Module 1: Introduction: What is a Community Educator? Competences, Tasks

Introduction to the course, what is a community, what is loneliness and techniques to overcome, what is a Community Educator, competences, role and personal motivation of participants

IO1 – PART 1 – Working Template

Length of each module: 8 to 10 pages / 5 hours

Introduction – Short Description of the module

This module has the function to introduce the participants to the course content covered in the following 4 modules and to define the role of the Community Educator.

In the first part the main emphasis lies on the definition of what is a community and what is Community Education work in general. Secondly, it explains the role and function of a Community Educator and the required skills and competences necessary to interact in this role. One activity covers the personal motivation of the participants. The argument of loneliness and possible strategies to overcome are also part of this module.

Benefits/Competences/Skills/ Learning Objectives of the Module

1. The module gives participants an overview about the course content and serves as an introduction to it
2. The module covers the theoretical introduction to the concepts of Community, Community Education work and loneliness and defines the role of a Community Educator
3. It defines the required skills and competences participants have to have to interact in this role
4. Participants should be able to reflect on the work as a Cultural Educator and develop personal approaches how to interact in the role

Theoretical and Contextual Background of topics /Theories discussed in module

Community, Community education work and loneliness will be discussed as followed:

1. General introduction and definitions about Community, Community Education work and loneliness
2. Definition and skillset of Community Educators
3. Theoretical background of loneliness and methods to overcome it in the society

Overview and timeline

1. Activity 1: Triangle of similarities: 40 minutes
2. Activity 2: My bunch of keys: 25 minutes
3. Activity 3: My Community map: 1 hour 45 minutes
4. Activity 4: My role as Community Educator: 1 hour 20 minutes
5. Activity 5: My Motivation – Advantages of CE: 1 hour
6. Activity 6: What's next? Next steps: 10 min
   TOTAL: 5 hours 20 min

IO1 – PART 2 – Working Template

Activity 1 – Get to know – triangle of similarities

The first section of the course is dedicated to get to know better the members of the group in order to enhance the team spirit.

Part 1: Separate participants into four groups, consider to mix the participants in order that they are matched up with unknown people

Part 2: Each group get a flipchart and highlighters in different colours. The trainer demonstrates the task by drawing a pyramid.

Participants should now assign to the pyramid the following tasks:
   a.) Things they have in common are written into the pyramid
   b.) Individual things are written down outside the pyramid close to the name of every participant

In order to complete the task, participants have to communicate and ask questions. Doing so, they are getting to know each other better.

In the end, every group then presents the result to the other groups.

Duration
40 minutes this includes preparation and minutes in groups as well as the discussion

Materials needed / tips for applying the methods
Flip chart paper
Markers

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

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Activity 2 – My bunch of keys – my quarter, my community

This game has the aim to build up a better dynamic among the course participants. The "bunch of keys" activity combined with the aspect of culture and the local aspect could be a suitable way to draw a bow from the getting to know aspect to the introduction to the course elements – because keys can tell a lot about the life of a person.

Part 1: Arrange your chairs in a circle. Every participant should prepare his bunch of keys.

Part 2: Every participant then should describe his keys considering the following questions
   a.) What does the key lock (home, office etc.)? What is your personal relation to this building? Tell us more about it, is it your working place, do you live there?
   b.) Where is the building located, in which quarter of the city?
   c.) Could you tell the others more about your quarter? What do you like about it? What makes it special for you? Who lives inside this quarter?

This game has not only the aim to strengthen the team spirit among the participants but it also introduces them to one crucial task/criteria of the

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Community Educator, the work as a multiplier in the quarter and the community. Doing so it sensitizes the participants already for their future work – and how this has to do with their community.

Duration
5 minutes per participant, in total 25 minutes

Materials needed / tips for applying the methods
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Supporting material for practicing/understanding/implementing the method (Exercises, Case studies, Videos, Interactive resources)

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Activity 3: My Community map

In this activity, participants reflect about their community by creating a Community map. The pedagogical concept covers several aspects: The first part of the activity dedicated to the creation of the community map brings the participants to reflect on their community by taking into account aspects that they may be not considering in their daily live.
The theoretical input gives participants an overview above the key ideas of the concept of community as well as loneliness. This knowledge should enrich the created community map in the last part of the activity, the group discussion/brainstorming session.

Part 1: Introduction
Participants should reflect about their community and present their results to other participants.

