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No. 23

Intergenerational programmes Towards a society for all ages

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Preamble

The ageing of the population and its consequences have become an issue of enormous importance for policy-makers. In June, 2000, the United Nations General Assembly therefore decided to convene the Second World Assembly on Ageing, in order to present recommendations concerning how to best combine socioeconomic development and demographic ageing.

This Second Assembly was held in Madrid in April, 2002, and one of its most important outcomes was the approval of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, a document including 238 measures related to older persons and the development of health and welfare in old age, and how to create more favourable environments for ageing.

The novelties of this Plan relative to the International Plan approved in Vienna in 1982 after the First World Assembly on Ageing include one which is of special significance: the consideration that intergenerational solidarity in households, communities and nations is fundamental if our societies are to be for all ages, as proposed by the United Nations since 1995.

With this new issue of the Social Studies Collection, "la Caixa" Welfare Projects aims to make a contribution to the efforts made by the United Nations in favour of the construction of societies for all ages. How? By providing an in-depth analysis of one of the possible ways in which solidarity between generations can grow: by fostering intergenerational programmes. This contribution is made precisely when, five years after the Second Assembly, an initial review and assessment is being made of what has been accomplished since the Madrid International Plan of Action was approved.

This Study, under the leadership of Professor Mariano Sánchez, clarifies the concept of *a society for all ages*, explaining what intergenerational programmes are, describing their fundamental benefits and presenting some of the best practical models for achieving suitable community services and development for such a society. It also provides some information about the status of these programmes in Spain, where they have undergone unprecedented development in the last few years.

This Study not only shows that intergenerational programmes can help to reduce discrimination against older persons, but it also provides specific examples showing how they are a source of intergenerational solidarity and can thus be classified as suitable instruments for increasing the integration and cohesion of our societies. The eleven Spanish and international authors who have been involved in this project, some of whom are leading the promotion of intergenerational programmes in Europe and North America, provide the general public, the professional community and policy-makers with material which could help them to ensure practical progress in creating societies for all ages.

José F. de Conrado y Villalonga

Executive Director of "la Caixa" Welfare Projects
and Managing Director of the "la Caixa" Foundation

Barcelona, December 2007

Introduction

This project is focused on two planes. On the one hand, we have reality, the reality of contact between people of different generations and the impact of this contact on those involved. On the other, we have the ideal plane, where we discuss how to progress towards a *society for all ages*, a goal defined by the United Nations in the mid-nineties. The question underlying this project arises where these two planes overlap. Based on the reality of the current status of intergenerational contact and relations, how could we foster a social change to bring us closer to the ideal of a *society for all ages*? The conclusion we have reached is that if we appropriately increase and organise the opportunities available to the people from one generation to relate to people from other generations, more of these people will decide to make use of such opportunities and there will be more intergenerational interaction. Obviously, the more the interactions and positive relations between generations, the closer we will be to demolishing some of the barriers currently preventing our societies from truly being societies for all ages.

What is the current status of intergenerational relations in Spain? The data available does not enable us to reach final conclusions, but merely to obtain an idea of what the situation is like. For example, the Spanish Survey on the Living Conditions of the Elderly (*Encuesta sobre Condiciones de Vida de los Mayores*) (*Observatorio de Mayores-IMSERSO*, 2004) asked a sample of older persons what they had done during specific week to which the survey referred. The answers showed that 18% of them had been with children or young people every day. However, the percentage was as high as 40.5% for those who had been with people of their own age *every day*. Adding together the answers of those who had been with children or young people *every day* or *nearly every day*, the percentage was 31.4%; the figure was much higher,

however, as much as 65.2%, for elderly people who had been with people of their own age *every day* or *nearly every day* of the week. According to the same survey, being with children or young people was only the tenth most common activity of the elderly.

If, instead of considering older persons in general, we focus on those in special living facilities, the figures were even more overwhelming. In this case, only 3.8% of these people claimed to have been with children or young people *every day* or *nearly every day* in the last week and only 3.5% of those who had not recently been with children and/or young people, said that they would like to do so in the future.

What does this information suggest? That most older persons apparently have no regular contact with children or young people. Why? There are many possible reasons. In the context of this project, one of them is of particular interest and it is two-fold: is there no more contact because there are not enough opportunities or because the opportunities are not attractive enough? This question, however, leads to another two: can a *society for all ages* even be contemplated where each individual has his or her rights guaranteed but no opportunity to relate with other individuals of different ages on a daily basis? Is wellbeing enough in this ideal *society for all ages* or do we prefer the possibility of «*being well*» together?

In the conclusions of the Second World Assembly on Ageing held in Madrid in 2002, the United Nations recognised «the need to strengthen solidarity between generations and intergenerational partnerships, keeping in mind the particular needs of both older and younger ones, and encourage mutually responsive relationships between generations» (United Nations, 2002: 4). One way of doing this, also according to the United Nations, is to «encourage and support traditional and non-traditional multigenerational mutual assistance activities with a clear gender perspective in the family, the neighbourhood and the community» (United Nations, 2002: 18).

Intergenerational programmes were created forty-odd years ago in the United States in order to correct what was then perceived as a threat for its society: the growing distance and confrontation between different generations. Over the last forty years, these programmes have shown, in North America and elsewhere, that they can help to eliminate, or at least diminish, some of the

barriers preventing intergenerational contact and relations. This is the belief of the eleven authors who have written the eleven chapters in this Study, presented as an attempt to respond to the call made by the United Nations, and explaining why and how intergenerational programmes can help to bring the initial situation (reality, in which there is little intergenerational contact, particularly between non-relatives) closer to the goal identified by the United Nations (the construction of what is as yet an ideal, a *society for all ages*).

The authors involved in this project are experts in the design, creation and assessment of intergenerational programmes. We have not attempted, however, to create a practical manual (indeed, some texts are now being published with that objective, both in Spanish and English: Kaplan and Hanhardt, 2003; Bernard and Ellis, 2004; McCrea, Weissmann and Thorpe-Brown, 2004; Bressler, Henkin and Adler, 2005; Sánchez, 2007). Our goal was to explain what intergenerational programmes are, identify the components of the best of these programmes, define their benefits for the participants and define the role to be played by intergenerational programmes in the social policies required to create a *society for all ages*. We believe that answers to these questions must be provided in order to create a solid basis for intergenerational programmes; otherwise, we are likely to create programmes which, their great impact notwithstanding, are no more than a *pleasant experience*. In the words of Generations United, the organisation which best represents the United States in its defence of intergenerationality, we believe that intergenerational programmes should not only be *pleasant* but also *necessary and effective*.

The Study approaches the above and other issues in a given order. In Chapter I, we start by providing a detailed explanation of what the United Nations means when it refers to a *society for all ages*; it is evident that if intergenerational programmes are to bring us closer to such a society, we first need to know what we are talking about. This done, Chapter II presents the concept and history of intergenerational programmes, aspects of those which have been most successful, and some information about and examples of intergenerational programmes organised in Spain (of which there is indeed little information available to date). As, once we know what intergenerational programmes are, most people will want to know what they are for, Chapter III answers this question in some detail; obviously, an intergenerational

programme does not automatically guarantee benefits, but we do know, thanks to research such as that described in this chapter, that in the right conditions, these programmes have positive outcomes. What kind of outcomes? Many kinds. We have decided, however, to directly address two specific issues of concern for the United Nations, providing the answers to two questions related to these possible benefits: can intergenerational programmes help to eradicate discrimination against older persons? And, how can intergenerational programmes help to enhance social cohesion and intergenerational solidarity? Chapter IV addresses the first of these questions and the second is considered in Chapter V.

We continue by presenting two specific intergenerational programme models showing how, in practice, such programmes bring us closer to a *society for all ages*. Chapter VI describes what intergenerational shared-sites consist of, how they work and their pros and cons; such sites are places where, usually under the same roof, services are provided for people from different generations, making use of the extra potential derived from their daily physical proximity. Chapter VII refers to the model known as *Communities for All Ages*, currently being put into practice in the United States; we believe that this model, of which we present the basic ideas and some examples, is one of the best developed and boldest ways of promoting a *society for all ages*.

The last two chapters address issues which are of the utmost significance if intergenerational programmes are to take hold in our societies: on the one hand, we need professionals who know how to make use of the intergenerational potential involved in these programmes and, on the other, we need social policies appropriately designed and applied to promote positive intergenerationality. These two chapters aim to encourage the reader to consider the concepts and dilemmas behind these two issues; their authors believe that their in-depth analyses are essential in order to necessarily renew the language and way of thinking involved in both the professional aspects and social policies related to intergenerationality.

