

EVSification

manual

volunteer

management
in EVS projects

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CENTRUM
DOBROVOLNICTVA



Voluntariat
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Erasmus+



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The EVSification Manual. Volunteer management in EVS projects, has been created as a part of the “EVSification” project implemented by Centrul de Voluntariat Cluj-Napoca (Romania) with the partners Centrum dobrovolnictva (Slovakia) and Fundacja Edukacji i Rozwoju Społeczeństwa Obywatelskiego (Poland). The project is financed by the European Commission through the Erasmus+ Programme –Key Action 2, Strategic Partnerships in the field of youth.



The European Commission' support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

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April 2016, Cluj Napoca, Romania

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Dear reader,

EVS seems to be sometimes like uncharted territory for organizations and volunteers! We are all navigating unknown new places and in this process it's hard sometimes to distinguish between our own assumptions and reality! Here is why the effort to adapt our assumptions to reality can be one of the keys to successful EVS projects. We have identified some potential traps you might find while discovering EVS and we want to summarize them here, hoping they will help you in your work:

We assume that working with EVS volunteers is always harmonious, easy and rewarding, as volunteers are just wonderful people who dedicate themselves to their work. Then we wonder why things get complicated and we begin to understand that volunteers are just people and that our role might be more complex than we thought.

We assume that the integration of the EVS volunteer in the community is always a pleasant process for the volunteer. As it can only be great to get to know new cultures, the volunteer can only feel good while trying to find his/her own way through this journey alone. Then we wonder why he/she has no links with others in the community.

We assume there's no need to motivate the volunteer, he/she is a volunteer after all and being motivated is part of being this. Then we wonder why he/she has lost enthusiasm or is becoming less motivated.

We assume that if we have explained the volunteer (orally) some things about his/her work and the volunteering stage, he/she understood and will remember everything exactly and with details, after all....we did just tell him/her! Then we wonder why we have different per-

ceptions about the nature, duration and quality of his/her work.

We assume that if things go well with the volunteer, they will continue in the same manner, why would this change? And then we forget that change and development is in our nature.

We assume that the volunteer is not a human being, he/she must be a super hero! Then we are surprised to learn that he/she has flaws.

We assume the volunteer is an amateur, being just a volunteer. Then we wonder how it can be that he/she has outshone us.

We assume that the volunteer is organized, he/she is coming from a country where organization and planning are engraved in the nation's DNA. Then we are surprised he/she is not.

We assume the volunteer accepts and appreciates our organizational culture, we do have a great atmosphere all the time. Then we wonder why he/she doesn't feel at home!

We assume the volunteer is happy and do not even bother to question this and make sure we understand his/her deeper feelings. Then we wonder why he/she doesn't feel integrated and needs a change.

We assume the volunteer's unhappy being away from home, family and friends. We overwhelm him/her with excessive attention and then we are surprised when we are told our effort was not needed.

We assume the volunteer knows without saying that we appreciate him/her, volunteering can only be appreciated and so we don't need to express it out loud...and then we wonder why they are not grateful or thankful!

In the chapters you are about to discover we will not assume that the ones who need to change to improve an EVS project are the volunteers (even though this can be the case in your particular situation). But we will look at the perspective of the hosting organization and

the volunteer coordinator, trying to balance some of these assumptions and to test them using a reality check!

In the next few pages you can read some of the ideas experts and literature present on managing EVS volunteers. But you will also find the conclusions of our years of working with EVS volunteers, years that have meant a “trial and error” learning process, most of the times. We are still learning with every volunteer and every EVS project we are hosting. And our aim with this manual, as a partnership, is to share the lessons we have learned so far (sometimes assuming and being hit by reality in the face) and to help you uncover the beauty of working with EVS volunteers!

You will find at the end of each chapter a small section with tips and tricks that we hope will be practical and useful. For more in-depth details about EVS in our national context (Romania, Slovakia, Poland) you can of course contact any of the three partners involved in this process. We are all happy to share our journey whenever we have an ear that will listen!

We wish you a pleasant reading and a great EVS adventure!

Nicoleta Chiş-Racolţa

Executive director, Cluj-Napoca Volunteer Centre

1. INTRODUCTION

Dear reader.

