



Faculty of Legal Sciences

International Studies School

Analysis of the Impact of Culture as the Fourth Axis of Sustainable Development: El Vecino Neighborhood Recovery Project of the International "Pilot Cities" Program - UCLG.

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Author: Luz Victoria Vilela Briceño

Director: Diana García

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Gratitude

To my family and friends for being the main engine to achieve each goal in my life.

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Abstract

During decades, the traditional model of sustainable development has included a three-dimensional structure: economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection. However, in recent years, the global network of United Cities and Local Governments, through its Culture Committee has sought to incorporate culture as the fourth axis of this paradigm. That is the reason why, the present research work aimed to analyze the impact of culture within the framework of the El Vecino Neighborhood Recovery Project of the international "Pilot Cities" program of UCLG. Besides, it intended to analyze the role of culture in instances such as the United Nations SDGs, to examine the role played by the Autonomous Decentralized Government of the Canton of Cuenca in the execution of the project, and finally, to determine the perception of the neighborhood residents regarding the implementation of the project and the neighborhood situation of vulnerability. To this end, the impact of culture on the resilience and social cohesion processes of the zone, as well as the relevance of localization and local governance in this context were studied through a qualitative methodology that showed transformations in the neighborhood dynamics, but evidenced certain needs and deficiencies that demand the project to focus on a more integral transformation.

Introduction

During decades, the sustainable development paradigm was conceived as a model made up of three dimensions: economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental balance. However, the international organization United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) has determined the importance of including culture in this paradigm and, following this logic, it has created the "Pilot Cities" Program that aims to place culture as the fourth axis of sustainable development.

In this sense, it is essential to analyze the impact that the implementation of this program has generated in El Vecino since it intends to recover neighborhoods in vulnerable situations through activities that value their tangible and intangible cultural heritage and that recognize and strengthen their cultural values in order to fortify the resilience of its inhabitants towards different kinds of conflicts. Indeed, the importance of carrying out this research is justified in the need of analyzing the impact of culture as the fourth axis of sustainable development within the framework of the program previously mentioned.

More specifically, the objectives of this investigation are: to analyze the role of culture in the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, to determine the role of the Decentralized Autonomous Government of Cuenca during the execution of the project and finally, to analyze the perception that the residents of the neighborhood currently have regarding the implementation of the project and their vulnerable situation. For this purpose, it has been made a bibliographic compilation that gathers information from the background of the traditional sustainable development model up to the recent proposal of the UCLG Culture Commission of incorporating culture as its fourth axis. In the same way, the impact of culture on the processes of resilience and social cohesion, and the relevance of localization and local governance processes in this context have been analyzed. The methodology used is qualitative and it is made of several interviews and a focus group, which, in summary, have shown changes in the dynamics of the neighborhood and the need to focus the project on a more integral transformation.

CHAPTER 1: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. Traditional Model of Sustainable Development.

1.1.1. Background.

When talking about sustainable development, it is crucial to know the evolution that this model has had throughout history, as well as to identify the main milestones that have served as the foundation for its conception.

First, in the year of 1972 the Massachusetts Institute of Technology published the report: *The limits of growth*, commissioned by the Club of Rome, “a non-governmental organization whose purpose is to promote the understanding of the challenges that humanity is facing and to propose solutions for them, through scientific analysis, communication and political advocacy” (The Club of Rome, 2018).

This report stated that:

“If industrialization, environmental pollution, food production and depletion of resources maintain the current growth trends of world's population, this planet will reach the limits of its growth over the next hundred years. The most probable result would be a sudden and uncontrollable decrease, both in the population and in the industrial capacity” (Meadows, Randers and Behrens III, 1972, p. 40).

One year later, a second study called *Humanity at the Crossroads* was published and although it has a similar message to the one of its predecessor, it establishes the importance of recognizing the diversity of circumstances and situations on the planet, thus opting to study the interrelationships of the problem by dividing the world into ten zones with different levels of development. This is based on the fact that the catastrophes resulting from the current crisis will not be simultaneous and that each region has a singular breaking point. For example, food insufficiency as a phenomenon that attacks Southeast Asia more strongly in comparison to the United States; as well as unemployment in Latin America in relation to the USSR (Hodara, 1975, p. 114).

These reports served as a catalyst that allowed the environmental factor to take place at the international debate on the possible responses to the crisis that was arising. Similarly, there were events such as the Conference on the "World food problem" in Rome (1974)

and the first edition of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements in Canada (1976) that originated reflections that complemented the hypotheses of the documents mentioned before (Eschenhagen, 1998).

In 1980, it was published the Brandt Report, whose main objective was to promote a new economic relationship between the North and the South so that the resources of the world are distributed more fairly to ensure the survival of the human race. At the same time, the external debt crisis in developing countries intensified, creating the propitious environment to the emergence of the first international strategy of ecological development, called the World Conservation Strategy (WCS), which would discuss sustainable development as a goal (Eschenhagen, 1998, p. 112). Regarding the WCS, Eschenhagen says that, even though it includes the complexity of new international relations, it neglects social and political structures as factors of analysis. However, it is recognized as a great contribution to raise the need of planning environmental policies to the international arena (Eschenhagen, 1998, p. 113).

1.1.2. Brundtland Report

In 1987, the concept of sustainable development was developed in a more formal way through the Brundtland Report or Our Common Future. In this document the discussions that took place in the previous decade were concretized, raising the indisputable interrelation between the environmental crisis, the economic crisis and the social crisis around the world.

Following this logic, economic growth, social inclusion and environmental balance were enshrined as the pillars of sustainability in order that the prosperity of each of them does not imply the detriment of another. Chacón and Silva establish that development distances itself from sustainability when it deals in isolation with conservation, equity and economic growth, without considering the functional integration of these components (Chacón & Silva, 2005, p. 72).

The importance of developing a model that articulates all its axes is justified in examples such as Latin America, a region that as a result of the "debt crisis", had to exploit its natural resources to fulfill the financial obligations contracted with foreigners creditors,

besides neglecting the improvement of their citizen's quality of life (United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, p. 13).

In addition, the report determines a very deep relationship between the unequal distribution of wealth and the environmental imbalance, by stating that pollution has been the result of an increasing demand for "those who have more" over scarce resources. It also states that poverty also contaminates the environment, given that "the poor and the hungry often destroy their immediate environment in order to survive: they cut down the forests, their livestock overgraze the prairies, they exploit marginal lands and the number of people congested in cities keeps increasing" (United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, p. 40).

Even though the report raises general ideas on how to solve the crisis of the different sectors discussed, it is summed up in the fact that the way to achieve sustainable and lasting development is to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to satisfy their own (United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, p. 52).

However, nowadays there is not a real consensus on what sustainable development implies, but authors like Altaraz have tried to define what each of its dimensions involves. First, Altaraz addresses the economic dimension, whose main turning point is the international economic crisis of 1973 that questioned the economic growth model that qualified nature resources as unlimited and therefore, generated a clear incompatibility with environment conservation (Artaraz, 2002, p. 2). In this regard, Redclift states that "the external effects, among which the greenhouse effect and the destruction of the ozone layer stand out, are not consequences of scarcity, but of imprudence and unsustainability of production systems" (Redclift, 1995, p. 50).

In response to this disturbing situation, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in 1990 developed the Human Development Index, which calculated the progress of a country based on life expectancy, educational level and the per capita income. "This would mean the first step to move from the notion of *Growth*, which is what GDP measures, to the notion of *Development*, a more appropriate concept in terms of quality of life" (Artaraz, 2002, p. 3).

Then, Redclift addresses the social dimension and, in this context, he argues that the environmental crisis is determined by two processes: the way in which individuals dominate nature and the control that some may have over others. The first point is really easy to demonstrate, while the second one responds to the power exercised by developed countries over developing countries in relation to the exports of natural resources. This is known as “*ecological debt*” because if externalities or social costs are not considered, the prices paid by developed countries do not reflect the real value of the resource and its extraction.” The gap between countries is abysmal since “the basic sustenance in underdeveloped countries requires the sacrifice of environmental quality to favor short-term economic gain” (Redclift, 1995, p. 46). In addition, it is important to consider the concept of social equity, identified in three levels: intergenerational, intragenerational and between countries.

Finally, the ecological dimension is integrated because when placing the three axes at the same level, the economy is intended to be a circular process in ecological terms, that is, to develop productive systems that use renewable resources and energy that do not generate waste. In this sense, its main objective is to reduce the environmental effects that products can have during their life cycle (Commission of the European Communities, 2001, p. 5).

However, despite the innovative nature of this proposal, in recent years, new discourses and approaches, which will be discussed in the next section, have emerged about the paradigm of sustainable development and the inclusion of a new dimension that complements the triangular structure of 1987.

1.2. Culture as the fourth axis of Sustainable Development.

1.2.1. New Paradigm of Sustainable Development.

As it was mentioned before, despite the revolutionary nature of the proposal for sustainable development conceived in the eighties, it has been determined that these dimensions are not sufficient to reflect the complexity of contemporary society, since researchers and institutions like United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) have requested the inclusion of culture in this paradigm, asseverating that it is the factor that

determines what we understand by development and the way people act in society (United Cities and Local Governments, 2010, p. 4).

Continuing with this logic, Romero Cevallos argues that "culture is relevant for development because it determines what has value in a society, that is, how it influences individuals and communities, and how they respond to the changes resulted from development" (Romero, 2005, p. 34). Complementary to this, and for the purposes of the present investigation, it has been considered that Tylor's definition of culture is the most appropriate because, besides it has lasted over time, it constitutes the origin of studies carried out in anthropology and other social sciences. Tylor points out that "culture is that complex whole that includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (As cited in Harris, 2011), without neglecting the fact that it can be demonstrated through material and immaterial elements. The importance of this definition lies in its opposition to "high culture", that wrongly established a hierarchy between "cultured" and "uncultured" social groups.

Returning to the critics regarding the sustainable development paradigm, it should be mentioned that it is justified in hypothesizes such as the one proposed by Arturo Escobar, a Colombian anthropologist, who defines development as a set of ideas and practices used by a certain group to legitimize their actions. In other words, development, as it is traditionally conceived, constitutes a mechanism of western expansion that ignores the identity and culture of the dominated (Escobar, 1994, p. 48).

In the same way, Amartya Sen agrees with the re-elaboration of the concept of human development by openly rejecting those who conceive it as the growth of economic indices, describing this current as the "narrow vision of development." Sen considers that "political decisions, economic initiatives, and social reforms are much more likely to successfully move forward when cultural perspective is simultaneously taken into account in order to meet the aspirations and concerns of society" (Sen, 1998).

Martinez Montiel coincides with this statement by arguing that "the challenge involves promoting paths of development that are nourished of the recognition of how cultural factors shape the way societies conceive their own futures and choose the means to

achieve them” (Martinez, 2005, p. 27). In this context, "proposing culture as a pillar or a dimension forces us to reconnect the current 3 pillars in order to "locate" and "civilize" the paradigm. In other words, it helps to focus development on local factors and to give greater leadership to civil society” (Paschal, 2016, p. 3).

Following this line, Romero Cevallos states that the goal is to make development experts incorporate culture into public policies in order to motivate a more participative process of development in which the contributions of its beneficiaries are reflected. In this way, it would not constitute an idea imposed by the West or by international organizations but local cultures, through mediation, would be the ones who mold (Romero, 2005).

In the Declaration of Our Creative Diversity, UNESCO affirms that culture results from the interaction of individuals with the environment and from the way of expressing their attitudes and beliefs towards other forms of life. Furthermore, in this document, UNESCO expresses its strong conviction that all forms of development are undeniably determined by cultural factors (UNESCO, 1995).

However, it is necessary to distinguish between the instrumental role and the constituent role that culture has within the sustainable development model. According to Amartya Sen, in the first case, culture is compared to a mere tool that drives economic growth. In other words, it is wrongly considered that culture does not have value by its own, and therefore, it constitutes a mean to achieve other purposes, in particular, those of promoting and sustaining economic opulence (Sen, 1998).

In contrast, authors like Eduard Miralles claim that culture does not constitute a catalyst for the other three pillars, but actually complements them because without cultural development, development would not be considered as sustainable or complete (Miralles, 2014, p. 6). Radl goes a little beyond and points out that culture is not only a dimension of development but that development is an essentially cultural phenomenon (Radl, 2000, p. 23).

The Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) assumes this new paradigm, arguing that culture does not constitute an accessory dimension of development and much less an element of historical nostalgia. Indeed, culture is the very

fabric of society and its intrinsic strength for its progress (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Cooperation, 2007, p. 9).

In fact, a really curious explanation of the historical separation between culture and development has been raised by Arjun Appadurai, who explains that, traditionally, culture has been associated to the past because those who have dedicated themselves to its study have made a great emphasis on tradition and inheritance, disregarding the factor of adaption. In contrast, development has been directly related to the future because economists have conceptualized it around long-term planning, needs, and expectations (Appadurai, 2004, p. 60).

1.2.2. Culture and the Sustainable Development Goals.

In 2012, during the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were created with the aim of articulating actions that respond to the environmental, political and economic crisis that was arising in the world in that moment. The SDGs would replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that were created in the year 2000. Despite the important progress that MDGs made, there were lessons and experiences resulting from its application that generated the need to set new objectives according to current reality. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals are interrelated, which means that the achievement of one of them will affect others (United Nations Development Program, 2018).

Moreover, it is essential to understand that among the innovations brought by the SDGs, it can be seen that for the first time in the program, a reference about culture is made, specifically within the framework of the SDGs related to education, the achievement of sustainable cities, food security, protection of the environment, economic growth, patterns of sustainable consumption and production, and the promotion of inclusive and peaceful societies (UNESCO, 2018).

For instance, in Goal 4: Quality Education, there is a reference about guaranteeing access to knowledge, taking into account cultural diversity and its contribution to sustainable development. Nevertheless, there are goals like number 8: Decent Work and

Economic Growth, in which the cultural factor is mentioned in a utilitarian way and not with the true intrinsic value that, according to Amartya Sen, corresponds to it. Finally, in Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, it is stated that "efforts must be redoubled to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage" (United Nations Development Program).

Being more critical about the presence of the cultural factor in the Sustainable Development Goals, it is undeniable the fact that it has not received the expected attention because it is mentioned in a quite ambiguous, general and utilitarian way. Similarly, there is not a specific goal about culture and in response to this alarming situation, the global network of United Cities and Local Governments has developed a document whose objective is to "demonstrate that cultural aspects play an essential role for the success of the entire 2030 Agenda, even in areas where connections are only implicit" (United Cities and Local Governments, 2018, p. 4). The importance of this document lies in the examples of cities that have put into practice the new model of sustainable development, that incorporates culture as a fourth pillar; however, for the purposes of this research, more emphasis will be placed on Goal 10 and 11.

Goal 10 aims to reduce inequalities based on age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, or economic condition and UCLG proposes that culture can contribute to the empowerment and promotion of inclusion of all people, regardless of their condition (United Cities and Local Governments, 2018, p. 20). One of the immediate actions proposed by CGLU is to incorporate objectives linked to people's capacity to create, produce, and disseminate their own cultural expressions within the cultural policy, paying particular attention to the most vulnerable social groups. Furthermore, this organization suggests that it is imperative to require state cultural institutions to develop programs in neighborhoods with high levels of poverty and exclusion. A clear example of the implementation of these approaches is the program "Local Actions" in Rio de Janeiro, which refers to the injection of resources for the increase of cultural activities where there was no government support; as a result, local development of peripheral neighborhoods was notably strengthened (United Cities and Local Governments, 2018, p. 21).

