Methodology
Training of trainers

Non-formal learning for employability

Project: 2014-1-BG01-KA205-001743
Table of Contents

Preface .................................................................................................................................................. 3
Introduction........................................................................................................................................ 4
Development of the “Training of Trainers" Methodology.......................................................... 4
Development of “Training of Trainers” Manual ....................................................................... 5
Methodology – Training of Trainers ............................................................................................ 6
∥ Summary .......................................................................................................................................... 6
∥ Aims ................................................................................................................................................... 6
∥ Identifying the Target group ........................................................................................................ 6
∥ Identifying the needs ..................................................................................................................... 7
∥ Resources ......................................................................................................................................... 8
∥ Contents and program ..................................................................................................................... 8
∥ Methods and tools .......................................................................................................................... 10
∥ Results of the training process ..................................................................................................... 11
∥ Follow-up activities ....................................................................................................................... 12
Contacts ............................................................................................................................................. 13

Authors:
Ognian Gadoularov, Bulgaria (NC Future Now 2006)
Bogdan Romanica, Romania (Dreams for life)

Advice and Tips:
Teodor Vasilev, Bulgaria (NC Future Now 2006)

Translation and editing:
Alexandra Mircheva, Bulgaria (NC Future Now 2006)
This methodology is developed as a result of cooperation in the youth field between experts from Bulgaria and Romania, in the framework of the project "Non-formal learning for employability" - 2014-1-BG01-KA205-001743, funded by the European Erasmus+ Programme under Key action 2.

The Methodology is part of a comprehensive Model for interventions in the field of competence development among young people, which will increase their realization on the labour market and their social involvement and participation.

In this model the highlight is on youth work and non-formal learning. The concept of measures is based on a thorough survey and the findings thereof, and these measures can be adapted and applied at various levels (local - schools, community, NGOs; regional - municipality, city; national level). This allows the results of the project to be replicated and used as a real tool for the integration of youth work and non-formal learning at different levels, to tackle the problems of young people.

The general framework of the Model developed within the project is based on the following steps:

- Analysis of areas where formal education doesn’t provide practical skills but young people need such skills for employability or social sufficiency – study, research or observation;

- Development of methodologies, manuals and training programs based on non-formal learning to provide relevant competences;

- Preparation of expert Trainers to train and support Youth workers in their direct work with young people;

- Preparing Youth workers to provide training programs for young people interested in the field;

- Support processes at each level by methodologies and guidelines concerning NFL¹, modern pedagogy and interactive teaching.

¹ – NFL – Non-formal learning
The methodology is targeting trainers who prepare youth workers to conduct educational activities with young people. The application of this methodology provides human resources for training youth workers who can use non-formal learning and interactive teaching in their job. The Pools of trainers (who are prepared during the process) will use this methodology for continuing to work on different levels (local, national, international) and thus will be ensured the long-lasting results and benefits for young people in different situations and regions.

The current methodology is, on the one hand, aimed at people with relevant experience in the field of youth work and practice as trainers, and on the other hand it is aimed at learners who will develop specific competences such as: being able to train youth workers to help young people through the methods of non-formal learning to develop practical skills enhancing their employability and social cohesion. These two aspects are important to provide the context for understanding the methodology and to prevent criticism about whether it is sufficiently complete or whether its approach is complex and profound enough.

This Model for interventions (see General Methodology Model for Interventions) contains comprehensive previous experience of the organizations and experts involved in its preparation and incorporate different learning theories. The learning process for trainers, youth workers and young people is based on the principles of non-formal learning but is enriched by other concepts from interactive teaching and modern pedagogy. Such concepts included in the process are – Multiple intelligences, Socio-cognitive learning, Experiential learning, Learning styles, Stages of development, Self-efficacy and others. All these supportive concepts are included in the Manual (Training of Trainers – using non-formal learning and interactive methods in Youth work) that is created to be complementary to this Methodology.

Development of the “Training of Trainers" Methodology

Developing and describing the "Training of Trainers" methodology is an educational product that is currently missing in the partner countries - Bulgaria and Romania. Due to the early stage of development of the youth sector and youth work in these countries, the educational materials aimed at non-formal learning are still limited and insufficient. The lack of an adequate educational framework for training of youth workers in the field of formal education leads to inefficient use of the capacity of professionals.

