Application of the Systemic Approach to local and central policies for migration, as strategy to move over contrasting ideologies and build resilient, functional and inclusive societies

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Abstract

Referring to migration, two aspects are unquestionable and important to consider: Migrations exist since ever and are an integral aspect of the human beings; Globalisation facilitates communication and movements, and these enable people to displace across countries shifting the number of migrants from 150 million in 2000 to 272 million in 2020 (IOM 2020). This essentially means that migration is and will likely always be part of our existence and, regardless of any ideology and belief, finding functional approaches to manage at best this phenomenon is in the interest of every single citizen and nation. The objective of this article is to shed light on the effectiveness of the Systemic Approach to deal with some of the main migration related issues and develop efficient policies to make societies more resilient, inclusive, and smart. The Systems Theory builds a solid bridge between science and societal life and provides an incredible tool not only to understand and solve problems related to human interactions, but also to discover successful ways to rule the common existence of people, in any context.

Keywords: Migration, Systemic Approach, Change Management

Abstract

Relativamente alle migrazioni, due concetti si dimostrano tanto incontestabili quanto importanti da considerare: Si tratta di fenomeni che esistono da sempre e che rappresentano un aspetto integrante degli esseri umani; La globalizzazione favorisce la comunicazione e gli spostamenti tra paesi e continenti, contribuendo così ad incrementare il numero dei migranti che tra il 2000 ed il 2020 è passato da 150 a 272 milioni (IOM 2020). Questo significa, in sostanza, che molto probabilmente le migrazioni continueranno ad essere parte della nostra esistenza e, indipendentemente da qualsivoglia ideologia, trovare approcci funzionali ad una gestione efficace di tale fenomeno è nell'interesse di ogni nazione e di ogni individuo. L'obbiettivo di questo articolo consiste nel fare luce su come e quanto l'utilizzo dell'approccio sistemico possa dimostrarsi vincente per la prevenzione e gestione di una serie di criticità connesse ai flussi migratori, e per lo sviluppo di politiche volte a rendere le società più resilienti, inclusive ed intelligenti. La Teoria dei Sistemi costituisce un ponte tra scienza e

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società, e si dimostra essere uno strumento incredibile non solo per l'analisi e la risoluzione dei problemi, ma anche per lo sviluppo di nuove strategie di gestione dei meccanismi di organizzazione ed interazione umana, in ogni contesto.

Parole chiave: Immigrazione, Approccio Sistemico, Gestione del cambiamento

Introduction

Writing about migration is extremely complex since it encompasses many aspects and nuances of individual, social, economic, and political life. Variables that influence and are influenced by migration are interconnected, interdependent and often inseparable, both in origin and host countries, or regions. At the international level, no universally accepted definition for "migrant" exists. In the framework of this abstract, the meaning of the term "migrant" refers to the classification of the International Organization for Migrations (IOM), which states that:

This is an umbrella term, not defined under international law, reflecting the common lay understanding of a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons (IOM 2019).

We can relate our imagine of migrants to men or women, skilled or unskilled labour force, waves coming from non-EU nations or from rural to urban areas of the same region, students, researchers, diplomats, employees of public authorities or international organisations, people in search of new experiences or escaping desperation, poverty, wars, violence, political or religious persecution, natural disaster, conflicts, climate change and water scarcity.

These visualisations change depending on our perceptions, based on where we live and what we focus on. We all interacted with or have been migrants at some point of our existence. In a such complicate and rich landscape, some evidences are unquestionable and important to consider: Migrations exist since ever and are integral aspect of the human beings; Globalisation facilitates communication and movements, and these enable people to displace across countries shifting the number of migrants from 150 million in 2000 to 272 million in 2020 (IOM 2020). This essentially means that migration is and will likely always be part of our existence and, regardless of any ideology and belief, finding functional approaches to manage at best this phenomenon is in the interest of every single citizen and nation.

The objective of this article is to shed light on the effectiveness of the Systemic Approach to deal with some of the main migration related issues and develop efficient policies to make societies more resilient, inclusive, and smart.

The Systemic Approach consists in the concrete use of the Theory of Systems to a specific purpose. The General System Theory (GST) was outlined by the Austrian biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1901-1972), who demonstrated how all systems, independently of their nature and components, share common characteristics and functioning rules. This finding builds a solid bridge between science and societal life and provides an incredible tool not only to understand and solve problems related to human interactions, but also to discover successful ways to manage the common existence of people, in any context.

The contents addressed in the following paragraphs result from over eighteen years of concrete field experience, supporting International Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations, Civil Society Organizations, public authorities and companies in the implementation of change and transition processes for sustainable development and growth, coping with all forms of resistance. Any contribution and consideration in this article come from field practices, made of successes and failures, questionings and doubts, observations and analysis, discussions and collaborations, problems and solutions, changes and resistance, risks and fears, and above all of people and their systems.

1. Concrete use of the Systemic Approach to migration

1.1 Definition of a system and its environment

The initial step to understand the functionality of the Systemic approach applied to migration, and to establish a common language across this article as well, is the definition of System:

As a sum of parts (components) and of the relational and organizational rules that determine the way they interact together, in a particular environment and temporal boundaries, and with a specific reason, where every part of the system is so related to its fellow parts that a change in one part will cause a change in all of them and in the total system (Watzlawick, Beavin, Don 2011).

