



Self-Build Housing Schemes In Marinaleda From The Perspective Of Ostrom's Concept Of Self-Governance In Common-Pool Resource Situations

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Abstract

The self-build housing schemes in Marinaleda (Andalusia, Spain) are a pioneering experience very much akin to other social production of habitat initiatives, with which they share aspects relating to self-management, mutual aid and collective ownership. The aim of this paper is to analyse the phenomenon in its context, which includes the role played by the regional government of Andalusia, other policies implemented by the local council of Marinaleda, and the village's sociodemographic profile and labour market. Similarly, it also examines the political background of a village that has stood out for its efforts to maintain a sustainable process of social struggle and for its participatory democratic and assembly-related, self-organisation practices. From an empirical perspective, this study is based on a long process of participant observation by one of the co-authors in her position as the municipal architect of Marinaleda, and on documentary analysis. Employing the institutionalist theoretical framework of

Ostrom's concept of self-governance in common-pool resource situations, her design principles for common-pool resource institutions were applied to the case of Marinaleda. In light of the study findings, it can be claimed that these principles prevail in a very similar way and help to understand the success of the self-build housing schemes in Marinaleda. Accordingly, it would be interesting to extend the application of the theory to different types of assets, beyond natural resources.

Keywords

Social production of habitat; common-pool resources; self-build; housing; Marinaleda

Introduction

The self-build housing policy implemented in Marinaleda (Andalusia, Spain) has not hitherto received the attention of academia, despite the fact that it is a pioneering initiative in the region which mirrors experiences such as those of Uruguayan (Federación Uruguaya de Cooperativas de Vivienda por Ayuda Mutua, FUCVAM) and Argentinian (Movimiento de Ocupantes e Inquilinos, hereinafter MOI) cooperativism as regards its self-management, mutual aid and collective ownership aspects. In addition to its similarities to other Latin American experiences (Nahoum, 2013; Rodríguez, 2009), the case of Marinaleda stands out because of the fact that it even predates some of the benchmark initiatives relating to policies of this type, including that of the MOI in Argentina (Díaz-Parra, 2018). Nonetheless, the phenomenon has indeed received plenty of media coverage, even the international kind,¹ as an example of public policies aimed at guaranteeing the right to adequate housing. Accordingly, the aim of this paper is to examine the phenomenon in its context, which includes other public policies adopted by the local council and the regional government of Andalusia (southern Spain), the village's sociodemographic profile and its labour market and, of course, the political context, placing the accent on collective action, forms of leadership and assembly-related, self-organisation practices, the relationship between the different institutions, etc. Together with those pertaining to employment, housing policies are doubtless Marinaleda's greatest achievement (Hancox, 2013; López-Bahut and Paz-Agras, 2018). Mainly (but not always) under the successive Self-build Housing Programmes (Programas de Autoconstrucción de Viviendas, hereinafter PAVs) launched by the Andalusian government, these schemes have allowed the villagers access to housing at a cost of €15 per month, much lower than the average for the country and the province of Seville.

Briefly, in Marinaleda the PAVs are based on a loan from the Andalusian government employed to purchase building materials and to defray the cost of technical services, such as the design of architectural projects and site management. This loan is then repaid with the monthly premium of €15 which, taking into account that the beneficiaries usually provide the labour as builders, is the only economic cost of the housing. For its part, the local council of Marinaleda provides the land free of charge (which is the most costly aspect of housing in Spain) and zones the plots through the Rural Employment Plans (Planes de Empleo Rural, hereinafter PERs), thanks to a long-term policy for purchasing agricultural land at low prices. These plans consist of state investments in public works in those villages with a high seasonal unemployment rate in the agricultural industry. Furthermore, the local council provides supplementary technical support through its technicians and machinery and tools free of charge. Lastly, the beneficiaries supply the labour, working on the construction of the dwellings some

¹ A good example of this is the following article appearing in *The New York Times*:
<https://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/26/world/europe/26spain.html>

450 days. In the event that the beneficiaries do not want to, or cannot, provide their own work, usually because they have paid jobs, they are expected to pay some €45 per day for hiring builders. Indeed, this is encouraged when selecting the beneficiaries, for a proportion of approximately 75 per cent of self-builders, who perform basic tasks, and 25 per cent of non-builders is required, for the latter pay the wages of the qualified workers necessary for performing more specialised tasks.

The formula broadly summarised above seems to be simple at first sight. The combination of already zoned land ceded free of cost by the local council, a loan granted by the Andalusian government for purchasing building materials and paying for technical services, and labour (self-builders, the hiring of qualified workers and the support of council staff) allows for the building of housing at a minimum cost. Be that as it may, despite being generally covered by a regional government programme for Andalusia as a whole and the fact that Marinaleda possesses the same geographical, demographic and economic characteristics as the majority of the region's villages, the experience of Marinaleda is unique. So, this begs the question of why it has not been copied elsewhere. In order to understand the reasons behind the success of the PAVs in Marinaleda, this paper focuses on the management of this policy and on the finer points of its application at a local level. More specifically, the research questions are as follows: What relationship is there between the main (the local council and the self-builders) and secondary (the Andalusian government) stakeholders, and how has it influenced the uniqueness of the PAVs in Marinaleda? What relationship is there between the PAVs and other public policies implemented in Marinaleda, like, for example, those relating to employment? What role is played by other local factors, such as local leadership, the assembly movement and the village's tradition of collective action?

