Red FACIAM

Homelessness and Diversity

The 7 fantastic axes of an intersectional intervention

"It is not our differences that divide us, it is our inability to accept those differences"

Audre Lorde

————————————————

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Presentation

We live in a society where people of vastly different characteristics, conditions and classes coexist and interact in all spaces and at all levels of our lives. The perception that each person holds about these differences has a decisive influence on the way we establish relationships (personal, social, at work...) and the decisions we make. Diversity - be it racial, cultural, functional, ethnic, religious, based on origin, class, gender identity, or sexual orientation - is also present among people experiencing homelessness who attend the centres, projects, services and entities that serve them, and it is probable that, in the coming years, this plural coexistence will increase.

It is precisely the factors related to discrimination that intersectional analysis focuses on. Discrimination, not in a legal sense but in its connection with the unequal treatment received by people, in this case people experiencing homelessness, based on unconscious biases, prejudices, and the stigmas that are rooted in the social imaginary. It is important to know not only how the personal stories of each person in a situation of serious exclusion influence their process of disengagement or expulsion, but also how certain social categories cross them and contribute to the rejection and dehumanization with which they are viewed, even to the point of hindering access to their rights, to their citizenship status on an equal basis with the rest of the society. For this reason, intersectionality speaks of 'oppressions'.

Accepting the possibility of the existence of unequal treatment motivated by the axes of inequality and stereotyped beliefs about race, gender, sexuality, disability, immigration, place of birth, origin, ethnicity, religious beliefs, or social origin (among others) helps to avoid reproducing discriminatory patterns within the intervention, the organisation, the spaces, in the design of the projects, in their evaluation... This is the value that the intersectional perspective provides when it comes to reflecting and analysing the management of this diversity in the care of people experiencing homelessness. The way in which social differences are considered has a clear and direct effect on the dynamics of coexistence of resources and, above all, on the emotional well-being and dignified treatment of each of the people experiencing homelessness who come to them.

Intersectionality is a theoretical framework and, therefore, an analytical tool that helps to understand the interaction of the vertical relations of power that sustain the structural situations of disadvantage, inequality, discrimination, and injustice created and/or promoted by them; these relations can even multiply the social exclusion and violence against the people experiencing homelessness. Intersectional analysis can help, through different keys, to avoid, contain, or reduce the harmful consequences of this social inequality.

Seven of those keys are explored in this Guide. The importance of understanding them was one of the conclusions drawn from the workshops prior to the preparation of this document that were held with the entities of Red Faciam. If the intersectional analysis is understood, each organisation will be able to find their keys and how to make them operational.

Finally, it is necessary to thank those who have, for years, committed to the intersectional view from theory and life experience itself. They are mentioned both throughout this text and at the end of it, in the bibliographic reviews, and links are included to consult the full texts. Without their knowledge, reflections, and experiences, this Guide would not have been possible.

The 7 fantastic axes

1. Conceptual frameworks
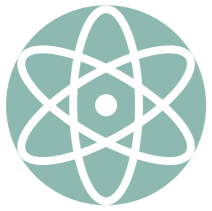
Intersectionality

Diversity

Unconscious biases

Stigma

Intersectionality

Definition

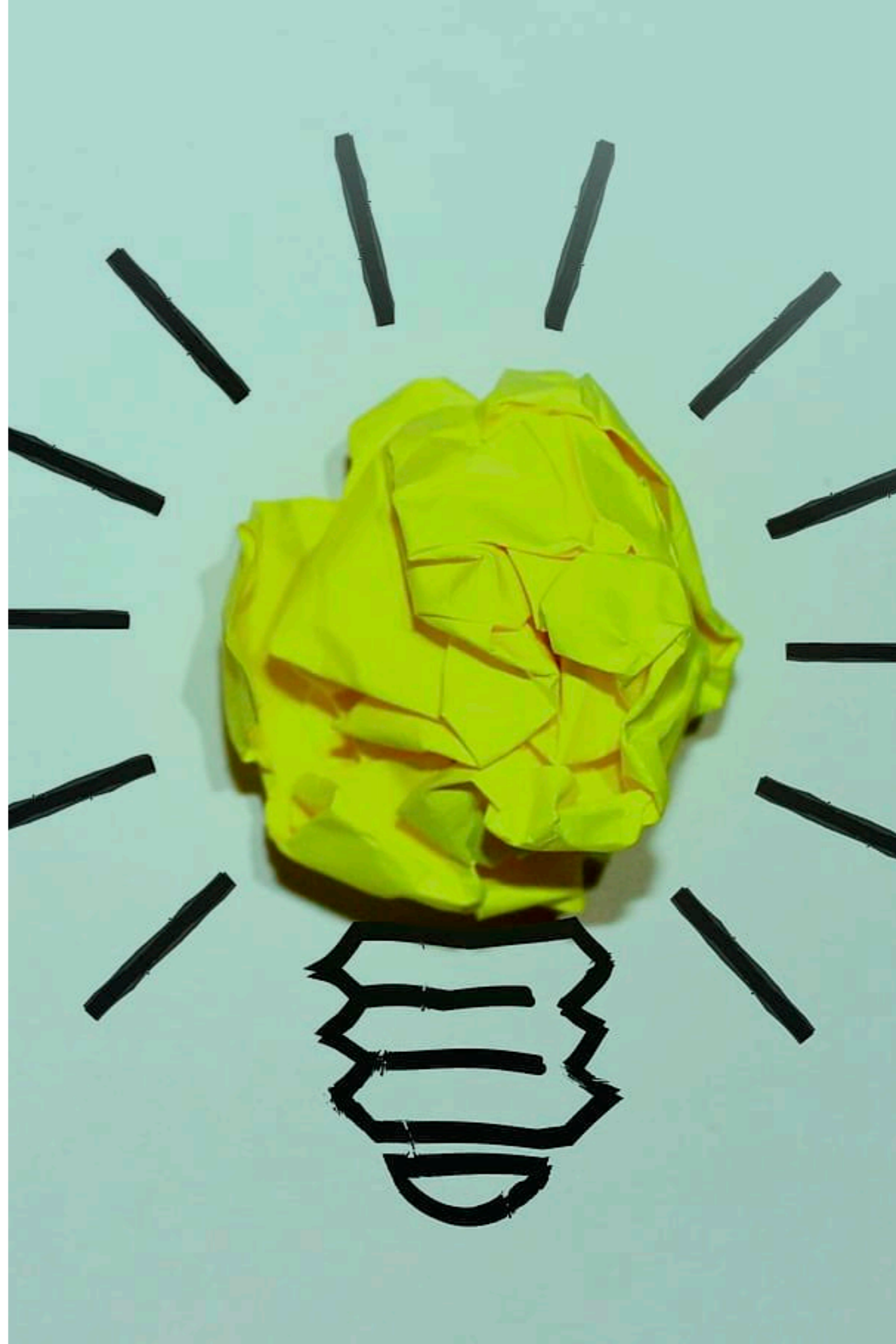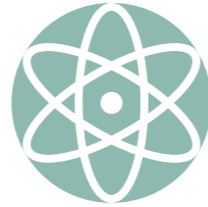"«Intersectionality» is a way of looking at and understanding social inequalities that goes beyond the classification of people by one of their characteristics. The realities and needs of people are conditioned by their position in relation to gender, age, origin, beliefs, sexuality, abilities, etc. Some of these characteristics may involve disadvantages or advantages. The intersectional perspective is a response that avoids these simplifications, biases, and exclusions, since it allows situations of inequality to be made visible, analysed, and addressed in a more comprehensive way, taking into account that the axes of inequality act in an interrelated way. It is an approach that helps us better understand people and reality, in order to prevent inequality in each context, and invites us to seek new ways of intervention"

Source: **Guía para incorporar la interseccionalidad en las políticas locales** (2019)

Origin

The thought and experience that gave rise to the theory of intersectionality emerged in a more or less organised way in the United States and in Europe between the 1960s and 1970s within the social movements that fought for the rights of Afro-descendant women and their civil rights.

However, already in the 19th century, references are found of how this approach is already in the discourses of black women who fought against slavery and faced the existing sexism also within the same African-American community (Sojourner Truth or Maria Miller Stewart are two of these women models).

But the key date is 1989, when activist Kimberlé W. Crenshaw coined the term 'intersectionality' to explain how African-American women are excluded within the feminist and also anti-racist policies that were promoted by the respective movements.

In the following decade, the 90s, it is the academic Patricia Hill Collins who develops, along with other academics and activists, the theoretical framework of «Intersectionality».

This framework opened an analytical approach to the discrimination suffered by women and other subjects suffering rejection and violence, not only for a single cause but also for the intersection of what they call different 'oppressions'.

Click **HERE** to see the whole TED talk by Kimberlé W. Crenshaw

TED Talks: The urgency of intersectionality. Kimberlé Crenshaw

Axes of inequality or differentiation

The 'axes of inequality' (which are also named 'axes of differentiation') are axes of rights violations (vulnerability). These refer to the unequal treatment suffered by a person due to a structural problem, which gives rise to discrimination/oppression.

Examples of these power imbalances are racism, sexism, homophobia, antigypsyism, aporophobia, transphobia, classism, islamophobia…

In the intersectional analysis, there is no closed list of what the 'axes of inequality' (or differentiation) are, nor is there a hierarchy between them. However, for its correct understanding and application it is necessary to initially integrate the three axes that originated the theory of intersectionality: gender, class, and race.

