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MEASURING THE LIFE SPACE OF CHILDREN

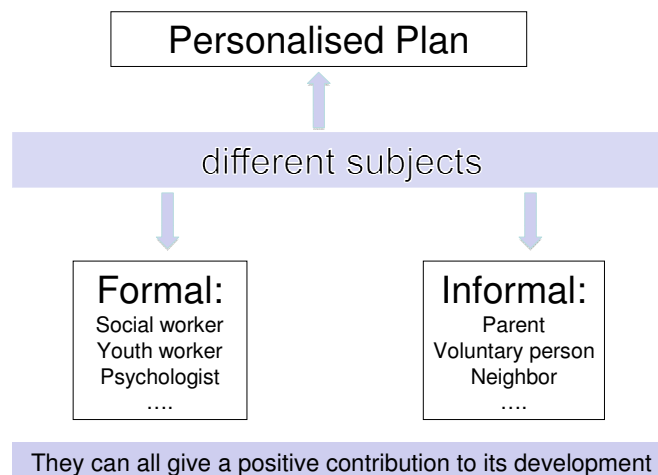
Findings from a multi-site research

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Development of the plan



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The Map of Subjects & Resources (MSR)

The MSR considers the socio-environmental and relational domain of the “person” in need.

This tool has been designed by a group of researchers of the Fondazione Zancan as a response to the growing demand for assessing the **life space** of children, with specific attention to relational and socio-environmental dimensions.

It is part of a set of instruments used for having a **global assessment** of the “person” in need (in this presentation, a child).



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Responsibility in the life space

The MSR aims to assess the level of “responsibility” of people (not services) included in the life space of the child in need. Their position in the MSR gives some information to the groupwork in regard to their involvement in the personalised plan.

Once completed the MSR, three indexes are available:

SR = scale of responsibility

LPSV_r = level of protection in the life space^{revised}

LPP = level of potential protection



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First step

List the people who are in the life space of the child in need and are interested in his/her problems:

Elenco delle persone che possono essere interessate al problema

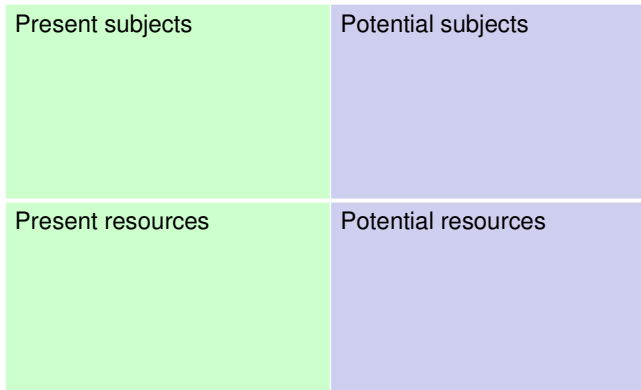
1.	9.
2.	10.
3.	11.
4.	12.
5.	13.
6.	14.
7.	15.
8.	16.



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Second step

Define the levels of interest that the different people have in the management or resolution of the problem (put them into the quadrants):



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Subjects

A “subject” is defined by a *positive answer* to ALL the following checklist:

- Does s/he feel the need to tackle the situation?
- Does s/he take part in the analysis and the assessment phases of the person’s problems?
- Does s/he contribute in creating the personalised plan of intervention?
- Does s/he agree with it? Has he/she subscribed to it?
- Does s/he take part in the evaluation (for example of the process and outcome)?
- Does s/he have a role in the implementation of the personalised plan?



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Resources

“Resources” are people who, based on their capacity as professionals or volunteers, acknowledge the utility of the tasks they are asked to undertake, and they fulfil them according to modes and timing described in the intervention plan.

Therefore, the kind of participation we are referring to is one to be measured in terms of time, of its financial expenditures, of actions to be carried out, and is displayed in the “plan of actions” and who undertakes them.



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Present and Potential

Some are present subjects/resources and some others are potential; some are professional figures, others are not.

If they are available immediately they are put in the quadrant of **present** subjects or resources.

If they are only potentially available, that is in the near or far future, they will be defined as **potential** subjects or resources.

The issue of availability is important because it implies the possibility of involving them in the plan.



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Third step

Calculate the three index:

SR = scale of responsibility (it considers ONLY present subjects)

LPSV_r = level of protection in the life space^{revised}
(it considers present subjects AND present resources)

LPP = level of potential protection (it considers potential subjects AND potential resources)

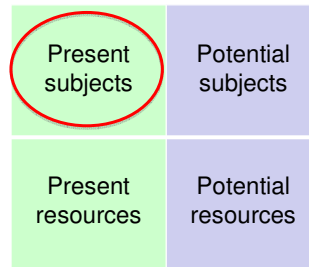


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Scale of responsibility (SR)

SR measures the capacity of 'present subjects' to share responsibility in respect to the problem of the child.