The following questions should be discussed by preparing a short presentation. Participants can use flipchart paper and markers.

a.) What is the name of my community? Is it located in a specific quarter?
b.) What makes my (local) community special? (traditions, celebrations, but also related to the local sphere: specific shops, restaurants, bars, organizations)
c.) Give a short overview about the "typical member" of your community.
d.) Your community in one sentence: Try to find one sentence that sums up your community pretty well

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e.) Are there persons/group of persons that are maybe affected by loneliness in their daily life?

Participants can be creative: drawing, using symbols, creating a plan of the quarter with the most important facilities etc. The two representatives of each Community should work together.

Time: 35 minutes

Part 2: Presentation to the group

Each group gets approximately 5 minutes to present the results to the others
Time: 20 minutes

Part 3: Definition of community & types and forms of loneliness (theoretical input)

The aim of Part 4 is to pass the theoretical information about community and loneliness to the participants. It serves as a preparation for the last part of Activity 3, the enrichment of the created Community maps with the theoretical background.

The text with the elaborated theoretical concepts can be found in the appendix of the document, the PowerPoint can be found in the same folder.

Time: max. 15 min.

Part 4: Find similarities and differences (group discussion)

a.) Mixed Map

Each participant now choose one presentation/flipchart (one community map) that is not his own. Based on the following questions and the theoretic input, participants should reflect on differences and similarities between the communities:
   a.) Are there any similarities with my community?
   b.) Are there differences? Why?
   c.) Regarding loneliness: Are there differences/similarities?

Participants have 10 minutes and should write down their thoughts on additional prompt cards.

b.) Group discussion

The last part, organized in the format of a group discussion, wants to bring together the different thoughts of the participants now enriched with the theoretical background. After conclusion of Activity 3, participants should be aware about particularities, differences and similarities of their community considering already the aspect of loneliness.

The discussion should include at least:
- Answers from the participants on differences and similarities
- Particularities of the communities
- Thoughts about vulnerable groups / persons regarding loneliness within the community

The trainer is responsible for the moderation of the discussion. Every participant should actively contributing to the discussion. If possible, the results should be summed up in a mind map (or list).

Time: 25 minutes

Duration
1 hour 45 minutes

Materials needed / tips for applying the methods
Flip chart paper
Markers
Power Point

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

Theoretical background to the arguments of Community and
One PowerPoint including the theoretical approach to Community and loneliness can be found attached to this module

Activity 4: My role as a Community Educator

This activity familiarizes participants with the topic Community Education work, the project and their role as Community Educator. It will be a combination of input sessions and more interactive parts. In contradiction to the previous activity, the theoretical introduction comes in the beginning because it is the

logical continuation of Activity 3 (my community – the problem of loneliness – countermeasures/activities against the phenomena).

Part 1: The Community Educator and community education work (first theoretical input)

Short presentation summing up the project goal(s) – What is a Community Educator? Competences and tasks – What means Community Education Work?

See text in appendix for details

Time: 15 min

Part 2: My role as Community Educator

Participants should reflect on how they personally could interact as Community Educator.

a.) Individual part (20 min)
   Every participant gets three prompt cards. They get 20 minutes to brainstorm about the following questions:
   1. Card: My role inside the community?
   2. Card: What could I contribute to my community?
   3. Card: What I want to communicate about my community?
   4. Card: How could I tackle loneliness in my community?

Answers should be given, if possible, in key words, not in sentences

b.) Collection (3 min/participant)
   Every participant presents shortly his result and add the cards to the board creating so three forms of mind maps – 3 minutes/participant

c.) Group discussion (25 min)
   The structure should be orientated on the four questions from a.). The four mind maps can be used also as a better definition of the role of the Community Educator. The group should try to find similarities between the answers. In the end of the discussion, every participant should be more aware about his future role.

Time: 20 minutes individual preparation + 50 minutes presentation/discussion

Duration
1 hour 20 minutes

Materials needed / tips for applying the methods
Flip chart paper
Prompt cards
Markers
PowerPoint

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

Theoretical background including the PowerPoint can be found attached to this module

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Activity 5 – My motivation: Advantages of being a Community Educator

This activity wants to focus on the personal benefits for the participants becoming a Community Educator. What could be positive incentives to rise the personal motivation of the participants? What could be positive effects for the community as a whole?