In the same way, Goal 11 seeks to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (United Cities and Local Governments, 2018). Culture is important in this field because in cities there are considerable amounts of places and elements of tangible and intangible cultural heritage that promote sustainable local development. UCLG suggests that cities can focus on actions such as the promotion of the use of a reference guide on "cultural impact assessment" within the framework of urban planning policies. In addition to being able to adopt measures to promote the role of culture in the renovation of historic centers and in the development plans of neighborhoods, districts and regions (United Cities and Local Governments, 2018, p. 22).

A practical example of this situation is the "Urban Art Gallery" in Lisbon, which has contributed to the improvement of public space and to the recognition of it as a place for cultural expression and participation, besides motivating the transversal recognition of cultural expressions that emerge from cities, including urban art (United Cities and Local Governments, 2018, p. 23).

1.2.3. Cultural Identity, Social Cohesion and Territorial Resilience.

Continuing with the discourse about the strong relationship between culture and sustainable development, there are a series of concepts that must be addressed to understand the impact that culture can have on this paradigm. To start, cultural identity, understood as the capacity to construct a personal narrative as a result of interactions with other individuals and of the reference to a larger group with which certain characteristics are shared (Larrain, 2003, p. 23).

Orduna Allegrini shares the essence of this statement by arguing that each community has assimilated a set of experiences that has then transformed into convictions, ideas, traditions, and beliefs that reach a personal and community level. That means that "each community has particular models of interpreting all the facts of life, of judging events, of formulating principles ..." (Orduna, 2012, p. 31). In addition, this collective memory gives meaning to the relationship between the past, the present and the future because this author points out that a community's capacity of recognizing itself in history determines its power of action about its future plans.

This proposal is based on reflections such as that of Ander-Egg, who says that when individuals decide to become part of a cultural identity, they generate positive contributions in the community and therefore, development (Egg, 1981, p. 16). Following this line, Viché argues that "there are situations in which the human being, together with other individuals, tries to optimize their living conditions by generating answers to their needs and desires, besides giving original and creative solutions to problems" (Viché, 1989, p. 27).

An example of this type of solution is cultural creation, conceived as a process through which a group of individuals united by a certain identity "assumes and knows the culture of the past, but designs itself for the future" (Froure & Sánchez, 1990, p. 41). In other words, cultural activities allow intervening in cities' public spaces to help change people behaviors or postures towards certain situations (Latin American Arts for Inclusive Cities, 2017).

In the same way, it is imperative to consider that there are intangible cultural manifestations, whose impact on people identity cannot be quantified with the methods that are used to measure other parameters of development. These expressions have been classified as expressive culture or performing arts and have usually been the ones most ignored by development specialists, "when, ironically, they are those that clearly interpret the character of ethnicity and the notion of social welfare of its constituents" (Romero, 2005, p. 59). According to Latin American Arts for Inclusive Cities, culture promotes social cohesion in a context of rapid and unplanned urban growth, which has caused great social inequalities (Latin American Arts for Inclusive Cities, 2017).

In this context, it is crucial to clarify what social cohesion means, which according to the URB-AL III Program is "a global situation in which citizens share a sense of belonging and inclusion, actively participate in public affairs, recognize and tolerate differences and enjoy relative equity in the access to public goods and services and in terms of the distribution of income and wealth" (URB AL III, 2012). In addition, the same program highlights five components that characterize a cohesive society: belonging, equality and social inclusion, participation, recognition and legitimacy.

A cohesive community is important because when having an active participation and a sense of belonging, actions are organized to achieve common welfare. "It is properly in the identity group where it is possible for the individual to participate, communicate and, ultimately, develop social learning" (Orduna, 2012, p. 25).

In this sense, it is important to start from a humanist approach that places the individual as the means and the end of society's development because besides the physical that have to be satisfied, there are those that include self-determination, self-confidence, security, participation in decision making, national and cultural identity (Streeten, 1982, p. 42).

Finally, it is essential to explain the concept of territorial resilience, which according to Mendez, refers to "the capacity of positive adaptation and internal transformation that some places have in order to confront adverse situations resulted from external phenomena or processes, but reinforced by certain endogenous weaknesses that made

them especially vulnerable”. (Mendez, 2013, p. 12) This concept brings together elements of authors such as Adger, who defines the resilience as “communities’ capacity to withstand shocks that are external to their social infrastructure” (Adger, 2000, p. 347) and Keyes, who links it to “a guideline of behavior and functioning that demonstrates a positive adaptation in a risky or adverse context” (Keyes, 2004, p. 224).

Mendez proposes that resilience is a dynamic process of conscious work, which means that although all territories can be vulnerable to varying extent, not all of them will be resilient because it does not represent a permanent quality of their own, but a social construction. In order to be a resilient territory, Mendez identifies an initial stage of realistic diagnosis of the impacts of the crisis, as well as the weaknesses and strengths to mobilize resources to help overcome difficulties through innovative responses. In this way, there is a guarantee that utopian objectives would be avoided (Mendez, 2013, p. 13).

Polèse points out that although these adversities can be natural, the most frequent are those that are derived from systemic crises that question the activities that served as their foundation, posing serious uncertainties about their future viability (Polèse, 2010). As an example of this, we can identify the situations generated by the economic growth model prior to Brundtland Report, and the crisis resulted from the exclusion of culture within the sustainable development model.

Joxean Fernandez, coordinator of CEFIR “City, Culture and Public Space” laboratory, states that “towards a growing territorial, social, economic and symbolic fragmentation, culture reinforces cities’ resilience by contributing to curb the progressive erosion of common spaces of socialization and political action” (Global CAD, 2018).

Complementary to this, in the context of his research, Mendez points out that one of the factors that can motivate territories’ resilience is “the capacity of local actors to generate innovative initiatives and to build collaborative networks in order to increase collective efficiency” (Mendez, 2012, p. 227). More specifically, it identifies actions such as the promotion of spaces for innovation and the protection of cultural heritage.

1.3. Location and local governance.

Authors like Amartya Sen and Arturo Escobar, who have decided to take an even more critical stance of the traditional model of sustainable development, highlight the "relativity" of the idea of development as an exclusive product of the West. Sen points out that external development processes, besides including their own know-how and their own technology, bring with them their culture, which directly or indirectly impacts the culture of the community in which the development project is being executed (Sen, 1999, p. 240).

Following this logic, in 'The Future of global governance' Amitav Acharya establishes that there are more creative ways to cope with problems in different contexts because of the cultural and political world's diversity nowadays. This is an alternative to West recipes that pretend to avoid a dangerous homogenization, in addition to recognizing the contributions that the Global South has made in the last decades in terms of sustainable development (Acharya, 2016, p. 458).

Likewise, Ponce argues that local development has become an alternative response to the problems and contradictions that state-centric and top-down approaches have not been able to solve. It also recognizes that "it is an effective methodology for triggering endogenous development processes, towards the dynamics that local space acquires as a result of changes in the productive and economic system at the international level" (Ponce, 2006, p. 1).

Thereby, it is crucial to consider authors like Jordi Pascual, representative of the Commission of Culture of United Cities and Local governments (CLGU, who states that "proposing culture as a pillar or as a dimension obliges to reconnect the other 3 axes in order to "locate" and "civilize" the paradigm or in other words, to focus development on local factors and to give greater prominence to civil society" (Pascual, 2016). In addition, Amitav Acharya recognizes the importance of localization and describes it as a complex process through which local actors adapt international standards to local practices and beliefs to generate legitimacy in decision-making (Acharya, 2004).

Similarly, United Cities and Local Governments define localization as the act that “takes into account sub-national contexts — their challenges, opportunities, and governments — in all global agendas, from setting goals to its implementation, monitoring and reporting” (United Cities and Local Governments, 2016, p. 14).

That is why, given the participatory nature of this new proposal for sustainable development model, the concept of governance must be considered and understood as an orderly, coherent, and participatory process that articulates the diversity of actors, capacities and interests in order to create consensus on the actions that will take place at a certain time.

F. Albuquerque agrees on how important it is that local actors assume a leadership role in the development of these processes of mobilization and participation in order to conform groups that guarantee the continuity of their initiatives (Albuquerque, 2004, p. 163). In addition, Le Gales states that governance in a territory will succeed while it manages to integrate the interests of different local groups, through consensus-based strategies and policies (Le Wales, 1998, p. 496).

That is why, at a certain moment, a community takes the initiative to develop projects with local resources with the purpose of solving problems resulting from external crises. In other words, through certain initiatives and participations, local actors are involved in the approach and implementation of development policies at the local level.

According to Stöhr, the strategies of bottom- up development allow the mobilization and channeling of local resources and capacities to obtain a true state of well-being derived from the joint, coordinated, and consistent act of local actors (Stöhr, 1981). In this point, it is imperative to recognize the importance of public institutions and local governance that serve as intermediaries to carry out actions that lead to endogenous or local development. According to Mendez, institutional capital (values, norms, styles of government, and management of public affairs) should not be ignored because it is the one that can stagnate or encourage the search for solutions (Mendez, 2013, p. 11).

Hernández defines local governance as “the territorial governorate process that allows the establishment of common goals, as well as the mechanisms to achieve them through associative, deliberative, and collaborative interaction between different social actors from different levels, that have presence and impact on the territory” (Hernández, 2015, p. 72). Furthermore, this author propounds a model about social governance levels (derived from the theoretical proposal of Kooiman), that has to be taken into account in the context of this research.

First, he argues that, on the organizational level, local governance should take advantage of the administrative proximity that has with the community in order to gain access to better and more information, as well as to coordinate more effectively local resources and actors. Then, regarding the institutional level, he emphasizes the adaptability that local governance must have in order to act towards the heterogenetic social fabric, which is integrated of actors with differentiated conduct parameters resulting from historical and cultural community issues. However, the author states that it is not intended to generate ambiguity but to converge different groups with the purpose of evaluating the actions of representatives of diverse hierarchical levels. Finally, in relation to the normative level, he proposes that "governance in the local sphere of government should be focused on building and consolidating strong confidence among local stakeholders" (Hernández, 2015).

CHAPTER 2: INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME "PILOT CITIES".

2.1. UCLG and the Pilot Cities Programme of the Committee on Culture.

United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) is a global network of local and regional governments created in 2004, when local and regional authorities from around the world decided to form an entity that represented and defended their local interests and autonomy to the international community.

Following this line, UCLG can be recognized as an institution that materializes the theories of localization, given its commitment to encompass proximity governments, that is, those who have a responsibility more related to the daily life of the citizens. This is based on the fact that today, due to accelerated population growth, half of the population resides in urban areas and that this unstoppable phenomenon requires the active participation of local and regional governments (United Cities and local governments, 2016, p. 8).

In the document “Strategic Priorities 2016 – 2022”, UCLG emphasizes the need to place local and regional governments at the center of public political processes in order that certain normative ideals can be transformed into concrete actions to entrench human settlements as the main engine of the current sustainable era (United Cities and local governments, 2016, p. 11).

For the integral execution of its projects, UCLG has four specialized commissions: social inclusion, participatory democracy and human rights, urban and strategic planning, economic and local social development and finally, culture (United Cities and Local governments). The latter is a global platform that, in short, allows the learning, cooperation, and promotion of policies and programmes according to the role of culture in sustainable development (UCLG Culture Commission).

The UCLG Culture Commission has directed its work through international documents that gather the commitment of local governments to consolidate culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development. They include: Agenda 21 for culture, a document composed of principles and commitments that can be summarized in 5 topics: 'Culture

and social inclusion' that seeks to promote cultural participation as an element of citizenship, 'Culture, sustainability and territory' which aims to define public spaces as spaces of culture, 'Culture and human rights' that invites creators and artists to undertake actions to face cities' challenges by improving coexistence and quality of life, 'Culture and governance' that aims to legitimize cultural policies, and 'Culture and economy' that seeks to provide a strategic role to cultural industries and local media, so that they contribute to local identity, creative continuity and job generation (UCLG Culture Commission, 2004).

With this precedent, the Committee on Culture developed a Policy Statement on Culture called: 'Culture is the fourth pillar of sustainable development' with the purpose that cities, local and regional governments around the world integrate the cultural axis into their public policies (United Cities and Local governments, 2010). In addition, an international document entitled 'Culture 21 Actions' was adopted in order to gather a set of concrete and achievable actions that make the Agenda 21 for Culture (2004) more operational. The guidelines of this document are presented in nine sections: 'Cultural rights', 'Heritage, diversity and creativity', 'Culture and education', 'Culture and environment', 'Culture and economy', 'Culture, equity and social inclusion', 'Culture, urban planning and public space', 'Culture, information and knowledge', 'Governance of culture' (United Cities and Local governments, 2015).

However, given the need to strengthen its evaluation and monitoring, the UCLG's Commission on Culture has designed the international program "Pilot Cities" so that cities participate in learning processes based on the principles and actions included in Agenda 21 for Culture and "Culture 21 Actions". The program lasts between 26 and 28 months and any city in the world can be part of it. It does not matter if the city is an indirect member of UCLG or if it is just acquainted with Agenda 21 for Culture.

Pilot Cities comprises the following phases:

- 1) Analysis of the local context and self-assessment.
2. Design of the work programme.

3. Implementation of the work programme.

4) Final Conference – assessment and report.

5) Communication (United Cities and Local governments, 2015, p. 6).

With regard to its objectives, excel:

- To generate greater local and international understanding about the relationship between culture and sustainable local development in the cities that are part of the programme.
- To facilitate the design, implementation, and evaluation of the pilot measures that make up the work plan of each city.
- To supervise the process of exchange, evaluation, mutual learning, and training between cities.
- To give more notoriety to the participating cities and their policies in the international debate.
- To conduct lobbying actions with the international community for an explicit consideration of cultural factors in the sustainable cities paradigm (United Cities and Local governments, 2015, p. 4).

In fact, UCLG, through its commissions and respective programs, is in charge of guiding and advising each one of the participants, considering their singularities and respective contexts from processes of self-evaluation and participatory diagnoses. In the case of culture as the fourth axis of sustainable development, UCLG has strived to give rise to a more conceptual and reflective debate on its proposal, in addition to create alliances that will make its discourse more operational.

The relevance and differentiation of the UCLG's Committee on Culture resides in the previous paragraph, because besides proposing a guide that can be adapted to the reality

of different cities, it faces the problem that many international declarations and documents have when they are limited to a simple declarative nature. It should also be noted that although it represents a significant investment for the city that wants to be part, the counterpart is that UCLG has a team of experts that is in charge of training and forming the local government. The UCLG's Committee on Culture is a meeting point that allows the exchange of experiences between cities and therefore, it facilitates the construction of cooperative relations.

2.2. Cuenca's Pilot Cities Programme self-assessment.

Since August 2015, Cuenca is part of the Pilot Cities program with eight other cities in the world. However, in January 2016, a participatory self-evaluation between representatives of the public sector, private sector, civil society, and experts of the UCLG Commission on Culture was carried out, in order to determine the strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities the city has in relation with the nine topics mentioned before. In the following image, it can be evidenced that Cuenca obtained lower scores in: "Culture governance" (48.9%), "Culture, equity and social inclusion" (46.9%), "Culture and environment" (40%) and "Culture and economy" (31.25%), which can be seen in the graph presented below (United Cities and local governments, 2016).