The European Voluntary Service (EVS) Manual that you are just opening was created to support the management of EVS projects, for all organizations and coordinators involved in EVS.

It is also one of the outcomes of the international project called “EVSification”, implemented by three partner organizations: Cluj-Napoca Volunteer Centre (Romania), Fundacja Edukacji i Rozwoju Społeczeństwa Obywatelskiego (Poland) and Centrum dobrovol’níctva (Slovakia).

First step to create this manual was a research aimed to identify needs of 60 organizations from the three countries mentioned above. The outcomes from the research were used to create the chapters of this manual.

People involved in designing the manual have experience, both in writing on this topic, as well as in effectively managing volunteers. The content of the manual represents their views, experience and recommendations.

The manual is created in printed and digital version, both in English and in the native languages of the three partners - Romanian, Slovak and Polish.

We wish you pleasant reading!

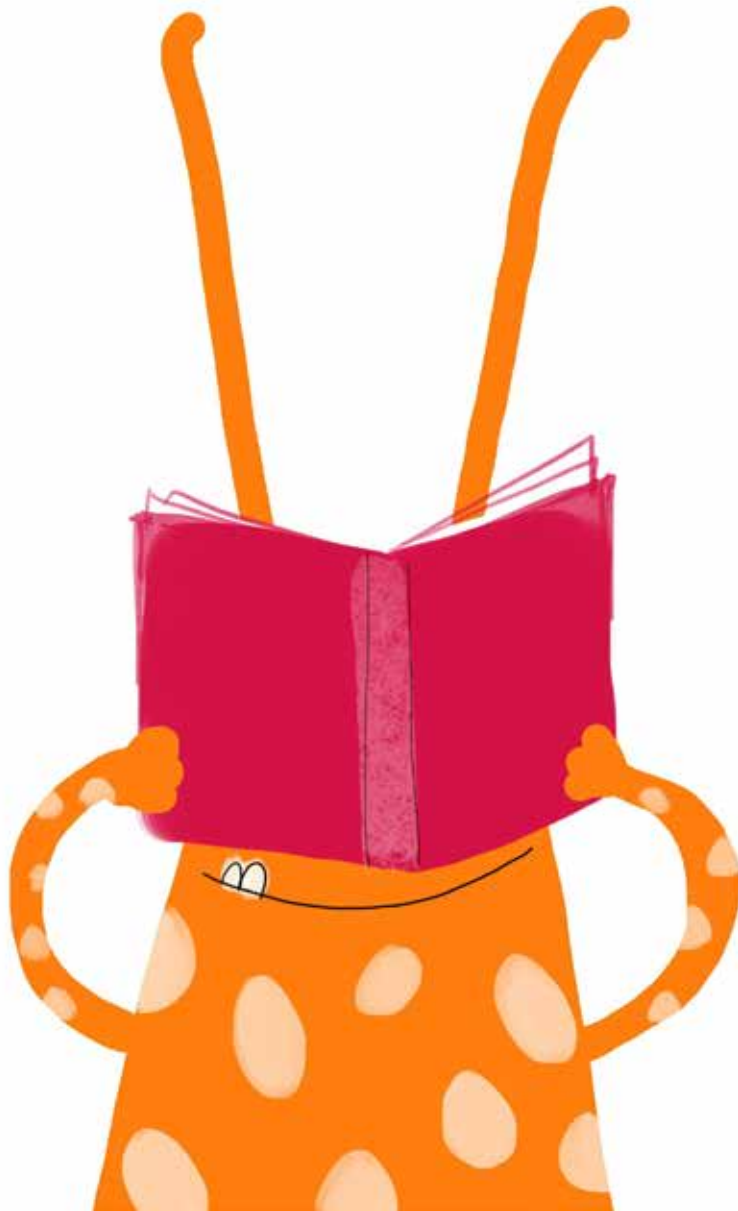


2. 

