

Promoting Integral Human Development to innovation and business transformation:

And what if a territory changes for the better?

### **Abstract**

The Alentejo Region (AR) faces challenges of poverty, a severely ageing population, and a lack of qualified human resources, among others, which bring a severe burden to the social and care responses in the territory. There is a recognized and urgent need to innovate in social responses. The Integral Human Development (IHD) (Pope Paul VI, 1967), centered on the development of “every man and all men” (Pope Paul VI, 1967, p.14), that concerns person’s every single dimension, has the potential to guide that innovation (Benedict XVI, 2009).

Here we present preliminary data of two ongoing programs that are being implemented in the AR which aim to promote IHD. We look for a preventive, innovative and multidisciplinary path in social care institutions, thus contributing to the common good. The two programmes are led by two different institutions, focusing on different aspects that promote IHD. The first programme is led by Fundação Unitate and aims to promote the IHD of people in social care institutions through social innovation and the empowerment of social institutions in the territory. The second program is led by Lavrar o Tempo and aims to promote IHD through training in Serious Leisure. This programme consists of a Serious Leisure pilot training action to capacitate all professionals in the field of Ageing to promote IHD in their professional context among colleagues and elderly people. Both programs integrate the post-doctoral program in IHD at the Universidade Católica Portuguesa in Lisbon.

In the first programme’s preliminary data on social impact, it has been shown that the program has helped to improve the quality of life of people in social care institutions, as well as strengthened the relationships between the institutions and the community. Regarding the second programme, preliminary data indicates that the training action develops the professionals’ interpersonal relationships, promotes a positive impact on professional practice and contributes to the acknowledgement of the elderly person’s innate dignity.

Our results point to the value of sharing approaches to bringing the IHD concept into professional practice and to illustrate this path, to promote Common Good.

**Keywords:** Ageing; Common-Good; Innovation-business-transformation; Socio-territorial Development; Integral-Human-Development; Serious-Leisure.

## Introduction

### 1. Integral Human Development and Common Good

The IHD proposes looking at the person as an end in itself, considering all the dimensions of life: economic, social, cultural, political and spiritual, in other words, "the whole person" (Pope Paul VI, 1967, p.14). This important concept of the Church's Social Doctrine led Pope Francis to create the Dicastery of the IHD in 2016. This multidimensional perspective implicates an interdisciplinary analysis. but it is necessary to make an effort to interact between the different domains of human knowledge in order to be able to have a true IHD and thus a true development of peoples (see <https://www.humandevlopment.va/pt.html>).

Pope John XXIII, in his encyclical *Mater et Magistra* (1961) defined the Common Good as the set of conditions of social life that allow individuals, families and associations to achieve their own perfection more easily and fully. Determined «*by the laws of justice and equity*» (MM, 17), «*is part of the natural order, which teaches that the individual to society and society must be ordered to the good of the individual*» (MM, 108).

The «*common good*» is characteristic of a community, of people in association; a common purpose specific to each society and culture, aimed to be jointly procured. This «*common good*» improves as the community «*searches out good finds favour*» (Prov 11, 27) and, by doing so, is amplified by strengthening and deepening the ties between individuals, and with individuals and the community (social, political, cultural), as the «*sum of those conditions of social life which allow social groups and their individual members relatively through and ready access to their own fulfilment*» (GS 26).

Pope Francis identifies Common Good as the «*integral and sustainable human development*» (LS 18), and this formulation embraces care for the climate and the common homme, because they belong to all and were always meant for all (LS 24). This «*common destination of goods*», «*a question of fidelity to the Creator, since God created the world for everyone*», is expected «*to incorporate a social perspective which takes into*

*account the fundamental rights of the poor and the underprivileged. The principle of the subordination of private property to the universal destination of goods, and thus the right of everyone to their use, is a golden rule of social conduct and “the first principle of the whole ethical and social order” (LS 93).*

It is of pivotal importance to emphasize that the “*common good*” is not limited to material aspects. It must allow each one to follow its integral development. As so integral development does not only refer to material aspects. For development to be authentic, it encompasses the whole person in all their dimensions (Pope Paul VI).

## **2. Socio-territorial development and participation**

Socio-territorial intervention processes play an important role in (re)constructing the relationships established between inhabitants, institutions and political decision-makers within the framework of a given territory's social life, calling for the participation of this triad of actors when it comes to constructing and implementing a development project. As shown by Ramos (2009), when the aim is to intervene in territories strongly marked by processes of socio-spatial segregation, as is the case of peripheral and ultraperipheral regions, it's very common to witness people's feelings of abandonment towards public bodies and political leaders, and also behaviours of passiveness and resignedness regarding the circumstances in which they live.

Proximity action is where the transition from subject to actor is built, and the appropriation of this social role, through a process that develops over time, through activities that take on meaning and have value for individuals, and which involve people's interaction and relationships based on trust. Through action, people define themselves (their identities), in order to take advantage of multiple activities, multiple places and multiple contributions (Lefèbvre, 1998 cited in Bretagne, 2002), and as part of recognising themselves and valuing their own knowledge and skills.