In order to answer these questions, the theoretical framework for the self-governance of common-pool resources (hereinafter CPRs) developed by Ostrom (1990; Ostrom et al., 1999) is employed. It should be noted that self-build housing does not fall under the authoress' definition of CPRs (dwellings being of the unnatural, non-renewable kind, in which providing the good is therefore more relevant than appropriation). However, it is considered here that the design principles for CPR institutions described by Ostrom (1990: 91-101) apply in a very similar way to the self-build housing schemes in Marinaleda and are very useful for understanding them. It is also contended that their use in this study also serves to extend the theory's scope of application beyond natural resources to urban spaces, an objective shared by other academic works published in recent years (Bruun, 2015; Lee and Webster, 2006). Likewise, they are an example very much akin to social production of habitat (hereinafter SPH) practices, given the non-profit and non-alienated way of producing the space and the key role played by the community (Ortiz Flores, 2002; 2004).

This paper is structured as follows. Firstly, the methodology employed, in particular participant observation (based on the involvement of one of the co-authors as the municipal architect in Marinaleda) and documentary analysis, will be described. This will be followed by a description of the sociodemographic profile and job market in Marinaleda, which is particularly conducive to self-building, as well as the village's decisive political context, characterised by the leading role played by a community organised in an assembly and with an acute social and political awareness. Following this, in the research results section a detailed account will be offered of how the PAVs are implemented and managed in Marinaleda and the role played by the main stakeholders: the Andalusian government, the local council and the beneficiaries. Lastly, in the discussion section, the experience will be considered from the perspective of the general theoretical framework of CPRs and the SPH, addressing previous conceptual and terminological issues, before comparing the case study with Ostrom's eight design principles for CPR institutions. In the conclusions, it will be contended that, in the case at hand, 'clearly defined boundaries', 'congruence between appropriation and provision rules and local conditions', 'collective-

choice arrangements', 'monitoring', 'graduated sanctions', 'conflict-resolution mechanisms', 'minimal recognition of rights to organise' and collaboration between different 'nested enterprises' prevail, and how such principles can help to understand the general and particular reasons behind the success of the PAVs in Marinaleda. Stress will also be placed on the role of participatory democratic and assembly-related, self-organisation practices, which have made it possible to adapt the PAVs to Marinaleda in a more efficient way than the centralised planning characterising the design and implementation of most public policies.

Methodology

Methodologically speaking, in order to understand the phenomenon it is essential to have direct access through participant observation (Guasch, 1997; Sanmartín, 1989), which has allowed for gaining detailed insights into the implementation of the housing programme and, above all, the tacit social and cultural rules deriving from the assembly processes and community life of the village's inhabitants, which have in fact influenced the programme's implementation and management, adapting it to Marinaleda's specific needs and explaining its success to a great extent. This participant observation was possible thanks to the experience that the co-author has gained as a municipal architect in the village for more than 13 years (from 2006 up until the present day), playing a leading role in the implementation and management of the last programmes and with direct access to both documentation (the local archive, the land registry, etc.) and decision-making processes (council meetings, political and technical meetings with the representatives of the Andalusian government, assemblies attended by the villagers and beneficiaries), as well as the relations with the other stakeholders (the mayor and municipal technicians, the beneficiaries and the rest of the villagers). In addition, a documentary review was performed (Hart, 2008; Randolph, 2009; MacDonald and Tipton, 1993) on both the academic literature and the documents housed in the local archive.

Context

Marinaleda is a village located in the Sierra Sur, in the province of Seville, over 100 km away from the city of Seville (the capital of the province and the autonomous community of Andalusia). The village's 2,665 inhabitants (Padrón Municipal de Habitantes, 2017) occupy a total of 1,026 dwellings (Censo de Población y Vivienda, 2011), with an average of 2.6 members per household. In 2019, the unemployment rate was 7.12 per cent, below the national (14.2%) and regional (21.8%) average, Andalusia being one of the regions with the highest unemployment rates in Europe.² The villagers are mostly employed in agriculture and related industries. Traditionally, most of the inhabitants were landless day-labourers who were seasonally employed in the olive harvest. This state of affairs changed in the 1980s when, after a series of widespread protests and the occupation of land, the Andalusian government expropriated 3,000 acres belonging to the Duke of El Infantado. This previously fallow land is now being cultivated by the inhabitants of Marinaleda and exploited through the El Humoso Cooperative, which has an olive press for producing oil and a vegetable packing factory (artichokes, peppers, beans, etc.), which employs around 50 per cent of the population who all earn the same wage.

In Marinaleda, the expropriation of the land and the creation of the cooperative resulted from the widespread protests that had been staged since the end of the Franco dictatorship (Falcón, 2015). The unequal access to land has been one of the historical bones of contention for the Andalusian day-labourer movement (Martínez Alier, 1968; Ramos Espejo, 1985). The forms of land appropriation during the

² Servicio Público de Empleo Estatal-SEPE: <http://www.sepe.es/HomeSepe/que-es-el-sepe/estadisticas/empleo/estadisticas-nuevas/2019/octubre.html>

Castilian conquest and the liberal agrarian reform in the nineteenth century converted Andalusia into a region inhabited by large pockets of landless peasants who often staged violent uprisings (Gómez Oliva, 1993). After the death of Franco in 1975, the Spanish transition to democracy got underway, thus fuelling the desire of the country's oppressed sectors of society for social change. Against this backdrop, the Day-labourers' Commission (Comisiones de Jornaleros) was created in 1975, becoming a year later the Agricultural Workers' Union (Sindicato de Obreros del Campo, hereinafter SOC), known as the Andalusian Workers' Union (Sindicato Andaluz de Trabajadores, hereinafter SAT) since 2007. Since its advent, the SOC/SAT has been characterised by its direct action tactics, heir to the agrarian anarchism at the end of the nineteenth and at the beginning of the twentieth century, and whose political and ideological discourse is based on contesting land concentration ('the land for those who work it') and the capitalist system (Talego, 1996). It also has a marked Andalusian nationalist streak, a nationalism that, in its most traditionalist versions, underscores the idea of a people closely linked to the countryside and peasant demands (the hymn of Andalusia itself reflects this notion in the verse, 'Andalusians rise up, ask for land and freedom').