This introduction ends by referring to those the project is addressed to. The authors are aware that intergenerational programmes are new, if not unknown, even though they are increasingly found in Spain. We therefore considered the need to include basic aspects to increase the reader's familiarity with the idea: the vocabulary, ideas, concepts and examples most commonly used in

the intergenerationality field. We assume that the reader will reach his or her own conclusions; we also imagine that social policy-makers will find ideas for improvement, that those who investigate intergenerational processes and relations will find suggestions for new research projects, that those who are involved in the field on a practical daily basis will discover what lies behind the activities performed by people from different generations, and that those who are merely curious enough to read about the subject for the first time will be encouraged to consider participating in, or even organising, an intergenerational programme.

We sincerely hope that this Study will help to guide the development and organisation of intergenerational programmes so that we can gradually come closer to building a *society for all ages*.

I. A society for all ages

Mariano Sánchez (*University of Granada*)

Antonio Martínez (*Instituto de Mayores y Servicios Sociales, IMSERSO*)

1.1. Introduction

The concept of a *society for all ages* is the focal point of this book. The first chapter can thus be expected to verse on the subject. This will take on the form of an exercise in interpretation: our interest does not lie in how we understand the concept, but in how it is seen by the organisation promoting the idea: the United Nations.

The following pages therefore provide an answer to the following question: what does the United Nations mean when it refers to a *society for all ages*?

Like all good slogans chosen to promote political activities, a *society for all ages* is an expression which is initially easy to understand. On the one hand, it refers to a society made for people of all ages (babies, children, adolescents, young people, adults, older persons) to live in; on the other, considering the organisation behind it, we can imagine that the idea is not only for a society with room for different ages, but designed for different ages and capable of covering their needs and ensuring their wellbeing and happiness. A *society for all ages* is not just a concept, but also an ideal and a goal.

The problem with using ideal images when representing an objective is not a new one. When we consider things in the form of an ideal model, as in this case, questions like these immediately arise: how to progress from where we are to another, ideal situation defined as our goal? To what extent is an ideal attainable? How feasible or impossible is this ideal image?

1.2. A society for all ages: initial formulation

The United Nations General Assembly, in a resolution dated June 16, 2000 (A/RES/54/262), decided to convene the Second World Assembly on Ageing devoted to the «overall review of the outcome of the First World Assembly, as well as to the adoption of a revised plan of action and a long-term strategy on ageing, encompassing its periodic reviews, in the context of a *society for all ages*» (United Nations, 2000). Thus, a *society for all ages* became the focal point of the meeting planned for 2002. Eventually, the term was used as the slogan of the Second World Assembly.

The *society for all ages* concept was formulated as such by the United Nations in the process of preparing 1999 to be the International Year of Older Persons. Indeed, in 1992, by means of resolution 47/5, the General Assembly of the United Nations had decided that 1999 would be the International Year of Older Persons. Three years later, specifically on March 22, 1995, the Secretary General of the United Nations presented the Assembly with a proposed conceptual framework (Conceptual Framework for the Preparation and Observance of the International Year of Older Persons in 1999 (A/50/114)) in which he defined the key aspects of the concept. The General Assembly, in resolution 50/141, of December 21, 1995, took note of the conceptual framework established by the Secretary General and invited the member States to adapt it to their national conditions and formulate programmes accordingly in order to appropriately celebrate 1999.

The roots of this concept, however, are found earlier; the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen from March 6 to 12, 1995, had ended just ten days before the presentation of the conceptual framework. According to Chapter IV of the Summit report, on Social Integration:

«The aim of social integration is to create a society for all, in which every individual, each with rights and responsibilities, has an active role to play. Such an inclusive society must be based on respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, cultural and religious diversity, social justice and the special needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, democratic participation and the rule of law» (United Nations, 1995a: 66). The impression is that the expression a *society for all* was an invitation to create the term *society for all ages*.

In his presentation of the conceptual framework for 1999, the Secretary General of the United Nations explained that a *society for all* is one which «adjusts its structures and functioning, as well as its policies and plans, to the needs and capabilities of all, thereby releasing the potential of all, for the benefit of all. A *society for all ages* would additionally enable the generations to invest in one another and share in the fruits of that investment, guided by the twin principles of reciprocity and equity» (United Nations, 1995b: 9).

The conceptual framework defined four facets of ageing converging on the idea of a *society for all ages*:

- 1) The situation of older persons;
- 2) Lifelong individual development;
- 3) Multigenerational relationships; and
- 4) Development and ageing populations.

We will now explain in more detail how the United Nations characterised each of these four facets.

The situation of older persons⁽¹⁾

This first facet connects the *society for all ages* concept with the Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing adopted in 1982 after the First World Assembly on Ageing. This connection is found in the proposal to build the concept of a clearly multigenerational *society for all ages*, based on caring for older persons. The Vienna Plan made older persons the object of different ageing policies; not in vain was it the result of the first World Assembly convened «to establish an international plan of action aimed at guaranteeing the economic and social security of older persons, as well as opportunities for them to contribute to the development of their nations» (United Nations, 1983). As we can see, so-called *older persons* were placed centre-stage and the next question was what they needed and what could be done for them.

Furthermore, all the practical measures adopted in Vienna had to help to comply with the 18 United Nations principles in favour of Older Persons, formulated in 1991 and referring to five fields: independence, participation, care, self-fulfilment and dignity.

(1) This chapter uses the term *older persons* when it appears in United Nations documents or to refer to the Organisation's discourse.

As we can see, the focal point of the *society for all ages* concept is gradually being delimited: it basically refers to older persons (and not everyone, although we are all of a certain *age*).

Lifelong individual development

In line with the approaches contemplating ageing from a life-cycle perspective, this second aspect of the *society for all ages* concept established that older persons could only be truly understood by considering that ageing is a lifelong process: «Ageing is a lifelong process and should be recognised as such. Preparation of the entire population for the later stages of life should be an integral part of social policies and encompass physical, psychological, cultural, religious, spiritual, economic, health and other factors» (United Nations, 1983: 25i).

From this perspective, we deduce that older persons are, first and foremost, *persons*, that is, human beings capable of lifelong development; they are, however, also *older* but the fact that these persons are at an advanced stage of their lives does not mean that they have no potential for development and certainly does not authorise us to consider them as a separate group.

This new approach to ageing, which rejects the idea of *old age* as a specific stage of life, opened the door for support for healthy ageing, closely followed by active ageing. Societies must be *for all ages* because all their members, regardless of age, must be able to continue contributing to their wellbeing providing that societies, in turn (including families and communities), provide persons of all ages with all the necessary support so that their participation becomes actually feasible, and not only desirable. The right to participate alone, for example, is not enough unless people are provided with real opportunities and the faculties and resources required to do so.

This second characteristic of a *society for all ages* was even more original when it was formulated. When it sustained that the conditions of older persons depended not only on themselves but also on their interaction with the environment, this meant that society in general and all of its members are responsible for the quality of life of older persons.

Multigenerational relations

A long-living society is also a society in which different generations have to live together for longer. This opens the door to possible new forms of interaction between generations in families, communities and society in general. For example, how can older persons receive the care they need when they need such care for longer periods? Or how to guarantee that they have sufficient income when growing numbers of people are entitled to a pension?

The *society for all ages* concept is multigenerational by definition. Moreover, it must be intergenerational. Collaboration between generations (as we shall see in chapter II, this involves more than their mere juxtaposition or co-existence) is a key factor in the maintenance of social structures capable of responding to the needs of older persons; needs which, by the way, are linked to the needs of people of other ages.

This third dimension of the concept, as approved by the United Nations, represented a call to reconsider and foster multigenerational relations in families and promote the same relations in neighbourhoods and groups defending specific interests (such as senior associations and youth organisations).

The United Nations thus emphasised the multigenerational nature of a *society for all ages*, not as a mere descriptive feature (if society is for all ages, the presence of people from multiple generations is unquestionable) but as a driving force to be strengthened in order to guarantee the continuity of our increasingly long-living societies.

Development and ageing populations

In this fourth and last factor of the *society for all ages* concept, the term *development* did not refer to individuals but to social structures, particularly the relationship between demographic and economic structures. According to Sidorenko (2007: 6), the idea was to harmonise an ageing population with continued socioeconomic development. The key to this fourth dimension was the *(inter)dependence of the population*. What does this mean? That ageing can only become a developmental factor if we collaborate with one another, maintaining a kind of contract according to which it is acceptable for all of

us to depend on what we all contribute. The clearest example is the pension system: it can only be maintained if those who work pay for those who no longer work to receive a pension. Some of us depend on the others.