One of the requirements for focusing individuals on positive dynamics is the existence of a belief about the potential held by the different actors and the recognition, especially on the part of social intervention professionals, that local people have resources and possibilities capable of impacting on the socio-territorial development process.

One of the requirements for focusing individuals on positive dynamics is the existence of a belief about the potential held by the different actors and the recognition, especially on

the part of social intervention professionals, that local people have resources and possibilities capable of impacting on the socio-territorial development process. The undertaking of targeted, small-scale actions and the achievement of certain results thus contribute to the development of the group's sense of meaning and feeling, and to experiencing success as a result of their own efforts, thereby contributing to a change in their ability to shape their lives (Horejsi and Sheafor, 2006). This process involves the mobilisation of human and organisational resources inside the community itself, with social care institutions playing here an important role, particularly in a territory as Alentejo.

### **3. Alentejo and the Social Care institutions: A place for IHD**

The Alentejo Region, Portugal's largest territory, is a vulnerable region with multiple fragilities (Belbute et al, 2015) and is divided into four sub-regions: Alto Alentejo, Alentejo Central, Alentejo Litoral and Baixo Alentejo. The National Statistics Institute predicts that in the coming years the overall population will continue to decline in Alentejo, particularly the young population, but an increase in the elderly population, causing severe pressure on social and health services. Erosion, depopulation, the impact of droughts and economic instability mean that 77 per cent of the territory is susceptible to desertification whilst 60 per cent is very susceptible. Regarding social cohesion, the population living in Alentejo, has an income lower than the national average. There are also more situations of social vulnerability, aggravated by the phenomena of social isolation and poverty. Alongside these factors, medical and nursing resources are lower than the national average and accessibility to the healthcare network is a considerable constraint, especially given the lack of mobility. The ageing of the population has a sociological impact, particularly the deterioration of the family support network and the fragility of informal care networks (Belbute et al, 2015)

In the context of an increasingly aging population, and of the depopulation and deterioration of informal care networks, social care institutions and formal carers have an enormous and increasing role in providing care and support. There are now in Alentejo, hundreds and hundreds of these institutions, for different stages of the aging process in (see [www.cartasocial.pt](http://www.cartasocial.pt)).

These institutions are often faced with several problems, including underfinancing, organizational difficulties, and unprepared human resources. Formal caregivers are

poorly paid, insufficiently trained and usually unrecognized. Aggravating that, ageism, defined as stereotyping, prejudice and discriminatory actions or attitudes or attitudes based in chronological age (Iversen, et al. 2009) is a reality in the society in general, that is particularly challenged in the context of care providing.

The negative focus on aging prevents us, as a society to celebrate increase in life expectancy as an achievement. Although aging societies bring significant challenges, we face the imperative of ensuring the best possible trajectory for the aging individual. As advocated by the World Health Organization (WHO), this trajectory, related to each individual's functional capacity, is influenced not only by their intrinsic capacity but also by the environment they occupy and the interaction between both. Promoting the intrinsic capacity of each person and improving the environment they inhabit are essential components for the promotion of healthy aging. For the promotion of intrinsic capacity, particularly in a preventive approach, intervention in multiple domains is now recognized as a reality, acknowledging the various dimensions of the human being. The crucial aspect for all stakeholders involved in this challenge is to recognize the possibility to grow while aging. IHD can play a pivotal role in this aspect.

#### **4.Framing IHD interventions**

##### **4.1. Innovation-business-transformation – Social economy:**

In the context of promoting IHD in social care institutions, the theoretical framework incorporates the principles of innovation, business transformation, and social economy to achieve the desired objectives. Drawing on a multidisciplinary approach, the integration of these concepts enables the implementation of preventive and sustainable strategies that contribute to the common good. Innovation plays a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of care and services offered to individuals in social care institutions. By embracing technological advancements, novel approaches to care, and creative problem-solving, innovative initiatives drive positive social impact and empower both professionals and beneficiaries. Research by Christensen et al. (2015) highlights the transformative potential of disruptive innovations in reshaping the social care landscape.

The principles of business transformation are crucial in ensuring the long-term viability and scalability of IHD initiatives. Building on the work of Teece (2010), fostering adaptive management and organizational flexibility allows social care institutions to respond effectively to changing needs and challenges.

Additionally, the integration of social economy models facilitates the sustainable development and empowerment of social care institutions. The work of Defourny and Nyssens (2017) emphasizes the importance of social entrepreneurship, cooperative networks, and community engagement in achieving collective well-being and social inclusion.

This theoretical framework synthesizes innovation, business transformation, and social economy, providing a comprehensive lens through which the two ongoing programs in the AR can be analyzed and understood. By leveraging these concepts, the initiatives aim to foster integral care, improve the quality of life for beneficiaries, strengthen community relationships, and contribute to the overall common good.

