Fighting social exclusion: between economic development and social wellbeing

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Introduction

Social exclusion is the product of the interaction of a wide range of socio-economic, cultural and institutional problems. Its complex and cumulative nature, with its many different contexts and forms, makes social exclusion a widespread and deep-rooted phenomenon and an essential reference point for defining the goals and criteria of human development programs. In order to be successful, these programs should aim to combine - in the real contexts in which they operate - interventions for economic growth with interventions to increase the opportunities for the excluded to benefit from them.

A detailed analysis of the condition of social exclusion in local communities or populations as a whole reveals how real life contexts - and the social network of relations, power structures and actors that characterise them from an economic, cultural and institutional point of view – contribute to bringing the condition about and perpetuating it. Experience in the field and detailed analyses of programs for fighting social exclusion, on the other hand, show how important it is to penetrate these contexts and thereby change their structure from within.

Human development interventions, then, help individuals and social groups indirectly; their primary aim is to modify life contexts in order to change the factors that generate or perpetuate the process of social exclusion. A further aim is to involve the excluded - individuals and groups – and turn them into actors, allowing them to become the main agents of the strategies and practices of change. If a real reversal of the social exclusion process is to take place – at both an individual and a social level - deprived individuals and groups must regain not only the right but also the ability to act on their own behalf to improve their social condition.

Programs against social exclusion that pursue this double aim - the involvement of subjects and the modification of their social contexts – must pay special attention to organisational forms, to best practices and to methodologies of action, as well as to ensuring the necessary knowledge and competence.

2. OUTLINING THE PROBLEM AND NECESSARY INTERVENTIONS

2.1. Features of the problem
Social exclusion is a complex problem rooted in deprivation both of resources and of the ability to act and participate in social life. Caused by a wide range of factors, it has different, often coexisting, facets which are often mutually detrimental in their cumulative effects.

a) Economic factors.
Exclusion - or expulsion - from economic life is a crucial aspect of the problem. Exclusion thrives on conditions of unemployment, or precarious or marginal employment; on marginal, poorly paid and insecure jobs; on the resulting lack or shortage of income, of basic survival resources and lack of access to economic and social markets. The roots of social exclusion are therefore to be traced back to the dynamic forces behind capitalism and the global economy. It is the social cost of a deregulated and de-localised labour market and production system, the result of the polarisation and concentration of economic power.
b) Cultural factors.
Social exclusion is also the product of deprivation of cultural and cognitive resources. It reveals itself in the inequality of access to resources such as education and communication, and in the discrimination of groups or peoples with different values and cultures, often accompanied by explicit or implicit forms of racism. These aspects of social exclusion are therefore related to the importance today of the cultural and symbolic capital, where radical inequalities often take place, and monopolies of knowledge and technology tend to consolidate.

c) Political and institutional factors.
Non-participation in civil life is another form of exclusion. It reveals itself when people are denied formal or real access to the system of civil and political rights, as well as to the system of social rights (primarily health, education and social security), which constitute today a citizen's basic endowment. Confinement or segregation (especially in asylums or prisons) and expulsion to marginal no man's lands outside "civil society" are common complements to this condition. In countries with a well-established welfare system, the increasing prevalence of these conditions is the extreme but inevitable result of neoliberal policies against systems whose aim is to achieve social justice and inclusion. In the many areas where war is underway, where dictatorial regimes are in place, and where ethnical cleansing, forced migrations or deportations of entire populations are carried out, these conditions are even more common. The complementary conditions of segregation and expulsion are thus extended, with the dramatic result that these peoples are excluded entirely from any form of civil status.

Social exclusion is thus a complex phenomenon: its various features combine economic marginality, cultural discrimination and civil exclusion in different ways, with one constant: their focus is always on disadvantaged social groups. Further aggravating circumstances should also be considered: physical or mental handicaps, gender or age discrimination (women in the first case, elderly people and children in the second), ethnical or cultural discrimination (minorities, immigrants), as well as the mere fact of living in local communities cut off from the creative destruction of economic dynamics. These are the types of people and of social conditions that are everywhere subject to social exclusion.

2.2. A survey of interventions against social exclusion
Because of these multiple features and converging factors, social exclusion is a crucial reference point for programs and initiatives representing strategies for human development. These strategies are committed to promoting economic development in deprived areas and to bringing about change in the social and institutional context. The aim of human development is in fact to transform economic development into greater wellbeing for the populations involved and to promote and extend social and political participation.

