



Manifesto on the value of quality in NGO management

Commitment to society, innovation in organizations.

By improving quality in organizations, we will improve intervention with people and improve their quality of life.

The reality of Civil Society Organizations in Europe is very heterogeneous, whether in reach, origin, size or scope of action, and although they are dedicated to multiple causes, they all converge in the same goal: to build a world that is fairer and more respectful of human rights.

To this end, they have been dedicating resources for decades to different actions, programs and activities that bring us closer, step by step, to this goal. Thus, CSOs are key to this society and have an important role to play in making it more equitable, inclusive, sustainable, and democratic.

However, when we talk about providing a service to people in vulnerable situations, it is not just about doing it, but about doing it as well as possible, meeting their real needs, while using our resources as efficiently as possible in order to maximize our reach and impact. This is where the importance of quality in this sector stands out because the tools for quality management applied to organizations bring them a little closer to achieving common goals.

In this line, the generation of alliances is one of the keys to building a more just, supportive and strengthened society. This is reflected in numerous programmatic documents, such as the 2030 Agenda, which makes it explicit in Goal 17, giving meaning and depth to the purpose of this manifesto.

Examples of networking, such as Civil Society Europe, are significant facts of agreement and consensus among European organizations working to generate a technical and ethical corpus to strengthen their intervention, but also to build European social policies. We fully agree with what is expressed in the founding manifesto of this Platform, called "Building Civil Society Europe" in which the European Coordination for Civil Society Organisations states: "The organized civil society that we represent aims to regenerate the European project by returning citizens, solidarity, equality, equity and inclusion to where they should be: at the heart of Europe".

On the other hand, at the EU level, there is already a great consensus in the vision of NGOs as fundamental actors of civil society for the development of populations. This is reflected in the Parliament's draft report on Civil Society, approved by the Civil Liberties Committee, which calls for a civil society strategy to give genuine political recognition to the crucial role of CSOs (Civil Society Organizations, which are widely recognized as NGOs).

Today there are numerous examples of entities that have incorporated quality instruments at the same level as other sectors, in areas of management such as transparency, good governance, effectiveness and efficiency, ethical management, leadership and people participation, innovation, etc. But there is still much to be done.

It is in this context, where ICONG, as an entity born in the heart of the Third Sector in Spain, launches the initiative to build common spaces that allow us to exchange knowledge and tools around quality management in NGOs from different fields, in order to generate synergies and joint learning, with the ultimate goal of contributing to a more just and kinder society, aligned with human rights. We believe that sharing is caring, that we can make European civil society stronger and more resilient through the generation of spaces to exchange, learn from each other, share and disseminate tools that improve the management of entities. Basically, it is about using quality as a tool to improve people's quality of life.

Therefore, WE (partner entities, European or national third sector platforms from different European countries, NGOs, Social Action/Civil Society or International Cooperation (either at local, regional, etc.), Social Enterprises, administration and government agencies) signatories, state that:

We share a common vision:

- We believe that having a third sector working with quality tools and management instruments will provide better services to people.
- We consider that quality management systems act as a fundamental lever to achieve our purposes: tools for quality, improvement and innovation applied to the reality of European CSOs will increase effectiveness, efficiency, transparency and improve the impact of our action, always taking into account an ethical perspective and respect for human rights.
- We value very positively the possibility of having a common and permanent space (a learning community) in order to:
 - Generate synergies, connect people and entities oriented towards quality.
 - Share and disseminate knowledge and experiences on quality, improvement and innovation tools applied to CSOs in Europe.
 - Strengthen the technical structures of the entities through exchange and good practices that can be transferred to other organizational contexts.

Signatories (list):