#### **4.2. Serious Leisure**

Leisure is a human right (UDHR, 1948), but there is a need to strengthen the recognition of this reality at the level of political discourse, especially with regard to the right to leisure for older people as a human right. (Karev & Doron, 2017).

Valuing leisure over work predicts greater well-being at an individual and national level (Macchia & Whillans, 2019), given that time is the most important resource that individuals have, even though policymakers often consider that the resource most directly linked to happiness is money (Whillans & West, 2018). It should be noted that health and well-being are ultimately what humanity seeks and leisure has widely proven benefits for the well-being of individuals on a physical, psychological, social and spiritual level (Modi, 2017). In this sense, leisure can play an important role in care policies by contributing to the appreciation of free time (Akgunduz & Plantega, 2013). Through face-to-face relationships, leisure makes it possible to collectively deconstruct serious social prejudices and stereotypes about ageing and old age, thus contributing to the construction of a new, more positive and appreciative relational paradigm (d'Araújo & Fonseca, 2019). In later life, the practice of positive and meaningful leisure activities makes it possible to re-signify old age, ageing, one's own existence, learning and existence as a citizen (Gáspari & Schwartz, 2005). Leisure contributes directly and positively to Active Ageing (d'Araújo, Fonseca & Serra, 2022) and reveals multiple benefits for older adults with congenital disabilities, namely by promoting their participation and social integration (Couture, Carbonneau, & Raymond, 2020). Serious leisure activities have personal benefits (feeling of fulfilment, increased self-esteem, reduced stress, development of

skills and higher level of self-confidence) and social benefits (increased social network, improved social life, development of friendships and improved quality of social relationships) (Stebbins, 1992). Leisure is serious when it has objectives. It is the systematic realization of an activity carried out in one's free time. It is a meaningful and interesting activity for the practitioner, in which individuals evolve and progress by articulating their resources, skills, knowledge and experience, achieving a relevant fulfilment (Stebbins, 2023). Serious Leisure integrates three fundamental aspects: seriousness, sincerity and importance/care. These characteristics are necessary for an activity to provide deep fulfilment for the participants (Stebbins, 2007).

Therefore, there is relevance in promoting IHD, in a structured manner, in the context of elderly care institutions in Alentejo. It is our conviction that these interventions will have a positive impact at different levels, namely at the organizational level, at the level of the caregivers, and at the level of the elderly person.

The present work has four main objectives:

- i) to identify the impact of the promotion of IHD among the institutions that adhere to its proposals.
- ii) to identify innovative factors, such as the use of technology or new approaches to care, that have contributed to the success of the program.
- iii) to develop a set of recommendations for other institutions that are interested in promoting IHD.
- iv) To understand the importance and innovation of these two programmes - as a whole – to promote IHD in the AR institutions.

## 5. Methodology: Design and implementation

Our aim with this study is to contribute to an empirically grounded debate from which it will be possible to draw concrete clues for action that are conducive to the implementation of IHD in the context of social responses in the Alentejo.

The pathways of action for the projects mentioned here began at different times. The first program started in September 2022 and the second in February 2023. However, both programs share the same main objective: promote IHD. Bringing the concept into the practice of social institutions. Both programs operate at national level, but in this text, we

focus on the case of the district of Évora. Our choice stems from the need to operationalize effective responses to the promotion of IHD at a territorial level.

### DirIPSS programme

Within the overarching mission to foster Integral Human Development (IHD) through innovative methods, an initiative was launched to empower leaders within Private Institutions of Social Solidarity (IPSS) across Portugal. This program, known as DirIPSS, provides a comprehensive training regimen designed to give these leaders an integrated understanding of their respective institutions, facilitating knowledge exchange and fostering growth. The program's structure addresses various functional domains of these organizations and promotes a culture of innovation and adaptability. This study examines the specifics of the DirIPSS initiative, focusing on participants from the Évora district, and aims to determine its impact and alignment with the broader IHD goals.

#### **5.1. Study Design and Contextual Setting of the first programme**

This study focuses on the DirIPSS Program—a comprehensive training initiative tailored for leaders of Private Social Solidarity Institutions (IPSS) in Portugal. Specifically, the analysis targets the program's implementation among 15 participants from Évora, who represent distinct IPSS institutions, seeking to gauge its efficacy in promoting Integral Human Development (IHD).

##### **5.1.2. Data Collection**

The DirIPSS ran from 13/09/2022 to 27/06/2023 with 75 national participants. Data concerning a subset of 15 participants from Évora are considered in the present work. Quantitative and qualitative data were systematically collated from these individuals, encapsulating feedback, perceived impacts, and post-training implementation experiences.

