



THEME WORK

SUB-THEME:

Equity, inclusion and social rights

TITLE OF WORKSHOP

Welfare and degrowth: developing a caring system + Degrowth and vulnerable people: socio-political commitment in favor of transition



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A MORE CARING AND EQUITABLE SOCIETY REQUIRES LINKING LOCAL ENGAGEMENT IN SUPPORT OF GLOBAL POLICIES FOR HEALTH

Eduardo Missoni

Paper Abstract

The health care industry is one of the world's largest and fastest-growing industries and healthcare spending is rising faster than economic growth, consuming around 10 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) of most developed nations. However volume and increase of spending do not relate directly with population's health improvement.

In many countries, the increase of health care needs and spending is related to population ageing, but an increasing burden of disease worldwide is strictly related to the neoliberal model of society and its globalization. Its impact on health may be direct (as in the case of the spreading consumption of processed foods) or indirect, as consequences of environmental degradation or macro-economic policies increasing inequality. The dominant bio-medical and technological approach to health is an additional co-factor of increased healthcare costs, but the introduction and marketing of new products often does not respond to real health needs or diagnostic and therapeutic improvements, and is mainly driven by the market.

In addition, in times of financial crisis while life and health conditions of the population worsen, neoliberal policies impose cuts on public expenditure including on public health expenditure, pushing population into the poverty trap.

In a convivial de-growth perspective, together individual and collective behaviours, the quality and characteristics of health policies need to be rethought and public policies in all sectors should be formulated taking into consideration their impact on health. A paradigmatic shift toward a more caring and equitable society, would be necessarily based on substantial reorientation of policies at national level and citizens engagement at community level.



Nevertheless, due to global interdependence and the unavoidable interactions between global forces and national systems, a deep rethinking and reorganization of global health governance and its reformulation into Global Governance for health are essential.

The paper argues that a human rights approach to health should reorient global public policies in all sectors, and social determinants of health should be taken into consideration in global priority setting. Using examples from the food industry and the experience of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) it argues about the inadequacy of solely relying on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and industry's self-regulatory approach, and advocates the establishment of binding international instruments to regulate and monitor market forces critically influencing health worldwide. Besides strong commitment and health conscious leadership at the global level, the effective enacting of such policies needs strong support from, and connection with, civil society which can be built on a global scale taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the globalization process (such as networking and knowledge sharing facilities), interlinking local experiences, to increase awareness, and organize and coordinate advocacy.



(DE)GROWTH, WELFARE STATES AND PATH DEPENDENCY

Paolo Ermano

Paper Abstract

Since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, especially in U.K., several programs had passed to help and assist the poor workers through a redistributive mechanism managed by the State. We call these programs Welfare State and they still represent one of the main achievements of modern society.

In the hypothesis of a degrowth society on one hand it would be difficult finding resources to sustain them but, on the other hand, the positive social and communitarian externalities resulted from less hours spent at work or in exploiting material resources due to consumerist behaviours could be used to create a different kind of Welfare programs.

In this work we are going to discuss the economic and political implications behind the transition from capitalist to degrowth society, highlighting the problems of this radical institutional change occurring after decades of material growing economies, of technological progress, of demographic expansion and population aging.



INDABA NETWORK: SUPPORTING AND CONNECTING YOUTH ENGAGED IN ACTIONS OF SOCIAL CHANGE THROUGH A DEDICATED G-LOCAL NETWORK

Eduardo Missoni - Alice Russell

Paper Abstract

The economic crisis the world is living through shows us the ineffectiveness of the capitalist development model and of the current financial systems. The real economy is superseded by an ephemeral one which increases inequalities between and within countries, while at the same time emphasizing the need for new social and economic frameworks that are open, inclusive, just, and environmentally sustainable. The “De-growth” approach may contribute to giving new political sense to the global social and economic system, through a project of convivial, autonomous, and thrifty societies.

Indaba Network is a reality of young individuals, youth groups and experienced advisors working with and for young people. The Network actively supports the idea that non-formal education plays a fundamental role in creating a world in consonance with the idea of fair de-growth.