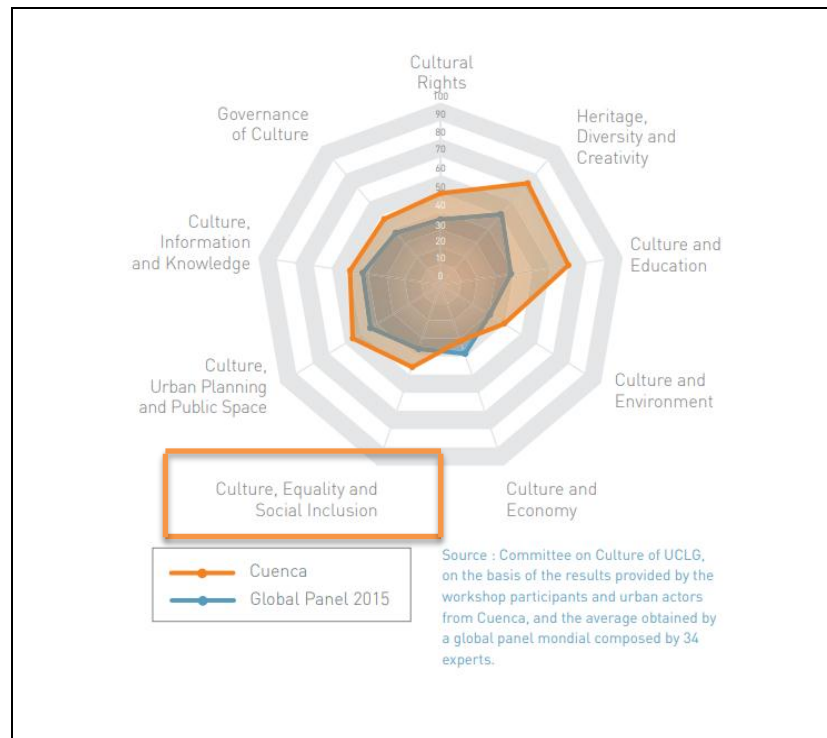


Figure 1. Self-assessment of Cuenca and the 2015 Global Panel data.

Source: UCLG's Committee on Culture, 2016.

For the purposes of this research, emphasis will be placed on "Culture, equity and social inclusion", a thematic in which Cuenca obtained one of the lowest scores (46.9%), although it was a score higher than the world average (35). According to Antoine Guibert, expert in charge of the elaboration of the diagnostic report, in Cuenca, there are a series of social problems that make social development a priority axis of public intervention.

In brief, although there are several cultural activities focused on social welfare and local problems' solving, the relationship between social policies and cultural policies is not correctly established or coordinated; that is to say, they are isolated activities without long-term planning. Guibert points out that this deficiency is due to the lack of an explicit and organized program that contains these actions, in addition to the little linkage and collaboration between the Direction of Culture and other public sector institutions (United Cities and local governments, 2016, p. 10).

Nevertheless, during the interview held three years after the first evaluation, Antoine Guibert clarified that there have been many changes in the planning of the Direction of Culture due to the fact that as a result of framing certain actions about culture and sustainable development within an organized and coherent international programme, local authorities have been forced to continue the process with the purpose of achieving medium and long term objectives. Even though these activities could have been done through existing cultural services, the pressure of the international community to be part of a program of this magnitude demands a higher level of commitment by the mayor.

Andrea Malquin, Coordinator of International Projects of the Direction of Culture, shares Guibert's approach and argues that the formality with which UCLG and its Committee on Culture work, when conducting a selection process, signing an agreement, and spreading international experiences, gives greater weight to the program in order to achieve a total fulfillment of what was agreed by both parties.

Guibert adds that the recruitment of people who come from civil society has allowed the improvement of the relationship with this sector because when the diagnostic process was officially initiated in January 2016, there was a very deep rupture between the

Direction of Culture of the Decentralized Autonomous Government (DAG) of Cuenca and local cultural managers.

In this way, the normative level proposed by Hernández in its local governance model is fulfilled, since the participatory methodology and the incorporation of cultural managers within the project has created the appropriate environment for the consolidation of local governance in terms of trust between the inhabitants of the territory. In other words, the tensions have been attenuated and a dynamic of fluid and constant work has been generated under guidelines of common agreement that are supposed to bring benefits for everyone. On the contrary, when distrust of formal institutions prevails at the local level, local governance becomes dysfunctional; such is the case of the Direction of Culture at the time of the initial diagnosis that was given in the framework of the Pilot Cities programme in January 2016.

Continuing with the weaknesses of the thematic "Culture, equity and social inclusion", it was detected an incipient identification of the most vulnerable people, groups and areas besides the lack of explicit and sufficient programs for the zones that need immediate attention. Regarding this, Andrea Malquin argues that before the implementation of the Pilot Cities programme, there were initiatives with groups in vulnerable situation but without a specific database, much less based on a study that determines the spaces that need more urgent attention.

That is why, as a result of the implementation of the programme, the inter-institutional and interdepartmental articulation within the same municipal corporation has been improved. For instance, the joint work that has been done with "Fundación Barranco" and its Integral Program for the Improvement of Peripheral Neighborhoods of Cuenca, based on the vision of UN-Habitat that promotes the improvement of neighborhoods from a broad overview about sociocultural and urban topics.

However, despite the undeniable progress that institutional articulation has had, it is essential to consider the fact that during the final evaluation stage, which took place in July 2018, the beneficiaries of the pilot measures were not present and neither were the participants of the initial assessment made in January 2016. Indeed, it is considered that

the process is framed in a context of bias and subjectivity, that even though does not discard the possibility of being complemented with objective data or indicators, falls into an insufficiency state that comes from instances prior to implementation of the programme.

2.3. The role of the Decentralized Autonomous Government of Cuenca and the programme of work for Cuenca within the framework of Pilot Cities.

As it was indicated in previous paragraphs, the second activity within the Pilot Cities Programme includes the design of the work programme for the implementation of the documents "Agenda 21 for Culture" and "Culture 21 Actions" in the different projects that the Decentralized Autonomous Government of Cuenca carries out through its Direction of Culture in coordination with other public sector dependencies. The design of this plan was supported by an expert and the secretariat of the UCLG's Commission on Culture, who were responsible for providing advice and formulating suggestions on the draft work plan.

In this sense, Jordi Martí, creator of the Agenda 21 for Culture, during his presentation in the Symposium "Cultural Rights and City", which took place in Cuenca, defended the importance of the long-term planning and the endowment of a reference framework to the actions that can be taken in the cultural scope from the locality. Martí shares the dynamics of the bottom up creation of cultural policies, arguing that the traditional country planning, developed within the symbolic limits of the Nation-State, must be complemented by the vision of the cities as the real playing field.

In the case of Ecuador, Decentralized Autonomous Governments play a fundamental role in the implementation of international programmes like Pilot Cities because, since they have been recognized as guarantors of rights, they respond to the nature of Agenda 21 for Culture, whose purpose is to protect and promote respect for human rights, and specifically cultural rights.

Furthermore, it is important to consider the extent range of competences that Ecuadorian legislation gives to DAG as executor of policies to strengthen the cultural axis, with special emphasis on the Organic Code of Territorial Organization, Autonomy and Decentralization, which in its article 3, literal H states that "they will prioritize the potentialities, capacities and vocations of their territorial constituencies to drive development and to improve the welfare of the population, and will promote the territorial development focused on their Inhabitants, their cultural identity and

community values.” In addition, the article 4 of the same normative body establishes that one of the aims of the Decentralized Autonomous Governments is “the protection and promotion of cultural diversity and respect for their spaces of generation and exchange, the recovery, preservation and development of social memory and cultural heritage” (National Assembly of Ecuador, 2010).

In fact, Andrea Malquin said that the municipal corporation has a significant investment in cultural issues and that its role has been decisive to design and to implement the work plan resulting from the second phase of the Pilot Cities programme. Malquin argues that the DAG's main task is to gradually implement the program, in addition to institutionalizing it so that, regardless of the change of administration, the measures that compose it will continue to be implemented, by giving the necessary permanence to generate a true and integral transformation.

Below, there is a chart that synthesizes the information regarding each of the pilot measures that were raised to respond to the weaknesses identified in the cultural field in the city of Cuenca, along with their respective objectives and immediate actions. At the moment, each of the projects that compose the chart are completed or at its final stage.

Table 1. Work Programme for Cuenca.

Thematic	Measure	Objective	Actions
Governance of Culture	Strategic Plan of culture at 2030.	To turn culture into the fourth axis of sustainable development through long-term public policies.	Dialogue tables, workshops, surveys, and draft plan open to citizens' comments and suggestions. Debate and approval by the Cantonal Council. Designation of a responsible for its follow-up and evaluation. Conformation of a committee of monitoring and oversight of the strategic plan.
	Cantonal system of culture and heritage.	To articulate and to regulate an integral and co-responsible system for the management, conservation, dissemination, promotion and value of the material and intangible heritage of Cuenca.	Process of reflection and evaluation between the Direction of Culture and the Direction of Historical and Patrimonial Areas for the creation of their respective ordinance.
Culture and Economy.	Pre-Hispanic Sacred routes and Geography: Cumbe Parish.	To promote a strategy of local economic development based on culture as a source of wealth and employment.	Cadastre and cultural cartography of Cumbe. Diagnosis of the current state of its natural, material and immaterial patrimony. Campaigns and tours.
	Program for the development of cultural industries.	To promote a strategy of local economic development based on culture as a source of wealth and employment. Creation of a scheme of recruitment and remuneration of workers in the cultural sector.	Creation of a scheme of recruitment and remuneration of workers in the cultural sector. Workshops on financing mechanisms for cultural projects, copyrights, and innovation. Cantonal directory of cultural goods and services, business roundtables, and fairs for the promotion of creative industries.

Culture, urban planning and public space.	Special Area for arts and culture.	To plan the city and the territory with a focus and cultural sense recognizing the identity and vocation of each territory.	Diagnosis of public space for further delimitation and regulation of a "special zone" open for the use of artists and other cultural agents.
	Cultural indicators of the canton of Cuenca.	To build the first database that will allow us to move towards local cultural indicators.	Introductory seminar for the construction of a qualitative framework of cultural policies and a framework for self-evaluation, monitoring, and follow-up.
	Cartography and cultural cadastre of Cuenca.	To implement an inventory of the material and intangible cultural heritage of Cuenca for its management, promotion, diffusion, preservation and conservation under international standards.	Introductory workshop on cadastre and cultural cartography. Documentation and inclusion of data in the PDOT of Cuenca.
Culture, equity and social inclusion.	Neighborhood Recovery Program: El Vecino, Narancay, Tablón de Miraflores, and Guzho.	To revitalize neighborhoods and parishes in situations of vulnerability through cultural activities that put into value their material and immaterial cultural heritage to promote the resilience of the inhabitants.	Approaching leaders and residents of the neighborhood to develop an initial diagnosis with the construction of their neighborhood cultural plans as well as follow-up and implementation.

Source: United Cities and Local Governments, 2016.

However, in the framework of this research, it will be made special reference to the Neighborhood Recovery Programme: El Vecino, that responds to the Thematic 6 "Culture, equity and social inclusion" whose objective is to revitalize neighborhoods and parishes in situations of vulnerability through cultural activities that put into value their material and intangible cultural heritage in order to solve conflicts, to strengthen social fabric, and to promote resilience capacity of the inhabitants.

To start with the implementation of this programme, there was a process of approaching with the district's residents and leaders to make a diagnosis of their current situation. Andrea Malquin said that the greatest difficulty they had in the process was to bring together the people of the neighborhood because some of them did not know each other and were distrustful of attending the meetings; however, the church played an important role in the stage of gathering neighbors because given the moral authority it possesses, it could use the Virgen de la Merced Parade as the perfect meeting place.

Likewise, another of the difficulties that could be identified when implementing the measure was the ignorance that the residents of the neighborhood and the members of the DAG had about sustainable development and culture as its new dimension. Malquin argues that this situation exceeds the local level and goes beyond to a national and even regional stage. In her own words: "talking about sustainable development with culture as its fourth axis is quite new." In the same way, she said that another barrier is the fact that culture is still seen as a tool to generate votes or as a simple artistic presentation. Finally, the lack of articulation between the other institutions responsible for culture represents a substantial obstacle.

CHAPTER 3: NEIGHBORHOOD RECOVERY PROGRAMME: EL VECINO.

3.1. Analysis of the neighborhood context of the neighbor.

“A neighborhood is the refuge of the community sense, which is doomed to weaken or to disappear by the intensity of modern life and the intensification of the urbanization process: the neighborhood is the last trench of resistance of the relationships of proximity and the values linked to the rootedness, the identity, the memory and belonging” (Tapia, 2013, p. 5). Located in the north of Cuenca’s historical center, El Vecino (besides Las Secretas, El Cuartel, El Condominio de los Profesores y El Chorro) is one of the five neighborhoods that form the parish of the same name.

For the purposes of this research, the document “Cuenca en Cifras” (produced by the Citizen Security Council of Cuenca) will be analyzed, making special emphasis on the urban parish of El Vecino and its surrounding sectors. This paper systematizes statistical and spatial information about the crimes and contraventions that have arisen in the district, evidencing the locality’s security problems in quantitative terms.

To begin with, in the year 2016, 72% of homicides and murders were committed in the urban parishes of the canton, being the intersection of the streets Antonio Vargas Machuca and Alberto Muñoz Vernaza (El Vecino¹), the place that recorded the greatest concentration of crimes of this nature in 2016 (Cuenca’s Citizen Security Council, 2016, p. 15).

¹ See figure 3.

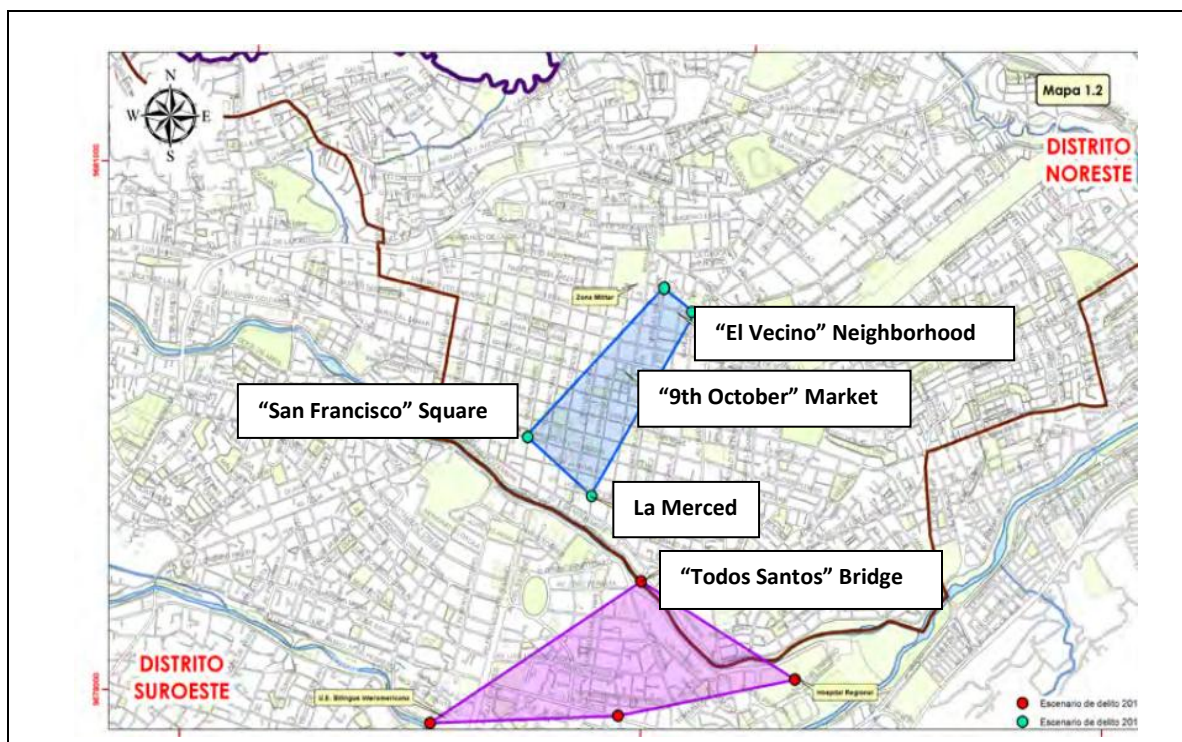


Figure 2. Distribution of crimes against life in Cuenca, 2016.