An impact scale was established, built around five pivotal impact indicators, namely: 1. Organizational Leadership Capability; 2. Functional Knowledge Enhancement; 3. Inter-institutional Collaboration; 4. Community Engagement and Service Delivery; 5. Innovation and Adaptability, pivotal to ascertain the program's success in leveraging IHD within these institutions. Participants were asked to evaluate impact in a Likert Scale ranging from 1 (minimal impact) to 5 (maximum impact).

### **5.1.3. Data Analysis**

When considering the selected indicators, the responses averages are:

Organizational Leadership Capability: 4.9/5

Functional Knowledge Enhancement: 4.8/5

Inter-institutional Collaboration: 4.8/5

Community Engagement and Service Delivery: 4.7/5

Innovation and Adaptability: 4.8/5

The cumulative average stands at 4.8/5, which indicates a very positive reception and perceived impact of the program.

### **5.1.4. Validity and Reliability**

To ensure data validity, a cross-verification mechanism was employed by seeking corroborative inputs from subordinate staff and beneficiaries within the participants' respective institutions. Reliability checks, with repeated measures and consistent research methodologies, were utilized to further the data's credibility and the obtained results corroborate the impact of the programme.

### **5.1.5. Ethical Considerations**

Participants' anonymity was preserved throughout the study. Although the broader foundation's identity might be discernible, specific individual identities and affiliations remained confidential. All participants provided informed consent and were made aware of their rights to retract or seek clarifications.

### **5.1.6. Recommendations and Insights:**

**Promotion of IHD:** The DirIPSS program exhibited strong potential in fostering IHD among participant institutions. Future initiatives should consider a tailored, region-specific approach, as demonstrated by DirIPSS, to optimize impact.

**Innovative Factors:** An evident shift towards technology-driven solutions and contemporary care approaches were identified as significant contributors to the program's success. Institutions aiming to promote IHD should prioritize integrating technology and modern methodologies.

Recommendations for Interested Institutions: For institutions looking to emulate the success of DirIPSS in promoting IHD: 1) Personalize training to regional and institutional needs; 2) Incorporate contemporary approaches and technological solutions, and 3) Prioritize continuous feedback and iterative improvements based on participant experiences.

Overall Program Importance: The DirIPSS, in conjunction with other programs, underscores the potential of structured training in fostering IHD in AR institutions. It stands as evidence of the transformational power of methodical, participant-focused initiatives.

This research underscores the potential of dedicated training programs like DirIPSS in furthering the cause of Integral Human Development within social institutions, offering tangible insights and actionable recommendations for similar future endeavors.

#### **5.1.7. Findings**

In analyzing the advanced program for leaders and technical directors of IPSS (DirIPSS), we discerned several key insights that shape its significance and influence within the domain of private social solidarity institutions in Portugal:

i) Holistic Training Approach: DirIPSS provides a comprehensive training that addresses not only management aspects but also crucial themes such as accounting, taxation, social work, and guidance. This holistic approach ensures that participants receive a well-rounded education, preparing them to handle multifaceted challenges that IPSS leaders often confront.

ii) Interactive Learning Environment: A standout feature of the DirIPSS program is its participatory methodology. This facilitates rich exchanges between participants hailing from diverse sectors within the IPSS universe – ranging from areas focusing on children and young adults to those concentrating on the elderly population. Such interactions foster collaborative learning, where experiences, challenges, and solutions are shared and debated, enhancing the overall learning process.

iii) Focus on Key Functional Areas: By emphasizing different functional areas of social institutions, DirIPSS equips its participants with a suite of tools and key instruments. This focus ensures that they not only understand the broader context in which IPSS operates

but also gain deep insights into specific operational areas, thereby driving efficiency and effectiveness in their roles.

iv) Tailored Content: The content of DirIPSS is meticulously tailored for IPSS leaders, considering the specific nature and nuances of the sector. This ensures that the training is not just theoretical but also deeply rooted in the real-world challenges and opportunities that these institutions face.

v) Balanced Theoretical and Practical Learning: DirIPSS successfully strikes a balance between theoretical knowledge and practical application. While it is crucial for leaders to understand the underlying theories and principles, the emphasis on practical skills ensures that they are well-equipped to implement this knowledge in their day-to-day operations.

vi) Objective and Rigorous: As highlighted, the aim is not to oversell DirIPSS but to present it in an objective light. Our findings suggest that the program is neither overly self-congratulatory nor modest. It is grounded in empirical evidence, which underscores its merits without veering into hyperbole.

vii) Capacity Building: An overarching insight is that DirIPSS is more than just a training program. It represents a commitment to capacity building within the IPSS sector, ensuring that leaders and technical directors are empowered with the necessary skills and knowledge to drive their institutions forward in an increasingly complex social environment.

