**F17 - Interview female farmer Los Villares 12-11-2021**

**To start, could you introduce yourself?**

My name is [name], but everyone calls me [name], we came here in 2015, we bought this field with our family, with my brother. I didn’t work in agriculture before, but my father died and also my brother died, so I stopped with my previous work and I now dedicate myself to agriculture. Since 2015, we have this, we also have a field in [place], the only thing we have is fields in the mountains, in a traditional form. Here is our basis, from here we go everywhere, we go to [name] and always come back here.

We have an ambitious project, with tourism, with rural olive tourism. We are the first patrimonial region of Andalusia, there are a lot of old paintings, nature, the castle. We want to have rural houses to rent to tourists. We like to combine tourism with agriculture and the rural life. That is our ambition.

**Oke, and you said that you didn’t work in agriculture before, what did you do?**

I worked in a supermarket.

**Oke, that is something really different.**

Yes, totally different, I started working there when I was 16 years old.

**And do you live here in this house, or somewhere else?**

We are from Los Villares, which is a village nearby, but we are here, is where we live. We work here, we sleep here, this is where we live, on the countryside.

**And with who do you live here?**

I live with my husband, but he is now in Almeria for his work, and my mother is here, so I am not by myself so far from the city.

**Ok, and do you also have children?**

Well, I am working on it, I am searching them.

**Could you describe a normal day for us, how does that look like?**

It depends on what time a year it is, now we are in the harvest period, so I get up between 5 and 6 in the morning, and I will go to the field. We have workers that help us, so I pick them up in Jaen and then we go to the field, then the day begins. We start often at 9 and finish at half past 4, and then, it depends, maybe I have some paper work to do, or they call me and I have to arrange things. The field/agriculture has a lot of bureaucracy. Here in Jaen yes, we often say, between me and my brother, mother and husband, that at the countryside it often looks like a paper is worth more than an olive. We are sometimes spending more time in doing paperwork than in cultivating olives.

**And in what sense?**

In a lot of things, for example here, we are in an mountainous area, so when we are doing the pruning, we cannot enter some areas with our machines. So we have to burn the pruning waste, to get rid of the rests. But what happens, because we are in a mountainous area, we have to ask permission to be able to burn our pruning waste. You have to ask permission for that, and that you have a tractor and water nearby to be able to put out the fire when needed. And that, they are delaying the work in the fields. *It eats us (nos come)*.

**And you work with employees? And with how many?**

It depends on the time a year, now in the harvest we work with 10-15 people and during the whole year, with 2 or 3. It depends on the treatments we do, for example during the pruning, there are 2 people doing the pruning and 2 people preparing the pruning waste for the machine, that will chip it.

So it depends on the time a year and also on the type of tasks that need to be done.

**And your job is more managing all of this?**

My work is managing it, but also working in the field, I do everything. I do what needs to be done.

**And what do you enjoy doing in your day?**

*(she has a big smile, she is very enthusiastic to tell about being in her field)*

What I like most is being in the field, outside. I don’t like being in the city, with all the noise and business. I like to be in the field, walk around, the people, people that I work with, the people that come by where you can talk to. I really like that, it is much better than in the city, outside of the stress of the city. I like this more. More quiet.

**And when do you rest?**

When it’s possible. I say often to my mother, I don’t rest during the day and not during the night/during sleeping. When there are problems, which there are, I can’t sleep, I’ll think about what I should do, I think about it all day and night. My mother says to me that I am like a witch, all night walking around, thinking. When I can’t sleep, she says, there comes the witch.

**And to rest or relax, what do you do?**

Normally, I go on vacation for a week, in summer it is the swimming pool. In the winter I like to sit here, near the fire, talking with friends, enjoying some food, watch a movie or go out to drink a beer. Those are the things I do to relax.

**And you said that you live here 100% of the time right?**

Yes, I live here, I also got married here.

