

Best Practice Collection TCA AIM EQUAL:

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SUMMARY

of the most important results of Best Practice Collection TCA AIM EQUAL

PROJECT DATA

Please find basic information about the projects, such as

- Name
- Contact
- Starting date and end of the project
- Personnel resources
- General framework and external conditions for project implementation
- Budget per year
- Sponsors

... in the evaluation sheets, which also contain further details on the projects.

TARGET GROUP

Unaccompanied minors and young asylum seekers between 14 and 25 years of age. The projects which were evaluated for the Best Practice Collection involved asylum seekers with ongoing asylum proceedings at first or second instance, who have obtained the status of subsidiary protection in Austria, as well as foreign minors in need of help and protection who have not apply for asylum in Austria.

Participants/Capacity of accommodation/Maximum capacity utilisation

At the moment, none of the centres offering accommodation have free capacities.

BEWO – Axams

Six separated asylum seekers, all of them under 18 years of age. Some of them are under subsidiary protection. Since the project was launched in 2004, 22 young people were taken into care. At the moment, there are only male separated asylum seekers under 18 at the BEWO-Axams. There is also room for

admitting girls, however in this case at least two girls should be placed at this centre.

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

34 separated asylum seekers under 18 years of age (among them refugees under subsidiary protection), plus seven young asylum seekers of age. Since the start of the project in 2001, 340 adolescents and young adults have been admitted altogether. Gender-neutral admittance.

Projekt Caravan Wien

20 separated refugees under 18 (among them also refugees under subsidiary protection), who are already admitted to start their asylum proceedings after having passed the preliminary proceedings. Participants are predominantly allocated to the project by the reception centre Traiskirchen/Vienna Social Funds (regional office). Since this is an acute care centre, young people from other placement centres are also admitted if required. Caravan also takes care of foreign minors in need of help and protection who have not applied for asylum in Austria (with the aim of acquiring a humanitarian residence permit for them). We focus specially on young people going through a crisis situation and who need because of that special socio-pedagogic and psychological attendance. Since November 2001 we have been able to provide care and support to 400 youngsters.

Coming of age

As soon as young asylum seekers turn 18 they are relocated to one of the housing facilities for adults provided within the framework of the Basic Services.

BEWO – Axams

Informal follow-up support

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

Follow-up support is an integral part of the concept, practical implementation

Projekt Caravan Wien

Providing follow-up support is not part of the concept and is impossible due to lack of resources.

Perspective for obtaining the right to stay, status, permanent residence, return (UNHCR)

Admittance to the project

Admittance to the project depends on the assignment by the federal state responsible (after the admittance proceedings at one of the reception centres). The status of project participants is not relevant for admittance.

BEWO – Axams

Five out of the six asylum seekers placed at BEWO-Axams are in the midst of an appeals procedure (2nd instance) of the asylum proceedings. One person has already been granted subsidiary protection (non-refoulement). Return counselling is not provided at the moment.

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

Most of the youngsters placed here are still in the middle of an ongoing asylum proceeding. We estimate that 20-25% of asylum seekers are granted a decision on asylum, which permits them to stay for a longer period of time (positive decision on asylum/subsidiary protection). Adolescents/young adults seeking asylum under subsidiary protection stay at the clearing house within the framework of Basic Welfare Support. Minors/young adults who have already been granted asylum remain at the clearing house in accordance with an agreement with the Youth Welfare Office. In these cases the YWO covers all expenses. Return counselling is being provided in cases when returning home seems to be a reasonable option for the person concerned, promising positive future perspectives to him or her. Caritas Salzburg also offers a project for returning to the homeland. In three cases of impending deportation repatriation was carried out on the basis of an analysis of future perspectives in the respective home countries. At the moment, contact with partner organisations has only been established with one project in Rumania. There is, however, great potential in this area.

Projekt Caravan Wien

Most of the young refugees are still in the middle of an ongoing asylum proceeding. We know from experience that most cases are only decided when

the person concerned attains full age (there is no statistical data available on the status of legal proceedings after being discharged from the project). Two young asylum seekers were granted subsidiary protection while they were staying at the facility. Two project members were granted asylum during their stay. Five youngsters were adopted, taken into foster care or could be reunited with their families. In rare cases (approximately five youngsters so far) young asylum seekers are offered counselling on returning to their homeland. In some cases this proves to be a better solution for the future of some young asylum seekers, especially if they are under massive psychological stress, or if they want to return home voluntarily.

Stopping the missing persons rate (e.g. because of secondary movement)

BEWO-Axams

So far, none of the youngsters placed at the BEWO-Axams have migrated anywhere else, returned or disappeared. Sometimes, emergency cases are admitted for a short-term stay. After one or two nights they are redirected to other institutions or continue their journey. The project is based on stable, long-term provision of care and support. This is why there was no case of secondary movement (migration to another country) with or without prior notification.

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

An estimated 10% of young asylum seekers “disappear” or leave the country. This is rather likely to happen to those who have been in care for only a short time. The rate of disappearance decreases if there is enough information (especially on the Dublin- agreement) and if young asylum seekers trust the institution and custodians. So far, those who left the clearing house had not given notice beforehand. In most cases there is no information on their whereabouts. It happens very rarely that they contact us again after a few weeks. They either get in touch via phone or ask a third person to deliver a message.

Projekt Caravan Wien

At the beginning, when the project operated as a clearing house, 25% of the asylum seekers left the country, or disappeared without notice about their future whereabouts. This rate has been declining constantly. Since Basic Services were introduced in 2004, the disappearance rate has been reduced to almost 0%. There are two main reasons for this: On the one hand, the Regulation on Basic Services was passed. On the other hand, socio-pedagogical work became increasingly professional. This meant that these specific problems could be addressed more effectively and that information as well as counselling activities became more efficient.

Involvement – reference groups, supportive environment for the target group, use of resources (e.g. former asylum seekers, lobbies,, community)

BEWO-Axams

In the villages nearby there is a number of lodgings for adult asylum seekers, which also host entire families (most of them asylum seekers from Afghanistan). Our young asylum seekers were in touch with them. They also had connections to communities in Innsbruck. Those of them, who were culturally close to the others, helped out as interpreters. Cultural mediators were neither trained nor required, because there was no need for them so far (e.g. because of cultural conflicts). Young asylum seekers are generally very open to Austrian culture and they are eager to learn the language. This is why conflicts within the group can generally be settled easily. Austrians –individuals from the village community - proved to be generally supportive on a number of levels: e.g. foster parents, common neighbourhood activities, donations.

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

We have a large pool of interpreters at hand, because there are so many people working at the project with different mother tongues and a history of migration. They are also involved in the training courses. Former project participants are often involved in public relations activities. Part of the staff is also composed of multi-lingual migrants, who have already been living in Austria for some time (e.g. a doctor from Afghanistan, several counsellors and interpreters).

Projekt Caravan Wien

One of the crucial aspects of the project is the composition of the team: our staff is multilingual and some of it partly made the experience of being a migrant themselves. They can utilise these experiences for the project, which gives them a range of perspectives and thus a better understanding of the project participants. It is also important to mention that teamwork is excellent and constantly being improved further by regular (every two weeks) supervision sessions. The fact that such a heterogeneous team is ready and capable of working together professionally is another aspect which makes this project exemplary (for the young people taking part as well as in this survey).

Project content

Project description

All projects involved in this study have submitted their concept for this study (the new concept for BEWO-Axams is being compiled at the moment). It is important to note that it is still the institutions concerned which hold the copyright of the project concepts.

Thank You!

Concepts – see appendix

Project goals

BEWO-Axams

Giving young asylum seekers a medium-term perspective since long-term planning is difficult for people in such a precarious situation.

- Social integration (rural areas) schooling, sports clubs, contact to Austrians of the same age group under the principle of reciprocity (willingness of the project participants and of the locals from Axam)
- Creative projects with the youngsters offering the chance of exhibiting their works at the project site – art exhibitions, preparing flyers (possibility of presenting themselves), computer and internet connection available, music, rap and hip-hop, we plan to attend a festival in Innsbruck
- Sports including winter sports (snowboarding, tobogganing, hikingtours)

- Public relations work in order to open up the village community towards the group, breaking down barriers, especially in connection to elderly locals, e.g. "kitchen club" (cooking by topics) and specific invitations (consistory)
- Boosting participants' independence
- Spracherwerb: Verpflichtende hausinterne Kurse 4x2 Stunden/Woche mit einem Hauslehrer
- Learning German: obligatory courses at the centre lasting 2 hours, four times a week with a tutor
- Networking
- Training and Employment

SOS Clearing house Salzburg- Short summary of goals

The main objective was to provide each youngster with maximum care, support, advice, education, access to the labour market and support his/her way to become a full member of society. We wanted to enable them to spend their time in Austria as usefully as possible regardless of their future possibilities to stay here. Of course, we also made sure that their age was taken into account. At the same time we encouraged them to become more independent and made them aware of their personal responsibility.

Projekt Caravan Wien

A living space for minors which fits their needs: Managing their everyday life, structuring their days, providing community, education, leisure time, sports, games, fun, etc.

Providing support to the youngsters coping with situations specific to their target group, such as the experience of being an unaccompanied child, separation from the family, being a fugitive, having to start from scratch, etc.

A great number of youngsters (ca. 1/3) suffer from apparent or latent psychological problems and need psychiatric and/or therapeutic help. The main goal however is -as in practically all pedagogic domains - to make them more independent and autonomous, so that they can eventually provide for themselves.

All these different approaches are based on the same purpose: to give these youngsters a sense of belonging, a new home. If we cannot provide them with this then all other efforts are doomed to fail. Our project often acts as a substitute for their family. This is especially important considering the lack of perspectives in connection with the asylum proceedings and with integration into the labour market. However, these are the two crucial factors for leading a self-sustained existence. According to the motto "If I have no chance to channel my energy in a positive way, then I will use it destructively" Project Caravan aims at compensating for the legal situation by providing more constructive and positive possibilities.

Problems and solution attempts, status of the project (what have we accomplished so far)

BEWO-Axams

Forming and stabilising groups and the individual participants. Helping them to accept their situation (waiting time and feelings of insecurity during the asylum proceedings). Establishing social contacts and social relations (also outside of their own ethnic group).

By speaking German constantly (also within the group if they do not have the same mother tongue) they learn the language faster.

Social and cultural integration, integrating into the community, cooperation with the neighbourhood.

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

The project strongly improved the general attitude in Austria towards migration and asylum, which originally had been very negative. This could be achieved by very intensive PR, for example activities like Culture Coffee, percussion workshops, opinion forming activities, etc. Good cooperation with the social scene in Salzburg, especially with the College of Higher Education for Social Work. This cooperation introduced different approaches of social work to the project.

Projekt Caravan Wien

Competence in solving crises

Due to our specialisation we have great competence in dealing with youngsters with grave psychological problems. We know how to handle the consequences of these psychological problems and crises (suicidal ideation, self-inflicted injuries, etc.). We have great expertise in this area and we are constantly improving our competences.

Violence Prevention

We are very proud to say that aggressive behaviour and violence (physical or psychological violence, vandalism, etc) have never been a problem at Project Caravan. Most likely, this is due to the great care and mentoring that we are able to provide. This support makes our participants really feel at home at the centre (and who would destroy their own home?). Moreover, there is great emphasis on interpersonal and social skills as well as a respectful way of speaking to each other.

Education

See chapter „Education and Labour Market.“

Public Relations

Using positive media coverage to counteract the prevailing negative public attitude towards asylum seekers (triggered by the media):

A film produced by our project participants.

An 8-minute feature on Project Caravan in the religion magazine “Orientation” in ORF shown on December 17th 2006. Please find the link to Sabine and Michael Ranocha’s report on the website of the Integrationshaus Vienna.

A feature-length film by Nina Kusturica (planning phase).

Challenges or problems which cannot be solved right away?

BEWO-Axams

Uncertainty and hopelessness regarding the future status of young asylum seekers as well as restricted access to education and the labour market.

Both problem fields are a consequence of restrictive asylum regulations.

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

Rigid barriers, which prevent this group from accessing regular education and the labour market.

Long asylum proceedings:

The duration of the asylum procedures as well as the waiting time until the first hearing at the Federal Asylum Agency have substantially been reduced. Sometimes asylum seekers only have to wait for two weeks until the first hearing. This means that there is not enough time to stabilise them.

Changes within this target group (new approaches needed):

Due to changes in the situation of young asylum seekers especially from the Russian Federation, we have to face new challenges: Apart from showing a stronger inclination to violence, they often show no motivation for integration and do not accept legal boundaries. Presumably this because of the appalling situation in their homelands (a childhood spent in a war zone) and the experiences they have made while being on the run. We need special ways to handle this form of "support refusal".

Projekt Caravan Wien

Rigid barriers for access to education and the labour market

Legal restrictions for asylum seekers to education and the labour market, which entail a frustrating situation and lack of perspectives for young people.

Handling "support-resistant" youngsters with a specific ethnic background

There are a few youngsters, who cannot or will not accept the help, support and care offered as a stabilising factor. If all socio-pedagogic measures and psychological interventions prove to be unsuccessful the person concerned has to leave the project. Mostly, these kids leave of their own volition if they are in such a situation. Or they become delinquent and are sentenced to prison. We also had two participants who took drugs. All these examples are isolated cases. However, since there seems to be no adequate way to help them, project staff is generally left with a sense of helplessness. Everybody who works as a pedagogue (especially if they work with youngsters) have to accept that from time to time there will be individual cases where they cannot find an acceptable solution for the person concerned with the means they have at hand.

Positive „side-effects“ – positive effects (public/society)

BEWO Axams

No information

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

Schools request common projects and integration activities

We were surprised to see the great number of schools which are interested in presentations by and common projects with our project participants.

Volunteers

Committed people volunteered to do honorary work.

Projekt Caravan Wien

Basically, we could fulfil the objectives which had been laid down in the original concept. The project exceeded all our expectations.

Great cooperation and sense of community

We are particularly happy about the way everybody involved in the project behaved towards each other. Men and women of different origin, with a different history and experiences, ethnic background, etc. had to live together. They had to show respect for each other and proved to be more than ready to do so. Of course, we are aware that this was not a coincidence, but the product of hard work. Still we know that even hard work does not always leads to success. Thus, we consider this aspect as one of the positive effects of the project.

Public Relations:

Since the clearing house was a pilot project to some extent, we had calculated with intensive public awareness and feedback. This approach is also in line with the Integrationshaus' approach on political PR. However, we want to stress the great number of creative PR-instruments (videos, ORF documentary, a play by Peter Sellers) which have made an important contribution to shape public opinion.

Negative „side effects“ – negative effects (public/society)

BEWO Axams

No information

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

Little, if any. We were rather surprised by the acceptance and constructiveness we encountered. The project was even more successful than we had expected it to be. There were a few conflicts in the neighbourhood and sporadic racist incidences, which we could resolve. Apart from that there were no negative side effects to the project – quite contrary.

Projekt Caravan Wien

We had a number of very negative incidences and conflicts with official authorities. Lobbying for the rights of asylum seekers inevitably brings political conflicts to the surface. However, we had not anticipated this kind of antagonism, which shows signs of authoritarian abuse of power.