When we review them, we observe that between these axes of inequality there is
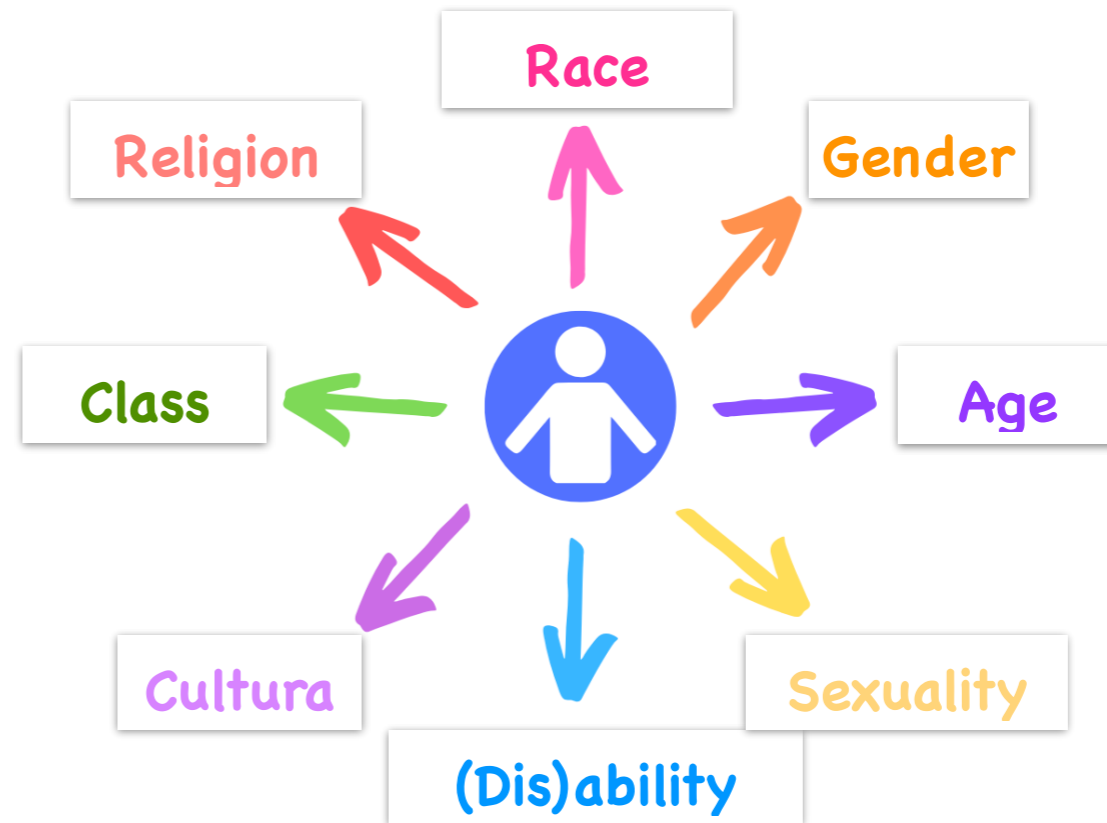
*Illustration from **Diversity & Ability***

a close link to the grounds of discrimination prohibited in international instruments that guarantee, protect, and promote human rights.

When these axes of inequality intersect and interact (race, gender, class, abilities, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex, religious beliefs, age, ethnic-cultural origin, nationality ...) the complex and specific realities of discriminations/oppressions are reproduced.

It is necessary to underline that this interaction does not respond to an additive logic but to a system of subordination/domination.

Consequently, intersectionality does not add categories of discrimination, but rather analyses how their intersections enhance exclusion, marginalization, or violence - or create positions of privilege that make people, unaware about its effects, reproduce and perpetuate them.

Matrix of domination – subordination

This matrix is the main tool used in intersectional analysis. Its creator is Patricia Hill Collins, and with it, she shows how the different axes of inequality interact and interrelate.

In this visual way, it is possible to observe how a category or axis of inequality by itself (sex, race, class, sexual orientation, etc.) provides partial information and that, by crossing it with other axes (categories), we understand the complexity and multi-causality behind the discriminatory or arbitrary treatment of a person experiencing homelessness.

In the upper part of the horizontal central axis, from the structural point of view of inequalities, are located the situations of privilege, versus those of disadvantage/ oppression in the lower part. For example, being a man versus being a woman, being white versus being racialized, being heterosexual versus being homosexual, being cisgender versus being trans, having an academic degree versus not having an education, having a stable economic situation versus being in a situation of poverty...

Observing the crossings, we can analyse how, in a concrete context, privileges and oppressions interact. In this way, we will be able to bear in mind the degree of structural violence and discrimination to which a person experiencing homelessness is exposed (and has suffered) when he/she/ they is an uneducated woman-transgender-elderly or a man-migrant-gay-with HIV. It is with the interaction of these categories that the intervention can be adjusted to their degree of vulnerability, using logic of rights.
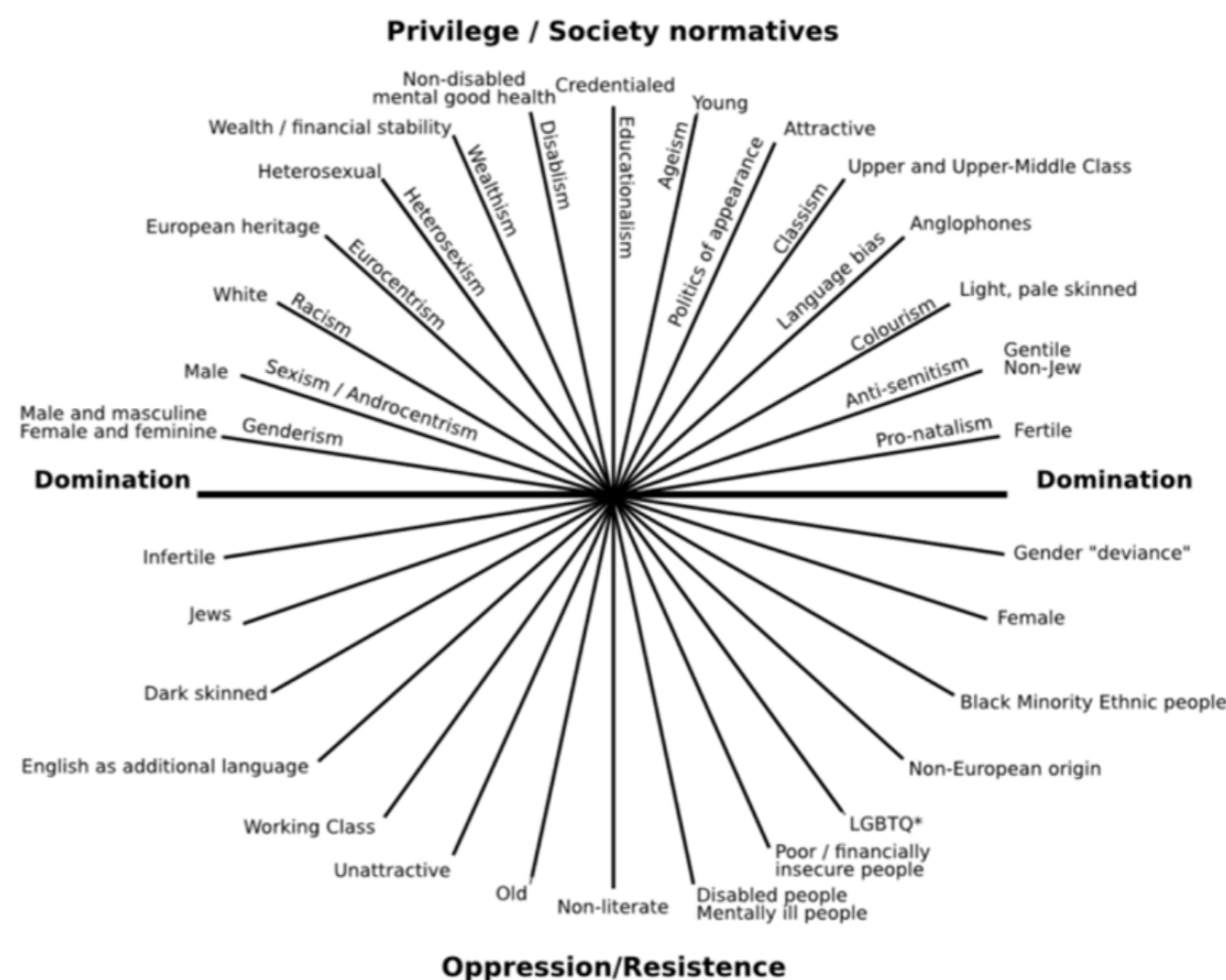

Matrix of domination. Source: Wikipedia

The intersectional (but distinguishable) effects of power systems

"Imagine an apple. It is sweet, red, hard, and cold. The taste, texture, colour, and temperature would be the criteria mentioned in this characterization, and they all have an ontological character - they are measured by means of various elements and classified according to different features, for example. But, if we concentrate on the apple, these properties are linked to others, in such a way that they can be deeply affected. If we put the apple in the oven, the high temperature will make the apple softer and sweeter. Thus, it can be said that temperature "affects" and "changes the nature" of the texture of the apple. The colour of the apple is causally linked to its maturity: the more it ripens, the more it turns from green to brown. And all these characteristics constitute the apple. In an analogy, we propose the conception of social categories as properties of individuals: being a woman, white, and lesbian are three different properties of someone and they have certain effects on the experience of the person, in certain contexts. What "changes" in different situations is the person's general experience, so there are different effects in different situations".

