**M4M | Using the buddy system to foster integration
of asylum seekers in the society**
Project Number 2019-1-FR01-KA204-063158

Module II - Buddy System

Module description

This module will present the Buddy System - concept, purpose, principles, key roles, benefits, and obstacles. For this specific project, the Buddy System model is oriented to migrants and refugees' target groups, to promote an innovative method to connect people from different cultures and to facilitate social integration.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this module you will:

- Know what the Buddy System is as a mentoring process
- Comprehend the purpose, principles and functioning of the Buddy System
- Understand the role of each actor in the mentoring process
- Be capable to identify your role within the Buddy System
- Understand the importance of matching buddy and mentee on a common ground
- Be able to understand the requirements of a mentor and a coordinator
- Be able to understand the requirements of a mentee's involvement in the mentorship programme
- Understand the benefits of the Buddy System and as well its shortcomings
- Learn to mobilise key skills during the Buddy System process

Theoretical and Contextual Background

The Buddy System has been promoted particularly in the workplace context, however in a more general perspective, the Buddy System aims to provide a 'new starter', guidance and experiential knowledge that will support individuals in their new context. We will consider the following definitions:

1. Buddying has been defined by Campbell (2015) as: *"An arrangement in which persons are paired, as for mutual safety or assistance"* (p. 992).
2. Buddying in a social care context has been defined by NESTA (2013) as being focused "… o*n the development of an informal but intentional relationship between people around shared interests*" (p.18).

Buddies (mentors) can act as role models, and may have an important part to play in conveying explicit knowledge; offering emotional support, especially to those experiencing difficulties in adjusting to new circumstances and environments;

enhancing understanding, ethics, values, prevailing culture and social norms expected in the new context. In this regard, buddying can be understood as a form of 'organisational socialisation', that is the process by which an individual acquires the social knowledge and skills necessary to join a new context, fitting both organisational (in this case, culture and society) and individual needs (Honney et al., 2012; Nigah, Davis and Hurrell, 2012).

The approach of the Buddy System is currently applied in multiple contexts such as:

- In the health sector: as part of induction and training regimes for health personnel; as a social support intervention for individuals experiencing physical and mental health illnesses or conditions; as a public health intervention to advise individuals to adopt healthy lifestyles (Honney et al., 2012).
- In the educational context: as part of induction of school-aged children arriving at a new school; as a means of providing psychological support to children experiencing bullying or other problems.
- In military settings: to support active personnel as well as veterans.
- In the criminal justice system: to support prisoners to deal with challenges they face both within and without a penal system.
- In the integration of migrants and refugees: as a support in a diverse environment, and a support in frustrating situations that migrants and refugees may face such as: deteriorated psycho-physical serenity, complex situations with local authorities, difficulties in finding jobs, different living conditions from those they were used to, and also to develop new knowledge and skills (SOFIE, 2017).

Content/Topics

This module will discuss the following topics:
- Buddy System concept
- Buddy System model & purpose
- Buddy (mentor) role
- Buddy (mentor) & mentee relationship
- Buddy System benefits & obstacles

M4M | Using the buddy system to foster integration
of asylum seekers in the society
Project Number 2019-1-FR01-KA204-063158

Supporting material - *Additional Resources*

Title	*Description*	*Link*
Surf's Up Making a Board	Struggles of mentoring	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g7yWDrn2XBM
Guide for best practice for buddying/mentoring by volunteers	Guidelines to implement buddy process with refugees	https://support-refugees.eu/media/sofie-io5.pdf
MEET A compendium to design migrant mentoring programs	Guidelines for mentors and coordinators to implement mentoring programs with migrants	https://www.cesvi.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/meet_DEF.pdf
Mentor International Help Refugee Youth	Empathy with young refugees complex situation	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H4OpWQpzSTc
Gender-Specific Approaches in Mentoring	Guidelines for Gender-Specific Approaches in Mentoring	https://educationnorthwest.org/sites/default/files/resources/factsheet16.pdf
Building Relationships: a guide for New Mentors	Guidelines to build a successful mentoring relationship	https://educationnorthwest.org/sites/default/files/effective-strategies-for-providing-quality-youth-mentoring-in-schools2.pdf
Mentoring Refugees: a Handbook for volunteers	Handbook for volunteers mentoring /empowering refugees	https://www.ritaresources.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Mentoring-Refugees_A-Handbook-for-Volunteers.pdf

ACTIVITIES/EXERCISES/GAMES/TESTS

M4M | Using the buddy system to foster integration
of asylum seekers in the society
Project Number 2019-1-FR01-KA204-063158

Activity 1 – A good buddy is a good communicator

Instructions:

Create different groups (according to the number of participants) and discuss the following topic. *Think about one-to-one conversations you have been involved in recently with someone from a different background from yours*. Would you describe yourself as a good communicator in this situation?

