

Κοχλίας • Εταιρεία Έρευνας & Ανάπτυξης Κοινωνικού Κεφαλαίου  
Kochlias • Research & Development Association for Social Capital



Athens, July 2021

## **‘Faces of Migration’ Seminars Evaluation Report**

This initiative was organized by *Lesvos Solidarity* and funded by *ActionAid*. The evaluation was undertaken by *Kochlias, Research and Development Association for Social Capital*.

## Introduction

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**Description:** This evaluation concerns the completion of a seminar program consisting of 11 seminars, organized by Lesvos Solidarity. As the title ‘Faces of Migration’ suggests, the program touched upon various facets and aspects of:

- i) *migrants’ experience and interactions with host societies* (resilience & vulnerability, dimensions of refugees’ experiences, communication via interpretation),
- ii) *the psychosocial support tailored towards them* (both in emergency as well as everyday settings, accentuating the importance of self-care for professionals),
- iii) *drawing distinctions and emphases on particular groups of refugees* (e.g. unaccompanied minors, transgender, people with extremely adverse experiences).

Each seminar took place over the span of a day, lasting for approximately 6 hours. The titles of each seminar and the subsequent topics explored, along with the numbers of people who participated in each can be found in **Appendix I**.

**Participants’ background:** The vast majority of the participants were professionals whose work concerns psychosocial support to asylum seekers and refugees, and volunteers/workers who are active in the field in any capacity, affiliated with various NGOs/institutions. **The participants’ backgrounds widely ranged, from psychologists and social workers to lawyers, educators, interpreters, program coordinators and more. Most of the participants live and work in Greece, however, the seminars were open for registration to professionals living abroad too.**

**Seminars:** The trainings took place between 30 January-26 June 2021 and were attended in total by **367** participants. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 10 seminars were completed online, and only the last one took place face-to-face. 3 of the 11 were conducted in English, providing those for whom Greek is not their first language the opportunity to take part too (e.g. cultural mediators, internationals residing here or elsewhere).

**Evaluation method:** An evaluation form (via Google-Forms) was sent to participants by the respective trainers following the end of each seminar. They were kindly asked to complete it right after the seminar’s completion, though they were of course given the option to also do it later in their own time. The online form remained open throughout the week after the seminar, and in some seminars (where completion was scarce), the participants were sent a reminder the following days. An evaluation was not sent for the seminar: *Non-violent Communication: Introduction* as it was a short 2 hour presentation/introduction to a topic explored in two later seminars (**See: Appendix I**)

The *evaluation form* consisted of 8 questions on a scale from 1-5 (ranging from Strongly disagree [**negative evaluation**] -- to --Strongly Agree [**positive evaluation**]), and three open-ended questions, asking for participants’ positive and

negative feedback in the training process, as well as their suggestions for improvement. The form can be accessed in its entirety in **Appendix II**.

→The evaluation parameters were agreed between Action Aid, Lesvos Solidarity and Kochlias. The evaluation form was loosely based on suggestions from the handbook ‘*Psychological First Aid: Facilitator’s Manual for orienting field workers*’ published by World Health Organization (2013) and translated to Greek by Syneirmos NGO of Social Solidarity (2016) ( <https://babeldc.gr/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/protes-voitheies-psixikis-ugeias.pdf> ). The loose adaptation came from the above handbook as it has repeatedly shown to be a simple, succinct and effective tool for evaluations of similar seminar programs conducted by Kochlias in the past year.