Examples of systems are everywhere. A nation is a system, but also a municipality, a school, a company, or a family. All of us are part of numerous systems and this is also why it is extremely important to own specific knowledge related to the Systemic Approach: it can extraordinarily enlarge our understanding of events and problems, increase our power of action, improve our leadership and wellbeing.

Along with this article, we will refer to hosting countries as systems, made of their institutions and inhabitants, and of the sets of formal rules and social behaviours that shape their coexistence and interaction, determining specific political, cultural and socio-economic results.

1.2 The systemic Principle of Nonsummativity

Referring to migration, the first systemic rule that is worthy of attention is the Principle of Nonsummativity, which states that:

A system cannot be taken for the sum of its parts; Indeed, formal analysis of artificially isolated segments would destroy the very object of interest, this is because a system is not behaving like a simple compound of independent elements, but consistently as an indivisible whole (Watzlawick, Beavin, Don 2011).

This means that to analyse and understand specific phenomena and problems, and consequently develop relevant policies and governance strategies, we cannot refer to a country as a sum of different social groups that interact together, but as a whole identity shaped by the all the components and the way they act, interact, relate, communicate and organize together.

The difference between the two is substantial. In the first case, the focus of the analysis and the design of new policies and solving interventions inside a system target specific features, actions, and behaviours of the social groups that are directly associated to the interested phenomenon or problem. In the second case, the focus is on the detection and change of the ineffective mechanisms – which can be made of formal laws or collective behaviours – that trigger the interested phenomenon or problem inside the system. In the first case, we address people, and this approach can easily turn into disruptive consequences, conflicts and situations without a way out. In the second case, we address policies, laws and societal habits that can be modified.

Why is the principle of Nonsummativity useful to move over dysfunctional contrasting ideologies and build resilient societies?

To explain facts and social problems, we generally include in our survey only the apparently and directly involved groups, using a linear-causal approach based on a guilty-victim perspective. Consequently, and automatically, we overgeneralise and simplify the reality, shaping two factions: the perpetrators and the sufferers. The former are collectively perceived as the offenders, owning the responsibility for the concerned issue and the sole (apart the public authorities) to have the power to resolve the situation, since the change depends on their decisions and acts. The latter are collectively perceived as victims, without any responsibility for the concerned issue and therefore with no power to solve nor modify the situation. Their role is limited to wait and claim for a

change, which depends on other people's will and actions, or on the effectiveness of the formal laws and their enforcement. This approach threatens both the equilibrium of systems and the possibility to enact relevant changes, growth, and development interventions.

First, how to establish who are the victims and who are the perpetrators?

The answer generally depends on the possible different positions and viewpoints, and both the roles are attributed and exploited by contrasting extreme ideologies. Populism, for example, blames migrants and gains public consensus by arising fear and resentment of local citizens and defending their apparent interests. At the same time, a certain number of organizations that support migrants act in the same way but in a reversed scenario. As a result, tensions and anger augment jeopardising the system's balance. The situation is stuck: all the involved actors believe to be the sufferers, therefore without any responsibility and room for action. Finally, this description hides the ineffective functioning structures that are the real key of the problem and must be substituted to allow the system to grow.

According to the Principle of Nonsummativity, this representation based on a linear guilty-victim perspective, which is very common and widespread above all among mass media across the planet, is not only unrealistic but also totally unfunctional since it triggers additional grater problems: such as the instrumentalization by extreme ideologies, conflicts, system's weakness and paralysis.

Opposite to the above-described binomial vision, the Principle of Nonsummativity clearly asserts that any outcome that a system produces cannot be endorsed only to some specific groups, but to all the parts that act as an indivisible whole. This means that the totality of the components is responsible (of course with different degrees and roles) for the positive or negative results that their system achieves: included margination, violence, segregation, stereotypes, and many other issues commonly attributed to migration.

Standing to this systemic vision, to solve problems the focus must shift from people, or social groups, to the system's structures: the formal or social norms that are damaging and need to be modified. Consequently, the only useful and solving approach does not consist in blaming nor victimizing specific people, as extreme ideologies do, but in the collective recognition and change of the unfunctional systemic working structures.

When in 2008, with DISVI – Disarmo e Sviluppo –, the organizations I was working for, I started the project *Improvement of living conditions of internal conflict affected communities*, funded by Europe-Aid, to support the most vulnerable groups affected by the inner conflict in Nepal, the situation of the Internally Displaced Persons was dramatic.

Internally displaced persons (IDPs), according to the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, are persons or groups of

persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border (UNHCR 1998).

The armed conflict in Nepal, between the Government and the Maoist Party, lasted from 1996 to 2006 and forced between 50.000 and 70.000 people to leave their homes and villages (OCHA 2008).

In the rural areas of Dharan and Itahari, where the project took place, many IDPs settled down along the rivers, where there were the only few available public plots and the poorest local population lived in extremely difficult conditions. Internal migrations exasperated problems related to scarce land fertility and food insecurity, insufficient room and annual flooding that regularly eroded the soil, inadequate hygiene and sanitation, and severe deprivation. Consequently, migrants and inhabitants perceived each other as a reciprocal threat due to the limited availability of resources, and this conflict undermined the overall resilience of the rural communities to the current hardships.