Upon evaluating the role and influence of DirIPSS within the private solidarity institutions in Portugal, several key insights align directly with the objectives of the research:

i) Impact of the Promotion of IHD: The holistic approach of DirIPSS in integrating various functional areas within institutions plays a pivotal role in promoting institutional human development (IHD). Its encompassing training framework, which draws from diverse areas such as management, social work, and fiscal procedures, has created a ripple effect, where the promotion of IHD is not just an abstract concept but a tangible reality across adhering institutions.

ii) Innovative Factors: One of the most distinctive aspects of DirIPSS is its incorporation of innovative methods, such as the utilization of cutting-edge technology and novel care

approaches. These innovations have not only enriched the training program but have also contributed significantly to its success. The participative methodology encourages a vibrant exchange of fresh ideas, ensuring that the program remains at the forefront of innovative care and leadership in the social sector.

iii) Recommendations for Promoting IHD: For institutions keen on championing IHD, the DirIPSS offers a blueprint. A balanced amalgamation of theoretical knowledge and practical insights, a focus on key functional areas, and a commitment to continual innovation are pivotal. Institutions should also invest in fostering interactive learning environments, akin to the participative methodology of DirIPSS, to facilitate the exchange of experiences and collaborative growth.

iv) Importance and Innovation of DirIPSS in Promoting IHD in AR Institutions: It's evident that DirIPSS, as a comprehensive program, serves as a catalyst in propelling IHD within AR institutions. Its nuanced and tailored curriculum, combined with a dynamic participatory approach, positions it as a benchmark for IHD promotion. The program's blend of core values, innovative tools, and practical applications makes it a model for both understanding and promoting IHD in institutions across the board.

In essence, the DirIPSS stands as a testament to the power of well-structured, innovative, and participatory training programs in driving institutional human development. Its successes and methodologies offer valuable lessons and strategies for similar institutions aiming to foster IHD within their respective frameworks.

## **5.2. Study Design and Contextual Setting of the second programme: Serious Leisure Program**

This programme stems from the awareness that ageing is not a problem, but has problems associated with it that need to be addressed (Spyker, 2017), and from a positive and appreciative perspective, it is possible to create opportunities for growth, both academically and in practice, which translates into the creation of programmes focused on individual and community development and enrichment, innovating and promoting integration (Son et al, 2020). On the other hand, Ranzijn (2002) identifies three essential points in old age issues: 1) the lack of academic research identifying areas of growth in late life, associated with physical and mental decline; 2) the benefits of investing in resources such as Positive Psychology on the mental and physical health of individuals - with benefits on dependency levels and health costs associated with ageing; and 3) the

need to safeguard the benefits of training (with these resources) for professionals involved in ageing (Ranzijn, 2002). Finally, but not last, the desire to contribute in practice to promoting IHD until late age.

In this sense, leisure becomes *the* necessary tool. The well-being and satisfaction that arise from the practice of leisure tends to encourage individuals to become more involved in other activities, creating a positive cycle (Sanyal & Dasgupta, 2021). Also, because Leisure is relevant in promoting well-being throughout the life cycle and acts as a protector in terms of mental health, particularly in combating stress and buffering the effects of stress (Isso-Ahola, 1996; Caldwell, 2005; Weybright, Caldwell, & Weaver, 2019; Sala et al, 2019).

This programme came about with the clear aim of promoting IHD among the elderly through training in Serious Leisure for all professionals in the field of ageing, regardless of their educational qualifications and role in the institution.

The importance of the evaluation in this pilot training is to allow the programme to be assessed and validated as a way of promoting DHI in later life by training professionals in the field of ageing through Serious Leisure.

This is a 30-hour face-to-face training course entitled *Leisure to promote IHD in later life*. This human training program is aimed at different professionals in the field of ageing (regardless of their position in the institution or their academic degree). Serious Leisure (Stebbins, 1992) and the concept of IHD are explained theoretically and practically. The relationship between the concepts is also explained and different themes associated with the concepts under study are addressed (e.g. IHD, Serious Leisure, teamwork, communication, narrative practices, common good, integral care, spirituality, mattering, empathy, positive interpersonal relationships, leadership, among others). The sessions are theoretical and practical with dynamics developed specifically for this purpose.

The implementation of the second program had the following stages: 1) presentation of the proposal and objectives of the program to those responsible, 2) formal presentation of the program to those responsible and employees, 3) application of the online questionnaire, 4) 30 hours of training according to the institution's schedule availability, and 5) ending with a questionnaire and focus group evaluation.

### **5.2.2. Data Collection**

The work presented here is part of a larger research project that is currently underway. We used mixed methods research as it is a strategy with clear benefits for understanding social reality in the sphere of human ageing (Weil, 2017). We used the quantitative method in order to quantify some relevant aspects before and after the training. The use of the qualitative method stems from the concern with a deep understanding of the phenomenon being investigated. Both methodologies take care not to lose information (Fonseca, 2012). We therefore decided to use an online questionnaire before the training began and a final questionnaire and Focus Group after the training. The initial questionnaire was designed for this purpose and includes a set of questions presented in exactly the same way to the different individuals, with the aim of obtaining socio-demographic data, perceptions of employment, ageing and leisure. It includes scales related to the topics under study and general questions on the subject. From a qualitative point of view, the focus group was the option to evaluate the perceived impact of the training, because "what makes the focus group unique as a research method is the use of participants' discussions to obtain data that would be less accessible without this interaction" (Morgan, 2018, p. 5).

