

Module 7 – Migrants Empowerment

Length of each module: 6 to 10 pages

Module description

Add 3-5 lines to introduce the content of the module.

Empowerment refers to the power to act on one's own situation and environment. The purpose of this module is to address empowerment as a process that allows migrants to strengthen their confidence, self-esteem, skills and the development of a network in the host society. Professionals, volunteers and other stakeholders have a key role to play in this process.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this module you will be able to:

- Know the conceptual and practical framework of migrants empowerment
- Comprehend how empowerment is an opportunity to develop the inclusion of migrants in their hosting societies
- Set up and manage the conditions for success and the processes necessary for continuous improvement of migrants' empowerment
- Be capable to empower and support migrants so that they dare to exercise their power of action efficiently

Theoretical and Contextual Background (optional)

Some definitions of "Empowerment."

A common definition of "Empowerment" mentions the **process of gaining freedom and power to do what you want or to control what happens to you.**

Among the many sources of inspiration for work on empowerment, the method of conscientization developed by the Brazilian Paulo Freire in his book "Pedagogy of the Oppressed", published in 1968, occupies a prominent place. He advocates a method of active education that "helps people to become aware of their problems, their condition as persons, and therefore as subjects" and allows them to acquire "the instruments that will allow them to make choices" and to "politicize themselves" (Freire, 1974). "The aim of the educator", he underlines, "is not only

to teach something to his interlocutor, but **to search with him, the means to transform the world in which he lives**" (p. 9).

UNHCR defines empowerment as “a process through which women and men in disadvantaged positions increase their access to knowledge, resources, and decision-making power, and raise their awareness of participation in their communities, in order to reach a level of control over their own environment.” (UNHCR, 2001) *UNHCR, A Practical Guide to Empowerment: UNHCR Good Practices on Gender Equality Mainstreaming, 2001*).

Regardless of the definition that one may adopt, States, private sector actors, international organizations, and civil society can promote migrants’ resilience and empowerment to support migrants addressing underlying conditions of vulnerability.

Content/Topics

This module will discuss the following topics:

1. The concept of “Migrants Empowerment”
2. What is it for? What is the added value for professionals, volunteers and society?
3. Migrants empowerment in practice

E-LEARNING CAPSULE

Capsule 1 – animated video produced by IRTS (see script)

Capsule 2 – a filmed interview provided by Afeji

Supporting material for practicing/understanding/implementing the method (Exercises, Case studies, Videos, Interactive resources)

Additional Resource 1

Title:	Building Migrant’s Belonging Through Positive Interactions
Description:	A guide developed by the Council of Europe for Connecting, Recognition, Participation and Empowerment to improve social cohesion.
Link to resource:	https://www.coe.int/t/democracy/migration/Source/migration/English/MigrantBelongingWeb.pdf

Challenges and tips for professionals/ mentors

Duration

The duration of this block is approximately 2 hours.

Quiz / Self – assessment activity

List 2-4 questions and their answers for the users to assess if they correctly understood the module's content. [Use multiple questions style (please do not use images)]

Question 1

If empowerment is a process, thus migrants are empowered when...

- A. They just arrive in the hosting country, because they automatically have better living conditions.

Feedback: Incorrect, sorry! Migration does not automatically lead to feeling empowered. The process can take some time.

- B. You do everything for them and at their place.

Feedback: Incorrect, sorry! Empowerment is about helping oneself to search for the means to act over one situation.

- C. You only teach them what you think is the best for them

Feedback: Incorrect, sorry! Empowerment is not only about teaching but rather helping oneself to search for the means to act over one situation.

- D. You search with them the means to act over their situation.

Feedback: Correct! Migrants' empowerment is a process in which migrants are encouraged to gain autonomy and self-trust.

Correct answer is D

Question 2

Positive interaction means:

- A. An interaction without disagreement

Feedback: Incorrect, Sorry! Positive interaction is when people work toward a resolution of a problem, recognize each other's value, are building understanding and exchange on the basis of mutual respect.