Worin liegt die Innovation des Projektes? Innovative characteristics and aspects of the project

BEWO-Axams

Intensive networking (authorities, local community, etc.)

Basic principle of autonomy - empowerment (no 24/7 care) →

Interventions: Special “autonomy-trainings”, house meetings with intensive discussions about rules and tasks, proposals and feedback, managing and structuring their days, assigning individual tasks and responsibilities.

Youngsters have a clear framework, but they can act autonomously within these guidelines.

Clarity, clear agreements and frequent consultations within the team.

Willingness to implement new, innovative processes.

Trying to solve conflicts by finding common solutions and compromises (learning how to solve problems instead of conflict avoidance or shying away from conflicts).

Treating our youngsters as partners (preventing the projection of being “the enemy”) so they can experience trust and reliability and understand the importance of this sort of behaviour for society (on a small-scale in the beginning). Intensive networking activities (e.g. local children’s home, Youth Welfare Office), social workers (not just as legal representatives, but also as information source, advisors, networkers) in cooperation with our staff.

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

Creating a youth welfare standard for unaccompanied underage asylum seekers.
Diverse learning opportunities: internal and external education opportunities.

Three different German courses (different levels).

Basic training course. There are training courses of different levels leading up to the ÖSD (Austrian Language Diploma) test and external exams for the Secondary Modern School Certificate. Youngsters who stay for two or three years at the centre (and continue their education) will obtain a school degree.

Linking up with Equal-projects from Epima 1&2, which provided new possibilities for education and work (e.g. "Pathfinder"). Cooperation with local bodies and tourism associations, such as the Austrian Alpine Association, which provide non-profit public utility employment.

Projekt Caravan Wien

Focus on youth welfare

Our primary goal was to closely interlink help for refugees with child- and youth welfare activities. Concept and implementation focused on youth welfare aspects. This concept is about young people, who are in a difficult situation and who happen to be refugees (first a human being, only then a refugee), thus they have special problems to face. On the national and international level this aspect is barely acknowledged.

Group home

An innovative aspect is the implementation of this support concept in the form of a group home. Our intention was to provide young people with structures which resemble the family structure as closely as possible. Thus, Caravan does not focus on individual accommodation and individual support (which does not mean that it would rule out the focus on the individual according to Case Management). It thrives to create a community structure, which gives youngsters support, safety and security. Our motto is "Proceeding step by step from a safe, family-like community to the stage of self-reliance".

Emanzipation und Empowerment der Zielgruppe

BEWO-Axams

Our project is based on the philosophy of empowerment. Our project conditions require a high degree of autonomy and independence on the participants' side. They have to have these qualities from the start and they are also supported and encouraged to become more autonomous. We do not offer 24/7 care, our goal is to encourage qualities such as social competence, independence and proactiveness.

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

We know from experience that our participants can only be successful in their plans for the future if they are being supported in becoming more independent. By taking responsibility for themselves and trying to protect their own interests they become more mature and self-reliant. This is the result of our empowerment-approach. Positive results become visible as youngsters change from assisted living to private accommodation and manage their lives constructively. "Intensive support and a long leash" is our concept for success. Another important factor is our support for establishing contacts with Austrians of the same age (e.g. sports clubs, youth centers such as IGLO and JOKO).

Projekt Caravan Wien

Help and support for all aspects of everyday life. Encouragement and appraisal via creative projects (as a vague alternative to regular employment and the gratifications at work). Making participants more self-responsible by giving them the possibility to present themselves and to articulate their own views. We do not carry out PR-activities for our participants, but give them the possibility to present themselves to the public (video, folders, theatre projects, photo projects, magazine+distribution, etc).

Has the project already been evaluated and are there comparisons between concept and implementation?

BEWO Axams

Reports, statistics and evaluation documents are available at BEWO – Axams.

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

We issue regular reports such as yearly evaluation sheets and three-months-statistics. There is a big and very positive gap between what we had planned originally and what we implemented: we have achieved much more than we had planned to. Originally, we had planned to accommodate 12 people. By now we can admit 34 unaccompanied refugee minors and seven young adults applying for asylum. We were also able to improve our education opportunities by expanding German courses from 200 hours per child to school-like half-day trainings (this was partly founded by SOS Childrens' Village).

Projekt Caravan Wien

Reports, statistics and evaluation documents are available at Integrationshaus Vienna – Project Caravan.

A very special form of evaluation is taking place at the moment: the artist Nina Kusturica is making a documentary about the project. She wants to translate project contents onto film. This gives us insiders the possibility to view our project from a different angle, an outside perspective.

Which were the key factors for the successful implementation of the project?

BEWO Axams

- Basic Welfare Support Act
- Networking and institutional support
- Education and leisure time activities
- Basic approach stressing independence and autonomy

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

- Basic Welfare Support Act 2004
- Personal resources (intensive care and support 24 hours per day)
- Accommodation (housing facilities)
- Education and leisure time activities
- Located in the city, good infrastructure

Projekt Caravan Wien

- Financial means at disposal
- Well-trained staff

- Professional approach (and implementation)
- Infrastructure

Education-Training-Access to the labour market

Schooling and education

Regular education sector

For school-aged asylum seekers of not more than 15 years, education is compulsory, thus they are granted access to the regular school system. However, there are very few unaccompanied refugee minors at that age that would actually come to Austria. Most of the youngsters at the accommodation centres are between 16 and 18 years old.

External exam for Secondary Modern School

There are external Secondary Modern School courses available according to age, command of the language and prior education.

BEWO Axams

It is not easy to integrate young asylum seekers into the regular education system. We are planning to send one of our participants to secondary school – as a trial. Those wanting to attend secondary modern school or an external SMSCH exam have to fulfil very high requirements. In Axams there is no manageable system for obtaining a SMSCH-diploma externally. One of our participants attends the local polytechnic school as an auditor student.

Note: The education situation clearly shows the difference in infrastructure between urban and rural areas.

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

Less than 10% of youngsters above school-age continue their education within the regular school system. Supporting organisations: Adult Education Centre (VHS), Project "Different Learning", network of grammar school teachers. The cooperation between the adult education centre and a secondary modern school provides the possibility to obtain an external secondary modern school

certificate. Whether our participants are able to join this programme depends on their language skills and previous education.

Projekt Caravan Wien

Approximately 10% of our participants are school-age children attending regular schools. There is also a possibility to attend preparatory courses for the external secondary modern school exam. Different institutions (VHS, UKI, Interface, etc.) offer these courses and our participants are eager to use the opportunity. Some of these courses are tailor-made for this specific target group of migrants and asylum seekers. These institutions are especially important for our youngsters, since they are only entitled to receive 200 hours of German courses before that. "Whoever manages to attend a secondary school after only 200 hours of German classes – he or she must be a genius."

Higher education/grammar schools

The legal situation concerning the admittance of young asylum seekers to grammar school or any other school of higher education is not clearly regulated. According to experience, it primarily depends on the decision of the headmaster.

BEWO Axams

At the moment there are no initiatives of this kind.

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

The admittance of asylum seekers as auditor students to schools entirely depends on the arbitrariness of the headmaster and other teachers. There are certain criteria required for admittance to the regular education system as regular students: secondary modern school certificate and an entrance exam.

Projekt Caravan Wien

In Vienna, the admittance of asylum seekers to grammar school as regular or auditor students is generally no problem. However, the project focuses predominantly on strongly troubled youngsters, these schools are generally not an option. These young people do not have the adequate capacity to concentrate and study. In some rare cases however, participants are capable of these things and will attend grammar school.

Vocational schools/ regular education system:

It is not possible for asylum seekers to attend a vocational school (secondary modern school degree followed by an apprenticeship), because this would already be classified as employment. However, the Foreign Labour Act does not permit asylum seekers any kind of employment.

BEWO Axams

At the moment there are no initiatives of this kind.

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

Some young asylum seekers manage to be accepted at vocational schools or the like. Some examples are nursery teacher or elderly care nurse.

Projekt Caravan Wien

We have no experiences on that matter, because our project participants do not belong to this age group. Only a few of our youngsters have attended a secondary school so far.

Welfare/ Contact/Benefits Austrian Public Employment Service (AMS)

BEWO Axams

At the moment there are no initiatives of this kind.

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

At the moment we are trying negotiate with the Austrian Public Employment Service-AMS about special services targeting those young people who have just been granted asylum. These target-group specific services should focus on vocational counselling and work.

Projekt Caravan Wien

In this area we have new tasks in connection with those under subsidiary protection. We do not have enough experience in this field yet. We plan to become more active in the future.

There is already a project called JAWA – Young Asylees On Their Way To The Labour Market (funded by AMS, BMI and ERF). It offers different education and

training possibilities, internships and training-on-the job. The first round of JAWA-activities proved to be very successful and achieved a remarkable placement rate. Thus, we plan to direct those participants of Projekt CARAVAN who are under subsidiary protection to the JAWA programme.

Further information:

<http://www.integrationshaus.at/de/projekte/index.shtml?33>

New target group specific education and training opportunities/ vocational trainings/vocational counselling

BEWO Axams

Our in-house teacher, who was especially contracted for this task, offers a two-hour German course four times a week.

Cooperations: BFI vocational training institute – German courses of a higher level, computer courses.

Cooperation with the University of Applied Sciences (UAS) for Social work and Social Management – Tasks for interns – Projects on employment and work, leisure time, etc. We intend to expand this area. Participants who have been granted subsidiary protection receive counselling and support on their job perspectives (schooling/secondary modern school certificate/internships/vocational orientation) and how to improve them. The first step of the vocational counselling process is to convey that they are entitled to have a perspective. They should think about themselves and their future! Among our target group it is quite common for people to think “I have no dreams left/What is there for me to hope for?” Thus, it is our task to help them to overcome this sense of helplessness, this “no-future” attitude (which stems from legal confinements). This takes several steps of empowerment, developing perspectives and constructive decisions.

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

The project offers a number of education- and training opportunities:

Three different German courses (different levels)

One basic training unit. Training units are structured along different levels and build up to the Austrian Language Certificate Exam or the Secondary Modern

School Exam, which can be taken externally. Youngsters staying at the project centre for 2 to 3 years (and who participate in the training courses during this time) obtain a school certificate.

In cooperation with the Equal-Projects EPIMA1 and EPIMA2 the following vocational orientation opportunities were offered: wood processing (Epima1), metal working, agriculture (Epima 1) → in cooperation with:

Franz-Staufer-Hof

Working project- agriculture – Contact person: Mr. Michael Köck

Tel. +43(0)7684/ 8017 - 19

Fax 8017 - 14

Mobile: 0664/ 83 40 801

E-Mail: stauferhof@sos-kinderdorf.at

Working project – workshop – Contact person: Mr. Anton Rauchenzauner and Mr. Werner Matieschek

Tel./ Fax +43(0)7684/ 20 237

Mobile: 0664/ 57 16 372

E-Mail: stauferhof.ws@sos-kd.at

In the area of tourism we also cooperated with the Austrian Alpine Association „Pathfinders“ (Epima2). At the centre we have specialised staff for cooking/household/ cleaning as well as house automation and building services/electronics/ fitting and plumbing/woodwork, who provide vocational counselling on these fields.

Projekt Caravan Wien

The project itself does not offer education or training. However, young asylum seekers are offered courses such as German and computer courses as well as vocational counselling at the Integrationshaus. These courses are measures of Epima 1 (Sindbad) and Epima 2 (Kiona).

Non-profit activities and seasonal work

BEWO Axams

No information

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

Now that our project "FluEqual" is over, Caritas is trying to find a way to continue this project, which gave asylum seekers work in the non-profit sector. The Clearing House Salzburg project would like to participate in this incentive with their target group of unaccompanied refugee minors and young adult asylum seekers. Because of the replacement of the head of the local government, there is no decision yet about project funding. The project aims at the construction of footways, tourism, preservation of local and municipal infrastructure (parks, playgrounds, etc.). Our long-term objective is to give more working opportunities in the non-profit area to asylum seekers who are legally barred from the labour market and thus have no other option to work. For the last three years it has virtually been impossible to find seasonal work for asylum seekers.

Projekt Caravan Wien

In Vienna there is no such form of employment yet, however we are already negotiating it with the new city counsellors, the city counsellor responsible for integration and others. There are jobs available as day-labourers. However, this is no option for asylum seeker minors, since law for the protection of minors does not permit minors to work under these conditions (working on the street).

"If it is not possible for them to work, the only option is education. However, because of their own individual situation, not all of them have the possibility or the capability to study (level of education already obtained, learning capacity, ability to cope with pressure, etc.)"

Project history – Preparation – Project Launch

Who recognised the demand for planning and implementation of such a project? Who was involved in this process?

BEWO Axams

Project implementation paralleled the introduction of the Basic Welfare Act in 2004. The municipal childrens' home of Axams and the Youth Welfare Office were the decision makers.

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

In 1998 Mr. Svager read a study by "Asylum Coordination Austria" (Heinz Fronck). On the basis of this document a project application was submitted. At the same time the Austrian Children's and Young Persons' Representative recognised the necessity of such a project and publicly articulated it. They submitted their proposals to the executive board of "S.O.S Childrens' Village". The European Refugee Fund was the first to provide project funding.

Projekt Caravan Wien

A strong initiative for launching the project was a campaign in 1996 by „Asylum Coordination Vienna“ called "Human Rights for Children Refugees". Integrationhaus was very actively involved in this campaign and developed the concept for the clearing house on the basis of this initiative (remittance work). The initiative was also backed by a number of local politicians (e.g.: the city counsellor of Vienna responsible for financial affairs provided subsidies and premises). Financial means were provided for the launch of five clearing houses in Austria. Project funding was divided to equal parts between three major players: European Refugee Fund, City of Vienna and the Austrian Ministry of the Interior.

Were there any representatives of the target group involved in the process?

BEWO Axams

No

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

No

Projekt Caravan Wien

No. At the founding of the clearing house though we defined our first objective: identifying the needs of our target group. Until then no forum (for a scientifically

and socio-pedagogically funded evaluation of needs together with the youngsters concerned) had existed for the involvement of this target group.

Future orientation - Sustainability

What long-term successes are to be expected?

BEWO Axams

Fulfilling our medium-term objectives, stabilising our young participants and helping them to acquire more and more autonomy up to the point of being entirely self-sustained.

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

If people receive adequate care and support, if there are right general conditions and if they are met with respect, they are able to grow into full-fledged members of society. This is the long-term success we are thriving to achieve.

Projekt Caravan Wien

Enhancing qualified lobbying on the basis of our experiences in this field. Developing perspectives for the future by providing family-like structures of support. Sustainability stems from safety. We provide a safe haven for young people to spare them the fight for survival at least at this young age. For the individual this protection and intensive support will become a long-term psychological energy source.

Could the project serve as a model for other organisations or countries as well?

Our approach might serve as a model, however it is important to note that implementation always depends strongly on the surroundings, people, individual experiences and processes. It would be absolutely unrealistic to adopt the same concept one hundred percent and to expect the same result.