 EVS

Introduction 





HISTORY OF EVS

During the late 80's and early 90's the **European Commission** took in consideration to take some actions, in the youth field, in order to promote non-formal and informal education, mobility, solidarity, tolerance, active citizenship and mutual understanding among European young people. One of these actions is **European Voluntary Service** which was established as a pilot action in 1996. It became part of the "**Youth for Europe**" programme in 1998 and since then it is an important part of the European Youth programmes. In 2007, the "**Youth in Action**" programme started, involving under its actions also Action 2 -European Voluntary Service. Since January 2014 there is a Programme called **Erasmus+** (Erasmus Plus) that is combining all EU schemes for education, training, youth and sport. European Voluntary Service projects are supported under the Key Action 1 (KA1) – Learning mobility of individuals. Only organizations that are accredited for EVS can apply for hosting, sending or coordinating a project under this action. There is the Erasmus + Programme Guide that describes all the criteria for the project submission, limitations and timelines. You can find it in all official languages of European Union on www.erasmusplus.eu. In every EU country there is a **National Agency** in charge of implementation of the Erasmus+ Programme. This is also the main communication authority for the applicants and beneficiaries.

There is also another legal document called "**The EVS Charter**" that highlights the roles of EVS sending, receiving and coordinating organisations and the main principles and quality standards of EVS.



BENEFITS OF EVS PROJECTS FOR VOLUNTEERS AND ORGANIZATIONS

There were several surveys done to show the impact and benefits of EVS projects. We can find them also in the **final report** of each EVS project filled in by the organisations and volunteers. The specific benefits of EVS projects for organizations and volunteers are documented also in our research findings.

According to the **interviews** conducted, EVS volunteers gained diverse experience during their service. From a **personal point of view** they feel they gain the greatest benefits are:

- Self-awareness, finding himself/ herself;
- Opportunity to work with people;
- Trying new things;
- Have a possibility to implement their own projects;
- Development of diverse skills and abilities, such as empathy, social skills;
- Development of intercultural understanding, reducing prejudice and stereotypes;
- Getting to know new people and meeting volunteers from other countries;
- Fun with friends.

From a **professional point of view** volunteers evaluated positively, in particular, the following facts:

- Connection of EVS to the education;
- Development of skills and gain of experiences useful in professional life;
- Impact on professional orientation.

For the organisations that participated in the survey, the implementation of EVS projects also brought many benefits, such as:

- Help in fulfilling the mission of the organisation;
- Contribution to the improvement and development of new projects, activities and services in organizations;
- Strengthened personal capacities;
- Contribution to the personal and professional development of the organisation and its workers. Staff improved intercultural competences, communication skills, skills to communicate in a foreign language, skills in international projects management, organisational skills;
- Raised quality of projects;
- Brought new ideas, thoughts and perspectives;
- Strengthened the influence of organisation in their local community;
- Increased visibility of the organization;
- Developed the cooperation with local and regional partners or with EVS partners;
- Improved the overall management of work in the organisations;
- Improved PR of the organisation and increased their prestige;
- Contributed to a new perception of the organisation and its functioning; organisations became more diverse and their environment is more tolerant.
- Strengthened financial capacity;
- Brought an intercultural experience.

EVS is called by European Commission a true **“learning service”**. What is meant by this is that beyond benefiting the local communities, by participating in voluntary activities, young volunteers can develop new skills and, therefore, improve their personal, educational and professional development.

BEFORE YOU START TO WORK WITH EVS VOLUNTEERS

If your organization takes the decision to work with EVS volunteers, it is important to know what are your goals and reasons, why you want to use this opportunity. Volunteering is beneficial for all involved parties, but the EVS project management has also the specific conditions and requirements

The group of EVS volunteers can be very diverse. You can have one volunteer that can be managed very easily but, in the same group, you can have another volunteer that may face various issues. We recommend you to evaluate your own internal capacity, if you think about starting to work with this target group. You should make a SWOT analysis of your organisation, with a focus on the work of EVS volunteers.

A **SWOT analysis** is a complex method that will help you to evaluate the internal and also the external organisational environment. It offers an inside view on the organisation's functionality, from reflection over the past to future perspectives. The method analyses the basic factors divided into: internal strengths vs. weaknesses and external opportunities vs. threats. A SWOT analysis is very good tool for evaluating new ideas. It works with the assumption that the organisation will achieve its goals by capitalizing on its internal strengths and external opportunities, and, at the same time, by minimizing weaknesses and deferring threats.