-   **If yes, can you identify and explain a characteristic that made you a good communicator?**

-   **If not, what makes you a less effective communicator?**

-   **You can also answer both questions if both situations are verified.**

Activity 2 - Put yourself in your mentee's shoesInstructions:

1.   **Ask participants to think for a minute about some of the values that are important to the people they have mentored/ are mentoring /or have given advice in a similar form of mentoring, during their life.**

2.   **Ask the participants to write these values (in an anonymous way) and then to explain - whoever wants- how they know these are the persons' values – in which way have those values emerged during the sessions?**

3.   **Then in group, with these anonymous cases, try to understand and identify where these values can come from (especially considering life experiences and backgrounds – such as family, ethnicity, community, among others)**

4.   **To wrap-up the session ask participants to mention in a board or in a Jamboard "Which little things" you can do as a buddy, to show understanding and respect for the mentee's culture, values and concerns?**

Activity 3 - Empathy map

Instructions:

M4M | Using the buddy system to foster integration
of asylum seekers in the society
Project Number 2019-1-FR01-KA204-063158

1. **Divide participants in groups**

2. **Give to each group a model of the Empathy Map**

3. **Ask participants to discuss in group and try to answer the questions presented in the empathy map starting from this indication:** *Try to put yourself in Estefania's shoes, in the first moment when it is proposed to her to take part in a Buddy System program and answer the following questions.*

Estefania's background: Estefania is now 25 years old. Instead of spending her days at school or with friends, she and her family were forced into hiding for fear of persecution. Sara and her family arrived in a new country, and the NGO who is helping them encouraged Estefania to participate in a Buddy System process.

Activity 4 – True or false

Discuss in group (using the Zoom reactions if the activity is online – using green and red objects if the activity is presential).

Are these sentences true or false?

1. **One of the risk of mentoring migrants or refugees is the exposure to a new culture F**

2. **Mentoring migrants or refugees can develop a new appreciation for diversity T**

3. **A buddy must commit to at least one year to pair with a refugee or a migrant mentee F**

4. **A buddy must be bilingual to pair with a refugee/migrant mentee F**

Challenges and tips for mentors

Most volunteers have never had any personal experience related to migration. Therefore, some training is required to provide them with information and knowledge to properly mentoring migrants and refugees.

M4M | Using the buddy system to foster integration
of asylum seekers in the society
Project Number 2019-1-FR01-KA204-063158

- Lack of communication: often, migrants and refugees do not speak the host country language, and volunteers rarely speak the languages used by refugees, which can lead to (linguistic) misunderstandings.

- Cross-cultural barriers: migrants and refugees often have different political, normative, religious and cultural backgrounds that can lead to minor and/or major misunderstandings, irritations and upheavals.

- Emotional stress: whilst being confronted with the refugee's (mentee's) life story, the bureaucracy of authorities, or a pending deportation, buddies (mentors) may experience emotional challenges that might be very difficult to be overcomed.

- Psychological challenges: arising from working with people with traumatic experiences.

- Dealing with prejudice, disrespect, racism and discrimination.

- Eventual lack of the necessary tools/ resources to achieve the pre-established integration objectives.

- Eventual lack of specific training (SOFIE, 2017).

- Avoid the risk of reinforcing gendered and hierarchic relationships in the mentoring

- Keep in mind that in cross-gender mentoring, most women might be inhibited from reaching out and seeking guidance from male buddies (Stock, 2019).

- Keep also in mind that in cross-gender mentoring, in some cases in which the mentor is a woman some mentees might not accept the role of a woman as a 'leading figure'.

Duration

The duration of this block is approximately 2 hours online (asynchronous) and 1 hour face-to-face (synchronous).