The operational programs and initiatives aimed at fighting social exclusion have different features which take into account the highly heterogeneous contexts in which they operate. The main differences are: the priority fields of action, the conditions of
disadvantage they choose as their main target, the types of organisation they are divided into.

The most significant fields of action are:
- the socially sustainable economic development of local contexts located in a marginal position, or cut off from the development dynamics of the global capitalistic economy (for instance through credit back up, promotion of enterprises, active labour policies)
- social policies, in their different articulations (health, education and training, income support, etc.)
- programs of urban regeneration operating in socially and economically deprived areas

Very often, each of these fields of action requires further initiatives against social exclusion in other fields; at times, one field of action borders or overlaps with another area of intervention, as when economic and social policy measures are combined. These combinations, which can take on different features and lead to different outcomes, are not always easy to bring about; they are, however, strategically relevant in the fight against social exclusion.

The targeted conditions of social disadvantage are:
- large pockets of exclusion or marginality in the labour market, expressed by different forms of unemployment, precarious work conditions where jobs are insecure and badly paid
- physical or mental disabilities that attract - and are matched by - other reasons for social disadvantage, mainly access barriers to the workplace
- run down urban areas, affected by a concentration of severe housing problems, shortage of basic services, lack of economic resources and exchanges
- abandonment, caused by the loss of a social network and by processes of disaffiliation (as in the case of street children)
- segregation, in prisons, asylums, mental hospitals, concentration camps, refugee camps, which separate and exclude people from civil society

The disadvantaged conditions subject to intervention are often highly focused and clearly defined; in some cases, however, the initiatives operate jointly on different conditions of disadvantage. To focus too closely on a specific group or on a specific social disadvantage can isolate the intervention or restrict it to a specialised setting, severed from the social context. On the other hand, the attention focused on individual cases and real people can generate energy and contribute to identifying the reasons for social exclusion, and thus effect change.

The most common types of organisations are:
- international bodies, with programs aimed at fighting social exclusion; these are either public (such as the UN) or private (such as charitable foundations), and operate through a network of local agencies
- non-profit private organisations (such as NGOs, social co-operatives, non-profit enterprises, associations), engaged in one or more of the different fronts of the fight against social exclusion
- local public administrations, equipped with policies and system services to fight social exclusion (municipalities, regional authorities, health service authorities, etc.)
- mobilisation and aggregation of citizens around civil and political issues around which common goals and projects are set up, as in the case of neighbourhood committees devoted to participatory programs of urban regeneration, or associations in defence of rights, including unions and advocacy groups

Operational programs are usually a combination of different types of organisations, which can vary according to their relative importance, to the kind of leader organisations, partnerships and inter-organisational networks.

3. CRITERIA FOR ANALYSIS AND INTERVENTION

As we have seen, the problem of social exclusion is by no means simple. Not only is it caused by different factors but it also expresses itself in different forms; moreover, each case is specific, and it is impossible to compare different local contexts. There are more specific reasons for its complexity, however.

A detailed analysis of the construction and implementation of interventions requires widely differing issues to be examined jointly in order to identify links between various polarities. The links are both conceptual and practical and include those between:

a) the pole of the individual, the subjective experience of the excluded person, the specificity of individual cases, and the pole of the social, collective and structural conditions of social exclusion;
b) the pole of the need for welfare support and social justice systems, and the pole of the need for economic investment, both in monetary terms and in terms of development projects and ideas;
c) the pole of local specific conditions, which must be acknowledged and appreciated, and the pole of global networks on which these specific conditions are often dependent;
d) the pole of radical exclusion, measured by the sheer opportunity to survive, and the pole of soft exclusion, measured by conditions of passivity and subjection, and by exclusion from active citizenship.

Both on a conceptual and on a practical level, the ability to establish a link between these polarities, to deal with them jointly, is a crucial parameter for the quality and the effectiveness of the strategies of action against social exclusion.

3.1. Between subjects and contexts.

Social exclusion is primarily an experience of deprivation, to be considered from the perspective of those who live in this condition and find it difficult, or impossible, to handle it in all its forms and in all its cumulative effects. This difficulty is closely linked to the social conditions in which these people live, and to the social organisation that
produces and perpetuates such conditions. In other words, social exclusion concerns individual lives and concrete people, but at the same time it highlights their social conditions; it concerns excluded individuals and groups as much as the society they live in, or in which they struggle to survive (see Castel, 1995; Mingione, 1991; Sassen, 1999).