BEWO Axams

No information

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

From independence and freedom into independence and freedom

An individual project with an own budget not constrained by rigid structures offers great freedom for creativity as well as for adapting to the needs of the respective target group. This freedom enables us to work in a target-group-oriented, individual and sustainable way, accompanying young people for a while on their way to a constructive, autonomous, self-sustained existence.

Pooling different services at one organisation

The fact that different services such as housing and care, education and counselling were brought together and offered at one organisation may well serve as a model. Our model is not without controversy, but it proved to be very successful in practice.

Projekt Caravan Wien

The key to our success is that we are primarily looking at our tasks from the perspective of Youth Welfare and not so much from the perspective of refugee aid. Of course, this model can be implemented by others.

Networking with other organisations and public bodies concerning sustainability and transferability.

BEWO Axams

Most important organisations:

- Municipal Childrens' Home Axams
- Youth Welfare Office
- Schools and education centres
- Many others

SOS Clearinghouse Salzburg

Most important organisations:

- County of Salzburg

- SOS Children's Village
- Youth Welfare Office
- Different refugee organisations
- Many others

Projekt Caravan Wien

Most important organisations:

- Asylkoordination (Heinz Fronek)
- Bezirksjugendamt (Memoli Katharina)
- Jupiz, VHS Ottakring, Bildungseinrichtungen
- und viele mehr
- Asylkoordination (Heinz Fronek)
- District Youth Welfare Office
- Jupiz, VHS Ottakring, education and training centres
- Many others

Einleitung

Introduction

In the course of evaluating Austrian best practice models according to the criteria of Transnational Partnership, following projects were chosen:

BEWO Axams – Assisted Living Axams, Tyrol

SOS - Clearing – House Salzburg

Project Caravan, Vienna

BEWO Axams – Assisted Living Axams



IGSWG TIROL – Society of socio-pedagogic group homes for children and adolescents

Jennisweg 4
A - 6094 Axams
Tel.: 05234/68133-15
Fax: 05234/68133-24
Project director: Dir. Mag. (FH) Dietmar Mutschlechner

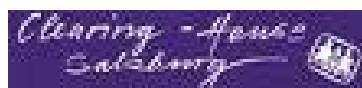
Implementing organisation: Municipal Children's Home Axams

Innsbruckerstraße 34,
A- 6094 Axams
Email: direktion@lkh-axams.tsan.at
Tel.: 05234/68133
Director: Dir. Mag. (FH) Dietmar Mutschlechner

Interview with Ms. Karla Zelder

Axams is a small village in Tyrol. This is why it was rather difficult to implement the project: compared to urban areas there was very little infrastructure available which would have been necessary for the involvement and integration of minors and young asylum seekers. Nevertheless, the project faced this challenge. Our primary goal was the integration of adolescents into the village community as well as creating adequate living conditions for them. This project may serve as a model, because it shows that projects can be carried out successfully even in less favourable regions. It also shows how to make the best of the existing circumstances by turning them into one of the focus points of the project itself. There is only a fairly limited number of educational opportunities available. However, there are many very interesting and creative concepts from experiential pedagogy, which help these youngsters to cope with their situation as adolescents and asylum seekers in a foreign country.

Clearing - House Salzburg



Schwanthalerstraße 43a
A - 5026 Salzburg
Tel.: +43 (662) 636766,

Fax: 0662 636766-10
Project director: Mr. Johann Svager

Implementing organisation: SOS Children's Village Austria

Stafflerstraße 10a
A - 6020 Innsbruck
Tel.: 0810/200 114
Fax: 0512/580001
Directing manager: Dr. Wilfried Vyslozil
wilfried.vyslozil@.sos-kd.org.

Interview with Mr. Johann Svager

The project had already been launched when the first clearing houses were established in Austria. It was further expanded when the Federal Care Law came into effect in 2004. There were several reasons why the SOS-Clearing-House project was considered a best-practice model: Firstly, this is due to the very professional care and mentoring work which provides participants with an exceptionally well structured daily routine, which is nevertheless oriented at giving them more personal autonomy and independence.

Another reason was the provision of a great variety of internal and external education opportunities. The extraordinary efforts undertaken to provide access to the labour market –as far as the Austrian legal framework permitted- were another main argument. The latter was primarily done by intensive networking. Another positive outcome is that new forms of sustainable, long-term care and support for project participants were created, such as accommodation for seven asylum seekers already of age. Others were a special agreement with the Youth Welfare Office which gave youngsters who had already been granted asylum the possibility to stay at the clearing house. Another important feature was that participants who were not placed at the SOS-Clearing House anymore still received support.

Projekt Caravan
Project "Caravan"

ProjeKt
CARAVAN



Engerthstraße 161-163
A - 1020 Wien
Tel: +43-1-2123520-71
Project director: Otto Hollerwöger, Sozialpädagoge
Email: o.hollerwoeger@integrationshaus.at

Implementing organisation: Project „Integrationshaus“

Engerthstraße 161-163
A - 1020 Wien
Tel: Tel: +43-1-212 35 20
Fax: +43-1-212 35 20 - 30
E-Mail: info@integrationshaus.at
Managing director: Mag. Andrea Eraslan-Weninger

Interview with Mr. Otto Hollerwöger

This project was launched in 2001 as a pilot project. It was one of the first clearing houses in Austria and was then extended in 2004 when the Austrian Federal Care Law was introduced. What makes this project so outstanding and a model for others is the fact that it primarily focuses on the aspect of youth welfare. This means that the socio-pedagogic care and support provided by us does not concentrate so much on aid for refugees. This is why it is predominantly youngsters with special needs who are admitted to Caravan. Since large urban areas offer a great variety of education and recreational opportunities for young asylum seekers, the project did not have to create these possibilities by itself. This meant that we could strongly concentrate on the aspect of providing care and support. Our project team was linguistically and culturally diverse, thus it served as an important role model. Especially because this very heterogeneous group devoted a lot of effort to building up a strong and positive team spirit. Another great achievement was the outstanding lobbying performance, which led to exceptional public awareness, often by using art as a form of public presence.

SUMMARY

Best Practice Collection - Czech Republic

Example I.

Within the scope of the Organization for Aid to Refugees' (OPU) activities, a team was set up to specialize on the care of minor foreign children who found in Czech territory unaccompanied by their parents or another legal representative. The court entrusts the minors on a tentative basis to the care of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MŠMT), specifically the Institution for Children of Foreigners (ZDC). The OPU team is comprised of two lawyers, two social workers and a specialized educator, who provide assistance according to the individual needs of foreign minors.

The care of minor foreign children is based on legal and social consultancy. The aim of legal assistance is to settle the residence status of clients before their departure from the Institution for Children of Foreigners; furthermore, it is the provision of information and legal counsel regarding the particular situation of each client. Similarly, social counseling is offered to minor foreign children before their stay at ZDC, where the focus is on the selection of a suitable occupation and preparation for an independent life. After leaving the institution, social workers concentrate on assisting clients with their current life situation. Social work with foreign minors can be divided into the following parts:

1. Workshops – focused on preparing clients to lead independent lives
2. Individual plans – formulated in respect to personal needs of each client
3. Social assistance – provided to clients at the start of their independent lives
4. "Home at half-way point" – support and assistance in accommodation at the start of clients' independent lives

The goal of the stated activities is the expansion and improvement in the care of foreign minors; increasing their awareness; and decreasing possible risks connected to their departure from the Institution for Children of Foreigners. Clients are prepared for independent lives, once they have decided to leave the

institution. They are supported at the beginning of their independent lives outside the institution. The central aim of all the work with foreign minors is their successful integration into Czech society.

PROJECT CONTENT

1. Workshops

Workshops, otherwise known as informative seminars, are designated for foreign minors who to date are living at the Institution for Children of Foreigners and are approaching the age of majority. The workshops were facilitated thanks to financial support from an NROS project and will take place during the period from July 2007 to June 2008. Social workers and lawyers at the seminars will objectively, with the assistance of interpreters, draw together the fields of minor law, health and social insurance, healthcare, accommodation seeking, employment and so forth. The seminars will be implemented at the Institution for Children of Foreigners (ZDC) and they will be divided into two thematic areas:

- a) Workshop I...: Departure from the institution – familiarizing minors with the main problems related to departure from institutional care (how to get housing; which institutions must they contact – foreign police, health and social insurance, employment bureau, doctors, municipal bureau; and so forth).
- b) Workshop II.: Course on legal basics – searching for and finding legal employment, a component will deal with training; how to proceed with a potential employer; how to write a curriculum vitae and a motivational letter; preparing for work interviews; etc.

During the seminar, foreign minors will be separated into groups according to their language abilities. In the case of a lack of proficiency in the Czech language, an interpreter will be present. A total of eight workshops will be implemented and every minor will take part in both seminars. It is anticipated

that approximately thirty-two minor foreign clients will participate in the workshops.

The clients will have available the information obtained at the workshops, in the form of the brochure "My Life in the Czech Republic." The brochure was produced for foreign minors by the *NBD* team with the aim of increasing the awareness of foreign minors during their preparations in their departure from ZDC and at the beginning of their independent lives. The brochure will be available in five languages (Czech, English, Russian, Vietnamese and Chinese).

2. Individual Plan

The individual plan at present is envisaged more as a compendium of options, taking into account their individual needs and personal situation, offered to clients after their departing from ZDC, rather than as a specific work plan for clients. Social workers have tried to map out all the possibilities that are available for clients in the following areas:

- *Accommodation* – all of the most suitable accommodation options are introduced in the individual plan, with respect to the needs of clients, i.e. an integration apartment within the scope of the state integration program (provided that the client is an asylum seeker); rental housing; "Home at half-way point", and if necessary even asylum housing, host families, and so forth. Invariably, the characteristics, possible advantages and disadvantages of the options, and if requested contacts are given. In addition, clients are cautioned about the need to change in the course of their re-location, the address on their permanent residency permit.
- *Employment/Short-term jobs* – all the options and ways of seeking full-time employment or short-term jobs are introduced (employment bureau, classified advertisements, websites, and so forth; furthermore if requested contacts are given); where clients can turn to in the case of losing a job or not finding employment; all the ways in which the employment bureau can assist clients; and other useful information concerning employment.
- *Education* – if a client is interested, they are informed about the ways in

which it is possible to continue with their existing studies, follow-up with educational attainment, or otherwise supplement their education or training.

- *Social help* – in the individual plan, social benefits are mentioned (i.e. retirement benefits), and any other assistance, such as in case of an emergency, which the client may at anytime receive. Clients are provided with the addresses and contacts for important institutions that they can turn to when a problem arises.

- *Health insurance* – the question of securing health insurance, registering at a general practitioner, if need be a pediatric, dentist or other specialized doctor. If need be, the client is offered psychological care and contacts for other specialists.

- *Other* – in this part there is introduced other important information that was not mentioned above, for example: how to obtain a personal identification number or a foreign passport (provided that the residence status of the client grants it); how to set up a bank account; and so on.

The individual plan is created around the client's requests, requirements and current situation. The social worker and client together discuss and if need be fill in other ideas and suggestions that may arise from the interview. On the basis of this, a plan is established that afterwards is worked out through concrete workable goals with the client.

3. Social assistance

Social assistance is focused on making the Czech system and environment more accessible to clients and to assist in their orientation in it, so that the least advantaged young foreigners may overcome difficulties due to factors such as language barriers, country of origin, unfamiliarity with the environment and/or Czech legal counsel. Assistance is provided by social workers who focus on advising and consultation in the areas of the labor market, health and social insurance and furthermore on questions related to seeking accommodation and employment. Social workers escort clients if need be to relevant bureaus and authorities – the foreign police, the Ministry of the Interior, the Institution for

Asylum and Migration Politics, health insurance companies, educational institutions, student employment agencies, labor bureau and so on. The client is assisted with handling the essentials at these offices and filling out supplementary and detailed information. Clients are helped in the process of seeking suitable employment, through assistance in writing a curriculum vitae, motivational letters and if needs be preparing clients for job interviews and in how to proceed with a potential employer.

Social assistance is provided to clients only for the necessarily contingent period. Clients are guided to self-sufficiency and personal responsibility. The aim of social assistance is to ease clients' transition to independent life, increase their awareness and facilitate their complete incorporation into Czech society.

The assistance is supported by the project European Refugee Fund (ERF) and by the NROS project.

4. "Home at half-way point"

"Home at half-way point", respectively accommodation for young asylum seekers trying to settle the gap in the system of care for minors and young refugees without escort, who have left the institution of state care MŠMT – Institution for Children of Foreigners. Even if these so-called young adults – youths from 18 to 26 years old – after departure from the institution are already partially integrated (they have their living status and high school education resolved), they do not have sufficient know-how, skill or experience needed for a self-sufficient life. Hence, so as not jeopardize their integration inclusion, it is necessary to extend to them aid and assistance at the start of their independent lives. In the Czech Republic, hitherto, there has not been an institution that offers these services. For this reason, the Organization for Aid to Refugees is at present creating supported accommodation, whose space should be complete by the end of 2007.

The aim of supported accommodation is to prepare young refugees for self-sufficient life and their integration into Czech society. Supported accommodation should help clients to acquire skills and abilities needed for leading an independent life and to establish a secure home. In order to achieve this goal, it is essential to fill these segments with targets that will be realized in the duration of one year in accommodation with the help of an attendant social assistant.

- 1) Social skills - assumption of responsibility for one's own person (handling of money, organizing time, etc.); establishing and maintaining contact with peers and the majority society; participating in the running and maintenance of the accommodation (cleaning, laundry, cooking, etc.).
- 2) Communicating with the institutions – contact with bureaus and doctors; handling necessary documents and insurance; and knowing about support options.
- 3) Employment – contact with the Labor Bureau; seeking suitable employment; contact with potential employers; acquiring work habits; securing finances; and finding and maintaining a job position.
- 4) Independent accommodation – seeking options; securing finance; and finding and maintaining accommodation.

Supported accommodation is designed for clients that are departing from Institution for Children of Foreigners. Upon departure from the institution, in order to access this service, they must fulfill the following criteria: 1) settling of residency – conferment of asylum, additional protection or residency permit; 2) preparation for future vocation or active seeking or pursuance of employment; 3) substantial proof, that they are not addicted to any narcotic substances and/or alcohol; 4) motivation and effort to completely integrate into society. The initial capacity of supported accommodation is four clients. During the operation of this service, we will make provisions for the expansion of the capacity according to financial feasibility. The benefits of supported accommodation are the full integration of clients into Czech society.

The realization of supported accommodation was provided from the ERF project and follows up the "Home at half-way point" concept developed by the Organization for Aid to Refugees.

Best Practice Collection - Czech Republic

Example II.

Project: The project *Theory and Practice of Social Work with Refugees* (hereafter *Social clinics*) was originated by the humanitarian NGO *Organizace pro pomoc uprchlíkům* or *Organisation for Aid to Refugees*, (hereafter OPU) and the Social Work Department of the Charles University Philosophy Faculty in Prague (hereafter the department).

SUMMARY

The main goal of the project is to fuse theoretical education with practical work with refugees, by combining the efforts of the department with OPU's experience in the field. As a result new educational techniques can be developed which should better prepare future social workers for the work world. The project introduces students to social aspects of forced displacement, reception and integration of refugees into a host society. The project should also contribute to the professionalizing of state and non-profit institutions working with refugees and migrants.