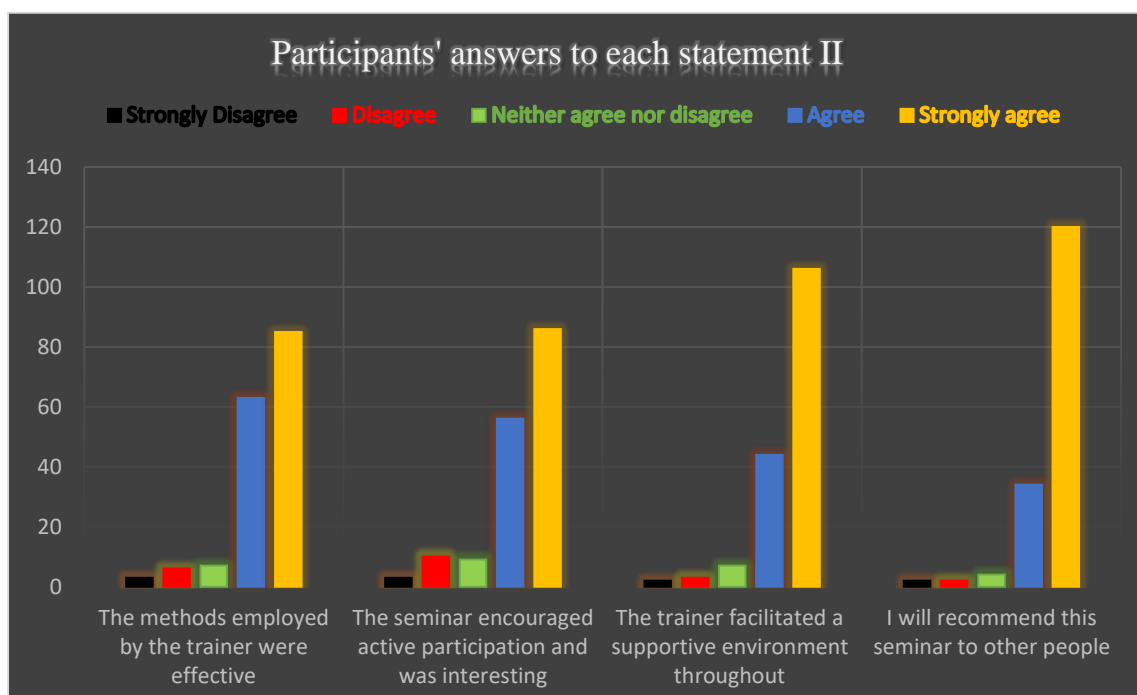
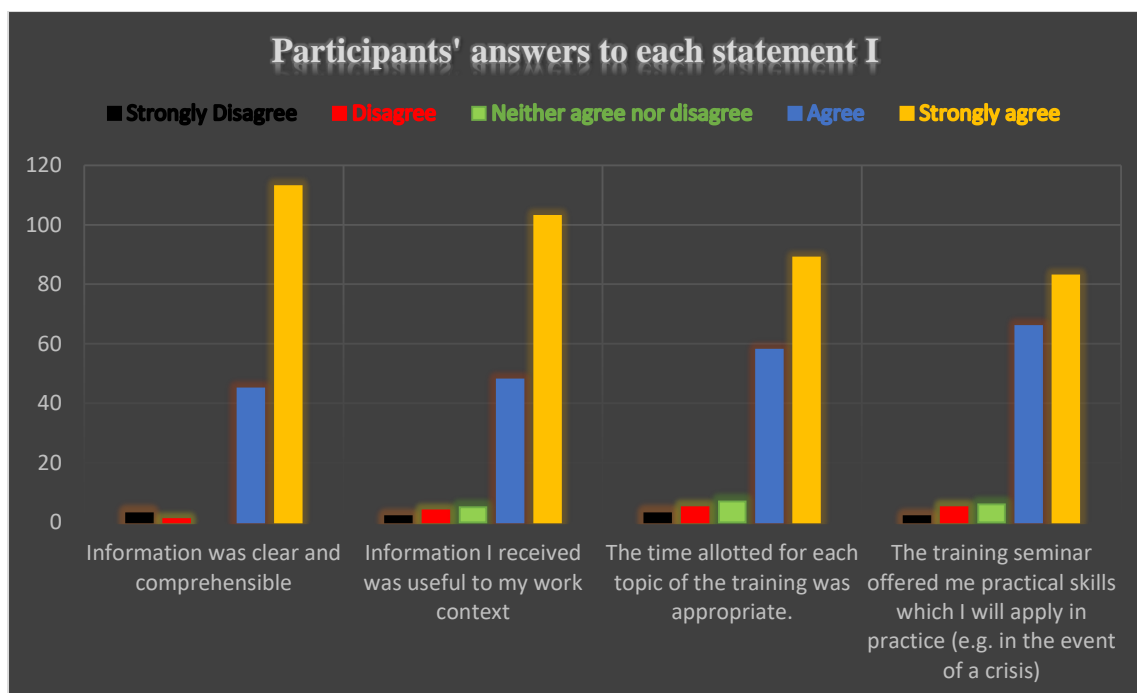
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### ❖ Participants’ Answers to Evaluation forms

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- ✚ As was mentioned, no evaluation was sent for ‘*Non-violent Communication: Introduction*’, as it was a short 2-hour presentation on a topic explored in two later seminars; it was attended by 59 people. ***Out of the 308 total remaining participants (discounting the latter), 163*** participants filled out the evaluation form. That’s a completion rate of 53%, which is not excellent, but considering the online nature of the seminars is also not bad. What is meant by that is we have to consider not all participants stayed up to the end of the seminars, some might have had connectivity problems, while another fraction of people simply chose not to write up an evaluation.
- ✚ The sample size differed among seminars; for instance, there were a couple of seminars for which only 5-7 individuals completed the evaluation, and conversely, two seminars where 40+ participants filled them in. As can be seen in **Appendix I** some seminars drew less interest and had a relatively small team, whereas others were directed to much larger groups. Some trainers did better at persuading the attendees to complete the evaluations (first couple of seminars), whereas others may have given less of an emphasis.
- ✚ ***There were generally no significant differences in the participants’ answers among seminars, meaning analysis showed that all seminars (regardless of sample size) were received in a similarly positive manner.*** For this reason, it was deemed unnecessary to conduct 10 separate evaluations with small sample sizes, and results are depicted for all seminars together.

