



# youthIES

## TRAINING PACK FOR YOUTH WORKERS - CASE STUDIES



## Training Pack for Youth Workers – CASE STUDIES

### WORK OF YOUTH WORKERS

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## **CASE STUDY 1 –Community Based Intervention for Mental Health Care of Asylum-seekers and Refugees in Greece Program**

### GENERAL FRAMEWORK/ PROBLEM STATEMENT

Due to its geographical location, Greece is considered an ideal initial destination for the gateway of asylum seekers to Europe, coming from countries of the Middle East, Asia and Africa. Based on European surveys, Greece is among the first countries in Europe to host asylum seekers, with numbers reaching 120,000. The management of migration flows is a priority for the European Union, which is why, mainly the Mediterranean countries, are called upon to respond to the policies implemented.

In Greece, the governmental system and social services are proven impotent and inadequate to cope with this massive refugee flow. They cannot respond to the growing needs of asylum seekers, specifically in the health sector, and especially provide them access to health services. Asylum seekers have suffered miserable living conditions, survived war, violence, poverty, as a result they deal with mental health issues and post-traumatic disorders.

### ACTIVITIES

Since 2019, the Association for Regional Development and Mental Health (EPAPSY) in collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), are implementing a Program designed to meet the mental health issues of asylum seekers and refugees hosted in Greece. The Program provides a Community Psychosocial Workforce in Attica, a Peer support project on the island of Samos and functions a Psychosocial Support Helpline extending nationally.

The Program is an innovative approach, which is implemented for the first time in Greece since the refugees/asylum seekers community is the main agent of this practice. Specifically, external psychosocial and mental health professionals have not been employed to provide support, as was traditionally used, but the intervention is guided by the refugees/asylum seekers community itself. The assets and resources of the refugees/asylum seekers community are being

utilized, saving money and outsourcing, and the agents themselves are actively involved to address their community's issues, feeling self-confident and useful at the same time. The team of refugees/asylum seekers providing mental health and psychosocial support have been trained by professionals and are supervised throughout. Thus, the gap between the refugees/asylum seekers community and the professional institutions has been bridged giving some power to the “victims” as well.

The Community Psychosocial Support Workers (CPW's) team consists of 12 refugees/asylum seekers, who can communicate in several languages and provide their services to others in need. Firstly, they conduct a needs assessment to identify the problems people are facing and plan their actions. Their role is to provide psychological support, to encourage people, to advise on how to deal everyday life situations and to act as liaison between challenging situations and specialized centers.

The Samos Peer Support project is in a pilot phase, where fieldworkers provide training to youngsters living in the camps in mental healthcare skills, so that they can later act as mentors to other peers or organize self-help sessions in the community. In this respect, all community means and resources are employed to resolve and reduce mental health issues. The Psychosocial Support Helpline was initially introduced during the pandemic to accommodate the need for access of vulnerable refugee groups to mental health care services. Under supervision, the team has provided significant support to people through the call center.

## IMPACT

The Program received official recognition by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees as a “Model of Implementation and Innovation” and has expanded its application on the Ukrainian refugees in the two main cities of Greece. On the program's official page, it is stated that a total of 763 people has benefited from the program, while 1948 people, have received significant help from the Psychosocial Support Helpline. Based on the evaluation questionnaire distributed to individual recipients of support, anxiety and depression levels have decreased and people expressed their satisfaction to the services provided.

## PHOTOS



*Community Based Intervention for Mental Health Care of Asylum-seekers and Refugees in Greece – ΕΠΙΨΥ.* (n.d.). <https://www.epapsy.gr/en/cpw-community-based-intervention-for-mental-health-care-of-asylum-seekers-and-refugees-in-greece/>

## CASE STUDY 2 – *ZERO FOOD WASTE CYPRUS*

### GENERAL FRAMEWORK/ PROBLEM STATEMENT

Although a comprehensive waste prevention and management plan includes a wide range of issues that should be addressed, the Department of the Environment in Cyprus has decided to focus on the recycling of plastic, paper, metals, glass, the separate collection and management of organic waste, and the creation of Green Points including reuse centers.