The Social Clinics project strives to adequately prepare future social workers for tough, but highly fulfilling social work with asylum seekers and recognized refugees. The course will be available as an option to students in any of the first five years of study.

NGO and government employees would also benefit from the project, as they would have at their disposal the brochure on social work with refugees and the web site resulting from the project. Moreover, refugees themselves would be better off, in the short term through the work done by the students in the practical phase of the course, and in the longer term due to the better preparation of social workers in the field.

Finally, the general public should benefit in terms of enhanced familiarity with the specific issue facing refugees as compared with other foreigners in the Czech Republic, and the reduction of xenophobia and racism

Start and End

The project was realized in the academic year 2003/2004. It was divided into two phases – a preparatory phase and an implantation phase. The preparatory phase, which took place in September 2003, consisted of the following: drafting and signing a cooperation agreement between the Social Work Department and OPU; concluding agreements with the external lecturers for the theoretical part; and introducing the course to students and taking enrolments. The implementation phase took place from October 2003 to January 2004 and was comprised of lectures and the regular supervision of students. The project was initially funded by the Open Society Fund. Today´s costs for fees to lectures are 400 EUR in total.

PROJECT CONTENT

Brief description of the project (activities):

The **theoretical preparation** takes place during the winter semester where students receive a broad overview of the refugee field through a course of lectures at the Philosophy Faculty. (See below: Description of the project (activities)). The lectures are given by specialists from a variety of backgrounds, and with national as well as international experience. We also seek the advice of the UNHCR's *Competency Development Program* and focus on practical questions throughout the process of forced migration, reception into a host country and eventual integration. Particular attention is paid to the protection of vulnerable groups, such as unaccompanied minors, elderly and sick people and women in specific situations as victims of trafficking and victims of violence as well as to gender and age specific needs of refugee women, men, girls, and boys throughout the refugee journey.

Social workers in the refugee field have to deal with people from a wide range of cultural backgrounds and learn to respect their values and norms. Therefore, this part of the project will also introduce students to these differences as well as the changes resulting from the different stages of refugees' forced displacement. Some of the lectures will be held by former refugees who work now within state and non-state institutions.

The **practical part** takes place in the summer semester, under the supervision of OPU, and is a requirement for all students enrolled in the course. The aim of this part of the course is to develop basic skills on the ground, with a special emphasis on protecting refugees. The work is done in accordance with the guidelines of the UNHCR's *Competency Development Program*, which covers social clinics throughout the CEE region. During this semester students are first familiarised with social work both in the state-run Accommodation Centres and Integration Centres, in OPU's Prague offices and in the offices of an NGO which specialises in integration of refugees into Czech society. A total of 20 hours are allocated to this part of the course, and students will be supervised by an experienced OPU social worker throughout this time.

Subsequently, students are able to choose OPU or any other state institution or NGO in which to gain hands-on work experience, amounting to a further 50 hours. Alternatively, students may opt to prepare a report on a specific theme, related to a particular group of refugees; in the course of this work they will receive free consultation from OPU staff and access to the OPU library. Confirmation of the conclusion of this work experience or research is signed by a representative of the department and the Director of OPU. Any reports produced by students are placed on the web page of the Social Clinics after we receive an approval from the author.

A more general aim of the project is to develop the attitudes of students, and, through the Internet and special seminars, to combat racism, xenophobia and intolerance, and to foster understanding towards the difficult situation faced by refugees. Both specialists and the general public are able to learn about the project through the web page. The practice in terms of the project is recognized as one under the regular study program of the Department.

Description of the project (activities):

During the implantation phase of this project the following lectures will be held over the academic year:

1)

Introduction to the course *Theory and Practice of Social Work with Refugees*

International protection of refugees

Definition of a refugee in the 1951 Convention on the legal status of refugees

Terminology

2)

Introduction to the course *Theory and Practice of Social Work with Refugees*

International protection of refugees

Definition of a refugee in the 1951 Convention on the legal status of refugees

Terminology

3)

Special features of social work with refugees

Stages of forced migration from countries of origin (prior to flight, flight, arrival and settlement in the host country); Changes in the life of a refugee

4)

Psycho-social aspects of forced migration

Specific differences between work with individuals and groups of refugees in camps

Working with victims of violence and other human rights abuses in the refugee population

5)

The Czech asylum system (legal and institutional framework)

The basics of European asylum and immigration policy

6)

Forms and methods of social work with asylum seekers in Accommodation Centres run by the Ministry of the Interior

7)

Social work with refugees from the perspective of an NGO

Methodology of social work within an NGO

The competence of an NGO social worker

Applications of social work methodology in selection cases

8)

Social work in the integration centres and in NGOs

The state integration programme

Integration of refugees into Czech society (employment, education, health and social security)

Applications of social work methodology

9)

Social work with foreigners and refugees subject to restricted freedom of movement in detention centres operated by the alien police

10)

Social work with unaccompanied minors

Social work with elderly asylum seekers

11)

Social work with women and gender analysis in the context of changing gender roles

Social work with victims of human trafficking

12)

UNHCR, its mandate, the importance of protection, the protection of special needs groups and refugee empowerment

Problem(s) addressed:

- The project works towards increasing the preparedness of future social workers
- This project addresses the problem of a lack of professionalism in state and non-profit institutions working with refugees and migrants.
- This project aims to better inform NGO and government employees, and the general public, on social work with refugees; as well as enhancing the familiarity with specific issue facing refugees as compared with other foreigners in the Czech Republic.
- The project works towards the reduction of xenophobia and racism

Objectives/Visions of the project and positive side effects:

- To continue the formation of the specialized subject *Theory and Practice of Social Work with Refugees – Social clinics* in the social work department at the Charles University Philosophy Faculty.
- To fuse theoretical education with practical work with refugees, by combining the efforts of the department with OPU's experience in the field. As a result new educational techniques should develop which should better prepare future social workers.

- To introduce the social aspects of forced migration and the reception and integration of refugees into a new host country.
- To contribute to the professionalizing of state and non-profit institutions working with refugees and migrants.
- Theoretical and practical training in social assistance to refugees.
- Developing communication skills to treat different ethnic groups and special needs groups such as women, children, handicapped and elderly people and people coming from war zones (i.e. differences between treating groups and individuals).
- Informing the wider public on the social aspects of the refugee issue, via the medium of the internet.
- Increasing the awareness amongst students of the UNHCR's *Competency Development Programme*.

Number of beneficiaries:

The main target group consists of social work students in their first five years of study, who would learn about the refugee field and gain their first experience of working with refugees. The estimated annual participation is 30 students. NGO and government employees also benefit from the project, as they would have at their disposal the brochure on social work with refugees and the web site resulting from the project. Refugees themselves in the short term will be better off, through the work done by the students in the practical phase of the course, and in the longer term due to the better preparation of social workers in the field. Lastly, the general public benefits in terms of enhanced familiarity with the specific issue facing refugees as compared with other foreigners in the Czech Republic, as well as the reduction of xenophobia and racism.

Decision process/Who is involved?/Who saw the need?

The director of OPU and a researcher at the Social Work Department of the Charles University Philosophy Faculty in Prague saw the need for this project. A project coordinator guarantees the effective running of the project. This person remains in close contact with the specialist guarantor as regards the theoretical part and coordinates the activities of an OPU social worker for both parts of the project. This person also ensures that students receive the relevant course

material in the form of a handbook. This person will organize regular meetings with the leader of the practical part and the specialist guarantor, provide supervision during both parts of the course, and assume overall responsibility for preparing the final report.

The specialist guarantor of the theoretical part will be a member of the staff at the Social Work Department. He/she will be responsible for the composition of the programme of lectures, the supervision of the students and the awarding of marks. The leader of the practical part will be an OPU social worker, who in addition to running the practical part of the course, will also attend all the lectures and keep a register of attendance. He/she will also liaise with colleagues within OPU and with the Ministry of the Interior in order to ensure smooth running of the project, and will supervise the work of the students. He/she will also take part in the updating of the web page. External lecturers are specialists who will lecture on individual topics.

The co-coordinator, leader of the practical part and specialist guarantor meet regularly in order to assure smooth running of the project.

Innovation context (What is innovative in the specific context?)

The main long-term goal of the project is to incorporate the subject *Theory and Practice of Social Work with Refugees* into the curriculum of the Social Work Department and thereby obviate the need for such a special project. OPU's role would then be to provide interesting work experience opportunities for social work students.

- The Organization for Aid to Refugees has fifteen years of experience working on problems concerning refugees and asylum seekers in the Czech Republic.
- The Social Work Department of the Charles University Philosophy Faculty in Prague is highly accredited.

Information about implementation

The originators of the project will provide both the theoretical and practical groundwork necessary to work with refugees. The course runs over two

semesters and is optional for students in the first five years of study. Students receive a broad overview of the refugee field in the theoretical part in the winter semester. The lectures are given by specialists from a variety of backgrounds, and with national as well as international experience. All lectures are compulsory and an attendance rate of at least 80% is required in order to complete the course. Students receive a grade according to a concluding piece of work and a final test, which is designed by both originators. OPU prepares a recommended reading list, which is provided to the department prior to the start of the lecture series.

During the following semester students are first familiarised with social work both in the state-run Accommodation Centres and Integration Centres, in OPU's Prague offices and in the offices of an NGO which specialise in the integration of refugees into Czech society. A total of 20 hours are allocated to this part of the course, and students are supervised by an experienced OPU social worker throughout this time.

Subsequently, students are able to choose OPU or any other state institution or NGO in which to gain hands-on work experience, amounting to a further 50 hours. Alternatively, students may opt to prepare a report on a specific theme, related to a particular group of refugees; in the course of this work they will receive free consultation from OPU staff and access to the OPU library. Confirmation of the conclusion of this work experience or research is signed by a representative of the department and the Director of OPU. Any reports produced are placed on the web page of the Social Clinics. The time schedule for work experience is provided to students at the beginning of the semester. Students have to pass the preceding theoretical part in order to proceed to this part of the course. During this semester Social Clinics students will also join their counterparts in the Legal Clinics project for a joint seminar. Again an 80% attendance rate is required for this part of the course, and students have the opportunity to make up for any failure to participate according to the schedule.

Graduation of the practical part of the course is recognised as work experience by the department. The practical part is also optional, however, students, who

decide to attend the practical part of the course, will have to meet all criteria of the practical part.

Results so far

More than 50 students attended the Social Clinics so far and some of them found jobs in the refugee / immigration field. All of them gained good theoretical knowledge of specific work with refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants.

Why is it a good practice?

The project represents a continuation of the Social Clinics project which was successfully completed in the 2002/2003 academic year, with the financial support of OSF. Students of social work, senior members of the Philosophy Faculty, UNHCR and OPU have all expressed a strong interest in the continuation of the project, which was also welcomed by the refugee facilities section at the Czech Ministry of the Interior.

The second year of the project would draw on lessons learnt from the pilot project last year, the feedback of the students, the comments of the department and the evaluation of UNHCR as well as experience from the management of our Legal Clinics project, which has similar aims in law (on which OPU works with the Law Faculty and the law firm Linklaters). Approximately 40% of the graduates of the Legal Clinics project found employment in the refugee or human rights fields within two years of graduating from the first two courses of the Legal Clinics project.

Key factors for successful transfer

The project will be evaluated in a preliminary report half way through the year and at the end of the academic year. Students are given a questionnaire (drafted by the leader of the practical part), which enables them to provide feedback on the quality and success of the project. OPU will co-ordinate the reporting process.

Best Practice Collection - Czech Republic

Example 3.

Project:

Creative workshops for asylum seekers

SUMMARY

People seeking asylum often exist in social deprivation and isolation and can experience distress due to reasons such as fleeing their home country, their journey to the Czech Republic or due to the situation they are currently in. Young people seeking asylum are especially vulnerable. This project and example of a best practice is aimed at empowering in particular young asylum seekers through the arts for personal and career development. The project involves the running of creative workshops at integration centres in the Czech Republic. The workshops provide young asylum seekers a selection of organized creative art activities, thus providing them the means and the tools to express themselves with the additional benefit of skill-building.

Amount of funding per annum/where does the money come from?

- Ministry of the Interior
- Pedagogical Faculty, Masaryk University
- Precise amounts are not available to OPU

Brief description of the project (activities):

- Drawing and Painting
- Constructions, Assemblages, Collages and Mobiles
- Pottery
- Sculpture
- Jewelry-making
- Basketry
- Print-making

- Individual development

PROJECT CONTENT

Description of the project (activities):

The project's activities are orchestrated by experienced and highly-trained teachers, social workers and/or lawyers. The creative workshops incorporate a variety of arts and crafting activities, ranging from: drawing and painting; constructions, assemblages, collages and mobiles; pottery; jewelry making; basketry; sculpture and print-making. The workshops are designed to offer instruction and then provide materials and space for asylum seekers to express themselves artistically. The workshop will be comprised of different classes focused on the above-mentioned disciplines. In addition, there is a workshop session dedicated to individual development, aimed at providing the asylum seeker with the skills to continue their creative work outside of the context of the workshop.

In the **drawing and painting** session participants will learn the fundamentals of drawing from observation. Participants will manipulate basic drawing materials and begin to recognize relationships between contour, shape, form, space and light. Part of the session will be dedicated to drawing flowers and forms from nature, using flowers and natural forms (bones, branches, rocks, skulls) as inspiration and as vehicles for study and expression.

In this session workshop participants are able to build **constructions, assemblages, collages and/or mobiles**. The materials used to create the projects include tempera and acrylic paints, cardboard, wire, wood, clay, fabric, beads and natural and found objects.

In the **pottery** session participants will learn about clay preparation and tools. Further, there will be an exploratory survey of sculptural and pottery forms and techniques, including hand-building and wheel-throwing. Part of each session will be dedicated to demonstrations, followed by individual experimentation where participants will be able to create many pieces using coils, slab and pinch methods.

In the **sculpture** session participants work on their own project. They are able to explore their personal vision of the sculpted figure or practice their skill with the medium. Participants are able to give their sculptures details by using drawing, painting, collage, fabric paint, sewing and gluing.

In the **jewelry-making** session participants use such materials as clay, wood, feathers, oil pastel, paper maché, beads and wire to design their own pieces of jewellery.

The **basketry** session focuses on combining techniques and materials from different styles of basket weaving to add surface texture and designs. The materials include vines and grasses and dye for colouring.

The **print-making** session is dedicated to **silkscreen**. Participants will explore monotype silkscreen and hand-painted stencils.

One session will emphasize **individual development**, specifically skills that are aimed at teaching asylum seekers how to work on their own, which can be carried over to art work outside of the context of the workshop.

Problem addressed:

People seeking asylum often exist in social deprivation and isolation and can experience distress due to reasons such as fleeing their home country, their journey to the country where they seek asylum or due to the situation they are currently in. Young people seeking asylum are particularly vulnerable. Furthermore, integration can be a major challenge for those seeking asylum or those granted asylum, due to cultural and language barriers. The result may be a loss of self-confidence, introversion, or may even lead to more serious problems such as alcohol or substance abuse and crime.