Before developing the personalised plan the map is set up in time T_0 ; it will then be reviewed at times T_1, T_2, T_n (intermediate assessments) and before the final evaluation, when the plan is finished.

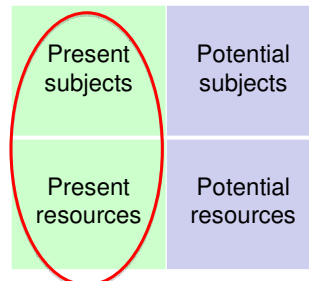


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Level of protection of life space (LPSV)

The $LPSV_r$ is determined by considering present subjects and resources. It is not enough that the person is simply willing to contribute;

it is necessary that a path meant to remove the obstacles that inhibit his/her immediate participation is documented.



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Level of potential protection (LPP)

In the LPP the potentialities are taken into account through this specific index that “counts” the number of possible persons, either subjects or resources. The obtained value is helpful in delivering personalised plans, they can potentially be included in the personalised plans (and therefore be considered as actual resource in the following assessment).

Present subjects	Potential subjects
Present resources	Potential resources



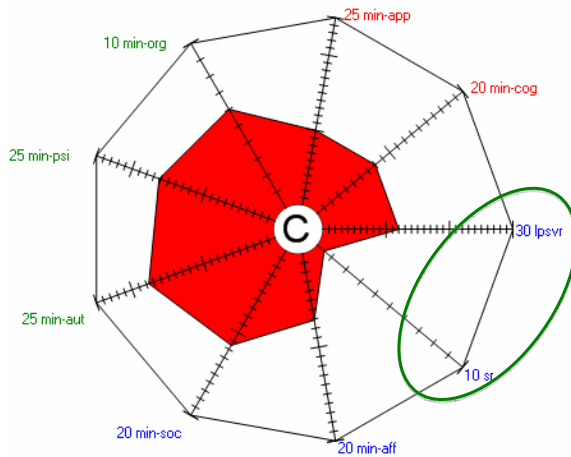
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The multi-site research



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The global assessment



This graph - called polar scheme – gathers together all the scores from different tools pertaining to different domains.

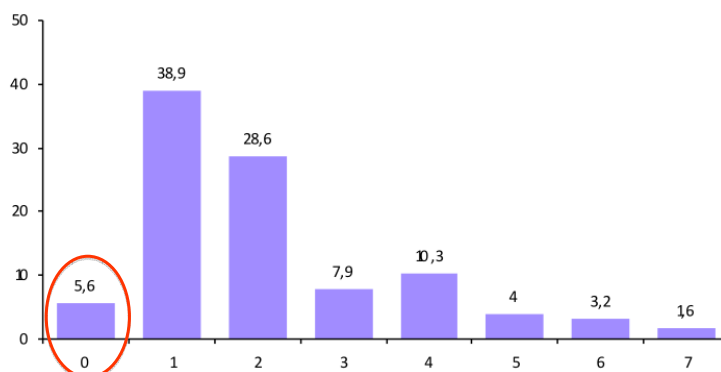
It highlights problems (the center) and strengths (the edge).

For this child:
 SR=0,5 (range 0-10)
 LPSV=12 (range 0-30)



MSR – Findings

Fig. 1 - % of children per number of present subjects (N=126)



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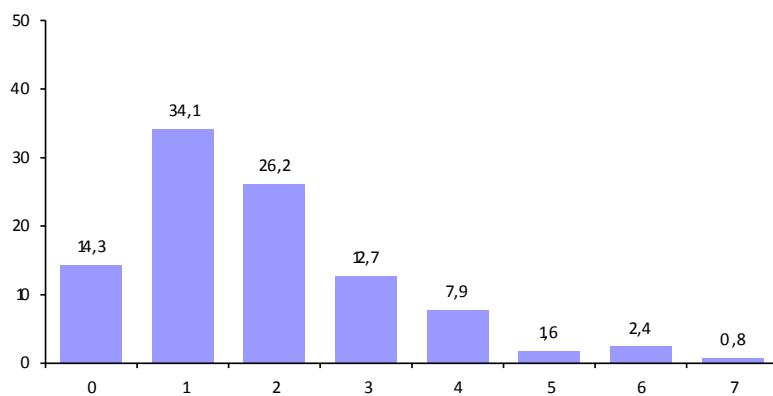
Tab. 1 – Categories of present subjects (N=126)

Subjects	Number	% (N=126)
Father/mother	75	59.5
Birth family	54	42.9
New family	9	7.1
Solidarity area	15	11.9
Educational area	27	21.4
Professionals (social, health)	97	77.0