The Principle of Nonsummativity suggested us to shift the focus to the systemic structural, organizational and relational weakness of these rural communities.
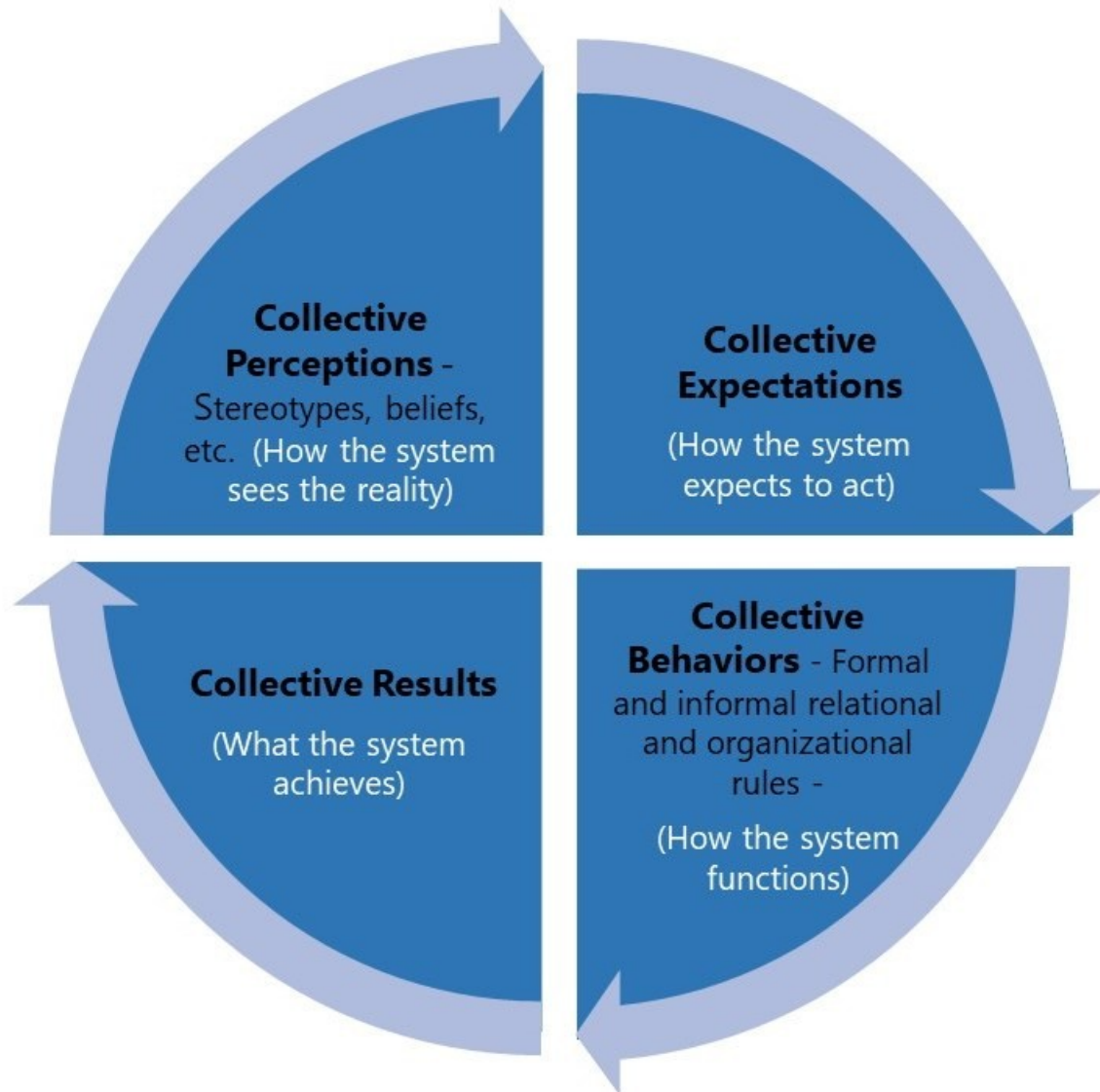
What were the local systems' unfunctional working mechanisms that made the living conditions so hard? What were the concrete population responsibilities and room for action to change?

Only when the communities accepted to stop mutual blaming and work together to search for the answers to the above questions, the situation started to change and substantially improve. They recognized that: They had stopped using traditional agricultural and farming knowledge and strategies, which were getting lost; They had not developed any form of collective organization of the rural tasks nor any shared emergency plan to prevent or manage rivers floods; They were not represented at the local public authorities; The building and management of their shelters were ineffective, as well as the hygiene related behaviours.

Based on this new shared vision and awareness, Internally Displaced Persons and hosting communities jointly and successfully worked during three years, and: Recovered the ancient traditional rural know how, which was collected into an illustrated guideline to cope with soil infertility and to cultivate healing plants; Differentiated and specialized their jobs to better meet the nutritional needs, and developed a community system to protect villages from seasonal floods; Improved shelters based on space, energy and sanitation requirements, and integrated new practices for a better hygiene; Developed a community health system with the active

participation of all the villagers and, finally, they elected representatives to communicate with local public authorities and advocate for their rights.

The empowered self-responsibility and self-management capacity reinforced people's resilience and inclusion and improved the common understanding on how and how much the social collaboration was a key

strength.