Part 1: Individual brainstorming about personal motivation

This task directly addresses the motivation of the participants. It focus on two questions:
   a.) What are my personal expectations to this course? What I want to achieve?
   b.) What could be incentives becoming a Community Educator? (For me personally and for the community as a whole?)

While question a.) is more personal, question b.) should be discussed also with the whole group as it has the potential to raise awareness of aspects that probably one participant is not considering.

Method: The Trainer distributes two prompt cards in different colours. Participants have then 10-15 minutes to reflect on both questions.

Part 2: Motivation mind map

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Afterwards there should be a discussion/brainstorming session where additional input could be given by the trainer (see input sheet for ideas in the appendix).

The result of the activity should be a "motivation mind map" with all the input from the participants. It has the function to give participants an overview about what their function as Community Educator could have positive effects for themselves as well as for the community as a whole.
Time: 45 min.

Duration
1 hour

Materials needed / tips for applying the methods
Flipchart
Prompt cards
Markers

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

Additional tips/advices for the "motivation mind map"

Activity 6 – What's next?

Short outlook to the following course modules.

Duration
10 min

Materials needed / tips for applying the methods
Course programme

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

Self-assessment on module
Did the module provide me with a good understanding of the concepts of Community, Community Education work and loneliness? Am I aware about my future role as Community Educator? Do I have the feeling of knowing better my community right now? Were you surprised by any part of this exercise? How did you feel sharing your experiences?
Bibliography See Appendix

APPENDIX

Activity 3
- Power Point "Module 1: What is a Community Educator?", first part **Theoretical background/text:** **What is a community?** A community is a group of people with common shared values (religion, customs, norms, identity). These values create among the members of the group a feeling of cohesion, a certain collective identity. People identify themselves via the group and vice versa. What forms this identity is part of a continuous process of what is still "worth" to be part of the collective identity.

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Often the selecting processes that shape one community are also part of their historical heritage. The knowledge of the older generations is the fundamental basis for the next generation. In that way, many of the oral and written knowledge pass from one generation to another and values remain important to the group.

There are two different types regarding membership: You can be part of the group voluntarily based on a decision or you can become a member involuntarily. The best example is the family: Two persons decide to become a pair while their child has not decided to become a member of this community, the family.

Examples for communities

There exist many different forms of communities and every has different principles, traditions and forms of living together. According to the sociology there are three main types of community.

The first are the location-based communities. These communities are existing because their members are living in a specific area. This could be for example one village, a neighbourhood or a specific quarter in a city.

The second type of communities are the identity-based communities. They share a specific, cultural related, identity that define their belonging to one group. One example could be their religion or ethnic background.

The last type was already introduced; the best example for an "organizationally-based community" is the family, that has an organization within it (father, mother, children). Part of this type are also more formal associations like economic enterprises or incorporated associations.

In addition to that, also a nation can be considered as a community as well as other forms of communities where it is no longer possible to know every member of the community (for example a religion).

Problems and conflicts between communities

Because of the variety of different communities and their different values and traditions, conflicts in the society can occur at any time. Many conflicts arise because of this differences and the lack of understanding that otherness is not a form of weakness but a result of the different historical developments of a specific community. In fact, many conflicts are there because every community believes that their personal values and traditions are the best.

Conflicts and problems between communities arise often if one community (at local or more larger scale) is marginalized because they are a minority.

We have to face this potential for conflicts by considering what a community is, how it is formed and how we can strengthen the dialogue between these different communities. The globalization and more intercultural societies make it necessary to facilitate measures to ensure the dialogue between different communities. We need Community Educators!

What is loneliness?

Loneliness has many different forms. One possible definition for loneliness defines the phenomena as an individual's personal, subjective sense of lacking desired affection, closeness, and social interaction with others. Loneliness, according to this definition, is not the same as social isolation. Although it has a social aspect, loneliness is also defined by an individual's subjective emotional state.

According to another definition, it can be considered as a negative experience that involves painful feelings of not belonging and disconnectedness from others. It is often the result of a lack of social relationships, if, for several reasons, we cannot have the quantity and quality of these relationships.

There is a difference between loneliness and social isolation: While loneliness is the feeling of having less social relationships, social isolation is more objective and it is defined by the number of social contacts a person have. People may choose to have a small number of contacts; loneliness on the other hand, is never desired.

Who is more vulnerable becoming lonely?