Transition to adulthood represents a challenge for millions of young people (mainly aged 18 to 25). Indaba Network was created to help the world's youth manage positively this transition to adulthood, while fostering responsible, creative, and active citizenship at interconnected local, national, and world levels.

To find a positive place in society, youth have to pass through one particular threshold: taking their place in the community and being accepted as responsible citizens.

The model we propose links global change with direct engagement and social transformation in local realities. This “g-local” approach is thus based on concrete local experiences, supported through indaba-network with on-line selected resources, a variety of tools for youth-led projects, based on an open-source and open-mind approach, as well as distance learning and training offered for free by experienced professionals. Young individuals and youth groups, as well as all



those who want to offer their support, are invited to enter the Network and share their knowledge and experience in Indaba Network's ethical, purpose-oriented online community.

Indaba-Network has identified seven main fields of debate, orientation, and action: Planet (environmental conservation, biodiversity, and related areas), Cultures, Health, Horizons (meaning active, responsible travelling), Liberating education, Organizations and Networks, and Social economy. These fields of action help all involved to identify the links between local and global issues and opportunities for constructive initiatives.



THE ACT OF CARE

Maurizio Venezi

Paper Abstract

Considering mandatory, for both ecological and economic reasons, to get out of the "Society of Consumption", the problem becomes to avoid being pressed into a "Society of Risk" where, while seeming to maintain the privileges of wealthiness, we are forced to take the individual risk of illness and then the collective one of ecological disaster.

In this speech the so-called "Society of Care" is presented as a workable alternative:

to investigate its possible ground, the crisis of values and references taking a medical doctor while reappraising the science founding his professional acting is explored, from a human and professional standpoint.

The evolution from a consumerist medicine in a recession age, to a relational medicine - respectful of people's existential path and ecologically oriented - in a desirable degrowth age is implicit in the paradigm shift from an industrial medicine, that assembles the health-product on the basis of statistically determined protocols, to a craft medicine that nurtures the causes of health of the person in its unique context.

Assuming this point of view, the medicine of the 3rd millennium, that we would like still scientific but not scientistic, has chances to be able to act its original roots, putting finally in place an "Art of Care".



TACKLED ISSUES:

1. How welfare state might evolve in a degrowth society
 - a. Shrinking population growth rate + increasing average age = welfare more expensive + depletion of new human and social capital
 - b. How to cope with finite resources
 - c. Redistribution as a means to offer welfare benefits and promote equality in a degrowing economy
 - d. Need to switch from an individualistic framework to a “we” framework
2. Need to redesign the approach to the act of care
 - a. Current medicine more focused on the disease than on the person
 - b. Care should guarantee a technically AND relationally competent presence
3. Need to change our institutional system
 - a. Health expenditure artificially fuelled by strategies of global corporations (ex: “invented” diseases)
 - b. Our perceptions influenced by marketing and the environments we are embedded in
 - c. Need to link local and global action to counteract big corporations’ lobbying on governments
4. Indaba network as an example of bridging local and global action
 - a. Indaba network provides directions to projects run locally
 - b. Platform for promoting social networking among youth all around the world
 - c. Exchange of ideas, best practices, knowledge



GIVEN ANSWERS:

- 1) A degrowing society is also possible within a capitalistic framework. Lacking an alternative framework, redistribution is required to counteract the negative effects of capitalism.
- 2) We do not need a framework, need to start from awareness and demand that institutions are accountable to citizenship. Local action is not enough: need to act locally AND globally. Need to counteract corporations' lobbying putting pressure on governments and global institutions.
- 3) Our welfare system is based on tax collection: the point is to understand how to finance welfare state with decreasing resources

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS, MESSAGES & COMMENTS:

1. Low level of social awareness about the problem related to social and economic inequality
2. Is it realistic and sufficient to redistribute resources (by taxing corporations) in order to satisfy the growing demand for social and health services?
3. Let's think about an un-monetary welfare, let's do it without money