**And how is it to live in this environment, do you feel safe living here?**

I feel safe because of the people that are around me here. And also the pastors here, they are 3, we have a very good relationship, it’s like they are my brothers. They take care of me and I of them, so I feel very safe here. We have here, the politics in the area, we have trouble with them. Here on our land we have some old rural houses that we want to use for our project, but the politicians want them as well. Almost every day we have something to do with the municipality of Jaen. In the year we bought this, they said that it should be public, so everyone could enjoy it. But strangely, a man, who has a parcel here near, everything needs to be public, except for his land. So he has good relationships with the politicians, he can do whatever he wants. So when you came here, I don’t know if you saw it, but there we want to start intensive cultivation, but the politicians have declared it patrimonial areas, so they don’t give permission. They say that it never existed here like that.

So the road that you have been walking, up until the fence, belongs to the diputacion. They have blocked that, because they say that it is an illegal entrance. We have a piece of land there, we need to go there with our machines and everything to be able to work there, but the diputacion doesn’t let us in there. They say that, by culture, the blocks are placed well, but for us, we think they hinder. So it is politics here, it makes us crazy, you cannot live like that. That is the only thing I don’t like, for the rest, I really enjoy it. But it is not fair, for the benefit of just a few, they are trying get rid of us. But I don’t let that happen.

**So you have good relations here in the community, with your neighbours, but it is difficult with the politicians here.**

Yes, we are tired of them, we bought this land with a lot of ambitions and dreams, we want to make it valuable, and they don’t let us.

**And are you active yourself as well in politics?**

I am active in my village, but not to be politicians, but I like the things to be better, so that is why I am active. But only in my village, I am not politician for my profession, I do it because I like it. But I am not telling people what they should or should not do. I don’t want to become politician and annoy people for my living. I suffer from it and I don’t see it as fair.

**But you are active in the politics in your village**

Yes, but it is not to earn money, I do it because I like it, to take care of my village.

**And what do you do?**

I am candidate for a group, I always go to share my ideas.

**And do you feel free to express your ideas and thoughts?**

In Los Villares yes, but here they don’t let me. Here the press is also bribed (todo comprado), here in Jaen, they put everything in the newspaper what they want about us. Good journalism, is that if someone wants to say something about us in the newspaper, they should also inform us and ask our side. That doesn’t happen, the politicians write what they want about us and they don’t ask us.

**And do you know why that is?**

Because they are against our plans, this is a very important area for tourism, we are very close to Jaen, have you been to Cazorla? Here it is a little bit like Cazorla, but it is nearby to Jaen.

**And if you could change anything in the political situation here, what would that be?**

Well first, more collaboration with us, and that they let us work in peace. And that they collaborate with us, if they want something. If they really want something from me, that they come here and talk to us.

**You also told before that you are member of [NAME], are you also member of other organizations or cooperatives?**

No.

**And in what way do you participate in [NAME]?**

In [NAME], I manage all the things I need to arrange, I do it in [NAME]. From subsidies to contracts with workers, if I need a lawyer, technical assistance, how to do the pruning, insurance for my car, all done via [NAME].

**Do you also participate in meetings of them?**

We have a group of young farmers here in the mountain region, where I have contact with. We want to form a group of young [NAME] here in the region, it is just starting, we invited them here, and we want to start up young [NAME] with all younger farmers of [NAME], from my age and younger. I am 36, so a group of people of 40 years and younger. We are starting to do that. There is a man, Miguel, who is president of the group of young farmers in [NAME], we are doing this with him. We will see what will happen with that.

**Do you have a lot of contact with other younger farmers here?**

Yes a lot, with everyone. We have a whatsapp group, with farmers from all over Jaen.

**And you share you experiences?**

Yes, everything, things we like, that we don’t like. Everything.

**Oke, and how important is you natural environment to you?**

I think it is everything, you need to take great care of it. Like I told before, whatever I can do to prevent the use of fertilizers or chemicals, I do it. Here for example, the animals like sheep and goats, they eat the weed on the ground. Yes, they also eat some parts from the trees, but I prefer that more than to use more chemicals. We prevent the use of chemicals. The same with fires, burning the pruning waste, we chip it. But what happens is that this is not possible in every area, so people need to burn it to get rid of it. In that sense, everything I can do, I do, because I think it is really important.