In 1979, the Workers' Unity Collective (Colectivo de Unidad de los Trabajadores, CUT) was created as the political arm of the SOC. As the local leader of the CUT (which would be incorporated into United Left [IU] in 1991), Juan Manuel Sánchez Gordillo was elected mayor in the first democratic elections held in 1979, a post that he has occupied ever since with an absolute majority. However, the political party clearly takes second place to the trade union, which is organised in assemblies open to all the villagers, an authentic forum of political debate and initiative, whose decisions are subsequently endorsed by the local council. As in other localities, assembly experiences of this type derived from 'specific unitary movements normally led by an uncontested person with a strong personality. The political parties in these small combative provinces were relegated to second place by participatory democracy practices'³ (Rodríguez-Villasante, 2005).

In the case of Marinaleda, under the leadership of Sánchez Gordillo and the impulse of the majority of the locals organised in an assembly, the village has stood out for maintaining a high level of mobilization over the years, which has resulted in major social achievements, not only as regards employment (the El Humoso Cooperative, the vocational school, etc.) and housing (the self-build schemes), but also sports (the sports centre, the municipal swimming pool, etc.) and care (the kindergarten, the senior centre, etc.), with superior facilities and services at very affordable prices.

Results

So as to offer the most detailed description of the inner workings of the PAVs and how they are being implemented in Marinaleda, the focus will be placed on the three stakeholders: the Andalusian government, the local council and the beneficiaries. The local council and the beneficiaries (whether they be self-builders or not) are considered here as the main stakeholders, for it has been in their context and immediate scope of action in which the most outstanding achievements have been made, even without the support of the PAVs and the regional government. The Andalusian government plays a secondary but essential role, insofar as it established the legal framework for the PAVs in which the majority of Marinaleda's housing policies have been implemented.

³ All translations are the authors', unless otherwise indicated.

The Andalusian government

Andalusia was transferred state powers as regards housing in January 1984 and, since 1992, has developed six Housing and Land Plans (1992-1995, 1996-1999, 1999-2002, 2003-2007, 2008-2012 and 2016-2020). Although the first self-build scheme in Marinaleda dates back to 1982, it was in 1988 when the regional government implemented the first specific PAV,⁴ the programmes subsequently being incorporated into its housing plans between 1992 and 2002 and, yet again, in the last 2016-2020 plan. Therefore, there had been self-build housing schemes in Marinaleda before the first PAV was approved by the regional government, which have also been maintained during the time when the programme has been discontinued, albeit under the aegis of the PAVs, whenever possible.

The PAVs stipulate that the housing schemes should include a minimum of 10 dwellings, considered as social housing, whose ownership is transferred to the beneficiaries. The land should belong to the autonomous community or to the local council or should be purchased from third parties and transferred to the beneficiaries free of charge or onerously (Díaz García, 2008).

The selection of self-builders is up to the local council. The requirements that they should meet are no different from those for other social housing applicants, although in different PAVs some of the criteria were changed depending on weighted family income (with a maximum of €12,020.24 a year).⁵ Moreover, other circumstances ‘relating to technical aspects, previous experience as a builder and, by and large, those that are deemed appropriate for guaranteeing the viability of the scheme’, can be taken into consideration.

Basically, the regional government’s contribution to the PAVs involves the granting of a loan with an interest rate and a maximum repayment term of 25 years, through a mortgage on the property and without any down payment. The loan granted by the regional government through the Regional Ministry for Public Works and Transport (Consejería de Obras Públicas y Transporte) is largely used to purchase building materials, with a total investment of €24,000 per dwelling.⁶ Additionally, the regional ministry defrays the cost of technical services, specifically the design and management of architectural projects, performed by an architect, and site management and health and safety coordination, performed by a works foreman.

The local council

In Marinaleda, self-build housing schemes date back to 1982, before the regional government launched the first PAV in 1988, when the housing scheme (La Paz) was implemented with the financial support of the Ministry of Public Works and Urban Planning.⁷ Other housing schemes (e.g. El Cabrero) have also been subsequently implemented outside the regional government’s PAVs, basically thanks to the local council’s own funding, the populace’s voluntary work (‘red Sundays’) and recourse to the PERs. The PERs envisage subsidies for carrying out minor and maintenance works in villages with a high seasonal unemployment rate in the agricultural industry, thus making it necessary to devote most of the

⁴ Decree 120/1988, of 23 March, governing self-build social housing: <https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/boja/1988/28/1>

⁵ Provisions of Decree 166/1999, of 27 July, governing the actions envisaged in the 3rd Andalusian Housing and Land Plan 1999-2002: <https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/boja/1999/94/2>

⁶ Approximate data retrieved from the last PAV, to which should be added the cost of the project and the technical fees paid by the regional government. In the extraordinary subsidy of 2010, which did not include these services, this amounted to €33,040 per dwelling.

⁷ Order of the Ministry of Public Works and Urban Planning, of 8 June 1982, on rural social housing: [https://www.boe.es/eli/es/o/1982/06/08/\(1\)](https://www.boe.es/eli/es/o/1982/06/08/(1))

budget to the hiring of workers, although allowing for a small item for purchasing materials. As of 1988, self-build housing schemes were generally framed in the regional government's PAVs, but even so they were implemented in Marinaleda in a unique way.