Even though loneliness can affect everyone, there are groups that run a higher risk of becoming lonely for different reasons. Elderly people experience frequent loneliness more than any other group. Although, this is not a specificity of the elderly. Because of changes in the demography and the labour market, loneliness is often connected with socioeconomic effects: The better your personal economic circumstances, the less the risk becoming lonely. Poor working conditions favour loneliness as well as living alone. The more the family loses his function as central entity of daily social life and the more people are living alone, also the frequency of loneliness in the society is rising.

Increasing international mobility and migration can lead also to loneliness, because people finding themselves in new countries with very limited social relationships. Barriers of language and cultural aspects are further motives

that can result in loneliness. Like already mentioned, poor working conditions raise the possibility becoming lonely. In that perspective, it is no surprise that unemployed men and women in migrant groups are having a higher risk of loneliness.

Vulnerable groups:

- The elderly / retirees
- Persons living alone
- Recently divorced or separated and recently bereaved
- Migrants
- Individual with mobility limitations or health issue
- New mothers
- Carers
- children
- Members of the LGBTQ community

How many?

It is important to keep in mind the demographic changes that Europe has to face in the next years and that will have impacts to the phenomena of loneliness. By 2025-2030 the number of single households will be much higher in almost every country according to a survey of the OECD (see link in Literature for more information). In 2017, the number of single households in Europe was one third with the highest number in Sweden (more than 50%). The statistics show the potential risk of loneliness that can arise due to a higher number of single households.

In addition to that, the demographic changes will lead to a higher number of elderly people in the next years, especially in countries where the birth rate is low.

The lowest levels of loneliness are found in Northern Europe, followed by Western Europe. The lowest numbers have Denmark and the Netherlands with 3%, the highest Hungary, Czechia, Italy, Poland, Belgium and Greece.

According to the European Social Survey (ESS), 7% of the European society is feeling lonely while 18% of adults in Europe are socially isolated.

Why does loneliness matter?

Loneliness can have a negative impact to health of a person. The mortality risk of being lonely is comparable to those of obesity and smoking. Furthermore, lonely people are more likely to have poor health in general, mental problems,

a poor cognitive performance and pessimistic judgements and are more threatened by life situations. Lonely people are often stigmatised as socially inept.

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- Definition of Loneliness and difference to Social Isolation from Age UK. In:
  https://www.ageuk.org.uk/our-impact/policy-research/loneliness-research-and-resources/loneliness-isolation-understanding-the-difference-why-it-matters/
- Definition of Loneliness in: The Missing Million. A practical guide to identifying and talking about loneliness, see page 15 for the definition; https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/wp-content/uploads/CEL-Missing-Millions-Guide_final.pdf
- Results of the European Social Survey (ESS): Loneliness, an unequally shared burden in Europe.;
  https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/sites/jrcsh/files/fairness_pb2018_loneliness_jrc_i1.pdf
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- Eurostat-statistic from July 2018: Back Rising proportion of single person households in the EU; https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-eurostat-news/-/DDN-20180706-1
- The future of Families to 2030. A Synthesis report. OECD International Futures Programme; https://www.oecd.org/futures/49093502.pdf

Activity 4

- Power Point "Module 1: What is a Community Educator?", second part

Theoretical background/text:

Activity 4 represents the continuation of the theoretical input given in Activity 3 (What is a community, different types of a community, what is loneliness). In this context, Activity 4 wants to clarify the role of the Community Educator including the theoretical aspect of community education work.

The role of the Community Educator should be seen as something dynamic, every participant interacts, based on different cultural backgrounds, in a different way. The main emphasis of this Activity lies on the participants itself that have to reflect on their own role within their community in order to develop their personal role. The theoretical background covers the argument of community education work and sets minimum standards that the role of a Community Educator should fulfil. The trainer can use this list to manage or enrich the discussion.

What is Community Education work?

Community Education means to learn through and with the community. It is the attempt to combine life-long learning with social aspects. One best-practise example for community education is Scotland. The Standards Council Scotland defines Community Education as :

 "(...) a field of professional practice that enables people to identify their own individual and collective goals, to engage in learning and take action to bring about change for themselves and their communities."

Community Education work both addresses the individual inside the community as well as the community as a whole. It wants to achieve improved life changes for people of all ages, through learning, personal development and active citizenship, and, in the same way, stronger, more resilient, supportive and inclusive communities. By combining members of all ages, Community Education work tries to generate a both socially and self-guided learning process.

