



Modular Training Programme

Project: Motivate. Support. Strengthen.
Educational Programme for Volunteers
Working with Children



FUNDACJA VERUM



INTRODUCTION

This training programme for NGO volunteers working with children is an essential part of the project „Motivate. Support. Strengthen” led in co-operation between the company COEDRO Coaching Education Development and two non-governmental organisations: VERUM Foundation from Poland and Change the World from Norway.

Many Polish NGOs do not have a professional training program to support and strengthen their volunteers. Volunteers who work with difficult topics, with pupils at risk of exclusion (sick children, youth having problems at school, living in difficult conditions or after traumatic experiences) are exposed to burnout, stress or decreased motivation.

For non-governmental organisations, the challenge is to recruit dedicated volunteers, but also to motivate, support and strengthen them, which significantly affects their level of commitment and satisfaction with cooperation with NGOs. The report "The Condition of Non-Governmental Organisations 2018" financed by the Stefan Batory Foundation and the Polish-American Freedom Foundation proves that 53% of organisations suffer from lack of people ready to selflessly engage in the activities of the organisation, 37% of organisations find it difficult to retain staff and volunteers, and 36% have problems with fatigue and burnout among the staff¹.

The percentage of volunteers who resign from work for non-governmental organisations dealing with children is very high. The most common reason indicated is too much mental stress, which translates into decreased well-being and even depressive states. The initial enthusiasm for helping in the absence of training and empowerment programmes for those directly working with abused children often evaporates quickly.

The situation in this respect is different in Norway, where a significant number of organisations develop their own training programmes, including motivation, support and prevention of burnout. The experiences of Norwegian NGOs presented in the Best Practices Report were an inspiration for the development of a comprehensive training programme, dedicated to volunteers of Polish non-governmental organisations.

At the time of writing this introduction, the global COVID-19 pandemic is still our reality, and it has not spared non-governmental organisations. The problems to date have been overlapped with the effects of the epidemic threat and the resulting restrictions that have lasted for over a year. A study by the Klon/ Jawor Association “A Year in a Pandemic. NGO research report 2020/2021”², published on the ngo.pl portal, shows that as many as 36% of organisations have lost volunteers. Re-attracting people involved, and then keeping them, will become an even more serious challenge, considering the fact that lockdown and months of restrictions reducing social contacts have already left their mark on the psychophysical condition of people. Moreover, as authors of the a.m. study report note, many organisations will have to learn a different approach, greater flexibility and also more professional competence management.

¹ Source: <https://fakty.ngo.pl/raporty/kondycja--organizacji--pozarzadowych--2018>

² Source: <https://fakty.ngo.pl/raporty/rok-w-pandemii-2020-2021>

Therefore, we very much hope that the Programme that we are entrusting to educators (trainers, coaches, mentors, coordinators, leaders) meets the expectations of non-governmental organisations and the new challenges they face.

IDEA

The concept of the project is the result of observing cases of burnout, stress, loss of motivation and even the so-called the syndrome of secondary traumatization of NGO volunteers as a result of dealing with difficult stories of their pupils. These experiences are known to both coaches and



trainers conducting training and development processes, and to non-governmental organizations themselves.

The deficit of comprehensive, professional training programmes available to NGOs, taking into account their specificity and needs, often disables the application of various methods of support and motivation of volunteers. The idea behind this programme is to provide NGOs dealing with children with educational material with a wide range of applications that could be utilised even by less experienced trainers. The programme "Motivate. Support. Strengthen" is designed in such a way that it can be tailored to the needs of a given organisation and its volunteers, focusing on such strengthening of volunteers, which directly translates into the quality of cooperation and the welfare of the pupils. It provides methods and tools for individual work, group work, a rich set of exercises and workshops, as well as tasks for individual execution and personal consideration.

Volunteering with a two-way flow of energy (from volunteers to NGOs and their pupils and back to volunteers) is a special type of exchange that benefits organisations and volunteers. Especially if, in return for long-term commitment, the volunteers receive support in individual development, the effect of which is increased self-awareness, the ability to cope with difficult and stressful situations, higher resilience, and greater flexibility. Thus, people involved in voluntary work, apart from valuable experience, will gain skills and competences that are extremely useful in their professional life.

CONTENT OF THE PROGRAMME

The educational programme for volunteers "Motivate. Support. Strengthen" can serve as:

- a handbook containing a compendium of knowledge in areas such as supporting internal motivation, developing good communication, managing emotions and stress and coping with difficult situations, as well as exerting a positive impact, building resilience and well-being;
- a script with a proposal of tools and exercises that each person acting as a trainer can use in individual work, work with a group and during trainings and workshops.

Methodological guidelines, recommendations for the correct identification of the training needs of a specific group of volunteers and the application of the programme in training practice are included in the "Guide for trainers/trainers/coordinators".