If analytical and operational attention is focused only on the first pole, there is a clear risk of setting apart target individuals and groups and creating specialised, abstract settings that separate them from their actual social contexts. If, on the other hand, the social causes of their problems are addressed exclusively, the opportunity to learn and make use of the knowledge gained from the experience of exclusion (especially by those directly involved) is wasted.

When planning programs and interventions against social exclusion we should therefore start from concrete, individual cases, but at the same time use them as a guideline for transforming the social processes that, in local contexts, reproduce their condition of exclusion. Changing these processes, and therefore changing real life experience, means also changing these patterns and bringing about social change.

To give an example: if the target is the problem of low life expectancy at birth - when babies are born prematurely and underweight, in conditions of severe economic deprivation - the first thing to do is, of course, support the baby and its mother in ways previously experimented. However, the target that remains is to improve the women's condition of malnutrition and severe deprivation, clearly the source of the problem. Thus, the intervention should ensure that expectant mothers are adequately fed and in good mental and physical health.

The example holds for strategies of intervention dealing with health or housing problems, or those which aim to integrate disabled people in the workplace. The initial target is the first stretch of an open path leading to interventions on social conditions at their source, beyond the borders of the specific field of action, and on social organisation systems at the very heart of the social structure.

As influential studies have pointed out (Castel, 1995), social exclusion, rather than being a static condition of particular individuals or groups in a society, is a dynamic path of progressive deprivation, a spiral, where different social processes, pertaining to different areas of social life, intertwine and combine, reinforcing each other. The processes leading to social exclusion run through the whole fabric of society, thriving on its "normal" order and casting its shadow on almost all of its people. When there is social exclusion there is often, at its source, a problem of social vulnerability, inequality, discrimination and social injustice, and - at the other end of the spectrum - monopolies of wealth and power.

Programs and interventions against social exclusion must therefore deal with the dynamic, ongoing nature of the problem. They should become processes themselves, continuously evolving projects, open building yards whose goal is not just the social reintegration of the excluded, but also the ability to fight and revert the social processes that expel, exclude and banish people to the fringes of society.

A typical example is the story of the de-institutionalisation of mental asylums in some countries and in some local contexts. The event triggered different interpretations and methodologies of action in contiguous areas of intervention (see Basaglia, 1984; Rotelli, 1999; De Leonardis, Mauri, Rotelli, 1986; 1994; De Leonardis, 1993). The target of allowing mental patients to retrieve their citizenship was the first step of a
transformation - carried out with their active participation - of the social conditions at the source of their experience of exclusion. This was achieved by operating on an institutional level, making changes in the law, lobbying for the suppression of mental asylums, bringing about changes in the organisation, culture and practice of public health, activating niches of economic enterprise to increase opportunities for work, generating income and creating economic and social exchange thereby setting indirectly into motion dynamics of local economic development.

More in general, this dynamic, ongoing perspective creates a tendency to move beyond sector policies, focused on narrowly defined targets, and to set up integrated policies that combine the targets of achieving social redistribution, economic development and an enhanced participation in civil life. The polarities at issue here underscore how crucial direct experience of the problem is in order to fight social exclusion effectively. The only way to achieve this aim is to work together with the excluded, and learn from their first-hand experience.

3.2. Between local and global.
Since social exclusion is more prevalent in specific groups, areas and conditions, it is necessary to focus both analytical and operational attention on the local dimension. Laying down roots in local contexts is an essential prerequisite for setting into motion more general processes of change in the forms of economic development, the role of public institutions and the conditions of democratic participation.

It is clear, however, that these local conditions of social exclusion are part of the macro-dynamics of a global condition (Sassen, 1991; World Bank, 1997): they cannot be tackled without taking into account the processes of globalisation that exclude areas and social groups from economic life. In any case, reflections and programs must deal with the question at both the local and the global level. Working at both levels is an acknowledged target, and a difficult one to pursue, in research as much as in policy-making (consider, for example, the debate on the decline and possible transformations of the State).