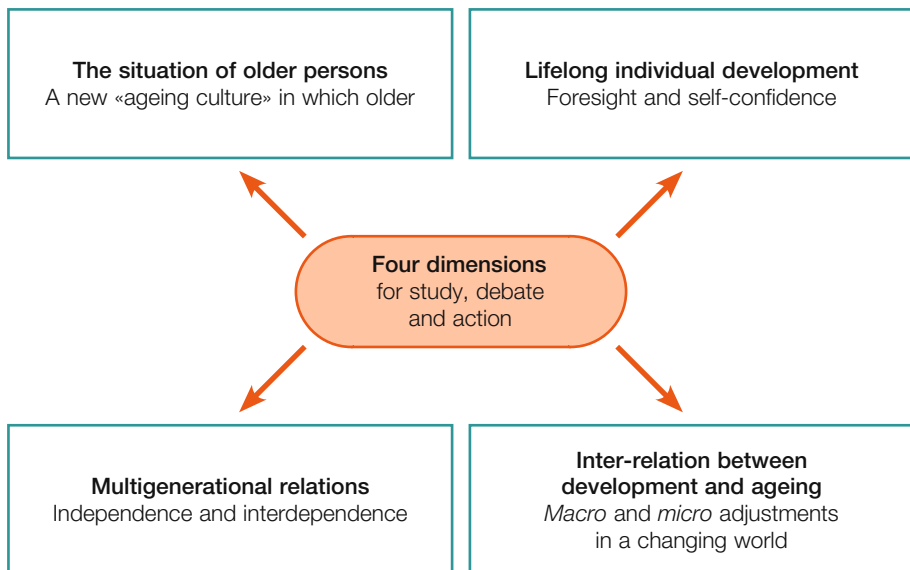
Finally, two aspects which have also been referred to in other dimensions of the concept are repeated here: the need to favour multigenerational sharing and promote active ageing at the site of residence.

To conclude, what did the United Nations mean in 1995 when it started to refer to a *society for all ages*?

The answer to this question can be illustrated by two charts: graph 1.1, proposed by Gary Andrews (1999: 6) and our own graph 1.2.

GRAPH 1.1

Dimensions for approaching the *society for all ages* concept

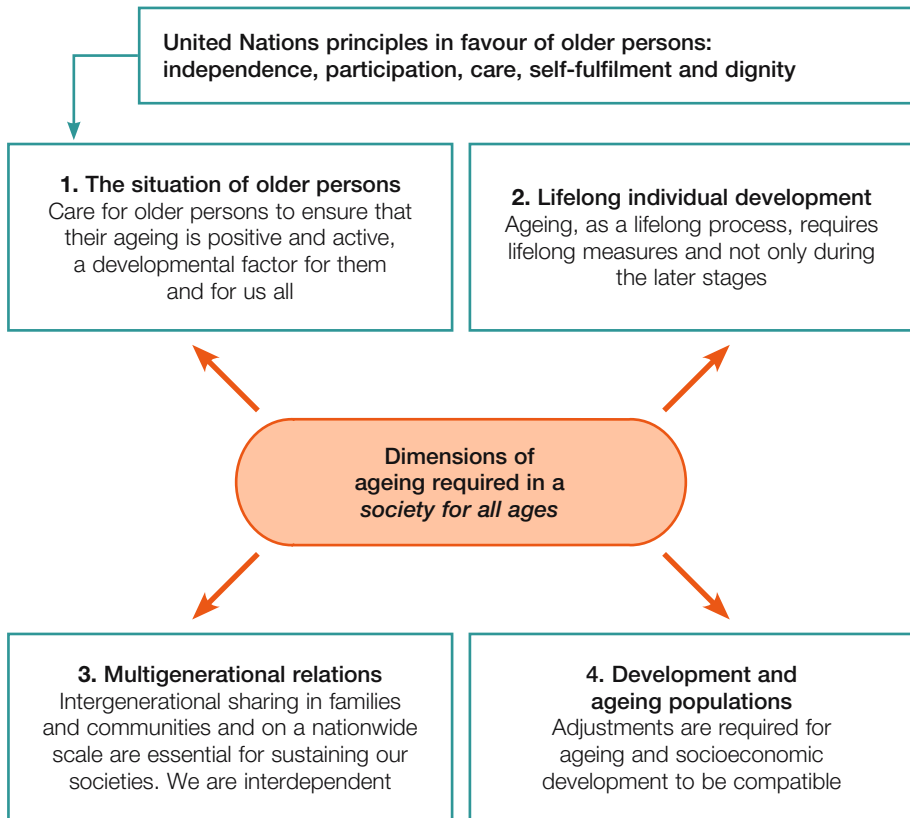


Source: Andrews (1999).

We propose a different approach, which we believe is more fitting for the implicit sense of the conceptual framework we have considered above.

Reformulation of the dimensions for approaching a *society for all ages*

Proposed according to the conceptual framework of 1995



Source: based on United Nations (1995b).

What is the difference between these two representations of the same conceptual framework? There appear to be four significant differences:

- First difference: the centre of our graph shows that the United Nations was not only attempting to present four dimensions for debate, which it was, but that these four dimensions were all defined in relation to ageing; the United Nations aimed at accomplishing a *society for all ages* with ageing as the focal point and fundamental guideline. This is of the utmost importance.

- Second difference: our graph clearly shows that, as a result of the above, the framework of a *society for all ages* was based on the United Nations principles in favour of older persons. This component is fundamental, as it reveals one of the framework's possible contradictions: if, as the second dimension claims, ageing is a lifelong process, how can the framework be based solely on principles in favour of older persons?
- Third difference: our graph includes the term *development* in three of the four dimensions (1, 2 and 4), so this factor's overall importance in the *society for all ages* concept is even more evident.
- Fourth difference: in dimension 3 (multigenerational relations), our graph shows how the conceptual framework appeared to indistinctly use the terms *multigenerational* and *intergenerational*. Do they both mean the same thing? Why did the United Nations appear to be more inclined to use the former than the latter on this occasion? And, more important still, what are the consequences for the basic aspects of its concept of a *society for all ages*? These are open questions encouraging us to delve deeper into our analysis.

Without having witnessed the debates concerning how to articulate the *society for all ages* concept, it would appear that all these questions are of interest if we consider the remarks of someone who did experience the situation on the inside (Sidorenko, 2007: 7): «When first put forth in the late 1990s, the concept of a *society for all ages* appeared as an innovative approach to ageing –and to some as a controversial deviation from earlier commitments to care and support for older people. The controversy was based on a presumption that efforts to achieve a society for all ages could lead to abandoning the policies that address specific and often difficult situations of older persons, shifting already limited resources to other social groups, such as children and youth».

As Sidorenko explains, in view of this paradoxical but realistic perception of a *society for all ages* becoming an obstacle for policies addressing the welfare of older persons, «the UN Programme on Ageing emphasised that although the concept of a society for all ages took a broad and long-term approach to individual and population ageing, improving the situation of older persons would remain a paramount task for future action on ageing» (Sidorenko, 2007: 7).

In the end, although the conceptual framework did not go as far as was thought by those who saw it as threatening, it became clear that ageing continued to be perceived as a lifelong process, but that United Nations policies of action would still focus on the part represented by older persons.⁽²⁾

To end this section, we can now answer the question from which it takes its title. What did the United Nations mean in 1995 when it started to refer to a *society for all ages*?

- It meant that ageing is an issue which should be a focal point of our societies, to be approached by all policies.
- It meant that, within this ageing process, priority should be given to older persons (people over 60 years of age).
- It meant that, of all the needs of older persons, five factors are of outstanding importance: independence, participation, care, self-fulfilment and dignity.
- It meant that care for older persons can be compatible with socioeconomic development.
- It meant that generations are (inter)dependent and resource-sharing between them should therefore be fostered.

1.3. From the conceptual framework of 1995 to the Madrid International Plan on Ageing of 2002

Seven years passed between the presentation of the conceptual framework analysed above, in March, 1995, and the Second World Assembly, in April, 2002. In that time, the idea of a *society for all ages* suffered new vicissitudes. However, it was still in good health at the time of the Second Assembly: Sidorenko and Walker (2004) confirm that the *central (sic)* concept of the Madrid International Plan on Ageing (the Madrid Plan, from now on) was a *society for all ages*. Indeed, this is recognised in Article 1 of the Political Declaration derived from the Second World Assembly: «We, the representatives

(2) With regards to the expression *older persons*, as used in United Nations documents, the Population Division of the UN Secretariat defines them as 60 years of age or older. Therefore, although it was not explicitly mentioned in this document, this can also be taken as the implicit definition of the subjects to which it refers.

of Governments meeting at this Second World Assembly on Ageing in Madrid, Spain, have decided to adopt an International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002 to respond to the opportunities and challenges of population ageing in the twenty-first century and promote the development of a *society for all ages*» (United Nations, 2002: 1).

