

Follow-up of the migrant

Introduction

A key step in the development of the intervention with migrants -but quite often not enough valorised- is their monitoring and follow-up, in order to adapt the intervention and make the appropriate changes during the whole integration process of migrants, based on their specific and shifting needs. In this sense, it is important to note that, although the aim of an intervention with migrants is focused on improving their social and labour inclusion, once they get a job they will still need support.

Therefore, the intervention must be conceived as a process of follow-up starting from the very first moment of welcoming and reception, through the development of skills related and not related to work, the career guidance, finding a job, but not limited to this process.

Making a constant follow-up of migrants during the intervention and beyond will help professionals to determine the most appropriate support, information and resources that are needed for improving the social and labour inclusion of beneficiaries: psychosocial support, legal counselling, databases of local and regional training programs, public and private services, information about social participation and volunteerism, etc.

Guidelines for professionals for an effective follow up of migrants

1. Use the methodologies, tools and ways of communication to follow up that better adapt to the service and participants during the whole process of intervention. Some examples:

- Methodologies: social coaching, mentoring, job coaching;
- Tools: database, registration sheets;
- Ways of communication: face-to-face, via email, Skype, phone.

2. Focus on relevant aspects to follow up

- Expectations, needs and priorities in different stages of the intervention. This dimension is closely related to the changing legal, economic, social and psychological situations of migrants;
- Level of self-sufficient and autonomy during the intervention/integration process;
- Learning environment and learning experience;
- Psychosocial well-being;
- Monitoring the workplace (if applicable);

- Follow-up after getting a job: migrants will still need support in many aspects: psychosocial support, keep on learning the host country' language, information about other services, etc.

3. Empower and engage migrants in their integration process

It is very important to empower migrants and engage them in their integration process as well as in finding and being part of the solutions to their needs by, for instance, providing them with tools and skills, or by targeting initiatives integrated into already existing programmes tailored for migrants.

4. Monitor the integration process: Mentoring approach as example

Migration can be a hard and painful experience, but it also means a positive experience that may change people, making them more aware of themselves and more open as they contact with other cultures. Aside from difficulties, immigration involves a possibility of evolution, an experience that involves developing personal skills that in another situation would not have arisen. In this sense, mentoring is an approach for monitoring the integration process of migrants.

Eric Parsloe (The Oxford School of Coaching & Mentoring) defines mentoring as an action “to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximize their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be.”

5. Assess the need for psychosocial support

The necessity of psychosocial support increases in importance as migrants and refugees become ready to start overcoming the continuous stress and traumas they experienced during their journeys. They may feel overwhelmed or confused; they may experience extreme fear and worries, strong emotions such as anger and sadness. Many of them are affected by multiple losses, etc. Stress responses are natural in this context but some people may have reactions that disable them to care for themselves and their families and cope with difficulties on their integration path.

There is no single way or model to provide mental health and psychosocial support to refugees and migrants, but the following good practice *principles* have been agreed upon organisations working in this field to guide the response of professionals carrying out and intervention with migrants and to prevent inadvertently doing harm at all phases:

- Treat people with dignity and respect and support self-reliance
- Respond to people in distress in a humane and supportive way
- Provide information about services, supports and legal rights and obligations
- Provide relevant psycho-education and use appropriate language
- Strengthen family support, paying special attention to the psychological situation of children (by asking users)
- Identify and protect persons with specific needs
- Make interventions culturally relevant and ensure adequate interpretation
- Provide treatment for people with severe mental disorders (provided by certified clinicians)
- Do not start psychotherapeutic treatments that need follow-up when follow-up is unlikely to be possible
- Monitoring and managing wellbeing of staff and volunteers

6. After getting a job, keep the contact with the employer and the migrant

In many cases, when a migrant finds a job, it is difficult to maintain the contact and therefore to keep following up his/her professional and personal development. It is important that professionals maintain contact with staff in charge of the job placement of migrants, so as to keep working both with the migrant employee and the employer to ensure the wellbeing of the migrant and his/her job maintenance.

Keeping the contact with the migrant after getting a job will enable professionals to update personal and professional objectives of the migrant, an individualized path, lifelong learning plan, set new goals, training needs resources needed, etc.

7. Synergies with public and private services

It is important to **coordinate and cooperate with other organizations and entities that provide services for migrants for the follow-up**; do not work in isolation. Entities supporting migrants must count with a strong cooperation with public social services, mainly at local and regional levels, so as to offer migrants a wider and integral intervention. In this sense, it is also crucial to engage private companies in the process of intervention in order to assure an early inclusion of the migrant into the labour market.

Resources

- Mental health and psychosocial support for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants on the move in europe. *A multi-agency guidance note*. December 2015
- Parsloe E. & Leedham L. (2009). *Coaching and Mentoring*. Ed: London and Philadelphia.
- *Smart practices to enhance resilience of migrants*. International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (2019).



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