Community Education work only can achieve these goals if there is a dialogue with the members of a community. Doing so, it can help to solve or improve problems related to the current life situation.

It is important to clarify the needs of the individual inside of the community to tailor the most suitable exercises and tasks. The specific content and the goals are set up in continuous dialogue with the community in order to guarantee that the learning process meets the expectations of all participants.

My role as a Community Educator?

As we can see, every situation and every community demands different measures to guarantee good and successful community education. The theoretical input cannot deliver a complete role description of competences, skills what a Community Educator should have. Based on the theory on Community Education it can give some minimum standard that every participant should achieve until the end of the course – or that should be relevant criteria when recruiting the participants.

The criteria list should have the function of guidelines; the concrete role profile should be developed by every participant/group.

What is a Community Educator?

Someone that...

- enables empowerment of the community by bringing together individuals and by building bridges with other communities
- is able to share their culture with others
- represents the own community towards stakeholders / businesses, NGOs, associations
- understands the perspective of a business/the public sector/NGOs and is able to raise awareness for their community/culture
- facilitates further education and engagement in the community
- understands the (cultural/intercultural) value they create for a stakeholder/potential customer
- is able to present their cultural expertise in a range of settings
- is able to widen understanding and appreciation of equality, diversity and inclusion
- wants to be part of the positive development of the community
- is able to understand and value other cultures and traditions

Competences/requirements a Community Educator should have:

- **attitude/personality (requirement)**
    - o motivation to learn new things, methods and also theories
    - o motivation to strengthen the capacity of people and communities to shape their own futures
    - o Be able to engage with people from different backgrounds

- **community background (requirement)**
    - o knowledge about the members and functionality of the own community and also other communities

- **Moderation/Communication skills (requirement)**
    - o Ability of speaking in front of audience
    - o Open to meet new people
    - o Talkative
    - o Story telling skills

- **Presentation skills (competence to develop)**
    - o Digital Skills
    - o Presentation skills to create engaging presentations
    - o Skills to present their culture
    - o Understand the concept of a knowledge party
    - o Skills to understand and value other cultures
    - o Skills to create discussions about cultural awareness

The criteria list about the competences should have the function of giving a minimal idea about the profile of a Community Educator, but like mentioned in the beginning, both competences and the description are not a final list. The profile should be seen as something dynamic, every participant should develop his or her personal profile as Community Educators until the end of the course. Doing so, it raises the motivation of the participants and in consequence the output of the project and the quality of work.

How Community Educators can tackle loneliness

We have seen the negative consequences loneliness could create in the previous activity. The rising number of single households and the demographic changes in the next years will be increase also the phenomena of loneliness. In that way, it is important to create effective countermeasures to tackle loneliness.

Community Educators could be useful in two ways: Firstly, they can directly helping lonely people with tailored tasks and activities as a form of Community Education work. Secondly, with their activity they can act like multipliers making the problem more visible not only inside the community but in the society at all.

There are no fully developed concepts that fit in every single situation – because loneliness has many different forms. It is important to create personalised responses to loneliness. The first step is always to clarify the individual needs of the persons to make the service more efficient and helpful.

There are some strategies that in the past have been efficiently used, for example:

- Supporting and maintaining existing relationships
- Supporting new social connections (group-based)
- One-to-one approaches (regular visits to the home)
- Psychological approaches (change the thinking of lonely people)

Also other factors play an important role, like for example the accessibility to transport and technology. According to experts, the strategies mentioned above are more efficiently if they are driven from the neighbourhood level because people normally feel a higher degree of commitment to their neighbourhood.

See for more details: https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/wp-content/uploads/Promising-approaches-to-reducing-loneliness-and-isolation-in-later-life-1.pdf

Literature:

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Activity 5

Additional tips/advices for the "motivation mind map"

The motivation mind map has the two main functions: First of all, it tries to collect the ideas of all participants in order to get an overview about different personal motivations.

As it is the last section of the Module, it is important to consider that all relevant aspects of possible motivation factors have been discussed. The "motivation mind map" should help participants to understand the various forms of how their activities as Community Educators could have a positive effect on the well-being of their communities. Furthermore, it raises the possibility that almost all participants continue with the course if there level of motivation is sufficient.

Some tips:

- Try to answer all remaining questions
- Every participant should at least indicate 3 forms of personal motivation
- Always combine the personal benefits with the benefits for the community
- Try to focus on positive aspects, try to encourage the participants