In a detailed analysis of the Madrid Plan, Sidorenko and Walker (2004: 152) explain that the concept of a *society for all ages*, as it appears in the Plan, is articulated in several themes approached in the document:

- Human rights.
- Security in old age, including the eradication of poverty.
- Empowerment of older persons.
- Individual development.
- Personal fulfilment and lifelong wellbeing.
- Equality of gender among older persons.
- Intergenerational interdependence, solidarity and reciprocity.
- Healthcare, support and social protection for older persons.
- The collaboration of all major stakeholders in the Plan's implementation.
- Scientific research and experience.
- The ageing situation of indigenous persons and emigrants.

To delve deeper into this analysis, we can examine the specific use of the expression in the texts of the Second World Assembly. The Political Declaration already refers to a *society for all ages*. Article 6 specifically refers to the need for concerted action «to transform the opportunities and the quality of life of men and women as they age and to ensure the sustainability of their support systems, thus building the foundation for a *society for all ages*» (United Nations, 2002: 2). Opportunities to participate and make a contribution, quality of life and guaranteed support are proposed as the foundation on which to build a *society for all ages*. Where the concept is defined in more detail, however, is in the text of the Madrid Plan.

Briefly, the general objective of the Madrid Plan was to adapt and adjust to an ageing world; its success will depend on *i*) the ability of its measures to enhance the quality of life of older persons and *ii*) its ability to ensure the sustainability of lifelong welfare systems. The first of these two ways in which to measure the Plan's success specifically refers to older persons, whereas the second has

a broader scope and appears to include us all, in as much as wellbeing is a constant lifelong goal. This approach appears to be an attempt to maintain the double language used in 1995, when the conceptual framework supported the lifelong approach to ageing but focused on a single stage of life (that of older persons –aged 60 or more).

The contents of the Madrid Plan are articulated in 132 points in which the expression *society for all ages* only appears on five occasions. Our remarks on the use of the term in the Madrid Plan can also be summarised as five:

1) The Second Assembly clearly makes use of a continuist approach by literally accepting the dimensions proposed in 1995 and used as the conceptual framework in 1999. This is certainly not surprising, but besides continuism, we also find some progress in three of the achievements which the Plan claims are due to the International Year of Older Persons: increased *i)* attention paid to the four dimensions of the concept, *ii)* introduction of ageing as a cross-sectional political topic, and *iii)* opportunities for all, regardless of age.

2) The concept of a *society for all ages* is linked to rights and freedoms. However, the main point of reference is not specific to older persons but has a broader scope, including the fundamental human rights applicable to all; this is certainly new. Later, and only later, it refers to the participation, non-discrimination and dignity of older persons (the subject of chapter IV in this book).

3) Intergenerational relations and dialogue appear as a factor to be promoted which, as we shall see later, is given unprecedented attention by the Second Assembly.

4) When the second of the dimensions of the *society for all ages* concept was explained, reference was made to opportunities to make a contribution to society (lifelong individual development). The Madrid Plan, however, goes even further when it specifies that the contributions of older persons are not limited to those which can be measured in economic terms or in exchange for remuneration. This not only aligns the Madrid Plan with active ageing but with productive ageing (Caro and Sánchez, 2005: 459). This is real progress.

5) If the conceptual framework of 1995 had embraced multigenerational relations, the Madrid Plan underlines the importance of intergenerational

solidarity. It also identifies a specific objective consisting of strengthening such solidarity by equity and intergenerational reciprocity. It proposes the following seven actions to do so:

- «a) Promote understanding of ageing through public education as an issue of concern to the entire society;
- b) Consider reviewing existing policies to ensure that they foster solidarity between generations, thus promoting social cohesion;
- c) Develop initiatives aimed at promoting mutual, productive exchange between the generations, focusing on older persons as a social resource;
- d) Maximise opportunities for maintaining and improving intergenerational relations in local communities, inter alia, by facilitating meetings for all age groups and avoiding generational segregation;
- e) Consider the need to address the specific situation of the generation that has to care at the same time for their parents, their own children and grandchildren;
- f) Promote and strengthen solidarity among generations and mutual support as a key element for social development;
- g) Initiate research on the advantages and disadvantages of different living arrangements for older persons, including familial co-residence and independent living in different cultures and settings» (United Nations, 2002: 19-20).

At this point, it is important to remember that the issue of interest is how, based on the current status of intergenerational relations, we could promote a social change to bring us closer to the ideal of a *society for all ages*. We now know that, in the Madrid Plan, the United Nations responds by proposing action such as fostering intergenerational relations and associations, facilitating the participation of older persons in intergenerational community groups or encouraging the design of homes aimed at intergenerational co-existence. It does not specify, however, how all this can be put into practice. We suggest that the promotion and growth of intergenerational programmes is a way of making these proposals come true. We therefore aim to link the proposals formulated at the Second World Assembly in relation to the concept of a *society for all ages* to the foundations, practical development and impact of such programmes, the objective of which is to jointly

address the needs of different generations. Our objective is thus clearly pertinent to the goals defined by the United Nations.

In sum, what did the United Nations mean in 2002 when it continued to refer to a *society for all ages*?

After all the above, we ask ourselves whether the concept of a *society for all ages* changed in any way between its initial formulation in 1995 and the Madrid Plan of 2002. Once again, we make use of a chart to answer this question (see graph 1.3).

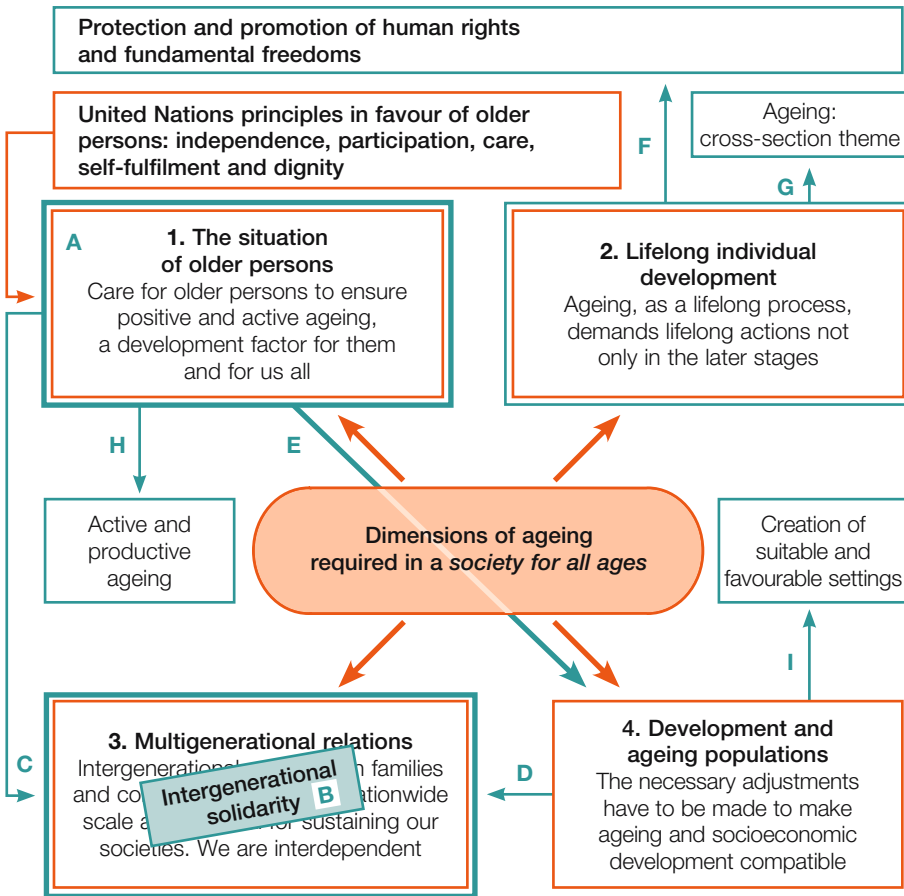
Based on this graph, what are our conclusions concerning significant changes in the initial concept of a *society for all ages*?⁽³⁾ They are as follows:

- First: primarily, two of the four dimensions have clearly been strengthened: *i)* concern for the situation of older persons, in view of old and new characteristics and problems (A), and *ii)* the belief that multigenerational relations, reformulated as intergenerational solidarity (B), facilitate (C and D) mutually beneficial relations between older persons and the socioeconomic development of ageing societies (in the Madrid Plan, this last dimension tends to be seen as just another aspect (E) of the first: *the situation of older persons*).
- Second: further consideration of ageing as a process adds (F) a generic concern for protecting and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms, not only of older persons but of us all, and this perspective (ageing is not limited to older persons) leads to another factor (G): the even stronger suggestion that ageing should be part of all policies, regardless of the age group (older persons) they could be seen to affect.
- Third: with regards to the situation of older persons, new emphasis is placed not only on their participation but on their possibility of contributing to society, underlying the idea of active (H), and even productive, ageing.
- Fourth: concern for populational development and ageing leads to a new theme given priority in the Madrid Plan: socioeconomic development should provide (I) more suitable and favourable settings for older persons.