In the Strategy for the Management of Municipal Waste of Cyprus, which was approved by the Council of Ministers in 2015, the main goal is the separation and waste management of organic material. Specifically, 15% of municipal waste should be collected separately as organic waste.

According to the Directive 1999/31/EC On the landfill of waste, in Cyprus 75% of the biodegradable waste that was sent for burial by 2010 should be allowed compared to the amounts declared in 1995, 50% by 2013, and 35% by 2016. These percentages translate to approximately 203,000, 135,000 and 95,000 tonnes of biodegradable waste respectively to landfill.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, there's no comprehensive and continuous effort that successfully achieves separate collection of organic waste in Cyprus and the infrastructures are poor and inadequate.

In January 2023, the Cypriot Government has announced the launch of an integrated municipal waste management system through the Municipal Waste Management Plan 2022-2028 (WWMP). Cyprus is lagging the goals set by the EU for 2030 related to waste management. Specifically, while the municipal waste recycling target for the EU was 60% of the total amount, in Cyprus, up to 2019, has only achieved 18%. Therefore, a set of goals related to organic waste management have been appointed including:

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<sup>1</sup> Isotech, 2019

- Recycling at least: 55% of municipal waste by weight by 2025, 60% of municipal waste by weight by 2030, 65% of municipal waste by weight by 2035
- Reduce food waste generation by 50% by 2030.
- Reducing the landfill of municipal waste to 10% or less of the total amount produced by 2035.<sup>2</sup>

## ACTIVITIES

In February 2018, an individual guided initiative was launched in Nicosia, Cyprus, following the footsteps of other similar international actions. In order to prevent and gradually eliminate the gross amounts of food waste in the island, Alexia, the initiator of Zero Food Waste Cyprus, approached the vendors of a local fruit and vegetable market in the capital and asked them to donate their surplus. In collaboration with CARITAS NGO, who provided the place for distribution, four months later, the initiative was established. Every Saturday, after the local market closed, the donated surplus was sorted and categorised into bins, which were weighted to keep some records on a database. The organic surplus that couldn't be utilized further, was composted, while the good ones were transferred to a local church, where it was distributed firstly to the people belonging in the network of CARITAS. However, gradually and with the help of social media, the group of volunteers has expanded, and the initiative was getting viral engaging also more people in need who were benefited from the surplus of fruits and vegetables.

The target group was consisted of migrant young people, single or with families, who were informed about the initiative through CARITAS network and mouth-to mouth. Sustainable practices were implemented throughout the procedure, for example migrants were encouraged to bring reusable bags to carry the goods, while the volunteers used their own resources to address every need (e.g. Cars for transporting the goods from the market to the church). The

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<sup>2</sup>Nicolaou, 2023

Zero Food Waste Cyprus has currently expanded in the north, occupied part of the island, in Girne, having two resource markets. This gives the initiative a bi-communal, social aspect, while it brings both communities together working on tackling environmental issues of the island.

## IMPACT

Based on the database and records on the official site of the initiative, the peak month of 2021 was November, with more than 3000 kg of fruits and vegetables saved and distributed. The main products that are collected is lettuce, zucchinis, eggplants, and tomatoes, while this varies according to the period and the production. The records from the collection and the amount of people benefited are announced every Saturday, after the collection/distribution on the ZFWC social media page. On average, every Saturday, approximately 200kg of fruits and vegetables are collected and around 30-50 migrant people are benefited.

## PHOTOS



ZFWC Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=657159823251621&set=pb.100068728282889.-2207520000>



## CASE STUDY 3 – *YOUNG CITIES*

### GENERAL FRAMEWORK/ PROBLEM STATEMENT

The main public body in Cyprus responsible for promoting opportunities and engaging young people into social activities is the Youth Board of Cyprus (ONEK). The Youth Board of Cyprus was founded in 1994 with the aim of providing young people multiple opportunities for active citizenship in society. Working with various of EU funded projects, ONEK implements a lot of activities related to youth giving them voice and active role on decision-making and socio-economical, cultural development of their community, while it bridges the gap between youth and public or private agencies. They also provide opportunities for capacity building workshops, improving the qualifications of youth to enter the labour market.