This methodology fills a gap in the youth sector, namely the need of methodologies for the preparation of trainers, who are able to train youth workers. This methodology will set the basis for the preparation of teams of trainers of youth workers. The methodology will serve the goal of multiplication of the project results and the development of youth work in the participating countries and other interested parties. A large number of youth workers can be trained according to the methodology at national and international levels, to use and promote non-formal learning as a tool to enhance the realization of young people in the labour market and increase their social cohesion.
As milestones for the development of the Methodology served elements from ETS – European training strategy and Competence Model for trainers in the youth field to work at international level:

https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/training-and-cooperation/trainingstrategy/
https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/training-and-cooperation/europeantotstrategy/trainercompetences/

Also relevant documents that supported the development of this Methodology and the whole Model for interventions are:

- **Quality in non-formal education and training in the field of European youth work, Helmut Fennes and Hendrik Otten (2008)**
  https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-1615/TrainingQualityandCompetenceStudy.pdf

- **The eight key competencies for lifelong learning: An appropriate framework within which to develop the competence of trainers in the field of European youth work or just plain politics?, Hendrik Otten and Yael Ohana (2009)**
  https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-1881/Trainer_%20Competence_study_final.pdf

- **Quality Youth Work - A common framework for the further development of youth work. Report from the Expert Group on Youth Work Quality Systems in the EU Member States**

### Development of “Training of Trainers” Manual

In order to ensure lasting effects and use of the results of this process, a Manual (Training of Trainers – using non-formal learning and interactive methods in Youth work) complementary to the Methodology, is developed to assist the Training of trainers. Thus when conducting the activities set out in the general methodology, an educational material is provided. The Manual “Training of Trainers – using non-formal learning and interactive methods in Youth work” is available for free access and distribution over the Internet (link for download of materials from the project).

When creating the Manual for trainers we were not confined within the framework of the methodology and we tried to fully deploy the understanding of the knowledge, skills and concepts one needs to know as a trainer in the youth field. For this reason, the Manual contains a large amount of materials.
Methodology — Training of Trainers

Summary

Methodology and training program for Training of trainers in the youth field

The main result of the implementation of the Methodology is the preparation of experts who apply the methods of non-formal learning and interactive techniques to train youth workers. In this way, youth workers will be able to provide learning opportunities to young people in need of developing their competences, supporting their realization on the labour market and social cohesion.

Aims

What skills, attitudes, actions and experience are developed during the training process?

- Improving the knowledge and skills of trainers in the field of working with groups;
- Ability to set and achieve educational goals;
- Development of competences for understanding and facilitating individual and group learning processes;
- Development of skills to design training programs based on the principles of non-formal learning;
- Development of skills for managing the process of self-directed learning;
- Development of skills for successful interaction and teamwork;
- Development of skills for effective communication in learning environments;
- Development of skills to use non-formal learning and interactive teaching methods as tools for training.

Identifying the Target group

For which target group is the training process suitable? What actions connected to the participants will be undertaken? (gathering information, application form, preparatory tasks, etc.)

The target group of the training process is composed of trainers and education professionals working in the field of non-formal learning and youth work. The program is aimed at people who are using interactive teaching methods for the development of competences involved in the project activities and active in the process of personal development and training.

The program is addressed to: youth workers, educators, trainers and consultants.

Necessary prior experience of the participants:

- To know the principles of non-formal learning;
- To have participated at least twice in teams of preparation, implementation and evaluation of trainings based on the methods of non-formal learning;
- To have experience in the youth field and youth work as: organizers of youth projects and initiatives, youth leaders, mentors, coordinators, trainers;
- To have the potential and desire to develop skills of trainers and capacity after completion of the training to work actively as trainers in the youth field, conducting training for youth workers;
- To show initiative and willingness to deliberately run a process of self-improvement and learning;
- To be prepared to critically reflect on their skills, values and qualities as trainers.
Before enrolling in the training based on the current Methodology, candidates must go through the application process and evaluation, to verify the above mentioned requirements. The application process starts with distributing information among the organization and networks working in the youth field. Applicants are asked to describe themselves according to the above-mentioned criteria, to self-evaluate their experience and competencies, and to express motivation to participate in this educational process. After being selected based on their applications, all future candidates will be evaluated by “Entry level test” related to topics and competences included in the Learning goals of this methodology. After that, during the preparation phase candidates will be provided with theoretical information (books, videos, publications) that will give them opportunities to learn. Through this process, a sequence of practical tasks related to providing information will be held. Based on the results obtained in the tasks, the final selection will be completed. All candidates will be tested again with the same “Entry level test” which will define the level of development during the selection/preparation phases.