(3) Upper case letters are used in the graph for reference purposes when reading the text. The blue lines represent the innovations found in the Madrid Plan relative to the initial conceptual framework shown on graph 1.2.

Dimensions of ageing required in a society for all ages

Proposal according to the 2002 Madrid Plan



Source: based on United Nations (2002).

We believe that the Madrid Plan, based on the initial concept, approved in 1995 and used in 1999, of a *society for all ages*, underlines two of the four dimensions of the concept: *the situation of older persons and multigenerational relations*. As we mentioned earlier, according to the interpretation put forward by Sidorenko (2007), the Second World Assembly fulfilled the commitment for «improvement of the situation of older persons to continue to be of the

utmost importance for future action related to ageing» (Sidorenko, 2007: 7). This is confirmed by our analysis.

However, we return to the interesting basic issue to which we earlier referred, consisting of how to reconcile an outstanding concern for the situation of older persons with the idea of promoting and strengthening intergenerational solidarity, which implies relations in which exchange satisfies all our needs and not only those of the elderly. This is certainly possible, but we believe that it cannot be achieved without method. If the intergenerational scales are too heavily weighed down in favour of older persons, we run the risk of other people perceiving not that they are making a contribution to the common good (including their own) but that they are only favouring a single age group. It is one thing to believe that we are all responsible for the needs associated to ageing processes and something entirely different to systematically give priority to the needs of older persons (even when it is all based on equity and reciprocity criteria).

The promotion of intergenerationality requires careful consideration before launching actions which could have the opposite effect; hence the importance of supporting the professionalisation of intergenerational projects (Sánchez and Díaz, 2005), the issue contemplated in chapter VIII of the Study.

We now repeat the same scheme used in the previous section when referring to what the United Nations meant in 1995 when it used the expression *society for all ages*. But our question has now been updated. What did the United Nations mean in 2002 when it referred to a *society for all ages*?

- It meant that intergenerational relations are not only necessary if we are to attain such a society but that such relations must successfully promote and increase solidarity.
- It meant that this intergenerational solidarity is precisely what is needed to reconcile the ageing of older persons with socioeconomic development.
- It meant that intergenerational solidarity not only consists of supporting older persons but of fostering the conditions in which they can participate in and contribute to social development and welfare.
- It meant that a *society for all ages* should be concerned with ensuring the means in general, and the settings (physical spaces, social rules,

legislation, etc.) in particular, for intergenerational solidarity to be possible (chapter VI of the Study describes and explains an innovative way of creating such favourable settings: the construction of intergenerational shared-sites.

1.4. Multigenerational and intergenerational aspects of the Madrid Plan

The last part of this chapter focuses on the dimension comprising the leit motif of the entire book: *intergenerational relations*. We believe that such monographic attention is justified: we have to know what the Madrid Plan adds to the idea of (inter)dependence (intergenerational exchange in families, communities and societies are essential for the latter's sustainability) to which the initial conceptual framework of 1995 referred.

To what does the Madrid Plan refer with the term multigenerational? The adjective only appears on four occasions in the text of the Plan. The original text does not specify what the Plan means by the concept, other than that it is used to refer to actions (multigenerational mutual care), organisations (intergenerational communities) or spaces (intergenerational homes) involving the participation or co-existence of people of different generations. In our opinion, the use of the term adds one interesting facet: older persons' organisations (initially, monogenerational) are considered to be appropriate instruments for fostering multigenerational interaction (between older persons and people of other ages (generations)). To conclude, the use of *multigenerational* in the Madrid Plan does not shed light on its meaning. Let us consider another of our terms of interest.

Intergenerational appears in the Madrid Plan twice as often as *multigenerational*. Indeed, *intergenerational* is used to explain what it means by bringing generations closer together for their mutual benefit. Intergenerationality is recommended in families and communities and throughout society, with special emphasis on the needs of older and younger persons. Intergenerationality is related to interdependence, solidarity and reciprocity so it does not merely consist of *generations being together*. Within a group, intergenerationality can be a way of developing and making full use of the potential of older persons, as well as referring to a *place for living* and not only to relations and interactions; from a socioeconomic perspective, formal and informal intergenerational solidarity

is necessary for social cohesion (this is discussed in depth in chapter V) and of key importance for the required balance between economic development and the guaranteed provision of services.

According to the United Nations, intergenerationality is, on the one hand, a consubstantial feature of how a life cycle progresses but, on the other, it has to be an option: respect is due to the wishes of older persons who prefer not to share their lives with younger people. Besides being inherently human and an ideal objective (considering the horizon of a *society for all ages*), intergenerationality is an objective which can be attained by means of specific actions.

We have seen that the Madrid Plan has updated and, to a certain extent, put into practice what was a mere desiderata in the conceptual framework. Progress has certainly been made.

1.5. Conclusion

This chapter started by asking what the United Nations meant when it used the expression a *society for all ages* as the context for and ideal objective of its ageing policies. We believe that this question has been answered to the extent that the organisation's own texts allow. We have reached a bitter-sweet conclusion. On the one hand, it is evident that the level of abstraction of this political discourse makes it difficult to actually define its goals and proposals; and the concept of a *society for all ages* is no exception. On the other hand, however, we have seen how the formulation of this concept and, more important still, its possible operationalisation, improved between March, 1995 and April, 2002.

With the expression a *society for all ages*, the United Nations is attempting to tell us, from the ageing perspective, that it is the responsibility of us all and that people should be able to become involved in the actions required to live better in societies where we are all going to live longer. The message, however, has been somewhat complicated by the United Nations' custom of focusing its concern and ageing policies on what it calls *older persons*.

Precisely to simplify such a complication, the following chapters will be analysing the foundations of intergenerational programmes and their potential for enabling the *society for all ages* discussed in the first.

The United Nations' view of a *society for all ages* provides useful arguments for those interested in organising intergenerational programmes. The use of these arguments, as we have explained them, could be an effective practical strategy for supporting the need for spending resources on an intergenerational programme.

II. Intergenerational programmes: concept, history and models

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2.1. Introduction

Article 16 of the Political Declaration of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, organised by the United Nations, reads «We recognise the need to strengthen solidarity between generations, and intergenerational partnerships, keeping in mind the particular needs of both older and younger ones, and encourage mutually responsive relationships between generations» (United Nations, 2002). In this respect, intergenerational programmes (which we will refer to from now on as IPs for reasons of simplicity) are appropriate instruments for encouraging and strengthening solidarity between generations.

Although the different chapters of this book refer to the same idea in different ways, we will attempt to establish a foundation for better understanding what IPs are. We will be considering the following three questions: *i*) what an intergenerational programme is and which are its basic components, *ii*) why these programmes arise and, finally, *iii*) how to distinguish between different IP models.

We will end by providing information about the status of intergenerational programmes in Spain. Although we are aware that we are not in a position to provide final conclusions, because there is a shortage of thorough fieldwork about IPs, we do have some data concerning a sample of the IPs currently in place in our country.

(1) Professor Sally Newman drafted this chapter while she was a guest of Oxford University's Oxford Institute of Ageing.