- B. An interaction in which the persons are building understanding

Feedback: Correct! In addition to that, a positive interaction is when people work toward a resolution of a problem, recognize each other's value and exchange on the basis of mutual respect.

- C. An interaction without conflict

Feedback: Incorrect, Sorry! Positive interaction is when people work toward a resolution of a problem, recognize each other's value, are understanding and exchange on the basis of mutual respect.

- D. An interaction in which the persons always say “yes”.

Feedback: Incorrect, Sorry! Positive interaction is when people work toward a resolution of a problem, recognize each other's value, are understanding and exchange on the basis of mutual respect.

Correct answer is B

Question 3

Fostering migrants’ civic and political participation is...

- A. Impossible, because of language barriers and cultural differences

Feedback: Incorrect, sorry! Fostering Migrant’s participation is a multi-stakeholder process with some relevant illustrations in several countries.

- B. Impossible at EU institutions level

Feedback: Incorrect, sorry! Fostering Migrant's participation is a multi-stakeholder process with some relevant illustrations in several countries.

C. Being done in several countries and has meaningful results

Feedback: Correct! Fostering Migrant's participation is a multi-stakeholder process with some relevant illustrations in several countries.

D. Being done only by NGOs

Feedback: Incorrect, sorry! Fostering Migrant's participation is a multi-stakeholder process with some relevant illustrations in several countries.

Correct answer is C

Sources

CALVES, A. (2009). « Empowerment » : généalogie d'un concept clé du discours contemporain sur le développement. *Revue Tiers Monde*, 200, 735-749.

<https://doi.org/10.3917/rtm.200.0735>

UNHCR, (2001): *A practical guide to Empowerment*, 1-32.

GLOBAL FORUM ON MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT (2016), "Empowerment of migrants by ensuring their health and wellbeing", (IOM Input to the Round Table 3.1 Background paper) and "Roundtable 1.2: Empowering Migrants and Diaspora to contribute to Development".

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS (2016), "One humanity: Safety and dignity for migrants".

TITLE OF THE TOPIC 1 - THE CONCEPT OF "MIGRANTS EMPOWERMENT"

Each topic should not exceed two pages without sources

Topic description:

This first topic is focused on the definitions and how to link migrants and empowerment.

Read

Defining migrants:

There is no clear, universally agreed upon definition of a migrant, sometimes referred to as an international migrant. Some human rights organisations differentiate between international migrants and internal migrants, also known as internally displaced persons, and between migrants who were forced to move and migrants who voluntarily moved to improve their economic situation. Therefore, generally, there are four categories of persons on the move :

1. people who have moved voluntarily within one State for the purpose of improving their situation,
2. people who were compelled to move internally within one State (internally displaced persons),
3. people who moved voluntarily across a border for the purpose of improving their situation (migrants),
4. and people who were compelled to move across a border (refugees, asylum seekers).

Regardless of immigration status International Human Rights Law applies to all human beings, although with different legal framework regimes (for instance, the Refugee Convention 1951 is applied to the refugees, while the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families is applied to migrants). Everyone – citizen or migrant, documented or undocumented – enjoys fundamental human rights such as the **right to life, liberty, and security of person; freedom from slavery or torture; the right to equal protection of the law and freedom from discrimination; freedom from arbitrary arrest and detention; the presumption of innocence; and freedom of association, religion, and expression**. These human rights are protected by the international bill of Human Rights which includes, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and international treaties such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

Defining empowerment:

As explained earlier in the introduction of this module, empowerment is a process leading to more autonomy, self-confidence and power over our own situation and environment.

How to link these two concepts?

Migration is generally an attempt to improve one's quality of life.

Therefore, one might expect that such an attempt would normally succeed, particularly when migrants are moving to countries where quality of life is generally higher (in part because those countries are wealthier). But it is not obvious that migration has a generally positive effect on migrants' happiness. In general, gaining a higher income does not lead to greater happiness.