Source: Cuenca's Citizen Security Council – Cuenca en Cifras, 2016.

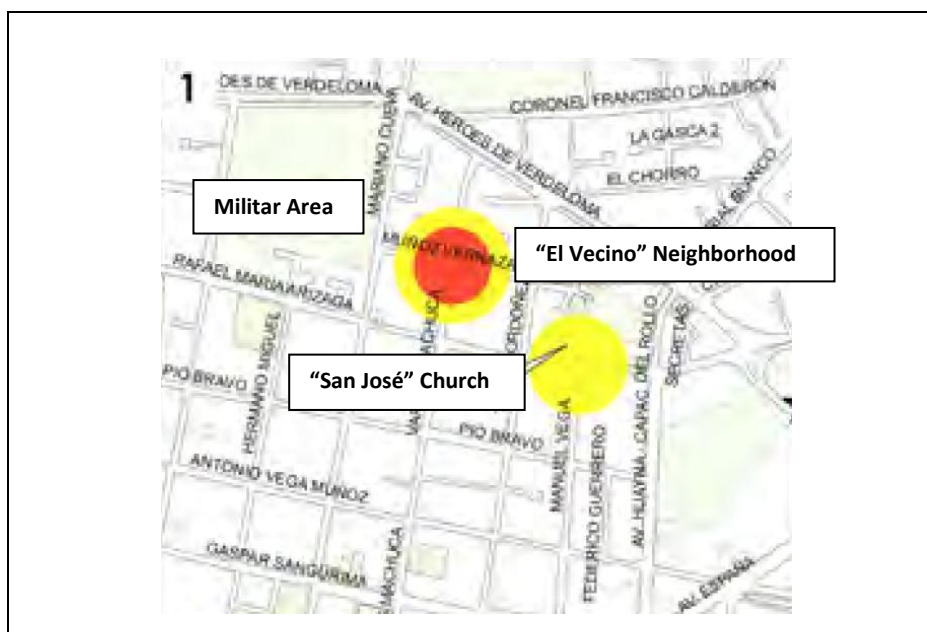


Figure 3. Distribution of crimes against life in Cuenca, 2016.

Source: Cuenca's Citizen Security Council – Cuenca en Cifras, 2016.

Table 2. Cuenca: Crimes against life in urban parishes (2013-2016).

Urban Parish	Year 2013	Year 2014	Year 2015	Year 2016	Total	Percentage
El Vecino	0	5	4	3	12	15,19%
Yanuncay	3	4	1	1	9	11,39%
San Sebastián	4	3	2	0	9	11,39%
Huayna Cápac	2	1	3	1	7	8,86%
El Batán	4	0	0	2	6	7,59%
Sucre	1	2	1	2	6	7,59%
Machángara	0	2	1	2	5	6,33%
Monay	0	2	2	1	5	6,33%
Hermano Miguel Gil Ramírez	1	1	0	2	4	5,06%
Dávalos	2	1	0	1	4	5,06%
Bellavista	0	1	1	1	3	3,80%
El Sagrario	0	2	0	1	3	3,80%
Totoracocha	1	1	0	1	3	3,80%
San Blas	0	1	1	0	2	2,53%
Cañaribamba	1	0	0	0	1	1,27%
Total	19	26	16	18	79	100,00%

Source: Cuenca's Citizen Security Council – Cuenca en Cifras, 2016.

As can be seen in the previous table, in the period 2013-2016, an average of 38% of homicides and murders were recorded in the parishes El Vecino, Yanuncay and San Sebastián.

In fact, El Vecino heads the list of urban parishes in Cuenca in which more crimes against life have been committed, representing 15.19% of them between 2013 and 2016.

Table 3. Cuenca: Robberies in urban parishes (2014-2016).

Urban Parish	Year 2014	Year 2015	Year 2016	Total	Percentage
El Sagrario	93	107	82	282	13,57%
El Batán	74	79	80	233	11,21%
Sucre	56	60	56	172	8,28%
Yanuncay	70	68	50	188	9,05%
El Vecino	41	43	49	133	6,40%
Huayna Cápac	64	91	45	200	9,62%
San Blas	37	37	37	111	5,34%
Totoracocha	47	68	36	151	7,27%
San Sebastián	46	76	35	157	7,56%
Gil Ramírez					
Dávalos	42	56	32	130	6,26%
Bellavista	44	39	18	101	4,86%
Cañaribamba	22	24	15	61	2,94%
Monay	27	41	14	82	3,95%
Hermano Miguel	6	12	13	31	1,49%
Machángara	17	20	9	46	2,21%
Total	686	821	571	2078	100,00%

Source: Cuenca's Citizen Security Council – Cuenca en Cifras, 2016.

In the same way, between the year 2014 and 2016, El Vecino has registered a total of 133 robberies, equivalent to the 6.40% of crimes of this nature committed in the urban parishes of Cuenca. Although it is not among the first places on the list, it is undeniable that this locality faces severe insecurity problems. In addition, according to the data of the following table, El Vecino has registered the 8.83% of the total of burglaries committed in Cuenca's urban zone.

Table 4. Cuenca: Burglary in urban parishes (2014-2016).

Urban Parish	Year 2014	Year 2015	Year 2016	Total	Percentage
Yanuncay	69	86	86	241	17,89%
San Sebastián	63	80	66	209	15,52%
Bellavista	23	40	32	95	7,05%
Totoracocha	33	29	31	93	6,90%
Machángara	16	38	29	83	6,16%
Sucre	23	22	23	68	5,05%
El Vecino	51	46	22	119	8,83%
El Batán	22	38	21	81	6,01%
Huayna Cápac	25	21	21	67	4,97%
Monay	19	22	20	61	4,53%
Gil Ramírez					
Dávalos	15	18	18	51	3,79%
Cañaribamba	15	14	15	44	3,27%
El Sagrario	11	19	13	43	3,19%
Hermano Miguel	16	21	12	49	3,64%
San Blas	19	15	9	43	3,19%
Total	420	509	418	1347	100,00%

Source: Cuenca's Citizen Security Council – Cuenca en Cifras, 2016.

It is important to note that despite the fact that the Cuenca's Citizen Security Council has visualized a disturbing situation of insecurity in El Vecino, it is necessary to complement these data with the perceptions that its inhabitants have about this problem.

Andrea Malquin, Coordinator of the Pilot Cities Programme in Cuenca, said that during the citizens' assemblies² developed by the municipality, the residents of El Vecino have always claimed that insecurity is their greatest concern. Sexual work, tags, informal sale, micro traffic, and lack of cleanliness are other problems they have to deal with, but insecurity remains the most recurrent issue, despite the fact that the Citizen's Security Council has incorporated cameras in the area and that the City Guard has also placed one of their offices there.

² Meetings in which citizens' requirements are prioritized through people's participation.

During the interview with Jorge Herrera, leader of El Vecino, it was possible to analyze more in depth what is currently happening in this neighborhood. Herrera said that for years the city has had the stigma that El Vecino is one of the most dangerous places in Cuenca and that trying to change this image has been one of the most difficult tasks for its management. The sense of unsafety is so internalized within the social imaginary of their inhabitants that there are testimonies like the one of a 72-year-old woman called Leonor Chaca, who says: "I must learn to live like this, (...) I've always lived in this neighborhood and it has always been like this. As a believer, I hope that God helps me and that feeds those slackers... I do not have any other option.", while referring to the times she have been victim of robbery.

In fact, he explains that the main problems in the neighborhood include micro traffic and robbery. However, he emphasizes the idea that homeowners are the main responsible for what is happening around them because most of the time, they decide to confine themselves inside their homes and avoid any contact with their neighbors, thus intensifying social fabric's erosion.

When the topic of social cohesion was discussed during the focus group, the attendees said that there is no unity in the neighborhood because part of the inhabitants are new and therefore, there is a profound lack of interest in getting involved with their neighbors. Leonor Chaca showed her indignation and said: "There was a time I was robbed inside my store and a neighbor saw everything and he did nothing to stop the thief. He knew the felon and he did not help me. In this neighborhood the phrase *¡Every man for himself!*" applies. Undoubtedly, social cohesion in the zone would contribute to the solution of these situations because like Jorge Herrera explained: "If your neighbors know you and someone tries to attack your home in front of them, it is a fact that they will try to avoid it or at least, they'll tell you."

Continuing with the analysis, it is necessary to retake the issue of the urban and economic policies that were carried out as a result of the model of economic growth of the XX Century. According to Llorente, the level of delinquency that cities faced is a direct result of the lack of planning on the increase of capitals, goods, and people in the

center of the cities. The absence of integral planning generated urban dispersion and this resulted in the creation of suburbs, in which the social segregation and marginalization of certain social groups intensified (Llorente, 2011).

In fact, in El Vecino there are people who live in overcrowded spaces with severe infrastructural deficiencies and a shortage of vital equipment. Andrea Malquin explained that there is a stigma that some of the people in the neighborhood live in tenements and Jorge Herrera explained that due to the low cost rent, people who migrate from other countries are located in these spaces, which generates certain conflicts. However, this argument is quite debatable for a number of reasons. To begin with, the migratory phenomenon should be further studied and then, the increase of the rent cost would not necessarily mean an improvement in the situation of insecurity; on the contrary, the neighborhood could face a process of gentrification that would segregate and marginalize its inhabitants even more.

Moreover, it is indispensable to note that, during the focal group, the participants agreed to say that the efforts made by the neighborhood's directive board to bring together most of the inhabitants have constantly failed. Melina, a 20-year-old university student whose father is part of the directive board, said that whenever there are meetings, the same people go. "The rest of the people only complain and when they are told to attend to the meetings with representatives of the municipality, they refuse." Hence, it can be deduced that residents have certain degree of mistrust towards public institutions and their officials.

According to a study carried out by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), there is a tendency to distrust in the justice system and in other public institutions such as the police and Parliament in the region. (ECLAC, 2007, p. 8) ECLAC attributes this mistrust to the ineffectiveness of public policies to ensure the effective ownership of rights, and this lack of trust hinders social cohesion. "The citizen perceives the lack of clear rules of the game, and the non-existence of reciprocity in the matter of rights and commitments" (ECLAC, 2007, p. 9).

The situation of the residents of the neighborhood exemplifies the previous statement because, like Jorge Herrera said, there has been some resistance from the neighbors at the time of requesting their participation in certain activities, given that several times the neighborhood committees did not accomplish the activities they offered in order to improve the situation of insecurity, in their own words: “They take advantage of the people in political season.” Furthermore, there is distrust of the police and the Citizen-Guard personnel who, according to testimonies from the focus group and from Jorge Herrera, do not fulfill their work. Following this logic, ECLAC points out that “social cohesion requires the implementation of a systemic approach that seeks socio-economic inclusion, recognition of diversity, improvement of sanctions and control institutions, and the reinforcement of civic culture and solidarity.”

Indeed, the solidarity and empowerment that local people decided to use in order to cope with the problems that affected them, even before the implementation of the pilot Cities program, fits within this logic. More specifically, it is crucial to take into consideration the first control actions, such as the community chat created to report any irregularities to the officer on duty, which has made his work more efficient. Undoubtedly, this type of actions strengthens the community’s resilience capacity because they have been able to adapt to adverse situations through their creativity and local initiative.

Moreover, they have scaled to a higher level and they have caught the attention of the authorities, so that they develop measures to improve the living conditions of the community. In this sense, Jorge Herrera said: “When you are a person, nothing changes because you are a simple citizen; but when you gather a group of people and organizations, when you gather several neighborhoods that ask for the same thing, you make that authorities give you more importance.” He also made special emphasis on the processes of mutual learning that Pilot Cities carries out, arguing that if cities like Barranquillas managed to be an example of how to overcome much more complex situations of insecurity through cultural activities, El Vecino could also be internationally projected as a reference of cultural action for development.

3.2. Analysis of the impact of culture as the fourth axis of sustainable development in the neighborhood El Vecino.

As it was stated in previous paragraphs, this research focuses on the impact that culture has generated as the fourth axis of sustainable development in the neighborhood El Vecino. For this purpose, the methodology includes interviews with Antoine Guibert, expert of the UCLG's Commission on Culture, Andrea Malquin, Coordinator of the Pilot Cities Programme in Cuenca, Jorge Herrera, leader of El Vecino. It also includes a focus group with the participation of six residents of El Vecino.

As a background, it is essential to consider the initial proposal made by the directive of El Vecino to paint murals similar to the ones in the Route of the Comic in Brussels. The main objective of these murals was to beautify the empty walls of the city and eventually, to promote the most relevant comic artists. However, the murals that were meant to be placed in El Vecino lacked the identity component; in other words, the interventions would not represent the context and essence of the neighborhood. That is the reason why the Direction of Historical areas did not approve the project, arguing that the material patrimony of the city would be affected.

Andrea Malquin said that by the time the DAG of Cuenca signed the agreement with UCLG, and the talks with the expert Antoine Guibert started, they noticed that Jorge Herrera was already improving the situation of El Vecino through cultural activities. For this reason, during the city's evaluation process, it was considered to use the neighborhood's initiative of seeing culture as a tool of change as the basis of a pilot measure possible to implement.

In the previous chapter the generalities of the Neighborhood Recovery Program were addressed, and after analyzing the information collected during the interviews and the focal group, it is undeniable that the Direction of Culture, with the guidance of UCLG's Commission on Culture experts, has a decisive role in organizing assemblies with the inhabitants of the neighborhood in order to compile information about the intangible heritage of El Vecino, and consequently, to identify the characters that are part of the cultural identity of the area. In this way, the true approach to localization can be

visualized because, as Acharya points out, if international norms are adapted to local practices and beliefs, the beneficiaries of these practices will give their approval. Furthermore, the proposal of authors like Ander-Egg and Viché is corroborated because they argue that individuals who share a cultural identity generate positive contributions in the community to satisfy its needs and desires in an original and creative way.

In this sense, a group of artists created eleven murals that rescue stories of popular characters from El Vecino. Below, there is a picture of each of them and their location:

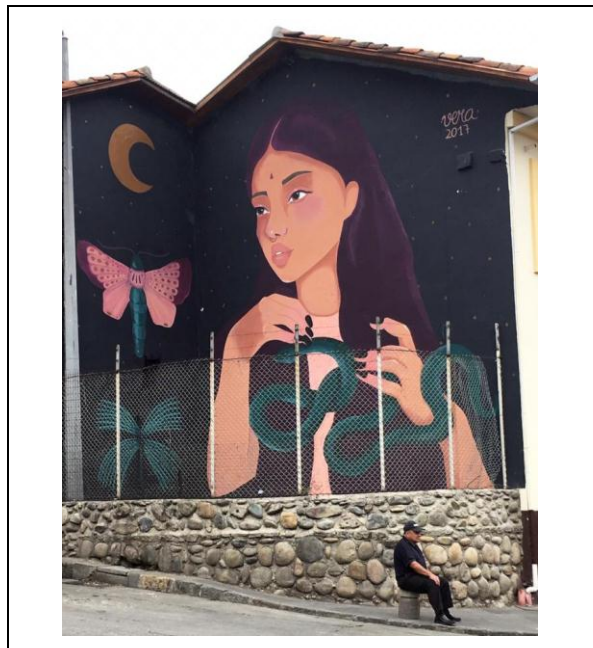


Figure 4. Mural inspired by Mary Coryle's poem "Yo soy así".

Location: Rafael María Arízaga Street and Vargas Machuca Street.

Source: Direction of Culture, Recreation and knowledge of Cuenca's DAG.



Figure 5. Mural inspired by Mary Coryle.

Location: Rafael María Arízaga Street and Mariano Cueva Street.

Source: Direction of Culture, Recreation and knowledge of Cuenca's DAG.



Figure 6. Mural inspired by Rigoberto Cordero y León.