Considering the problem from the perspective of social exclusion, it becomes clear that the following bridges between local and global should be built and strengthened:

a) enhancing links through communication flows, for example by creating networks of best practices against social exclusion

b) appreciating the positive aspects of territorial mobility induced by globalisation (in migratory flows even in the extreme forms of mass deportations), in order to create opportunities for cultural exchanges, hybrid conditions and links based on common experiences

c) enhancing vertical links in the networks through bottom-up strategies reaching national powers and authorities in order to affect their policies, and placing the problem of social exclusion on the agendas of international bodies mediating between local and global (Technical Liaison Officer, 1999).

3.3. Between welfare and work.
Triggering processes of local economic development is therefore a crucial condition if patterns of social exclusion are to be fought and reversed. In order to address the complexity of the problem, local economic development should have a social aim, should strive to achieve social justice and should be grounded in strategies for redistributing the opportunities to participate in economic life and wellbeing. Policies of an economic nature should therefore be closely linked with welfare interventions.

On the one hand, there is the need for a commitment to create enterprises and productive systems that increase work, income and economic exchange opportunities (through investments in small enterprises, forms of financial and technical support, etc.). However, a commitment exclusively focused on the economic level runs the risk of reproducing patterns of selection and expulsion from the benefits of economic growth on the part of the weakest sectors of the population. This is due to the restraints imposed by the economy even at a local level, given the imperatives of flexibility and in general the trend towards increasing the gap between economic growth and employment.

There is therefore a need for an additional commitment to social policies, to increase welfare and aid available to individuals and groups on the fringes of economic life. Even this commitment, however, if isolated, risks in its turn perpetuating this marginality, condemning those most in need of help to a condition of passivity, transforming them into needy and dependent recipients of welfare interventions. There is also the risk of reducing social commitment to the mere distribution of resources produced elsewhere, too scarce to really solve the problem of poverty and social exclusion.

In order to establish a link between economics and welfare, it is necessary to build investment strategies, both of an economic and of a social nature, so as to improve the human and social capital of the area. This can be done by:

a) making room for different forms of economic initiative, investing in the local heritage of knowledge and practice, and enhancing economic forces other than monetary and market ones
b) activating, connecting and putting into circulation the hidden and unconventional resources of local contexts, especially those that remain dispersed and unused in marginal environments - even those held by the excluded themselves
c) intensifying sociality, activating spaces and relations networks in the social fabric, social meetings and exchanges that can breed common projects, participatory enterprises and economic exchanges.

The experiences of social enterprise, developed in various local contexts mostly out of the need to avoid the increasing budget constraints imposed by welfare cuts, are a typical example of methodologies of action that combine welfare targets and interventions with economic ones (De Leonardis, Mauri, Rotelli, 1994; De Leonardis, 1994; 1999. On the one hand, social services are turned into laboratories undertaking the construction of spaces for social and economic exchange, where the disadvantaged recipients of welfare themselves - and their life contexts - can be involved and can act as main agents (whether they be mentally ill patients, drug addicts, immigrants, chronically unemployed people, convicts, etc.); on the other hand, the economic enterprises thus created or involved are guided towards enhancing the competence and project abilities of
the same disadvantaged subjects, and promoting their active participation in entrepreneurial choices and in economic exchanges. Along with the products they put on the market, they also create "marketplaces" and economic actors who meet there, exchange and participate in the local fabric of economic and social life.

3.4. Between survival and political action
The problem of social exclusion must be dealt with in its whole range of complexity, from its most extreme aspects to the apparently "softer" ones. On the one hand we have to deal with cases of radical deprivation of resources and violation of the most basic human rights. There are three different examples of such radical deprivation:

a) disadvantaged starting conditions, expressed by low life expectancy at birth, like those highlighted and analysed by Sen, concerning women in different countries in the South of the world (Sen, 1999)
b) conditions of radical invalidation of the self, caused by internment in asylums, such as mental asylums (or even concentration camps)
c) loss of a world to belong to, as a consequence of war, escape and deportation

Even the most common and more subtle forms of social exclusion - non-involvement and passivity towards civil and political participation in local contexts of belonging - should be included in the problem: there is no citizenship where it cannot really be practised (Bauman, 1999; Beck et al., 1997). When planning programs and interventions dealing with such a complex problem as social exclusion, these poles should be considered together as two sides of the same coin.

The pole of radical deprivation is essential to counterbalance the risk that interventions privilege fields in which it seems more possible to have a real influence thus reproducing selective patterns that exclude yet again exactly those people in extreme need, and perversely confirming the very logic of exclusion. The pole of soft deprivation - of the opportunity to participate in civil life - is, in its turn, essential to counterbalance the risk that interventions become mere donations to the excluded who are treated as passive recipients and as such eventually condemned to stay on the fringe of social life.