(Quote from **Marta Jorba** and **Maria Rodó-de-Zárate**, 2019 extracted from the **Guía para incorporar la interseccionalidad en las políticas locales junto** together with the illustration on the right —->)
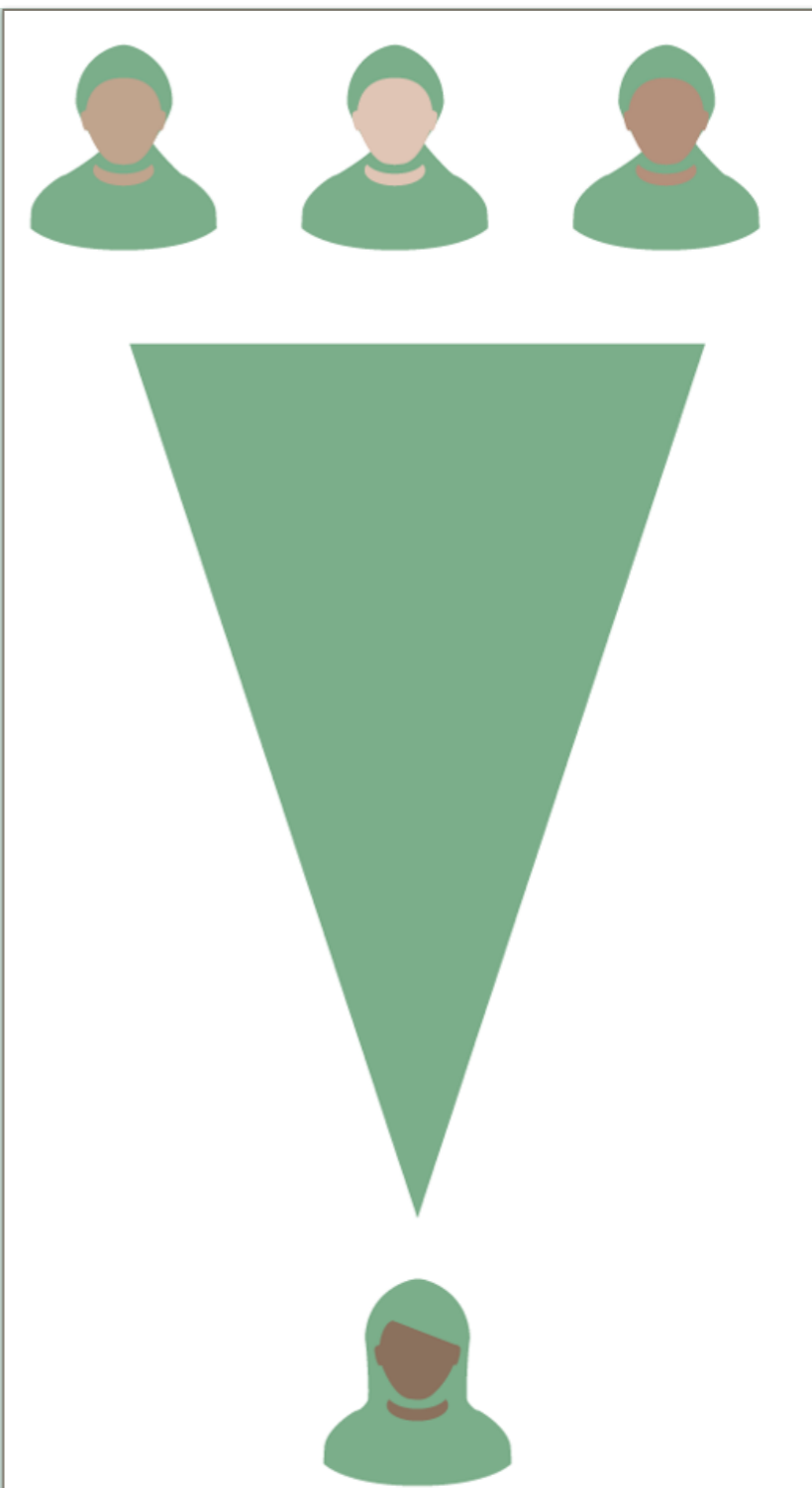
Heterogeneity, diversity, and difference

We have seen, therefore, how the essence of the intersectional analysis proposal stems from the heterogeneity and multiplicity of categories, groups, identities, collectives, characteristics...

This heterogeneity, in intersectionality, involves, consequently, recognising the importance of diversity and giving value to difference, be it based on gender, sexuality, class, race, ethnicity, age, education, capacities, sexual orientation, etc., as part of the person's dignity.

The conscious assumption of inequality and diversity is the premise for starting an intersectional analysis of intervention, also with people experiencing homelessness.

No person is like another; belonging to the same category, group, identity, or having the same characteristics, does not make people homogeneous. Consequently, there is no single way to be a woman, to be a man, homosexual, Roma, disabled, poor, transsexual, racialized, a foreigner, a migrant...

It is precisely these differences that are used to build, unfairly, hierarchies that allow for the rejection, exclusion, or structural violence that justify the discrimination of those who are part of that collective, group, category...

EXERCISE – First steps

Taking into account the context of the resource, service or project in which you work

1. Recognise the **differences**

   What characteristics do the people experiencing homelessness to whom you provide support have?

2. Recognise **inequalities**

   What social inequalities are hidden behind the problems of people experiencing homelessness in your organisation? Group them by axes.

3. Recognise the intersections of the **axes of inequality**

   Are there important interactions between the axes of inequality that you have identified? (for example, gender and social class, sexual orientation and national origin, etc.)

4. Recognise **heterogeneity**

   Does the design of the intervention take into account how the person is affected by life experiences and the emotional components of the intersections of the axes of inequality?

5. Recognise **diversity**

   From an intersectional perspective, what groups or people experiencing homelessness are we forgetting or not considering in our intervention?

Unconscious biases

Definition

Unconscious biases are judgments or decisions that we make based on our previous experience, on our most established values and beliefs, or on assumptions or interpretations that we make on reality, often without being aware of the magnitude they have.

With unconscious biases, we tend to pigeonhole, stereotype, and discriminate. Therefore, behind the social exclusion suffered by people experiencing homelessness, there are a multitude of biases that interfere with their processes of self-recovery and social reincorporation.

Beyond feelings of guilt, in this process of knowledge of intersectional analysis, it is important to start from the fact that all people have unconscious biases. Even those who we consider more open-minded, more tolerant and committed to social justice.

Most of the time, these biases are behind those 'micro' discriminations that are perpetuated involuntarily, without intention. It is precisely this involuntary factor that gives us the clue for how to prevent unconscious biases from discriminating or excluding: becoming aware of them, opening the mind.

We need to keep in mind that beyond our bias, no matter how involuntary and unconscious it may be, there is always a person whose dignity is undermined. Most of these biases have a negative impact on social beliefs about certain social groups and perpetuate, rather than eradicate, violence.

Some unconscious biases

Yes	No	Biases	Definition	Give an example
		Meta-bias	It is the tendency to believe that you are less biased than others and to not be aware of your own cognitive biases. You think you are always right.	
		Affinity	When we prefer (or consider to be better) people with whom we share characteristics, beliefs, hobbies, origin... We tend to trust them more. It is the tendency to value more those people who are similar or related to us than those who are different.	
		Confirmation	It occurs when we only take into account the information that confirms the preconceived idea that we have of a person, our own beliefs or our hypotheses. In this way we seek to 'confirm' these stereotypes, filtering out everything that does not align with them. The rest of the information that contradicts it is ignored.	
		Following the crowd	We do or believe in something because the people around us do it.	
		Anchoring	When we use the initial information we have to make subsequent judgments and decisions. That first information anchors us to an idea until it becomes the basis of the rest of the judgments we make	
		Aversion	In the face of conflict, we tend to be more willing to accept a modest but secure deal, rather than risk even at the prospect of a potentially larger gain. The fear of loss leads us to reject the new and changes.	
		Appearance	When we believe that the most attractive individuals are the most successful, and the worst looking, the least pleasant. It is appearance that leads us to unconsciously judge the other person by their physical attributes, clothing, or accessories	
		Attribution	When explaining the behaviour of others, we tend to describe features of their personality or their way of being that do not depend on the situation. Whereas to explain our own behaviour, we usually hold the circumstances responsible.	