SWOT analysis example – engagement of EVS volunteers into volunteering in a concrete organisation

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- good and also bad experiences in hosting EVS volunteers- partners on international level; possible sending organizations- many experiences with local volunteers- many contacts with local organizations- space for EVS volunteers for own projects and ideas- attractive space for young people- coordinator has an experiences as an international volunteer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- the coordinator has not so much time for EVS volunteers- changes in organization and new people- a few experiences with sending volunteers- no strategy for sending volunteers and - no person responsible for this project- no system of training for mentors- missing system of clear responsibilities for implementation of EVS projects
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none">-financial sources for organization- new ideas, projects- strengthen personal capacities of organization- intercultural dimension of projects and organization- cooperation with high schools and municipality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- sending organization will not find the volunteer- we can lost other financial sources for organization

Based on the SWOT analysis results, an organisation can draw conclusions and further steps. The SWOT analysis is an appropriate method for organisations that want to start working with EVS volunteers, but also for organisations that already implement EVS projects for a longer time.

3. Volunteer
Management
in the
context of
EVS
projects



INTRODUCTION INTO THE EVS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Involving EVS volunteers in an organization is a planned and structured process. The volunteer manager/coordinator is the main actor that ensures reaching the goals and objectives set for the project at the community level as well as the overall satisfaction and impact on the EVS volunteers (during the process and in the final results). In the next chapters we will discover together the process of managing EVS volunteers and highlight some elements that need special attention. We will go through this process from various perspectives: the organization hosting EVS volunteers, the project manager and the volunteer coordinator.

There are different theoretical models that present the stages of an efficient volunteer management process. Out of these, we have chosen the one we believe applies best to EVS projects. The theoretical model is based on 9 different steps or phases presented below:

- Preparation of the organisation for involving EVS volunteers
- Recruitment of EVS volunteers
- Selection of EVS volunteers
- Orientation and training of EVS volunteers
- Coordination and mentoring in EVS
- Supervision in EVS
- Motivating EVS volunteers
- Recognition of merits of EVS volunteers
- Monitoring the activity of EVS volunteers
- Evaluation of EVS volunteers and volunteering projects

You will find more details, both theory and some practical approach, in the next pages (each chapter includes a tips-and-tricks section at the end).

3.1. PREPARATION OF THE ORGANIZATION FOR INVOLVING EVS VOLUNTEERS

Preparing the organization for the involvement of EVS volunteers is just like laying the foundation for a house, the more attention you give to the process, the more you gain from it on the long term. EVS is focused on the volunteers' personal development and on building the proper context for this process to be facilitated. However, involving EVS volunteers in an organization must be in close and direct connection with its declared mission, vision and values. That is why, before establishing any contact with potential volunteers, it is of absolute necessity to have a preliminary preparation/planning stage. If we decide to fast-track this process and skip the planning stage, we could end up with multiplying the problems of the organization instead of diminishing them by working with volunteers.

The decision to involve EVS volunteers should be preceded by weighing up the costs and the benefits volunteers would bring to the organization. Among the reasons that support the involvement of EVS volunteers in an NGO we mention: expanding the offered services, increasing the quality of services provided through the vision brought by the new volunteers (which often reflects the views of the community they come from), improving the relations with the community, including a multicultural perspective to the day-to-day work of the organization and the various benefits of the volunteers themselves. However, not always is the implementation of an EVS project the best solution for the organization, which must take into account also the potential costs, such as risks specific to EVS projects (eg: volunteers quitting the project before its end, the need to change partner organizations,

difficulties faced by the volunteers in integrating in the work and living context or failure of the volunteers in finalizing the tasks given).

At the same time, the staff of the organization should carefully consider one of the main aspects that lead to conflict and difficulties in international volunteer programs: the intercultural element and the differences that exist at a cultural level. The main question we should be asking in this regard refers to whether or not we are ready to ensure an efficient volunteer management in the program: do our staff possess the skills needed for this (conflict management, teambuilding skills, communication abilities, etc.), does our organization offer integration opportunities for the volunteers, will the local community offer the proper context for integration and learning, etc.

Only after this reflection and analysis process of weighing both the negative and the positive impact of EVS volunteers on the organization, should the decision concerning starting EVS projects be made.

Taking things a step further, the preparation of the organization for involving EVS volunteers has to take into consideration a few directions, as presented below.