Objectives/Visions of the project:

- Identify ways in which the arts can be used to integrate, include and empower asylum seekers, especially young asylum seekers.

- Identify young people's interests and skills.
- Identify issues of best practice for working with asylum seekers, especially young asylum seekers.
- Investigate the future possibilities for the development of broader projects.

Positive side effects:

- Young people who participate in the creative workshops benefit by gaining new experiences, developing social skills, gaining confidence and self esteem and developing new friendships and peer networks.
- Participants use creative activities to communicate their feelings and thoughts, experiences, circumstances, hopes and desires.
- Art and creativity can be used as a mode for communication. It can overcome language barriers. Moreover, arts and creativity can be used as a tool for language development and as a learning tool.
- Volunteers can benefit from participation in the creative workshops. It can improve their project management skills especially and can lead to career and personal development.

What are the challenges/problems not solved so far?

- Regular and adequate funding that would allow the creative workshops to take place more frequently.
- Excessive use of interpreters can hinder integration and development of relationships between young people.

- Respecting the ratio of support workers to participants, because of the need to consider the impact of language and social issues, i.e. personal issues which may require one-to-one attention.

Decision process/Who is involved?/Who saw the need?

The Organization for Aid to Refugees (OPU) is the main implementer of the project. The director of OPU is the coordinator of the project. OPU employees as well as social workers from the integration centres are actively involved in the running of the creative workshops. In addition, volunteers help on the project and individuals from the refugee community are also approached to get involved in the running of the creative workshops.

Innovation context (What is innovative in the specific context?)

This project is innovative as it promotes the idea that young people seeking asylum are to be involved in decision-making and the implementation of projects. The goal is to have the creative workshops eventually run by the young people themselves.

Resources

- Highly-trained trainers and members of the project team who are educated in one of the following fields: social work, law, pedagogy or the fine arts.
- Prior experience in: working with refugees and asylum seekers; running workshops; teaching and training (language and the arts); and counselling (social and legal) and other forms of social assistance.
- Part of a wider network of organizations and institutions involved in work with refugees and asylum seekers (Czech Government Human Rights Committee, Czech Ministry of Labour Commission for Integration of Foreigners, European Council for Refugees and Exiles, etc.).

Information about implementation

- Partnership development is fundamental to affective and progressive delivery of creative activities and holistic support for participants.
- Specific training for staff and volunteers is needed to ensure awareness of cultural issues.
- Length of sessions needs to be considered when planning future projects. The slower pace in the painting and drawing sessions gave the young people the opportunity to connect with the facilitators and other young people and the opportunity to express their feelings and experiences.

Results so far

- The artwork created has been showcased.
- Young people have been supported to take control of decision-making and some direction of the projects.
- Further projects are being developed (e.g. music/instrumental workshops).
- Links have been made with other organisations.

Why is it a good practice?

This project exemplifies a good practice, as it supports participatory arts which function as a valuable means for individual and community empowerment, especially for young people seeking asylum. These young people are able to gain new experiences and can develop new friendships and peer networks. Also, art and creativity can be used as a mode for communication, as it can overcome language barriers. The workshops, which are based on art and creativity, serve as a tool for language development and as a learning tool.

Key factors for successful transfer

- Participatory arts offer valuable tools for individual and community empowerment for young people seeking asylum.
- Many young people seeking asylum, refugees and their families experience or live with mental health problems. Project workers should be appropriately trained in mental health awareness.
- Use of interpreters should be kept to a minimum during activities.



Name of Organization: Organization for Aid to Refugees

Website: www.opu.cz

Contact (Whom can I contact if I want to know more, if I want to create partnership etc): Refugee Facilities Administration, Mr. Miloslav Koudelny (www.mvcr.cz/suz) or Martin Rozumek, Director of the Organization for Aid to Refugees martin.rozumek@opu.cz

Keywords: Creative workshops, Asylum seekers, Youth

SUMMARY

Best Practices – Germany

Within the framework of best practice projects, according to the elaborated criteria of the Transnational Partnership, EP TransKom selected the following two projects involving vocational training of young refugees.

1. BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

State certified nursing assistant training (NA) with intercultural orientation for young refugees with a temporary tolerated residence status (“Duldung”) and asylum seekers

The Medikon Academy of Social Medicine in Oberhausen and BiG Bildungsinstitut im Gesundheitswesen (Training Institute for Health Care) in Essen conducted a one-year nursing assistant training programme specially for the target group of young refugees with “Duldung” status or asylum seekers in cooperation with 9 hospitals from March 2006 – March 2007.

The subject matter of the 12-month training and the state-recognized training certificate provide young refugees with occupational prospects for their further stay in Germany. At the same time the trainees can acquire specialized, methodological and personal competencies from which they benefit in securing their livelihood on return to their home country and/or in their further migration. Furthermore, holders of the nursing assistant certificate meet the requirements for further training in geriatric and/or health/nursing care.

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Voluntary Year of Social Service for young refugees with a temporary tolerated residence status ("Duldung") and asylum seekers

Within the framework of the Voluntary Year of Social Service (VYSS), as an educational gap year between school and employment, young refugees with an insecure residence status have the opportunity of testing their practical work in the area of assistance for children, youth, elderly and disabled persons and of obtaining vocational orientation.

Specialists and educational supervisors provide support for the practical work. Thanks to simultaneous acquisition of special qualifications (driving licence or PC training), employment is possible subsequent to the Voluntary Year of Social Service in one of the relevant fields or access is enabled to subsequent training courses. The organization sponsoring this programme, conducted from September 2005 to August 2007, was Diakonisches Werk der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland, e.V.

Contact:

Diakonisches Werk der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland, e.V.

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These projects were initiated and carried out within the framework of the development partnership of the EQUAL project "TransKom gesund & sozial" (TransKom healthy & social) and financed by funds of the European Union in the period from 1.1.2005 – 31.12.2007. The goal of EP "TransKom", consisting of 9 subprojects under the coordination of Diakonie Wuppertal, is to support vocational training for refugees and improve intercultural communication in health care and social welfare with the help of new resource-oriented concepts.

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2. PROJECT ACTIVITIES

NA

The one-year nursing assistant training with intercultural orientation comprises 1,100 hours of practical training and 550 hours of theory and is concluded with a state examination. Participants who pass the final examination receive a certificate as "state certified nursing assistant". The training has a modular structure so that at least partial certification for the completed portion of the training can be acquired in the event of difficulties with the residence permit and premature termination.

The theoretical training was conducted by the Medikon Academy of Social Medicine in Oberhausen especially for the target group of young refugees with "Duldung" status or asylum seekers. The practical training was carried out in hospitals that provided internships for the training and were located near the participants' place of residence. The project was additionally supported by the municipalities in which the participants live. The social security offices assumed, for example, a proportionate share of the travelling expenses and other allowances for successful participation in the training within the framework of co-financing.

The BiG Service Office additionally supported the participants during the programme with assistance parallel to training, practical support visits and personal counselling.

VYSS

The Voluntary Year of Social Service is generally a legal¹, state-wide instrument that offers a one-year orientation period (prior to commencement of university studies or in the transitional period between school and employment) to young persons between the ages of 17 and 27 and is aimed at supporting them in deciding on a career.

Within the framework of this project the VYSS, based on the "Diakonie Year" of the Diakonisches Werk der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland, e.V. provided for one-year practical orientation at institutions of health care and social welfare (hospitals, homes for the elderly, etc.) specially for the target group of refugees with "Duldung" status and asylum seekers, supported by 25 seminar days, as training for work as assistants in the fields of social welfare or health care.

During the one-year training period the participants work at social welfare and health care institutions in full-time positions (38.5 hours a week). The participants receive orientation and vocational training in looking after children and young persons, providing assistance to elderly and disabled persons or generally in the field of health care. On the seminar days they are given an introduction to the selected field of employment and the opportunity to reflect on their experiences. They can acquire knowledge on work-specific subjects, become familiar with the work at the institutions and are supported in the development of their own career prospects. Furthermore, educational support is provided during the Voluntary Year of Social Service in the form of individual contacts and visits to institutions. The institutions are responsible for professional instruction and are prepared for the cooperation in this project. The staff members providing practical guidance are qualified on the basis of further training courses on "intercultural opening". As a "special qualification", the participants can also obtain a driving licence, IT or additional language skills within the framework of this project.

¹ The legal framework of the Voluntary Year of Social Service is established in several federal German states. As a rule, the young persons receive 100 € as pocket money, a "Bahncard" (rail discount card), possibly free accommodation, social insurance and special training courses are offered. The respective sponsoring agency decides on the specific subject matter of the VYSS.

3. BENEFICIARIES

The participants in both projects were young asylum seekers in pending proceedings and refugees with a "Duldung" status from the ages of 17-27. In some cases the residence status of the participants changed to a residence permit or to rejection during the training programme.

I. NA

Altogether there were 19 participants in the course from March 2006 to March 2007, 8 of whom dropped out for different reasons in the course of the training and a total of 11 participants took the final examination. The participants came from 6 different nations.

II. VYSS

The group in the first course from September 2005 to August 2006 consisted of 24 participants. Nearly all of them successfully completed the training year, except one who has quit the course for a vocational training program. The participants were from over 12 different nations. In the second (still ongoing) course that started in September 2006 the group is composed of 24 participants, one of whom has prematurely broken off the social service thus far.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECTS

The projects serve the purpose of occupational orientation and are aimed at enhancing the employment opportunities of the young asylum seekers and refugees with "Duldung" status on the training or labour market in the field of outpatient and inpatient care. They focus in particular on medium-term development of the prospects for the young persons and making meaningful use of the waiting period since long-term goals are difficult to plan because of the uncertain status situation of the target group. By promoting the employability of asylum seekers and refugees with "Duldung" status and utilizing their special resources, their integration into the receiving society shall be facilitated in the case of acquisition of a residence permit or reintegration into their countries of origin shall be made smoother in the event of rejection.

Integration of asylum seekers and refugees on the training and labour market shall also provide an impetus for an intercultural opening in the services and human resources policy of the institutions. The skilled workers with their special resources represent an innovation potential for development of special services in the medical and nursing care of migrants that is forthcoming on the health care market. The broadening of the potential of skilled workers is additionally aimed at meeting the increasing employment needs in the German health and nursing care sector.

NA

The objective of the training is to provide nursing assistant qualifications with intercultural orientation. By obtaining the state recognized certificate as "Nursing Assistant", which was specially developed for this target group, the participants acquire the entrance requirements for further two-year training in geriatric, nursing and health care (requirement: 1 year of practice as NA and the corresponding certificate). In the case of clarification of the residence status, there is also the opportunity of employment as a qualified nursing assistant in hospitals, nursing facilities and outpatient care. In particular the language skills and cultural background of the participants extend their employment opportunities, especially at health care institutions undergoing an intercultural opening and further development.

VYSS

The Voluntary Year of Social Service as a non-formal training program provides basic qualifications in the field of outpatient or inpatient care and, in combination with the additional qualification (acquisition of driving licence, IT, language courses), improves access to the training or labour market in this sector. Subsequent further training as a Nursing Assistant (NA) or Geriatric Assistant (GA) is considered desirable. During the training period, which includes educational supervision, the participants have the opportunity of becoming familiar with health care and social welfare institutions, understanding the workflows, learning how to cooperate with different clientele and at the same time testing themselves and obtaining an occupational orientation. These experiences alone expand the personal action-taking and social competence of the young persons and foster their further vocational development.

5. PROBLEMS ADDRESSED

The provisional residence situation of asylum seekers in Germany rarely leads to a stabilization of the residence status. Most of them receive “Duldung” status, i.e. their application for asylum was tentatively rejected, but for different reasons (such as lack of papers or information on the person) they cannot return to their country of origin or EU state from which they first entered Germany. Persons with “Duldung” status (temporary tolerated residence status) or ‘insecure residence status’ therefore remain in Germany for years in some cases.

At present there are more than 200,000 refugees in Germany who have been living for years with an insecure residence status, isolated in terms of the social welfare law, threatened with deportation and in most case without access to the labour market due to the principle of Community preference², which gives preference to German and EU citizens in job hunting. The target group is subject to a residence requirement and substantially restricted material benefits and health care. In addition, their children are extensively excluded from training opportunities. The compulsory idleness and lack of structure in everyday life frequently lead to demoralization and a loss of self-esteem.

The years until a final decision is made on the residence status represent lost years, especially for young refugees, because they experience far-reaching consequences for their personality development and occupational prospects as a result of being excluded from the dual training system and further vocational training. After completion of their schooling young refugees are largely denied the opportunity of commencing training. Meaningful contacts are often not possible because of a lack of proper identification papers and educational qualification.

² The principle of Community preference means that non-EU citizens may only take on gainful employment if the vacancies “cannot be filled with domestic labour or labour from another EU country”. The basic principle actually only applies to unskilled migrants since most Member States exclude highly qualified employees and company staff. A detailed definition of the principle of Community preference can be found under SKADPLUS: <http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/cha/c11331.htm>

6. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

As a response to this situation, EP TransKom (based on the experience from EQUAL round 1) developed these two subprojects, which are primarily aimed at young persons in pending asylum proceedings or with "Duldung" status. In the projects the refugees are to gain valuable work experience in innovative fields of employment on the labour market without the restrictions of competition favouring German and other EU citizens.

Participation in a Voluntary Year of Social Service, for example, was made possible without any problems because admission to the programme is not tied to formal requirements, such as a work permit or school-leaving certificates. The VYSS training was specially developed for this target group to meet the increasing need for trainees in the field of care and to foster an intercultural opening of the facilities providing care by hiring staff with a migration background and their special resources.

7. RESOURCES / PERSONNEL-RELATED AND STRUCTURAL CONDITIONAL FRAMEWORK

EP TransKom with its contacts and experience with training projects for refugees in the health care and social welfare field was able to win over Diakonisches Werk der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland e.V., which has already gained experience with implementation of the VYSS, as well as BIG and Medikon respectively, which already have competence in the training of hospital and clinic staff, as partners for subprojects for the training of refugees. The goal was application and adaptation of the regular NA and VYSS programmes to the target group of young refugees.

NA

A total of 4 staff members (2 of them part-time) work for the project at BIG, which was responsible for implementation and support of the Nursing Assistant programme in cooperation with Medikon.

VYSS

Altogether 2 persons working part-time are responsible for implementation and support of the Voluntary Year of Social Service.

8. INNOVATIVE CONTEXT OF THE PROJECT

These two projects offered for the first time separate training in health care and social welfare to young refugees who otherwise are denied the opportunity of vocational training due to lack of schooling or of a work permit. Furthermore, the projects pursue a resource-oriented approach in the sense of empowerment. The self-esteem of the young persons shall be strengthened through vocational training geared to the needs of the target group and at the same time the employment opportunities of the young persons, whether in the case of remaining in the host country or in the event of return to the home country, are to be improved. In addition, the projects indirectly attempt to optimize health care and social welfare, particularly that of refugees and migrants, through the assignment of qualified workers.