The encouraging positivity in attendants’ answers is reflected in the graphs below. The bars depict the number of people who gave each score:



- ❖ The feedback received was extremely reassuring. On the aforementioned 1-5 scale (ranging from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree*), it can be seen that black, red and green bars-reflecting negative evaluations, were scarce, ranging from 1% to 10% for any evaluation parameter.
- ❖ It is apparent from the answers that participants found that the seminar and the subsequent knowledge and skills acquired will be very *useful to their work context* as well as that information was *clearly and effectively transmitted*. In addition, the degree to which an *open learning environment* was established was rated high, as was the *quality of the techniques utilized*. They also found it interesting, and *would certainly recommend it to acquaintances*-the latter being a pretty significant indicator of a successful and meaningful seminar.
- ❖ In no thematic parameter did 'Agree' receive more replies than 'Strongly Agree'. The themes for which it was relatively close (meaning that participants were slightly less satisfied) concern the i) *encouragement of active participation*, ii) *the training offering them practical skills to be used in their work*, and iii) *the effectiveness of the methods employed*. I) and III) can partially be attributed to the online nature of the seminars, while II) is an outcome that is dependent on continuing professional development and requires building skills that go way beyond what one can receive from a one-day seminar. Still, the positivity of even these parameters is remarkably positive.

### Concluding thoughts from the first part of the evaluation

🌈 Based on the above findings, it is evident that the seminar can be rendered meaningful to participants in at least three respects:

- i) *the trainers did a great job in transmitting information as part of the seminars, and the knowledge received by the participants was relevant as well as useful to their work contexts.*
- ii) *the learning environment and educational process co-constructed in the seminars was safe and trusting, and trainers encouraged a more than satisfactory degree of active participation. The vast majority of the participants would happily recommend the seminars to their colleagues.*
- iii) *the particular methods employed (presentations/role plays/activities) were deemed appropriate, and participants thought enough time was allocated to each topic explored.*

## ❖ Open-ended questions

Regarding the open-ended questions of ‘*what was appreciated the most, and what the least about the training*’, the following remarks can be made based on the answers received:

### Positive feedback

- I. A lot of participants commended the ***diversity of the methods*** employed by the trainers. Some enjoyed the videos, in conjunction with the discussions about them, while others made reference to the ***creation of exchange teams. The examples and the personal testimonies of other trainers*** were also appreciated by attendants.
- II. Many participants enjoyed the ***experiential character*** (despite it being conducted online) of the seminar, namely the opportunities they were given, when split in sub-groups, to ***share their thoughts***, work on concepts learned via ***role-plays and simulations***, and the engaging conversations that were instigated. Some note that this was the result of successfully created small groups, which further promoted the ability of all participants to actively take part and share their experiences.
- III. Quite a few participants appreciated the emphasis given by the trainer to people’s ***propensity for resilience***. Participants feel that they are often ‘pushed’ (sometimes unconsciously) to view those affected by crises ***as victims in desperate need of support***. They found it refreshing that a framework for viewing people as more than faceless victims searching for help exists.
- IV. The ***choice of the topics*** seems to have been very well-received as well. Some of them in virtue of their ***relevance to people’s work contexts***, others because it forced them to ***re-examine their thinking patterns*** and things they take for granted. Some topics (especially LGBTQI session) presented participants with the ***opportunity to hear about a neglected, unfairly treated group via a trainer first-hand***, which was something they have not had the chance to be exposed to in similar initiatives.

### Suggestions for improvement

There *were not many negative comments* about the seminar. However, there were a couple of things that the majority of the participants noted towards the potential betterment & effectiveness of the seminars:

- I. ***More interactive-ness and open discussions among participants***. This was an issue reported in the evaluations of much larger seminars (groups of 30+), and not so much in the smaller groups (<20). It is to be expected due to the online nature of these seminars, as encouraging participation in this context (considering the time restrictions too) with large numbers of participants is a challenging endeavor.