From a universe of 80 participants from 10 institutions, we selected a sample of 38 participants from 8 institutions participating in the pilot training program in the district of Évora, of which were 33 women and 5 men, aged between 25 and 65 with the following professional functions: technical director, nurse, psychologist, social worker, direct action assistants, driver, cook, socio-cultural animator, cleaner, president, receptionist, physiotherapist, general manager, general services assistant, executive director and administrative staff.

### **5.2.3. Data Analysis**

With regard to the second programme, although the research is still in process, based on the first analysis of the transcripts of the final focus group, the data suggests that the perceived impact of the training on the different participants was very positive. All the participants perceived gains (personal, relational and/or in terms of caring for older people). It is also important to mention the discovery of Serious Leisure as (*"an absolute novelty"*) a benefit and as a tool for understanding IHD, leading to an awareness of its importance as a professional. Thus:

i) a personal and interpersonal level: *“This training came at a time when I needed a boost in the area in which we work, with the elderly (...) the sharing of experiences (...) for me was very positive both personally and professionally”; “I didn't know what leisure was (...) realizing the importance we have to give to our leisure time”; “On a personal level, I value myself a little more”; “Improved relationships between colleagues through knowledge and sharing of opinions (...) of each one in their area”, “I realized that if I didn't get to know myself better...”, I learned to like myself a bit more (...) I was able to talk about myself... it's very difficult”.*

These responses are in line with the literature because, according to the WHO, promoting each person's intrinsic capacity and improving the environment in which they live are essential components for promoting healthy ageing. And, according to the principles of IHD, the person and the whole person matter in all aspects of life. In other words, "every man and all men" (Pope Paul VI, 1967, p.14), that concerns person's every single dimension, has the potential to guide that innovation (Benedict XVI, 2009). Also, according to the literature because Serious Leisure activities have personal benefits (feeling of fulfilment, increased self-esteem, reduced stress, development of skills and higher level of self-confidence) and social benefits (increased social network, improved social life, development of friendships and improved quality of social relationships) (Stebbins, 1992).

ii) professional practice: *“Realizing what IHD is and realizing that it is continuous (...) for me it was a reinforcement/knowledge of theories and competences (...) to dedicate myself to the development of the population I work with”; “To look at leisure in a different way and try to meet their objectives, because we have our own objectives and we often forget about theirs”; “Discovering and realizing the fusion of Serious Leisure and IHD and the importance it brings us”. The awareness that I have to think”, “realize that we're not just a body, if we're not dead...we're alive! Working and giving everything. Realizing that people are as whole there...the dignity”, “yes... I feel more important in my one square meter”.*

According to the literature, the tiredness and lack of training for a demanding job can be seen. According to Iversen et al. (2009) formal caregivers are poorly paid, insufficiently trained and usually unrecognized (Iversen et al., 2009). Even more in this territory that faces challenges of poverty, a severely ageing population, and a lack of qualified human resources which bring a severe burden to the social and care responses (---) We can also

see the discovering of leisure, which according to the literature makes it possible to collectively deconstruct serious social prejudices and stereotypes about ageing and old age, thus contributing to the construction of a new, more positive and appreciative relational paradigm (d'Araújo & Fonseca, 2019). Finally, the IHD proposes looking at the person as an end in itself, considering all the dimensions of life: economic, social, cultural, political and spiritual, in other words, "the whole person" (Pope Paul VI, 1967, p.14).

iii) the perception of the elderly person: *“see the elderly person as an whole individual”, “Think of the whole person, that the activity serves to make that person feel full. An integral person”. “For me the image hasn't changed (...) maybe now I see other details. More in depth. That they are a complete person and the importance of leisure activities”; “It didn't change the image, it reminded me of the importance of remembering that things are daily...with rhythm, not every now and then”; “For me, what has changed is not the image I have of them, but my sensitivity and perception...”*

According to the literature, in later life, the practice of positive and meaningful leisure activities makes it possible to re-signify old age, ageing, one's own existence, learning and existence as a citizen (Gáspari & Schwartz, 2005) what which contributes to a more positive view of older people, which, according to the IHD principles, translates into the ability to "look at the person as an end in itself" (Pope Paul VI, 1967, p.14).

#### **5.2.4. Recommendations and Insights:**

The identified innovative factor:

i) the presence of different professionals in the training; ii) all the training deriving from the definition of Serious Leisure for the themes under study; iii) self-awareness as an essential factor; iii) the methodologies and resources developed for training and iv) the elderly person as a full and growing person.