In the different PAVs approved by the Andalusian government, the land on which the dwellings were built could be sold to the self-builders or transferred to them free of charge. In the case of Marinaleda, since the first housing scheme launched before the advent of the PAVs, one of the keys to its success has undoubtedly been the free transfer of land (the most costly item of a dwelling) in all the housing schemes, as well as their zoning by the local council, by and large through works financed by the PERs. This is a long-term policy with which the local council, in anticipation of the expected demand for housing, has gradually acquired an important public portfolio of undeveloped rural land. Insofar as it is green belt or building land without development planning (i.e. which has not yet been zoned), it can be purchased at very favourable prices by the local council. Over the years, the land has been reclassified whenever necessary, with the appropriate urban plan being drawn up and the zoning carried out. This system of long-term prevision and purchase has allowed land to be acquired at very low prices and, therefore, to transfer the plots free of charge to the self-builders. It has also prevented speculation, since 90 per cent of the new dwellings have been developed under the umbrella of self-build housing schemes, thus preventing private developers from selling dwellings at market prices.

In terms of urban development, this local policy has also favoured the integration of the municipality, which was originally divided into two urban centres: Marinaleda and Matarredonda. The local council gave priority to the purchase of the land located between both of them, on which the main municipal facilities were also built.

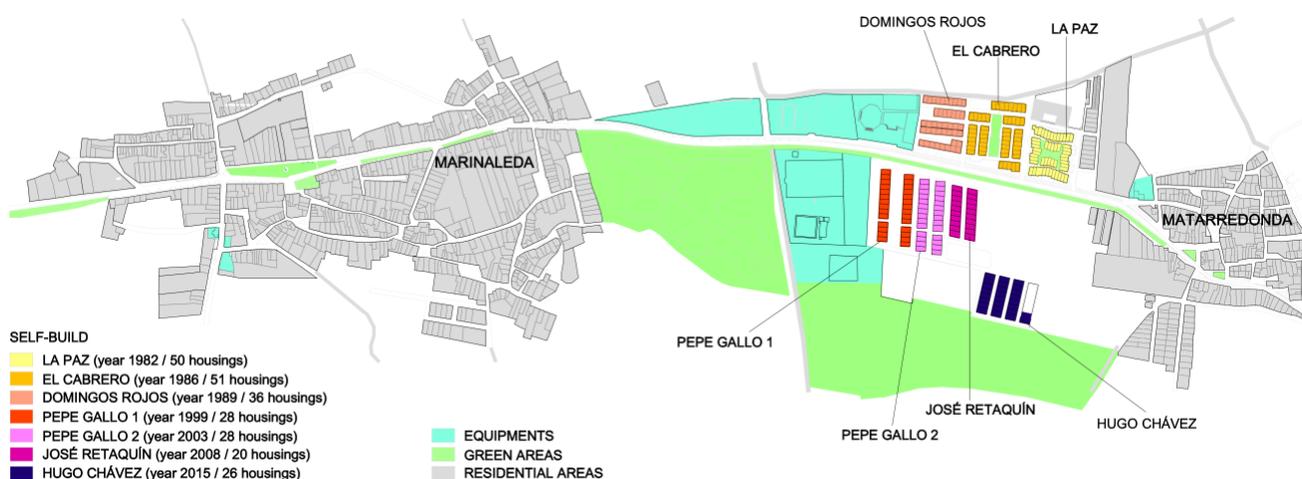


Figure 1: Plan of Marinaleda

The local council's drive has been supplemented by other important contributions, such as the free advice and monitoring offered by the municipal technicians (especially the municipal architect) and by qualified workers, including the municipal electrician and plumber, who undertake those tasks inherent to their trade. All are paid wages by the local council, which also directly hires the works foreman. It should be stressed that, whenever the self-build schemes in Marinaleda have not been covered by a PAV, the local council has outsourced architectural projects, the municipal architect has taken charge of site management and a works foreman has been hired. It is also important to mention the free

loan of tools and machinery belonging to the department of municipal works. Lastly, it is essential to underscore the negotiating role played by the local council which, supported by the villagers and the pressure brought to bear by them, has obliged the Andalusian government to maintain the PAVs or to adapt their implementation to local needs and demands, and even to give them continuity through the granting of special subsidies⁸ during the period when they have been unilaterally discontinued.

The beneficiaries and the community

Lastly, the main stakeholders in the self-build housing schemes in Marinaleda are, together with the local council, not only the direct beneficiaries, but also the village community as a whole organised in an assembly. The boundaries between institutional and social issues, political and union business, and formal and informal aspects are vague in Marinaleda. Adopting many institutional (the local council), political (CUT), trade union (SOC, SAT) and associative (El Humoso Cooperative, etc.) forms and representations, what really exists is an authentic ‘strengthened community’ (Ulloa, 2000) organised in an assembly and with a deeply-rooted class consciousness. At a local level, this leads to a type of ‘militant particularism’ (Harvey, 2007), linked to the territory as a necessary common space of recognition among peers, thus fostering a strong collective identity (Melucci, 1999). This community is chiefly organised through a sort of ‘social movement trade unionism’ (López, 2004), which in Marinaleda goes beyond the trade union structure, to the point that ‘the assembly does not only resolve internal political or union strategy issues, but also decides on how municipal management should be approached; decisions that affect all the villagers, whether they be affiliated or not’ (Talego, 1996: 72).

