



PROJECT HANDBOOK

5 SHADES OF BLUE

**Training course on project management
with a focus on Migration**

ROME, 21ST – 29TH OF JULY 2021

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INTRODUCTION

Oh no! Not another handbook!

Wait! This is not the usual handbook, full of texts written in small fonts, endless lists, boring reports. Nothing of the kind: this is THE handbook! In these pages, we want to share the feelings and impressions that we experienced during our training course, in an entertaining and dynamic way.

Yes, because this was a special meeting indeed!

We met in Rome in July 2021 after a long break caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. For many of us, this gathering was the first opportunity of an “offline meeting” after more than a year and a half of confinement, online training and travel restrictions. The energy that we shared during the days of the course was impressive, probably because we really needed to talk, play, learn, discuss and laugh face-to-face.

We hope that reading this handbook you will be able to grasp the same emotions that we felt together in this memorable learning experience. And of course, we also hope that you will learn more on project management and on migration, just like the way we did.

And now, a few words about the purpose of this toolkit.

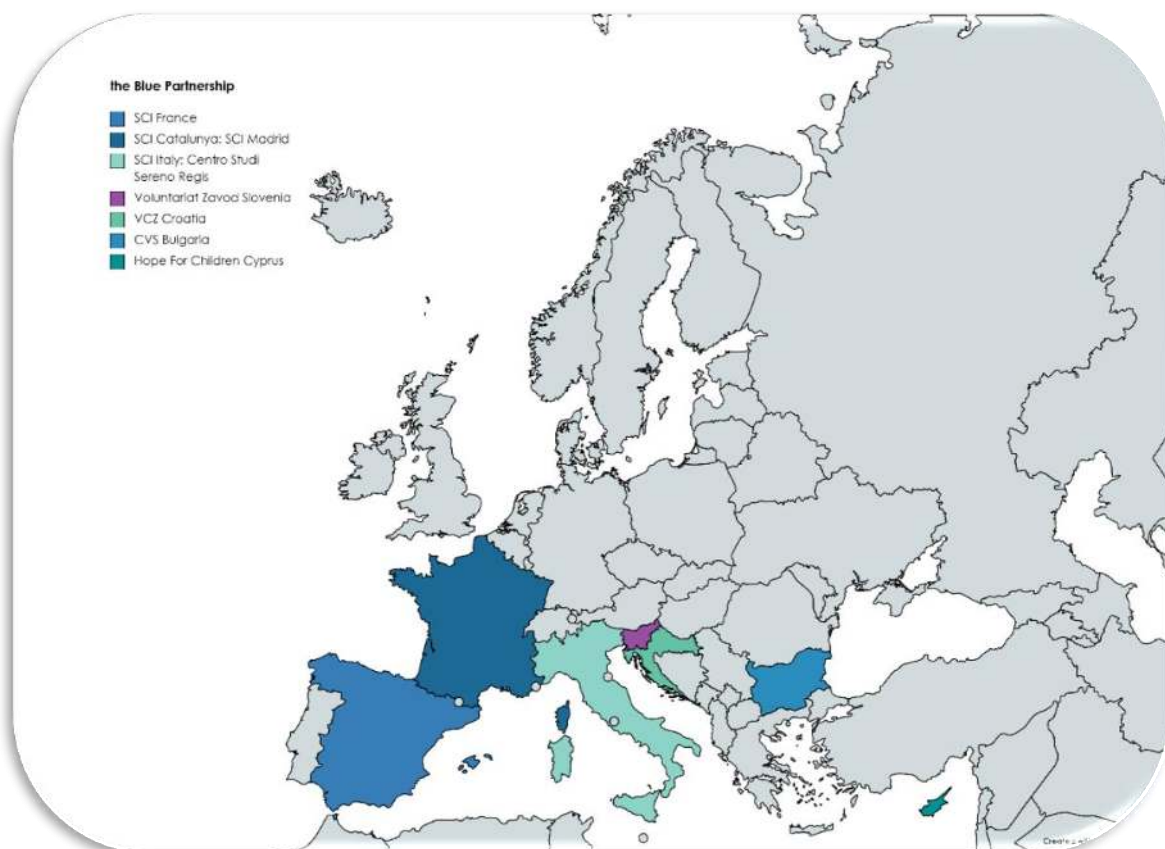
What are handbooks for? They are publications that can meet different needs: to build capacity within a partnership, to share methods and ideas, to test new learning instruments, to improve the quality of the outputs, to provide a theoretical framework. And also: to start a dialogue (between readers and writers), to share best practice, to involve participants in the creation process of a publication and thus to reinforce their commitment in the topics they addressed. Last but not least, a handbook can help find potential funders and can act as a report. So many purposes!

So, what about this one?

Our humble aim is to encourage other organisations and networks to propose a training course like “5 Shades of Blue”, in order to improve participants’ skills in the design, coordination and evaluation of non-formal education projects focused on the social inclusion of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. Here you can find ideas, inputs, suggestions that you can use in your event, and most of all many diverse comments shared by the participants and the trainers. This is not meant to be a step-by-step guide, but rather a source of inspiration and reflection. We hope you will like it!

What is “5 Shades of Blue”?

Finding a good title for a project is never easy. It takes creativity and sudden inspiration to identify a catchy name able to attract the evaluator’s attention and to convey the meaning of the initiative. We don’t mean to brag, but we think that “5 Shades of Blue” is a poignant and meaningful title for a training course on project management focused on migration: it is inspired by the colour of the sea and by the 5 modules of the project, that brought together representatives of organisations from Mediterranean countries (from West to East: Spain, France, Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Cyprus and, well, we included also Bulgaria, even if its coasts are not directly rimmed by the *Mare Nostrum*) who gathered in Rome from 21 to 29 July 2021 to develop together project writing and management skills in the field of migration.



So, what are these “blue” modules?

- “**Electric Blue**” module: a 2-hour online meeting to introduce the project and the partners, followed by online preparatory tasks.
- “**Light Blue**” module: team building sessions, presentation of international and local contexts related to migration, meetings with local organisations.
- “**Azure**” module: sessions on the project cycle; needs analysis, definition of objectives, learning outcomes, expected results on participants, target group and local community.
- “**Sapphire**” module: presentations on institutions, donors, calls and grants compatible with projects focused on migration issues; exercises on budget; impact measurement.
- “**Ultramarine**” module: laboratory of ideas, networking session, design of the handbook; evaluation.

Maybe you’re curious to know why we proposed this project...

The recent outbreak of the Covid-19 has cast the spotlights of media on economic recovery and health measures to react to the pandemic. Although the topic of migration in the Mediterranean region has been temporarily ignored, this issue is still pressing and will continue to affect several European countries, especially those bordering the Mediterranean. Observing the development of the related scenario in the last years, it is to expect that European governments will provide less and less logistic and financial support on behalf of the well-being of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers living in Europe. There is the concrete risk that this group will be further exposed to social exclusion, episodes of racism, criminal organisations. NGOs and networks of voluntary organisations like SCI can provide support to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, proposing initiatives, projects and campaigns that will reduce the risks of social exclusion and strengthen the bonds with the local communities.



Our host: Servizio Civile Internazionale – SCI Italy and La Città dell’Utopia

Servizio Civile Internazionale - SCI Italy is the Italian branch of the Service Civil International (SCI) network, a voluntary movement with branches and groups all over the world and advisory member of UNESCO and the Council of Europe. For more than 100 years, SCI has been promoting international volunteering projects with a strong social connotation, placing a special emphasis on its original themes such as peace, disarmament and conscientious objection. Over time, it has developed towards other issues: international solidarity, respect and protection of human rights, active citizenship, social inclusion, environmental protection, gender equality and fight against climate change. Currently the SCI network has 42 branches and groups all over the world and thanks to the collaboration with numerous partners it is present in more than 80 countries. Today like in the past, international workcamps are the main important instrument to promote volunteering, reinforcing solidarity and support local initiatives. In the last 20 years, SCI branches have developed strong skills in designing and coordinating seminars, training courses and meetings financed by the European institutions.



SCI Italy, founded in 1948, is an NGO recognized by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and has its main operational headquarters in Rome. Its activities are supported on the national territory by various regional groups and local activists, who are in charge of training and promoting national and international volunteering in the various Italian regions and cities, supporting the work of the Secretariat in Rome. In this city, since 2003, SCI Italy has been carrying out a local project focused on active citizenship and social inclusion. The project is called “La Città dell’Utopia” and it is hosted by the Casale Garibaldi, an ancient building situated in the San Paolo district.