Location: Mariano Cueva Street and Rafael María Arízaga Street.

Source: Direction of Culture, Recreation and knowledge of Cuenca's DAG.

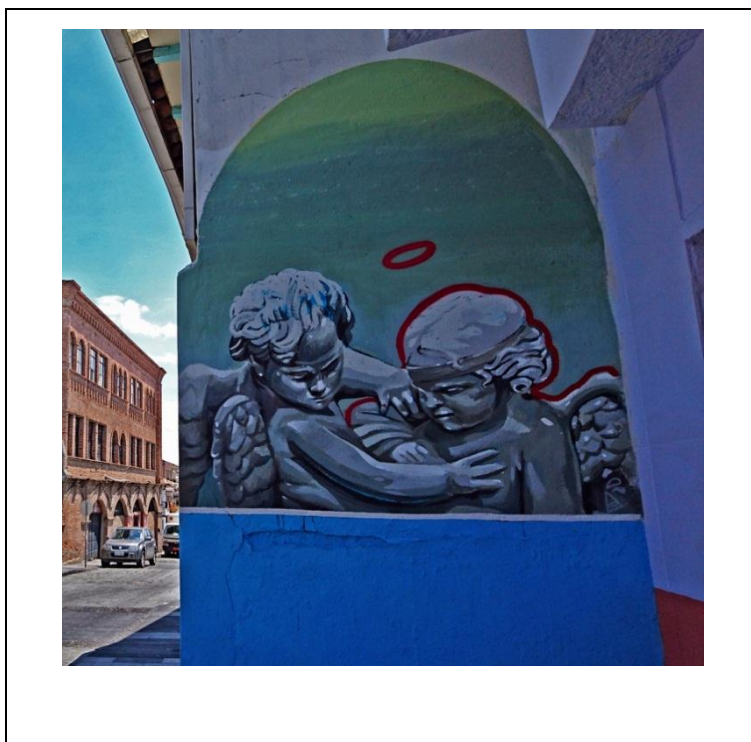


Figure 7. Mural of angels.

Location: Rafael María Arízaga Street between Tomás Ordoñez Street and Manuel Vega Street.

Source: Direction of Culture, Recreation and knowledge of Cuenca's DAG.



Figure 8. Mural inspired by a local artisan.

Location: Rafael María Arízaga Street between Vargas Machuca Street and Tomás Ordoñez Street.

Source: Direction of Culture, Recreation and knowledge of Cuenca's DAG.



Figure 9. Mural inspired by El Pacharaco.

Location: Rafael María Arízaga Street between Hermano Miguel Street and Mariano Cueva Street.

Source: Direction of Culture, Recreation and knowledge of Cuenca's DAG.



Figure 10. Mural inspired by a resident of the neighborhood.

Ubicación: Rafael María Arízaga Street between Manuel Vega Street and Street of El Rollo (square).

Source: Direction of Culture, Recreation and knowledge of Cuenca's DAG.



Figure 11. Mural inspired by María la guagua.

Location: Rafael María Arízaga Street between Manuel Vega Street and Street of El Rollo (square).

Source: Direction of Culture, Recreation and knowledge of Cuenca's DAG.

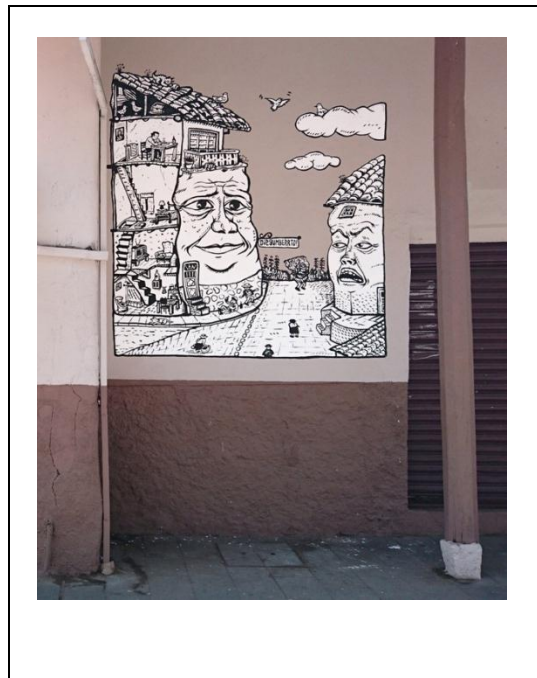


Figure 12. Mural inspired by El Vecino heritage houses.

Location: Rafael María Arízaga Street between Vargas Machuca Street y Tomás Ordoñez Street.

Source: Direction of Culture, Recreation and knowledge of Cuenca's DAG.

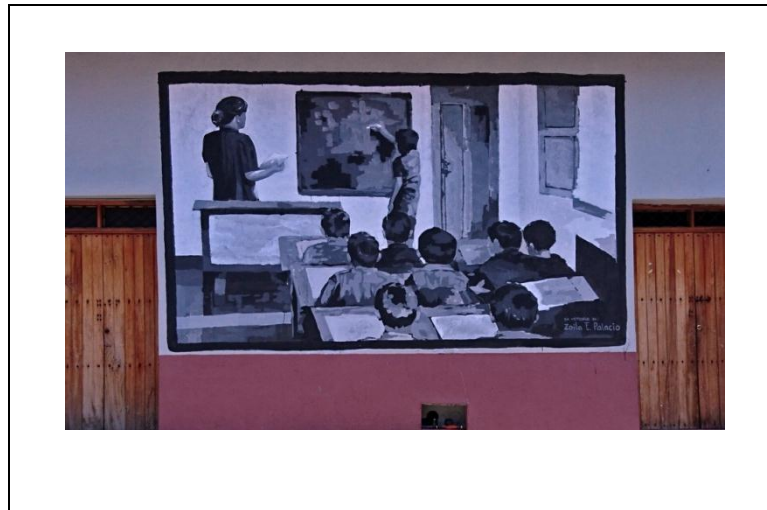


Figure 13. Mural inspired by Zoila Esperanza Palacios.

Location: Rafael María Arízaga Street between Tomás Ordoñez Street and Manuel Vega Street.

Source: Direction of Culture, Recreation and knowledge of Cuenca's DAG.



Figure 14. Mural of toquilla straw hats.

Location: Salazar Lozano Street and Rafael María Arízaga Street.

Source: Direction of Culture, Recreation and knowledge of Cuenca's DAG.

Initially, during the focus group applied to the residents of the neighborhood El Vecino, it was possible to identify that none of the attendants were familiar with the name of Pilot Cities Programme. However, at the time of explaining its objective and the activities that were carried out in its framework, specifically, the murals, they said they knew about it but they did not know its name. Leonor and Sarah said at the same time: "We knew about the murals but we did not know the program's name. We even signed for it!"

Melina, on the other hand, expressed that she knew very superficially about the subject, since her father was vice-president of the neighborhood and actively participated on the assemblies held to know the improvements that the neighborhood needed. He socialized with the artists who intervened the walls of Rafael María Arízaga Street and he was also in charge of inaugurating the murals. Nevertheless, it is necessary to point out that, although the pilot measure comprises the intervention of the neighborhood El Vecino, the only street that has been intervened is Rafael Maria Arízaga Street.

With regard to this, Melina expressed a serious concern by stating the following: "If you eradicate insecurity from Arizaa Street, it goes down to Tomás Ordóñez Street; if you remove it from Tomás Ordóñez Street, it goes to Vega Muñoz Street; if you reduce it in one place, it continues to spread to others because the fact that you eradicate insecurity from one street does not mean it will be eliminated in everyplace." The incorporation of the City Guard's office and the provision of more lighting responds to the points raised by Díez - Ripollés and Cerezo, who indicate that improving the prevention and prosecution of crime must be focused on situational prevention by avoiding the access of potential delinquents to the place of possible crime, reducing the occasions in which it is feasible to commit it, and guaranteeing police effectiveness (Díez - Ripollés & Cerezo, 2009, p. 175).

Following this line, Jorge Herrera said during the interview, that the events that take place in the neighborhood last only until 11 pm. Additionally, there is no liquor and a policeman is always patrolling. He believes that "this is how events that are uncomfortable for felons are generated." However, being more critical about this model

of crime prevention, it can be argued that although criminal acts are no longer concentrated in Rafael María Arízaga Street, criminals disperse to other areas that have not yet been intervened. Following this logic, it is undeniable that the development of more effective medium and long term social policies to attack the problem from the root is in standby.

Another factor that is important to consider regarding crime's location is society's perception of a particular area and the crimes committed in it. Enrique Viana argues that spatial configuration significantly influences the collective image of certain places. That is why, according to Fraile, when certain sectors are stigmatized as dangerous, they provoke an almost mechanical rejection by individuals, thus causing the population to avoid going to these places and therefore making it dangerous (Fraile, 2007). This internalization of discourse generates severe problems in the solution of insecurity because residents get used to their complicated reality and do not consider the possibilities of generating a change in their context. In this regard, Jorge Herrera said: "The elderly people whom you listen to and pay attention to are those who tell you that it is impossible to change."

And it is not only a matter of elderly people; Ricardo, a 20-year-old student, pointed out that although a camera has been placed in the area with the purpose of monitoring all the acts and immoral things that are done, the criminals do not react to it. "There is no way to fight against this ... intendancies and the mayor have come and there is no way to control the situation." Ricardo's parents own a store in the zone and they do not know how to deal with the criminals who roam the area because they are afraid of retaliations.

In this sense, it can be deduced that cultural activities, specifically the creation of the murals that rescue the cultural identity of El Vecino leave a considerable gap in the control of crime in the area. However, the fact that the intervened street has had, according to the perception of the people, a significant decrease in crime cannot be obviated. Guibert argued that "the fact of bringing people, organizing parties, making murals, and making the neighborhoods livelier, reduces insecurity and generates new spaces for meeting and belonging." But even with this premise, there is an imminent

necessity to consolidate the pilot measure in a more comprehensive and sustainable way over time, by involving other aspects.

Continuing with the analysis of the social impact that culture has generated in this context, it is essential to address the issue of neighborhood self-esteem. Guibert, explains that, after the creation of the murals, he has been able to perceive a considerable change in the image of the neighborhood. In addition, he points out that this physical transformation is not only a minimal change reduced to marketing, but shows a change in the inhabitants perception about themselves and therefore, of them as a neighborhood, so that in the long term they can change the perception that the rest of the city has about them. "If you feel good, if you feel good as a neighborhood, you're going to make this happen. If you feel ugly, if you feel insecure, if you feel that you are dirty, you will continue with the same dynamic." In this sense, he highlights the difficulty of being able to verify how the feeling of pride affects the inhabitants of a neighborhood through quantitative indicators. However, he firmly argues that, from a sensitive point of view acquired from his work with communities, the perceived impact is much greater.

Sarah Barriga, resident of El Vecino, said: "Thanks to this project, Rafael Arízaga Street is more beautiful and lighted because, before the murals, the street was dark. Now with all these actions, it looks pretty; however, we are afraid of going out of our houses. Thanks God, nothing has happened so far." Paula complemented her grandmother's intervention and said: "Now, you see people coming to see the murals. Previously they did not because they said the neighborhood was dangerous, but now they come and see the murals ... There is more movement of people." All the participants in the focus group agreed with this comment.

With regard to this matter, Andrea Malquin said that despite the fact that El Vecino continues not to be considered a safe place at all, a greater number of people goes to the streets and exercise their "right to the city", by enjoying the public space that is in better condition. She also mentioned that the attendance of tourists is higher and this represents a considerable change of the environment.

Another point that Andrea Malquin stressed during the interview was that the murals are still intact one year after being painted and that, normally, that kind of conservation has not occurred before. Based on this premise, it was decided to ask the people who participated in the focus group what were the reasons why they believed that the murals were preserved and the response was oriented to the fact that there is greater control of the spaces by the City Guard, but not because of a sense of belonging derived from the cultural identity rescued in the murals.

In fact, when the participants were asked if they knew the characters that inspired these artistic expressions, only Leonor and Sarah, the elders of the group, answered yes. The youngest people in the group and Elizabeth, a woman who arrived a year ago to the neighborhood, said that they were not aware of the intangible heritage that the area possesses and justified their ignorance with the lack of socialization of this content; on the contrary, Leonor attributed it to the lack of interest they demonstrate about these matters.

In this context, two scenarios can be identified. The first related to the sense of unity demonstrated by those adults who have spent most of their lives in the neighborhood and therefore, know the history of the characters in the murals. The second, which corresponds to young people and new residents, who as a result of not being aware of this historical baggage, indirectly feel excluded. In the first case, it can be observed that culture directly influences the processes of social cohesion because thanks to the collective memory that has resulted from the interactions between individuals, spaces for encounter, learning and action have been generated. Jorge Herrera argued that during certain meetings there is usually somebody who tells a story and there is someone else who complements it and as a result, connections that allow people to eventually socialize emerge.

Evidently, when a community shares the same cultural identity, strong bonds are created and this allows to propose creative solutions to face adversity. Chapter 1 addressed Mendez's proposal that in order for a territory to achieve resilience, there must be an initial realistic diagnosis of the impacts of the crisis. Moreover, territory's weaknesses

and strengths should be analyzed to start mobilizing resources and overcome difficulties. The pilot measure implemented in El Vecino, within the framework of Pilot Cities, is framed within this description and even more with the statement of the same author, which indicates that one of the factors that motivate resilience of the territories is the capacity of local actors to generate innovative initiatives such as the protection of cultural heritage.

The gatherings that took place before the elaboration of the murals of Rafael María Arízaga Street are an example of this because through them people managed to take part, know the culture of the past, and design a project that improves their present and their future. On the contrary, there is also a process of latent social fragmentation that is product of generational and cultural gaps, which eventually can result in the disappearance of the intangible heritage of the zone.

Similarly, it is important to emphasize that the Catholic religion is a key component in the cultural dynamics of the neighborhood because, as mentioned in the previous chapter, the church has become a meeting place and has mobilized a large number of people through Virgen de la Merced Festival which, according to the Coordinator of Pilot Cities, is currently the link between festivals that occur in the neighborhoods crossed by Rafael María Arízaga Street. El Vecino has promoted all its potential through fairs in which local artisans participate and heritage houses are exhibited. In this regard, Leonor Chaca said that the church is a determining factor of the cultural identity of the sector and that the activation of the place where the monument of the Virgin de la Merced is located has contributed to the well-being of the inhabitants, given the constant movement of people who resort to this place, either with tourist or spiritual purposes.

Likewise, there are other cultural activities that gather the residents of the neighborhood in safe spaces, besides the murals. Jorge Herrera explained, during the interview, that the Coordinator of the Municipal Economuseo of toquilla straw hats has carried out cultural activities such as a fashion show, which although generated a lot of skepticism in the members of the board of the neighborhood, was very successful. Additionally, for a

different type of public, there are bingos with artistic performances of the Polyphonic Quintet.

Continuing with the analysis of the effects generated by culture as the fourth axis of sustainable development, it should be considered that if there is no adequate planning, there would be conflicts such as gentrification, understood as "the spatial restructuring of a given urban area, which implies the displacement of low-income residents who had lived in these spaces" (Glass, 1964; Clark, 2005 as cited in Red, 2016, p. 699). Indeed, authors such as Janoschka and Sequera have investigated this phenomenon in places such as Mexico City, Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro and have concluded that the strategies of adaptation of urban sectors based on cultural planning motivate the progressive expulsion of popular sectors (Duque, 2015).

Nevertheless, despite the fact that until now such processes have not been observed in El Vecino, Antoine Guibert has stated that his greatest concern is the possibility that, due to its patrimonial nature and due to its great potential, people with more resources may start buying the houses in the area and force their current inhabitants to mobilize. Guibert pointed out that it would be undesirable to reduce the insecurity of the area by changing its residents and not by improving the life conditions of the initial community. Following this logic, Andrea Malquin stated that the cultural identity of the sector should be put in value and strengthened to empower the neighbors and therefore, prevent that the project becomes a gentrifying initiative.