**Identifying the needs**

*What knowledge, skills and attitude are essential to be transferred and practiced in the learning process?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Knowledge</strong></th>
<th><strong>Skills</strong></th>
<th><strong>Attitudes</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theories of the learning process</td>
<td>Setting learning goals</td>
<td>To serve as a role model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles of non-formal learning</td>
<td>Assessment of learning outcomes</td>
<td>To inspire future achievements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning styles</td>
<td>Design of training programs</td>
<td>To communicate positively and encourage learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiential learning</td>
<td>Active listening</td>
<td>To follow a timetable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-cognitive learning</td>
<td>Effective communication</td>
<td>To handle emergencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation and self-efficacy</td>
<td>Effective teamwork</td>
<td>To resist stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple intelligences</td>
<td>Creating effective learning flow</td>
<td>To radiate dedication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods for reflection and debriefing</td>
<td>Mentoring and Coaching</td>
<td>To seek opportunities for personal development proactively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning environment</td>
<td>Implementation of interactive teaching methods</td>
<td>To encourage participation and involvement of learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of learning outcomes</td>
<td>Description and documenting of training programs</td>
<td>To show responsibility at work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills for self-directed learning</td>
<td>Facilitating and conducting discussions and debriefing</td>
<td>To show openness towards innovation and creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Competences</td>
<td>Giving instructions</td>
<td>To empathise and understand the individual needs of learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roles of the trainer</td>
<td>Giving and receiving effective feedback</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group processes</td>
<td>Creating an environment for reflection and self-evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods and techniques of the non-formal learning</td>
<td>Assessment of training needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creating and adapting activities and implementing them in different contexts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Resources

Location, working space, materials, Internet access etc

In order to conduct the program, it is necessary to use a training environment identical to the one in which the future trainers would work – with spacious training areas for activities involving movement and undisturbed work in small groups. It should also provide opportunities for outdoor activities and a wide range of materials and equipment - flipchart stands, projectors, stationery and art materials. It is important to have Internet access. It will be best if the training is carried out in a remote, isolated training centre to achieve a high level of concentration of the participants during intensive training.

Contents and program

Which topics are included?

- Education and learning
- Development of competences
- Trainer - roles, skills, ethics
- Types of learning - socio-cognitive, experiential, learning styles and others
- Group processes and learning in a social environment
- Evaluation, self-assessment and self-reflection
- Design of a training program
- Training methods in non-formal context
- Training cycle
- Tools to enhance learning
- Learning environment

Stages of the program:

The process of training of trainers is a complex and demanding venture. The trainer is the person responsible for the participants and for the consequences of his/her work. For this reason, we believe that the process of training and assessment of trainers in the youth field should not begin and end within a few days of residential training in a group. In this connection, the process which we offer with this methodology is complex and covers a longer period of time. The overall conduct depends on the individual progress of each participant. The process covers 3 months preparatory period, 9 days residential training and a minimum of 6 months of follow-up. During the preparatory work it is necessary to involve more than the required number of candidates in the process of preparation and by monitoring progress and performance assessment, to select participants for the residential training. For the various phases of the process we suggest a range of tools to assist the process of learning and development and to build and improve on the previous period:
1. **Preparation (before the residential phase of the training of trainers)** - during the preparation phase, online-based learning tools (ICT) are used. This will provide background information to the learners, creating contact between participants and trainers and starting the process of personal preparation.

Key elements of the preparation phase are:
- Sending a **questionnaire** to assess knowledge;
- Provision of **training materials** – video, audio, books, publications;
- Passing through a series of **practical tasks** to assess progress;
- **Final selection** of participants.