In this sense, migrants empowerment is a process and an objective that can be met when actors from the hosting society and migrants are in interaction and **develop services, tools, projects in line with migrants' needs.**

In the field of migration, empowerment is also about respecting **migrants' voice and agency, recognising their value and building their sense of belonging** in the host society.

As stated by the Council of Europe: "the key is interaction".

The key is interaction. Engage with people in the hosting community (work place, neighbourhood, school, doctor, local administration).

TITLE OF THE TOPIC 2 - MIGRANTS EMPOWERMENT, WHAT IS IT FOR?

Topic description:

This topic focuses on the added value of empowering migrants: building a sense of belonging, dignity, self-esteem and quality of life through positive interactions. The goals of empowerment are multi-dimensional and have added value for the professionals/volunteers/organisations who support this process.

Read

As a process, empowerment can be developed, repeated and will have multiple and diverse impacts. When you help one person, that person can in return help others – this is the underlying idea of peer to peer support. The impact of migrants empowerment is visible in the social, economic and cultural areas:

- housing
- employment

- health
- services and administration
- education
- language learning
- leisure activities
- access to a network and opportunities

Considering that professionals and volunteers support migrants in these different areas of their lives, migrants' autonomy, quality of life and sense of belonging, are the driving forces in the process of migrants' empowerment.

According to the Council of Europe, the key to migrant empowerment are **positive interactions**. This does not mean interactions devoid of disagreement or conflict but rather interactions in which people:

- work toward a resolution of a problem (constructive)
- recognise each other's value
- are understanding
- exchange on the basis of mutual respect

TITLE OF THE TOPIC 3 – HOW TO USE IT?

Topic description:

This last part is about how to implement empowering processes within your organisations and every-day practices. In this topic you (re)discover inspiring initiatives that are being carried out with the objective of empowering migrants.

Read

Migrants' empowerment is built through the promotion of positive interaction. Respecting migrants' voice and agency, recognising their value and giving them opportunities for civic and political participation.

More and more organisations tend to create events (festivals, conferences, etc.), spaces of expression or even consultation bodies to empower migrants and foster their participation.

Here are some inspiring initiatives built with migrants and with people in the hosting community (public authorities, social services, work place, neighbourhood and NGOs).

-European inspiring practices collected in the frame of M4M - Intellectual Output 1.

See Module 1 for some examples.

The final report is available here : <https://www.migrants4migrants.eu/results.html>

- **The Buddy System Service Model** developed in the frame of M4M – Intellectual Output 2. It relies on the definition of mentoring as a process which involves the interaction between two individuals in which the mentee (apprentice) is in a position to benefit from the knowledge, skill, ability, or experience of the mentor. The mentoring process is marked by the absence of unequal roles (Finnegan et al, 2010). The final report is available here : <https://www.migrants4migrants.eu/results.html>

-Refugee Food Festival

A culinary festival born from a popular initiative, in Paris in 2016, as well as in Strasbourg. It is run by the association Food Sweet Food, in conjunction with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. Local collectives organise the festival in each city.

The principle is to invite a refugee chef to cook in a restaurant, so that he or she can prepare recipes from his or her country of origin, or recipes created in

collaboration with the team of the restaurant hosting the festival. The association proposes a methodological kit for organising the festival in other cities.

Website here: www.refugee-food.org

-European Commission experts group on the views of migrants

In 2020, the European Commission launched a call for applications to establish an expert group of people with a migratory background to participate in the development and implementation of migration, asylum and integration policies. The participation of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees is essential for more effective and responsive policies on the ground.

The 24 members of the expert group, selected from a total of 354 applications, reside in 16 different Member States and represent a wide range of origin countries, from Turkey, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Syria, Brazil, Colombia, Senegal, Nigeria, Burundi, South Africa, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan. Some of them also represent organisations active on migration and integration at national or EU level.