- II. ***Even more role plays and experiential activities (most of the seminars already included a few), with examples and case studies to draw on.*** Although these activities were part of what the participants liked about the seminars, they are requested even more, as it would have increased opportunities for them to share experiences relevant to their everyday work-life.
- III. ***Continuation of such seminar initiatives.*** It is interesting, as well as encouraging of course, that some participants' suggestions centered on more similar seminars to be organized. They found some topics extremely stimulating, and they have experienced a lack of opportunities to consistently attend such meetings as part of their professional development.

### ***Participants' Quotes***

- **The summary of the open-ended questions above is useful, however, another meaningful way to evaluate such seminars is to look no further than quotes from the participants themselves. Here they aid to give a voice to the attendees, as well as serve as highlights to the initiative.**

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*"It [the seminar] helps you re-examine your everyday life from a different perspective, reminds you that there is a human being in front of you who you support, which is sometimes forgotten within the narrative of trauma; it forces you to take your eyes off trauma for a second, and widen your field of vision."*

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*"It placed me in a process of reflecting, in order to realize exactly how some types of behaviour I have come across in the past can be better comprehended. I think now I am much better equipped to respond to these situations in a more conscious way. Also, many questions I held about my own behaviour towards these people [refugees I support] were effectively answered."*

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*"It was amazing! Perhaps the best seminar I have participated in relevant to the field. The videos were absolutely captivating!!"*

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*"The multi-dimensional approach and depiction of issues that are faced by professionals in the field. It is important that emphasis was given on the need to understand beneficiaries as complex entities and the issues that plague them as complex too. Giving space and time to understanding our own role, as well as the emotions that are born through this interaction between 'us and them'."*

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*“The importance of this seminar consists in providing credible information and experiences by strong and worthy individuals, relevant to a topic [LGBTQI] which unfortunately is not given the attention it should. It is a topic where we are lagging very much behind as a society, hindered by harmful ideals that have been held for generations. The need for people who belong in this community to be freed is huge.”*

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*“Today we learned the importance of being a true professional, and not so much a ‘scientist’. What it is like NOT to inform others based on your qualifications and academic knowledge, but rather understanding people and their emotions in depth. To listen. To me personally, the comment made about telling children the truth despite how ugly it may be, it spoke right into my soul”.*

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## **Limitations**

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- ✚ Again, the completion rate of 53% (163 out of the 308) may serve to slightly compromise results. It could be argued there is a small bias as perhaps people who chose to fill in the evaluation enjoyed the seminars more than the ones who chose not to fill in an evaluation. This is still just a postulate, however, and is not necessarily the case.
- ✚ Without a question, these seminars would ideally take place face-to-face, enabling superior interaction and more room for role plays and simulations to practice real-life scenarios. Unfortunately the pandemic rendered this impossible at the moment (with the exception of the last seminar).
- ✚ Some participants noted connection problems, which was to be expected given everyone attended from different screens/places. As much as we have gotten used to such issues in the prior months, there is a degree of directness and openness that can be lost when connectivity issues are compounded with compromised interaction online.



## Appendix I

### Seminar Topics, Attendees & Completion by Seminar

<b>Title of seminar</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Number of participants attended</b>	<b>Number of participants who completed evaluation</b>
Dealing with challenges of everyday work with refugees	30/1/2021	50	40
Transgender	13/2/2021	82	44
Non-Violent Communication: Introduction	17/2/2021	59	N/A (no evaluation for the introduction)
Dealing with challenges in everyday work with minors (unaccompanied or not)	27/2/2021	15	5
Non-violent communication: Cycle 1	18/3/2021	22	7
Effective collaboration between interpreters and other professionals	27/3/2021	35	23
Non-violent communication: Cycle 2	17/4/2021	17	7
Mental health and psychosocial support in emergency settings: IASC Guidelines	24/4/2021	31	13
Psychosocial Dimensions of the Refugee Experience	8/5/2021	31	12
Self Care- I take care of myself to take care of others	22/5/2021	14	7
Psychological First Aid	26&27/6/2021	11	5

## Appendix II

### Evaluation form for Seminars

Please choose the option that better corresponds to how you feel about this seminar.

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree, nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
Information was clear and comprehensible.					
Information I received is useful to my work.					
The time allotted for each topic was appropriate.					
The training seminar provided me with practical skills and knowledge which I will apply in practice (e.g. in the event of a crisis).					
The training methods utilized by the trainer were effective.					
The training mobilized active participation and was interesting.					
The trainer facilitated a supportive environment during the seminar.					
I will recommend this training to others.					

**Please write a few words about what you deem was most useful about this training seminar.**

**Please write a few words about what you deem was least useful about this training seminar.**

**What recommendations can you offer towards the improvement of the training seminar for future participants?**