**And were there changes in the natural environment here?**

No, it has been stable here. Well, we changed it a lot since we came here, because when we came the olive tree didn’t produce. So the change, we made it ourselves. But I am quite content in that sense, we try to make it most ecological possible. I like it a lot, I also want to produce ecological olives. But that is a process, we need to do it step by step, but I am talking about that with Cristobal, that it will be interesting to cultivate ecological olives here in this area.

**Ok, and if you could change anything in the natural environment, what would that be?**

For example, I would change, we have a lot of invasive plants here, called corneta, it reproduces a lot and very fast, it is protected, but this plant is competing with the olive tree, so I try to get rid of it, but it is a lot of work to do that. It is also the case with the pines, it takes a lot of work to maintain them. And we don’t have authorization to cut them. That is what I was telling before, about the famous bureaucracy. They don’t let you. You need to ask for permission and wait until they give it to you.

**Ok, and now were are sitting very comfortably near the fire. What energy sources do you use here in the house?**

We have different sources. For example, and I talk again about bureaucracy, I would like to have solar panels here, to be self-sufficient. Well, this here, the fire, they can’t take it away from me, I like it too much. We use it to heat the whole house. We have other heating, but we don’t use it. We heat the house with the fire.

But I like to have solar panels to become self-sufficient, and what happens, you need to ask permissions to the department of culture, and they don’t let me. So we arrive at the same point, at the bureaucracy and the politics.

**And did anything change in the past years, in terms of access to energy or water, or other services?**

No it is the same.

**You have sufficient, also the water?**

Yes, we have a water source here, in the field down where we saw the sheep. We pump the water up and use it.

**Ok, and do the olives have irrigation?**

No, I would like to put it, but we have still problems with bureaucracy. We want to do it in the most effective and efficient way. Our water source is down here, but we have olive fields that are higher, so that is not efficient. So we want to make a water source up the hill, so we can make irrigation from that point down. But they won’t let me, I have to ask permission at the department of agriculture, culture and mines. They are against us, they won’t give it. But I would like to put it here, because the production will be higher. We use phytosanitary, we need to increase the production one way or another, we use chemicals. But I want to become more ecological, one thing I need for that is water. If you don’t use chemical products and don’t have water, you cannot survive.

It is always the politics, it all comes back to that point.

**You told that you bought this land in 2015. Why did you buy this, why did you start with it?**

In my case, since I was little, and since my parents were little, they always lived from the olive production. Apart from that, my family, my father and brother, who also passed away, had a specific connection with this land. They loved it a lot. Since I was 5, my father wanted to buy this land. He went to Madrid, to talk to the owners, to see if he could buy it. And then my father and brother were able to but it. And when my brother died, I bought this land. We think it goes way back. We think, we have an idea, but we cannot prove it, in the year 1827, when the Santa Cristina originated (the land where they live now), among the first people to live here, we believe was the grandmother of the grandmother, of our grandmother. So we think there is a connection with this land, we are talking about this land for generations. We are not 100% certain, but we think it is like that.

**How beautiful is it that you own this land now.**

Yes, it’s like that.

**How did you learn to do this work?**

I don’t know how to explain that, since I was born, I learned it. All I know since I was little, is this. My father always took me to the fields, I always went to the fields. I know how to navigate. It’s like how a small child learns to walk, who teaches him? He just learns it. The countryside is the same, I learned it, by living it.

**And do you continue to learn, do you do courses for example?**

Yes, when my brother died, I did 8 courses, and also a few years ago, I did a course about ecology and one about pruning. So I try to learn more, I still want to do courses on using mechanics. I want to do something like that.

**So you are trying to keep learning new things.**

Yes.

*Her mother says, you already know how to use these machines*

Yes, the tractor I use like any person, but I want to learn more about other mechanics as well.

**Oke and what education did you have before?**

Primary and I left secondary school to do this, to collect olives. I like that more than studying.

**You like it more to work with your hands**

Yes, and when I stopped picking olives, I started working in the supermarket.

**And who does the work in the household?**

When my husband is home, I do it, but when he is not there, the grandmother, my mother. My mother helps me in everything she can. When she comes to visit here, also when my husband is here, during the weekends or something, she helps me out as well. To iron the clothes and everything, because she knows I leave the house at 7 in the morning and I don’t return until 7-8-9 in the evening. She washes the clothes, irons them, cooks, everything. She is a harder worker than I am, with her age. She just continues and continues.

