



## Erasmus + VET Strategic Partnership

**IENE 8 – Empowering Migrant and Refugee Families with Parenting Skills**

### Bite-sized Learning Unit number 3.5

## WORKING TOGETHER

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## THE WHOLE IS GREATER THAN THE SUM OF ITS PARTS

This learning unit will present the topic of **working together**. Professionals (employees in the health care sector such as nurses or social workers besides many others) and volunteers (who work towards a certain goal in their spare time without getting paid) often care for refugee families together. In doing so, it is important that both groups work together for those families who need their support. However, the refugees themselves also have to be regarded as actors at eye to eye level with their skills and have to be motivated to participate actively.

## OBJECTIVES

In this learning unit refugee families and health workers will learn:

1. the definitions of working together;
2. the challenges that lie in working together;
3. strategies that ensure good cooperation;
4. the place that the refugee family will have in this process.

## DEFINITIONS AND THEORIES ON WORKING TOGETHER

**Working together** includes the notion that different people make an effort for a common cause. The word **cooperation** in this context refers to a collaboration of a number of people, who normally pursue a common goal. In a professional context, cooperation is also described as **multidisciplinary cooperation**, especially when various professional groups are working together. In the context of the support for refugee families, professionals and volunteers work together very often. Professionals have an overview of various legal, health-promoting, financial and many more aspects and can give professional advice. Volunteers, for example, accompany refugees to offices and authorities (job center, Foreigners' Registration Office, etc.), they explain matters that refugees are unfamiliar with or do not understand and they inform them by means of their own everyday experiences. If it is legally clarified, they can also forward important information of third parties to professionals. Professionals and volunteers provide different tasks and possibilities regarding the support of refugees. Professionals, when working with refugee families, have to

- have a professional point of view;
- take legal aspects into account;
- comply with defined procedural structures;

Volunteers, when working with refugee families, can

- organize common leisure activities;
- accompany refugees to offices, authorities or health facilities;

- build interpersonal relationships;
- potentially serve as a mediator between a refugee and a professional;

However, the challenge often lies in the different paces and skills which the respective side is dealing with. While the professional has to comply with certain procedures, the volunteer is able at times to react in a fast and personal way as well. This can lead to conflicts. Thus, the following aspects have to be taken into account when working together:

- a clear allocation of roles between professionals and volunteers;
- acknowledging the skills of the other person;
- appreciating the work of the other person;
- mediation by a third person in conflict situations;
- exchange at eye to eye level;
- define common roles for everyone involved;

In addition, volunteers and refugees equally need information on the various actors and points of contact they encounter in their daily work and in their daily life (Bertelsmannstiftung 2016).

Refugees have to be perceived as the actors of their own life by everyone involved and their independence has to be promoted. They normally know very well what their skills are. These have to be discovered in conversations by everyone involved and thus promoted even more, so that refugees can play an active part in society. In this context, one must not underestimate the fact that refugees possess knowledge which is indispensable to mutual integration (Robert Bosch Stiftung & BpB 2018)!

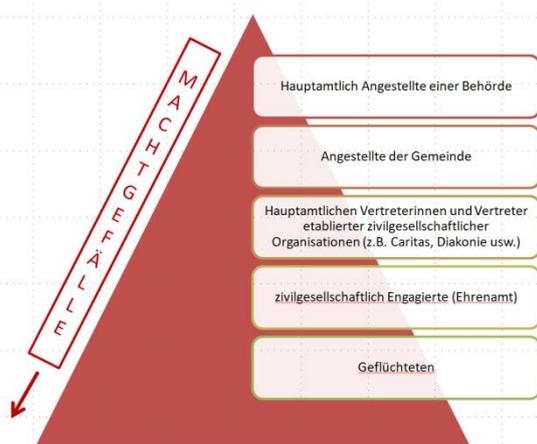
### **In the context of IENE 8**

For refugee families, it is important to know that they are supported by different actors in the host country. However, every actor also has certain rights and duties. The health care system is complex as a whole and professionals and volunteers work together in many different areas – not only when it comes to taking care of refugees. For refugees, transparency regarding the distribution of responsibilities and communication is helpful. The refugees themselves are supposed to become more and more independent and be the directors of their own life again as soon as possible. These topics will be covered in the IENE-8-project and health workers will be trained in order to become aware of their own roles and to organize them accordingly when supporting refugee families.