11. RESULTS THUS FAR

A total of 12 hospitals agreed to provide internships for the nursing assistant training programme and were willing to finance 200 € a month per trainee for the theoretical training and 100 € as trainee pay. This is especially remarkable since hospitals are going through a phase of upheaval in terms of financing and staff that often does not permit them to cover additional expenses for training. The commitment of the hospitals involved indicates that access to the labour market, particularly for refugees, is possible and is actively supported by enterprises that are aware of their social responsibility. Moreover, the young persons participating in the training received a work permit from the aliens' registration office, which is otherwise not possible for this target group.

Most of those who completed NA training received afterwards offers for a three-year traineeship in nursing and health care or a job at the hospitals involved. The

others, who were denied this opportunity, in some cases due to a veto from the aliens' registration office, were accepted for BIG's vocational preparation programme set up subsequent to the project for young asylum seekers and refugees with "Duldung" status with the aim of placement in health, nursing and/or geriatric care training. This programme also served to generate follow-up prospects for the participants in the Voluntary Year of Social Service subproject.

III.

Besides obtaining knowledge about the local social welfare and health care systems within the scope of their practical assignments, the young persons were also able to acquire further occupational and personal qualifications. Most of the participants opted for the driving licence as an additional qualification in the first course. On the parallel seminar days, with educational guidance, the participants had the opportunity of discussing with other young persons from different nations, though with similar situations and problems, which represented a new but valuable experience for many of them. The experience of being able to "help" other people in practice at the institutions involved was also a new and positive one for their self-esteem.

A23 of the 24 participants successfully completed the Voluntary Year of Social Service in the first course, except one that quit the course for a training place and eight of the participants decided to extend their service by an additional 6 months. Others opted to obtain their lacking school-leaving qualification or found a traineeship at the end of the VYSS or were able to be placed in BIG's vocational preparation programme or in other TransKom subprojects.

The success of the projects indicates that it is absolutely possible to enable young refugees with "Duldung" status to access the labour market. For the participants this is an important step towards being able to secure their personal livelihood independently, especially in view of the new regulations regarding the right to stay in Germany³ for foreigners with "Duldung" status.

³ In March 2007 a new immigration law was adopted that provided for a compromise for refugees with "Duldung" status who had already been living in Germany for many years. One of the prerequisites for this is proof of permanent employment on the part of the refugees with a transitional period until the end of 2009.

12. POSITIVE SIDE EFFECTS

Although at the beginning, during the search for suitable places for practice. the projects were, in some cases, faced with reservations on the part of the institutions with respect to the target group, the health and social welfare institutions involved showed predominantly positive reactions in the end. Some of the institutions endeavoured to extend the services (in the case of the Voluntary Year of Social Service) or even to employ the young refugees longer in spite of the bureaucratic obstacles. This shows that the projects contribute to conveying a positive picture of asylum seekers to the public and that a change in personnel at the institutions offers an opportunity for sensitization and awareness building with respect to the problems faced by refugees and migrants. On the other hand, interculturally open health care and social welfare services are a prerequisite for successful integration of asylum seekers and migrants into society.

13. CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS

Due to their unclarified residence situation and, in some cases, impending deportation, the participants were confronted with massive personal and legal problems that had to be cushioned by the project. Within the scope of the nursing assistant courses and the VYSS parallel seminars, therefore, consideration was regularly given to the group situation and experiences in the course of training. These considerations were also utilized to clarify personal difficulties in practical training and in daily work.

For current problems assistance in individual cases and additional support were provided by the persons in charge of the project, such in the case of difficulties with the aliens' registration office, mediation in the event of problems at the place of practice or in the case of family difficulties. For both projects working with this target group thus meant significantly more work and time than with normal Nursing Assistant or Voluntary Year of Social Service training for which too few human and structural resources were available overall.

Furthermore, the participants experience enormous impairment of their learning capacity due to their difficult situation. In the NA training personal learning assistance was therefore additionally planned and agreed as individual support with every single participant so as to enable successful completion. In spite of these support measures, 10 of 22 prematurely ended the training because of family problems, different conceptions of the job in the care sector and health problems. These and the other dropouts in the training programme clearly indicate that person-centred and group-specific assistance parallel to the training is necessary and such assistance has to be compatible with the legal and curriculum-related conditional framework.

Some of the participants started the NA training perhaps only for lack of occupational alternatives, which then led to premature termination in the course of the training. It might have been possible to reduce the high dropout rate in nursing assistant training by means of participation in a vocationally oriented preparation course prior to the training. Such a so-called “low-threshold” programme, which offers the participants initial insight into practice and the spectrum of tasks, was therefore set up for BIG’s nursing assistant training.

Because of the lack of a work permit, the situation for most of the course graduates and the transition to working life after the project remains one of the biggest challenges.

14. INFORMATION AND KEY FACTORS FOR SUCCESSFUL PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

A major prerequisite for projects with young refugees who are exposed to various challenges due to their status and their circumstances is that they are adequately staffed. Individual support and continuous personal counselling and guidance of the participants parallel to the training must be possible in order to give them motivation and support in terms of empowerment.

On the other hand, it is important to offer the young persons training or vocational qualifications in a field that opens up occupational prospects or further

vocational training to them, as in this case in the care and health sector where there is a demand on the labour market.

Close cooperation and supplementary information and support for the institutions of practice during the participants' assignment serve as the basis for an intercultural opening and sensitization of the institutions in such a way that they view the young refugees with their specific experiences as a resource and not as a problem.

Not least of all thanks to continuous public relations work and cooperation with other subprojects within EP TransKom, with responsible migration counselling offices, municipal departments, authorities and politicians, it was possible to create a successful network of support in order to draw attention to the difficult legal and political situation of refugees that is different in other European countries.

15. SUMMARY: WHY IS THE PROJECT BEST PRACTICE?

- The training encompasses special courses *for young refugees* who are otherwise denied vocational training due to a lack of schooling or of a work permit.
- The projects pursue a resource-oriented approach in the sense of empowerment through vocational training geared to the needs of the target group
- The training gives the young refugees real employment opportunities, whether while remaining in the host country or also in the event of return to the home country.
- Parallel to the above, the training is intended to provide impetus for an intercultural opening in the services and personnel policy of the institutions of practice in the health and social welfare sector.

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SUMMARY

Best Practice Example – Rome, Italy

UNDERAGE POLITICAL REFUGEES From the street to integration

Since November 2005, in the framework of project *Orizzonti a Colori (Coloured Horizons)* and *Equal-Palms Project*, a process of implementation for in-street intervention has started up. It is addressed to minors at risk and it led to the creation of a multi-forces street unit, involving Casa dei Diritti Sociali (Social Rights House), Caritas, Save the Children and Rome City Administration.

The project is based on a testing process, ending in December 2007, for underage political asylum seekers. This testing activity consists of contacting the minors in the streets through the Integrated Street Unit, coordinated by Rome City Administration through the V Department, Social Policies and Health Council.

In the period from June 2005 to December 2006, 120 street interventions were carried out, three times a week. The choice of the areas and the time of the interventions were based on a monitoring activity carried out by our team and according to the signalling received. As one can easily imagine, every place presents a specific kind of unease, in some cases characterized by a specific "activity". On the basis of this latter issue, as well as other variables as minors' age and nationality, approach strategies and interventions carried out are completely diversified. In Piazzale dei Partigiani, there are mainly Afghan youngsters. They are youngsters escaped from their country of origin and arrived in Rome after a travel lasting 4 years on average, passing through other countries such as Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, Greece and Italy as last.

The main objective that Palms Project aims at achieving is the testing of those best practices concerning young asylum seekers, from contacting them in the street, to planning an educational project including their integration through their training and the acknowledgement of their status as political refugees.

Those practices are mainly focused on the consistency of an educational path for a minor under the ward of Rome City Administration.

This includes:

- Contacting them in the street through the Street Unit.
- Accompanying them at the Police Station for their identification.
- Providing for their reception in shelter centres.
- Accompanying them during the verbalization procedures at the Police Immigration Office.
- Preparing the necessary documentation for the examining committee.
- Path evaluation and potential integration in the Palms Project's activities.

The circularity of such an intervention, in which the minor has the opportunity of having an institutional representative with him/her, helping him/her, together with other people's contribution, facing all the difficulties characterizing the reception phase, proved to be particularly effective.

Despite this action may seem focused only on the minor, it gives also a considerable help to all those actors involved in his/her reception, as they can receive information, support and evaluation from an operator having a comprehensive vision of the whole intervention.

So, the intervention is not fragmented according to one's competences; on the contrary, through this circularity, it becomes more consistent and effective, and the minor is the main actor taking most advantage from it.

What illustrated above is proven by the following data:

The minors involved in this test were 30 in total.

Almost all of them had been contacted by the Integrated Street Unit. Thanks to the presence of a Palms Project operator working in the V Department, the minors could be taken in charge.

Out of 30 minors, 20 were able to express their life story more consistently. This allowed them to have a greater capacity to present themselves in front of the committee.

Out of these 20 minors, 19 obtained the status of political refugees.

30 of them accomplished a literacy course and finished Primary School.

20 of them took part in the Equal Palms Project's Work Grants, 15 to sport activities, 6 succeeded in getting a job contract.

As a conclusion, the best practices we implemented are based on a circular strategy for taking minors in charge, through which the minor acquires a reference person taking him/her away from the street and introducing him/her into integration paths. Therefore, those best practices have a highly positive value in building the educational project for the minor and his/her life perspectives.

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3.

Best Practice Example – Italy, Torino

Università della Strada – Gruppo Abele

Thematic fields: Networking between entities, sustainability, transferability; Peer Education; Emancipation/ Empowerment of beneficiaries and professional staff

The peer support as a work-tool in the field of social emargination has been codified and tested in several contexts within the social work in the so called "drop-in" centres. This method includes the acknowledgement and utilization of the target group's knowledge as well as the formal integration of people from the target group within the teams. This leads to three main results:

- The implementation of the comprehension of the internal dynamics characterizing the populations undergoing that intervention.
- A "real" cultural liaison.
- A process of direct empowerment for the peer operators and other addressees, and of indirect empowerment for the operators and the services through which and with which the target populations' position will change from object to active subject.

This methodology has already been successfully implemented on several occasions in the field of psychotropic substances consumption, homeless people, adult immigrants and sex workers. In this case, however, it is reviewed and proposed in the field of the so called foreign “unattended” minors. This practice consists of co-opting children met on the occasion of outreach activities, acknowledging their economic dignity and participation to support and decision-making processes (such as decision-making meetings of the group and supervision activities, assuming that they can bring a “knowledge” that is different, but as useful and usable as the one brought by “professional” operators). The choice of the peer supporters is obviously complex, as it is necessary not just “speaking” the language of the group in order to become a peer, as it is not enough being a psychologist or an educator in order to be able to do an outreach activity.

4. INFORMATION

- **Project:** Finestra sulla Piazza (*"A Window on the Street"*) – street walkers, Torino, Porta Palazzo
- **Summary & keywords:** Start & End: 2003, project start, 2006 peers involvement – currently ongoing, likely to be continued
- **Name of the organization:** Torino City Administration – Foreign Minors Office; Gruppo Abele Association, F.Fanon Association
- **Contact** (e.g. website): http://www.comune.torino.it/stranieri_nomadi/min_stranieri/progetti/finestra.htm
- **Amount of funding per year/where do money come from?** (8000 Euros for training and supervision, 12500 Euros for economic support to 4 peers – 2 full-time and 2 part-time per year – Funds come from different sources, European funding and others.)
- **Brief description of organization/form of organization:** Network of actors from the public and private sectors
- **Description of the project:**

Turin City Council – neighbourhood of Porta Palazzo: area of Borgo Dora/Porta Palazzo

Population: Tot. 11.032 of whom 19,26% are Ethnic minorities. In this area resides 6% of the total Ethnic minorities residents in Turin. In some places of this area, the immigrants represent 50% of the total population. (CICSENE, the Gate Project – Porta Palazzo, March 2002). Overall number of final

receivers. This project is addressed to the foreign* minors resident in the VII district (1368 of whom 697/ 51% males and 671 / 49% females).

5. Target

The phenomenon of the so called "unattended" foreign minors living in Italy has taken an ever-growing importance in the last few years. In Northern Italy, they come mainly from Morocco, Albania and Romania. Turin has been one of the first Italian cities that tried to face this situation in an articulated way by defining inter-institutional agreements.

In Turin, the area of Porta Palazzo is a place of meeting and confrontation among foreign and autochthonous cultures since many years.

"Pushing" and drug consumption are extremely widespread among the "invisible" youngsters and children, who are often recruited right because of their young age by adults who use them as drug runner. The feeling of anxiety as well as the facts that they are difficult to catch and involved in illegal activities are the daily challenge of the "dope peddling".

These strong emotions are often supported and stimulated by the consumption of cocaine, sniffed or smoked. The existence of codes, roles and hierarchies, allows them to develop a well-defined image of themselves within the context they live in. The pushing, maybe the most visible phenomenon, intertwines with lifestyle, values and rules, new and old behaviours, such as male prostitution, a hidden but widespread phenomenon.

- Problem addressed
- Objectives/ Visions of the project

Objective A - To promote the capabilities and the potentiality in accessing services.

Objective B – To promote youth empowerment processes.

The street work and the activities based on the territory resources are the tools which allow to contact the foreign youngsters experiencing positive integration processes and who may be involved in the activities addressed to young migrants through empowerment technique. The peer group, employed as a natural helper may foster approach processes and opportunities for positive relations for the youngsters living in the streets in extremely marginalised conditions and cultural poverty.

Definition of a training schedule for peers, with the professional advice of the Street University (Gruppo Abele Association), which training goals are: increasing the communication skills and the relations about the help systems, the team work, with the support of the animation techniques. The trained youngsters will then have the opportunity of being integrated in specific projects of the local development agencies and/or in the multicultural team of the project.

Objective C - Promoting exchange, connection and co-operation processes

Objective D - Learning from the quantitative as well qualitative point of view

6. Number of beneficiaries:

4 directly (the whole working group indirectly)

7. Positive side effects (see objectives)

8. What are the challenges/problems not solved so far?

The management/balance of power and the acceptance of its proxy by the "different" team. Sharing the same objectives. Conflicts with the group of origin and integration in the team felt as a "betrayal". "Sclerotization" in the role of peers. Transfers according to the canteens' and other assistance institutes. Police duties

9. Decision process/Who is involved/Who saw the need?

The attempt is a circular process starting from the partner organizations, then involving all the actors, included peer operators, because everyone of them has

their own particular and necessary point of view, from which they can perceive some needs other can't.

10. Innovation context (What is innovative in the specific context?)

Turnover of traditional roles of the patient and the person responsible for them.

11. Resources (personal, networks, pre-experience....)

Supervisor coordinator for the experiences (see introduction)

12. Why is it a good practice? (Innovation, sustainability, transferability, methods, etc) RESULTS Durability

The method is totally sustainable and repeatable, as proved in this and other fields.

13. Key factors for successful transfer

Flexibility, adaptability, availability to "de-structure" the concept of taking charge of the subjects, "treatment" and help relationship, re-thinking them according to a biunique conception

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1.

SUMMARY

Best Practice Collection - Spain

EXAMPLE I.