Stigma, stereotypes, and prejudice

The elaboration, construction, and reproduction of stigmatizing arguments are a universal phenomenon and inherent to the human essence itself. They occur where human relationships exist. People experiencing homelessness are precisely one of the groups that suffer the most from the social weight of stigma. But to understand what it is and how it differs from stereotypes and prejudices, it is necessary to be able to identify, detect, and prevent its impact on people experiencing homelessness. The common element is that it is based on the beliefs that exist about a certain social group and, from an intersectional perspective, some beliefs enhance others as the axes interact. Despite being closely related and giving rise to situations of discrimination and violence (human rights violations), they are not the same.
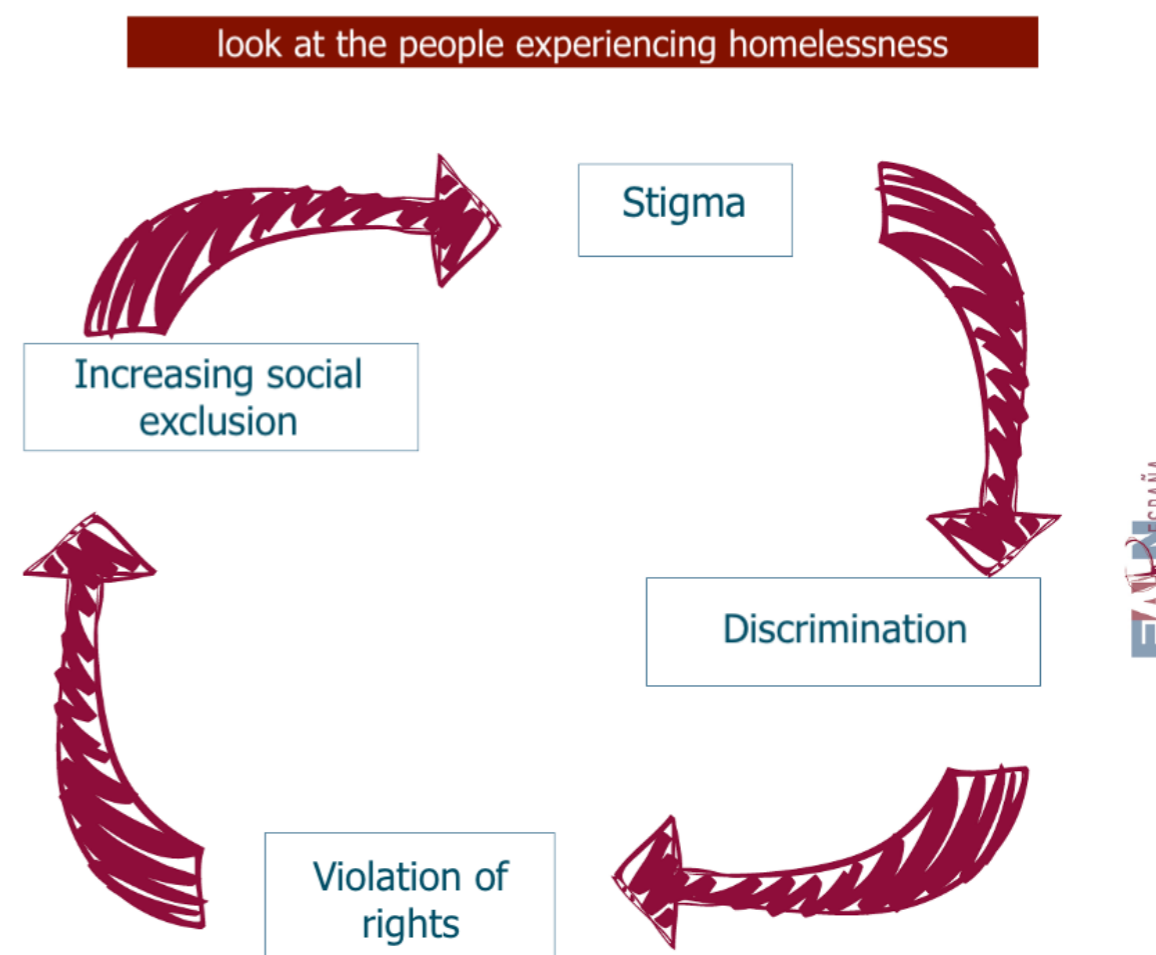
Definitions

PREJUDICES: they are the feelings and attitudes (positive or negative) towards a person who belongs to a group or is perceived as a member of it. They are directly related to biases. We all have prejudices that we learn from childhood. These can be both negative and positive.

STEREOTYPES: they are beliefs, opinions, and simple ideas that offer us an image about the characteristics (physical appearance, behaviours, interests, features, etc.) of a social group. They are the expression and rationalisation of a prejudice. They simplify the message based on generalisations that do not correspond to reality.

STIGMAS: they are attributes that are directed at someone, causing them to be discredited or undervalued. This assignment generates a negative social response and deep contempt for the person. It usually has its origin in deeply rooted social beliefs, hence the difficulty in overcoming it. The damage it causes to the person who suffers it can compromise their recovery process.

DISCRIMINATION: it is the result of the behavior that treats a person differently for belonging to a social group or category (truly or supposedly). It can be negative or positive. A large number of variables influence the expression of discrimination. Discrimination is the way to resolve a vertical power issue.

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look at the people experiencing homelessness

Stigma → Discrimination → Violation of rights → Increasing social exclusion →

Seven prejudices about people experiencing homelessness

1. **"They are like this because they want to"** - Nobody lives on the street by choice. People end up on the street after many problems and events: it is not something that happens overnight. Either they don't have, or aren't able to have, a close network (friends, family) and find it difficult to ask for help

2. **"They are alcoholics" -** Alcoholism or drug use are not the only cause for living on the streets. On many occasions, they can be a consequence and there are cases in which the person does not drink or use. There are people who start drinking to escape, stop feeling cold, not think, bear the pain...
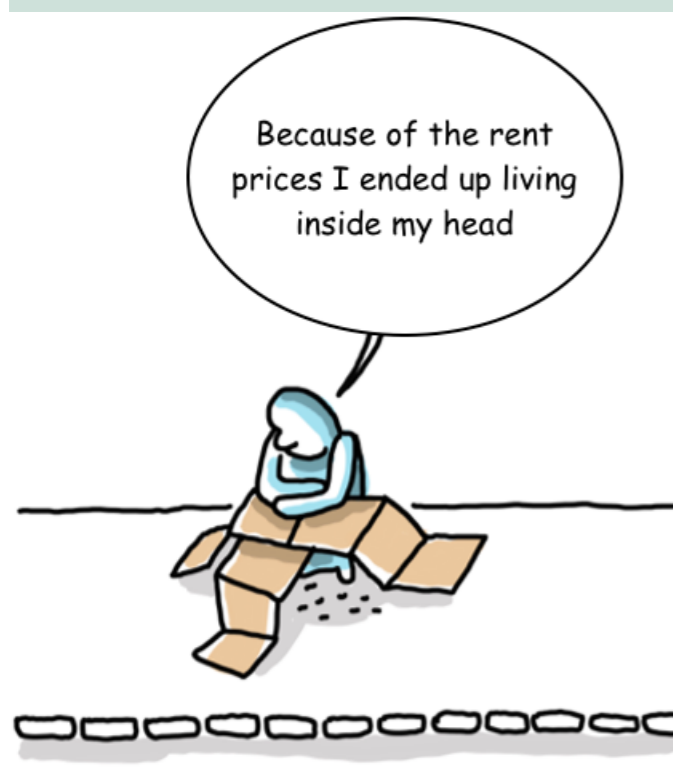
3. **"They don't want to go to shelters" -** Why do people sleep on the street and not want to go to a shelter even if it's cold? The reasons are related to the fact that these spaces often do not take into account what the person wants and needs. Sleeping in a temporary resource implies sharing space with many people, lack of privacy and tranquillity, and having to leave out belongings and pets. The solution should be apartments at affordable prices where the person can live in a stable way, or smaller spaces, cosy and accessible.

4. **"They don't want to work"** - Most people do not receive money from the government. Many people who sleep on the streets have worked, others work in the informal economy, and others have a normal job, but the income is very low and they cannot pay for accommodation. There are also people who will never be able to go back to work because life on the street has affected them and their health is very fragile. There are many other people who spend the day surviving and going from one support service to another in order to eat, shower, or sleep.

5. **"They are immigrants who take advantage of the situation" -** Most of the people who live on the street have Spanish nationality or are citizens of the EU. The lack of a network of contacts, administrative difficulties in acquiring documentation, language barriers, and discrimination for being a foreigner are some of the factors that lead many immigrants to be in a more fragile and vulnerable situation compared to the rest of the national population.

6. **"They have asked for it" -** A person ends up living on the streets because their situation has deteriorated over time. This has to do with the sum of many causes and how these are managed by social resources, by the person him/herself or by the social environment in which the person experiencing homelessness lives. The situation of homelessness can only be analysed from a multidimensional perspective: unemployment, housing prices, migratory movements, access to health, the rigidity of social services and aid mechanisms, divorces, the death of a loved one, education, health...

7. **"They are aggressive and violent" -** In a home there are basic needs that we have covered and of which we are often not aware. Living on the street means being more exposed to conflict situations, problems due to not having a toilet to go to, a shower, a kitchen, a sofa ... When someone spends their whole life on the street, they are exposed to violence.

Because of the rent prices I ended up living inside my head

Illustration by Javirroyo

*Source: **Mitos y prejuicios acerca de las personas sin hogar** - (Arrels Fundació)*
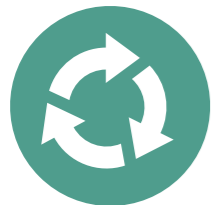
2. Tools of support

Detecting unconscious biases

Abandoning monofocal logic

Emotional intelligence

Joining forces

How to detect unconscious biases

Here are some keys to try to identify and block the unconsicous biases that we can fall into more frequently. From an intersectional approach, being able to be aware of them allows us to identify, on the one hand, our privileges and disadvantages; on the other hand, it allows us to be more receptive to understanding the complexity of discrimination suffered by a person experiencing homelessness.