Quiz / Self – assessment activity

The end of the relationship between buddy (mentor) and mentee:

- Happens naturally, after the end of the process

- Implies changing the mentor

- Must be prepared from the beginning and remembered during the process ✔

- Is dictated by the promoting organisation

It is expected that the buddy:

- Become the mentor's best friend

- Demand firm and certain responses from the mentee

- Be a catalyst for change ✔

- Provide psychological support to the mentee

Trust:

- Should be promoted by the mentor, but the mentee has to take the first step

- Comes naturally

- Passes by the mentor being patient, not judging and being as tolerant as possible ✔

- Is not influenced by expectations

In a gender inclusive mentoring:

- Is more effective if a man is the mentor that provide women with necessary skills

- The mentor coordinator is the only one who should acknowledge the gender issues that exist

M4M | Using the buddy system to foster integration
of asylum seekers in the society
Project Number 2019-1-FR01-KA204-063158

- The mentor is aware of the gender specific challenges and needs ✔

- The quality of the relationship improves if the mentor is a woman and the mentor a man, as women are the only responsible to provide emotional support

Sources

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994). *Ecological models of human development. International Encyclopedia of Education*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Elsevier Sciences

Campbell, A. (2015). Introducing a buddying scheme for first year pre-registration students. *British Journal of Nursing,* 24(20), pp. 992-996.

Clutterbuck, D. (2003). Diversity issues in the mentoring relationship. In M. J. Davidson & S. L. Fielden (Eds.), *Individual diversity and psychology in organizations* (pp. 253–264). Wiley: West Sussex.

Dave, P. (2016). Challenges of cross-gender Mentoring relationships: When it comes to mentoring, does gender matter? Pp. 2-16. In Srivastava, D. et al. Macro and Micro *Dynamics for Empowering Trade, Industry and Society. Excel India Publishers.* Ahmebadad: Excel India Publishers

EURITA. (2019). *Mentoring Refugees: A Handbook for Volunteers.* EURITA

Hayes, E. F. (2005). Approaches to Mentoring: How to Mentor and Be Mentored. *Journal of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners*, p. 17 (11).

Honney, R., Rees, S., Raza T. & Vassallo, M. (2012). Developing a 'buddy scheme' for foundation doctors. *The Clinical Teacher*, 9, pp. 205-209

Hudson, P. (2012). Mentoring as professional development: "growth for both" mentor and mentee. Professional Development in Education, 39 (5), pp. 771-783

Mead, S. and MacNeil, C. (2006). Peer Support: What Makes It Unique? *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation,* 10 (2), 29-37. Available at: http://www.psychosocial.com/IJPR_10/Peer_Support_What_Makes_It_Unique_Mead.html. Accessed on: 29/05/17

M4M | Using the buddy system to foster integration
of asylum seekers in the society
Project Number 2019-1-FR01-KA204-063158

Mentoring Complete. (2019). *What Skills Do You Need to Be a Mentor?* Available at: https://www.get.mentoringcomplete.com/blog/skills-you-need-to-be-a-mentor

MEGAN. (2013). *Evaluation of the Mentoring for Excluded Groups and Networks (MEGAN) Project - Final Report.*

MPATH. (2017). *Modelo de Mentoria para Desempregados de Longa Duração com baixas competências.*

MPATH. (2016). *Perfil de competências do Mentor*

Mutti, V. et al. (2021). MEET A compendium to design migrant mentoring programs. Bergamo: CESVI

Neal, T. (2014). *How to be a Good Mentee. APS observer*, 24 (2), p. 35.

NESTA. (2015). *Peer Support: What is it and does it work?* Available at: https://www.nationalvoices.org.uk/publications/our-publications/peer-support
NESTA (2013) *People helping people: Peer support that changes lives*. NESTA: London

Nigah, N., Davis, A.J. & Hurrell, S.A. (2012).The Impact of Buddying on Psychological Capital and Work Engagement: An Empirical Study of Socialization in the Professional Services Sector. *Thunderbird International Business Review,* 54 (6), pp. 891-905

NYU. (2017). *New Employee Onboarding: Buddy Guidelines.* Available at: https://www.nyu.edu/content/dam/nyu/hr/documents/managerguides/BuddyGuidelines.pdf