The parameter of civil and political participation requires strategies of action whose aim is to acknowledge the excluded as protagonists seeking a way out from their condition of exclusion, and to give them back their rights and their basic opportunities to choose and act for themselves (Sen, 1992). Programs and practices of action should therefore satisfy both the need for resources - primarily of a material kind, indispensable for survival, for human dignity and for life expectancy - and, at the same time, satisfy the need for cultural and political resources, indispensable for the practice of citizenship.

Programs and initiatives against social exclusion, aimed at establishing a link between these two poles and combining the most basic human rights with the right to a full participation in citizenship, have, as a crucial parameter of their methodologies of action, the reconstruction of the basic rights and choices of people who have been invalidated by a radical deprivation of resources.

The experience described before of people interned in asylums who have won their right to participate in citizenship has left a store of knowledge and skills which is very useful for dealing with other types of social exclusion. While acknowledging and
stimulating the capabilities of the people involved, social contexts were transformed and rebuilt in order to accommodate them, thus creating actors who participated in these contexts and in their improvement, protagonists in choices concerning public life, personal and collective projects, of initiatives and organisations contributing in various ways to social change (Basaglia, 1984; Rotelli, 1999).

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. A preliminary prerequisite
If fighting social exclusion is to be an important priority in human development programs, the first recommendation is that interventions should establish links between the polarities inherent in the problem of social exclusion. In accordance with this very general recommendation, programs should address the following features which should be subject to the circulation of knowledge, communication, research and training. They concern:

- organisational forms that actively pursue a high ratio between targets and outcomes;
- methodologies of action consistently aimed at fighting and overcoming social exclusion, and at establishing links between polarities
- the types of basic skills necessary in the different fields involved
- the training methodologies for these skills

4.2. Organisational forms

4.2.1. It is important that programs pay attention to the organisational forms they choose, gaining the necessary knowledge and experiences to recognise and orient the generative potential of the organisational sphere (Tendler, 1997). The organisation is wedged between programs and their outcomes. It moulds the action by outlining its results. As has been amply proved by aid programs for local development, different ways of organising programs lead to very different outcomes. Moreover, the ability to trigger autonomous processes of fair and sustainable local development depends on organisational forms that facilitate the autonomous organisation of the contexts of intervention, and take care of its quality;

4.2.2. It is therefore important that programs equip themselves with organisations and organisational skills with the following characteristics:

- learning organisations: open processes, such as laboratories or building yards, that change as they develop step by step, in order better to respond to the changes taking place
- gateways organisations: on the border between different positions, social (wealth and poverty), cultural (otherness and cultural conflicts) or institutional (separate and non-communicating authorities). Their function is to build passageways, gateways in social rifts, areas of co-operation on projects, synergies between interests
- grounded organisations: primarily created by actors and interactions in local social life, with the resource of experience and knowledge expressed there;
- organisations for participatory projects: oriented towards the formulation and pursuit of projects. They take care of the quality of processes, as well as the outcomes: involvement of recipients, even as far as strategic choices are concerned, partnerships among different actors concerning shared targets, participation, discussion, learning and adjustments in progress.

4.3. Methodologies of action

4.3.1. Laying down roots in the real contexts of action is an essential prerequisite of programs fighting social exclusion. The energy and resources needed to escape exclusion should be sought and motivated from the inside. This is why methodologies of action should:

- avoid pre-constituted solutions, outlining the problem in advance on the basis of prearranged models
- be oriented to listening, to seeking out solutions using the specific capital of culture, experience and interpretations from within the context of action

4.3.2. The ongoing character of actions and operations necessary for fighting processes of social exclusion requires methodologies of action that allow for reflection. These methodologies should be open to learning from experience and self-evaluation in order to facilitate adjustments in progress and changes in the course of action, and to avoid the crystallisation of know-how.

