with others). Several projects of action research have shown that the 'social work' aspect of the 5-TWIN is probably the one most neglected in present day society; the 'imbalance' this entails has negative impacts on all the other types of work (Wilkinson & Pickett 2009).

This text is meant as work in progress, to be elaborated through co-construction with other social organisations and with actors in the academic, economic and political world.

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