**And are there things you are proud of?**

Do you know what, I am. I feel most proud of, I lost my brother in 2017, with only 39 years old, and I feel proud of that what he fought for, I am still maintaining. I feel proud of that and I would like to stay that way. I do everything what’s possible to improve things here, make it happen, no one can take me away from here, no politician, nobody.

**Do you often go out, to visit other places?**

When I was younger, I didn’t stay in the house. But now, it changed. I like it too much, now in the winter with the fire and in the summer with the swimming pool, I don’t go out that often any more. Here I like it in my house, with some beer, with my family and friends. I also go out sometimes, because that is also nice, go to the village, visit the family of my husband. But I prefer the stay in my house. Before, it was the other way around. I didn’t want to stay in the house.

**So that changed**

Yes

**But you feel free to move around and go to the places you want to visit?**

Yes

**And does you income completely depend on the olive cultivation?**

Yes, totally, if there is no production, I don’t earn anything. And the prices, that’s another thing, we suffer from that. The prices are not good, this year it is better than before, but the prices for the fertilizers and other input also rose, so in the end I don’t earn more. People say, the prices are better now, yes that is true, but the costs are also higher. And an olive from the mountain is different from an olive in a flat area or intensive. Here, you cannot work with machines, so we have a lot more work. That is not recognized, the extra work we do, in comparison to more intensive farms. There are a lot of things you need to manage, in olive farms in the mountain, the fires, the manual harvest, a lot of things. And it is not valued.

**And do you feel like you can earn sufficient, to support your family?**

(*they both take a deep sigh*)

It is complicated, it takes a lot more work than intensive farm, for the same production. The production is good, but the problem is that we don’t receive a good price. For a good olive oil, they were paying 1,40 euros, and the costs you are making are rising. You lose, it is nor well valued.

**And can you save some money?**

That is really difficult, to harvest the olives, I need to make a lot of costs, we need to do it all with a hand machine, so I have to use man labour, and that is not cheap. And those costs are rising as well. It is a lot of work to go forward.

**Do you also have loans?**

Some yes, to make investments, to buy this land.

**And if you could earn more money with the olive cultivation, what would you do with it?**

Well, first pay my depts. And then invest. Now, with the project that we are trying to do, with the rural houses and tourism, I would invest in that.

**Do you feel satisfied with the life you have?**

Yes, I feel satisfied, because or the place I am in. The country side, being outside and everything. But what I don’t like, or what I would like that would change, is what we talked before, that they leave me work in peace, that they listen better and let us live.

**Are there things you would like to achieve? What are things you dream about?**

To put everything here in its value. Rural houses, rural tourism, I would like to have my own olive oil. We started last year with our own olive oil brand, and this year we also did that with green olive oil, from the first harvest. It is still very small, it is not my own factory, it is someone else’s. I would like to have my own factory, make my own labels, buy my own bottles, put my own olive oil in there.

**Oke, to have your own brand**

Yes, we have it now already (her mother shows a bottle of their own olive oil, with their own label on it). It is from last year, but we have it in our house, we consume it ourselves. And I will show you, we made different designs for labels. So this picture, is based on a historical wall painting here in the area. We want to design a new label every year, so people can collect the bottles. We are working on that, but in the future I want to do it all myself. And go to Holland and sell it.

**So that is a nice dream for the future.**

**And does spirituality play a role in your life?**

We are Christians, and I also practice it. Like all in Jaen, and Spain.

**Do you go to church?**

Yes, I go to the church

**And is that something you would like to have more time to spend on spirituality?**

To be honest yes, my mother also knows, when my brother died, I didn’t believe in it anymore. But now, with time, I know it is not the fault of God. Fault is ours, when I make a mistake or I do something wrong, it is my mistake. The fault is not of God or the virgin, how much I would like that. To find someone who is culpable for this, for when something happens. But that is not how it is. Sometimes, it is our own fault, what happens to us.

**And how is your physical condition?**

Well, I am a little overweight, but I am doing good.