Reeves, R. B. (2017). Inter-cultural mentoring for newcomer immigrants: Mentor perspectives and better practices. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring*, 15 (1), p. 186

SOFIE. (2017). *IO5 Best Practice Guide for Buddying.* Verein Multikulturell

Stock, I. (2019). Buddy Schemes between Refugees and Volunteers in Germany: Transformative Potential in an Unequal Relationship. *Social Inclusion*, 7 (2), pp. 128-138

M4M | Using the buddy system to foster integration
of asylum seekers in the society
Project Number 2019-1-FR01-KA204-063158

WKO. (2008). *Mentoring for Migrants.* Available at:
https://www.wko.at/site/Mentoring/MigrantInnen/en/english.html

---

Topic 1 - Buddy System Model and Purpose

Topic description: The present topic focuses on describing the Buddy System model as a one-to-one type of mentoring whilst enhancing the model purpose and principles.

A Buddy System is a type of mentoring that usually takes place on a one-to-one or peer-to-peer basis; like mentoring, it is built on the premise of peer-to-peer matching. It is a process through which two individuals develop a relationship of support, influence, sharing and confidence, aiming for personal and professional development. Buddying schemes are usually time-limited in duration, designed to assist individuals during transitional phases in their lives, most often when experiencing significant life events or transitions (NESTA, 2015).

The buddy scheme involves the commitment of a buddy (mentor) - the one who will provide support - and a mentee, the one who needs support. The Buddy System is centered on the mentees' needs and aspirations. Thus, the Buddy System is adapted to the context and to the specific circumstances and challenges that the mentee is facing, whilst considering the available resources. Furthermore, the Buddy System is a model of co-construction: a process built together by mentor and mentee, foreseeing a degree of flexibility on the construction path where the mentor should guide the mentee along a path that can lead them to a better life (Hudson, 2012).

The purpose of the Buddy System is to aim for personal, social and professional development, bringing also benefits to the community. The Buddy System is frequently used in cases of cultural insertion, with the specific purpose of helping the social and cultural integration of one person in the host-community by a mentor whose experience or knowledge in that host-community can be of help (MPATH, 2017). The Buddy System allows migrants and refugees to develop a social network, to build a trusting relationship that provides stability and support, where the buddies provide an emotional anchor, and a support for the orientation in the new culture, and a contact point for questions and integration obstacles

M4M | Using the buddy system to foster integration
of asylum seekers in the society
Project Number 2019-1-FR01-KA204-063158

(SOFIE, 2017).

We can resume its principles as to:

- Create a secure and stable relationship between the buddy (mentor) and the mentee
- Promote the mentee's skills and qualities
- Create an environment of respect and security
- Respond to the needs of the mentee (MPATH, 2016)

People who have similar experiences can better relate, emphasize and validate mentee's needs and progress throughout the mentoring process. Thus, people with similar life experiences can offer each other practical advice and suggestions that professionals may not offer or even know about.

Topic 2 - Buddy (mentor) & mentee roles

Topic description: The present topic focuses on the mentor and mentee roles.

The buddy (mentor)

In a more generic way we can define a buddy (mentor) as someone who partners with a new individual during her/his first months of adaptation in a new context. The mentor assists the mentee in identifying his/her needs and objectives, as well as abilities, qualities, skills, and aspirations. The mentor provides support, motivation, guidance, emotional support and role modeling in working towards the mentee's objectives and needs fulfillment, as well as duties achievement. The buddy (mentor) is primarily responsible for offering advice and guidance regarding the day-to-day aspects of the new environment (NYU, 2017) (MEGAN, 2013). The buddy (mentor) may also offer encouragement, knowledge about resources, as they help introduce the individual to the "new" culture.

Therefore, the buddy (mentor) should:

- *Be a communicator: in order to encourage open communication and process of continued and self-directed learning, whilst providing relevant information to the mentee.*

- *Be a role model: the buddy should be a model in social behaviours and exemplify the cultural values, whilst leading by example.*

11

**M4M | Using the buddy system to foster integration
of asylum seekers in the society**
Project Number 2019-1-FR01-KA204-063158

- *Be motivated and positive: the buddy should have a positive outlook and build up the mentee's self-confidence.*

- *Be a performer: the buddy can help guide the mentee in many situations based on his/her experience (NYU, 2017).*