2. **Implementation (during the residential phase of the training of trainers)** – the process of residential training starts with the **Assessment centre** (based on ETS trainers competencies), to assess trainers’ skills and behaviours, and identifies the baseline level of each participant. During the training a wide range of tools that accompany the learning process are used. First of all, residential training gives the possibility to elaborate the theoretical knowledge developed during the preparation phase. Second, it is the moment to deliver and develop a specific set of practical skills related to trainers work (e.g. facilitation of debriefing, giving feedback, communication skills etc.). The process is based on the logical flow of competency development – attitude, knowledge and skills. It starts with creating needed attitudes towards youth work and NFL, accompanied by ethics of the trainer and perception of self-development. After this, knowledge about methods, practices and processes are elaborated. Finally, practical tasks are given to be performed in the social environment (in teams) and analysed and refined afterwards. In order to become competent professional trainers, the learners develop real educational programs - based on the needs and learning objectives of the target group.

Key elements of the residential training are:
- **Assessment centre** – to identify trainers’ skills and behaviours;
- **Social learning** - related to values and principles of youth work and training delivery;
- Performing **practical tasks** related to training tools such as facilitation, session design etc.
- Refining the performed tasks through **analysis and feedback**;
- **Developing and demonstrating** in practice a training session;
- **Design of a whole training process** - as a final task to the group to demonstrate what they have learned (identification of needs and target groups, preparation and design, conducting sessions, evaluation of results and follow-up).

3. **Follow-up (after the residential phase of the training of trainers)** - during the period after the training some of the practical tasks are repeated, but in real situations at the workplace/community of learners. During this process each participant is supported by one trainer and colleagues.

Key elements of follow-up are:
- **Design and implementation of the learning process** - the steps described above, but in a real environment;
- **Online learning** - additional materials;
- **Webinars** - to increase qualifications;
- **Mentoring, coaching** and online support - provided by trainers and external experts;
- **Support groups** - the learners form groups to keep in touch and participate in solving real cases from trainings.
Methods and tools

Conducting the program is based entirely on interactive learning and the principles of NFL. Behind the methods selected for the training are the following principles:

- Active involvement of the participants - stimulating their initiative;
- Flexibility of the learning process - to meet their specific training needs;
- Sharing best practices and experience;
- Creating practical dimension of the learning process.

The participants in the program are placed in an environment that requires their active involvement and high level of participation and expression. They have to cope with challenges and tasks using limited resources to make decisions and to track the results of their actions. Trainers guide participants to effectively interpret lessons from experiences and turn them into skills and attitudes needed for future work.

The principle of learning by doing and experiencing helps participants to develop and practice real skills that will be useful to them in the future.

Certain working methods are planned for the training, all of them based on the non-formal approach. It is focused on the needs of participants and their experiences. The methods are participatory and leave space for individual involvement. Included in the learning process, guided experiences lead to the internalization of new theoretical fundamentals (the participants discover and understand new theoretical tools, instruments and methods), skills development (the participants get involved in methods and activities that develop the 8 key competencies of Life Long Learning), individual and group practice (the participants have the chance to create and implement methods, activities, plans for their own realities).

All activities and working methods contribute to the process of non-formal learning such as games, debates, simulations, energizers, icebreakers, communication games, get to know each other activities, group discussions, guided practice, coaching sessions, creativity activities, reflection activities, open space and many more. The training is focused on the personal development of the participants. The selected activities and methods have to empower the youth workers and trainers, to become more confident, more motivated and more competent.
Thus they will contribute to social development by transferring the experiences and knowledge to their everyday work. Besides the *Experiential learning principles*, which are familiar to many trainers, there will be included in this training new principles and instruments, such as *Socio-cognitive learning, Self-efficacy, Multiple intelligences, Learning styles* - concepts that will enrich non-formal education.

The participants should be actively involved in every stage of the training. During the preparation stage, the candidates should be active in creating the online learning materials, passing tests and completing tasks. During the residential training course they have to create their sessions and have the chance to deliver workshops and receive feedback. After the residential training, the participants become part of the mentoring process, they share information with other participants, participate in an online learning process. They are also involved in the next activities in the process – trainings of youth workers, multipliers events etc.