**Because it is a physical job, you have right?**

It depends, some work I can do sitting in the tractor. I have more kilos, but I am doing fine.

**You can do you work the way you want to do it**

Yes

**Is there anything you need, in terms of health?**

That I can become pregnant, that I can have a baby.

**That is another dream**

Yes

**And do you feel happy in your life?**

*(she smiles modestly, seems like it could be better)*

I always say, there are always people that are doing worse. I need to be thankful for what I have. There are people that cannot eat, don’t have a house, we can eat, we have a house

**And you said before that sometimes you can’t sleep, because you think a lot**

Yes, I am thinking a lot, I work during the day and during the night. That also depends on how you are as a person. I take my problems with me when I go to sleep.

**And do you worry a lot about things?**

No, the normal things, that everyone has here in the country side. Thinking about all the things I need to do, the payments I need to do, the politics here. Everything. Like everyone in Spain, or in the world, all people who have their own company have it I think. How beautiful it is, but you also have worries.

**And do you have people you can share your worries with?**

Yes I have, but I don’t use it a lot. I try to solve it myself. Well, and I talk a lot with grandmother. It is my mother, but we call her grandmother.

**You also said you also said that you enjoy living in this community. Do you spend a lot of time with people here in the community?**

Here, I spend time with my family. My other brother and I are together here in the countryside. My husband is working helping in the field as well when he can, my mother is with me. So I have all the people near to me that I want. Well, my husband is now a bit further away, but he will return.

**And do you like to do together with your family and friends?**

Well, talk, have a beer, the normal things. Speak to people, interchange ideas, talk about your daily problems.

**Are there things you would like to change anything in the social relations you have?**

Yes, we live in a country, in a world with a lot of competition. Not in all cases, but people feel better than other people. And I don’t think like that. We are equal. For example, I work together with a Moroccan man, who works with me all year, and I talk with him about racism. Well, it’s not some much about racism, but more daily life. I say to him, I am not your boss, I am a person just like you, we are in the world and we all try to move forward. And I am not more than you are. If you get two eggs, one is white and one is brown, you break it and you put it in the pan. What is the difference? There is no. I don’t like this competition. That is what I would like to change.

**And do you also sometimes feel discriminated, maybe because of your gender or other reasons?**

*(she is very outspoken and inspired talking about this topic, it really gets to her)*

Yes, on the countryside yes. When I pass by in the tractor, the people, and especially the men, stop and say, hey a woman in a tractor! I have a very open character, I don’t get affected by it and I say something back. I never forget, I had to repair one of the machines and I went to the workplace where they can fix that, and there were all men. They all went silent and looked at me. And I shouted to them, he what happened, have you never seen a woman before with a machine in her hands, or what?! And everyone went back to what they were doing. I have this character, I deal with this like that. Others do it differently. But I say something when they look at me and say things at me. Well, the word is not discrimination, but it raises attention, a woman with machines. Also between women, they say it as well.

**Do you think you have the same opportunities as others here in the community?**

Yes, and if I don’t have them I will find them. For example, the talk now about, the help that women should receive, just for being women. Well, I also don’t see that as fair. Every person is trying to move forward in life. All the talk about equality, I think, equality in what? We are equal, why is there so much attention for the difference between men and women, we are all the same.

**Now, we have talked about a lot of topics. We would like to understand from you, which themes are very important to you, and which are less important. Therefore, we have a set of cards and we would like to ask you to classify them, according to importance, so most important, little important and less important.**

**Starting with the care for the environment, what does that mean to you?**

For me it is very important, but it is the way it is done. I don’t like, how the politicians talk about it, you need to really do it. We, here in the fields, we are the people that take care of the environment, not the people talking about it. But for me, it is really important (!!!)

**And self-determination, that you can decide for yourself what you say and do**

This is for me the most important, to decide for myself what I can do, for me that is really important (!!!)

**And is this something you feel free to do now?**

Medium, it depends on the situation, I have a lot of possibilities. For example, to go out and have a beer, I am free to do that. But here, the problems that I have here in the region, they don’t let me do what I want to do. For me it is very important that they let me do what I want to do.