The Programme

Day	Morning Session	Afternoon Session	Module
DAY 0 – 13 July		Online introductory session (90 minutes): infos on the project, getting to know each other	
DAY 1 – 21 July	Arrivals	Getting to know each other games, team building; rules; shifts	
DAY 2 – 22 July	Name games and team building part II; presentation of the hosting organisation; getting to know each other; skills self-assessment	Meeting with Laboratorio 53 at the park; Role play game to better define the scope of NFE; creation of reflection groups	
DAY 3 – 23 July	Feedback from reflection groups; Presentation of the programme; energiser; Inspiring quotes and comments on volunteering; The grassroots approach of the IVS movement; The project cycle; Create your own model	Definitions on migrations; The refugee path; reflection groups	
DAY 4 – 24 July	Feedback from reflection groups; Energiser; morning workshop on project design (4 steps: problem tree, solution plan, impact/outcome/outputs, abstract)	Refresh shifts; Mediterranean quiz; Asylum Seekers in the EU; country presentations (participants make flipcharts collecting national data on migration, and present)	
DAY 5 – 25 July	Administrative tasks (reimbursement procedure); mid-evaluation; Youthpass session	Free afternoon in Rome	
DAY 6 – 26 July	Session on activity coordination and logistic dimension of projects; session on partnership: values and principles for a good consortium	Cultural dimension of migration, cultural shock cards, iceberg of culture, checklist for activities with refugees; best practice in the field of NFE project with migrants	
DAY 7 – 27 July	Energiser; feedback from reflection groups; exercise on budget, presentation in plenary; presentation of grant opportunities	Impact measurement (“staffetta” method); beginning of laboratories: identification of common topics and division in 4 groups; start addressing needs and core problem	
DAY 8 – 28 July	Short infos on SMART objectives; Continuation of laboratories: aims, objectives, partnership, activities, programmes.	Presentation of the laboratories results; presentation of the handbook and creation of the first inputs	
DAY 9 – 29 July	Evaluation (“pizza”, space distribution, online questionnaire); Certificates	Departures	

The methods

Service Civil International preferred method when it comes to workcamps, training courses, seminars, meetings is non-formal education (NFE). This approach is based on the following elements:

- participants play an active role in developing and sharing their skills and knowledge;
- the trainers are considered more as facilitators rather than experts: they take care of the learning process and of the group dynamics at the same time;



By making the activities in groups and a practical way, you can learn from the others and have a deep understanding of how to apply the knowledge (not only having it in mind, but also through the experience)

- the learning environment is free, flexible, creative and not competitive;
- participants can work indoors, outdoors, in big groups, in pairs, they can use flipcharts, colours, music, arts...there are no limit to their creativity!
- self-evaluation and self-assessment are essential processes to promote reflection, understanding, critical thinking and constructive change.

During the “5 Shades of Blue” training course, the trainers proposed to the group the following NFE tools:

Energisers, Ice breakers, Name games, Getting to know each other games, Team building sessions, Group splitting games, Role Play Games, Self-assessment, Pairs / Triads / Group work, Plenary sessions, Presentations, Visit to a local organisation, Reflection groups, Exercises with templates, Silent Mind Mapping, Relay (“Staffetta”), Mid and Final evaluation (“pizza evaluation”, room distribution, online questionnaire), Youthpass session, Self-coordination sessions (for taking decisions on shifts, cleaning, preparing etc).



[The idea] of moving from topic to topic was easy to follow and connected the matters to one another

Since many participants were not used anymore to international meetings due to the pandemic, and considering that for the majority of them this one was the first intercultural learning experience, the trainers preferred focusing the first days on a (re)socialisation process, based on games, team building sessions and activities to clarify NFE, the SCI grassroots approach. There was a special attention on groups dynamics, whereas the big heat (with peaks of 36° in the afternoon) imposed a certain balance between resting hours and work.

I enjoyed simple, everyday actions. Even eating a piece of watermelon after a long, hot day and among people who share the same values – it can be a memorable experience.



Concerning the contents, the morning programme focused mainly on project management sessions, whereas the activities in the afternoon were a chance to explore the concepts on migration. The food was vegetarian, with regular breaks featuring fresh fruit and beverages.



Something that made a huge impression on me was that the whole time the food was vegetarian. Personally, as a vegetarian, at events like these I have a very limited options on food but here I could eat everything. This was an amazing feeling.

THE ACTIVITIES

■ Energisers ⚡

Participants have formed a circle. Some of them are tired after a long trip, some are shy and cannot stare anywhere but at their feet, others giggle or laugh, others are just interested to see what comes next and simply wait. For many of them it is the first non-formal educational experience. Silence reigns in the meeting room. Welcome to the typical beginning of an international project! And if you are the leader, coordinator or facilitator...you definitely need a good set of energizers!

The main purpose of such activities is to allow participants to feel more comfortable inside the new group. Usually, these games are proposed at the beginning of a morning session, possibly outdoor. They should be entertaining, dynamic, interactive, their instructions easy to understand and their duration short (no longer than 10 minutes).



Energisers and games made me feel more comfortable with the people around me and made my brain ready to learn.

Here some suggestions in order to involve and motivate participants to join an energizer:

- do not experiment: try your energizer in advance, or if you cannot, read and learn carefully the instructions before explaining;
- be clear and short when explaining the rules; ask participants if they are well understood before starting, if needed, repeat the instructions more clearly;
- check the setting before starting: do you have enough room to play? If you have participants with disabilities, is the game suitable for them?
- adapt your game to the topic of the project. If yours is an environmental workcamp, propose energizers with related theme or shape them up according to the project topic;
- do not force participants to play if they do not want to. However, be aware that if many of them refuse to play, their behaviours can be contagious and can spoil the activity. Try to understand if their attitude depends on lack of motivation or on more serious reasons;
- if a participant persistently refuses to play, maybe s/he can be interested in joining the game as your personal assistant.

During our training course, we played different energisers. The one who was appreciated the most was “Evolution”. Here are the instructions with some comments.



Name: Evolution

Setting: preferable outdoors

Numbers of participants: from 12 to 100!

Explain participants the following evolutionary cycle (although biologically wrong!): amoeba, fish, crocodile, monkey, human being (mime each stage of evolution with a gesture for each animal).

Participants start moving randomly around the room as amoebas. When a player meets another player, they play “rock, paper, scissor”. The winner evolves to the next stage and becomes fish, whereas the loser remains amoeba and look for another amoeba to play with. When a fish meets another fish, they “fight” again. The winner evolves to crocodile, and the loser gets downgraded one stage lower (amoeba). The game goes on following these pattern (only similar animals can fight, the winner upgrades, the loser downgrades). Those who become human beings leave the floor and wait for the game to finish (the game ends when everybody becomes human being – this might not happen, though, and in this case the trainers should stop the game).



Energisers are a nice way to release the tension, to strengthen the group relations and to have a good laugh. However, be careful not to spend too much time with them!

I think this is a great energiser for the morning session!



Team building sessions

The task of this kind of activities is to help the group of participants overcome the initial barriers through fun and, often, physical contact, and to increase the sense of belonging to a group. In order to reach the goal, the members of a group are required to work as a team, including each participant in the decision-making process and avoiding to establish a competitive mindset.

THE BLUE GAME

This is not a competitive game! The objective is to find all solutions working as a team, first in small groups, then in bigger groups, finally in plenary.

Participants are divided in 4 groups, according to the colour of their eyes (ask them to create a line starting from blue-eyed to black-eyed, then split the line in 4 groups). Each group has 10 minutes to discuss and find the solutions within their group. After the first round, they will meet the members of another group and they will continue discussing for additional 5 minutes. At the end, they will meet in plenary and share the solutions. They will understand that knowledge is a cumulative process!

Questions:

1. Name a song containing the word "BLUE" in the title
2. Name a movie containing the word "BLUE" in the title
3. Name a book, a legend, a tale or a story containing the word "BLUE" in the title
4. Name a geographic place containing the word "BLUE" in its name (can be the name of a city, a forest, a sea, a mountain...)
5. Name a flag featuring the BLUE colour
6. Name an animal featuring the BLUE colour (in its body, head, skin...)
7. Name a BLUE stone
8. Name a food or something eatable featuring the BLUE colour
9. Name a flower, a plant or a tree featuring the BLUE colour
10. Name a dress featuring the BLUE colour (a dress related to a culture, religious groups, uniforms, jobs...)



Learning with games is one of the best ways to learn!

The space given to participants to work with each other in different tasks helped creating an atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect



Team building sessions can be coupled getting-to-know-each-other sessions, to be proposed when participants have learnt all their names; at this stage, they might be probably curious to know more about themselves: where they

come from, what they do, how they live in their countries; they would like to exchange information about their families, how they spend their free time and so on. If name games are the opening games, these games represent the typical second step.



THE TRIANGLE

Participants are divided into small groups of 3 members each. On a piece of paper, they draw a triangle and, on each corner, they write their name. They have to identify 3 common things shared by each "side" (pax 1 and 2, pax 2 and 3, pax 3 and 1) and three things that all 3 participants have in common.



It is a great ice-breaker to get to know other participants.



During the project, all of us were able to interact by random-chosen groups and everyone was able to speak up.

Meeting with Laboratorio 53

Laboratorio 53 was born in 2008 from the experience of “Medici contro le torture” (Doctors against torture), within which the first activities started and then took an autonomous and independent form. It is a group of philosophers, anthropologists, psychologists, social workers, lawyers and cultural mediators who, in a multidisciplinary perspective, offer assistance and hospitality to migrants, applicants for international protection and minors. The migrant people who come to Laboratorio 53 are not mere “users” of a service: with their stories, lives, experiences, skills and resources, they become part of a group that is always on the move and in constant change.



The meeting with Lab53 helped me realise that you don't need a lot to make an impact on people's life. Just good will, energy and passion for change.

I am grateful for having an opportunity to meet people from Lab53. It helped me understand that a quality project can have a huge impact on someone's life. I guess I will keep this picture in my mind and store it very carefully within my heart & mind.