## KEY POINTS

(Three PowerPoint slides with key points and diagrams / pictures from research)

## ACTIVITY



“My godfather went to the Foreigners’ Registration Office with me. We were told for the third time that something was wrong with the paperwork. My godfather had prepared everything. I don’t understand this.“

Please describe (professional/volunteer) a negative example and think about the questions on the basis of the chart:

- Where do you belong to?
- Why were there problems?
- How could the problems have been

Abbildung 1: Nach Schammann und Kühn 2016

solved?

Translation of the above chart: **Figure 1: According to Schammann and Kühn 2016**

**Written on the left-hand side:** Imbalance in power;

**Titles from top to bottom:** Full-time employee in an authority; employee of the local administration; full-time representatives of well-established civil society organizations (e.g. Caritas, Diakonie, etc.); people engaged in civil society (volunteers); refugees

## REFLECTION ON A TOPIC: WORKING TOGETHER

### Refugees:

Do you know the difference between a professional and a volunteer?

What experiences have you had with volunteers?

What impression do you have of employees in different authorities?

What can you personally do to reach your goal faster or to comply with the authority’s demands?

### Professionals / Volunteers:

What experiences have you had with professionals or volunteers?

What impression do you have of the employees or the volunteers in different authorities?

What can you personally do to reach your goal faster?

## SELF-ASSESSMENT

My skills as a professional / volunteer are:

I am aware of the skills of the other person:

Our work aims to: \_\_\_\_\_ the refugee

## LITERATURE / RESOURCES

1. Bertelsmannstiftung (2016). Koordinationsmodelle und Herausforderungen ehrenamtlicher Flüchtlingshilfe [*Coordination Models and Challenges of Voluntary Aid to Refugees*] [https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin/files/BSt/Publikationen/GrauePublikationen/Koordinationsmodelle\\_und\\_Herausforderungen\\_ehrenamtlicher\\_Fluechtlingshilfe\\_in\\_den\\_Kommunen.pdf](https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin/files/BSt/Publikationen/GrauePublikationen/Koordinationsmodelle_und_Herausforderungen_ehrenamtlicher_Fluechtlingshilfe_in_den_Kommunen.pdf)
2. Robert Bosch Stiftung & Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung [*Robert Bosch Stiftung & The Federal Agency for Civic Education*] (2018). Perspektive Teilhabe [*Perspective Participation*]. [https://minor-kontor.de/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Minor\\_PT\\_Freiwilliges-Engagement-in-Kommunen\\_2018.pdf](https://minor-kontor.de/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Minor_PT_Freiwilliges-Engagement-in-Kommunen_2018.pdf)
3. Schammann und Kühn (2016). Kommunale Flüchtlingspolitik in Deutschland. [*Local Refugee Policy in Germany*]. Bonn: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.
4. Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung [*The Federal Centre for Health Education*]. (2017). Resilienzförderndes und kultursensibles Denken und Handeln für Geflüchtete. Fortbildungsmanual für Haupt- und ehrenamtliche Mitarbeitende in der Hilfe für Geflüchtete. [*Resilience-Promoting and Culturally Sensitive Thinking and Action for Refugees. Advanced Training Manual for Professional and Voluntary Staff in the Aid to Refugees*].

### Solutions:

My skills as a professional / volunteer are: I am aware of the skills of the other person: please see introduction!

Our work aims to: \_support / \_empower/ \_promote the refugee.