The Principle of Nonsummativity, not only wards off people from conflict, fragmentation and segregation, paralysis and discharging of responsibilities, but it also perfectly complies with and it is absolutely useful to promote the European principle of social cohesion, as core mean to: i) Reduce social exclusion of certain groups in a society – in this case of immigrants in particular – and reduce disparities between groups; ii) Strengthen social relations and social capital between groups (EU Commission DG Employement and Social Affairs 2005).

All Member States are concerned about ways of promoting and maintaining social order and feelings of togetherness among their populations. This is particularly the case when they are faced with a growing diversity that stems from immigration (EU Commission DG Employement and Social Affairs 2005).

The concrete use of the principle of Nonsummativity have been extremely useful in all my assignments and professional experiences to make the components of the target systems (which could be local communities or organizations for example) much more responsible of their reality and empowered to actively improve their living conditions and cope with problems.

1.3 The systemic Principle of Equifinality

In a circular and self-modifying system, results are not determined so much by initial conditions as by the nature of the process, or the system parameters. Simply stated, this Principle of Equifinality means that the same results may springs from different origins, because it is the nature of the organization which is determinate. The open system may attain a time-independent state independent of initial conditions and determined only by the system parameters (…), then not only may different initial conditions yield the same final result, but different results may be produced by the same causes (Watzlawick, Beavin, Don 2011).

The Principle of Equifinality asserts that initial conditions do not determine the outcomes that a system achieves, which are instead produced by its functioning structures: the organisational and relational formal and informal rules that define the way the component parts act and interact (from a relational and organizational viewpoint), manage their territory and the available resources. This means that referring to countries as systems, made of all their citizens and of the social behaviours and formal norms that rule their interaction and life together, the results that each nation achieves are not really given by the overall initial conditions – as for example the geographical settings, soil typology, religion, past traditions and experiences, history, etc. – but by the quality of the current organizational and relational structures. This also helps to explain why neighbouring countries, sharing similar starting conditions, can achieve deeply different results.

A concrete example, among many others, is represented by the state of Kerala, which enacted a set of institutional laws and informal behaviours leading the country to become a real model in terms of achievements concerning social inclusion, social protection, education and food security, differently from most of its surrounding nations.

It is no accident that the southwestern Indian state of Kerala has fared better than many others in the COVID-19 crisis. The state has a long

tradition of investing in its people and institutions, and of fostering a civic and political culture of mutual respect, trust, and compassion (Taroor 2020).

Evidence of the importance of the principle of Equifinality is also showed by all those countries that, in short periods, rapidly moved to new and different overall living conditions based on a change of leadership and of the ruling organisational and relational structures, although in the same starting environmental and cultural conditions.

When migration related issues raise, mass media, politicians, organizations, and citizens more in general, tend to identify the triggering causes in some general starting circumstances such as poverty, for example, scarce availability of resources, cultural or religious features, unemployment, etc. This vision is risky and useless as well. It is risky because it represents a fertile ground to sow conflicting and extreme ideologies that, based on this description, justify and somehow legitimate intolerance, unacceptance, exclusion, non-compliance with the legislation, conflicts and violence from migrants or from local populations depending on the viewpoint. It is also risky because it paralyses the systems and all their components in a distorting framework without way out, limiting any form of resilience. If to deal with problems related to migration states should before reduce poverty or increase the available natural resources, this would mean the concrete impossibility to act, at least in the short and medium period. Finally, this vision is useless since it takes into primary consideration and analysis causes that are not so much determinant as we usually believe. Poverty and high unemployment rates of destination countries, for example, are often used to justify ineffective formal migratory policies of governments and discriminatory attitudes vis a vis of migrants that are perceived as an economic threat, even if this description does not correspond to real quantitatively nor qualitatively objectively data.

United Arab Emirates, for example, are in the eight position in the list of the ten richest world's countries (Ventura 2020), while they rank fourth in the classification of the world's five worst immigration policies (Ralph 2012).

Authorities restricted freedom of expression, imprisoning government critics and holding them in dire conditions. However, migrant workers remained tied to employers under the kafala – sponsorship – system, which made them vulnerable to labour abuses and exploitation. (Amnesty International 2019).

Italy ranks sixth in the list of the world best migration policies, before richer countries such as France for example (Krylova, Barder 2016).

Moreover, populism gains people consensus, especially among the most deprived social groups of developed countries, arising common hostility to migrants through to the false myth that migration increases the already

alarming local poverty rate, while international studies demonstrate that effective migratory policies improve system's development.

Migration is one of the defining features of the 21st century and significantly contributes to economic and social development everywhere; As such, migration will be key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (Hagen-Zanker, Mosler, Vidal, Postel 2017).

Furthermore, populism refers to local economic wellbeing as an attractive and triggering starting condition of huge migratory waves, generating alarmism and fear in richest nations, while reaches and literature highlights that most of the migrants move across developing countries.

The claim that the vast majority of migration is from South to North, poor to rich, is one of the biggest clichés – and the most unfair. In 2013, over 35% of all international migrants moved between developing countries. The 82 million migrants from the Global South made up just one third of international migration, while 67 million people migrated from the North to another developed or developing country (Caritas 2020).

Another common approach to explain the systemic unsuccessful management of migration, resulting in reciprocal conflicts and intolerance, and margination, is based on the idea that some cultures of destination and origin countries are too much different and incompatible to effectively coexist. Again, starting conditions are used to describe phenomena that they only marginally influence.