4.3.3. A crucial prerequisite is also to create social value added – at all levels, including the program’s daily implementation. This requires:

- the attention to be devoted to acknowledging and stimulating the context’s resources, especially hidden ones
- evaluating the action according to the validation of the contexts and subjects of intervention, acknowledging the existence of skills that should be activated and enhanced
- investing in this social and human capital in order to enhance it by giving it credit (also in the sense of trust), and at the same time taking risks

This aim requires different - even opposite - types of know-how. The relationship is very different to the usual aid relationship, in which the recipients (individuals or communities) are treated in terms of what they lack, not of the resources they can offer, in terms of the shortages to be made up for, not of the skills to be improved. This relationship aims to enhance the social and human capital of contexts and subjects, and thus measures entrepreneurial methodologies with different parameters from those of the economic market.

4.3.4. The ultimate sign of success in the fight against social exclusion is when the groups and local communities where actions have been undertaken no longer need the programs and interventions. An essential methodological principle to adopt if this aim is to be
achieved is to make sure that actions generate institutions and take care of their social quality (Beck et al., 1997; De Leonardis, 2000). It is important:
- to know how to acknowledge and use the powers that programs and their organisational articulations possess, to create values and social norms in the daily interaction with the concrete contexts in which they operate
- to rely on social mobilisation and conflicts in order to foster the building of institutions that can become tools of democratic participation, mediation and collective choice in common problems and aims
- to make sure that institutions, especially in their operational articulations such as the social services, act according to standards of social quality, in order to measure both the quality of private citizens' lives (primarily the availability of basic social goods and services) and the quality of citizenship and public life (primarily conditions of social justice) so as to redistribute opportunities of social and political participation among the whole population.

4.4. Competence

4.4.1. A preliminary general statement concerns the scientific and professional competence necessary for setting up and implementing programs to fight social exclusion with the characteristics mentioned above. Rather than designing new professional figures, it would be appropriate to exploit the skills available in the program staff, and especially in local contexts. Basic competence should be enhanced by means of training in the various, specific fields of action.

4.4.2. In accordance with the recommendations outlined in paragraph 3.2., it is necessary to develop competence in organisation, i.e. training and transmitting methodologies of analysis and action consistent with the organisational dimension. Crucial skills are, on the one hand, being able to recognise the signs of an organisation that is withdrawing into a self-referential circuit whose only purpose is organisation itself; on the other, knowing how to put into practise methodologies of action that promote processes of learning and changing the organisation itself;

4.4.3. It is important to promote people who are skilled in connecting: agents of projects whose aim is to build bridges, to establish relations between areas of intervention, to promote co-operation between forces belonging to separate and extraneous worlds.

4.4.4. It is important to promote people who are skilled in facilitating: in order to boost participation of local communities in general, and of disadvantaged subjects in particular, communication, relationship-building, the circulation of experience and knowledge, co-operation are all essential. It is especially important to know how to draft projects in which these communities and subjects can gradually become protagonists.

4.4.5. It is important to cultivate and increase skills in dealing with conflicts. These skills include:
- the ability to bring them to light, instead of suppressing them (social exclusion is often the result of suppressed conflicts)
- the "creative management of conflicts", especially if oriented towards a shared reformulation of problems and reasons of conflicts
- the socialisation of conflict and of the learning and changes that take place in it, activating spaces of discussion and democratic participation on the subject.

4.5. Training methodologies

4.5.1. Adequate training for programs fighting social exclusion should be directed at the skills shared and practised by a collective work group (team, project group, community initiative, individual organisation or network of organisations) rather than towards individual competence and related professional skills. The essential aim is to acquire methodologies of action that cut across individual professional skills and disciplines and that develop both the skills needed to formulate programs and to manage operational practices. The should also concern the way collective work is organised.

4.5.2. Since the target of these methodologies is to establish a link between the polarities underlying social exclusion, the training should include research and the sharing of experience regarding these polarities and the links between them.

4.5.3. In order to learn how to establish links between polarities, adequate training is needed to identify the powers in the field and to know how to make them interact, how to produce changes in them and build new powers, how to create new institutional bases for policies and programs to fight social exclusion;

4.5.4. Learning to learn: this crucial training target demands that training activities, teaching methods and the role of trainers is aimed at enhancing:

a) the ability to listen, to make comparisons with different positions, to make self-evaluations
b) a “negative capability” that makes it possible to deal with the unknown and build projects in situations of uncertainty and risk

4.5.5. The methodologies of action and the competence recommended can be acquired and enhanced through experience. In particular, they can be formed in direct contact with practices. Training based on operational apprenticeships should be pursued and encouraged by every possible means. Last but not least, the heritage of best practices in fighting social exclusion at the basis of these recommendations should be exploited to the full.
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