2.2. What an intergenerational programme is

By now, the question of what an intergenerational programme is has become relatively clear. We can resort to definitions like these:

- «Activities or programs that increase cooperation, interaction and exchange between the members of any two generations. They involve sharing skills, knowledge and experience between young and older people» (Ventura-Merkel and Liddoff, 1983).
- Intergenerational programs «bring together both the young and old to share experiences that benefit both populations. [...] Intergenerational programs are designed to engage nonbiologically linked older and younger persons in interactions that encourage cross-generational bonding, promote cultural exchange, and provide positive support systems that help to maintain the wellbeing and security of the younger and older generations» (Newman, 1997).
- «Intergenerational programmes are vehicles for the purposeful and ongoing exchange of resources and learning among older and younger generations for individual and social benefits» (Hatton-Yeo and Ohsako, 2001).
- «An organised program to foster interactions between children and youth, and older persons that are ongoing, mutually beneficial, and result in the development of relationships» (McCrea, Weissman and Thorpe-Brown, 2004).
- «Activities or programmes that increase cooperation, interaction and exchange between people from any two generations. They share their knowledge and resources and provide mutual support in relations benefiting not only individuals but their community. These programs provide opportunities for people, families and communities to enjoy and benefit from a *society for all ages*» (Generations United, undated).

As we can see, there are different ways of defining the IP concept. Three aspects, however, are found as the common denominators of IPs however we define them:

- a) People from different generations participate in all IPs.
- b) Participation in an IP involves activities aimed at goals which are beneficial for all those people (and hence to the community in which they live).
- c) Thanks to IPs, participants maintain relations based on sharing.

This chapter, however, will do more than merely define what an IP is. As shown on graph 2.1, we intend to connect the IP concept, with all its potential, with another two concepts: intergenerational relationship and ageing.

According to this chart, IPs, in interaction with ageing processes, could be one of the foundations on which to build a *society for all ages*.

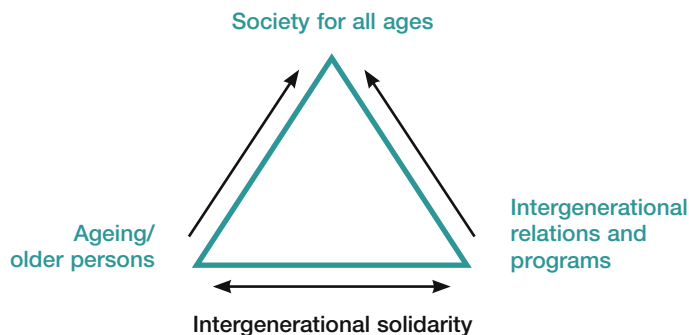
Generations and relations between generations

It has already been said: IPs can help to create or improve intergenerational relations. This has been proved by the history of these programmes, which we will briefly consider later. However, we first have to explain what we mean when we refer to generations and intergenerational relations.

What do we understand by *generation*? This has been discussed on many occasions. *Generation* is a polysemic term so we have to choose one of its different meanings. What are they? As explained by Sánchez and Díaz

GRAPH 2.1

Conceptual framework of the Study



Source: the author.

(2005), the proposal presented by Italian sociologist Pierpaolo Donati (1999) about the different meanings of *generation*, as shown on table 2.1, is one of the most complete.

In general, the intergenerational program field, at least in its original context, the United States, uses the concept of generation in its *socio-anthropological sense* (for example, grandparents, parents, children or grandchildren) or as an *age group* (such as, for instance, children, adolescents, young people, adults and elderly people); with one interesting precision, however: the generations involved in IPs should not be consecutive. «Although both intergenerational studies and family studies consider cross-generation interaction, family scholars utilize a broader definition of intergenerational relationships than the one widely accepted in the field of intergenerational studies. Specifically, family studies include parent-child relationships, and other kin relationships, among those relationships that are viewed as intergenerational, while intergenerational studies focus on non-kin relationships and family relationships that skip a generation» (Hanks and Ponzetti, 2004: 8-9).

TABLE 2.1

Five meanings of the term generation

MOST EXACT TERM	OPERATIONALISATION OF THE CONCEPT
Cohort (generation in a demographic sense)	Set of persons born in the same year or range of years (generally few)
Age group (generation in a historic sense)	A cohort of N years considered as a social group
Generational unit (as proposed by Manheim)	A sub-age group which produces and guides social and cultural movements
Generation in a socio-anthropological sense	A set of persons who share a position regarding descendency relationships (or vice versa). In other words, according to biological and cultural succession, relationships which are socially mediated (by society)
Generation in a relational sense	Set of persons sharing a relationship linked to their position in the descendency of a family (son, parent, grandfather, etc.) with a position in society depending on their social age (young people, adults, older persons, etc.). This meaning combines historic-social age with descendency relationships

Source: based on Sánchez and Díaz, 2005: 397.

This North American criterion is not universally accepted. Some claim that the term *intergenerational programme* can also be used when persons from consecutive generations, such as young people and adults or adults and older persons, are involved. In any event, the investigators studying IPs have placed special interest in analysing the singularity of the relations between people from non-consecutive generations (usually children-older persons, adolescents-older persons and young-older persons) in these programmes. Some of these investigators have pointed out the singular power of relations between cohorts and individuals from these non-adjacent generations in relation to enhancing intergenerational solidarity: «Intergenerational programs owe their existence to the convergence of a number of social, economic, and political factors, as well as to a unique synergy that seems to exist between older adults and young people» (Newman and Smith, 1997: 3).

Let us now consider the concept of *intergenerational relation*. Generically, such a concept can be said to refer to any interaction between individuals or groups from different generations. Indeed, it is so used by Villar (2007), who also distinguishes between the terms intergenerational and multigenerational. He says that «The term *intergenerational* implies the involvement of members of two or more generations in activities that potentially can make them aware of different (generational) perspectives. It implies increasing interaction, cooperation to achieve common goals, a mutual influence, and the possibility of change (hopefully, a change that entails improvement). In contrast, *multigenerational* is usually used in a related but far broader sense: it means to share activities or characteristics among generations, but not necessarily an interaction nor an influence among them» (Villar, 2007: 115-116).

We believe that to refer to intergenerationality, *being together* is not enough; it is important to *do things and grow* together; in other words, a relation is more than a mere interaction. We conclude, therefore, that intergenerational relations are those which, based on consensus, cooperation or conflict, involve two or more generations or generational groups as such. In other words, belonging to a given generation is the characteristic of reference of the individuals convened to relate or become involved in a relationship. After all, although we refer to relations *between generations*, these relations are actually between individuals. The key to the term (*inter*)generational, therefore, lies, as explained in detail in chapter IX, not in the *generational* but in the *inter*, in the *between*.

Taking this into consideration, it is surprising to find that the United Nations uses the terms *intergenerational* and *multigenerational* indistinctly when it refers to relations between generations: «It appears that the United Nations uses the term multigenerational relationships interchangeably with the term intergenerational relationships. In the gerontological literature, however, these terms have distinctly different meanings. In the view of the authors, the United Nations would be more accurate in using the term intergenerational relationships in documents that refer to the relationships between the generations» (Brownell and Resnick, 2005: 73-74).

It is evident that, without a more precise use of the terminology, it is more difficult to progress in the promotion of intergenerational solidarity, as desired by the United Nations itself.

And one more thing: not all relations between generations are beneficial for those involved. In this respect, what we are saying is that IPs have been seen to be capable of fostering intergenerational solidarity; it is not said, however, with the false rhetoric which sustains that all intergenerational relations are good. To steer away from this risk, we will now attempt to define the concept of *intergenerational solidarity*.

On the concept of intergenerational solidarity in the context of intergenerational programmes

The two world assemblies on ageing held to date have referred to intergenerational solidarity. But they have done so in quantitatively and qualitatively different ways.

The Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing only included the following direct reference to the subject of intergenerational solidarity: «An important objective of socio-economic development is an age-integrated society in which age discrimination and involuntary segregation are eliminated and in which solidarity and mutual support among generations are encouraged» (United Nations, 1983: 25h).

Twenty years later, in the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, the term *solidarity* appears on nine occasions referring to relations between generations. This document also contains a complete section on the subject (number five in priority direction I) in the following terms (United Nations 2002: 19):

- «Solidarity between generations at all levels –in families, communities and nations– is fundamental for the achievement of a *society for all ages*».
- «Solidarity is also a major prerequisite for social cohesion» (chapter V of this book analyses this issue: the relationship between intergenerational programmes, intergenerational solidarity and social cohesion).
- «[Solidarity] is a foundation of formal public welfare and informal care systems».
- «At the family and community level, intergenerational ties can be valuable for everyone».

Once again, United Nations documents use the expression without explaining what it means. We will attempt to do so within the context of IPs.

