



## **“Enhancing economic freedoms”**

**(2021) by Francisco Lopez**

Close your eyes, open your ears. Can you hear me? Or do you hear yourself listening to what you are supposed to? Close your ears, open your eyes. Can you see me? Or are you seeing through me the reflection of your interests? When was the last time you really felt empathy for someone surrounding you? How do you know that this empathy is actually empathy and not just a reflection of your ego? Meet Maria and Juana, two brave women who continuously fight for their freedom, and yet it seems that they will never reach it. They are neither slaves, nor servants, and yet they lack freedom. They lack economic freedom, to be more specific. Their livelihoods depend on tourism and the income related to it. But guess what? Tourism was virtually nonexistent during the last year. And guess what? They were not lucky enough to be born in a high-income country that can afford to provide social assistance to unemployed people during crises times. Their story is a story of resilience, informality, precarity, and hope. It is as well a story of a child that admires her mom. A child that wishes her mom did not need to work so much to bring food to their humble table. It is a story of a mother that hopes that one day her girl will thrive. Maria and Juana's story could be your story. It could be my story. It could be anyone's story. I hope one day it will be no one's story.