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Fig. 2 - % of children per number of present resources (N=126)



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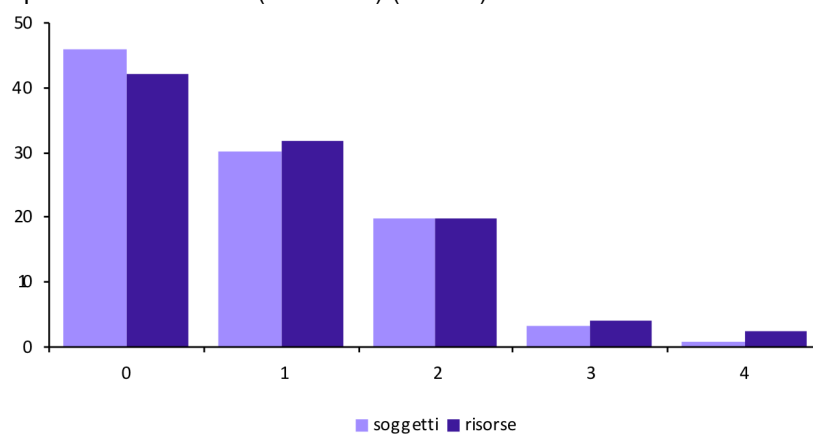
Tab. 2 – Categories of present resources (N=126)

Subjects	Number	% (N=126)
Father/mother	35	27.8
Birth family	50	39.7
New family	7	5.6
Solidarity area	17	13.5
Educational area	14	19.0
Professionals (social, health)	71	56.3



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Fig. 3 - % of children per number of potential subjects (blue) and potential resources (dark blue) (N=126)



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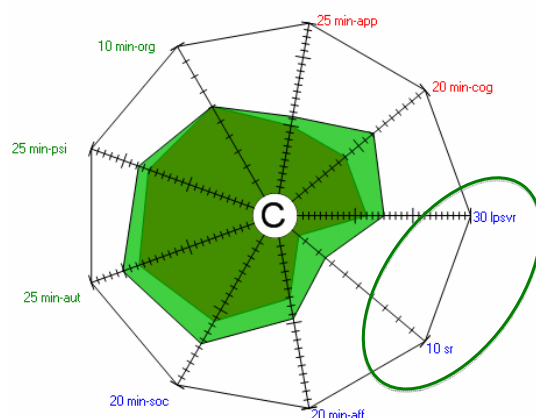
Tab. 3 – Categories of potential people (N=126)

Subjects	SUBJECTS	%	RESOURCES	%
Father/mother	47	37.3	9	7.1
Birth family	20	15.9	6	4.8
New family	4	3.2	0	0.0
Solidarity area	2	1.6	1	0.8
Educ. Area	4	3.2	1	0.8
Professionals	39	31.0	9	7.1



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Monitoring changes overtime



The graphs in two different times allow to see the changes (improvements hopefully), as in this case.

For this child:
 SR=2,5 (range 0-10)
 LPSV=15 (range 0-30)



Impact on professionals

*The added value is the possibility to give a “weight” to subjects and resources, not only to **present people** but also to **potential people**, who can contribute to a successful intervention [...]. The “common sense” tells us that these children are suffering and at risk – especially in the relational and socio-environmental domain and as regards the system of responsibility – Nothing new, it is obvious but...*



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Impact on professionals

... but the move from this consideration to the willingness to change the situation is not taken for granted. Too often professionals and managers are focussed on the service cut, lack of solidarity, daily emergencies. We are not brave enough to start from the existing situation (also what it cannot be seen at a first glance) and look for changes.



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Impact on professionals

*The research showed that we are more focussed on problems than strenghts and potentialities [...]. We have been forced to look at potentialities (hidden ones) that can be discovered and included in the care pathway, as **subjects** (available to take care in terms of sharing responsibilities) and **resources** (available to contribute to the goals of the personalised plan).*



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[Andrea]

Impact on professionals

*It has been interesting the change from **potential** to **present** resource: in our case the mother's boyfriend was involved by the home worker and he assumed a higher responsibility inside the family (in 3 months he passed from potential resource to present resource); this led to a change also in the mother (she passed from present resource to present subject).*



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[Michela and Veronica]

Conclusion

The findings showed that it is necessary to put the personalised plan at the centre of responsibilities and resources, regardless of the subjects involved (formal or informal people). Each contribution can be of great help in the process of changing for overcoming problems.



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Conclusion

The MSR and the three indexes are not only a theoretical exercise, but a concrete potential that has to be developed, since it increases the “value” (weight) of people pertaining to the child’s life space. All these people become a “**field**” where to cultivate collaborations and share responsibilities, that can be of great help in reaching the expected outcomes.



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Thank you for your attention!

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