The assembly not only handles trade union business, but is also an authentic forum of debate and decision-making of which the local council is a subsidiary. Thus, ‘the mayor and the counsellors of the CUT legitimise themselves in their posts inasmuch as they formally submit to the union, a fundamentally working-class institution, which is expressed through the assembly [...] the local council and the mayor would not therefore be more than mere spokespeople of the assembly’ (Talego, 1996: 71). As Lorenzo Gállego (2015: 54) claims, it is a joint management or participatory management model, with the stakeholders (the local council and the assembly), whose boundary in the case of Marinaleda is vague, being on an equal footing. Although the political leadership of the mayor Juan Manuel Sánchez Gordillo is unquestionable, the image of him as a messianic leader, which has sometimes been conveyed (Mármol, 1997), is completely inadequate. Moreover, this portrayal is an affront to an active and committed collective that, in contrast, is depicted as the ignorant masses typical of the reactionary theories of collective action emerging at the end of the nineteenth and at the beginning of the twentieth century (Le Bon, 2000 [1895]; Tarde, 1986 [1901]; Ortega y Gasset, 1930). On the contrary, in villages like Marinaleda ‘participation and unity are both long-standing practices of the struggle for democracy, the custom of decision-making in an assembly, democratic forms of direct management of urban and environmental issues’ (Rodríguez-Villasante, 1997: 14).

This community includes both the direct beneficiaries (i.e. the self-builders and the non-self-builders who pay the wages of third parties to work on the housing schemes) and the rest of the municipality’s population who directly intervene in its housing policy. For example, in the village assembly it was decided to reject both the payment of the interest on the loan granted by the regional government and the intermediation of private banks, as well as the legal provisions limiting the size of the dwellings. Marinaleda thus lobbied to modify the way in which the regional programme was being implemented in order to adapt it to its own specific needs. The villagers also participated in the so-called

⁸ Order of 13 October 2010, by virtue of which a subsidy is granted to the local council of Marinaleda (Seville) for funding the action called ‘the self-building of 25 dwellings’: <https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/boja/2010/215/61>

‘red Sundays’, days of voluntary work on the self-build housing schemes and other local works, which were key to starting up the programme. Finally, the mobilisation of the villagers was crucial for increasing the mayor’s negotiating power, thanks to which the PAVs were maintained with an extraordinary subsidy, after they had been discontinued, before being ultimately reincorporated into the Andalusian Housing and Land Plan as of 2016. This mass mobilisation capacity has also been relevant, to the point that, before the mayor meets with the representatives of the regional government, they usually request the presence of a national police squad for fear that he will encourage the villagers of Marinaleda to engage in peaceful civil disobedience actions. The combination of popular protests and lobbying and, consequently, the mayor’s enhanced negotiating power have actually been used by his political adversaries to detract from the political success of Marinaleda’s housing and employment policies. It is true that the mayor’s leadership has been a key factor in maintaining and even adapting the implementation of the PAVs. But the fact is that, on the one hand, these programmes still depend on a regional law applicable to any other locality and have even been implemented without that legal and financial support. On the other, the question can be turned on its head to ask why the Andalusian government has tried, on several occasions, to eliminate a programme that, as least in Marinaleda, has been a resounding success and which has been praised both in Spain and abroad.

With respect to the direct beneficiaries, their sociodemographic and professional profile is ideal for the PAVs. Their employment in seasonal agricultural activities allows self-builders to devote their periods of unemployment to the housing schemes, and that secondary building job provides them with both experience and training. But, beyond the direct beneficiaries’ adequate professional or training profile, their commitment, as with that of the community as a whole, is fundamental. The engagement and solidarity of most of the villagers have laid the foundations for the success of the municipality’s public policies. As will be seen following Ostrom, the key to the success of the PAVs in Marinaleda is the existence of a dense network of institutionality, rules and incentives that self-regulate the management of resources, thus guaranteeing the common good. But this is also determined by a shared culture based on the values of solidarity and social justice.

The following table summarises the main stakeholders in Marinaleda’s housing policy and their roles and inputs:

Table 1: Main stakeholders and their roles and inputs as regards the self-build housing schemes in Marinaleda

Institution/Organisation	Roles	Inputs
State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legislation. General legislation on employment, health and safety, and building regulations (CTE) - Funding. Rural Employment Plans (PERs)* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General legal framework - Plot zoning (PERs)
Andalusian government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legislation. Housing and Land Plans - Funding. Self-build Housing Programmes (PAVs), the vocational school** 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specific legal framework - Loans with interest rates*** for purchasing building materials and paying for basic technical services (PAVs) - Training courses in self-building (vocational school)

		- Labour and material inputs (vocational school)
Local council	- Developer - Funding	- Free land - Supplementary technical services - Tools and machinery - (When the housing scheme is not covered by a PAV of the regional government, the local council defrays the cost of basic technical services)
Beneficiaries	- Developer - Builder	- Direct (self-builders) or indirect (paying the wages of qualified workers) labour
Community	- Supervision and mediation - Support	- Voluntary work ('red Sundays')

* The PERs are framed as a state government policy, although it should be noted that it is up to the local council to decide on whether or not to devote these resources to plot zoning, thus withdrawing them from other projects.

** The vocational schools are framed in a regional government policy, from which they receive funding, although they are fully managed by local councils.

*** As already noted, Marinaleda has managed to avoid paying interest on the loan and the intermediation of private banks.

Ostrom's design principles for CPR institutions in the case of the self-build housing schemes in Marinaleda

The notion of the commons and its forms of management and governance developed by Ostrom (1990; Ostrom et al., 1999) have become highly relevant, even though they basically focus on the efficient management of natural resources. They have been employed by other authors to address the social production of the commons or commoning (Hardt and Negri, 2009), particularly in the context of increasing immaterial production linked to new information and communication technologies.

In the urban setting, a related concept is that of the SPH, generally defined as the non-profit, non-aligned production of space led by the community, whose members are its end users (Ortiz Flores, 2002, 2004; Pelli, 2010). However, this idea requires adapting some of Ostrom's concepts, since, for example, the urban commons are not defined so much by their extractive nature, as by the creation of value, the provision of the good being more important than the appropriation characteristic of natural or renewable resources, to offer just one example (Borch and Kornberger, 2015). The urban commons are not naturally available goods, but in fact created or produced by labour and social interaction in the urban space. Furthermore, it is in provision where the social collaboration of the community can be evinced, while appropriation, albeit managed or decided on collectively, can lead to forms of private ownership that prevent others from enjoying the good.