Earlier, we referred to the importance of the *inter* in *intergenerationality*. When referring to *intergenerational solidarity*, we are, however, referring to a specific *inter*. In Chapter V of the Study, Alan Hatton-Yeo suggests that the concept of intergenerational solidarity should be understood in a broad sense, in terms of formal and informal systems, practices and agreements enabling the generations to collaborate with one another to their mutual advantage. Based on this approach, we could add that said collaboration does not necessarily consist of a strict exercise in symmetrical reciprocity (as in the case, for instance, of «I'll help you if you'll help me») but can adopt other practical forms (such as altruistic conduct, a case of solidarity in exchange for nothing, where there is indeed no reciprocity).

Tesch-Römer, Motel-Klingebiel and von Kondratowitz (2000: 9), in the framework of an analysis of the ways of securing solidarity between generations, define solidary acts as those including «certain forms of helpful, supportive, cooperative behaviour which is based on a subjectively accepted commitment or a value ideal». They also distinguish between the intergenerational solidarity found in the family and that found in society. IPs primarily focus on the latter, although there can be expected to be points of connection between the two types of solidarity (indeed, one interesting challenge for the intergenerational field consists of explaining how movements are made between these two solidarity sites: families and society).

Ultimately, help, support and cooperation, and even reciprocity, are terms characterising intergenerational solidarity as acts related to the relations established in intergenerational programmes. IPs are vehicles for practising such solidarity; at least, that is the intention. From a methodological perspective, moreover, these programmes aim at ensuring that this solidarity is mutual, between different generations, and not merely unidirectional.

2.3. Components of the best intergenerational programmes

Earlier in this same chapter, we referred to IPs having the same common denominator. We will now analyse the elements which are most often found in the most successful intergenerational programmes and which best fulfil the objective of establishing positive ties between generations.

Our starting point is the recent analysis of the issue by Sánchez and Díaz (2007), as shown on graph 2.2.

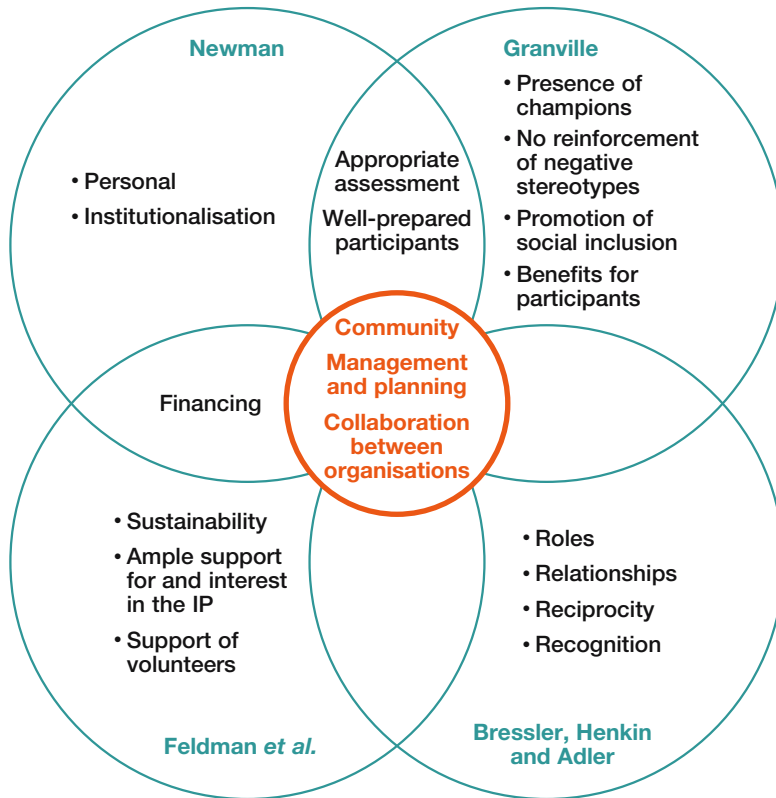
The graph provides a single image illustrating four different proposals, each of them represented by a circle. We are not only able to separately identify the basic components of each proposal, but also see where they overlap, either taken in pairs of all four at once.

We are able to reach two conclusions:

- What are the success factors most commonly found in intergenerational programmes? Connection between the IP and the local community (in other words, the IP satisfies the needs of its local setting), good programme management and planning and, finally, the collaboration of different local organisations (what could also be called *networking*).
- What other success factors are also important? Appropriate assessment of the programme, suitably qualified personnel and sufficient funding.

This analysis is now completed by adding a fifth source to the four included in graph 2.2. It is a recent project undertaken in Australia by MacCallum, Palmer, Wright, Cumming-Potvin, Northcote, Brooker and Tero (2006), which concludes that all intergenerational programmes have the following features:

Components of the best IPs I



Source: Sánchez and Díaz (2007: 16).

- They provide opportunities to develop *relationships*: IPs last long enough for relationships to be established and stereotypes eliminated; their activities favour relationships, which are nurtured to be open, tolerant and non-judgmental; reciprocity is promoted.
- In different ways, they are supported by both organisations and the local community.
- They provide the participants with opportunities to do a wide range of things together in order to break the ice and bring them closer together: the

programme thus helps them to feel capable of performing all the activities; all this is related to the *activities* contained in the programme and the management of the *roles* to be played by the IP participants.

- These programmes are *able to adjust* to better respond to aspects such as the difficulty of participating in IPs for more timid groups, a lack of motivation or the absence of awareness of the importance of gender and culture on leadership and the relationships created thanks to these initiatives.

This proposal by MacCallum *et al.* (2006) enables us to add several components to our graph, all of which can forecast the success of an IP. The first element mentioned by the authors, *relationships*, is already on the diagram; the second, *support*, does not appear as such but can be taken as implicit in the *management and planning* component (assuming that the programme is supported by an organisation), *collaboration between organisations* (making the same assumption) and *community* (support from local people). Thirdly, they referred to what we have interpreted as management of the participants' *roles*: everyone must have a role to play in the programme and those roles must be both appropriate and well-defined. The *roles* component was already on the diagram; not so *activities*, which forms part of the fifth model, by MacCallum *et al.* (2006). Finally, we have a new component: the *programme's adjustment* to the diversity of its context.

If we add these authors' opinions to what we already knew, we find a new, more complete chart (see graph 2.3).

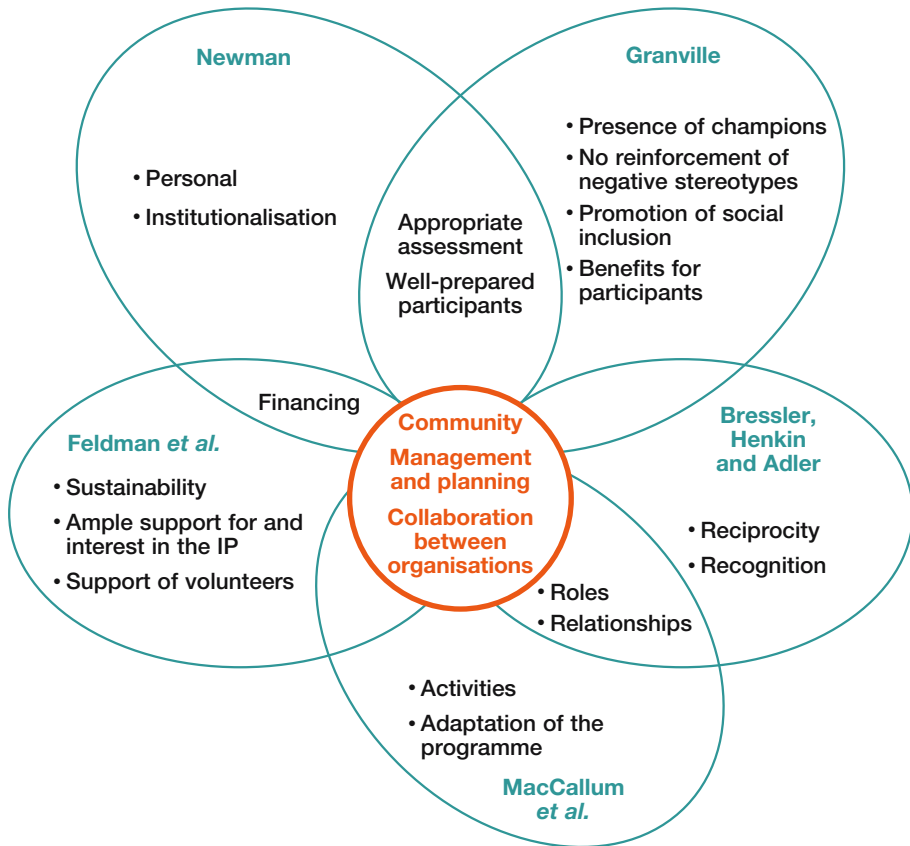
All this represents a practical lesson for those who are, in the field, planning and organising intergenerational programmes: there is a degree of consensus on the elements to be secured for an IP to be successful. They are at least the following three:

- a) The IP must respond to real local needs.
- b) The programme must be well managed and planned.
- c) It needs the collaboration of different local organisations (networking).