EXERCICE - Block your unconscious biases

1. **Fight meta-bias.** Accept that all people have biases and that our vision of the world does not have to be the true one. Being aware that we can have biases allows us to be alert: to detect them and banish them from our relationships.

2. **Activate your empathy.** It must be distinguished from the sympathy that is related to affinity bias. Empathy is the ability to listen to others and put ourselves in their place without abandoning ours, regardless of affinities, aversions, or appearances. Empathy is only available to the extent that we are aware of our biases. In this way, we can listen fully, without judging the person or what they say, without rushing to respond to them and establishing a sincere and respectful dialogue where there is acceptance and not questioning.

3. **Increase contact with social groups.** Prejudices and stereotypes are decreasing as there is more direct contact with people who belong to discriminated social groups. Establishing these relationships should not be the result of the idea of doing the experiment of meeting 'those people' but rather the result of wanting to open up to different people, realities, and information.

4. **Try to want to know mores.** EThere is a lot of accessible information (not only on the internet) to be able to learn and know more about what unconscious biases are, how they affect us, what ways there are to detect them, and the strategies to eliminate them from our habitual behaviours without the need to feel guilty or be on the defensive. The information is there, we just have to decide to go for it. It is worth it.

5. **Look for other different opinions.** In this way we can open our mind and contrast our way of seeing and analysing things. An open mind helps to detect unconscious biases, but it must be exercised by looking for other points of view that help us to have a less biased and more objective look.
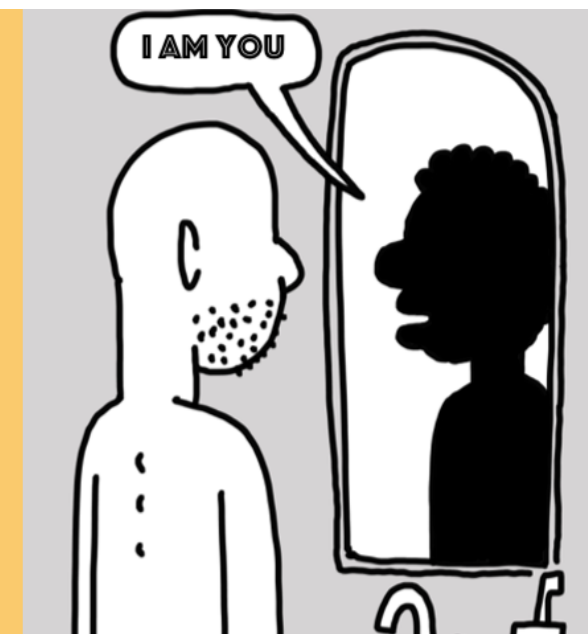

Illustration by Javirroyo

Abandoning monofocal logic

In intervention with people experiencing homelessness - as happens with other social groups and collectives to whom social intervention projects and services are addressed - there are different work models.
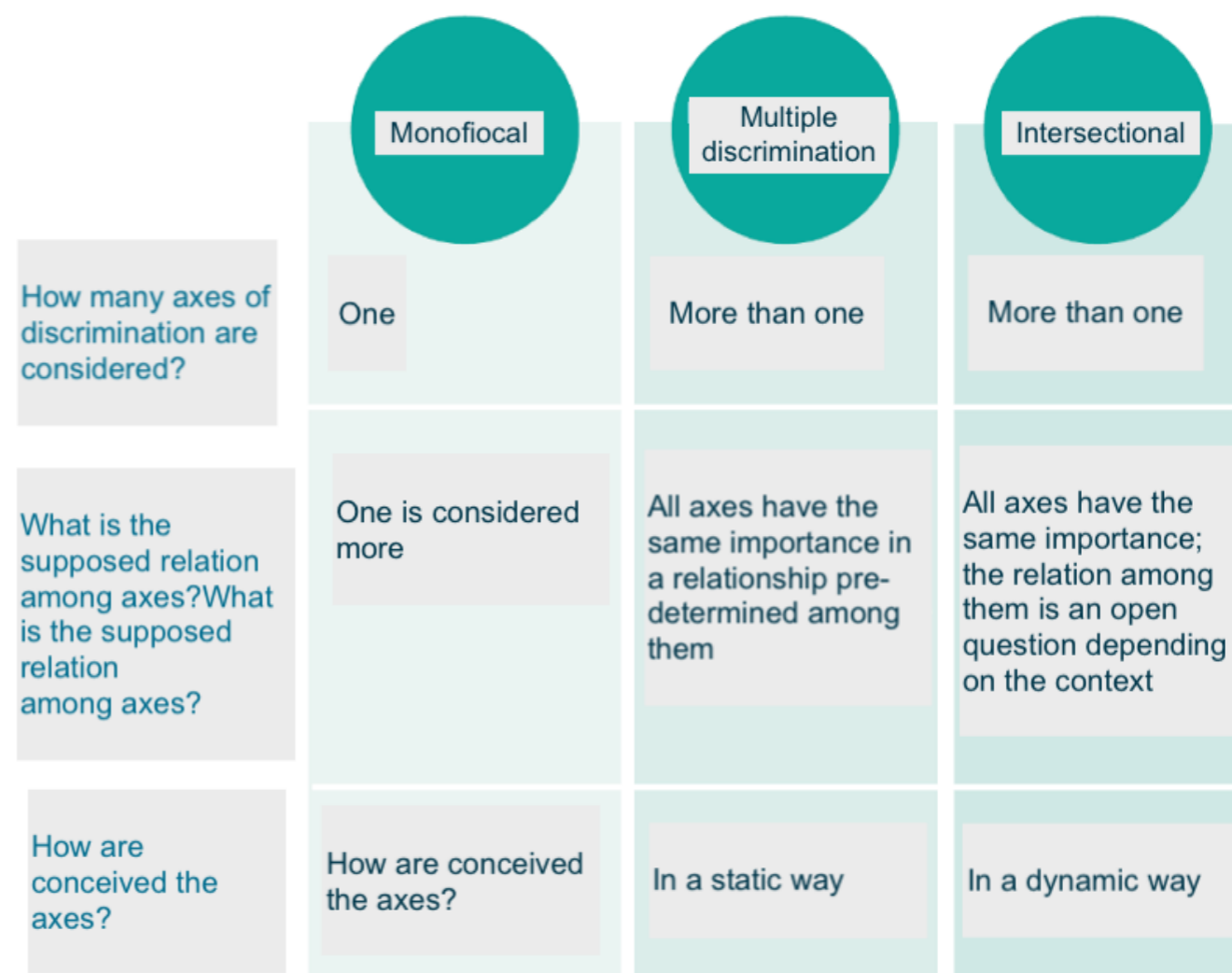
From the paradigm of the *domination matrix*, the people who are part of the social group 'people experiencing homelessness' share the same axis of inequality, that of poverty / social exclusion.

Once this has been determined, the social intervention can focus on that single aspect (monofocal logic) or consider two or more axes of inequality, either from an additive logic or from an intersectional analysis, for example: poverty – gender - age - health - nationality.

This way of distinguishing the possible views regarding the axes of inequality that appear in the domination matrix are based on the thesis of Ange Marie Hancock (2007).

Thus, we could differentiate three approaches to intervention with people experiencing homelessness according to the classification of the guide outlined in the diagram:

▸ The monofocal approachl.

▸ The multiple discrimination approach.

▸ The intersectional approach.

	Monofiocal	Multiple discrimination	Intersectional
How many axes of discrimination are considered?	One	More than one	More than one
What is the supposed relation among axes?What is the supposed relation among axes?	One is considered more	All axes have the same importance in a relationship pre-determined among them	All axes have the same importance; the relation among them is an open question depending on the context
How are conceived the axes?	How are conceived the axes?	In a static way	In a dynamic way

Adapted from Hancock - Source: Guía para incorporar la interseccionalidad en las políticas locales (2019)

MONOFOCAL APPROACH - It considers a single discrimination axis. It is usually the most common way of working on equality and non-discrimination. With this approach, the problems of homelessness are made visible, but it prevents us from seeing 'the whole picture'. It does not allow a complex approach to the fact that people experiencing homelessness go through several axes of inequality at the same time. In this way, a kind of 'mirage of inclusion' is created that does not end up questioning discriminatory practices or situations of inequality and social injustice that lead a person to be in a situation of homelessness (Ex: Housing Situation)..

MULTIPLE DISCRIMINATION APPROACH - This approach has two or more axes present and responds to an additive logic in which categories of exclusion or discrimination are added without analysing the relationships between them. In this way, there is a risk that hierarchies are established between the social groups themselves, as if being part of one or the other would give more points in that sum of discriminations. It is what Hancock calls the 'Olympics of oppression', that is, the competition between the discriminated groups themselves to show which one is more oppressed.

INTERSECTIONAL or DIFFERENTIAL APPROACH - This approach proposes that experiencing a homelessness situation is precisely the product of the intersection and interaction of different axes of inequality. In this way, it explores the relationships between them as an open question linked to a specific context that allows identifying which discriminatory and exclusion practices should be modified and adapted in the intervention without the need to enter into a logic of competition to see which group is the most excluded.