Conclusions

After analyzing the interviews conducted to culture experts and the direct beneficiaries of the project, and in relation to the theoretical framework presented in the initial chapter, it can be concluded that:

It cannot be questioned the fact that culture has a strong relationship with the sustainable development of cities, since it guarantees the integration of the population through participation policies that are appropriate to their context. However, the planning of projects that incorporate culture as the fourth axis of development should be developed carefully in order to prevent its superficial and instrumental use. This is justified in the need to avoid repeating what happened with development models that preceded it because, due to their lack of comprehensiveness and articulation between their axes, a crisis that to this day is difficult to solve, has emerged. In the specific context of El Vecino, it was clearly observed that although the murals have embellished the facades of the houses on Rafael María Arízaga Street, the underlying problem has not been solved.

In this sense, it is necessary to emphasize that the actions carried out to solve the situation of vulnerability of the sector must attack the origin of insecurity. As a recommendation, projects like those that took place in Mexico and Colombia should be replicated by incorporating the cultural axis into direct actions with people who alter the peaceful coexistence of certain sectors. In the case of El Vecino, this factor is ignored because there is a wrong idea of change since it is wanted to drive away people who generate conflicts, instead of focusing on the causes of their behavior.

In fact, the debate on the long-term sustainability of the pilot measure remains open, because as residents of the neighborhood said, the insecurity has been eliminated from a street, but it has spread to places where there has not been an intervention yet. A point that must be considered is the recommendation made by the neighborhood leader, who stated that the next step should be to place public offices in the zone, so that citizens would be obliged to go to this area and consequently, the greater circulation of people would generate safer spaces.

Another point of the research that has to be emphasized is that, although civil society is incipiently involved in some projects, there are processes of local initiative, addressed through governance, that seek to improve the current situation of certain neighborhoods. As the leader of El Vecino said, the projects that are being developed nowadays are the result of the previous work of the citizens. Although some projects have been driven by the weight that an international program can give, the mobilization of resources carried out by the leaders of the neighborhood, has been the epicenter of the transformation and capacity of resilience that a community can have, when confronting adversities resulting from crisis alien to their own decision. Additionally, it can be shown that a certain part of the community has bonded after the gatherings. Indeed, cultural identity affects the processes of social cohesion and generates spaces for meeting and learning. Similarly, the intervention of the smallest levels of territorial organization within the formulation of cultural public policies is crucial, which once again confirms that the true playing field is in the immediacy of cities, through localization processes.

In contrast, there are issues that cause concern. To begin with, and as the neighborhood leader has mentioned, the change must begin with the residents. It was observed that the stigma of insecurity has affected the perception that they have of the neighborhood and of themselves to the point of considering that generating change is impossible. That is why some residents of the neighborhood have decided to live with the situation of insecurity, without the intention of improving it.

Next, the possibility of gentrification is an issue that should be evaluated more thoroughly because it represents a phenomenon that usually accompanies cultural interventions that activate places with social problems. This is justified by the fact that without proper planning, those responsible for irregularities would not be the only ones to be displaced, but all the individuals who have traditionally inhabited El Vecino would be replaced by people capable of paying large sums of money for housing in the area, as a result of the improvement of a neighborhood so iconic.

It should be noted that although the methodology used is qualitative, the idea of eventually complementing it with quantitative indicators must not be discarded. Even

though culture is a subject with a lot of perceptions, quantifying the transformation of El Vecino or other neighborhoods would make future research more solid.

Moreover, it is necessary to mention that the conflicts with the institution in charge of patrimony conservation in the city have limited the opportune action of the citizens at the moment of intervening certain spaces. In this sense, opposing ideas arise about the function of patrimony and therefore, the debate on the extent to which certain areas of the city should be kept intact intensifies, because they could contribute to the sustainable development of the sector, without necessarily considering that they are in function of the detriment of the patrimony. Consequently, the institutions that address these issues should coordinate their efforts with the purpose of developing projects that include the enhancement of local intangible patrimony through orality promotion. Another very punctual and crucial observation regarding culture as the fourth axis of sustainable development is that instances such as the United Nations Organization still do not recognize its impact and relevance because in the Sustainable Development Goals document, culture has a really limited or even null role.

Finally, culture is not an isolated element, nor the justification of a new discourse on development that replicates historical inequalities. Long-term planning as well as local diplomacy play a decisive role in processes of this nature, since projects are being executed by international cooperation networks between cities that have the great advantage of being closer to the needs of its inhabitants. Also, it is important to remember that culture is not only immersed in the pictures of a museum or in the books of a library, but also in the ethereal of life.

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Appendixes

Appendix A: Interview with Antoin Guibert, expert of the Committee on Culture of UCLG.

Place: Central School (Gran Colombia Street between Benigno Malo Street and Luis Cordero Street).

Date: July 20, 2018.

How has the experience of working with the Cuenca municipality in the Pilot Cities process been and what progress have you been able to see in the implementation of the Pilot Cities program in the city?

Well, this program, as you know, has been developed in three years. Two and a half years... we started a little before January 2016 to prepare everything and we started with an initial workshop in January 2016. So, in total it is a process of 3 years and we are finishing it with a lot of results. I see a lot of changes.

First, in the organizational structure of the cultural services that were quite... how to say it, I think there was a lack of institutional and organizational structure within the Directorate of Culture at the beginning of the process. So I believe that this process has made it possible to put culture on the table in Cuenca. To make this a priority, and I sincerely believe that framing it in an international program with a defined and published work plan at the international level [...] has forced the political authorities to continue with this work program and to keep these priorities. So, I see this as an important organizational advance, because even all this work plan could have been implemented by the cultural services without the program; but the fact that it is formalized within an international program forced them to follow the goals and forced a political commitment from the mayor's office, a commitment to follow it. So, in this area I see an important advance, for example the culture team has been strengthened, many people have been hired, there has been a clear and very important commitment to culture. So, I think that in this area, the organizational structure has improved a lot. I

think that also from the culture team, the fact that they have hired people coming from the civil society has allowed to improve the relationship with the civil society of Cuenca.

When we started the process in January 2016 there was a very important rupture between the institution and the whole civil society, with a lot of tension with the cultural managers, and with the artists. Those tensions have been alleviated a lot in these 3 years process. I think that the whole citizen perspective of the process, the participatory methodology, the fact that they have hired people that come from the civil society and the involvement of cultural managers in this project, both in the process and consultations of citizen participation and much more participatory management, [...] has helped a lot in easing tensions and generating a better work dynamic.

With regard to the pilot measures that Cuenca had in its Work Plan, in which could you observe significant advances or which pilot measures have been the most successful?

I think all the pilot measures have been successful. Honestly, it would be very difficult for me to establish which measure worked better than another. I believe that governance was the thematic that needed more attention, regardless of the initial self-assessment and the notes that came out. I see many advances with the Culture Plan, with the ordinance and all the different measures that have been adopted and I believe that this is fundamental in the long term. Then, all the experiments developed on social inclusion in some neighborhoods and in public spaces are fundamental, right? Moreover, I have observed great advances in the thematic of economy with the project of sacred geography, although there is still a lot of work to be done. Furthermore, there have been good results in the thematic culture and environment and surprisingly, I didn't expect it. In sum, this integral dynamic seems very interesting to me.

Regarding the pilot measures, do you think that some of them could be replicated in any of the cities that are part of the program?

I believe that measures cannot be replicated because they must be adapted to the context desires, problems and ways of doing things. However, I consider that there are some measures that can be very inspiring as good practices. For instance, there are projects in neighborhoods and peripheral areas (native host program) that should be considered, [...] besides the participative methodology used for the culture plan. Within the thematic about culture and environment, there is a program of Andean gastronomy and sacred geography that can result very interesting. Furthermore, there are things that are not included in the pilot measures like projects of artisan management carried out by EDEC, CIDAP and the Economuseum that should be taken into account even though they have not been proposed by the Direction of Culture in order to strengthen them. The Direction of Culture is more artistic, but the models mentioned before have inspired a lot of what cultural industries are nowadays. Indeed, it will be important to make them visible in other cities.

In the morning, during the Panel about Culture and Social Cohesion, the project about the improvement of El Vecino was mentioned [...], how do you think that culture becomes a tool for resilience? Because even though there is a discourse about its capacity of generating cohesion and resilience [...] what does culture specifically generate in neighborhoods?

[...] I find it difficult to analyze the case of El Vecino because I don't know it that well. What I see in El Vecino [...] is a change in the image of the neighborhood, and this is not a small thing. I think that this is not changing the image just from a marketing point of view, but changing the image that the inhabitants have of themselves, the perception they have of them as a neighborhood and the perception that other parts of the city towards this neighborhood is fundamental. If you feel good as a neighborhood, you are going to make this happen. If you feel ugly, if you feel insecure, if you feel dirty, you will continue with the same dynamic. But if the perception of themselves changes, if the feeling of pride changes, their perception will change from negative to positive. It

sounds silly, but I think that it is fundamental in a development project, and this can give results in the next few years. This [is analyzed] from a pure feeling point of view, because from a quantitative point of view of indicators, from an academic point of view, you can't prove this [...] because you can't prove how the feeling of pride is going to change certain situation or the results it will give within 10 years. Nevertheless from a sensitive point of view of working with communities, I think there have been great changes and therefor, greater impacts.

From a more objective point of view, the fact of bringing people, of having parties, of making murals reduces insecurity and generates new spaces of encounter and belonging. So yes, I think that it can bring change to the neighborhood; now, what worries me about this neighborhood is that its improvement can generate gentrification in the future. In other words, wealthy people will want to buy the houses of the zone, and as a result, the people who live there would be displaced. This will generate a change in the neighborhood in the sense that there is going to be less poverty, less insecurity, but not because we have really improved the lives of the inhabitants, but because the inhabitants have changed. I believe that this is not something desirable; there is a risk in the case of the neighborhood El Vecino because it is a patrimonial area. So, in order for this project to truly contribute to social improvement, there should be control and protection measures.

Now that Cuenca is trying to be a leading city in terms of Agenda 21 for Culture, what are the main challenges that the city, the DAG and civil society will have?

The implementation of the Work Plan is going to be a great challenge. Previously, it was to elaborate it, now it is to implement it. The most complicated thing begins now and I think they have a very important job to do regarding it. I believe that in the scope of environment there is something very interesting and innovative that can be done. Furthermore, I believe that one of the biggest challenges is to expand all the pilot measures like: Native Host and the action programs in the neighborhoods in order to give them continuity and making them more massive. Currently, pilot measures have

been done in a few sectors to prove that they work well. I believe that this has given good results and that is the reason why, there has been a great local demand. In fact, during the final self-evaluation, we have seen that people demand the expansion of all these programs and perpetuate what has been done should be a real challenge.

Appendix B: Interview with Andrea Malquin, Coordinator of Pilot Cities in Cuenca.

Place: Central School (Gran Colombia Street between Benigno Malo Street and Luis Cordero Street).

Date: October 12, 2018.

What has been the role of UCLG in what is the implementation of the Pilot Cities program in the city of Cuenca?

The role that the organization has had, specifically through the Culture Commission, has been quite important, since the Culture Committee has [started the] initiative to create a guide for the implementation of Agenda 21 of Culture within the policies of local governments. Agenda 21 for Culture is a declaration that did not necessarily enlighten local governments of what they should do and how to implement it, [...] that is the problem of many international declarations and documents, which give you guidelines but do not tell you how to do it. For example, Sustainable Development Goals. In the case of Agenda 21 for Culture, UCLG commissioned its Culture Committee to create a clear guide, which does not try to impose policies to local governments, but to leave the possibility of adapting Agenda 21 to the reality of each city. In addition, within the framework of the program, advice is given to local governments, through experts and through the commission's coordination (Jordi Pascual). Although it represents an investment for the city, there is also a counterpart since UCLG also invests in a process of training and education, not to the people, but to local governments. Indeed, UCLG has played a very important role, since it has been a bridge for the exchange of experiences between cities.

Do you consider that the fact of framing activities within an international program generates greater commitment on the part of the GAD?

Yes, I think that the fact of being within the framework of an international program supported by an international organization such as UCLG on the issue of local governments gives more weight. Despite the existence of Mercocities, the Network of

Learning Cities, UNESCO Creative Cities, among others, UCLG is the most important and the largest. I also believe that UCLG has been really formal [...] in the way it develops its processes; for example, in order to enter un the Pilot Cities Programme, you have to go through a selection process and you have to sign an agreement in which UCLG is your counterpart. This gives more weight to the commitments that have to be fulfilled in the framework of the agreement and obliges the local government to comply with the agreement. In the same way, there is a program of international diffusion about the experiences and good practices that local governments have. However, I think another crucial factor is the political will of [who] is in the administration.

What is the role of the GAD of Cuenca in the development of the Pilot Cities program?

Our role is fundamental, because we are guarantors of rights. Agenda 21 for Culture, in its attempt of converting culture into the fourth axis of sustainable development, intends that their fundamental axes are human rights and specifically cultural rights. In the same way, the role of the government is to have the will to have a new perspective on the culture as well as to execute it. In the case of Ecuador, local governments have many competences on the topic of culture and in Cuenca, an important investment in cultural issues has been made.

The role played by the Municipal Department of Culture has been important to implement the Pilot Cities Work Plan and gradually, to implement the Culture Agenda. Now that Pilot Cities is finished, we maintain the program of implementation of the Agenda 21 for Culture, so that no matter the time or the change of administration, it will continue to be developed. However, there are still many things to do and that should be further improved.

What have been the limitations or obstacles that have arisen for the implementation of the program?

I believe that, on the one hand, it has been the lack of knowledge on issues of sustainable development with culture as a fourth axis, not only here in the local government of

Cuenca, but rather at the national and regional levels. We know of sustainable development, but knowledge about the paradigm of sustainable development from three sides is still maintained. Talking about sustainable development with four pillars and that the fourth is culture is still quite new topic. On the other hand, there is the obstacle that culture is still considered a tool to generate votes, which is not a specific issue of this administration, but of the population in general. It is still seen [as] artistic presentations and not as a tool for change. For example, although the projects we have implemented in El Vecino have had a strong component of events, there have been other projects such as the urban gallery that has generated resilience, social cohesion and space security. Another difficulty is the lack of articulation between the other institutions responsible for [the] culture. However, over the last few months that has changed and more institutions are joining the development boat based on culture.

In the assessment made in 2016, reference is made to the incipient identification of the most vulnerable people, groups or areas of the city. Has this situation improved? How?

I think that it is important to keep in mind that with the Pilot Cities program we intend to improve the interinstitutional and interdepartmental articulation within the same municipal corporation, since usually, we have worked with groups in a situation of vulnerability, but without a specific base, without a study that says in these spaces should work. For example, since the previous year we started working with the El Barranco Foundation, which had the integral improvement program of peripheral neighborhoods in the city of Cuenca, many of them, if not all, have a high poverty rate compared to the other neighborhoods and what was achieved through coordination with the El Barranco Foundation was knowing where to work. As a result, Native Guest was implemented this year, in addition to building the neighborhood cultural plans with the sectors with which the El Barranco Foundation and UN Habitat had worked. What is sought is the improvement of neighborhoods from an integral perspective, in the sociocultural theme and in the urban theme. Regarding the sociocultural issue, we have contributed a lot with the cultural neighborhood plans because they generate social cohesion, the neighbors know each other, join more, even for a party. For example, the

residents of El Vecino, now that we carry out the Barrial Cultural Plan, know each other more, and although you cannot talk about friendship as such, the fact that your neighbor knows you can prevent someone from entering your house.