- *Practice active listening: through an active listening the mentor makes a conscious decision to listen with intention.*

- *Be empathetic: understand the mentee's difficulties and concerns.*

- *Be able to give honest feedback: with no constructive feedback the mentee will never grow. It is important that a skill mentor knows how to provide constructive feedback with a positive twist (*Mentoring *complete, 2019).*

- *In this specific case, buddies are people who are migrant volunteers paired with other migrants or refugees: they should firstly help the newly arrived to cope with everyday life in the host-communities (SOFIE, 2017).*

Consequently, the mentor must have some competences such as:

- *Good communication skills:*

  - Verbal and non-verbal communication (tone of voice, facial expressions, gestures, body language, eye contact, the way the person is dressed). An examination of non-verbal communication conventions, norms, and patterns can be highly beneficial especially across cultures.

  - Oral and written communication

  - Barriers to communication (MPATH, 2016)

- *Resilience: ability to develop positive attitudes adjusted to deal with problems, overcome obstacles and resist pressure. Factors that contribute to resilience:* Positive attitude, Optimism, Ability to regulate emotions and Ability to look for failure as a useful form of feedback (MPATH, 2016).

- *Conflict management: conflict is a process between individuals/groups that generate tension caused by different perspectives and/or negative feelings*

**M4M | Using the buddy system to foster integration
of asylum seekers in the society**
Project Number 2019-1-FR01-KA204-063158

- ○ It may be destructive, with negative feeling development and high energy expenditure

- ○ If well managed, it may be constructive, releasing emotion and stress, managing tensions, whilst offering an opportunity to find a way out of the conflict together (MPATH, 2016).

- *Awareness of the Buddy System process:* promote and create a relationship of trust, strengthen the progress and the development of mentoring, promoting decision-making and ensuring confidentiality (MPATH, 2016).

- *Long-life learning and continuous development: the mentor must engage in continuous skills development and advanced training to develop their expert skills (MPATH, 2016)*

- *Awareness of the systemic & ecologic model: the ecological/systemic model defends that people live and interact in different contexts and are thus influenced by them, since childhood (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). This awareness is particularly relevant in the Buddy System with migrants and refugees as it might raise awareness of the mentor towards certain reactions, ways of thinking and barriers that the mentee might have/face. Example: In some cultures, direct eye contact is normal, while in other cultures it might be considered rude and intrusive.*

- *Skills of intercultural competence: means to be sensitive to other people's perceptions and value systems, whilst having an awareness of one's own cultural context. The basis of intercultural communication and co-operation is mainly based on:* Observation, Listening and Sensitiveness (SOFIE, 2017)

- *Adaptability, flexibility and compassion are crucial skills when volunteering as a buddy (mentor) with migrants and refugees. Furthermore, refugees expect their buddies to demonstrate knowledge about the social and legal system (especially about the asylum system, rights and responsibilities of refugees/asylum seekers, public authorities) and to show a multicultural understanding (SOFIE, 2017).*

It is important to remember that a good mentor should also be prepared for each session and should also evaluate the mentoring sessions.

M4M | Using the buddy system to foster integration
of asylum seekers in the society
Project Number 2019-1-FR01-KA204-063158

The Mentee

The mentee is someone who needs help and support, either in his/her personal or professional life. The mentee should, from the beginning, clearly share with the mentor her/his needs, expectations, and objectives, so they can approach together a path that fills the mentee's needs. As the Buddy System is a committed rapport, constructed in the course of time, it is best if the mentee is motivated or predisposed to receive support and feedback. For a more fruitful relationship, the mentee should be willing to show vulnerability and to ask for help.

Regarding migrants and refugees mentees, many have experienced violence, danger, uncertainty and hardship, hence it is crucial to consider PTSD (Post-traumatic stress disorder) throughout the mentorship, while respecting the mentee's agentic behaviors, wishes and autonomy. A special attention must be given to diminish any reproduction of unconscious biases and /or power dynamic towards refugees and migrants. Upon arrival to the host-community, refugees and migrants must be provided with assistance and care so that they can start a new life (SOFIE, 2017).