By welcoming and accompanying asylum seekers and refugees in their path of recognition and social integration, Laboratorio 53 realized how the first period of life in Italy often constitutes a gap of time and disorientation. This is due both to loneliness and the lack of supportive social networks, and to the fragmentation and difficulty in accessing the places and services that the city offers. Furthermore, the reception centers where most of the asylum seekers live close in the morning and reopen in the evening, with the consequence that many people are forced to wander around the city without a place to stay, like invisible presences. After having obtained some form of international protection - refugee status or humanitarian or subsidiary protection - a not-so-simple process of social integration begins. At this point, the institutions disappear and it often becomes difficult to understand how to move within a complex, stratified social fabric that is not well known. Finding a training course, a suitable job, a home or access to social services can be quite difficult.

To respond to these social problems and needs, Laboratorio 53 has modulated activities on parallel and related levels, such as Italian courses, dance therapy, psychological support, legal assistance, group of self-aid, “Guide invisibile” (a workshop of story-telling and narrative).



On a day of the “5 Shades of Blue” training course, the group had the opportunity to meet the activists and the migrants working with Laboratorio 53, in the fascinating natural setting of the park near Basilica San Paolo. We had the chance to listen to their stories, to ask questions and to better understand the values, vision and mission of the association. Unfortunately, due to the risks linked with the pandemic, further visits to projects and associations were cancelled. For sure, they would have provided more inputs and perspectives to the group.

I think that something that would have been more helpful for all of us is to have the chance to have more meetings with different groups of migrants and associations like Lab53. It was a very nice experience but more interactions would have been more useful.



It is always a good idea that participants get to meet a local association. It was a very inspiring afternoon for me and a great opportunity to compare their approach with my own experience, that I gained while volunteering in local NGOs in my country.



I asked to the Lab53 activists how they managed to currently finance their great initiatives, and it was impressive to know that it is a voluntary-based association. In our training we highlighted the importance of values and mission as a foundation for our actions, and Lab53 embodies these principles: “there is life beyond money!” (Alberto, Lab53 activist)

Design your own project (introduction to the theory of change)

This 2-hour session aimed at providing a general framework to start designing a project. It is based on a visual method, in order to be accessible also for those who have limited familiarity with the project management tools.

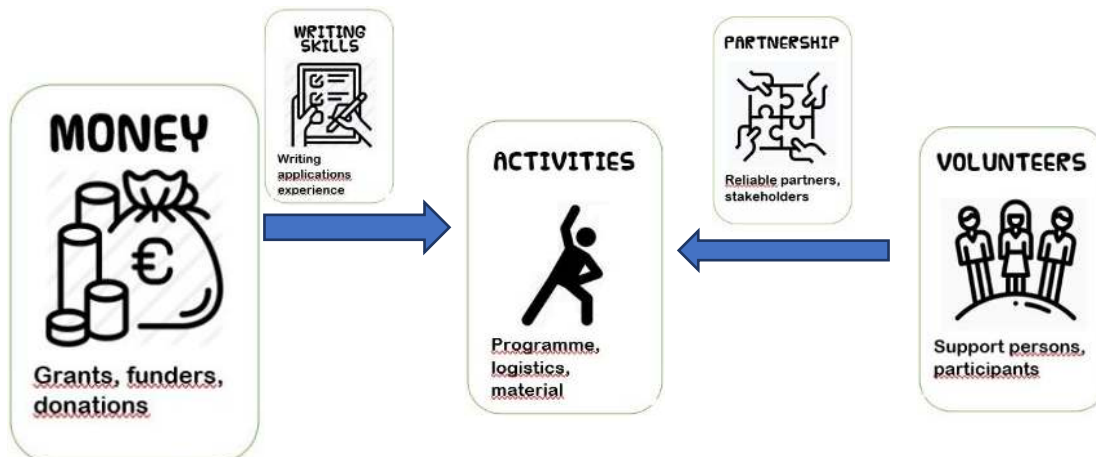
Look at the icons below. They all refer to elements which are relevant when we start designing an intercultural project.



We need MONEY, for sure, but also RESOURCES (an office, digital equipment, a functioning organisation with a staff and a board) and MANAGEMENT SKILLS and WRITING SKILLS (to design a project application, to manage the following steps if we receive the grant, to report...). Of course, we need PARTNERS for international projects and VOLUNTEERS (or participants) to be involved in ACTIVITIES based on GOOD IDEAS and solid educational METHODS. And all of this should match with concrete NEEDS (of our organisation, the local community, a specific target group...).

So many requirements! Where should we start? What are the most important elements? Does it have to be always so complicated? And what if I start right away without planning? You can find many different approaches and project management models. Some organisations prefer focusing on the implementation, others prefer giving priority to the quality of the partnership, others can concentrate all their efforts in writing as many applications as possible, in order to obtain financial contributions for their staff and activities. Let's analyse a couple of models that can be used to design and implement projects.

Example A: The “Take the money and run” model

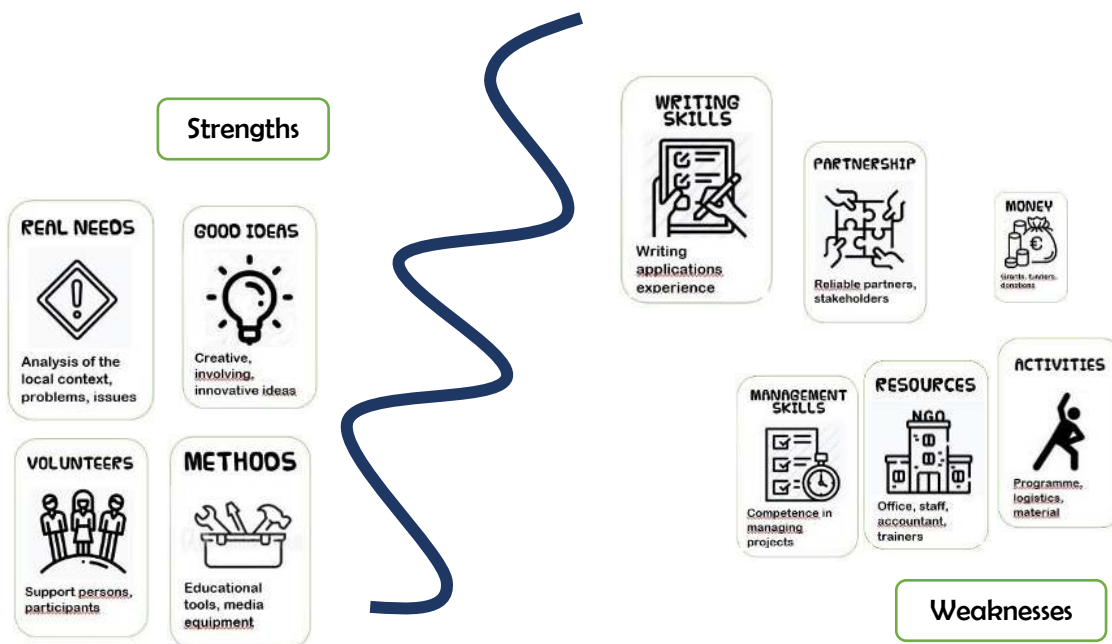


In the “Take the money and run” model, the focus of the organisation is on the grant. Writing skills are essential in order to submit successful applications. Partnership, agreements, objectives, local needs do not have the priority. Only in case of project approval, the organisation starts arranging logistics, and the methods and contents of the activities. Partners will provide volunteers/participants, but they are not involved in the project design or implementation. This model can be compared to a “project factory” or a “hamster in the wheel”. The main aim of the organisation is to write project applications to obtain a grant. The grant will allow the organisation to pay the bills and the staff fees (most important thing) and to implement the activity, and so on... The project is just an instrument to obtain the grant and to ensure the financial survival of the organisation. Change, impact, values, mission and vision do not have an essential role in this model.

Time to reflect!

- What do you think of this model?
- Imagine you have won 10.000 € at the lottery. Do you spend them in hiring the best project writer in Europe in order to be sure to obtain a grant; or do you use them to build the capacity of your organisation (to train staff, trainers, activists)?
- Have you ever heard of the concepts of “Mission” and “Vision”? Do you think that an NGO that uses the “Take the money and run” model has strong values, and a clear mission and vision?

Example B: the “Good will” model



The “good will” model is usually typical of unexperienced and “young” organisations. The activists are enthusiastic and would like to contribute to a real change on behalf of their communities, but they don’t have yet enough experience in the project management field. They might have great ideas, a good volunteers base, familiarity with NFE tools and a good knowledge of the needs of the context where they live. However, they can be too idealistic, and might overlook the logistic dimension, the financial resources, the knowledge and experience they need in writing and managing projects. For this reason, in spite of their “good will”, they can meet obstacles in obtaining a grant (this is the reason why the “MONEY” icon is small and far away in the model). Furthermore, they might meet problems in finding partners for their projects, due to their poor international experience. In this case, it would be preferable to be involved in a project as a partner, and not as an applicant, in order to learn more and to gain skills gradually. After building their knowledge, networking skills and self-confidence, they will be able to design and coordinate complex projects.