Likewise, it has intervened in peripheral neighborhoods such as El Calvario and Narancay, improving their self-esteem and therefore their resilience capacity. I believe that peace, security, resilience and social cohesion are concepts and principles that are handled in Agenda 21 for Culture that have worked very well for us. That is why in 2018, a project called "Culture, Equity and Social Inclusion" was created in order to improve social cohesion and resilience through culture and art.

One of the pilot measures is the intervention of neighborhoods in situations of vulnerability, through cultural activities and one of the beneficiary neighborhoods is El Vecino. Are there indicators that corroborate the situation of vulnerability in the neighborhood? How was the process of approaching and diagnosing El Vecino?

There was no specific study, UN Habitat and the Barranco Foundation did not do the specific study there. However, the diagnosis has been made through the citizens' assemblies of the municipality, which are meetings where citizen requirements are prioritized through the participation of the people who live in the area; and for example, all the times that we have done citizen assemblies, always the biggest concern in El Vecino is the issue of insecurity, sex work, tags and lack of cleanliness. However, insecurity and micro-trafficking are the most recurrent issues and this has generated a stigma that prevents people from going to this place.

It is necessary to emphasize that in spite of the fact that a City Guard office has been placed, that the military is there, that there are better controls and that the Citizen Security Council has set up cameras; the problem of insecurity persists. When we signed the agreement in UCLG and talked with the expert Guibert, we noticed that someone who was working a lot in this sense was Jorge Herrera. In the process of assessing the situation of Cuenca, it was possible to identify that El Vecino already had the initiative of seeing culture as a tool for change, then with that approach, more citizen assemblies began to implement certain measures.

The first action was the creation of the Festival of the Virgen de la Merced, which more than creation, was the union of all the festivals in a single large festival because it turns out that through Rafael María Arízaga Street cross some neighborhoods like: El Vecino, El Chorro, El Rollo that have their own image of the Virgin of Mercy, and talking with Jorge about what has been done in the zone, we decided to join everything in a single procession. Fairs are made, the artisans of the zone are promoted and the heritage houses too. It was really sought to exploit all the potential it had, trying not to be a gentrifying project, but to empower the neighbors to value their material and immaterial cultural heritage and thus, to improve their social cohesion.

What challenges have you identified when implementing the pilot measure in the El Vecino neighborhood?

In the beginning it was complicated to gather people because they did not know each other and there was this stigma that El Vecino lives people from other countries who were lucky enough to live in conventillos and that made the neighborhood unsafe. However, we must mention the role that the church has had, because through it it has managed to bring people together. I do not agree to mix the affairs of the church in a secular state, but when analyzing the situation, what draws attention [is that] the church is seen as an important agent. That is why the procession of the Virgen de la Merced was used as a meeting place.

Another difficulty was that when we started proposing mural graffiti, the representatives of historical areas maintained that it was a sacrilege to stain the wall of many heritage houses in the area, because it has the stigma that graffiti artists are from urban groups and that, therefore, they are criminals. There was a bit of resistance, but it was explained what type of graffiti is going to be done and it was solved through a process of intergenerational and intercultural exchange (tertulia), which mixed the theme of historical memory and current art. Another difficulty was that it was believed that the murals were not going to last.

However, to overcome certain difficulties, a large fair was held, heritage houses were opened for people to know, the procession was made and a contest of flowery balconies

was made with the EMAC. In addition, mediation was done with historical areas, the walls were painted, graffiti artists listened to the recordings of the gatherings of the people talking about the characters, they painted the characters. The issue of security improved to a certain extent, because now the place has a greater number of people who move in its streets and live in public space (right to the city); the sector is clean and tourists take pictures. The murals are intact and they are one year old, normally they would not have lasted.

Do you think there are other factors that have affected the transformation that has occurred in the neighborhood?

The directive and the work of Jorge Herrera in convening the leaders of the different neighborhoods have been important because people have joint and have been monitoring its execution. When the citizens' initiative and the political determination converge, the context improves.

Appendix C: Interview with Jorge Herrera, leader of the neighborhood El Vecino.

Place: Economuseo of paquilla straw hat.

Date: October 23, 2018.

What are the main problems that the neighborhood faced before the implementation of the Pilot Cities program?

I think we should not talk about El Vecino neighborhood but Rafael María Arízaga Street, which covers five neighborhoods (Las Secretas, El Vecino, El Cuartel, El Condor de los Profesores and El Chorro neighborhood) that have been beneficiated by the change made in the street mentioned. Returning to the question, we have had everything, the city has had the stigma that this place is one of the most dangerous places in the city and that has complicated us very much because it is difficult to change it. Moreover, there was theft and drug addiction, which in some way or another fluctuate, it appears for a time and then disappears; Prostitution in Huayna Cápac Street, although it does not belong to Rafael María Arízaga street, it affects us because the people who work there, live or lived in our sector. However, we as homeowners are the main responsible for what is happening in our homes and in our neighborhood because in Cuenca, and generally in Ecuador, most people goes to their homes and shut them up like if they were in a prison. If you lock yourself in, you do not know anything about the outside world and you care exclusively about yourself. That is selfish but it is a reality that happens to all of us. So, after leaving that selfishness a bit and understanding that the main base of cities is a society and that we should live more in community, we started looking for people who think the same. At first, you believe you are the only one who thinks differently and over the time you realize that there are more people who want a change. Based on that, we started to gather the homeowners to know if they were in agreement with the way we were living and if they saw any possibility of change. The answer of that possibility of change was no, and that it is very complicated because they have lived like that for many years. However, we continued to meet and we continued to pressure homeowners who are renting their houses without precaution in order to take certain actions. The fact of showing people that sectors like Las Peñas or La Ronda in Quito

could improve their situation was quite effective. Even we projected us out of our country because there are cities like Barranquillas in Colombia that have been able to recover much more complicated places than ours. In this way, we continued adding people and we began to see changes in one year.

Prior to the implementation of the program, what actions did you take as a neighborhood?

Pilot Cities appears two years of our work. Previously, in order to change our situation, we considered that it was necessary to understand the problem and for that we did a SWOT that made us see that things must be fixed internally. The main problem was insecurity but the actions of homeowners and police officers are a key cause of this. Also, there was ignorance of which direction the municipality and the government should take to guarantee security in the city. In the same way, the heads of these institutions could not lead clear and concrete actions as a result of this lack of knowledge. That is why we started to work with some institutions, including the government and the municipality, which at first showed some resistance.

The resistance was showed by the residents of the neighborhood or by the GAD?

On one hand, the municipality and the government showed resistance because they blamed on us. You as a citizen are guilty for renting without precaution and for making this place a complicated space. There are many pretexts. We should fix our problems but we also need the authorities to do their job. At the beginning it is hard because after living so long in one way it is difficult to change. We had many people who told us: "We have lived in this place for many years; you are a young person who has just realized this reality that will never change". They are the elderly people whom you listen to and give them attention who tell you that it is impossible. However, after this time they are already part of this group and they are convinced that there is a way to change things, but not 100 percent because it is complicated. [In] Ecuador, the situation of insecurity is complicated. You listen that insecurity is no longer [in] one place, but is dispersing for many reasons. In Barranquillas, when they cleaned a central point, insecurity dispersed to the rest of the city. I do not think this is the case, but many times

when you do not have adequate security policies you will not have the right results. In our case, we have the political will of all leaders, including the municipality. Moreover, there has been pressure to make our voices heard. When you are only a person, nothing changes because you are a simple citizen; but when you manage to group people and organizations, when you manage to gather several neighborhoods that ask for the same thing, you get the authorities to give you more importance. I understood that I just could not change the situation by my own because I was a simple citizen, but when you add house owners, when you add tenants who could not live in the way they lived, everything is easier. Likewise, people from abroad must learn our customs. They represent a considerable group within the neighborhood because, given that the leases are cheap, people who migrate from other countries are located in these spaces.

How was the process of rapprochement during the Pilot Cities Program?

Sincerely, our plans have been working regardless of what happened with Pilot Cities. [The program] saw our development and the projection that was being handled.

Specifically, what project did you develop?

Some time ago, we had raised the initiative to make some murals and we started to ask for permissions to the Direction of Historic Areas. We made a draft of the project, but there was no political will. We are convinced that it is good that historic and patrimonial areas protect the patrimony of the city, but it is important to open minds in order to understand that certain changes must be made to project ourselves into the future. I understand there are certain houses that should be maintained because they are part of the cultural heritage of the city, but if the project is to change the house to serve a future project, that must be done. However, if there is no political will, it does not work.

In April 2016, an architect who came to live in the neighborhood proposed the idea and that there is this general perception that in this neighborhood there is no professional support. We understood that they were not one or two, but several that could contribute

to change, that is why we always try to listen to the initiatives of everyone in the area. The places that were meant to be intervened were: El Rollo, Plaza del Rollo, La Virgen, up to [Calle] Padre Aguirre. The initial idea was to do something similar to what happened in Brussels, to catch visitors' attention with something out of the ordinary. She had a very different and interesting conception because she wanted to try to mix and merge that reality with our environment. However, this approach was not taken into account it did not project our reality

And your identity was not being reflected, was it?

Despite being striking, it did not reflect our identity. However, the project was later intended to recover the history of the neighborhood, in addition to its intangible heritage. We had a good relationship with Councilor Monserrath Tello but at the beginning she did not understand what was the point of the project, nor our attitudes towards the LGBTI group. We are not against them but against their attitudes, many of them lived in these places, generated problems, visually the difference was noticed. You can live with people, as long as they respect each other, but here there was no respect. We started to press this issue but we had problems with Monse because she thought we were extremely conservative and we wanted to finish with the members of this community. That was not the reality but it delayed the execution of the project and after a while, Pilot Cities appeared.

So, the proposal that you pointed out did not come to fruition?

It was not finalized, I was waiting the approval of the Director of Historical Areas, who is a very capable person but unfortunately did not have the same vision of the future that we had. It did not interest him and this caused him inconvenience because he had to use his staff. Then Pilot Cities appeared, but it is necessary to point out that our projects were not born in Pilot Cities but they came from before. This program what he did was to support us and suggest us to do a curatorship, besides asking people what they want. One of our fears is that the murals are scratched or destroyed, but we understood that if they feel related, they will take care of it and that is where the theme of the discussion started, which was the idea of Andrea Malquin.

Was there any resistance or lack of interest?

At first, resistance was demonstrated by the neighbors because the other committees took advantage of them. The previous committees appeared in political season, convinced people of many things, offered them a lot of things and then they forgot them and left them by their own. They used us, they assaulted us and violated our houses. Changing that reality involved working with people who do not need money or jobs, because the old committee came to meetings with the authorities to get a job. When you invite people who were deceived before to meetings, they do not believe you and they do not accept your invitations. However, in certain cases homeowners oblige their tenants to assist.

We never asked for money, and we looked for solutions that, although they were small, showed people that they can change. After the first meetings, which were attended by few people, we made an agreement with the Salesian University to carry out interviews asking what people need. Regarding the question about their perception of the old committee, only 20% said they knew the committee. People felt angry because the committee used to choose the same representatives, who were dedicated to find job for themselves and their families. We have tried to avoid this to the fullest. We are already three years in the administration and we have not tried to convince people that things have changed because they have changed so much that they are clearly visible and we do not need to tell them so. The people who come to the meetings currently do so because they see a new reality.

The next thing is to add more people. We have ladies who do not get along with their neighbors because their grandparents once quarreled with each other and they followed the routine and maybe they do not know why they do not get along. To solve this we talk to the Directorate of Tourism and the EMAC to make a contest, of what? Of plants, why plants? I'll be honest, I did not support this initiative just to make the neighborhood look beautiful, I had in mind the fact that if I have a plant and it is pretty, my neighbor will ask me for it. Likewise, there would be small courses and trainings in which all the neighbors are bound to be and they will have to talk. You are getting to the point, in

which although you are not dominating, or forcing them, you create the ideal place for relationship to be made between people who did not know each other before. Another point that needs to be stressed is that plants are something you can have in your house, plants are yours and that nobody can steal them from you, nobody can climb and scratch, hurt you, or break your plants. People are getting more involved and begin to show that they are gentiles. This type of things adds up, and although it seems small when Pilot Cities arrived, we had already advanced a lot on this subject.

From your point of view, what changes have you perceived with the murals, do you think the neighborhood is less insecure? To what extent did culture contribute to social cohesion and resilience within the neighborhood?

The events we do, such as the inauguration of the murals or the festivities of the Virgen de la Merced, last until 11 at night and end. There is no liquor and you have a policeman everywhere. In this way, events that are uncomfortable for people that affect the living of the residents of the neighborhood are generated and you begin to generate change in that sense.

When the children arrived to paint the murals, we were afraid of the problems that could be presented to the children, we thought: Would the artists be uncomfortable while being here? Or would the scaffolding be stolen? None of this happened; instead there was a situation of respect. None of the boys had problems. The scaffolding was not stolen and neither the paintings. Before the murals there was another project done with the municipality, which included painting the facades of the houses, since they were full of tags. We must consider that there are no strong laws so that those people who are damaging the city, have the obligation to reverse what they did, painting the city. That would make it change. Sadly, unless we have good councilors, the appropriate laws will not be generated. We asked ourselves: what should we do? We needed to improve the appearance of the neighborhood because the festivities of the Virgen de la Merced were approaching. We wanted to clean the walls of the houses, or at least a small space of them. Now you go through the houses and most of them are painted, but at certain time

they were [full] of tags. The homeowners did not get involved because they said: If I paint my house, someone will damage it again? I'm going to spend money in vain.

However, we started to press a bit and what we did was to request the support of the municipality to paint the walls that were tagged. We had the support of a very capable person from the municipality and he said: what do you think if we paint all the houses and I can bring some paint, we mix them, we can also ask the owner of the house for some paint. I will give the workers, and in that way we started the project of painting all the houses. People said: but they will charge me the costs later, and we said: no, you have the workforce, you have everything, and you just have to give us the paint. When explaining the dynamics, people were very grateful and participated even more.

Indeed, they are things that make you think more. They do not charge you, things improve, and there are courses and other activities like never before. For a long time, they were taught that something bad had to happen to them: someone has to charge you or something bad will happen to you; however, with everything we have done people say: no, it's nice, why should I hurt?

Returning to the theme of activities such as murals, and relating it to what is cultural identity, to what extent do you feel that this has contributed to social cohesion and resilience within the neighborhood? We already talked a little about the fact that the neighbors already know each other, but more thoroughly, what changes have been generated?

After people saw the changes, they went to the *tertulia* and that day people felt special because they saw older people accompanying and telling stories they heard at some point in their lives. In this gathering people talked, some of them told a lot of stories and there were others who complemented it. People realized they have things in common and this generated the possibility of talking later, of seeing themselves in the street and say hello.

Do you consider that there are other factors that have been decisive in the improvement of the neighborhood? Andrea mentioned that the city guard has been one of them. What do you think?

Well, we made the murals, we painted the houses and then the artist Vera Primavera made a mural. People were reluctant about the snake that was represented in the latter, but when they knew it was based on a poem by Mary Coryle, a better reaction to it. The people of the street Rafael María Arízaga were happy with the appearance of the street, but the people in the side streets expressed disgust when they said that only that street was intervened and that the other places did not.

When I started to do things and I speak to you from my personal point of view because people talk about me punctually, they said: you are trying to fix things on your block only because you live there. In response to this, I tried to prove the opposite and started adding blocks and neighborhoods. In parallel, we were managing security issues. The police that you are taught to attend normally is the 911. They ask you the place where the crime is being committed and they contact someone within your sector, your area, the north or south circuit, and this person will contact a police nearby. Until that happens, 5 minutes pass and that's not fast enough. That is the reason why we began to analyze what we can do as owners of the house and inhabitants of this place. First we needed a change of the policemen but how do you make the corrupt policeman, who does not want to work or who does not want to accomplish their schedules, to work better? How do you do it if you're not their boss? We have been working to get the attention of the heads.