Referring to the data offered by the Migration Policy Institute about the native and migrant ethnic groups that compose the current population of the United Arab Emirates, for example, we can observe that this country is somehow characterized by a kind of religious and cultural homogeneity: Emirati 11.6%, South Asian 59.4% - includes Indian 38.2%, Bangladeshi 9.5%, Pakistani 9.4%, other 2.3%, Egyptian 10.2%, Philippine 6.1%, other 12.8% (MPI 2020). Yet, here exclusion and segregation of foreign workers seem to be stronger than in many other hosting countries.

Regardless of the overall starting conditions, systems must imperatively focus on their inner working mechanisms to cope with the main issues related to migrations and find the best strategies and modalities to guarantee people coexistence, collaboration and effective interaction towards the common wellbeing and overall development. Inside these functioning structures, they will discover a vast room for action and for improvement at formal and informal level. The formal level encompasses the set off official policies and norms, which institutionally govern the country's life and for which politicians, and indirectly citizens, are accountable. The informal level includes all the collective social behaviours: the way people act, relate and communicate. Social behaviours tremendously impact the functioning structures of systems,

and for this reason the systems' components, natives and migrants as well, must be enabled to be aware and responsible for them.

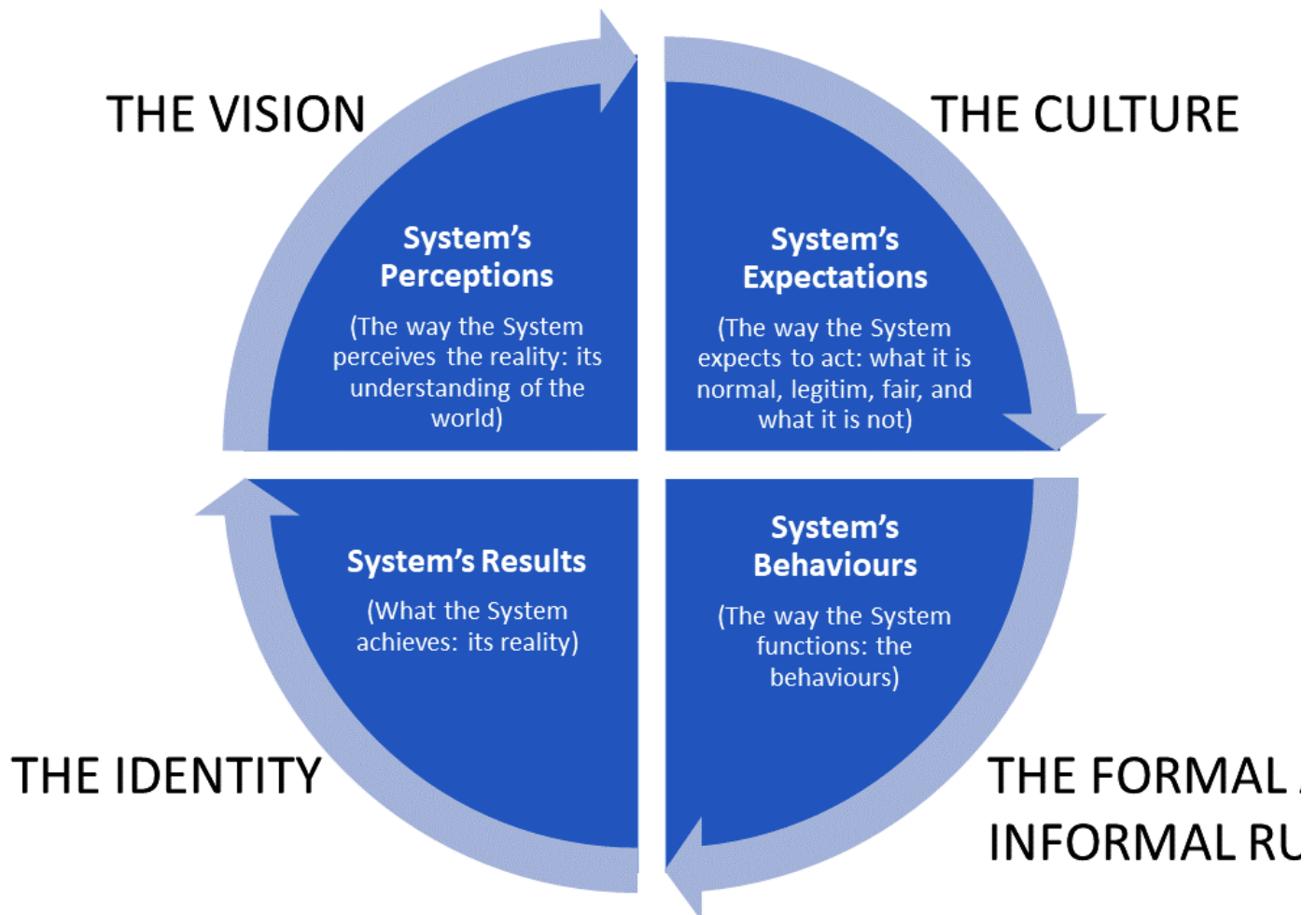How functioning structures work inside systems and generate results?