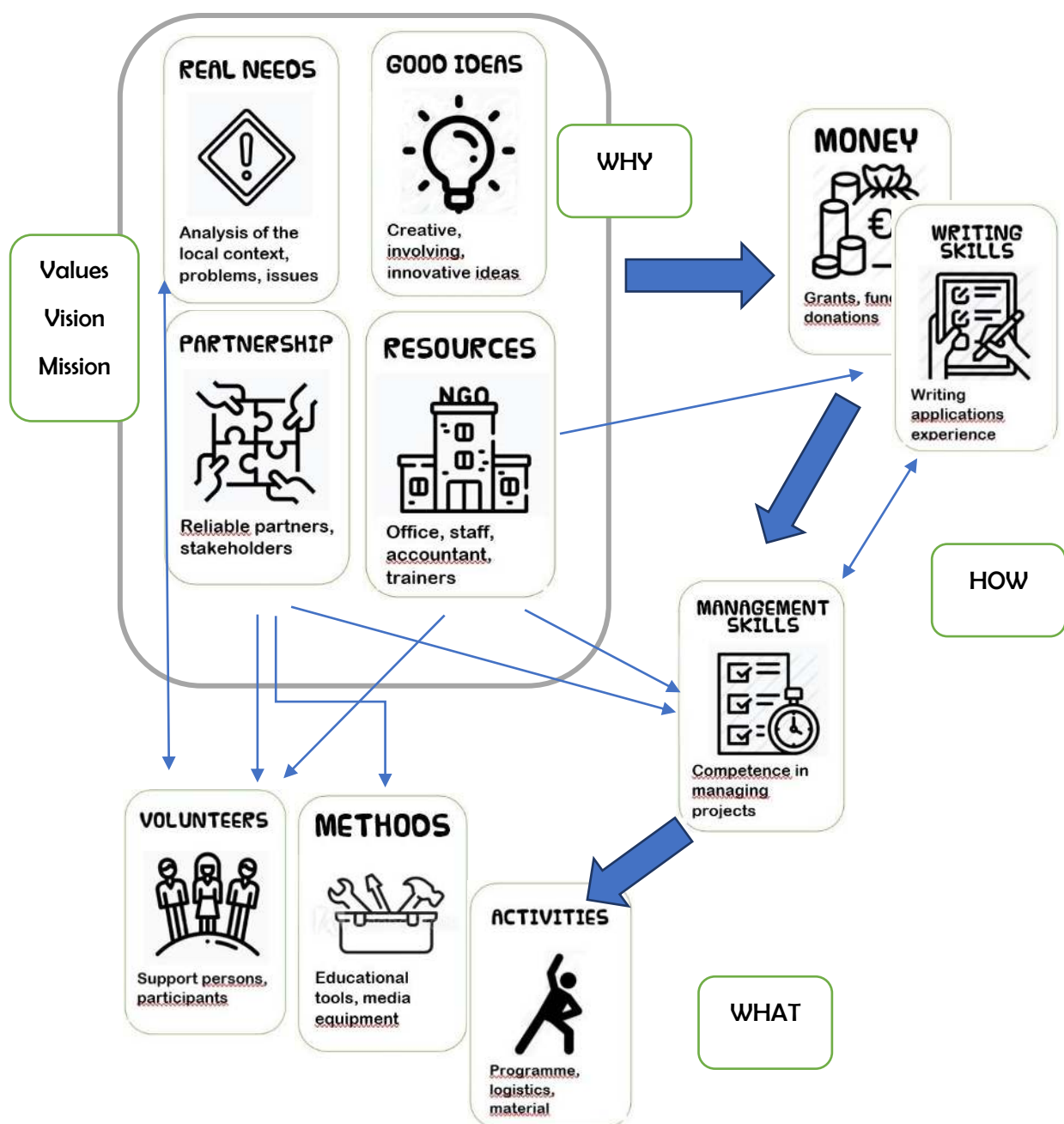
Time to reflect!

- You think that you have a great idea for a project, but it seems that nobody wants to support you! Has it ever happened to you? Have you ever experienced this situation? What did you do?
- Imagine you are a very young activist who wishes to design and manage intercultural activities...how would you start gaining experience? What strategy would you adopt?

- Do you think it is a good idea to try to coordinate an activity with ZERO experience in the field of intercultural projects? Maybe this is the best and fastest way to learn skills...by doing mistakes! Or maybe it will not work...

A model inspired by the Theory of Change

The model below, apparently quite complicated, is inspired by the Theory of Change (ToC). The ToC is a specific type of methodology for planning, participation, and evaluation that is used in non-profit and government sectors to promote social change.



1. Why – 2. How – 3. What

According to the model above, the first step in the project design should consist in the analysis of needs. Possibly, this step should be addressed involving the partners and the future beneficiaries of the project. Only after, when the “WHY?” question is clearly answered, it will be possible to define the following steps: “HOW” to find the financial resources to implement the project, and “WHAT” to do. If you pay attention, you will notice that many grant application forms start by asking the questions “why do you want to do this project?” and not by asking “what do you want to do?”. The focus is on WHY: your values, your vision, your mission, the needs you want to address.

Sometimes it happens that project managers start with the “WHAT?” question. They might “fall in love” with a particularly activity, but maybe this activity doesn’t meet the needs of the potential participants, of the local community, of the organisation. Therefore, it is always better to start with the needs’ analysis. It is also important to assess the capacity of the applicant, as this step will be essential for an effective implementation of the project (for example, if the organisation is understaffed, it might face problems with the administration of the grant). In addition to that, before applying to a grant, you should ask yourself: is this grant compatible with the activities carried out but my organisation? For example, if you work for an environmental organisation, is it worthwhile to apply at any cost for a grant that supports sport and recreational activities? Maybe you should look for more compatible grant opportunities (that will allow to meet the needs you identified), instead of “twisting” the profile of your expertise and of your organisation in order to adapt them to the grant criteria. This is why a reflection on “vision, mission and values” is important: if you know clearly what your organisation stands for, you will be able to better identify the financial opportunities that will support your ideas, meet your needs and allow you to implement your strategy.

An organisation can write an application using its own resources or cooperating with free-lances, or volunteers/activists who has a strong writing experience. It would be preferable that those who write the project are also involved in its management, as they can provide details, guidance and tips during the implementation and evaluation phase.

In this model, partners are not a simple “participants’ or volunteers’ providers” (like in the “Take the money and run” model). Partners are actively involved in the step of project design, and this approach is necessary to avoid potential misunderstandings and conflicts in the implementation phase. During the activities, partners can provide their expertise, their trainers, their methods. They can play a monitoring role and can be involved in the creation of the

narrative and financial report. If the agreements are clear, they will select and prepare the participants for their activities and will propose constructive alternatives in case of obstacles.

Time to reflect!

- Is this model too complicated? Do you think that it can really produce a change?
- Do you think it requires time to obtain the skills to run effective projects?
- Is a participatory approach always productive? What if partners do not cooperate?

Do you want to learn more about the Theory of Change? Here are some links:

<https://www.theoryofchange.org/> : a website with interesting resources on ToC

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJDNOcpxJv4>: a short animated presentation on ToC

<https://www.bridgespan.org/insights/library/nonprofit-management-tools-and-trends/mission-and-vision-statements> : clear definitions of “Vision” and “Mission”

Ideas for a 2-hour workshop on basic project design

- Create small groups of participants (4, 5 members for group);
- Provide each group with the 10 icons (you can print A4 sheets, each containing 2 icons), a flipchart, glue, scissors, colors, post-its;
- Shortly show the 10 icons and explain why they all important;
- Give each group 45 minutes to create their own model. They should identify the 3 or 4 most important icons and draw a model centered on these elements. They can use arrow, connectors, diagrams. They don't have to use all 10 icons, though, if they don't think that they are all useful;
- Give 5 minutes to each group to present in plenary;
- Conclude the activity by showing the 2 “dysfunctional” models and the one inspired by the theory of change, stressing the priority of the “why” (needs, values, mission, vision) on “what” (grant at any cost, activity based on poor foundations).



Don't forget to draw pictures or paint it in an attractive way. Coloured markers can be your best ally to transform your work.

A 4-step session on project design

This workshop was a step forward toward project design. It provides a method to create a structured idea in 4 simple steps:

1. through the “project tree”, we identify the core problem, its causes and effects;
2. then, we convert the project tree into a solution plan: this clarifies our general aim, our specific objectives, the activity and the expected results;
3. we proceed further and we define the impact of our actions, the learning outcomes that we want to achieve through our educational activities, and the outputs;
4. finally, we summarise all this with a clear and short abstract, in order to show our idea to partners, stakeholders, the press, donors etc.

Step 1: let's build the problem tree!

Split the group in small teams (3-4 participants per group). Provide a template with the problem tree (the trunk is the space for the core problem, the roots are the spaces for the causes, the branches / foliage are the space for the effects generated by the problem).

- Ask each group to identify a core problem: this is a problem/issue/negative situation/challenge that participants would like to address. They should try and be as specific as possible. These questions will help them choose their problem/need:

- Why does this need/problem have to be addressed?
- What will happen if we don't address it?
- How widespread is this need or issue?
- How long has it been a problem?
- How has it impacted you, your community or your organization?
- What evidence or data do you have concerning this issue?
- Is this an issue that you or your organisation can actually correct or improve?