Potential mentees should be:

- Willing to collaborate
- Willing to be challenged and guided
- Willing to relate and share
- Clear about what they want in mentoring (Hayes, 2005)
- Know what their own goals and expectations are
- Communicate goals and expectations clearly
- Carefully attend to maintaining a healthy relationship with their mentors
- Being able to trust (Neal, 2014)

Responsibilities of the mentee:

- Attend all sessions on time, notifying the mentor/coordinator if they must miss an appointment.
- Keep focused on tasks
- Be respectful to the mentor, staff, and other persons involved
- Do not exhibit abusive or threatening behaviour (EURITA, 2019)

14

M4M | Using the buddy system to foster integration
of asylum seekers in the society
Project Number 2019-1-FR01-KA204-063158

In mentoring relationships, it is crucial to bear in mind power dynamics. The mentee should accept increasing responsibility in order to respond to the mentor's attempt to empower them to become increasingly independent (Clutterbuck, 2003).

Topic 3 - Buddy (mentor) & mentee relationship

Topic description: The present topic focuses on the buddy (mentor) - mentee relationship.

A respectful cooperation between the mentee and the mentor forms the basis for sustainable outcomes. It is important to deal constructively with people who have different cultural backgrounds through cooperation. During the mentoring it is important to be aware of different identity markers which are crucial to understand someone's life experience (identity markers include: gender, education, occupation, age, place of origin and residence, nationality/ies of the parents, political orientation, sexual orientation, among others). Recognizing the cultural background and social background and the impact on the perception of identity markers may prevent mentors from making assumptions and judgments about mentee's behaviours (Reeves, 2017).

Overall, the Buddy System relationship cycle is made up of 3 phases: building of the relationship, intervention and closure.

1. Building of the relationship

It is important to be aware of the importance of first impressions: the mentor should present himself in a positive and friendly way, encouraging the mentee to speak to him/her. The first trigger of a positive relationship is trust. In order to motivate trust, the mentor must talk to the mentee, to learn the mentee's life story whilst providing their own life story. Knowing the details of the mentee's situation becomes important for the establishment of the relationship and to provide solid foundations for the next activities. The mentor can apply different exercises, from a simple conversation to a reflection game to know the mentee better.

M4M | Using the buddy system to foster integration
of asylum seekers in the society
Project Number 2019-1-FR01-KA204-063158

A key indicator of a positive mentoring relationship is:

- to have clear expectations and well-defined limits
- clarify the purpose of mentoring
- the objectives that can be realistically achieved
- establish how the relationship will evolve.

This information may be indicated and formally accepted in the Mentoring Agreement (if existing) (MPATH, 2017).

2. **Intervention**

The mentoring process should start with setting goals, realistic goals to be achieved during the mentoring period. Mentors can also introduce different types of strategies and activities, namely: motivational interviews, leisure activities or feedback to keep mentees motivated and apply the full potential of non-formal learning. The mentoring intervention phase can be applied both for the planning and monitoring of the process and for the implementation of the mentoring itself by:

- Describing the objectives, activities and resources that will be used in mentoring sessions (for example, using mentoring session plans)
- Describing the dates, activities, and duration of each session, (for example using Mentoring Session Record)
- Describing how the mentoring process and the relationship with the mentee evolves (for example, using the Progress Report) (MPATH, 2017).

3. **Closure**
   It is important to prepare for the closure of the mentoring relationship. The mentoring relationship should have a clear timeline, so when it's near the end the mentor will need to focus on how the mentee proceeds. The closure should be celebrated by analysing all the achievements, but also the way to go. It would be useful to prepare an event with the coordinator of mentors, while leaving the door open for a friendship (MPATH, 2017).

Topic 4 - **How, where and when support is provided**

16

M4M | Using the buddy system to foster integration
of asylum seekers in the society
Project Number 2019-1-FR01-KA204-063158

Topic description: *This topic will present indications on how, where, and when provide the mentoring.*

How can the support be provided?
- *Face-to-face*
- *Telephone*
- *Mobile phone*
- *Social media*
- *Other internet platforms (NESTA, 2015)*

Where is support provided?
- *Public spaces*
- *Community venue*
- *Other social services or institution (NESTA, 2015)*

How often is support provided?

Duration	Frequency
- *One-off* - *Up to one month* - *Up to three months* - *Up to six months* - *Up to one year* - *Longer than one year*	- *Constantly available* - *Weekly* - *Fortnightly* - *Monthly* - *Less than once monthly* - *Ad hoc*

Content from NESTA (2015).