The programme consists of two chapters and six modules:

Chapter 1 – Methods and tools of individual work;

Chapter 2 – Methods and tools of group work;

Modules:

M1. Motivation in the work of a volunteer

M2. Emotional Intelligence of a volunteer

M3. Effective Communication in the work of a volunteer

M4. Power and charisma of a volunteer

M5. Difficult situations in the work of a volunteer

M6. Well-being and Resilience of a volunteer

Each topic has a set of recommended tools and exercises.

The exercises in the appendices to the modules are similar in structure and consist of an introductory part, target specification, tips on how to use the exercise, potential suggested reading, and a source (author (s) or source of inspiration).

- Name/title
- Introduction
- Instructions regarding the exercise
- Potential additional guidelines/ tips („A word of advice”)
- Key presented by 4 icons:



1. The first icon shows the main category, to which the exercise relates.



2. The second icon indicates the type of exercise; it can be:

- a. An exercise, describing the activities that need to be done during the work (individually or in a group);
- b. Evaluation, when it has the goal of assessing person or her/his characteristics;
- c. A metaphor, which will be of help for further training (e.g. with a trainer, a coach).



3. The third icon indicates the estimated timing of the whole exercise.



4. The fourth icon explains the target group of the exercise; it can be an exercise to be carried out individually, in pairs, in groups, with a coach (all combinations are available).

DEFINITIONS

A MODULE

It is a separate didactic unit (marked M), the content of which relates to the defined gap (topic). The problem may concern both skills and competences in a given development area. Each module consists of several thematic sections (module sections).

The construction of the modules have a form similar to puzzles that can be put together in response to the specific needs of a specific NGO and its volunteers. The flexibility of this programme allows trainers to creatively use parts of it to design their own programmes.

A SEGMENT (MARKED “S”)

It is an element of work on a given area. Each segment is a separate unit that can be included in the creation of a new module. In this manual, the suggestions of the sections included in each module should be taken as inspiration, it is by no means an exhaustive list.

PROGRAMME PLAN - CORELATION DIAGRAMS

The programme consists of two main parts that complement each other, thus giving trainers, coordinators (leaders) of non-profit organisations a space to design tailor-made training courses.