THE VISION

System's Perceptions

(The way the System perceives the reality: its understanding of the world)

THE CULTURE

System's Expectations

(The way the System expects to act: what it is normal, legitim, fair, and what it is not)

System's Results

(What the System achieves: its reality)

System's Behaviours

(The way the System functions: the behaviours)

THE IDENTITY

THE FORMAL INFORMAL RU

Figure 1. The systemic functioning cycle.

Each system owns and develops sets of perceptions related to events and phenomena, which outline its understanding and meaning of the world. The sum of these perceptions makes the system's vision. Perceptions also include convictions, stereotypes, bias, categorisations, and determine the systemic expectations. Expectations are the way the system assumes to act: What it is considered as fair, legitim, good and right to do and say, and what it is not. Expectations constitute the systemic culture on which bases the system develops and implements the functioning relational and organisational, formal and informal rules that, in turn, take shape in the collective behaviours and produce specific results. Results represent the current reality and identity of a system.

When specific problems related to migrations rise inside a given system, it means that some of its current results must be changed. For this to be done, the causing formal and informal norms must be detected and modified. This shift from an unproductive functioning mechanism to an improved one, which happens thanks to the introduction of new and more effective rules or social behaviours, requires to be supported by conducive systemic perceptions and expectations, aligned with the change's objectives and contents. If this does not happen, and the change pretends to take place without addressing the system's vision and the culture, most of the components will probably resist, and weak progresses of migration policies and approaches will take place.

In this regard, two main common mistakes are often made by institutions. The first one consists in trying to transform ineffective migration results, without any substantial modification of the systemic functioning structures. Systems pretend to achieve different outcomes acting almost the same way. The second one consists in establishing new formal rules to improve migration policies without considering their possible misalignment with previous rooted perceptions and expectations. This generally leads to a low collective respect of the new laws, increasing the gap between formal codes and social behaviours. In both cases, institutions respectively focus on results and official regulations, underestimating the human side of change. If people do not change, even not the best solution or policy will attain substantial results, and this is particularly true for migrants' socio-economic inclusion processes. "Culture does not make people. People make culture" (Ngozi Adichie 2020).

One of my first project of social cooperation addressing migrants was in partnership with the Gruppo Abele of Turin, in Italy. The target group was made of men and women coming from the North Africa, drugs and alcohol addicted, who were completely excluded from any form of integration or assistance process, and assimilated into criminal local and international mechanisms and dynamics. The main objective of the intervention was to bring back these people into a legal overall framework and better living conditions, which required the radical change of a set of collective behaviours rooted in the group. To this end, it was first of all necessary to break the self-nurturing cycle that chained these people and was based on the: Perception of been victims of the national system, completely left behind and persecuted by institutions; Expectation that not to respect the law was normal and commit illegal acts was in same way legitim due to their overall situation; Consequent criminal perpetrated behaviours and substances abuse; Justice prosecution that strengthened their starting perceptions.

The attempt to set up self-help groups with Maghreb citizens in particularly precarious situations, both due to the abuse of alcohol and drugs, and in severe conditions of deprivation, forced the operators involved in the project to question themselves about the philosophy of

the intervention, but also to implement progressive revisions and adjustments, according to the real needs of target group, which also thanks to the intervention have gradually become apparent. The turning point of the path was a systemic and articulated work strategy, able to take on the complexity of situations (D'Agnolo Vallan 2005).

Based on the principles of Nonsummativity and Equifinality, and thanks to the development of relevant capacities and strong local networks, a consistent part of the group shifted to a new descriptive cycle, where dysfunctional perceptions and attitudes, and individual and collective responsibilities were much clearer, and a new scenario made of so far unseen opportunities appeared.

When years later, as systemic change manager, I supported the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in the development of new guidelines, targeting both organizations and governments, to mainstream migration into local and national development policies and interventions, the principle of Equifinality have been important to integrate recommendations, shed light on possible risks and on the validity of the systemic approach. Moreover, the principle of Equifinality helped to focus the attention on a key point for change and growth: To develop and successfully enact new policies targeting or including migration, public and private organizations must consider all the four steps of the system functioning, building conducive and relevant collective perceptions – by addressing false myths for example – expectations and behaviours towards the desired results. This means that national institutions, mass media, associations, and educational structures have to jointly work on a shared systemic vision to empower citizens by improving their understanding and possibility to choose and select functional practices.

To recap, the Principle of Equifinality: highlights that results are independent from starting conditions and that to attain different outcomes systems need to change the generating organisational and relational rules. The implementation of the new formal and/or informal rules is not automatic nor given for granted inside systems: It requires the consideration and modification of possible limiting perceptions and expectations. This is why many changes fail: systems' institutions expect to grow through new laws, rarely addressing culture and vision shortcomings. To be successful, all transition process must include the four steps of the systemic human cycle of change (Perceptions, Expectations, Behaviours, Results) and the four stages of the human side of change: Awareness and information, motivation and willingness, capacity and capability, consolidation and sustainability.

1.4 The four stages of the Human side of change

Migration means change and, therefore, systems must be enabled to manage and incorporate changes as integral part of their functioning structures.

Strengthening awareness, of both citizens and migrants, represents the first important step to create the needed conditions to move towards improved migratory mechanisms and more inclusive societies. This essentially means to provide people with proper tools to: Find answers to often unconscious and hidden questions concerning both benefits and challenges of migration related processes, changes and future objectives; Stimulate thinking and enrich the possibility to choose how to act and behave at best, which is one of the core pillars of human development (Sen 1987).