Adapted from [*Guía para incorporar la interseccionalidad en las políticas locales*](#) *(2019)*

Emotional Intelligence

As we know, Emotional Intelligence is a tool in itself. To the extent that its components allude to a series of skills and competences -both personal and social-, it allows us to face the complexity of relationships in everyday contexts. Intervention with people experiencing homelessness, from an intersectional perspective, implies a very high degree of demand, self-knowledge, and emotional management for those who carry it out. In this sense, it is good to remember the five components of emotional intelligence (Daniel Goleman) to use it as a support tool.

Personal competence

These competencies determine the way in which we relate to ourselves.

1. **Self-awareness -** Awareness of our own internal states, resources, and intuitions. It includes: emotional awareness (recognising one's own emotions and their effects); the proper assessment of oneself (knowing one's own strengths and weaknesses); and self-confidence (be sure of the assessment we make of ourselves and our abilities)

2. **Self-regulation** - Control of our moods, impulses, and internal resources. It includes: self-control (ability to properly handle conflicting emotions and impulses); reliability (fidelity to the criteria of sincerity and integrity); integrity (taking responsibility for our actions); adaptability (flexibility to cope with changes); and innovation (feeling comfortable and open to new ideas and approaches)

3. **Motivation -** Emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate the achievement of our objectives. It includes: achievement motivation (striving to improve and meet a criterion of excellence); commitment (to support a group's objectives); initiative (readiness to act when the opportunity arises); and optimism (persistence in the achievement of objectives despite obstacles and setbacks)

Social competence

These competencies determine how we relate to others.

1. **Empathy -** Awareness of the feelings, needs and concerns of others. It includes: <u>understanding other people</u> (having the ability to capture the feelings and points of view of other people and take an active interest in the issues that concern them); <u>service orientation</u> (anticipating, recognising and meeting the needs of project users); <u>taking advantage of diversity</u> (taking advantage of the opportunities that different types of people offer us); and <u>political consciousness</u> (ability to become aware of underlying emotional currents and power relations in a group)

2. **Social skills** - Ability to induce desirable responses in others. It includes: <u>influence</u> (using effective persuasion tactics); <u>communication</u> (delivering clear and convincing messages); <u>leadership</u> (inspiring and directing groups and individuals); <u>conflict resolution</u> (ability to negotiate and resolve conflicts); <u>collaboration and cooperation</u> (being able to work with others to achieve a common goal); and <u>team skills</u> (being able to create group synergy for the achievement of collective goals).

*Source: **La Práctica de la Inteligencia Emocional.** Daniel Goleman*

Joining forces

Networking serves to join forces and, in the case of intersectional intervention, make alliances with the representations of the social groups that embody the ownership of rights affected by the axes of inequality. These alliances must be based on principles such as these:

- **Horizontality**: the relationships are not determined by a hierarchy or formal positions.

- **Synergies**: projects/services/organisations are allied by complementarity with each other, with a multiplier effect of forces.

- **Autonomy**: each one maintains the full capacity to decide their own affairs, maintaining fluid communication.

- **Belonging**: it means conscious involvement and real participation.

- **Commitment**: responsibilities and risks are assumed. The projects/services/organisations have to take the rough with the smooth.

- **Common objectives:** having some objectives in common can guarantee that these are not alien or foreign to one of the participants.

- **Communication**: as a permanent dialogue and exchange of ideas.

- **Construction and collective management of knowledge**: taking advantage of the capacities, experiences, and knowledge of each of the participants.

- **Common action**: it is working jointly to support the networking that the alliance implies.

- **Simplicity and organisational flexibility**: avoiding any formal procedure and any ineffective and unnecessary structure.

- **Leadership**: a shared leadership promotes and facilitates participation, involvement, commitment, and achieving objectives.

- **Evaluation and lifelong learning**: to evaluate to improve, take advantage of resources. Take care of everyone's satisfaction.

3. Commitment

Inclusive leaderships

Teams that produce changes

Guidelines against discrimination

Inclusive leadership

The intersectional view on the problems of people experiencing homelessness implies a model of formal and informal leadership where, as we have seen, a set of personal competencies must be used in order to promote:

- A **collective intelligence** able to focus not only on the achievement of objectives, but also on the processes, which is where intersectional analysis is performed.

- **Fluent communication** that values the well-being and needs of people experiencing homelessness, considered as a whole. Working with criteria of efficiency and by objectives is not at odds with empathy, respect and, above all, with the search for coherence between values, rights, and methodology.

- The **interests of the social groups** that are affected by the oppressions of the axes of inequality. They must be present in the decisions that are adopted and that are planned so that there is a real fit between expectations, needs, and availability.

- **Conscious affectivity** so as not to neglect feelings and emotions. It is key that positive affective relationships are generated with the people experiencing homelessness in a respectful, sincere, and honest way.

WE CAN
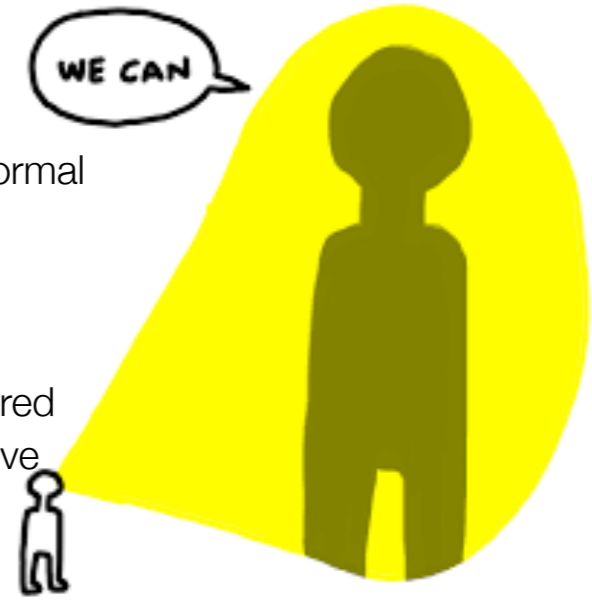
EXERCISE

Put your leadership in front of the mirror

1. If the project you are part of were a chess board, you would be:
   A. King; without you there is no game
   B. Queen; I move 'my way'
   C. Rook; a solid bastion
   D. Knight; my jump always has meaning
   E. Pawn; I advance step by step

2. When important decisions need to be made:
   A. You sleep on it
   B. You are a 'living doubt', everything influences you
   C. You feel the loneliness of your responsibility, you get overwhelmed
   D. You motivate yourself, and your strategist side awakens

   E. You feel responsible even if the final decision is not yours

3. Everything can be improved, so your next proposal for the project/service/organisation will be:
   A. More responsibility
   B. More parties
   C. More support
   D. More meetings
   E. Better communication

4. When I get criticised, my most frequent reaction is usually:
   A. Feel offended
   B. Feel sad
   C. Ignore it
   D. Return it
   E. Accept it

Source: Liderazgo asociativo - Cuadernos prácticos Nº 6 - Fundación Esplai

Transformative teams

15 ideas for teamwork

1. Considering our project/service/organisation/team a school of participation.

2. Committing to common goals. Knowing our goal clearly.

3. Taking care of the environment, the climate, the relationships between all members of the project/service/organisation/team as a school of participation.

4. Making information circulate.

5. Freely expressing our ideas, opinions, respecting those of the rest.

6. Listening with empathy, putting ourselves in the other's shoes.

7. Facing conflicts positively from a conciliatory attitude open to dialogue.

8. Being part of decision-making by providing necessary (and quality) information.

9. Weaving complicities by organising actions among all, sharing or delegating when necessary to achieve the objective.

10. Taking the lead when necessary; anyone can take an inclusive leadership that encourages the initiative of others, motivates and recognises them.

11. Helping out, cooperating. Lending a hand when the situation calls for it.

12. Being creative, flexible, open to new ideas and solutions.

13. Accepting that teams change and evolve, that they are not eternal. Do not be inflexible with new members and new ways of doing things.

14. Evaluating how we are doing and learning from what is needed to improve.

15. Celebrating achievements: congratulating ourselves when we deserve

Source: Los equipos - Cuadernos prácticos Nº 3 - Fundación Esplai

Anti-discrimination

If you don't want to contribute to the dynamics of discrimination that, subtly or directly, are suffered by people experiencing homelessness (dynamics crossed by different axes of inequality), it is necessary to start by avoiding being part of the problem. That is to say, the dynamics and structure that discriminate, stigmatise, and oppress the person. To achieve this goal, the following may be useful:

- Reviewing the information displayed/offered/delivered to verify that it is not biased by prejudices, stereotypes, and stigmas that contain erroneous ideas or messages, or that enhance the invisibility or marginalization of the people who are supported and belong to discriminated social groups.

- Including material resources (visual, audio-visual, textual…) that explicitly reflect diversity in all its categories in the organisation of the physical space and activities, thus promoting a representative approach from different points of view.

- Promoting the presence of professionals, volunteers and chiefs in the entity who represent diversity (ethnic-racial, LGTBI+, religious, functional, cultural, gender…)

- Using inclusive or alternative language in a conscious and intentional way, knowing that using certain expressions is offensive and promotes imaginaries and behaviours of subtle or explicit discrimination towards certain people experiencing homelessness.