ENCLAVEJOVEN PROJECT

2. SOCIAL ENTITY

The Professionals' Association for the Integration (API) in Castilla-La Mancha is a non profit organization, non confessional, without an ideological adscription and formed by professionals of different academic backgrounds, fields and services.

Its mission is to promote actions and services for the integration of people in risk of exclusion. Working on the principals of respect and recognition of people's capacity to act autonomously and responsibly, it promotes personal and social sceneries where every person can freely exercise both. Additionally it contributes with a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary vision and pretends the constant improvement in all the actions.

3. JUSTIFICATION

Since its foundation API has tried to defend and favour integral working models, in communication and coordination with the functionally connected services, and also promotes the incorporation of multidisciplinary professionals at these services with a clear community sense.

On the other hand, the association directs most of its efforts to the work with young people, because it is considered one of the best possible investments for the improvement of the society and world.

API proposes a service that can gather and confront some important existing needs not tackled by the actual set of resources for young people in the territory of Castilla-La Mancha. The service is ambitious in its intentions, undoubtedly

innovative, and can give efficient and original answers to many of the main needs that our young population expresses.

The project is called **ENCLAVEJOVEN** and it's a Regional Center of Integral Services for Youth.

Center	<i>Because it has a location (strategic area in the city of Albacete) and an equipped facility with activities.</i>
Regional	<i>Because some of the activities will become a support element for youngsters, professionals and projects at other provinces.</i>
Services	<i>There are many diverse activities (information, personal guidance, education-training and entertainment).</i>
Integral	<i>All the relevant areas for a young person are approached (labour, housing, health, education, leisure time, etc.).</i>
Youth	<i>The protagonists, addressees (and promoters) of the activities are youth from 16 to 24.</i>

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The project is addressed to young people, 16 to 24, characterized by two main aspects:

- ✓ They find themselves in a vital moment defined by the need to access the complex labour-market for the first time and present: training-educational needs, difficulties meeting the working experience requirements, need to clarify the personal itinerary, path, and precariousness.
- ✓ The access, difficult by itself, worsens for these youth due to the presence of negative psycho-social variables and, in many occasions, recurring:
 - ❖ Insufficient formative levels (school failure, training refusal ...).
 - ❖ Insufficient family and social support (they face new and demanding situations in loneliness).
 - ❖ Life stories with rejection episodes, uncertainty or insecurity crystallized in social distancing attitudes and behaviors.
 - ❖ Belong to minority groups (language barriers, xenophobic responses...).

- ❖ Possible episodes of social conflict and confrontation (increases the rejection of the normative group and pushes them towards marginality).
- ❖ Premature family responsibilities with insufficient resources.

In short, persons who face the search of their first employment in precariousness when compared to their reference group; in addition, they tackle it from an urgent and precipitated starting point. In this heterogeneous group the fact of being a woman toughens even more the difficulties.

Therefore, the project tries to give answers to the following profiles, bearing in mind the categories are not exclusive; rather many of them coincide in one single person:

- ❖ Youngsters searching for their first employment.
- ❖ Youngsters referred by the social welfare system.
- ❖ Youngsters under the guardianship of the administration starting an autonomous life.
- ❖ Young adults, over 18 and previously under the guardianship of the administration, beneficiaries of the services and Autonomy Plans.
- ❖ Youngsters with actual or previous judicial measures in the process of social rehabilitation.
- ❖ Young women with children.
- ❖ Unaccompanied foreign minors.
- ❖ Young immigrants, minors and over 18, in an individual first job seeking plan.
- ❖ Youngsters with physical, psychical or mental disabilities.

Some of detected needs are:

- ❖ Basic skills: literacy, learning the language, basic cultural notions.
- ❖ Pre-labour formation, professional skills.
- ❖ Learning about new technologies.
- ❖ Individual job action plans accompanied by career guidance.

- ❖ Psychological and emotional support along the whole process.
- ❖ Promotion and guidance towards social participation and diversification of the leisure time.
- ❖ Guidance for the reincorporation in the normalized educational nets.
- ❖ Housing support: searching and keeping the residence.
- ❖ Advice on the alternatives when economic need arise.
- ❖ Guidance when family responsibilities are present and financial resources lack.

4. GENERAL OBJECTIVES:

- ✓ Facilitate the evolutive development of the youngsters, favoring those knowledge, abilities and attitudes that allow the acquisition of autonomy and responsibility.
- ✓ Increase the opportunities for active participation and social construction of the youth.
- ✓ Promote the development of the community where the service is located.

5. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

Personal area:

- ❖ Support defining and developing the personal identity.
- ❖ Facilitate defining and constructing future personal projects.
- ❖ Offer positive leisure alternatives.
- ❖ Support the personal learning processes (autonomy, independence and critical thinking).
- ❖ Guide and favor the labour inclusion process.
- ❖ Develop solving skills in order to take charge of the personal problems.

Social area:

- ❖ Support and accompany the social integration processes.
- ❖ Favor the understanding of his/her close social setting.
- ❖ Propitiate the development of social skills for coexistence.
- ❖ Facilitate the resolution of conflicts.

Related to the setting:

- ❖ Promote the participation and implication of the local social network developing and managing the center.
- ❖ Get the services closer to the youngsters so they understand how they function and the correct use.
- ❖ Active participation of the center in the community, as any other agent, regarding the decision making processes and internal procedures.
- ❖ Promote the coordination and collaboration with the services that attend to the youth.

6. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CENTER

COMMUNITARIAN

It is defined from and for a specific geographical area. The starting point is the community the service belongs to (it gathers information of the needs and communitarian possibilities), and so is the arrival point (it becomes a community resource and as such it offers services and promotes social participation).

Potential instrument for social participation, from different perspectives:

- ✓ Community involvement developing and managing the center, through institutions and groups. Social responsibility regarding its youth.

- ✓ Engage volunteers to participate at projects committed to social transformation.
- ✓ Promote the acquisition of personal, social and communication skills of the young participants, the use of social activities and services, and the participation constructing his/her community.

INTEGRATION OF SERVICES

It doesn't pretend to be a new resource that simply adds to the existing ones, neither tries to replace them; rather, it is complementary to the already operative ones, as an instrument that contributes rationality to the processes and that offers proposals in those aspects in which other devices have fewer possibilities. To integrate and to enrich what already exists.

The complexity of the social problems demands innovative, multiple, of integration and adapted perspectives, which amplify the interrelationship of institutions, social and individual groups, to try to offer coordinated answers from the different social agents.

NORMALIZATION

As for service opened minded in its offers and as for a service that the community integrates like own. Without losing the capacity to give response to personal specific situations, it's opened to any young person who could benefit from it due to the response possibilities to common needs and situations of the juvenile group.

Any young person, for the fact of been young, lives personal and social situations that require increasing autonomy levels, as it can be in the search and selection of information, vocational-educational guidance, decision making process, future perspectives, behaviors and performances.

One of the educational functions of the center is to complete the social formation of the young person (civic education, health education, consumer education,

environmental education, leisure time education...). It is a prophylactic function since it tries to prevent social problems and difficulties.

It is, in this respect, a generator of development processes: it promotes the integral development of the youth bearing the cognitive, affective and social areas in mind, favoring his/her autonomy and critical sense.

PARTICIPATIVE

The young person is the protagonist. Active participation implies the young person who presents certain difficulties to manage autonomously is the spokesperson of his/her situation and it won't be open to adult interpretation of needs and problems.

COMPENSATORY

Capacity of response to singular needs and situations by means of individualized actions.

Compensating perspective of the needs and specific disadvantage situations with which some youngsters come to confront their vital challenges. It is about correcting certain negative social situations, with a mark therapeutically character or of help in the treatment of the social and personal difficulties.

SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

Intention of stimulating gradual changes that allows to face the educational, social and cultural difficulties in the context in which it develops. In the short term it supposes compensating difficulties and, in the long term, trying to modify the conditions that originate them.

Cultural integration tool; in communities which are increasingly more multicultural the center should contribute to:

- Make possible the construction of the personal identity in a multicultural context.
- Develop the multicultural competence of the youngsters.

7. KEY FACTORS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT

- ✓ Determine the specific frame, enclosure of the project at local and regional level complementing the current offer of the existing services who attend to youth. Establish and explicit the differential characteristics and the unattended needs that tries to cover.
- ✓ Create the conditions for the real integration of the centre in the community net of services and propitiate the networking with them.
- ✓ Organize the human resources for a suitable balance generating attractive activities for the young public in general and for those who need a specialized individualized attention.
- ✓ Create a climate where the youngster perceives he/she can participate managing the centre.
- ✓ Attend with special interest to the possibilities of working the integration among young people of different cultural and formative backgrounds and gender.
- ✓ Attract the participation of voluntary adult population, who allows the interaction and the exchange between the two referential groups.

8. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROJECT

Enclave-joven, relying on the funding of the Ministry of Social Welfare, began in November 2006; it will be subsidized during the year 2007. The groundwork was:

- search of a suitable facility
- equip it
- selection of the professionals
- dissemination of the project in Albacete

The actions and activities for and with youth started in April 2007. The following information corresponds to the months of April and May:

- 76 youngsters attended
- 78% male – 22% female
- 59% autochthonous – 41% foreign born (2/3 of African origin)
- 47% minors (65% age 16 to 18, 22% 20 years or older)
- 90% are social service users and got to know about the service because of a previous activity
- 10% come by themselves

9. CHALLENGES

Since the project just started, it is promoting its activities and the main challenges are:

- ✓ Increase the financing sources, public and private, to finish the conditioning of the facilities.
- ✓ Expand the spectrum of young participants. It is expected to reach a balance increasing the campaigns directed to youth foreign to the social services. It is a question of balancing the initial trend of participation of youth with serious difficulties towards a more normalized scene to make possible the integration.

- ✓ Progressive increase of the time and spaces dedicated to individual guidance, psychological and juridical. Until now protagonism has been given to group activities to claim the attention and attendance of the youth.
- ✓ Increase the actions oriented to social incorporation and to the community participation of the service as a local service resource. Nowadays the main efforts have gone to the social service system.
- ✓ Form and develop the regional aspects of the centre. Especially through the design of an informative web page, with a service of specialized assessment and advice and, finally, with the availability of the facilities of the centre to organize activities for professionals of the region.

10. SUSTAINABILITY

The project is financed by the Social Welfare Ministry with an annual subsidy that covers personnel and equipment expenses. Complementary economic sources are sought with the aim to have bigger and better conditioned facilities for the training and formative activities and to increase the number of activities organized out of the center.

The search is directed to public administrations, especially municipals related to youth, and private entities in order to encourage their responsibility with the youth of the area where they're located.

11. TRANSFERABILITY

At this moment, especially at local level, there are two types of services: one type addressed to youth in general and the other to youth with specific needs. The service they both offer is stagnant and, due to specific problems, involuntarily can help to slant even more its orientation.

To start a service addressed to the interests and needs of the young population in general and that simultaneously pretends to gather and support certain

individual processes with major difficulties, is an ambitious and complex challenge.

To combine these goals is a clear innovation, of complex development, that will be reflected in a context with real possibilities of interaction and integration of very diverse realities. Normally, in any community scenery, the above mentioned realities don't meet and coexist spontaneously.

On the other hand, the motivation to unfold the participation and protagonism of the young participants has to crystallize in a final feeling of being part of the service, of nearness to its interests and needs.

These two main aspects are, in the first phase of its development, the base to consolidate a useful, stable community space. The final scope of this stage, of clear experimental character, will be evaluated at the end of the year.

Therefore, the transferability of the practice, due to its short life, is premature. The autonomic administration has shown great expectations on the final impact and the fulfillment of the goals, and depending on the results, in the future, the experience can be transfer to other geographical areas of the Autonomous Community.

12. GENDER PERSPECTIVE

It is approached in different lines of action:

- ❖ Constitution of the educational team: 80 % of the staff members are women.
- ❖ There is a specific working line, under the epigraph of "Gender Equality", that approaches educational and informative actions and of orientation in this respect.
- ❖ Transversely, in the rest of lines, there are specific workshops where gender perspective is introduced.

- ❖ Diffusion of the service and activities to entities that work gender equality.
- ❖ For the evaluation of the project, the statistical information is segregated by sexes.
- ❖ A selection criterion to form the activity groups is the numerical comparison for sex.

13. CONTACT INFORMATION

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14.

Best Practice Collection - Spain

EXAMPLE II.

ACULL PROGRAM

15. SOCIAL ENTITY

Associació Punt de Referència is a non profit organization founded in Barcelona in 1997. Its projects are carried out at the Catalanian Autonomous Community, but priority is given to the province of Barcelona.

The association was founded when a young woman, who had been under the guardianship of the administration and had just turned 18, expressed the need of

support to deal with everyday situations and the lack of adults she could talk to and rely on in her social and personal life.

Therefore, the main goal of the association is to accompany and give support to youngsters who have been under the guardianship of the administration in their processes towards and autonomous life.

In order to give an effective response to the previously mention needs, the social entity initiates a program called Punt de Referència, where each young person has an assigned adult volunteer referral who will accompany him/her along the process.

Some time after, the Support Area for Youth Currently and Previously under Guardianship (ASJTET) of the Ministry of Social Action and Citizenship of the Generalitat of Catalunya proposed to the association to design a program specifically addressed to young unaccompanied immigrants who were previously under the guardianship of the administration. The program Acull was elaborated in 2002 and has been developed ever since.

16. JUSTIFICATION

Statistics show the institutionalization of the emancipation processes, due to lack of supporting social networks, of youngsters who arrived as unaccompanied minors to the host country.

The main reason is that the social networks they establish are with other youngsters with similar characteristics and personal situations; therefore, are not effective as support elements for the process of gaining personal autonomy.

The integration of these youngsters in an autochthonous family unit favors the development of their capacities in a normalized environment; likewise, it supports them effectively in their socio-labour and cultural integration at the host country.

The affective support offered by the family unit provides the youngsters with the safety and positive reinforcement needed along the emancipation process; in fact, the goal is to maintain the bond after the temporary hosting.

Additionally, the attention in a family unit favors considerably the task developed by the professionals who attend to the youth, since the family has access to detailed information about the needs and difficulties of the particular youngster and transfers it to the professionals. Concrete information allows elaborating specific mechanism of attention to the person, reducing the risks for social exclusion and favoring a responsible and mature autonomy.

17. ADRESSEES

Young immigrants over 18, previously unaccompanied minors and under the guardianship of the administration, with a residence and working permit, with a labour insertion plan and without conflictive or penal paths.

18. AIM

Offer the target group an integral support in the everyday life situations in order to allow them to consolidate competences to become more autonomous, facilitate the establishment of bonds with a Catalan family and favor to broaden and deepen their understanding of the host society.

Therefore, the program offers the temporary hosting of the target group with Catalan families. The usual period is 8 months, but can be extendable depending on the case.

19. PARTICIPATING AGENTS

Volunteers: host families that present personal, economic and labour stability, have a physical space and time to attend the youngster and commit to participate for a whole year in all the actions the program requires.

Youngsters: the susceptible youngsters, apart from the characteristics previously mentioned, have to understand and express the will to take part voluntarily in the program.