**Results of the training process**

*What are the results achieved from the training process? How will the results be defined by participants, self-assessment, etc.?*

**Expected results:**

**At the end of the program, participants will be able to:**
- To plan, organize, conduct and evaluate a learning process based on NFL;
- To participate effectively as part of a team in executing tasks;
- To pass on the knowledge using interactive methods and principles of NFL;
- To identify their own learning needs and actively seek opportunities to fulfil them;
- To apply several methods of NFL and interactive teaching.

**At the end of the program, participants will know:**
- Theories on the learning processes;
- Approaches for facilitating individual and group learning;
- Interactive teaching methods;
- Principles for the design of training programs;
- Methods for assessing learning outcomes.
Evaluation and measuring the results:
Before the residential training (preparatory phase):
• Procedure for evaluating the entry-level tests and practical tasks to identify the entry level (first tests are made before receiving the preliminary information in the preparatory phase);
• Procedure of selection of participants for the residential training – practical tasks based on preliminary information are completed by participants during the preparatory phase to monitor the outcome and final selection of participants in the residential training;
• Repeating the “Entry level test” – to measure the level of achievements during the preparatory phase.

During the residential training:
• Assessment centre - to assess trainers’ skills and behaviours and identify the starting level of each participant;
• Practical tasks – during the program, the execution of tasks is followed by receiving constructive feedback by the other learners and trainers;
• Reflection groups – daily group reflection for evaluating the learning achieved so far;
• Self-evaluation with the support of various tools and methods.

At the end of the residential training:
• Informal evaluation – using interactive methods for evaluation (e.g. methods like Pizza, Group Thermometer, Hot Chair and others);
• Self-evaluation with the support of various tools and methods;
• Formal evaluation – completing a questionnaire by participants.

Follow-up evaluation:
• Reports by the trainers/experts – during the whole process the leading experts who guide the educational process observe and evaluate learners. At the end, they provide individual reports for each learner;
• Evaluation of overall achievement – by the analysis of the real, practical tasks during the follow-up process by peer learners and experts, each participant receives feedback on their results.
• Final self-evaluation – at the end of the follow-up period, every learner assesses their achievements based on ETS Competency model for trainers working in youth field;
• Assessment centre (optional) - to assess trainers’ skills and behaviours and identify the final results of each participant;

Follow-up activities
What are the follow-up activities after the residential training?

Based on theories and physiology of the learning process, every new competence has to be practiced to become sustainable and useful. Also, social learning and support play a major role in the empowerment process when new skills have to be implemented in practice. To provide these elements, mentorship, coaching and peer networks will be applied as tools. In relation to this, to ensure long-lasting result of the learning in this process, the follow-up has to be based on two main principles:
• **Ongoing learning process for the learners** – to continue the development of competences related to training delivery. This gives motivation for further improvement of the learners and creates sustainable habits for lifelong and self-directed learning. The activities have to be both practical tasks to be implemented in real situations and theoretical inputs for deepening knowledge. The tools that can provide this are - **online learning, mentoring and coaching** from peers and experts, **support groups**.

• **Participation in the next steps in carrying out the process** – involving learners in the wide framework of implementation of this model for interventions (of which the training of trainers is only one part) creates deeper understanding about their role as educators in the youth field. This also creates space for real practice of the competences gained and possibility to improve and develop by providing real results for youth workers and young people. During the implementation of the model, learners (from Training of trainers) can be involved in different activities such as – **job shadowing** during Training of youth workers process (working as junior trainers), **conducting on-line learning events** for youth workers, **mentoring and assessment of learning outcomes** of youth workers during their learning process, **training design** with youth workers for the preparation of workshops for young people. All these activities can be supported and guided by peers and experts involved in the implementation.

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**Contacts**

NC Future Now 2006, Bulgaria – [home@gudevica.org](mailto:home@gudevica.org)

Dreams for life, Romania - [cluj@dreamsforlife.ro](mailto:cluj@dreamsforlife.ro)

Ognian Gadoularov, training expert, Bulgaria – [ogi@gudevica.org](mailto:ogi@gudevica.org)

Bogdan Romanica, training expert, Romania - [romanica.bogdan@gmail.com](mailto:romanica.bogdan@gmail.com)