Examples of problems/issues/needs:

- High rate of unemployed or inactive young people in your neighbourhood
- High level of air pollution in your town
- Lack of activists/volunteers in your organisation

- Causes. After they have identified the “core problem”, they should identify its causes, making a list and possibly expressing them in a negative form. Here is an example:

Core problem: Lack of activists in your voluntary organisation

Causes:

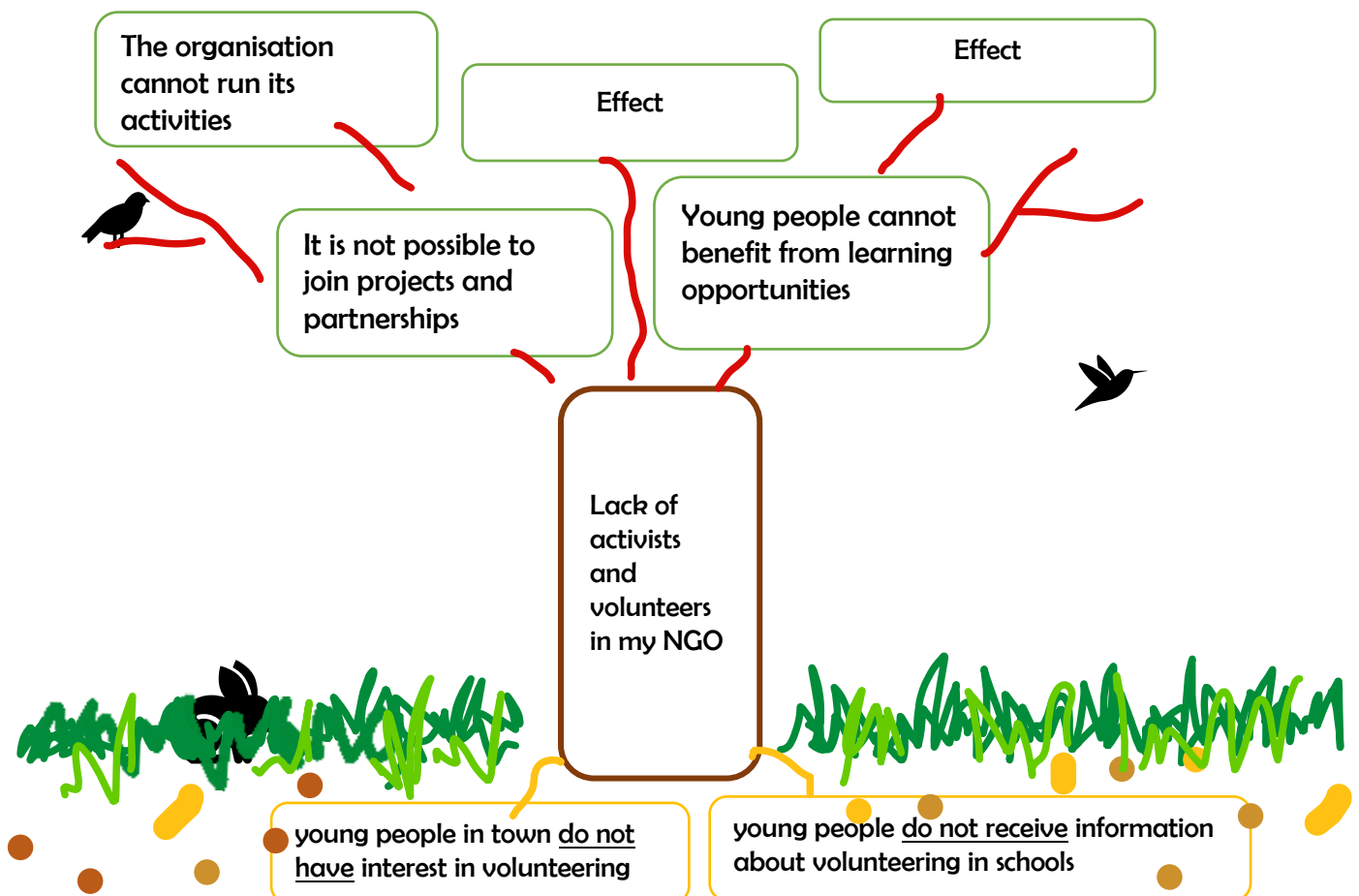
- young people in town do not have interest in volunteering;
- young people do not receive information about volunteering in schools

- Effects. Now let’s focus on the effects. Participants are invited to write down the possible negative effects created by the core problem. Look at the example below

Core problem: Lack of activist in your voluntary organisation

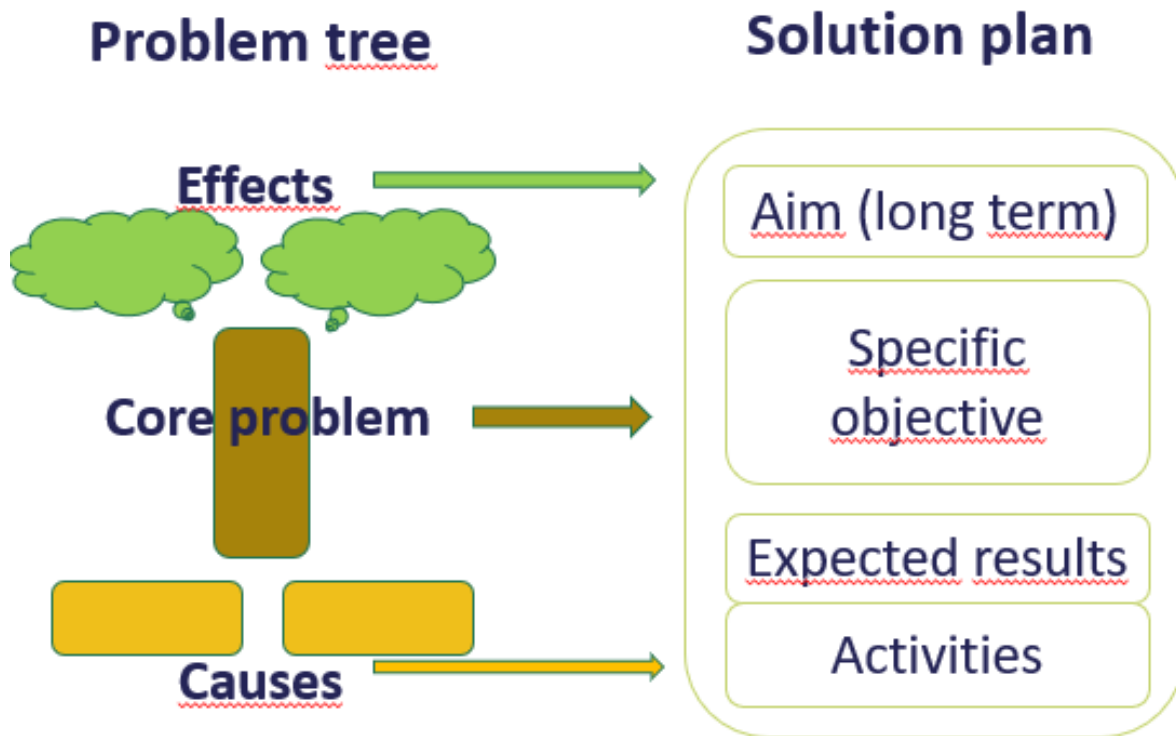
Effects:

- The organisation cannot run its activities due to lack of participants
- Young people cannot benefit from learning opportunities
- It is not possible to join projects and partnerships



Step 2: from problem tree to solution plan

After participants have created their problem tree, invite them to turn it into a solution plan, using the following template:



The core problem becomes the specific objectives. In our example, the lack of volunteers pushes us to find activists, and this is our “practical” goal. However, this is not enough: when we communicate our intentions, we should provide also “the big picture”. Why do we want to find volunteers? What is our vision? What do we want to achieve with that? Are we looking for personal, selfish objectives or do we want to offer benefits for the whole community? The aim (a broader, long-term achievement) is thus essential to communicate our goals, to avoid misunderstandings and to involve more stakeholders in our ideas. This element can be linked to the effects included in our project tree. Concerning the causes, we should identify those which are more realistic and feasible, according to the available resources. In our example, we decide to focus on the lack of information on volunteering in schools (we imagine that we can have access to classes). Following this idea, we propose workshops on volunteering, NFE and human rights, expecting to reach 200 young students.

Step 3: definition of impact, learning outcomes and outputs

The third step of the workshop consists in going deeper, defining the impact, the learning outcomes and the outputs of our idea, as illustrated here below:

Next: definition of impact, learning outcomes, output

Impact: the short, medium and long term effects of your project on different levels (on participants, your organisation, partners, local community; at local, national, international level)

Learning outcomes: skills, competences, abilities, attitudes and knowledge gained by the participants (and by the organisations and partners)

Output: a specific final production (toolkit, handbook, plan of action, website, a video, a podcast...)

Here, participants can create a programme of the activity, including the skills, knowledge and attitudes that the target groups will learn, gain and develop.

Step 4: creation of an abstract

The workshop concludes with a final written exercise. The groups create a short recap of their project, highlighting its most relevant aspects in a clear and coherent way: aim, objectives, target groups, learning outcomes, impact, outputs, activities (venue, duration, materials). An abstract is essential to communicate our ideas to colleagues, activists, partners, donors, the press. And of course, it can be a reference document to start developing an application form for a grant.