Since 2017, ONEK has undertaken the coordination and the implementation of the National Youth Strategy (2017-2022), which is the first youth policy document in Cyprus. They also conduct research to identify youth needs and act as advisors providing guidance, consultation, and open discussions on several issues, always with the participation or representation of youth. Among the activities of ONEK is the set up of working groups that aim to promote youth work in Cyprus.

One of the programs that is initiated by ONEK and is currently running with the collaboration of municipalities and NGOs is called “YoungCities”. The “YoungCities” program is an opportunity to economically support municipalities provided that young people will think and implement an idea that will benefit the community. The 'Young Cities' program is an innovative and highly participatory initiative, which focuses on the empowerment and creative involvement of young people in addressing challenges in their local community.<sup>3</sup>

### ACTIVITIES

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<sup>3</sup> <https://onek.org.cy/en/programmata-ypiresies/ethelontismos-symmetochi/young-cities/>

The program is implemented in two phases, working with 3 municipalities as participants [municipalities of Aglantzia, Deryneia and Athienou (2020-2021), Communities of Evrychos, Agios Theodoros and Pachnas (2021-2022)].

Following the National Youth Strategy goals, the Program focuses on the creation of "Youth" cities, where young people drive the path for policy recommendations according to their needs and the benefit of society by participating in public consultations and improving their skills. This results in promoting the culture of active citizenship. The methodology that is utilised is based on the exchange of ideas by forming brainstorming groups, that identify challenges and issues and plan actions. To achieve this, is important to build collaboration with external factors, such as interested stakeholders and public/private agencies.

The programme is implemented by young people aged 14-35 from three municipalities, who are actively involved in participatory bodies, such as Municipal and Community Youth Councils. In the first phase/cycle, young people had the opportunity to implement community interventions after participating in a 10-week training program. They formed and worked in groups, where they firstly discussed, identified, and prioritized the community needs, and suggested possible solutions to tackle the issues in collaboration with other agents and prepared the action plan. Young participants built an action plan with pre-set goals, priorities, course of action, distribution of tasks and timeframe. The program was successfully implemented in the first cycle and was encouraged by ONEK to be re-launched in rural areas.

## IMPACT

During the first cycle of the programs' implementation, there was an unexpected interest for participation. From the three participate municipalities, 63 people were engaged, 37 women and 26 men. The success of the first cycle led to the launch of a second and currently a third one is implemented.

The Youth group of the Municipality of Deryneia has submitted a proposal for the creation of a local "Youth Development and Employment Polycenter". This center will host programs, workshops and will function as a multi-space equipped with modern technologies giving youth a place for realising their ideas and actions. The Aglantzia Youth group's proposal was the "Artistic upgrading of Aglantzia's neighborhoods" through graffiti, installations and other creations provided that local artists and volunteers are involved. Lastly, the Youth Group of Athienou suggested the technological upgrade of the "Polycenter of Youth of Athienou" that will serve the needs of youth and will work as a cozy place for study and other activities.<sup>4</sup>

## PHOTOS



Retrieved from: <https://youngcities.org/%cf%84%cf%81%ce%af%cf%84%ce%b7-30-3-2021-%cf%84%ce%b5%ce%bb%ce%b9%ce%ba%ce%ae-%ce%b5%ce%ba%ce%b4%ce%ae%ce%bb%cf%89%cf%83%ce%b7-young-cities-%cf%83%cf%84%ce%bf-%ce%b4%ce%ae%ce%bc%ce%bf-%ce%b4%ce%b5/>

<sup>4</sup> The program's results are analytically presented in its website

<https://youngcities.org/%ce%b5%ce%ba%ce%b4%ce%b7%ce%bb%cf%8e%cf%83%ce%b5%ce%b9%cf%82/>

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**Partners:**



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