Some mentoring programs are set out in a flexible path to achieving goals. This means that the mentoring process can take place from 3 to 6 months, with at least 1 weekly session or fortnightly sessions (between mentor and mentee), lasting 1 to 2 hours each (may occur during or after working hours). The total number of sessions will depend on the mentee's starting point, which means the mentee and mentor can agree to have a more intense frequency of meetings. Mentors can use any type of communication channels to streamline mentoring sessions, either in person or online (eg, phone, email, skype...). It is suggested at least 1 session per month where mentors and mentees meet in person (MPATH, 2017).

Topic 5 - *Buddy System benefits & obstacles*

M4M | Using the buddy system to foster integration
of asylum seekers in the society
Project Number 2019-1-FR01-KA204-063158

Topic description: The present topic focuses on the benefits, the obstacles, and gender barriers in a mentoring process.

Buddy System benefits

The Buddy System has the potential to improve experience, psycho-social outcomes, behaviour, professional and emotional aspects of the mentee (NESTA 2015). The budding experience with migrants and refugees is also an opportunity for the buddies (mentors) to experience a broadening of horizons through contact with people from a different political, social, and cultural environment, as they also have the opportunity to perceive their own environment from a different perspective and even to take action against politically induced grievances. Collaboration in the Buddy System represents a possibility to acquire new knowledge and skills (SOFIE, 2019).

Benefits for the mentee: Increased self-confidence; Building skills; Reduced isolation and exclusion; Increased social opportunities and greater friendship circles; Greater resilience (SOFIE, 2017); Support, encouragement, friendship; Knowledge in specific areas; Discussion/ sharing of ideas; Feedback / constructive criticism; Increased self-confidence; Affirmation, career advancement and commitment; Reflection (MPATH, 2016); Development of potentials; Personality development; Occupational orientation; Networking in the world of work; Change of perspective; Motivation; Exchange of experience (WKO, 2008)

Benefits for the buddy (mentor): Joviality, collaboration, networking; professional development; personal satisfaction, growth; Development of interpersonal skills; Develop/refresh your profession's skills; (MPATH, 2016); Development of communication and coaching skills; Intercultural experience; Change of perspective; Intensified self-reflection; Added know-how about the labor market; Extension of personal network; Meeting other mentors (WKO, 2008).

Benefits for the coordinating organisation: Improvement in the organisational culture; More Effective Partnerships; Good image of the organisation (MPATH, 2016); Promotion of internationalisation; Diversity effects (diversity as an opportunity); Active support for people with migratory background; Contribution to corporate social responsibility (WKO, 2008).

Benefits for society: Intercultural dialogue; Conflict prevention; Contribution to economic development; Making potentials visible (WKO, 2008).

M4M | Using the buddy system to foster integration
of asylum seekers in the society
Project Number 2019-1-FR01-KA204-063158

Buddy System obstacles:

Obstacles for the mentee: lack of mentor time; Difficulty in pairing; Judgemental, defensive, insensitive, or unreliable mentor; Lack of feedback / mentor sharing; Lack of mentor training; Lack of understanding of goals / needs; Inappropriate advice or model (MPATH, 2016).

Obstacles for the mentor: Lack of time; Difficulty in pairing; lack of training; Extra weight of work or responsibility; Disappointment with the mentee's performance / attitude / lack of commitment or confidence; Lack of resources or support; Being an emotionally demanding process (MPATH, 2016).

Obstacles for the organisation: Cost of implementing the program, Lack of partnerships (MPATH, 2016).

Perceived barriers to mentoring relationship for women

Cross gender mentoring relationships are highly vulnerable, particularly for women and LGBTQI+ individuals with a migration background. This specific segments of the migrant and refugee population face multiple and intersecting vulnerabilities, many of which resulting in sexual abuse and other types of sexual and gender-based violence. Given the social conditioning, many women are inhibited from reaching out and seeking guidance from male buddies. In cross gender mentoring relationships, women have a number of issues which obstruct them to reach out, which otherwise is not seen in a same gender mentoring relationship (Ragins, 1996, in Dave, 2016). Cultural differences around gender exist. Cross-gender matching and mentoring processes (female mentors with male mentees) must be made with extreme caution (Mutti et al., 2021) to include gender-sensitive approach.