The key issues that the participants of the training on National Capacities Development - that I delivered from 2017 to 2019 at the Academy for Social Protection at the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organisation (ITCILO) of Turin - considered as to be the main limits to the realisation of the social protection in Africa, were the deep lack of population awareness and the wrong widespread perception that paying for public services meant a waste of money. During the three editions of the Academy, several representatives of African ministries and public services, associations and International Organisations unanimously declared that people do not understand the basic importance of social protection, notwithstanding the numerous information campaigns led by governments, and this substantially impedes any progress. Spreading information and building awareness are different and must not be confused. They encompass diverse approaches and methodologies. Information allows people to access to specific knowledge: It addresses the contents of the change and focuses on its collective acknowledgment. Awareness addresses the process of the change and focuses on collective perceptions: the societal understanding. Increasing and improving the collective perceptions means to enrich the system's vision and enlarge the possibility to comprehend, consider and properly choose.

Between the access to information and the positive effect of information towards development, there is a crucial variable that must be considered: It consists in the way individuals perceive the new contents (Baumann, Werick 1993).

A strong awareness is crucial to properly manage and filter fake information, and to limit the exploitation of migration related issues to promote populism or any other extreme ideology. The poor overall societal awareness has been largely exploited as core resource by the pro Brexit campaign in United Kingdom, for example.

The Brexit vote was largely driven by concerns over immigration. Given the UK's relatively positive economic context - low unemployment and higher growth than its European neighbours - why has immigration come to the forefront now? As a general rule, there's not always an immediate cause and effect. People see immigration taking place, they see what they consider the character and culture of the places they live changing,

and they react to that, often regardless of the real economic situation (Alden 2016).

To shift from being aware about to concretely enact the change, systems need to be motivated and therefore motivation represents the second indispensable step to consider for achieving improved migratory policies and inclusive collective behaviours. Social and legislative changes are costly: They require resources, time, efforts and continuous self and collective questioning. For these reasons, peoples must be kept focused on strongly perceived valid goals and stimuli. During a long time, the idea of societal motivation has wrongly been misunderstood, and many leaders tried to obtain people consensus and support towards social change by offering financial subsidies, which did not work.

Desire comes from inside individuals and systems. It requires to be addressed by specific professional knowledge and abilities, to create choices, collective understanding and emotions, which demonstrated to be successful (Sebunya 2019).

Informed, aware and motivated systems constitute a fertile ground to develop effective approaches to migration and successful results, but to step forward on this way a third crucial component must be included: capacity. Institutions and citizens (both migrants and local populations) need, at different levels, specific transferable and soft skills to shift from limiting and jeopardizing mechanisms and behaviours to new effective conditions, advantageous for the development and growth of the whole society. Transferable capacities are those cross-cutting methodologies, mechanisms, procedures, approaches, and strategies that can be effectively transferred and applied to any sector of the economic, political, societal, professional and private life. The ability to create relevant conditions conducive to innovate, to functionally change, understand and optimise systems' functioning structures, be flexible and adaptable to the continuous new openings for sustainable growth, integrate and use technical knowledge and technologies or transform research's results into tangible innovation, are all examples of transferable capabilities. Soft skills are related to the social and emotional intelligence, and encompass the management of relationships and communication, the capacity to synergistically cooperate and accelerate knowledge sharing, codesign solutions, build alliances, access to significant information and be proactive part of networks, lead, identify and solve problems, recognise real urgencies, prevent risks, and become more resilient.

Most of the systems still lack crucial transferable abilities and this limits individual and collective self-responsibility, problem solving, capacity of choice and self-determination. This lack triggers fear, anxiety, inadequacy, recurrent difficulties, conflicts, resistance to diversity, paralysis, and instability inside systems. Referring to the systemic functioning cycle - Figure 1. -, actions to strengthen awareness and motivation mainly address the collective perceptions and expectations

stages, while capacity development addresses the collective behaviours stage.

Systems must own relevant knowledges and abilities to effectively act, behave, relate and communicate.

The fourth and last step of the systemic human cycle of change is the sustainability. Once that progresses have been implemented and achieved, systems generally consider that the job is done, while one of the most delicate phases for innovation and development starts right now: This is the consolidation of the new behaviours and rules. Over the time, individuals and societies tend to recover previous rooted attitudes and performances and, if proper mechanisms to address this danger are not set up since the very beginning of the process, long run changes strongly risk failing. When growth paths are concretely based on the functional development of collective perceptions, expectations and formal and informal rules, besides law enforcement (which is generally unsuccessful as stand-alone action), other core means for maintaining and reinforcing change take place inside societies. Among these we can mention: Population monitoring and social blame, mutual gratification and consideration, collective punishment (for example isolation or denigration of free riders), peers support, public respect, etc.

The effective management of migration related topics and issues necessitates first of all conducive environments, which are those settings where people are informed, aware and capable to be active actor of inclusion, collaboration and sharing.

1.5 The Principle of Interdependence.

The Principle of Interdependence states that the parts of a system act continuously affecting one other. It means that each system's component influences by her/his acts the whole system and vice versa.

This Principle sheds light on the dysfunctionality of a crucial socio-economic issue, which is as common as widespread in most of our systems: the prevailing of individual interests and visions over collective advantage and wellbeing.