Therefore, another aspect in which the urban commons clash with the CPRs studied by Ostrom is their exclusive appropriation, thus restricting free access to them. For instance, in the case at hand there is a paradox in that the CPR created is a privately owned dwelling, while the land is public. In Ostrom's terminology, 'resource units' are (as in the case of natural resources) privately appropriated, but are not renewable, as with CPRs. In other words, once the resource unit has been appropriated, it is no longer available to the community. Therefore, the community does not receive a direct material good (a dwelling), but rather an immaterial right (the guarantee of the right to housing) which takes the shape

of dwellings for those families that need them. On the other hand, the notion of the commons as a realm differing from the public and private spheres raises problems in cases like the self-build housing schemes in Marinaleda, given that the public sector plays a fundamental role.

So, it is evident that the use of Ostrom's theory poses serious terminological and conceptual problems when applying it to the self-build housing schemes in Marinaleda. The unrenounceable nature of the resource, its private and, above all, exclusive consumption, the predominance of forms of provision over those of appropriation and the leading role played by the public sphere are all issues that do not adapt to the case studies performed by the authoress. Nevertheless, non-profit management, the active collaboration and participation of the community and the autonomous or self-management of the good by some of its members recall that general notion of the commons. Moreover, the case study shares the main characteristics of the SPH, specifically: the dominant role of forms of self-management (the village and beneficiaries' assemblies); the principle of mutual aid (public resources transferred by the local council and the community's voluntary work); and collective ownership at least of the previously provided goods (like land, technical support and municipal machinery and tools) and of the immaterial good obtained (the right to housing).

In particular, the success of the PAVs in Marinaleda is characterised and understood by considering Ostrom's design principles for CPR institutions as the key to the self-governance of the CPRs addressed by her. So, putting aside the theoretical discussion, what is of interest here is to show how these principles are adequate for explaining the success of the PAVs in Marinaleda. The fact is that the self-build housing schemes seem to be governed by the same provision rules as CPRs, as will be explained in further detail below.

Clearly defined boundaries

According to Ostrom, 'Individuals or households who have rights to withdraw resource units from the CPR must be clearly defined, as must the boundaries of the CPR itself' (1990: 91).

In the case at hand, the potential and final beneficiaries, as well as the CPR itself, are clearly defined. The potential beneficiaries are those residents who have been registered in the municipality for at least two years. Three criteria are followed to select the potential beneficiaries from that population: income, family composition and efficiency as self-builders.

As to income, it is important to note that the selection criteria are not only formally stipulated (yearly household income), but also informally, given that the members of the community know each other very well (borrowed housing, possible future inheritances, etc.). The family composition criteria take into account not only family needs, such as the number of children or dependent persons, but also establish diversity quotas so as to offer single people or young couples without children, for example, access to housing. Finally, the self-build efficiency criteria take into consideration those characteristics of the beneficiaries that guarantee the adequate progress of the building works, by attempting to make sure, for example, that there are approximately five families with jobs (who instead of getting involved in the building themselves can afford to hire skilled and qualified workers) for every 15 self-builder beneficiaries (who undertake the building work themselves).

With regard to the resource per se, this is also clearly delimited, since it is conceived as the self-build housing scheme as a whole, while the resource units are represented by the individual dwellings.

Congruence between appropriation and provision rules and local conditions

For Ostrom, this congruence implies that 'appropriation rules [...] are related to local conditions and to provision rules requiring labor, materials, and/or money' (1990: 92).

One of the keys to the success of the self-build housing policy lies in how the rules adapt to local conditions, especially to the job market. The majority of the villagers are seasonally employed in agriculture, namely, during intensive campaigns, fundamentally the olive harvest (from September to December). Other agricultural campaigns, largely run by the El Humoso Cooperative, including the pepper and bean harvests, also take place during the winter months, although they require less manpower. An attempt is made to adapt the self-build works to the agricultural cycles and, in the case of the olive harvest, self-builders can decide to down tools temporarily.

The knowledge and experience required to be a self-builder is also facilitated by the job market in a several ways. Firstly, one of the main sources of employment supplementing the agricultural kind is the building industry, above all during the summer months. Although thanks to the cooperative the unemployment rate in Marinaleda (7.12%) is quite a bit lower than the average for Andalusia (21.8%) and the surrounding villages, part of the population migrates seasonally to work in the catering or building industry, principally in Malaga. The experience gained by those seasonally employed in the building industry contributes to the adequate execution of the works. Secondly, in the PERs there are funds for hiring rural workers during periods of seasonal unemployment. By and large, the PERs are basically used to finance minor and maintenance works, although in Marinaleda they are also used for zoning the plots on which the self-build housing will be located. Thirdly, the vocational school also provides self-builders with training and experience. Furthermore, the apprenticeships at this school are aimed at supporting the self-build housing schemes. For example, in the carpentry course they make the doors which will be subsequently installed in the dwellings, instead of making furniture for no other purpose than learning the trade.

Thus, not only the work time devoted to provision is adapted to the local conditions of the job market, but the previous knowledge, training and experience of the self-builders are also consistent with the building work.

It should also be observed that the provision of the good also adapts to the local conditions. The dwellings are designed along the lines of the area's traditional architecture. They are detached townhouses, with gable rooves covered with ceramic tiles, whitewashed walls and 100 m² patios thanks to which they can be extended, should the beneficiaries need to do so in the future because of family reasons, among others. They are therefore ideal for agricultural tasks, insofar as their garages and double entrances at the back can be used for parking tractors and their ample patios for storing farm implements or for cultivating small vegetable gardens for family consumption.