**Ok, and the theme spirituality, that we also talked about**

That one you can put in the second point (!!), for me it is important, I am Christian, but it is not like the other points. For me, it is a daily thing. Not something I think about like, oh that is important. No I incorporate it in my life.

**Free time and play?**

I would put that here (!), at the lowest point. I will explain why, because to have that (free time and play) you first need to have this (what is put on top). For me, it is important, but first we need to have other important factors. Work, if we don’t have that, we can’t have free time. Not that I don’t like it, I would like to have it every day, but to have that, we first need to have other things.

**Education and critical thinking**

That is really important, put that up. It all starts with education, it affects everything (points to all the cards). (!!!)

**And is that something that you would like to change?**

Yes, but I don’t have the time for it. I do what I can, I like to develop myself. But it is important

**And mobility?**

That is also very important (!!!)

**And social relationships social support?**

That is also very important to me (!!!)

**And security?**

As well (!!!)

If you combine them, then almost every topic is related to this one (self-determination). Relationships, education, mobility, security, all are related to self-determination. For me, that is of all these themes, the most important, they all come out of self-determination. That I decide for myself if I need more education, or where I am going, more security, more help.

**And satisfactory work?**

Also up (!!!)

**And does that also relate to self-determination for you?**

Yes, if you can decide for yourself in your work, if you want to do something and you accomplish it yourself, that is satisfactory.

**And public participation, that you can participate freely in politics and other organizations around you?**

Yes the same (!!!), I see that similar to self-determination. That they let me decide for myself, that they don’t make me do things, or impose things on me that are not in line with my line of thinking. That is the same story.

**And physical and mental health?**

Yes also (!!!)

**And finally we have self-expression**

The same (!!!)

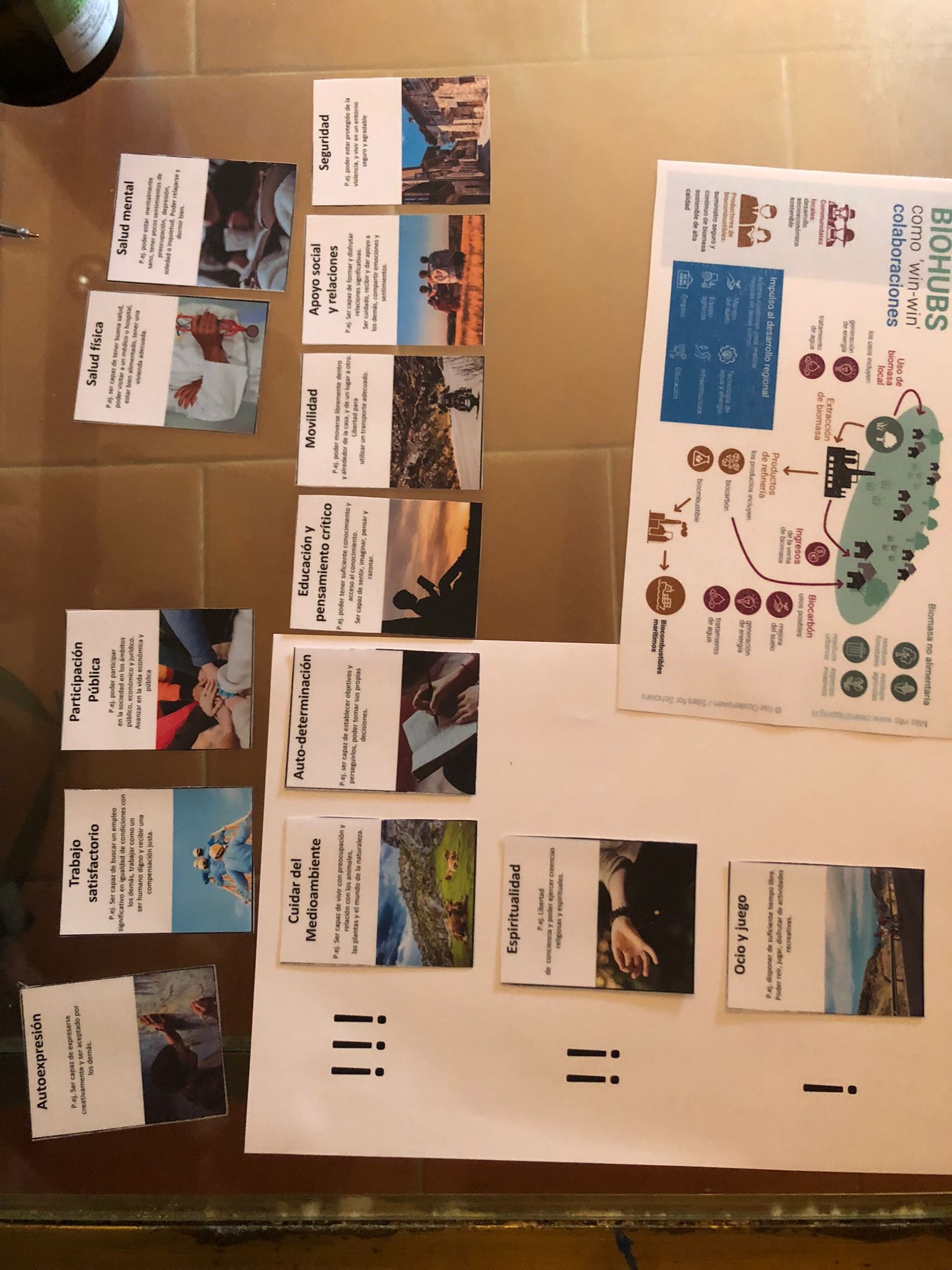
**Yes, so you have said that for you, self-determination is the most important**