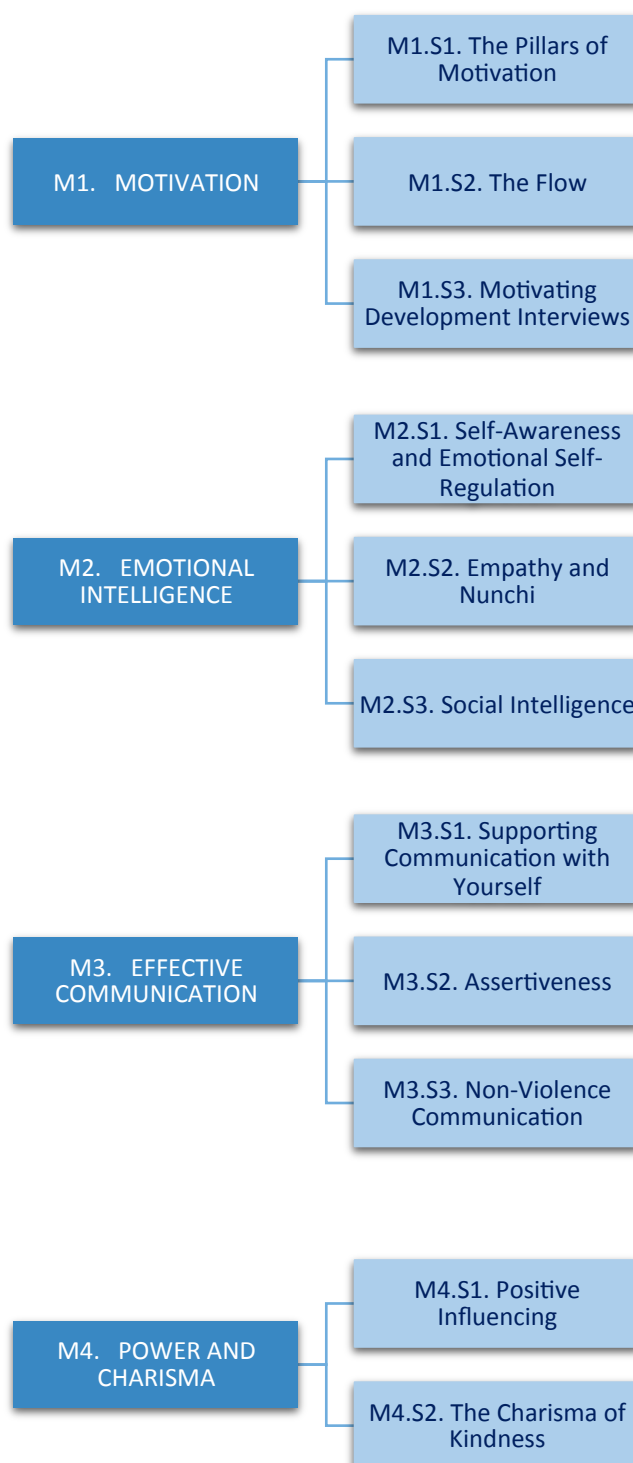
PART I – TOOLS AND METHODS

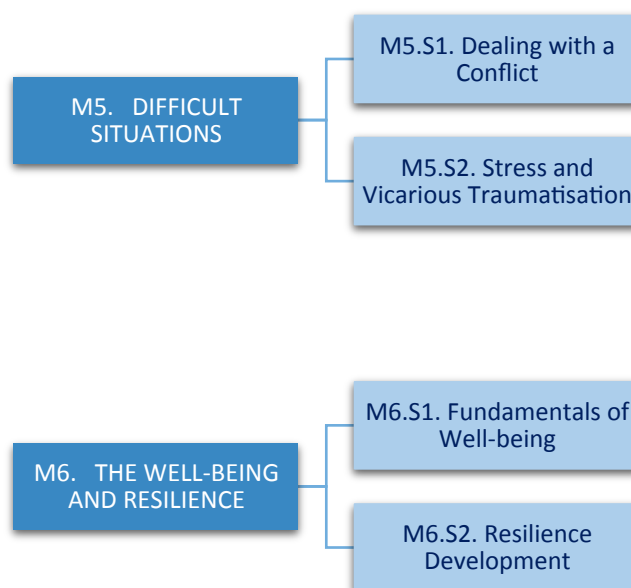
The programme proposes two basic methods of working with volunteers - individual work and group work. The techniques and tools recommended in part I are suggestions to be used during training, working in pairs and individual sessions with a coach or mentor.

Methods and tools of individual work	Methods and tools of group work
Coaching	Training
	Presentation
Mentoring	Case study
	Group Coaching
GROW Model	Open Space Technology
4D Perspective	Dragon Dreaming
Cartesian questions	Speed Dialogue
Targeted confidential interview	Wish Tree
Coaching questions - examples	Talking Stick

PART II TRAINING MODULES

The modules relate to thematic areas of development work and can be used in part (single sections) or in full in a training programme. It will be up to the trainer designing the course of the training to select such topics that best suit the needs of the non-governmental organisation. You will find some suggestions on how to use the modules creatively in the "Guide for trainers/teachers/coordinators".





AUTHORS

The programme is the result of cooperation between three entities:

COEDRO Coaching Education Development is a Polish company that has been active on the market since 2011. It specializes in coaching, mentoring and development projects supporting the development of leadership competences. It conducts projects for business and cooperates with non-governmental organisations, offering development programmes for volunteers dealing with people with problems (at risk of exclusion, unable to normally function in the community).

Website address: www.coedro.pl

Change the World (CTW) is a non-profit organisation operating in the field of sustainable development, which was established in 1997 in Oslo, Norway. The founders and a team of organisations take part in projects in the field of civil society education, they have experience in working directly with children in difficult situations, as well as in coordinating educational programs dedicated to children.

Website address: www.world-changers.org

The VERUM Foundation is a Polish non-profit organisation that has operated since 2011 conducting educational activities promoting the idea of lifelong learning by adults by designing and conducting training in this area. The Foundation supports people in finding and understanding their own potential, so that they can fully realize themselves both individually and socially, becoming a conscious and valuable link of civil society

Website address: www.fundacjaverum.pl

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We had to work on the modular programme "Motivate. Support. Strengthen" in particularly unfavourable conditions. The start of the project coincided with the beginning of the global COVID-19 pandemic, which in this or other way directly affected all people involved in the implementation of the project. It was a real test that everyone passed successfully! Very good cooperation and mutual trust, empathy and understanding helped to overcome all obstacles and the work proceeded according to the schedule.

I would like to thank the COEDRO team for their substantive input, valuable resources, ideas and insightful comments. I would like to express my special thanks to Dorota Michniewicz for the professional presentation of conflict resolution issues and the methodology of non-violent communication.

I would like to thank the invaluable representatives of the project partners: Marta Ruiz, President of the VERUM Foundation and Mauricio Deliz, the Director of Change the World for their substantive input, valuable comments, corrections and extremely efficient translation of the modular programme into English and Norwegian.

I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude to all members of the teams involved in the project for the pace of work, dedication and open approach to the challenges we faced during the project implementation due to the pandemic. I sincerely hope that the programme "Motivate. Support. Strengthen", which we are handing over to Polish non-governmental organisations, will meet their expectations.

Monika Górską