Collective-choice arrangements

According to Ostrom, the ways of changing rules should depend on those affected by them, so that 'most individuals affected by the operational rules can participate in modifying the operational rules' (1990: 93).

In the case of Marinaleda, it has already been noted how the beneficiaries have managed to bring pressure to bear on the Andalusian government not only to maintain the programme by means of an extraordinary subsidy when it has been eliminated from the housing plans, but also to adapt its implementation to their interests and needs. For example, there were discrepancies over the surface area of the dwellings, which was initially limited to 66 m², as well as the technical project to which they were expected to adapt in order to request the subsidies. In light of this, the local council litigated and, as Rodríguez-Villasante asserts, the villagers 'have resorted to ploys, so that they can build dwellings with a surface area of 75 m², extendable to 100 m²' (1997: 15). In this way, they have rejected the 'housing for the poor' model with which the administration tends to segregate those citizens with less resources.

These collective-choice arrangements are also made during the building works, with respect to how the work is organised and the floorplans of the dwellings. As to work organisation, the self-builders may decide to stop work temporarily for the agricultural campaigns or arrive at a consensus on workdays and roles. But the experience accumulated from several self-build housing schemes has promoted the establishment of new provision rules. For example, a tacit rule establishes that the person working as a self-builder in each family should preferably be a man, except when the beneficiary is a single woman. From a certainly moot traditional perspective, this is justified by the importance of physical strength in self-building and, in the main, it is a rule that is also applied in the El Humoso Cooperative, where it is the men who mostly work in the fields, while the women are employed at the packing factory. This also brings to mind the rules established by the *zanjera* irrigation communities of the Philippines studied by Ostrom (1990: 83-88).

In a specific case, a change of rules for an ongoing self-build housing scheme was agreed upon. During the building works, two beneficiaries started a relationship and decided to embark on a life project together. The immediate consequence was that they had to renounce one of the two dwellings (to which, in principle, both had a right) and share one of them, even though they had both worked as individual beneficiaries. Of course, gestures like this and the spirit of solidarity of most of the inhabitants do not guarantee on their own the adequate implementation of municipal policies, although they do indeed make a contribution in this regard.

Lastly, consensual changes in the rules to modify the floorplans of the dwellings according to the needs and desires of the beneficiaries are also commonplace: for instance, collectively choosing interior finishes, floors or bathroom equipment, the cost of higher quality materials sometimes being mutually defrayed, and even modifying the proportions of dwellings, patios and garages, although always respecting the architectural projects or including modifications in them.

Monitoring

For Ostrom, monitoring involves those who ‘actively audit CPR conditions and appropriator behavior, are accountable to the appropriators or are the appropriators’ (1990: 94).

With respect to monitoring, the self-builders of Marinaleda are engaged together in the works during the same workdays, whereby, as in the case of the irrigators in Valencia analysed by Ostrom (1990: 142), they monitor each other without the need for outsourcing this task at a cost. In addition, attendance and working hours are registered, which at some time or another allows for sanctioning beneficiaries for unjustified absences and for compensating others.

The blind system employed to allocate the dwellings is also noteworthy. In this system, the beneficiaries are not allocated a specific dwelling beforehand. The General Rules for Self-builders (Normas Generales de Autoconstructores, 2013) stipulate that ‘the dwellings should not be allocated until the entire housing project has been completed’. The allocation of specific dwellings to each family is made by drawing lots once the work has been completed. In this way, all the beneficiaries work on the housing scheme as a whole and not on their particular dwellings, thus guaranteeing that the same amount of attention is paid to each one of them. As they are unaware of which one will be theirs, the self-builders avoid the temptation of lavishing more attention on their own dwellings than on the rest, as before without the need for external monitoring and the cost that this would entail.

This self-monitoring is supplemented by the works foreman hired by the local council, as well as the certifications of the municipal architect, and is also debated on and endorsed by the general village assembly, which is kept permanently informed about the progress of the works and supervises their adequate execution.

Graduated sanctions

Ostrom observes that ‘appropriators who violate operational rules are likely to be assessed graduated sanctions [...] by other appropriators, by officials accountable to these appropriators, or by both’ (1990: 94).

In Marinaleda, the sanctions envisaged mostly include fines for unjustified absences from the works. These sanctions are governed by the principle of replacement (the payment of the wages of external workers equivalent to the hours not worked), rather than being punitive. Nonetheless, the General Rules for Self-builders (2013) also stipulate that ‘for unjustified non-attendance during five workdays, the status of self-builder will be lost’.

The informal sanctions are even more important. Specifically, the possible offenders’ loss of social standing and their accountability in both the beneficiaries’ assembly and the general village assembly. In general, in the nearly 40 years that the programme has been running stronger measures to sanction behaviours, such as the loss of the right to housing, have not been necessary.

Conflict-resolution mechanisms

Easy access to local arenas for conflict-resolution is another of the governance keys described by Ostrom. In this connection, she notes that ‘appropriators and their officials have rapid access to low-cost local arenas to resolve conflicts among appropriators or between appropriators and officials’ (1990: 100).

In the case of the self-build housing schemes in Marinaleda, firstly there is a person who undertakes mediation tasks, specifically the works foreman hired by the local council, who is in turn a counsellor and a figure respected by most of the community. The beneficiaries’ assembly is the first arena for resolving possible conflicts and, in the case of more serious ones that cannot be resolved through mediation or debate, recourse is had to the general village assembly.

Minimal recognition of rights to organise

As regards this point, Ostrom stresses that ‘the rights of appropriators to devise their own institutions are not challenged by external governmental authorities’ (1990: 101).