In short, try to have a conscious and constant attitude of self-observation to identify erroneous beliefs, biases, prejudices, and stereotypes that reinforce stigmas (comments, jokes, distribution of tasks, notice board...).

4. Safe spaces

The emotional and the physical

What is a safe space?

A safe space is not an overcontrolled space, with surveillance and controls that guarantee the physical safety of people. When we refer to a safe space from an intersectional perspective, we are talking about materializing the emotional security that is needed by a person experiencing homelessness (who is crossed by several axes of inequality). A space that legitimates and respects the person as he/she is, and in which they can express freely, be themselves, ask questions, complain, show doubts, report violence without fear of being blamed or rejected, or suffer any kind of insult, mockery, attack, or aggression. A safe space is usually a physical place, but it can also be an activity, a conversation, a relationship, or a bond.

Some key factors that help

‣ Having teams of professionals and volunteers who are in accordance with the human rights of the people who are crossed by different axes of inequality.

‣ Having training plans that promote respect for the human rights of all people without discrimination from gender and intersectional perspectives.

‣ Promoting a culture in the organisation that openly rejects any type of discrimination and violence towards people who are part of the most vulnerable groups.

‣ Promoting mechanisms for reporting, investigating, and repairing cases of inappropriate behaviour, prejudice, discrimination, or abuse towards these people.

The distribution of physical spaces

The way in which workspaces are distributed also affects daily practice and can contribute to perpetuating or mitigating inequalities. The layout of a space is never neutral; it responds to a certain cultural framework and has an impact on the way we interact, either with other professionals or with users.

If we think about the planning or design of programs, we will see that the location of the different services in offices or even in separate buildings, without points of coincidence between teams, except in the case of specific meetings, makes work difficult from an intersectional perspective.

In the same way, the comfort and arrangement of the working spaces (with light, spacious, etc.), as well as the existence of more informal meeting areas between professionals (coffee room, kitchen, etc.), also facilitate interactions and the generation of complicity. Thus, abandoning the division at the level of spaces also allows abandoning the working logic from each axis in parallel.

On the other hand, when planning services at the city level, one can think of facilities that favour the intersection between various axes of inequality. This cohabitation can generate synergies or collaborative actions between the different groups.

The organisation of the space is neither innocuous nor neutral, but rather reproduces socially and culturally localised practices, and this arrangement does not always help to fulfill the objectives of the service. Sometimes, intervention in the physical space can cause positive changes in working dynamics.

Source: __Guía para incorporar la interseccionalidad en las políticas locales__
(2019)

5. Management of diversity

Guidelines for entities to address diversity management

The intersectional analysis of the intervention requires, on the part of the entity, an institutional commitment to policies and strategies that favour the management of diversity, difference, and plurality of groups, especially for reasons of race, gender, and class.

For this aim, the entity should have:

- **Preparation of a diagnosis** about diversity and the roots of stereotypes, prejudices, and stigmas within the entity, among management teams, professionals, volunteers and also among people experiencing homelessness who are beneficiaries of the service, especially in matters of gender, race, and class.

- **Equality and non-discriminatory policies and procedures** that include the use of inclusive terminology in the internal documents of the entity, have regulations and/or protocols to avoid and/or report harassment and assign a person the responsibility to ensure respect for diversity.

- **Training plans** that explicitly and cross-sectionally incorporate the intersectional perspective and issues related to discrimination against vulnerable groups, especially race, gender, and class. The training should be addressed to volunteers and technical staff, middle managers, managers, and positions of responsibility in the entity.

- **Culture of the entity committed to diversity.** Inclusion of activities, events, festivities, and celebrations relevant to the social groups that are represented among the people experiencing homelessness who come to the entity. Incorporating their interests from their own proposals and participation in their design, planning, development, and evaluation.

- **Strategies at an informal level** to avoid or minimize the use of jokes, mockery, or expressions that may be offensive with respect to the diversity of people experiencing homelessness who belong to social groups vulnerable to discrimination.

- **Support external communication actions** that materialize the entity's commitment to diversity, participation, and representation of people experiencing homelessness who belong to different social groups or groups vulnerable to discrimination.

6. Representation of all diverse

There can be no changes from an intersectional perspective in the intervention with people experiencing homelessness if they are only promoted by the entity, the professional team, or a specific person. It is important that the experience of the people who represent these groups and collectives is recognised and included, and also the experience of those organisations of rights holders that mobilize to claim them and that denounce the structural inequality they suffer. If you want to work from an intersectional analysis, you have to include their voices and experiences, not as anecdotal testimonies but as rights holders and spokespersons for a reality.
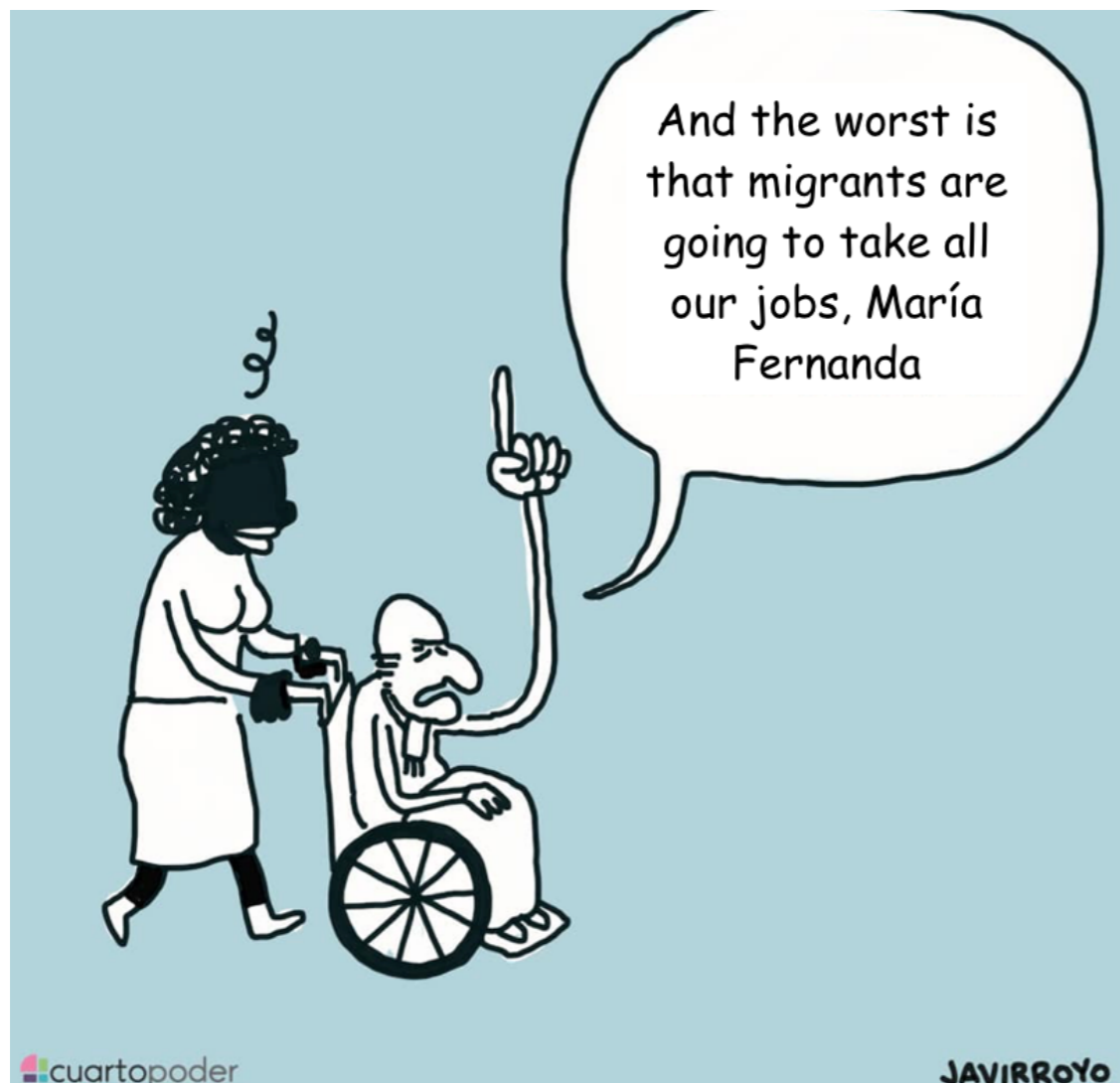
EXERCISE - How are all voices heard?

▸ Do the participatory spaces have representation from people, entities, or referents of the different axes of inequality?

▸ What is done within the entity to include voices that are not normally represented in the spaces for participation?

▸ Are strategies, initiatives, coordination, etc. carried out to know and/or intentionally reach groups that are not usually represented?

▸ What tasks do people experiencing homelessness who are members of the most discriminated social groups usually take on?

▸ What aspects favour or hinder the involvement of certain groups in the spaces for participation (for example, formal requirements, meeting times, space where they are held, accessibility, etc.)?

▸ Do the people or groups served feel they have the same legitimacy and recognition? If that is not the case, why?

▸ What privileges, stereotypes, and/or prejudices may be affecting the lack of presence, representation, and/or visibility of some members of social groups vulnerable to discrimination?

