

Social Sustainability: The Forgotten Students in Ghana

In Tamale, the Job Shadowing group worked on an issue of social sustainability against social exclusion. It was focused on students who are talented footballers and manage to complete senior high school with very poor grades. This neither allows them to enter tertiary institutions nor obtain employable skills. Some of them become social misfits, excluded from the educational sector and the labor market.

Based on this reality in Tamale, participants developed a long term project that suggests the use of non-formal activities for developing communication and other soft skills. The main idea is to develop an inclusive environment through sports in which excluded talented students develop their sense of belonging, are empowered with soft skills so as to identify their strengths, enhance their personality, become productive members of the society, and develop their talents professionally. The project is called “Sedarvp Football Academy”, coordinated by the local organization Sedarvp Ghana.

They should train or practice football weekly, under the supervision of an expert coach for two months. While undergoing this intensive training, time would allow the team members to be offered Leadership, Communication, Entrepreneurship, Creativity, Collaboration, Listening, Self-Confidence, Public Speaking, and Reflection-discussion skills. A 2-day Sports Festival would then be organized between Sedarvp team and any known team(s). The Festival could be local, national or international and it should be organized four times a year. Experts are to be invited to observe the students and how they react. Some of these talented footballers are to be selected and help link them up with any known team within or outside Ghana in order to play professional football. Policy Makers, former footballers, sports journalists, teachers, etc will be involved.

The concept could be seen as similar to the case of the Eco Karaoke Festival in Vietnam (see Activity 5.4).

A big difference with this proposed activity is that it seems a bit too business-oriented. A more participatory perspective could be given to this project by enhancing the community ownership of the Academy, supporting students to be more empowered, resilient, and independent with higher self-esteem. These qualities could lead them to be more active citizens in their community, with the aim to be involved in social initiatives and take life into their own hands.

Participants in the Job Shadowing in Ghana working on the activity: Onyango Benjamin (Kenya), Vy Thi Khanh Nguyen (Vietnam), Natalia Vazquez Gutierrez (Spain), Jorge Galiano Bravo (Peru), Marilena Maragkou (Ghana, Greece), Konstantinos Maragkos (Ghana, Greece), Sintosis Georgios (Greece), Despoina Tsireka (Greece), Abdul Muumin Sualihu (Ghana), Vivanco Parada (Spain, Argentina), Shaibu Niendow Abukari (Ghana), Sil Van de Velde (Ghana, Brussels)

Social Sustainability: (Environmental) Migration

Participants of the Job Shadowing in Greece, similarly to the Job Shadowing in Ghana, turned their interest towards social issues. In Greece, their focus was on migration and the fact that migrants living in Greece for more than a decade were still seen as strangers and felt excluded by the local community.

At this part, it is wise to mention that apart from the typical categories of migration recognized by the existing international law, such as the migration for economic reasons and the forced migration due to fear of life (refugee), people migrate for environmental reasons. Climate change has impacts on human mobility as people are affected by natural disasters and environmental degradation.

According to the International Organisation for Migration “Environmental migrants are persons or groups of persons who, predominantly for reasons of sudden or progressive change in the environment that adversely affects their lives or living conditions, are obliged to leave their habitual homes, or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently, and who move either within their country or abroad”.

Environmental migration as any type of migration is a complex issue. Beyond the existing vulnerabilities of the current system and the challenges of social exclusion, people that migrate may also become more resilient. Furthermore, people that are unable to migrate, they may stay trapped in a more disadvantaged situation than the ones who migrate. For more information about the subject, it is advised to consult the training manual about [Migration, Environment and Climate Change](#) that was developed with the financial support of the European Union and the IOM Development Bank.

Inspired by the challenge of migration and social integration, the participants designed an activity in the form of a photography contest, based on the methodologies of art therapy with the aim to inform the locals and raise awareness against discrimination and social exclusion.

Activity 5.7 Art Therapy for Social Inclusion & Social Sustainability

Goals: Participants increase their emotional intelligence and empathy; Participants feel connected with each other; Participants feel included and empowered

Method(s): dream journey, photo exhibition

Estimated Time: 4-6 hours

Level: 2

Description: Before starting, it is important to establish a nice atmosphere and build a trustful environment between the participants. The facilitator may introduce some ice breaking activities beforehand. The activity is divided in three parts.

Part 1: Participants find a comfortable place to sit or even lay down while music is playing. The facilitator asks participants to close their eyes and pay attention to the dream journey. The facilitator describes an isolated place with no buildings, no trees, nothing. Then the facilitator asks them to move forward until they find a house, their home. However, their house is no

longer their home, because it has been occupied by strangers and their furniture has been replaced; besides they cannot enter or get much closer. The facilitator calmly asks participants to open their eyes and take one piece of paper or flip chart paper, using different drawing materials to express their feelings by drawing. They should not interact with the rest of participants. Participants are gathered in a circle and anyone interested shares his or her painting. Participants may answer the following question: “Can you share an experience where you felt the same way as before?”

Part 2: Participants in pairs draw or take as a photo the portrait of the other. Drawing or photography skills may be provided by an expert or the facilitator. Making each others’ portrait should involve also sharing of personal stories, hobbies and life interests. Just like a painting in a museum that has the name of the artist, the date and a description of how it was made and what it shows. It is assumed that the participants have different socio economic backgrounds. Some of them might have faced discrimination and social exclusion for different reasons. The point of this part is to try to “see the person” behind any social constructed characteristic. Society has a tendency to assign labels to people according to their sexual orientation, country of origin, economic status, educational status, etc. All pictures should be put in an exhibition during an **open event** where the creator of the artwork should present it to the rest of the participants and audience.

Part 3: Participants of this activity are gathered around a circle to share their feelings while they were the artwork and the artists. The facilitator asks participants if they feel more connected to each other and part of this communal exhibition.

Participants in the Job Shadowing in Greece working on the activity: Natalia Vazquez Gutierrez (Spain), Maritza Betsabet Medina Ramos (Peru), Jorge Martinez Lopez (Spain).