As to the recognition of rights to organise in Marinaleda, at the highest level mention should go to the autonomy of the regional government and its ability to manage directly the powers transferred to it by the state, including housing, and also the powers of the local council with regard to urban development. But, above all, beyond the legally established distribution of territorial powers, what is of interest here is the beneficiaries’ right to self-organise the commons. This self-organisation is chiefly reflected in the general village assembly and that of the beneficiaries of each housing scheme. In practice, the village assembly of Marinaleda handles political management, which is then legally endorsed by the public policies implemented by the local council. The absolute majority of the council’s government team (uninterrupted since the first democratic elections) and the opposition’s scant presence and initiative makes the informal village assembly an effective space for democratic debate and decision-making, decisions that are then formally implemented by the local council. After the starting up of each housing scheme and the selection of the beneficiaries, the village assembly then hands over decision-making and the routine management of the works to the beneficiaries’ assembly, intervening solely as a mediator or to resolve conflicts that the beneficiaries’ assembly is incapable of ironing out. The General Rules for Self-builders (2013) thus stipulate the obligation of the beneficiaries ‘to become self-builders of the dwellings and their co-developers’, while, according to these same rules, the local council undertakes ‘to accept the internal rules that shall govern the works and which shall be complied with’.

Nested enterprises

Finally, Ostrom observes that for the CPRs that form part of broader systems ‘appropriation, provision, monitoring, enforcement, conflict resolution, and governance activities are organized in multiple layers of nested enterprises’ (1990: 101).

In the case at hand, different bodies, both formal institutions and informal spaces of organisation, participate in the design and building of the dwellings. The state theoretically occupies the highest level, although given the decentralised nature of the Spanish political system, it does not play a direct role in the programme. However, the state administration establishes the legal framework as regards legislation on labour, safety and health, and building regulations (Technical Building Code) governing the programme. Thus, the Andalusian government is the highest institution effectively participating in it. It passes the general and specific legislation, such as the Housing and Land Plans, not only through the PAVs, but also through other laws pertaining to heritage, the environment, the technical characteristics of dwellings built under some or other social housing initiative, etc., which flesh out the legal framework. The running of the programme is the responsibility of the local council. As already noted, the boundaries between institutional and social issues, and between formal and informal aspects, are vague in Marinaleda. Thus, in addition to the local council, the other direct participants in the programme include, first and foremost, the general village assembly, in which all the villagers can participate. Once the housing schemes have been allocated, the beneficiaries’ assembly is ultimately created, in which routine issues are addressed, the work is organised and decisions on the design of the dwellings and the scheme’s implementation are made.

Conclusions

The case of the self-build housing schemes in Marinaleda thus follows the design principles for CPR institutions described by Ostrom, to which they owe much of their success. The existence of a dense network of formal and informal institutions allows for adapting the rules to the local conditions and to the needs of the community. This contributes to reinforce credible commitments that govern the relationships between the stakeholders who monitor each other—thus dispensing with the need to outsource this task—with informal sanctions, like the loss of social standing, taking priority over others, and to establish collectively rules that adapt the implementation of the PAVs to the context of Marinaleda (Ostrom, 1990: 65-66).

We also believe that factors like the village’s social awareness and the mayor’s leadership have been equally crucial. The extreme poverty of the inhabitants of Marinaleda, the vast majority of whom were landless day-labourers when the first PAV was launched in the 1970s, was doubtless a fundamental inducement for the intense social struggles in the village since the end of the Franco dictatorship and during the transition to democracy. Those objective conditions were not only reinforced by the mayor’s leadership, but also by other founding leaders of the SOC, such as Father Diamantino García Acosta. In a context not only marked by extreme poverty, but also by high levels of illiteracy, the role played by the leaders and workers’ organisations was crucial for raising the population’s awareness. In Marinaleda, therefore, there is a combination of initial extreme poverty (objective conditions) and the building of a strong collective identity and ideological awareness promoted by the leaders (subjective conditions), thus explaining the intensity of the village’s social struggles.

However, we understand that these factors on their own are insufficient to explain the village’s specific successes as regards employment and housing. The resolve of its inhabitants may explain the intensity of their struggles and some of their successes, but efficient management has allowed them to build on and consolidate them. Just as fishermen or irrigators are aware of the need to constrain their

immediate individual interests to preserve CPRs, knowing that their own long-term survival depends on them, so too are the inhabitants of Marinaleda aware of how solidarity and collective struggle have improved their particular living conditions. But, as Ostrom (1990: 111-139) notes, such an initial awareness is not always enough for the efficient management of CPRs. It is also necessary to create a network of institutionality, rules, commitments, sanctions and incentives adapted to the context. These rules are being permanently reviewed by the community members themselves. Thanks to the experience acquired over the years, they have managed to find intelligent and efficient solutions for preserving the commons in the interest of the population as a whole and of future generations.

In this sense, we consider that, despite the mayor's evident leadership, forms of participatory democracy and self-organisation in an assembly have been key factors. The participation of the beneficiaries and the community, and the first-hand knowledge that this favours, has unfailingly allowed for finding specific solutions to particular problems and for establishing consensual regulatory arrangements that facilitate the implementation of adopted measures. Thanks to this, it has been possible to adapt the PAVs to the local context and to each specific situation, thus improving their efficiency. The achievements of Marinaleda are not therefore solely the result of political will, but also of the efficient collaborative management between different complementary stakeholders. In this respect, we have shown how Ostrom's design principles for CPR institutions also help to explain to a great extent the success of the self-build housing schemes in Marinaleda.

Beyond the local context, our case study points to the need to improve and broaden the channels of participation in the design and implementation of public policies, taking into account the beneficiaries themselves and the community and creating spaces of autonomous decision-making that allow for adapting the established measures to different contexts and situations more efficiently than any centralised planning.

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