Source: Guía para incorporar la interseccionalidad en las políticas locales (2019)

7. Good practices

One of the most useful elements to implement intersectional analysis in social intervention is the location of **Good Practices** in other organisations, projects, or within our own working network.

In this sense, and for the purposes of this Guide, we understand as Good Practice an action or set of actions or initiatives with tangible and measurable repercussions that improve the quality of the resources, service, program, or project, and can serve as models so that others can know them and adapt them to their own situations.

There are many good practices that integrate the intersectionality approach in their design and development. Here are just a few:

Igualdades Conectadas (Equalities Connected)

A pioneering project that proposes how to apply the intersectional approach in local public non-discrimination policies.

The project aims, precisely, to research the possibilities of applying the principle of equality and non-discrimination in an intersectional manner in the context of a local administration, in this case the Terrassa City Council, and in dialogue with civil society, organising a set of training activities in relation to intersectionality in the city

As a result, in order to understand intersectionality and address inequalities in different ways, they published different training materials and tools (videos of workshops and seminars, a collection of good experiences in public equality policies, and a toolkit with other resources).

Under the creative commons license, these materials have served as the basis and inspiration to develop this Guide and can be found in their entirety at: **http://igualtatsconnect.cat/es/**

Co-financed by the Justice, Rights, Equality and Citizenship Program of the European Commission, and implemented by the **Terrassa City Council, the University of Vic - Central University of Catalonia** (UVic-UCC) y and CEPS Social Projects.

Relief Maps

It is a digital tool: through a website you can create your own Relief Map project that serves to study social inequalities with an intersectional perspective, relating three dimensions: social (gender positions or identities, social class, ethnicity, age, etc.), geographical (places of daily life) and psychological (effects on emotions). It helps to understand the different axes that are related in a context and how their intersection determines our experiences. It is a project of the Open University of Catalonia.

More info can be found at: **https://www.reliefmaps.cat/es/about**

¿Cómo podemos analizar y visualizar las desigualdades sociales?

How can we analyze and visualize the social inequalities?

SHE Video Game

It is a corporate video game developed by Aiwin and aimed at raising awareness among companies and employees about the effect of unconscious biases on the perception of reality and making, consequently, non-objective decisions. The video game leads each player to recognise their own biases and to act accordingly through an interactive story where they will be the protagonists in the development of SHE artificial intelligence.

More info can be found at: **https://aiwin.io/es/she/**

Perceptions, discourses, and attitudes towards immigrants in a Madrid neighbourhood

This is a study that aims to deepen, from a qualitative point of view, the knowledge of social motivations, the reasons for changes and new trends in Spanish public opinion that explain racism and xenophobia in a limited context, the Madrid district of Puente de Vallecas. The Puente de Vallecas district has been the space chosen for the study due to its socially complex character, representative of many other neighbourhoods that have suffered the impact of the economic crisis and a cultural crisis whose manifestations we still do not understand. It has been prepared by GEA 21 for the Spanish Observatory of Racism and Xenophobia (OBERAXE).

More information can be found at:: **http://www.mitramiss.gob.es/oberaxe/ficheros/documentos/Percepcioneslargo.pdf**

Technical Conference on Homelessness: 'Homeless, With Diversity'

The Conference held to make visible the links between the situations of homelessness and the prejudices and rejection that still exist about LGTB+ people, based on the knowledge of necessary previous concepts and the analysis of this reality in the centres and resources for people experiencing homelessness. Organised by Faciam Network.
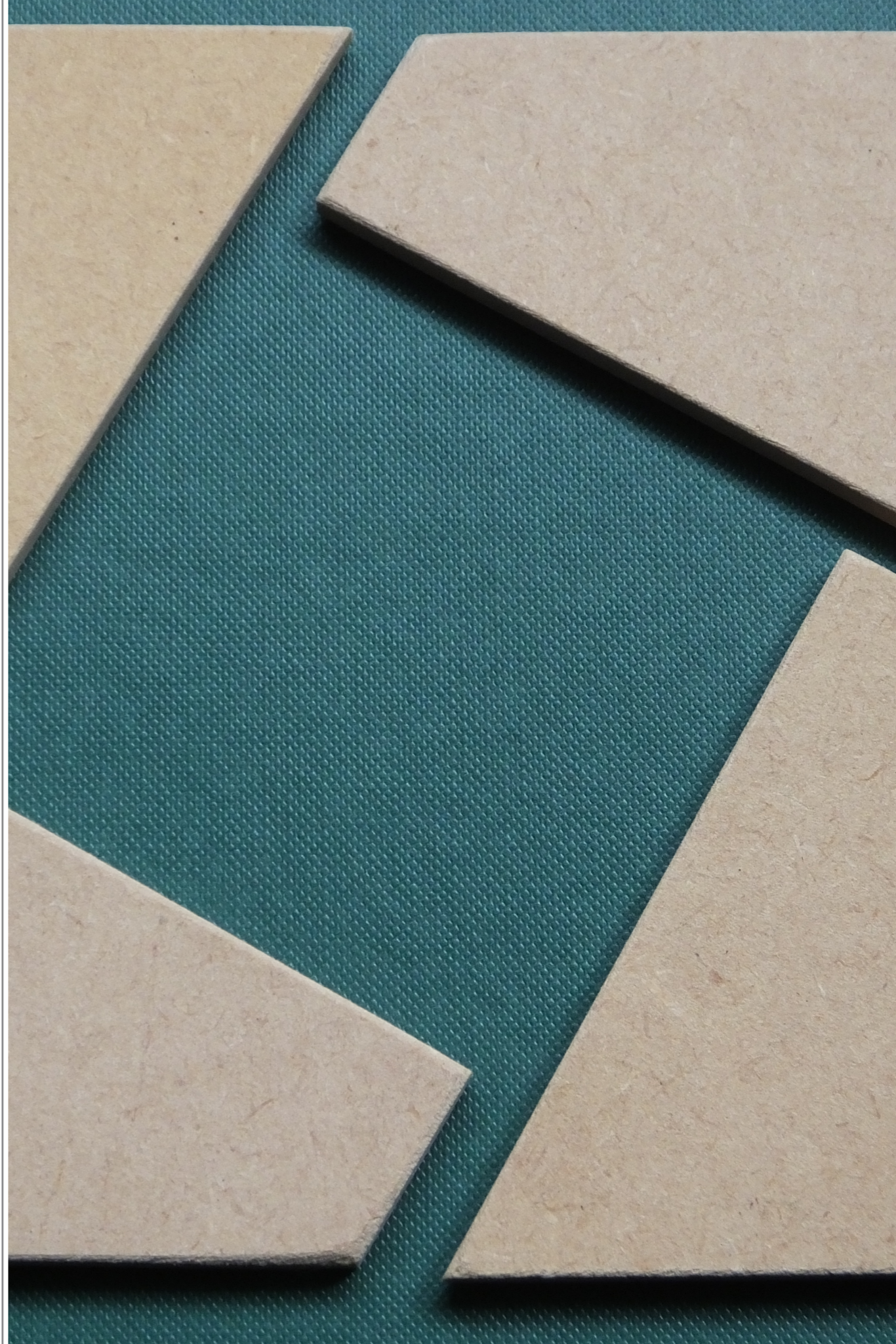
More info can be found at: **https://faciam.org/2019/04/25/sin-hogar-con-diversidad/**

Support material

Bibliography

Videos to know more

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Some useful videos to fix ideas…

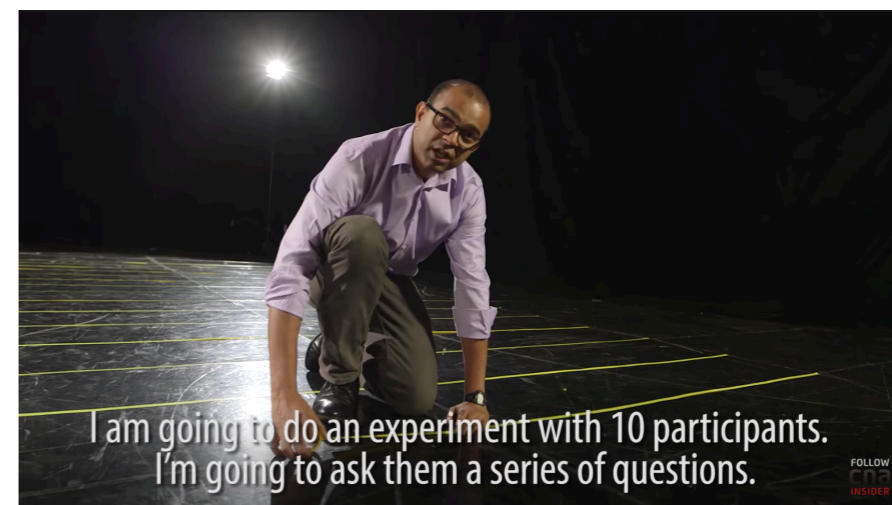CLICK HERE ——> <u>The things I hear every day</u>

CLICK HERE ——> <u>The Intersections Between Domestic and Sexual Violence, Racism, and Homelessness</u>

CLICK HERE ——> <u>Prejudice and Discrimination</u>

CLICK HERE ——> <u>Race & Privilege: A Social Experiment</u>

"Real dialogue isn't about talking to people who believe the same things as you"

Zygmunt Bauman