Example: The project intends to address the lack of activists in the local organisation [specific objective]. This problem affects the local community, as the young people in town cannot benefit from the European opportunities, cannot develop intercultural skills and are exposed to inaction and passivity [context, needs]. Thus, the initiative aims at promoting the growth and personal development of young people in town [general, long-term aim]. The activities will be carried out in the local schools during the 2nd semester, where experienced facilitators will hold weekly 90-minutes workshops on volunteering, NFE and human rights [activity], targeted to the 200 high school students [target group]. The students, supported by the facilitators, will create a final video, including interviews with peers [output]. They will learn more about intercultural projects, volunteering opportunities, at local and international level [learning outcomes]. It is expected that the students will join the NGO as participants of projects, volunteers in workcamps and members of the board, producing a positive change in the community [expected results, impact].



The problem tree is really useful to organise the ideas and go forward



This activity gave me tools to analyse a problem and figure out how to find a realistic and creative solution



Wow! The method shows how to turn a problem into a solution that you can apply in everyday life for any kind of problem. I find it really useful as it helps you gather ideas and structure them in a way that leads to a solution

It was a perfect activity to order your ideas on a project. It provides participants with a *modus operandi* that could also be applied to other fields other than project management.



I really appreciated all the group activities linked to the project planning and management we had during the mornings: this kind of approach gave me the possibility to deeper understand what is the process behind projects, facing problems and trying to find solutions.

During the pandemic, I had conducted sessions on project design, but we were always under pressure due to limited time. Finally, I had the chance to test this method in our training using the whole morning: it was so rewarding to see how participants could interact, create and share ideas, free from digital devices and time constraint. I mean, I don't want to put technology down, but working totally "offline" was really cool!



Budget exercise & Grant opportunities 🏠

When it comes about numbers, participants always tend to become a little edgy. This is not hard to understand: budget sheets, financial reports, reimbursement forms do not require as much creativity as the other phases of project management... moreover, these tasks are sometimes boring and tiring. Nevertheless, it is essential to master figures and excel tables, in order to ensure a solid financial foundation for our activities. For this reason, our training course featured 2 specific sessions on budget in the “sapphire module”. Of course, we suggest to blend the task with NFE methods, in order to make the pill less bitter!



Although money is not the most important, it is quite important to learn how to use it and get it

- In the exercise on budget, participants were divided in small groups (2 or 3 people) and had the task to fill in a simplified budget form, according to some basic instructions (they imagined to spend 10.000 € and to receive a 66% co-financing support for their activities). They were invited to include different items in the form, such as trainers' fee, material, insurance, travel costs, accommodation costs etc. At the end, each group presented the results in a plenary session, and the other participants and trainers could make comments on the feasibility of the financial proposal.



The knowledge we received made me understand a lot of things about the way projects work: how to manage money, how to see the needs of local or international projects.



- The morning focused on money was integrated by another session, aimed at presenting the grant opportunities offered by European and Mediterranean institutions (different actions of Erasmus+, ESC, European Youth Foundation, Anna Lindh Foundation, CERV...). The trainers presented them as they were “restaurant menus”, in order to make the session more entertaining. Participants had the chance to ask questions and to improve their knowledge and their motivation to apply for future grants.

Key concepts of migration

The key concepts of migrations helped participants understand the framework of the discussions and the context of the phenomenon. Here below we list the most important ones (Sources: State Agency For Refugees-Bulgaria, UNHCR, PICUM, OCHA)

Asylum seeker

An asylum-seeker is someone whose request for sanctuary has yet to be processed. Every year, around one million people seek asylum.

National asylum systems are in place to determine who qualifies for international protection. However, during mass movements of refugees, usually as a result of conflict or violence, it is not always possible or necessary to conduct individual interviews with every asylum seeker who crosses a border. These groups are often called 'prima facie' refugees.

Refugee

In accordance with the Law on Asylum and Refugees of the Republic of Bulgaria a refugee is an alien who has a well-founded fear of being persecuted due to

his/her race, religion, nationality, membership of a specific social group, political opinion and/or belief; who is outside of the country whose national he/she is or, if stateless, outside the country of his/her permanent residence, and who, for those reasons, cannot or does not want to avail himself/herself of the protection of that country or return thereto”.

Refugees are defined and protected in international law, and must not be expelled or returned to situations where their life and freedom are at risk.

Stateless person

The international legal definition of a stateless person is “a person who is not considered as a national by any State under the operation of its law”. In simple terms, this means that a stateless person does not have a nationality of any country. Some people are born stateless, but others become stateless.

Statelessness can occur for several reasons, including discrimination against particular ethnic or religious groups, or on the basis of gender; the emergence of new States and transfers of territory between existing States; and gaps in nationality laws. Whatever the cause, statelessness has serious consequences for people in almost every country and in all regions of the world.

Regular (Irregular) Migrant

A uniform legal definition of the term 'migrant' does not exist at the international level. A 'migrant' is fundamentally different from a refugee. Refugees are forced to flee to save their lives or preserve their freedom, but 'migrant' describes any person who moves, usually across an international border, to join family members already abroad, to search for a livelihood, to escape a natural disaster, or for a range of other purposes. However, refugees and migrants often employ the same routes, modes of transport, and networks. Movements of both refugees and migrants are commonly referred to as 'mixed movements'.

⚠ Please note the term 'illegal' which is widely used in the media is incorrect. No person is illegal.

[I liked] the definition of migration, because I learned the proper way to express myself better on the topic of migration



Undocumented migrant/ Sans pappier/

Undocumented migrants are those without a residence permit authorizing them to regularly stay in their country of destination. They may have been unsuccessful in the asylum procedure, have overstayed their visa or have entered irregularly.

Immigrant vs Emigrant

When a person leaves his country to take up permanent residence in another country, he becomes an emigrant and an immigrant. He is an emigrant upon leaving his homeland and an immigrant upon arriving at his destination.

Economic migrant

An economic migrant is someone who voluntarily leave their country of origin in search of better employment and development opportunities. They can return to their homeland as they avail themselves of the protection of their national government and the rights laid down by law.

Unaccompanied minor

In immigration law unaccompanied minors, also known as separated children, are generally defined as foreign nationals or stateless persons below the age of 18, who arrive on the territory of a state unaccompanied by a responsible adult, and for as long as they are not effectively taken into care of such a person.

Internally Displaced Person (IDP)

Internally displaced persons are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or 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 human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognised state border.



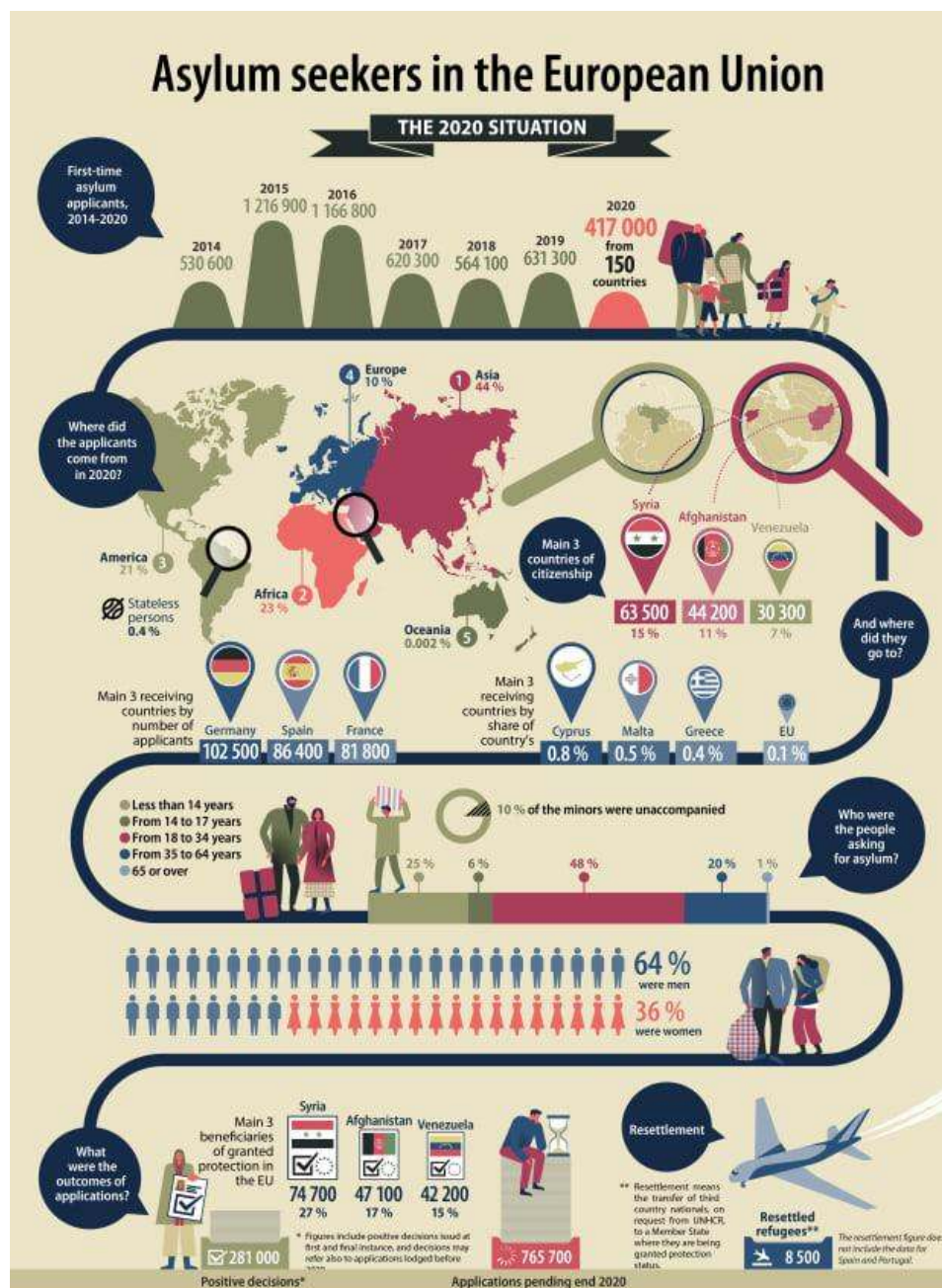
The Refugee Path

An interactive game to involve participants in stepping into the shoes of the migrants and understanding the main definitions, concepts and actors connected to the topic can be found in the toolkit Go visual!