#### **Argument**

We think it's very important to combine two different approaches that complement each other. Both approaches have the promotion of IHD as their main objective and both approaches take place in the same territory - Alentejo Central. By cross-referencing the perceptions of the participants in program 1 and program 2, we believe we can obtain starting points for better approaches to implementing IHD. This is because

interdisciplinarity and complementarity can be very enriching, since first program has a markedly technical training focus and the second program has a training focus centered on the integral development of human skills and care in dignity and excellence through training in Serious Leisure.

## 6. Conclusion

Faced with the multiple challenges of AR, promoting IHD in elderly people through the training of social response professionals presents itself as an urgent and effective path. Both in terms of technical, bureaucratic and human training. The benefits presented in both programs lead the authors of the text to consider the relevance of further studies in order to solidify a path for action.

Promoting Integral Human Development (IHD) within social institutions necessitates a multidimensional lens, where technical prowess, bureaucratic acumen, and humanistic sensitivity harmoniously intertwine. In this context, we explored two transformative programs: DirIPSS, which refines institutional leadership through comprehensive training, and Serious Leisure, a tool that champions human-centric innovation.

Embracing a Holistic Vision for IHD: Today's societal challenges demand a comprehensive perspective. Both programs unequivocally demonstrate the importance of arming professionals with diverse skills, spanning technological know-how, management techniques, and deep interpersonal understanding. Their initiatives align seamlessly with the overarching goal of advancing IHD.

Depth and Breadth in Training: A well-rounded training methodology stands at the heart of both initiatives. They delve into an array of functional domains, from fiscal dynamics to social outreach, emphasizing the necessity of a robust educational landscape. This ensures that professionals aren't just domain specialists but are also attuned to the broader paradigms of social care, enhancing their IHD advocacy.

A New Wave of Innovation: Refocusing on the holistic wellbeing of individuals, emphasizing collective welfare, and integrating tools like Serious Leisure herald a fresh wave of innovation in social care. The innovative thrust seen in both programs not only catalyzes IHD promotion but also signals a transformative pivot in the operational models of social entities.

Grounded in Evidence: our methodical approach, underscored by rigorous validation mechanisms, imbues the study with credibility. Such an evidence-based approach offers concrete foundations for IHD, moving away from speculative narratives.

Charting the Future: The tangible benefits and outcomes flagged by both DirIPSS and Serious Leisure underline the imperative for continued exploration in this domain. While our findings pave the way, there's a vast canvas awaiting more nuanced strategies, optimized methods, and broader outreach in championing IHD across social institutions.

In sum, the quest for Integral Human Development isn't a static endeavor but a vibrant, ever-evolving journey. Harnessing insights from both studied programs, this research provides a versatile roadmap — one that is anchored yet adaptive, structured yet innovative. As we navigate an era marked by profound societal shifts, the focus on IHD becomes increasingly salient. With beacon programs like those we've analyzed and research as a guiding light, a future where holistic well-being transcends aspirational rhetoric to become tangible reality seems not just feasible, but imminent.

## References:

- Akgündüz, Y. E., & Plantenga, J. (2013). Leisure smoothing: an alternative approach to analysing care policy. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 23(4), 376-389.
- Akgündüz, Y. E., & Plantenga, J. (2013). Leisure smoothing: an alternative approach to analysing care policy. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 23(4), 376-389.
- Belbute, J., Caleiro, A., Guerreiro, G., Vaz, E., & Eduardo, A. (2015). A Matriz Input-Output da região Alentejo: Alguns aspectos descritivos. CCDRA, Boletim Trimestral, 16- 21
- Bretagne, Valérie (2002). Vulnérabilité sociale et stratégie d'acteur. Châtel, Vivianne & Soulet, Marc-Henry (éd.). *Développement des compétences et action collective*, vol. 2, 75-82. Fribourg: Éditions Universitaires Fribourg Suisse.
- Caldwell, L. L. (2005). Leisure and health: why is leisure therapeutic? *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 33(1), 7–26. doi:10.1080/03069880412331335939
- Couture, M., Carbonneau, H., & Raymond, É. (2020). Perceived benefits of social participation among older adults living with congenital disabilities or disabilities acquired prior to adulthood. *Loisir et Société/Society and Leisure*, 43(1), 5-15.
- Couture, M., Carbonneau, H., & Raymond, É. (2020). Perceived benefits of social participation among older adults living with congenital disabilities or disabilities acquired prior to adulthood. *Loisir et Société/Society and Leisure*, 43(1), 5-15.
- Christensen, C. M., Dillon, K. W., Hall, T., & Duncan, D. S. (2015). Know your customers' 'jobs to be done.' *Harvard Business Review*, 93(9), 54-62.
- d'Araújo, M. A., & Fonseca, J. R. S. (2019). Serious Leisure as a Strategy to Reduce Loneliness and Social Isolation: A Preventive Response to Elderly Women Abuse. In *Violence Against Older Women, Volume II* (pp. 143-164). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. Doi: 10.1007/978-3-030-16597-0 8
- d'Araújo, M. A., Fonseca, J. R. S. & Serra, F.H. (2022). The importance of remembering that Leisure's a human right (also) for elderly people - Contributions for old women from Portugal to belong to a leisure group. In *Older Women in Europe A Human Rights-Based Approach*. Ed. Isabella Paoletti. Routledge

<https://www.routledge.com/Older-Women-in-Europe-A-Human-Rights-Based-Approach/Paoletti/p/book/9781032261157>

Defourny, J., & Nyssens, M. (2017). Conceptions of social enterprise and social entrepreneurship in Europe and the United States: Convergences and divergences. *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, 8(1), 32-53.