It is the most important, that they let me think and act for myself, of course within a certain norm/order, but that not everyone will decide for me. That is what is happening here, there is a high barrier, it is complicated here.

**And from all these themes, are there other things that you would like to change or you are not satisfied about?**

Well, self-determination. And also public particiapation, well than we come back to the same point we have been discussing.

**(Picture of the sorted capability cards)**

**Oke, and now we have some more specific questions about the pruning waste. What do you currently do with the pruning waste?**

I leave them on the soil, everything. That is a natural fertilizer and also keeps the moisture fro the olive tree.

**And you also use the wood for the heating here**

Yes, I use the wood for the fire place.

**And would you be interested to collect and sell the pruning waste?**

If it is economically viable yes. The wood we already collect now, for in the house, there are people who want to buy wood, but it is currently not viable. But we have to, for the environment, we cannot leave it in the field. We need to take it out. You need to chip it, or burn it, and the larger wood you need to take out.

**And what would you prefer, that you collect the pruning waste yourself and bring it to a place, or that a company would come to take it out?**

My preference is the option that is most economically viable. Otherwise, it is not worth the work.

**Ok, because you said that you also use it for the soil. So do you need a part to stay in the field, or could you sell everything?**

I don’t know, because the it will be complicated to take out the pruning waste with a machine here. So I don’t know. I have good experiences now with leaving it on the soil. But if there would be a better option, I am open to explore that. I am like that, you need to try out the things.

**And what do you think, because there are traditional uses of the pruning waste, for example for heating, or for the soil. Do you think there are alternatives for that?**

No, currently not. We have 1000 hectares, also with pines. Nobody is interested to get or buy the wood from it here. Also because of the terrain we have here, the it is difficult to go there with machines. A wood from the pines that I could sell, nobody wants it. So I need to pay money so someone will come and get it.

**So, if there would be a market for it, you would be interested.**

Yes, there is a market now, but it is not well paid.

***I show the biohub concept***

That is interesting, I don’t see it negatively. But I will talk for myself, how I see it. It needs to be viable for the farmer. And also, here in the mountains, it will be more difficult. So it needs to be economically viable.

**And apart from income, do you see other benefits?**

Well, orujillo, it is also used to heat houses, not only based on wood. They also heat water with it. So it is used.

**You said that pruning waste is also sometimes burned here. Do you also notice an effect on your health, because of the smoke?**

Yes, what happens is that here there is no alternative to burning, because the machines cannot come here. You need to walk. There is no alternative.

**Oke, thank you very much. Is there anything you still want to share?**

No I think I told you everything.