Needs assessment is directly linked to the identification of possible tasks for volunteers. From this perspective, it is particularly important to achieve a direct link between the tasks we assign to the volunteers and the organization's mission. Volunteers need to understand their role and place in the organization and in which way their work will contribute to reaching its goals. This will give them a feeling of relevance and significance and will represent a highly motivating factor. Among the questions the organization must answer in this phase are: do our services and activities offer an environment in which EVS volunteers could learn and develop themselves? can we identify enough tasks for the EVS volunteers? should these tasks be done by a paid staff (as an EVS volunteer should never replace the

work of an employee)? can we create a flexible working context that will offer volunteers the opportunity to implement their own ideas in personal projects? what are the needs of our organization and our clients? can EVS volunteers fulfill these needs? Strongly connected to this is the **capacity assessment** that looks at the overall resources (experience, motivation, prepared staff, etc.) the organization has, in order to decide whether involving EVS volunteers can be a positive experience, both for the volunteers and the organization. Sometimes involving volunteers, and particularly EVS volunteers, in an environment that is not prepared for them, will only add to the problems of the organization instead of helping the staff increase the quality of their work.

ACCREDITATION FOR EVS PROJECTS

The accreditation for EVS projects is a process that ensures that good quality standards are respected in the implemented projects. Receiving the accreditation is a compulsory step for any organization wanting to be involved in this type of projects. The rule applies to all organizations from a Programme Country, a country neighboring Partner Countries in Western Balkans or the Eastern Partnership and the Russian Federation. Starting with 2015, accreditation became compulsory also for organizations from the Southern Mediterranean region. Accreditation is an assurance that all organizations involved and their staff members are aware of the values, objectives and principles that govern EVS projects. Accreditation is available for both sending and hosting EVS volunteers, but informal groups cannot apply for it.

The accreditation process is coordinated by the National Agency, if the organization is located in one of the Programme Countries, by SALTO EECA for all organisations located in Eastern Partnership countries and the Russian Federation, by SALTO SEE for all organisations located in Western Balkans countries and by SALTO Euromed for all organisations located in the Southern Mediterranean countries. There are no deadlines for submitting the accreditation, but this should already be approved at the moment of submitting a project proposal (and be valid for the entire period of the project). The accreditation process takes a minimum of 6 weeks, however, to be sure the process is completed in time, the organization should allow more time in between receiving accreditation and its plans for applying a project.

The maximum period of the accreditation requested by the organization can be the maximum duration of the Erasmus+ Programme. At the same time, the organization may request a shorter validity period, and the National Agency/SALTO may award accreditation

for a shorter period than what has been requested. Upon expiry, the accreditation can be renewed if the organization submits a new accreditation application.

Once the organization requesting the accreditation submits an online form for this, together with the needed documents, the National Agency/SALTO appoints accreditors/assessors to evaluate accreditation applications. At least two accreditors will assess each application in areas such as: organization's motivation and experience, knowledge of Erasmus+ and EVS, organisation's aims, activities and capacities, risk prevention and well-being system put in place for the volunteers, recruitment of volunteers, etc. In addition, for the organizations interested in hosting volunteers, the assessment process will look also at possible volunteer tasks, organization's capacity to create an environment that will facilitate the learning process, personal support offered by a mentor and efforts to support integration in the local community, practical arrangements. At the end of this process, accreditors may ask for further clarification or information, as well as suggest improvements or even possibly ask for revisions of an accreditation application, which can be done by resubmitting the form.

Once the accreditation is approved, the requesting organization will be informed, it will receive an accreditation number and their description will be published in the volunteering database on the European Youth Portal, where potential volunteers will be able to read it. For specific information on the steps you need to do for the accreditation process, check the website of your National Agency or SALTO.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR EVS VOLUNTEERS

Efficient volunteer management in the context of EVS projects requires that a set of formal rules and procedures are created by the organization in this preparation phase. The benefits of policies and procedures are various, for both the volunteer and the organization: they develop a consistent pattern for EVS volunteer involvement, they increase efficiency by making sure volunteers know who to address or what to do in specific situations, they ensure equal treatment and objective assessments of specific situations, they clarify the role of the EVS volunteers and their specific rights and responsibilities, etc.