(https://sci.ngo/wp-content/uploads/Resources/Our-publications/Go-Visual-Icon-Dictionary-2nd-edition-en_compressed.pdf)

Asylum seekers in the EU

The figure below presents the forced migration situation in Europe in 2020.



Cultural dimension of migration

This session helped participants understand the cultural dimension of migration by dividing them in small groups and providing them with a set of questions, connected to culture, which they could discuss. Then, they brought back the discussion in plenary to point out the main aspects of culture.

Example questions:

- What are the elements that define a culture?
- What would be your definition of culture?
- Why do you think culture is important?
- When people from other cultures think about your culture, what do they usually think of?
- Within your culture - is it polite to be straightforward and direct when you talk to someone? To whom is it OK and to whom is it not OK?
- What are the unwritten rules about eye contact during communication in your culture?
- What are the unwritten rules about physical contact in your culture? For example, how do you greet someone you meet for the first time? What about greeting a friend?
- What is the role of the family and family ties in your culture? Does this role differ from other cultures you know?
- What is the attitude towards time in your culture? For example - is it a custom to be late?
- What are the unwritten rules for communication between men and women in your culture?
- What are the traditional gender roles in your culture?
- What are some of the conversational taboos in your culture? (Things you can't talk about with people you don't know well? Things you would tell your friends but not your family? etc.)
- What are some of the superstitions in your culture?
- What is the influence of religion on your culture? What is the difference between faith and tradition?



Q & A activity about cultural behaviours in a small group – learning first hand in a relaxed environment speaking about important topics make me learn more and understand better

- What has surprised you when you have met people from other cultures?
- How do young people in your culture behave differently from older people?
- What does it mean to be polite in your culture? What is rude or impolite? Can you point out some differences to other cultures?



Cultural dimension: it was too much interesting to discuss with the other persons here for stereotipes or differences in our cultures. We realised how many common thinas we have



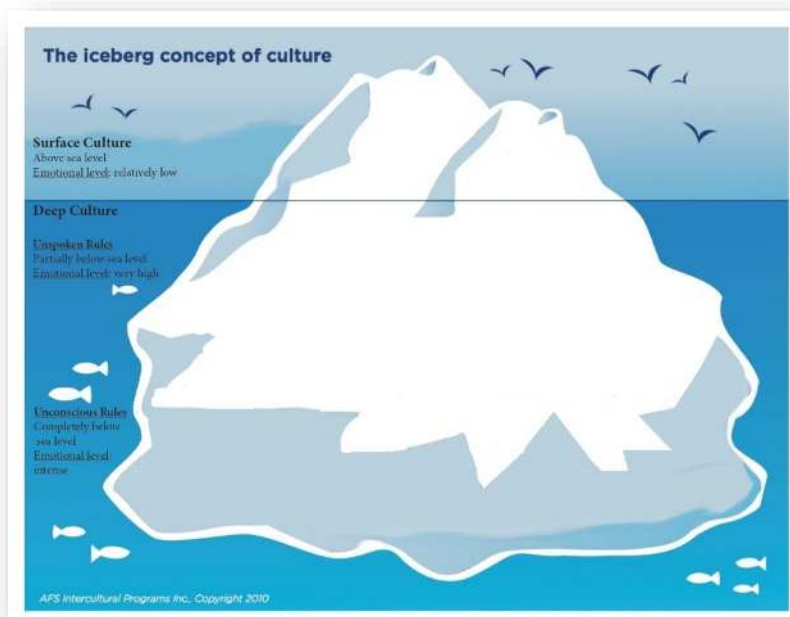
The cultural dimension and finding similarities and difference were a valuable asset for understanding



The iceberg concept of culture

One of the models which helps us explain culture is the Iceberg model. While in small groups the participants received an empty cultural iceberg handout and were asked to brainstorm on what is above the surface and what is below the surface when describing the characteristics of one's culture. For example, the clothes someone wears are noticed right away and therefore this characteristic can be placed above the water.

Handouts



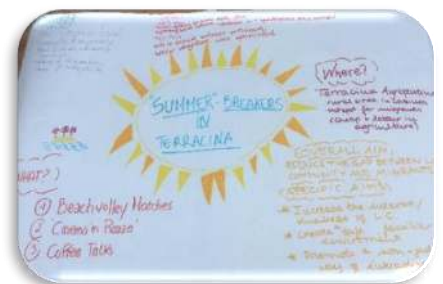
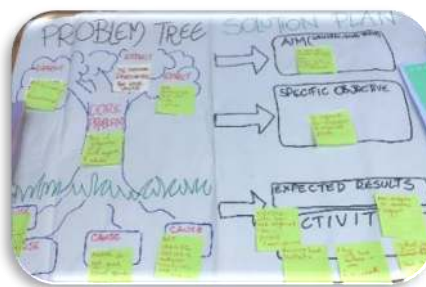
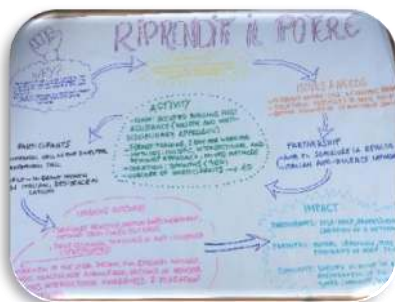
Final laboratory of ideas

In a long training course like “5 Shades of Blue”, we had the chance to include a multi-session phase in the final part of the programme. This long activity (which lasted in total around 4 hours) had different purposes:

- to consolidate participants' learning process, reflecting on all the previous tools, knowledge and skills gained in the previous sessions;
- to allow participants to combine the contents and methods on project management & design with the information & concept on migration;
- to create ideas for future projects;
- to promote networking among participants who intended to propose common local and international initiatives.



First, participants were divided in small groups, according to the topics they wanted to address. Then, they received some basic instructions on how to develop their project ideas: a recap of all the sessions we did, short information on the S.M.A.R.T. objectives, 6 tips to guide them in the creation of their initiatives. Participants worked hard until the end of the training to produce 4 nice ideas. Hopefully, they will be able turn them into real projects soon!



The best part of this activity was to combine our own creativity and desires with specific needs that we observed in our daily lives in our community and / or professional practice. At the end, our group wanted to carry out the project we came up with in real life and felt energised by sharing our ideas and desire to be engaged in our communities.



ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION

In a long activity, monitoring participants' mood, learning process and feelings is essential to ensure a constructive working environment and to strengthen groups dynamics. Trainers should include constant spaces to “check the pulse” of participants throughout the meetings, possibly using a diverse range of methods (proposing always the same tool can be boring in the long run. Be creative!). Here we want to share the ideas we use during our activity.

Reflection groups

On day 2, the trainers split the whole group in 4 small “reflection groups”, who were invited to gather 20 minutes after the last session in the afternoon to discuss about the whole day. When creating the groups, it is important to properly “mix” participants, avoiding to create team with representatives of only one country or region. In order to diversify the task, different questions and methods were proposed every day:

- What did you learn? What did you like most?
What can be improved?

- 3, 2, 1 technique: mention 3 things you learned today, 2 things that kept you energy up and 1 thing that pulled your energy down.



- Reflect on the day writing a comment for each finger of the hand: thumb (great thing), forefinger (something you would like to point out), middle finger (something negative), ring finger (something engaging), small finger (something apparently small but important).

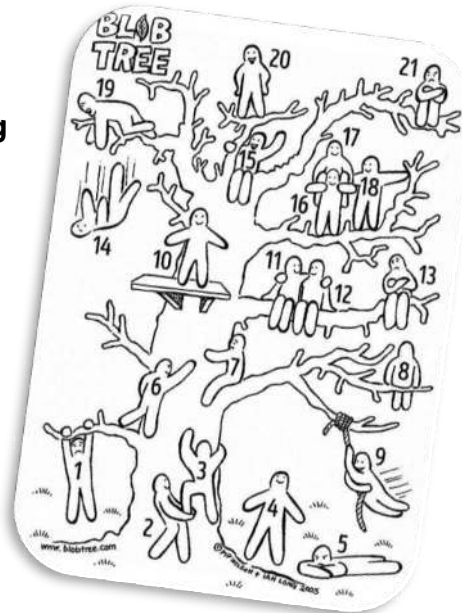
- If today were a song / an animal / a novel / a piece of food / a smell...what would it have been?