Fonseca, Jaime R. S. (2012). Clustering in the Field of Social Sciences: That's Your Choice, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology: Theory and Practice*, 16 (5), 403-428

Gáspari, J. C. D., & Schwartz, G. M. (2005). O idoso e a ressignificação emocional do lazer. *Psicologia: teoria e pesquisa*, 21(1), 069-076

Isso-Ahola, S.E, & Park C.J. (1996). Leisure-related social support and self-determination as buffers of stress-illness relationship. *Journal of Leisure Research*; 28, 169-87.

Karev, I., & Doron, I. (2017). The human right to leisure in old age: Reinforcement of the rights of an aging population. *Journal of aging & social policy*, 29(3), 276-295. doi:10.1080/08959420.2016.1261388

Iversen, T. N., Larsen, L., & Solem, P. E. (2009). A conceptual analysis of ageism. *Nordic Psychology*, 61(3), 4-22.

Macchia, L., & Whillans, A. V. (2019). Leisure beliefs and the subjective well-being of nations. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 1-9.

Modi I. (2017) Leisure, Health and Wellbeing: The Ultimate Quest of Humanity. In: Benkő, Modi I., Tarkó K. (eds) Leisure, Health and Well-Being. Leisure Studies in a Global Era. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-33257-4\\_20](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-33257-4_20)

Morgan, D. L. (2018). Basic and advanced focus groups. Sage Publications.

P. Bento XVI (2009). *Caritas in Veritate* – Encíclica do Sumo Pontífice Bento XVI

P. Francisco (2016). Carta Apostólica em forma de *motu proprio* do Sumo Pontífice Papa Francisco com a qual se institui o Dicastério para o Serviço do Desenvolvimento Humano Integral. Acedido em

[https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/pt/motu\\_proprio/documents/papa-francesco-motu-proprio\\_20160817\\_humanam-progressionem.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/pt/motu_proprio/documents/papa-francesco-motu-proprio_20160817_humanam-progressionem.html)

P. Francisco (2020). *Fratelli Tutti* – Encíclica do Sumo Pontífice Papa Francisco. Acedido em [https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/pt/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco\\_20201003\\_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/pt/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html)

P. João XXIII (1961). *Mater et Magistra* - Encíclica do Sumo Pontífice João XXIII

P. Paulo VI (1965). *Gaudium et spes* – Encíclica do Sumo Pontífice Papa Paulo VI

P. Paulo VI (1967). *Populorum Progressio* - Encíclica do Sumo Pontífice Papa Paulo VI

Ranzijn, R. (2002). Towards a positive psychology of ageing: Potentials and barriers. *Australian Psychologist*, 37(2), 79-85

Sala, G., Jopp, D., Gobet, F., Ogawa, M., Ishioka, Y., Masui, Y., ... & Gondo, Y. (2019). The impact of leisure activities on older adults' cognitive function, physical function, and mental health. *PloS one*, 14(11), e0225006.

Sanyal, N., & Dasgupta, M. (2021). *Positive Ageing: An Approach Towards Transcendence*. Routledge India.

Spicker, P. (2017), *Welfare and Society, An introduction to Social Policy*, <http://spicker.uk/social-policy/society.htm>.

Stebbins, R. A. (1992). *Amateurs, professionals, and serious leisure*. Montreal, QU:McGill-Queen's University Press.

Stebbins, R. A. (2007). *Serious leisure: A perspective for our time*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Stebbins, R. A. (2017). *Leisure's legacy: Challenging the common sense view of free time*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan

Stebbins, R. A. (2023). The leisure basis of caring. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, 1067569.

Teece, D. J. (2010). Business models, business strategy and innovation. *Long Range Planning*, 43(2-3), 172-194.

Weil, 2017 Weil, J. (2017). Research design in aging and social gerontology: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. Routledge.

Whillans, A. V., & West, C. (2018). Alleviating time poverty among the working poor: A pre-registered longitudinal field experiment. Harvard Business School Working Paper.

Weybright, E. H., Caldwell, L. L., & Weaver, R. H. (2019). Preventing leisure from being overlooked: Intersecting leisure and prevention sciences. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 1–19. doi:10.1080/00222216.2019.1617646