There are a number of adolescents who recognize they are not mature enough to emancipate and are willing to accept the support, rules and dynamics of a family environment, independently of the adjustments and new agreements that may occur.

Experience shows that most of the youngsters adapt quicker and easier to families with small children; they usually come from large families with younger siblings and establish more natural and spontaneous relationships with the younger members of the host families.

Professionals: the professionals belong to the association and the public administration. A professional from the association gives support to the host family; the youth receive support, besides from the family, from professionals of the association and the administration.

20. SERVICE OF ORIGIN

The susceptible young participants reside at the different types of residences for minors with protection measures of the administration. The social educators or directors of the residential homes send the petitions to the ASJTET.

21. FAMILY PROFILE

Host families represent the diversity of today's Catalonian society; they can vary from a single member household to a large family.

When the host family is composed by more members than the parents, especially when teenagers are present, all family members have to agree to host the youngster temporarily.

Experience shows that large families with small children are more willing to become host families; they verbalize it is easy for them to integrate one more member at the everyday dynamics while in the midst of raising their own children.

22. ACTIVITIES AND APPLICATION PHASES

Diffusion of the program and selection of the host families: diffusion campaigns are periodically organized. There are two main objectives: to clarify the functional criteria and aims of the program and to recruit potential host families. Afterwards a selection process is carried out.

Formation: the main goal is to qualify the selected people to develop the referral-host functions during the accompaniment process offered to the youngsters in risk of social exclusion; therefore, before hosting the young person 8 group meetings, 2 hours each, are organized.

The general subjects of the meetings are:

- learn about and understand the type of population they will host and the institutionalization circuits
- learn about and get closer to the target group
- involve the referral person designing and developing the reception plan
- provide the referral adults with strategies and skills to correctly approach different situations that may happen along the accompaniment process
- use the group as a self-help tool

Hosting process: when the group acquires the essential notions, the professional team studies the feasibility of each case according to the characteristics of the families they have.

Therefore, they analyze the characteristics of each family and each youth and try to match them accordingly. Once the youth is assigned to a host family, an agreement is signed by the association, the referral family and the youth.

Follow-up: the aim is to look after the relationship established between the young person and the host family and to canalize the difficulties that could present.

The accompaniment of the referral person during the hosting period is intensive and constant, both individually and in group. The individual assessment allows customized advice and orientation; the group assessment, besides the advice given by the professional who directs the activity, allows the establishment of bonds among the families and encourages sharing experiences, doubts, exploring solutions....

The technical team carries out the individual follow-up of the youngsters; the aim is to assess and evaluate the process. If negative aspects show up, the team may reconsider the situation.

It is the most intense working phase and also, when correctly developed, the one that holds the key for success. It is crucial that the host family receives immediate support when needed and feels accompanied all along the process.

23. END OF THE HOSTING

After the 8 month hosting period if the youth hasn't been able to find housing autonomously, he/she can be helped by the Àrea de Suport a Joves Tutelats i Extutelats of the administration.

It is important to underline that since the very beginning the youngsters and families know the hosting is a temporary measure with the aim to establish a bond that goes beyond this period.

24. CHALLENGES

The main challenge is to recruit more voluntary families because susceptible youth outnumber available families. After analyzing the results of the recruitment campaigns, the association concludes that the main difficulty is not the lack of available families, rather how to reach them; therefore they need to improve-change the diffusion campaigns' strategies.

25. RESULTS

Since its beginnings the project has attended 24 youth, 22 young men and 2 young women, and only in one case has the hosting been interrupted. 22 people are from Morocco, the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors in Spain is mainly Maghrebian and male.

The success lies in its methodology, especially in the intense, exhaustive and continuous follow-up with both, the host family and youngster.

Additionally, the group follow-up helps to establish supporting relationships between the different families that go beyond the hosting period since they organize birthday parties, festivities, Sunday brunch, etc for them and the youngsters.

The added value of the program is that the host family becomes a quality referent for the youth after the hosting period. As for the youth, they express to have two families, one in the country of origin and the other one in Catalonia, without representing any conflict or complexity to them.

In fact in couple of cases, due to certain circumstances, both families cooperated to favor the well-being of the youth. This collaboration served to bring together both realities and was a satisfactory complement for the young men involved.

26. FUNDING

The association receives public and private funding to develop this particular program. The family perceives 300 € per month during the host period, the youth pays half of the payment and the association the other half. If the youth can not pay his/her part the association will pay for him/her.

The highest cost of the program is the professional personnel necessary for the follow-up phase; it involves not only the professionals of the association but also those who work at the ASJTET, the family, other professionals in vocational training programs, etc, and all of them with an intense dedication.

27. INNOVATION

The legal system establishes adult age as a determiner of the full juridical capacity of the person.

The innovative aspects of the program are:

- the temporary reception of youth over 18 (not contemplated juridically)
- the hosting in autochthonous families that provide bonds and social networks in the territory in which the young man/woman tries to establish
- the quality of the established bond which will prevent social risk situations

28. TRANSFERABILITY

The program is a specific request of the public administration; therefore, there is a vertical transferability. The ample horizontal transferring is achieved by the participation of the residential homes and social entities that work with the target group.

The key factors for successful transference are the previous formation given to the host families, the correct matching of youth and families, and especially the intense accompaniment during the follow-up period.

It is necessary to underline that the young participants have specific characteristics, as a working permit and a labour plan for example, and since the hosting is temporary if the initial conditions were different so would be the final results. Therefore the transferability with the same results is subjected to the having the basic initial characteristics.

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EXAMPLE III

CENTER OF RESOURCES FOR MINORS

31. SOCIAL ENTITY

The organization, founded in 1981, began with small projects and scarce resources at one of the most punished neighborhoods of the city of Zaragoza. First a welfare center was opened, used as a reception service for people with social and health needs, answering to the service shortage of the area. From that moment on other needs were detected at the neighborhood and a series of “charitable-welfare” programs were designed and carried out.

Due to the rapid growth and in order to consolidate the diverse programs and centers managed by the Benefit Society, in 1989 the entity resolves to create the

Foundation Federico Ozanam to structure and give a definitive coverage to the benefit society.

The programs are distributed in: elderly people, infancy and youth, training and employment, housing and flea market.

32. JUSTIFICATION

The Project establishes complementary actions to consolidate the personal processes directed to obtain the full social inclusion of minors and young adults linked to the Minors' Protection system of Aragón.

The project offers additional services to those already facilitated in the residential centers and flats where these minors and young adults reside and also directs many of the services foreseen in the future Plan of Autonomy and Emancipation for Minors dependent on the Government of Aragón.

The Center of Resources offers the target group:

- a meeting point where they can establish interpersonal relationships and enjoy their leisure time either individually or in a group
- the opportunity to share their time with youngsters of similar characteristics
- an alternative to the street for the time they spend out of the residential centers and flats

On the other hand, it constitutes a center of services, mainly offering advice, guidance and information related to the auto sufficient development in society. It is especially appropriate for those who take part at the Autonomy Plan and for those who previously had protection measures; it offers them a new opportunity to achieve for themselves their personal goals and, additionally, can rely on a specific help if new adversities arise.

The third dimension of the Project addresses social entities and residential centers when they require professional support to guide the development of

specific activities (basically of recreational or formative character), resources, and a different physical and methodological space to the daily one.

33. ADRESSEES

- ✚ Minors with protection measures attended by the family fostering programs (there are different types of fostering).
- ✚ Young people attended by the Autonomy and Emancipation Plan of the Autonomous Community of Aragón.
- ✚ Minors of the public and state assisted centers of Protection and Reform of Aragón destined to work personal autonomy and emancipation. (Age 14 on).
- ✚ Young people with previous protection measures not linked to the Minors' Service any longer, but in need of a specialized support to attain full social inclusion.
- ✚ Educators and professionals of the previously mentioned Protection and Reform resources.

34. GOALS

- ✚ To culminate the individual processes of social inclusion of young people linked to the Minors' Protection system of the Government of Aragón.
- ✚ To facilitate the meeting and the establishment of relationships out of the residential setting, where the target group spends most of its time.
- ✚ To implement, by means of complementary actions, the new Plan of Autonomy and Emancipation of the Government of Aragón.
- ✚ To provide with additional tools, in view to the development of the Socio-educational Intervention Programs, to the social entities who attend to minors and youth in general.

35. SERVICES

1. Activity Management for Social Entities

The recreational and formative options of the city of Zaragoza do not adjust to the specific needs of young people with protection measures. The different cultural, leisure and youth centers are based on a pre-established programming and do not offer neither an educational frame nor a physical space for the target group and their residence educators to participate in the same activities.

Therefore, in agreement with the previous analysis and according to the specific requirements made by the different residential centers that attend to these youngsters, the Center of Resources creates this service to offer:

- customized development of formative and/or recreational programs for the target group and their residence educators
- adequate means that adjust to their specific needs
- an opportunity to make proposals
- a neutral context that breaks with the usual residential environment and favors motivational aspects

Nevertheless, for those youngsters who want to participate in organized activities, the Center has an updated database with all the activities carried out by cultural and youth entities of the city.

2. Information, Advice and Derivation Services

✚ Information about housing and alternative accommodations. This service is specially directed to youngsters previously under the guardianship of the government, so much for those who are in emancipation projects as those that are not linked to the Protection system any longer.

The entity creates and manages its own housing exchange service, in accordance with its compromise with the project, but also offers information

about subsidies for first time home buyers, public housing services, specific housing campaigns of the city of Zaragoza, etc.

- ✚ Legal advice on regularization processes for immigrants. This aspect, due to the future emancipation processes, becomes crucial for the young immigrants residing at the different centers and flats and also gives meaning to the protection offered to minors by the administration.

Each youth presents a particular situation and the centers find themselves with insufficient resources to give individual answers; therefore, the service offers individual advice according to the personal legal situation and group informative sessions according to the topics of common interests for the majority of the group.

- ✚ Information about leisure activities in the city of Zaragoza. The service creates a data base with information about cultural, social, recreational, sports and leisure time activities. It keeps a constant contact with the main private and public entities in order to offer updated information to the target group

- ✚ Labour insertion resources for the youth who are not susceptible to enter at individualized insertion plan; that's to say, those who are not attended by the minors' labour inclusion services or by the autonomy and emancipation plan. They're informed about alternative possibilities and directed to the right service according to the individual needs. Fundación Ozanam contributes with a job placement service and with the labour insertion department. Likewise, the youth can be oriented to other private and public labour insertion programs and job agencies.

- ✚ Information about social benefits offered by the social services. This service is directed to young adults, who where previously with a protection measure. The service analysis each case and addresses the person to the correspondent social worker. Collaterally educates these youth with the use of "normalized" services available to the general citizenry.

3. Orientation and Labour Insertion

The service was design and functions since May 2004. Latter integrated the Service of Labour Insertion for Minors, belonging to the Autonomy and Emancipation Plan, and contemplates the integration of the New Plan directed to other Minor's centers assigned to the Provincial Sub-bureau of Zaragoza.

The assignment of the cases is decided by the responsible of the Minors' residential centers or the professionals they have delegated this responsibility on. The Individual Itineraries of Insertion are narrowly tied to the Individualized Plans of Intervention, which are elaborated, developed and evaluated at the residential dependencies in which every young and minor live.

4. Educational Reinforcement-School Support

This is a future school support project centered on high school basically, but with two complementary actions, arisen from the requests maid by the centers, which are Spanish for immigrants and literacy on one hand, and basic computer applications on the other. The beneficiaries are minors with a guardianship of the administration.

This field gives sense to the voluntaries project design for the Reception Flats Project and Accompaniment of the Ozanam Foundation, which will be physically located at the Center of Resources. It will attend minors not only of the Ozanam's centers, but also of other minors' resources of the city. The school support will be carried out by professional educators in the beginning, but the development responsibility will be shared with the voluntaries.

5. Process of Consular Documents of Foreign Minors

This service will be available as soon as there is an agreement with the Minors' Service of the Government of Aragón. The biggest challenge it endures is the personal resources needed for its development given the volume of management it bears.

The service will process the consular documents of minors residing at observation and first reception centers during their stay. Once this process is fulfilled, the residence where the minor resides will be responsible to process the residence and/or working permit.

6. Meeting Point

The Meeting Point is a parallel service to all the programmed services, with a detailed educational planning of its activities and a permanent attention given by qualified educators, professional and volunteers.

The service encourages:

- The development of the most spontaneous and autonomous aspect of the juvenile leisure
- Meeting each other
- The transmission of information
- Communication

The service offers:

- A complementary service to those offered by the residential centers
- New activities every day

And favors and complements the integral formation of the young assistants.

36. CHALLENGES

The professionals face an everyday challenge at the Meeting Point since they have to integrate new people everyday, without knowing in advance who is going to come or what their demand will be; therefore, it offers the possibility to develop personalized educational intervention processes through unspecific plans that can give response to the needs of the youngsters that, in many cases, sublie in the background without been perceived or detected by the professionals.

Due to all the aspects detailed above, it is necessary to deepen the knowledge on the field as a privileged space for educational purposes; therefore it is necessary to think about the experiences lived up to the date, and the possibilities they offer.

Another challenge is adapting and designing new projects with effective approaches to respond to changing situations. Today's society changes quite fast and some of the autochthonous population finds difficulties accessing the labour market and obtaining a social and labour inclusion. Besides, immigration is a new phenomenon in the country and although until two years ago the unaccompanied minors were from Morocco, now there are sub-Saharan minors arriving with different characteristics that need different approaches to a similar situation.

And a third challenge is starting and managing the new school support program. Most minors present very basic schooling and need to improve language competences, literacy, numeracy, computer literacy and transferable competences in order to become autonomous, not only economically but also personally and socially. Therefore, the challenge is how to engage the target group prioritizing and understanding schooling as a means to become completely autonomous but at a longer term than what they expected.

37. RESULTS

52 people were attended in 2006. Most of the youth attend or use more than one service and the most requested is the orientation and labour insertion service, due to the personal situation of the youngsters (close to the end of the guardianship or right after).

The evaluation process indicates the general results are favorable, evaluation carried out by the administration, social entity and target group, since the offering adjusts to the actual needs, it has the capacity to change and generate new approaches and the potential increase of the services offered.

38. FUNDING

The social entity's funding is combined; it is to say, public and private. Some of the projects and services receive public funding, while the funding of others is private. The Center of Resources for Minors, provided that the youth attended have protection measures of the administration, receives public funding.

39. INNOVATION

The innovative aspect of the project is summarized in the centralization of different services in the same physical space, with a specific working methodology and with a professional team specialized in several attention areas.

Previously the young person had to attend to a few services in order to get responses to the different needs; at present, the Center of Resources attends to the basic and most important needs of the target group as can be: training needs, career guidance, access to the labour market, labour inclusion, housing, health, leisure time, legal advice, learning Spanish, financial advice, etc.

Additionally, the methodology guarantees that the professional referral designs an individualized itinerary in agreement with the needs, potentials, preferences, competencies, attitudes of the youngster, always receiving the support of the rest of the professionals of the working team.

40. CONTACT INFORMATION

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