Managing conflicts is extremely difficult, being able to use the right words is very complicated, but we have been able to do it, starting with the fact that if you have a meeting with someone you should demand punctuality and respect. Maybe that's why I do not have a good relationship with directors who do not like to work, but what a shame, they work for us. It is hard to say it but unfortunately the public servant does not understand what they must do.

As a response for the security issue, we created a community chat so there is no longer the need of a policeman in each corner. Initially, the police created the chat and every time the police in charge was changed. The problem was that we did not know if that policeman is an honest person. That is why we made that a representative of the neighborhood handled the community chat. That person will be responsible for adding or not the cops to it. Only those in which he trusts and have shown that they give security to the zone are in this chat.

The chat is handled in this way because sometimes when a photo of an irregularity in the neighborhood was sent, the delinquent immediately threatened the homeowner and the homeowner felt threatened and did not want to be part of the group. However, when you give them the assurance that there is a person who is concerned about them, they feel more included and without fear of being attacked by someone.

After the activities that have been carried out, what are the main problems that persist in the neighborhood?

It will always be the insecurity and drug trafficking that occurs in some schools of the area like: Manuel J. Calle, Zoila Esperanza Palacios, Julio María Matovelle. This is related to organized crime groups.

To control this situation we have an intelligence group that watches the places through cameras. This means that criminals no longer go to these spaces because they are being observed and cannot do anything. However, this does not solve the situation at all. We are always going to have that problem, and it will always represent an inconvenience. Another crucial point is the fact that if there is no political will, they will totally forget you. Something that should be understood is that the authorities are used to joining you to their political groups in order to guarantee you support. If you do not do it, they forget you and leave you aside.

In the long term, do you consider it sustainable?

The next thing is to bring public offices to our zone. Other countries have done it. You do not have to invent anything; you just have to learn from others. This is what Pilot Cities do, it learns from other cities.

In other countries, it has been decided to place public offices in areas that were considered unsafe in order to force people to move to these places. This make the municipality to get more effective security and it makes the criminals no longer feel comfortable going to those places. In our case, we already had a local Farmasol, a barracks of the City Guard and a police camper.

And what about cultural activities?

Gerardo has kept doing activities all the time. Last year we made a fashion show and although I was very skeptical about it, since fashion shows usually take place in locations different to the one we have, Gerardo managed to make it and invited the Queen of Cuenca, Pamela. A model said: we cannot walk outside, it's impossible. However, the Queen of Cuenca said that she finds it spectacular because in Milan there is something similar and that the inclination does not matter. In November we will repeat it. Saying that you did something of this nature in El Vecino is incredible and although there are people who think that there were delinquents stalking, this was not the case because these kinds of cultural events are boring to them and they do not go. Likewise, bingos are played with artistic performances of the Polyphonic Quintet.

Appendix D: Focus Group

Location: Economuseo of paquilla straw hat.

Date: October 27, 2018.

Moderator: First of all I want to thank you for your time and collaboration in the realization of this focus group. My name is Luz Vilela, student of the International Studies career at the University of Azuay and the reason of this meeting is to know your perception and opinion about the Pilot Cities Program, more specifically about the role of culture as the fourth pillar of development sustainable, which is what this program promotes.

I would like to ask you to feel free to express your opinions and that we should respect the participation of everyone so that the dialogue is fluid and constructive. It is also necessary to clarify that all the information that you provide me will be used only for academic purposes and that the audio recording will be only for my record.

To start, I would like everyone to introduce themselves, saying the name by the one you like to be called, your age and what are you currently doing.

Paula: My name is Paula García. I am 14 years old and I am a student.

Sarah: Sarah Barriga. I am a housewife, retired and now I am doing housework at home.

Melina: Melina Muñoz, 20 years old, student.

Ricardo: Ricardo Zea, 20 years old, student.

Leonor: Leonor Chaca seamstress 72 years.

Moderator: In a general way, as residents of El Vecino what are the problems that you consider as more frequent?

Everyone says in chorus: insecurity.

Moderator: Maybe is there any experience or a concrete case that you want to share? Because talking about insecurity is a very broad topic.

Ricardo: Crime, prostitution and transsexuals located on Federico Guerrero Street.

Moderator: Jorge Herrera told me that micro-trafficking is another bit trouble in here.

All affirm.

Moderator: Anyone who wants to share some experience? Have you been assaulted or something like that?

Leonor: Yes, twice. As I said, I have my workshop and one day a man comes in and tells me not to lock the door and immediately enters and even I tell him to leave, he took my cell phone. I have to enter the clientele to measure them and on that occasion I was charging my cell phone and when I realized it, I only saw the case of my phone. But what can I do? It concerns me not knowing what to do. Before I came, I saw this man near my house. On Sunday he said to me: Neighbor, good morning! And how do I ask him for my cellphone? Is he going to return it to me? No! And I bet you that if I denounce him, it's his word against mine. So ... (sighs) I have to learn to live with that. I have always lived in this neighborhood and this has always existed. As a believer that I am, I hope that God continues to help me and that he feed those bums, there is nothing else I can do. I'm telling you, that right now he stayed there, and I cannot do anything because the street is free. I recently learned that the police have collaborated to recover stolen objects but I do not have a conventional telephone and they did not inform me that they have been investigating.

Moderator: Have you always lived here?

All: Yes

Moderator: Do you think the situation has improved with the placement of the city guard?

Leonor: Yes, a little, but usually they are inside office.

Sarah: Only when they are called, they come to help. Yesterday I had a problem in my house. I live in Vargas Machuca Street and I saw that some persons get off a taxi with a bag full of beers; I think a dozen or something like that. Then, I thought they have already left, they were at the door of my house and they start drinking there. I said to myself: what do I do? I did not have my cell phone because it was damaged. I mean, what can I do to make them leave? Because they will start urinating and doing other things in my door. I went out, locked my house, went to Johnny Merchan's place and tell him: do me a favor, call the police, there are these people at the door of my house and they are drinking beer. He answered me: I'll do it right now neighbor, I'm calling. After ten minutes, 5 motorized arrived and made them leave. However, it took about 30 minutes and I was really scared. In the mornings, I am alone in the house and sometimes I feel scared. Thanks God, the authorities came immediately and made them leave.

Moderator: Jorge told me that you have a community chat to be aware of these things, does it work?

All: Yes.

Moderator: You guys that know more about social networks and so on, do you actively participate in the group?

Melina: I'm not in the group, my daddy is in it; but a month ago it was 6 in the morning and there were already 7 or 8 people on the front of my house and I had to go to class. I called ECU911 and they told me that they were going to call a cop but they never called. I called again and they said: yes they are already going and they never arrived and I had to go to college as soon as possible. I picked up dad's cell phone and wrote to that chat and in less than two minutes the cops arrived.

Moderator: So, is it efficient?

All: Yes it is.

Melina: Because the ECU does not help, that chat is immediate.

Ricardo: Even though in the Federico Guerrero there is a camera, that it is supposed to record all the acts and immoral things that they are doing, these gentlemen do not feel affected. There is no longer how to combat this. Intendancies and the mayor have tried, and there is no way to deal with it.

Moderator: So, do you consider that there is no solution?

Ricardo: I live in Federico Guerrero Street, in front there is my parent's store and we are constantly afraid that thieves attack us. There is no way to deal with this situation; there is nothing we can do to fight against this type of people because we are afraid that they act against us. We cannot have total security. I know that they say that space is public but that does not mean that they can do immoral things. I think it is a point that must be taken into account.

Moderator: Well, changing a little bit of subject, are you familiar with the Pilot Cities program?

All: No.

Moderator: Pilot Cities is an international program that aims to make culture an axis of sustainable development since it traditionally included economic, social and environmental issues. This program seeks to incorporate culture into this model and improve people's life quality. However, I find it strange that you do not know about this because one of the projects was for El Vecino neighborhood and specifically the murals. Maybe with this background you will remember it.

Melina: Oh, yes.

Moderator: If you tell me you do not know anything about it, I imagine you did not participate in it because initially there were conversations to get the most representative characters from the area.

Melina: I think there was something like that. My dad is vice president of the neighborhood and he was part of the meetings to know the needs of the neighborhood and of the meetings about the murals. He spoke with some guys from college to ask

them for help. Moreover, he did the opening and tour of the murals and I think that's where they got the ideas to make the improvements in Rafael Street.

Leonor and Sarah: We knew about the murals but not about the name of the program, we gave support signatures.

Moderator: Now that you are already familiar with the program, did you attend to any of the meetings?

Ricardo, Sara and Leonor: No, we did not participate.

Moderator: Do you know someone who participated in the process of making the murals? Because they were done to rescue the historical memory of the neighborhood and have information about characters such as Mary Coryle and her brother, Rigoberto Cordero.

Leonor: Let's say the board is the one that is most involved and so when we have meetings they let us know.

Moderator: Have you ever been invited to meetings?

All: Yes, they have invited us but we do not usually participate.

Moderator: Do you feel that the murals represent the identity of the neighborhood?

Leonor: María la Guagua, Mary Coryle...

Moderator: Do you guys feel that the murals rescue the identity of the neighborhood or do you know about these characters?

Melina: We do not know who they are but it helped a lot.

Moderator: So, is it the older people who feel identified?

Leonor: Children and young people do not pay attention to it.

Moderator: Do you think that you do not know about this because you are not interested or because your parents have not told you about it?

Melina: They have never told us.

Ricardo: I do not think it is disinterest, as Melina says: they've never told us.

Leonor: The zone where you live seems to be not very old.

Ricardo: I live in Vega Muñoz Street and Federico Guerrero Street and I really do not know about the characters.

Moderator: And you Melina when you saw the finished murals, you had an idea of who they were?

Melina: No, no idea.

Moderator: You did not ask either?

Melina: No.

Leonor: María la Guagua.

Ricardo: Did she steal children?

Leonor: No, it was a "silly" that came from Azogues, and came to live in El Vecino. She used to carry a bundle of rags and said it was her baby.

Some people say she died and others that she is in an asylum. Professor Zoila Esperanza Palacios picked her up and took care of her. When she went out to tour the streets of the neighborhood, people shouted: María! And the baby? They wanted to pull the bundle of rags and Maria threw the stones she picked up from the street at them. There was the Pacharaco. Sarita, do not you remember the Pacharaco?

Sarah: Yes, of course.

Leonor: The military gave her boots and he liked to walk around the neighborhood. I think these people were crazy.

Moderator: Paula, did you know about the murals and the characters?

Paula: When I saw the finished murals I found out that these characters existed.

Moderator: Regarding the creation of the murals, do you think that the neighborhood has become more united?

Leonor: No. The truth is that they are there, they make the neighborhood beautiful but we do not join because some of the neighbors are not from here, they have arrived.

Sarah: They are new.

Leonor: They are from outside.

Leonor: They do not know anything, they do not want to get involved, and I can give you names. I have told them to come to the meetings and they say: No, I'm busy or whatever but not. Some have already died and their houses have been bought by others. Those who have come recently think: if I am fine, I do not care about the rest... When they robbed me inside my premises, a neighbor saw everything and did not do anything to stop the thief, I was told that they knew each other and he did not help me. In brief, every man for himself!

Moderator: They do not get involved as neighbors.

Melina: As they say, it's little cooperation from neighbors. Every month they are invited to the meetings and the same people comes, twelve people and the rest just complain and when they are told to go to meetings with representatives of the municipality, they refuse. They say: no, I do not want to; I have no time.

Moderator: Maybe it's because they do not feel part of the neighborhood.

Melina: No, it's just because they do not want to get involved.

Elizabeth joins.

Moderator: Good morning, can you please come so that we can meet you and participate in the dialogue? What is your name and what are you currently doing?

Elizabeth: My name is Elizabeth Bedaponte and I do not work for now.

Moderator: As a summary, we were talking about the problems of insecurity that were taking place in the neighborhood and also if they are familiarizing with the Pilot Cities program, which seeks to make culture the fourth axis of sustainable development in order to improve people's lives. As a result of this, murals were created in the Rafael María Arízaga Street and to continue with the conversation, do you know about the characters?

Elizabeth: I'm not from Cuenca; I have lived here for a year.

Moderator: I imagine you share the idea that the neighborhood is unsafe.

Elizabeth: Yes.

Moderator: Continuing with the idea of the neighborhood cohesion, they told me that people do not get involved. Have you participated in the assemblies that are done to communicate the activities and more?

Elizabeth: Yes.

Moderator: So, have you expressed your point of view and the concerns you have about the insecurity of the neighborhood in the meetings?

Elizabeth: Yes, but it has improved, in comparison to what it was before, it has improved a lot.

Moderator: If you have different opinions, it is better to contrast the ideas.

Sarah: In comparison to what the neighborhood used to be, it is not like that anymore, there is less insecurity, with the chat we have security, you communicate and the police are always collaborating.

Moderator: What has motivated the conservation of the murals?

Ricardo: Control, because if there was not control this the murals would be full of graffiti.

Moderator: Elizabeth, why do you think the murals are preserved?

Elizabeth: I think because of control.

Moderator: Generally speaking, do you think that the murals have contributed to the current state of the neighborhood?

Sara: Thanks to this Rafael Street is more beautiful and lighted, because before the street was too dark. Now with all these things, it looks pretty. Hoowever, there is still fear of going out. Thanks God, nothing has happened so far.

Moderator: What do you think Paulita?

Paula: Now you see people coming to see this, before they did not because they said that the neighborhood is dangerous, but now because of the murals there is more people here.

All: Yes

Elizabeth: There are always people asking what the murals mean.

Moderator: You say that criminal acts are committed in the same frequency, so it can be said that the murals have not helped either.

Ricardo: As I say, it's not just this street; there are other areas that have to be intervened.

Melina: If you eradicate insecurity from Rafael Street, it goes down to Tomás Ordóñez Street; if you remove it from Tomás Ordóñez Street, it goes to Vega Muñoz Street; if you reduce it in one place, it continues to spread to others because the fact that you eradicate it from one street does not mean it will be eliminated in everyplace. You see everything here beautiful but the streets below are still ugly. For the inhabitants of the Rafael it is beautiful and illuminated but for those who live below is still dangerous.

Moderator: Do you think it's like a make-up? Because for a moment everything is fine but then it goes to other areas.

Ricardo: One point that you should take into consideration is the connection with the terminal, this street connects directly to the terminal, they go up or down and since there is a very strong connection, there is delinquency.

Melina: The only culture you will see is crime and theft culture but maybe if the program would be implemented in other places that are dangerous, you could reduce insecurity.

Ricardo: When festivities in Cuenca start, all the Federico Street is full of transvestites and not just from Cuenca but from other cities and it's dangerous and even if the police tries to do something, they respond violently and do not respect the cameras. Culturally the neighborhood has a lot to improve.

Moderator: Anyone else who wants to contribute something?

Leonor: Is the church culture? Because we have the monument to the Virgin and that's why they made the park more beautiful and lit. I think that through the church and the priests the neighborhood is a little healthier or at least in the day they try to inculcate people values. We did a bingo to use that money on something but even the church is insecure because the priest put cameras. Insecurity is inevitable but we try to keep things easier with a kind of makeup. Security as make up because criminals run due to the fear they have. There is nothing else I can do, I have to say good morning to them and answer to their questions. 72 years that I have lives like that.

Sarah: It's better to be friend of them so that they do not harm us.

Leonor: That's why I live accustomed. The other day they told me: + Neighbor, lend me a ladder! -But I do not have. + You are in the church and you have to favor me ... They already use ideology with me. However, what they want to do is to go inside my house and stole something. We have to learn to live like this, we have no choice.

Appendix E: Photography of the focus group.

