DOTA Association

· **Supporting the learning processes of adults with migration trajectories, especially women**

· **Closing the educational gender gap**

· **We provide:**
  Language and literacy classes, IT courses and guidance services to women with migration trajectories.

ASSOCIACIÓ DOTA. Dones per la formació, el treball i l'autoocupació

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Who we are

Where we are

Question

What would come first when designing a targeted outreach strategy?

· Determining the target group

· Determining the course or learning activity you want them to reach access to

· It depends on the context

Main focus

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How to design an outreach strategy to enhance access to education for a target group of adult women with migration trajectories.

'**Women**' is used as a category given that it is the one association members mainly identify with. Members and students of the association don't necessarily identify with a binary gender identity.

By **migration trajectories** we mean the fact that a person have carried out a process of migration due to economic and/or security reasons throughout his/her life.

Limitations

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· **We haven't carried out a formal research process.
The following points are taken from the experience of
professionals and volunteers of DOTA (not from the students).**

· **This experience is local (it is context-dependent) and the
points we present are not necessarily valid for all contexts.**

Contents

1) **Introduction**: the outreach strategy

2) **Designing a targeted outreach strategy**: five points

3) **DOTA Association outreach experience with our target group**: adult women with migration trajectories

4) **Outreach during Covid-19**

5) **Discussion**

Introduction:
the outreach strategy

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The outreach strategy: introduction

· **An outreach strategy as a way to reach more access to education**

· **An outreach strategy is based on the analysis of the groups of people which are being potentially excluded from education**

The outreach strategy: introduction

What is outreaching about?

· Meaningful communication

· Building a relationship with a community of people, inside and outside the learning center/activity

Designing a targeted outreach strategy: five points

Designing a targeted outreach strategy: five points

1) Analyze which access barriers might be occurring in your context and the groups of people that are affected the most

2) Analyze the target group/s and the specificities of the context

3) Analyze well-established features of the organization that might be entailing access barriers and make the changes needed

4) Decide how to communicate with the targeted group

5) Foster recognition and build safe relationships within the organization

Analyzing the context and current access barriers

- **Analyze the community around your center:**
  groups of population and kinds of access barriers

- **Analyze your registration statistics:**
  which group is under-represented and in which activities

- **Decide where to focus the strategy:**
  a single group, multiple groups, a sub-group of people

Analyzing the targeted group

- **Life needs**

- **Learning needs and strengths**

- **Sociocultural specificities and habits of the learners**

- **Community networks**

- **Possible relational preferences**: preferred way of entering a new social group (individually, from an already acknowledged group, through a peer or significant other…)

- **Psychological barriers: limiting beliefs, resistances…**

Analyzing the organization

- Analyze and eventually reformulate processes and contents that have been established in your organization

- Be aware of the possible bias that comes from preferences of the staff when designing these processes and contents

- Be aware of the extent to which the course content is a result of a negotiation process with learners

Communicating with the group

- **Determine the relevant groups beyond the targeted group**

- **Decide the main objectives of the strategy: give information, get information, mediation, accompaniment, solve concrete access barriers...**

- **Work with the community network**

- **Move to the spaces of the specific community**

- **Adopt the ways in which the groups normally get information**

- **Adapt your communication style and content to the terms of the targeted group so that it becomes significant**

Fostering safe relationships and recognition

- Building a relational atmosphere based on trust, equal participation, dialogism, negotiation and consensus inside and outside the learning center

- Recognizing the variety of needs and life realities of participants as something to live with instead of as something to be changed or improved

- Building a secure space where the majority can feel that their emotional and sociocultural needs/wishes are taken into account

Question

Chose two aspects you consider to be the most important in order to determine the target group?

- common learning needs
- age
- gender
- living place
- levels of certain skills for example reading skills

- migration trajectories
- capacity
- labor situation
- caring obligations
- sociocultural habits
- cultural and religious habits
- social codes

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DOTA Association outreach experience

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Targeted group: basic profile

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· Women with migration trajectories for economic and
security reasons

· More than 5 years living in Catalonia/Spain/Europe on average

· Most depend on husbands' residence permit (Reunification process),
that sometimes is a temporary one, with or without working permit

· Few are single mothers

· Low basic skills proficiency (educational gender gap)

Targeted group: life needs

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- **Difficulties to arrange the different schedules** (domestic, child care and elder care daily tasks. Sometimes they take care also of other people's children)

- **Intensive or variable labor schedules** (theirs or of their husbands, the case of intern domestic workers, high rate of temporary work, informal work: schedules vary depending on the work hours they get every week)

Targeted group: life needs

- **Life instability:** geographic mobility around the territory, labor instability (changing life conditions very often)

- **Other priorities:** life primary needs, finding or maintaining a job, bureaucracy issues related to legal status and other issues, prioritizing other trainings that can lead to a job, health issues

Measures to reach the group

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Adapting to life conditions

· **Scheduling activities in the right time, when women can attend it in a relaxed way**

The target group is characterized by being responsible of almost all the caring and domestic tasks and roles. This means they are really bounded by the school schedules. The religious calendar is also important when programming activities

Measures to reach the group

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Adapting to life conditions

· **Finding a way to combine care tasks with learning tasks**

Having a child care service, letting women come with children to learning activities, organizing activities that are adapted to children participation as well...