The reflection time at the end of each day was crucial to “stick” feelings and knowledge. Doing it in the same small groups was also important.



- Pinpoint yourself in the “blob tree” (participants received a drawing featuring little persons hanging/sitting/climbing a tree – each one inspiring a special feeling, mood or state of mind).



I like the “blob tree” because it can help discover how the group feels. You can make it when you start a training, in the middle or in the final part, because sometimes it is complicated to find out the words to describe how you feel.




The reflection groups at the end of the day were fundamental to check feelings and how the day went



I'd like to underline the importance of all the “reflections groups” we had at the end of the afternoon activities, during which we tried to understand what's behind a specific word, and what's its real meaning. What I do strongly suggest is to give space, in structured moments, to open discussions in order to re-create moments of divergent thinking.

Self-assessment session

Our group was made up of participants with diverse backgrounds and experiences. However, not all of them were familiar with the instruments typical of the project management field. Therefore, it was useful to invite them to self-assess their knowledge and skills before starting their learning experience, focusing on 13 different skills. Inspired by Lev Vigotskij's "Theory of proximal development", the trainers provided a list with knowledge and competencies related to project management, and invited each participant to evaluate themselves (first individually, then sharing the results in pairs) by choosing one among three options: 1) Comfort Zone (I don't need help to perform the task); 2) Learning Zone (I am maybe not so competent about it, but I can make it with some help from a more experienced person); 3) Panic Zone (this task scares me to death!). Finally, each participant copied their results in a flipchart, to provide an overview on the group skills. This session helped the trainers adapt the contents and methods of the following activities to the level of the group.



	COMFORT ZONE	LEARNING ZONE	PANIC ZONE
1. CREATING A NARRATIVE REPORT			
2. FILLING IN A FINANCIAL REPORT			
3. CREATING A BUDGET FOR AN ACTIVITY			
4. ARRANGING LOGISTICS			
5. DISSEMINATE RESULTS			
6. DEFINING AIMS, OBJ, LEARNING OUTCOME			
7. SELECTING PARTICIPANTS			
8. IDENTIFYING RESOURCES			
9. MONITORING PROGRESS			
10. DEFINING AND MEASURING IMPACT			
11. FINDING GRANT OPPORTUNITIES			
12. FINDING INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS			
13. MANAGING GROUP DYNAMICS			

As it happens in many training courses on project management, it seems that figures and numbers are what scares the most among our participants (filling a financial report, creating a budget). In addition to that, a significant amount of them expressed "panic feelings" when it comes to identify grant opportunities and to develop a partnership. On the other hand, managing group dynamics was the skill that "scored" the highest in the comfort zone.

The self-assessment task was an interesting personal reflection, that was useful not only for this project, but also in general.



Evaluation & Youthpass

The training foresaw 2 spaces for evaluation: the first was planned exactly in the middle of the meeting and it was merged with a session on the Youthpass; the second concluded the training and proposed 3 methods.



In the mid-evaluation, the trainers asked inputs on how to improve the logistics and feedback to finetune the contents and methods of the sessions. Moreover, participants were informed about the Youthpass and were invited to reflect about the learning outcomes of the training.

The final evaluation consisted in the so-called “pizza evaluation” (participants were invited to express their appreciation of different elements of the training, marking spots on a flipchart), the method of the “space distribution” (participants reflected on some factors like food, group dynamics and methods, distributing themselves in the yard and sharing their comments or tips for improvement) and an online questionnaire. To combine diverse tools together is a choice which allows to attract participants’ attention, in a moment of the training when the remaining energy is low and the will to conclude and celebrate is high. At the end, each participant received their Youthpass certificate.



“You are the only one who can judge yourself” (Laura V.): an inspiring quote that I learned in this training, which will accompany me all my life

The communication I had with people during the “out of project” times was just priceless!



WRAPPING UP

Guidelines & Tips for your training

If you wish to “replicate” this training course, proposing sessions on project management with a focus on migration, here you can find a list of extra-tips that we learned during our experience and we would like to share with you:

- It's true, the pandemic forced us to spend more time at home, but we learned also to master new digital tools and to propose online and offline sessions. You can start the project planning an introductory digital meeting (like our “electric blue model”), to share important logistic information, to start getting to know one another and to appoint homework.
- In order to meet the anti-Covid-19 measures, all our sessions in Rome were conducted outdoors. We opted for a technology-free approach, inviting participants not to bring their laptop and using smartphones only to take picture, to share the reading material after the activities and for the final evaluation. We realised that it is possible to work without digital devices and the interest of participants during the sessions was very high (but do not forget to take a picture of every flipchart!)
- On the other hand, as one of our participants pointed out during the evaluation, our choice led us to use an impressive amount of paper, which could have been reduced if we had opted for more online tools. Also, the noise coming from men at work nearby, the cars in the streets, the crickets sound, the mosquitos and the heat were sometimes an obstacle, therefore it is advisable to spend more time indoors, when possible.
- To involve participants in the creation of their poster presentations focused on the situation of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in their country was a good idea. The task started as a homework after the online meeting and continue during the first part of the training. It is important to provide clear instructions and not to put the group under pressure, giving time, space and material to create and share the results. At the end, this activity proved to be really informative.
- When building the programme, we suggest to keep a good ratio between the general contents on project management and coordination (how to create a programme, how to fill in a budget, how to develop a project idea etc) and the knowledge, debates and reflections on migration. In our training, we decided to focus the morning sessions on management and to

dedicate the afternoons on migration. This system was clear and effective in terms of learning outcomes.

- If you wish to propose a similar training, take into account that participants need to re-adapt to the intercultural meetings after the long interval caused by the pandemic. Plan at least one and a half day for getting-to-know-each-other games, team building sessions and introductory activities. If your training is longer than 5 days, provide a free afternoon, too, as people currently feel a strong need to socialise.
- When it comes to project management, remember that everything can be related to this topic: how to organise the cleaning shifts, the free time, even an “aperitive” before dinner. Make participants aware of this dimension and stimulate reflection every time it is possible, proposing links and involving them in the decision-making process.
- The meeting with a local organisation working with migrants was one of the highlights of the training. It was a good idea to place it at the beginning of the programme, as it remained impressed in participants’ mind when they started reflecting on aims, needs and impact in the following sessions.
- Throughout the whole programme, try and propose diversity: plan different questions for the reflection groups, a wide range of methods for your activities, different energisers, games and ice-breakers. Participants will appreciate the variety of ideas and will feel more engaged and involved in your sessions.
- Especially if your training is long, propose constant overviews and recaps to the group, emphasizing the learning outcomes and the links existing between the sessions. This will help participant find their way in their learning journey.
- Conclude your training with a session to wrap up and consolidate the learning experience and with a follow-up. In our case, we planned the laboratory of ideas and we kept participants involved with a session to develop this handbook.

Tips on working with refugees

Some common learning issues for refugee background students include:

- 'blocks' to learning caused by the disruptive effects of trauma on cognitive, emotional and social functioning, which affect their ability to participate effectively in the classroom;
- culture shock of being in a new country with unfamiliar systems;
- concentration, lethargy and retention problems caused by poor sleep and nightmares;
- learning difficulties caused by factors such as malnutrition and deprivation;
- sight and hearing problems;
- deficits in education caused by disrupted schooling

Protective factors that can help young people's resilience and recovery include:

- having access to people who can give friendship and support;
- having some understanding of stressful experiences, including the reasons for exile;
- making friends and achieving successful outcomes;
- being able to talk about stressful events and thus gaining some control over them;
- feeling optimistic about the future and about making progress;
- having high self-esteem;
- having the capacity to integrate experiences into a belief system; and
- being able to ask for help at times of need.

Volunteers can support the development of:

- confidence; self-esteem; social skills and interactions; a sense of safety and security; and a sense of control.

Some tips:

- be positive and praise effort;
- be reliable and trustworthy;
- show genuine interest;
- communicate respectfully;
- ask students relevant questions but also respect their privacy;
- make students feel comfortable and welcome;
- make students feel safe and secure;
- understand their life experiences;
- provide routines but also be flexible;
- explain rules and expectations;

- help students to set achievable goals, leading to a positive sense of the future;
- acknowledge legitimate problems but try not to dwell on them;
- provide opportunities for appropriate expression of difficulties;
- provide opportunities for fun and sharing.

How should you respond if a student wishes to talk about traumatic experiences? Here are some suggestions for appropriate reaction:

Acknowledge the student's feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell students that they have experienced a lot and it must have been difficult • Tell students that a lot of others have had similar experiences
Offer a level of support that you feel comfortable about and can provide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know personal and program boundaries and work within them • Don't promise confidentiality as it may be necessary to share information with staff • Ensure that you have the knowledge and experience to offer support
Know when to seek further advice and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of your moral responsibilities • Discuss any concerns with your coordinator. It is their role to support tutors and make any referrals needed
Take care of yourself and be aware of your own emotional reactions to traumatic events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand that emotional reactions are normal • Recognise your own signs of distress • Be realistic about the effect you can have on students • Express and share your feelings with others • Relax in a way that suits you