When individual and collective gains seem to be conflicting, and systems lack key transferable skills, people tend to prioritise their own benefit also if this is harmful for the system, generating several destructive phenomena, such as the Social Dilemma for example. "The Social Dilemma is a situation in which what is in the best interest of each individual makes the collective worse off" (Bicchieri 2019). Explicit intolerance and discrimination, physical and verbal violence, non-compliance with formal rules, human exploitation, dissemination of false information, are some examples of organizational and relational practices issued by the anteposition of individual objectives and wills to the interest and wellbeing of the system. These behaviours trigger self-nurturing

institutional and social cycles that threaten and corrupt the mechanisms of systemic functioning, dramatically falling not only on the community, but also and consequently on each single component.

The cost that systems and citizens pay for implementing actions targeting single benefit and collective disadvantage is much higher than the gains obtained by the individuals through the implementation of these same actions. For this reason it is essential to work, increasing awareness, motivation, capacity and sustainability, to build a systemic culture.

A collective-risk social dilemma implies that personal endowments will be lost if contributions to the common pool within a group are too small. Failure to reach the collective target thus has dire consequences for all group members, independently of their strategies (Xiaojie, Szolnoki, Perc 2015).

1.6 The Principle of Systemic Equilibrium

The existence of systems is bound by their equilibrium: unbalanced systems collapse. Therefore, all systems naturally tend to keep and protect their stability. Equilibrium consists in the repetition of legitimated and consolidated, formal and informal, relational and organisational rules, which determine system's results and identity. If stability represents the safety for a system, change is a challenge that threatens its survival since it requires to pass through a phase of destabilisation and rearrangement to establish new settings.

Systems can react to change stimuli with positive or negative feedbacks. A negative feedback means that the system refuses to change and responds by contrasting reactions aiming to maintain its own homeostasis state. In this way, the system is secured, but remains inflexible, it cannot change, develop and grow. Several reasons may cause a negative feedback: Lack of information and awareness; Scarce capacity to manage the transition; Fear; Exclusion; Mismanagement of the process by leaders or institutions; Perceptions and expectations in contrast with the change's contents and objectives, and so on. A positive feedback makes the change possible and allows the system to have a certain degree of flexibility, to develop, improve, grow and adapt to the external modifications or emerging internal needs. In this way, the system progresses, but must be able to cross and manage temporal instability.

Migrations entail continuous transformation, and it is as normal as innate for systems to resist to the arrival of new foreign components when specific conditions to protect inner balance are not secured. Institutions must be accountable for these conditions, otherwise resistance will arise, and inclusion will be difficult, risky, and costly.

Protecting systemic balance takes place at two levels: the structural and organisational one, and the psychological and emotional one. The former entails a careful and safe development of the migration agenda, tailored on the current functioning structures and characteristics of systems. The latter entails the development and implementation of a relevant communication plan aiming to constantly provide systems (including migrants) with indispensable contents to strengthen: Information about the realisation of the migration agenda and state of the art; Awareness concerning the socio economic benefits of migration for the system, the roles and support of migrants to the system's growth, challenges and resources of the process; Motivation to be active actors and contribute at best to the successful enactment of the agenda; Knowledge on how to concretely perform the migration agenda and promote inclusion; Gratifications for supporters and contributors. The communication plan is also a key tool to reinforce systemic and individual responsibility, self-determination and capacity of choice, and to limit fake information and manipulation of events by extreme ideologies.

Conclusions

The use of the Systemic Approach to develop, manage and implement migration policies:

• Allows systems to move from rooted social fragmentations in conflicting groups, that unfunctionally accuse each other to be the cause of critical problems, to the accountability of the whole system towards the social cohesion and collaborative solution of the same critical problems, so strengthening collective inclusion (Principle of Nonsummativity);

• Frees systems from paralysis, rooted blocking mechanisms and expedients that limit development, so reinforcing their resilience and power, through the introduction of a flexible approach to change, which is based on the detection and transformation of the organisational and relational, formal and informal rules that generate ineffective situations (Principle of Equifinality);

• Explains the basic functioning mechanisms through which systems produce their outcomes, so strengthening understanding and self-determination;

• Clarifies the crucial steps - Collective Perceptions, Expectations, Behaviours, Results - of the systems change process, to improve the effectiveness of the social behaviours and the implementation and respect of new laws. These steps must be considered in any transition path to make it effective, successful and sustainable, so reinforcing systems functional self-management;

• Lessens the system fragility vis a vis of possible manipulations by extreme ideologies and false information, limiting their detrimental impact;

• Sheds light on the core importance of the human side of change, highlighting the stages of the individual and systemic change that must be included in any development path to make it inclusive, effective and sustainable: information and awareness, motivation and willingness, capacity and capability, consolidation and sustainability;

• Enables citizens to understand the importance of prioritising collective interests rather than individual profit (Principle of Interdependence);

• Places the concept of system's stability at the center of any decision and new policy (Principle of Systemic Equilibrium).

Relevant knowledge and skills concerning the Systemic Approach should be developed inside institutions and organisations involved in the design and implementation of migration policies and services, and spread among populations (including both migrants and local groups) through proper information and capacity building actions. This would significantly contribute to improve the systemic understanding of problems and possible solutions, as well as to reinforce collective and individual liability and self-management and capacity of choice in a shared perspective and for resilient and smart societies.

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