Targeted group: psychological barriers

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- **Resistances:** perception of lack of intercultural awareness in educational spaces (public spaces in general), resistances to unknown spaces and/or unknown groups of people, lack of trust in organizations (NGO or public administrations) due to previous bad experiences

- **Limiting beliefs** about the own capacity to learn, about the uselessness of basic skills learning processes for job purposes, beliefs about the impossibility to learn at a certain age...

Measures to reach the group

Creating a safe environment (familiarity, stability)

· **Counting on significant agents or peers among the organizers and the executers of the activity**

For instance when neither the space, nor the organization (or even the activity) is familiar to them, we can find other familiar elements that could transform the uncertainty of a new situation into a familiar situation

Measures to reach the group

Creating a safe environment (familiarity, stability)

· **Encouraging women to attend the activities with friends, family, or other classmates**

The support of peers can help learners to take care of the children, reinforces the sense of security and familiarity, allows sharing the experience after the activity, is an opportunity to feel complicity with others and can serve to justify the suitability of attending the activity to others

Measures to reach the group

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Getting familiar with a new space progressively

· **Using formal and non-formal learning activities where women are already engaged as an opportunity to let them know about other activities and public spaces where they can participate**

The key element is taking advantage of the groups already constituted inside or outside your organization to reach them out and get them to know other spaces

Targeted group: sociocultural aspects

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· **Lack of information** about learning providers, about the adult education system, about the suitability of their profiles to participate in educational spaces...

· **Language/communication barriers:** not being able to understand the published information available, or to ask for more information in the host language

Measures to reach the group

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Personalize the communication
(relations mediated by peers or significant others)

· **Contacting women directly or through significant agents/peers to inform about the activities**

Many of the women we wanted to reach were more used to get informed personally, talking with friends and relevant people. It was important to inform them in a more individualized way, also adapting to their oral and literacy skill, communication skills...

Measures to reach the group

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<u>Adapting verbal communication to the current levels in the host-language and including all kinds of communication</u>

· **Adapting communication forms and styles**

Adjusting host language level, prioritizing alternative ways of expression over verbal expression, offering a pivot language or translation services

Targeted group: sociocultural aspects

- **Gender aspects**: some of them prefer only one-gender spaces

- **Religious practices**: some of them would like to perform religious practices during the class time

- **Religious/cultural timings**: religious fests and holidays must be taken into account

- **Religious/cultural norms and moral aspects**: what counts as morally reprehensible

Measures to reach the group

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Sociocultural sensitivity from the majority culture

· **Being aware about the religious and sociocultural conditions of each community**

Intercultural sensitivity when preparing group meals, offering prayer spaces, taking photos and disseminating information through social media, etc. Being sensitive to the seasonal activities of each religion, etc.

Targeted group: learning needs

- **Very low proficiency in literacy** (due to missing or little schooling)
  - reading and writing skills in general
  - numeracy skills
  - host language proficiency

- **Socio-cultural knowledge** (of the host-community, of what it means to participate in learning contexts)

Measures to reach the group

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Reaching relevance

· **Including socio-cultural knowledge as transversal competences in the activities (previously having negotiated which contents are of interest)**

Combining formal learning with non-formal activities on other topics: on the health service of the region, on the School System, on childcare services, on health topics of interest, etc.

Measures to reach the group

Adapting to the specific participation backgrounds

· **Establishing guided participation situations**

The roles and rules that education and participation entail might not be equally known by everyone in the group Designing guided participation processes to entering the learning dynamics

Measures to reach the group

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Recommendation when evaluating

· **Valuing all ways of participating**

It might seem that some of them are not committed to the activities if, for instance they don't participate as much as expected in the classroom or they have a variable attendance

We need to value all the steps they are taking no matter how few or slow they seem to be

Measures to reach the group

Recognizing and taking advantage of the learning and relational skills

· **Using pivot languages**

· **Acknowledging their skills on interpreting social situations even with scarce verbal language resources**

· **Using non-verbal communication**

· **Taking advantage of the solidarity among peers**

Outreach during Covid-19

- **Access issues during the lockdown:** internet and digital gap, create or discover on-line material

- **After the lockdown, managing physical aspects:** following the hygienic and security measures, establishing very stable groups

- **Managing fear and insecurity:** being strict with the measures, communicating the measures not from the perspective of the high risk we are exposed to but from the prevention perspective
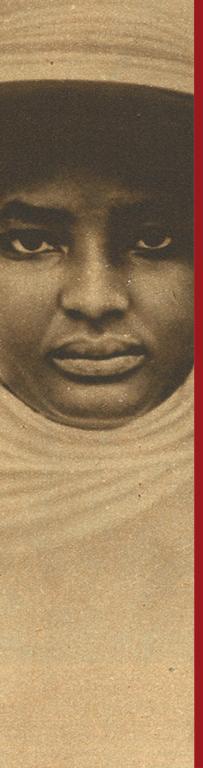
Discussion

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Discussion in break-out rooms

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- This is the target group you want to work with in your community: **Retired people with reduced mobility during Covid-19 pandemic.**

Which measures would you apply in your outreach action in order to remove the access barriers they might be facing at the current moment in your organization?

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