But an attempt must also be made to secure the following five components:

- a) Appropriate assessment of the programme.
- b) Good preparation of the persons participating in the IP.
- c) Sufficient funding.

Components of the best IPs II



Source: based on Sánchez and Díaz (2007).

- d) Each participant must have a role to play in the programme.
- e) The IP should not only ensure that the participants meet and spend time together but that they establish relationships.

2.4. The *intergenerational field* concept

All the above IP elements, which are recommended in order to ensure a positive outcome, should be accompanied by such programmes being not

isolated activities but part of a broader framework: the intergenerational field. This idea is of the essence if IPs are not to be organised for their own sake, without forming part of a broader outlook.

Our definition of the concept of *intergenerational field* is the following: set of knowledge (theory, research, practice) and actions (especially public policies and intergenerational programmes) aimed at benefiting from the potential of intergenerationality as a meeting place for sharing between persons and groups from different generations.

British professor Miriam Bernard (Bernard, 2006) sustains that the intergenerational field is based on four dimensions: research, policies, practices and theories concerning intergenerationality. But this investigator not only describes these four dimensions, but also relates them to each other: for her, research (including IP assessment) is the foundation and it is essential for facilitating and understanding the links between practice, policies and theory. She therefore classifies research as the central dimension of the intergenerational field, as shown in graph 2.4.

Analysing the inspiring proposal of this renowned investigator, we can conclude that although the four dimensions are well identified, this is not true of their mutual inter-relations. A change in the order of the dimensions could be suggested, as shown in graph 2.5.

This new representation considers that the intergenerational field starts not with research but with intergenerational practices, which are therefore found in the centre. This term includes all kinds of formal or informal, intentional or unintentional, and solitary or continued interactions between individuals or groups of different generations, in as much as said interactions are preferably interpreted from the perspective of their generational identity.

It seems evident that if there are no practices, no activities, no projects or no programmes, there is nothing to investigate; investigation, explanations of different intergenerational practices (the definition of theories) and, of course, the design and application of intergenerationality policies, come later. However, research and theories appear at the bottom of the triangle, supporting both practices and, indirectly, policies. The intergenerational field thus has need of a solid foundation of research and theories (the definition of theories is actually just a highly significant part of research) to guide intergenerational

GRAPH 2.4

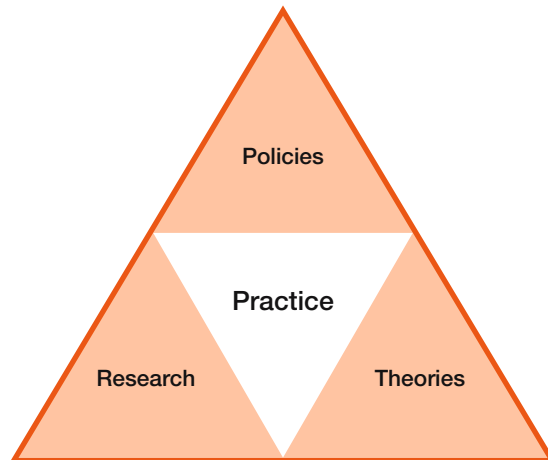
The intergenerational field I



Source: Bernard (2006).

GRAPH 2.5

The intergenerational field II



Source: the author.

practices (especially programmes) and decision-making concerning the best policies for promoting intergenerationality.

Indeed, whereas there are countless examples of intergenerational practices, the development of research and assessment in the field is still in its early stages, as explained by Valerie Kuehne: «The result of such studies is that the findings are necessarily tentative, the conclusions are weakly supported and the recommendations to practitioners, other researchers and policy makers are equivocal» (Kuehne, 2003: 146).

This leads us to a clear conclusion for the practical organisation of intergenerational programmes: IPs cannot be based on intuition («I've got a feeling that this will work») or experiments («let's bring these groups of children and older persons together, and see what happens») but must be based on and directly related to research. Only then will their quality be ensured.

2.5. History and evolution of intergenerational programmes

At the beginning of this chapter, we said that as well as considering the concept of *intergenerational programme* and its fundamental components, we would also talk about how they came about. Here is that explanation.

The historic development of IPs can be divided into several phases. The first is found in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s; the reason for such programmes was related to a patent divide between generations. The second phase, up to the 1990s, and also in North America (United States and Canada) was characterised by the use of IPs to approach social problems related to cultural, social and economic needs. Finally, the third phase, which we are now witnessing, involves not only the growing use of IPs for community development purposes but the emergence of such programmes in Europe.

The first IPs were created in the late 1960s as a result of growing awareness that the geographical distance between the younger and older members of families derived from a changing labour market was having negative effects on their relationships. This separation was reducing interaction between older and younger people, isolating the elderly and favouring the appearance of mutual incorrect perceptions, myths and stereotypes in these generations. The first IPs were organised to respond to these changes and effects.

Twenty years later, in the second phase, the purpose of IPs changed: they started to be concerned with mitigating the problems affecting two highly vulnerable populations, children/youngsters and older persons, which can be summarised as low self-esteem, drug and alcohol abuse, poor academic performance, isolation, the lack of appropriate support systems, unemployment and the lack of familial and social ties.

In the early 1990s, IPs broadened their scope of action in an attempt to revitalise communities which, in the long run, could be expected to re-connect different generations. This objective is the most consistent with the construction of a *society for all ages*.

At the end of the same decade, IPs started to grow with some force in Europe. They appeared in response to problems such as the difficult integration of immigrants, in Holland, political issues related to inclusion and the new roles to be played by the elderly, in the United Kingdom, or the perception of a crisis affecting traditional family solidarity models and interest in fostering active ageing, in Spain. The best evidence of this awakening of IPs was the creation, in 1999, of the International Consortium for Intergenerational Programmes, the objectives and reasons for which will be discussed in chapter IV.

During this forty-year period in which IPs have been developing, there were some particularly significant milestones which are shown, in schematic form, in table 2.2.

2.6. Intergenerational programmes in Spain

The third of the issues we intend to approach in this chapter refers to different IP models. As IPs were proposed and put into practice, a need arose for a system for their classification, thus distinguishing which were the best for which objectives. Initially, they were classified by a simple descriptor system, identifying the interactions occurring between groups of older persons and children/youngsters.

The first classification criterion was service: who provides a service and to whom? According to this criterion, four different types of IP were identified (Sánchez and Díaz, 2005: 395):

TABLE 2.2

Milestones in the history of intergenerational programmes (IP)

1960-1970	The systematic development of IPs led to the appearance of new programmes organised by both local and State governments and foundations
1980s	<p>The publication of manuals explaining how IPs are organised helped to create sustainable long-term programmes</p> <p>The publication of training manuals led to the appearance of the professional figure of the intergenerational specialist</p> <p>The establishment, in the United States, of Generations United, as the national agency supporting intergenerational initiatives, provided the opportunity to contact a spokesperson in Washington DC capable of promoting IPs and lobbying for legislative support for the issue</p> <p>Generations Together, a centre of reference linked to the University of Pittsburgh, organised the first Intergenerational Certificate, providing an opportunity for many professionals to obtain accreditation in this new field</p> <p>Some North American universities started to introduce intergenerational learning as part of their student syllabi; students had the opportunity to become involved in intergenerational projects as part of their practical training</p>
1990s	<p>Development of IPs related to questions related to community development, individual involvement and intergenerational communities</p> <p>The International Consortium for Intergenerational Programmes was created in 1999</p>
Year 2000 on	<p>2001. Creation of the Beth Johnson Foundation's Centre for Intergenerational Practice, in the United Kingdom</p> <p>2003. Launch of the Journal of Intergenerational Relationships (JIR), a journal created to promote communication in the intergenerational field. JIR exclusively publishes papers about practices, research and policies related to intergenerationality</p> <p>2005. Creation of the <i>Red de Relaciones Intergeneracionales</i> of the <i>Instituto de Mayores y Servicios Sociales</i> (IMSERSO), in Spain (www.redintergeneracional.es)</p> <p>2007. The universities of Pittsburgh, in the United States, and Lampeter, in Wales (United Kingdom) create IP training courses</p>

Source: the author.