While some policies and procedures might seem relevant only for the staff members of the organization, make sure your organization maintains transparency and informs EVS volunteers on all the aspects that concern them directly (this can be done in many ways: a face-to-face discussion, creating a brochure on Policy and procedures for EVS volunteers, etc.). Some of the policies and procedures used for local volunteer or even with the paid staff of the organization can be adapted to EVS volunteers as well: procedure for reimbursement of transport or other costs for the activities, rules regarding the work space, procedures for reporting the working hours, etc. At the same time, the organization should take into consideration the specifics of EVS projects when creating the set of policies and procedures and it should make sure this includes elements such as: policy on the recruitment and selection of EVS volunteers, planning and informing the organization on the free days volunteers have a right to take according to the EVS Charter, rules and principles of the living environment, liability for damages in the working or living environment, reporting procedures for mentors, balancing the right to privacy of the volunteers with the need of communication between the mentor and the coordinator, etc.

The last two elements that the organization should focus on during the preparation phase

are the **preparation of documents** needed and of the **team involved**. The preparation of documents should take into consideration all the management steps in the coordination of volunteers, from recruitment to evaluation of the EVS volunteers and the project. Among the elements that need attention in this phase are: job descriptions, reporting forms for mentors, activity time sheets for volunteers, evaluation forms (for mentors, volunteers, beneficiaries of the volunteers' activity, sending organizations, etc.), etc.

Making sure the team that will work with EVS volunteers is ready implies identifying the EVS volunteer coordinator responsible for the task-related support and the mentors that will offer personal support to the volunteers, and making sure they are prepared for their tasks, through trainings, informational resources, sharing experience with other coordinators or mentors, etc.. The EVS volunteer coordinator can be appointed from the old staff of the organization or can be recruited especially for this position, in either case a period of training being necessary. On the other side, in order to ensure the objectivity of the mentors (especially in conflict situations between volunteers and coordinators), it's good to select them from the people connected with the organization (volunteers, former employees, etc) but who are not directly involved as paid staff. This will help mentors facilitate the integration process of the volunteers in the working and living environment, but also to mediate difficult situations between the organization and the volunteer, if these arise.

The preparation of the organization for involving EVS volunteers is an investment of resources (time, people, energy, etc.) but at the same time, it is a process that makes sure that both the EVS volunteer and the organization benefit from the experience, on the long term.

Oana Țicle

Ioana Bere

TIPS AND TRICKS

- Before making the decision to start this journey, find experienced organizations that already work with EVS and try to find out from them what the main challenges of involving EVS volunteers are.
- Weigh the arguments for and against involving EVS volunteers in your organization and take this decision together with your entire team.
- Decide in your team who will have the role of EVS volunteer coordinator.
- Invest resources in training and preparing the team that will work with EVS volunteers.
- Financial planning is an important part of preparing the organization for involving EVS volunteers – as EVS is based on a monthly lump sum, financial planning is essential for ensuring the needs of the volunteer and all the costs involved by the activities are covered.
- The preparation of the volunteers' arrival is also a preliminary step in starting an EVS stage and can include elements very diverse: from logistical preparation (accommodation, bank accounts, monthly transport passes, etc.) to communication with the volunteers before arrival, sending an info pack with details, etc.

3.2. RECRUITMENT OF EVS VOLUNTEERS

Very rarely, the volunteers suited for the EVS placements your organization is offering will come up at your door on their own. In most cases, finding the volunteers the organization needs implies an active process of spreading the word about the EVS volunteering opportunity and searching for the right volunteers. This is exactly what recruitment does!

Recruitment is not about convincing people to do something they don't want to do, but rather to show them the opportunity to get involved into something they were already motivated to do. In recruitment, the aim is to find the people who are attracted and motivated by the EVS opportunity your organization is offering.

Recruitment of volunteers in EVS projects follows the main guidelines of any recruitment process for volunteers in general, but at the same time has some special characteristics that will be dealt with in the second part of this chapter.

The recruitment process follows three main steps:

1. **Preparing the recruitment.** Answers two main questions: what volunteers do we need and what will they do in our organization?

Directly connected to the elements discussed in the previous chapter (Preparation of the organizations for involving EVS volunteers) it includes assessing the need for volunteers in the organization, developing the job descriptions, as well as the volunteer's profile.

2. **Planning the recruitment.** Implies focusing the recruitment (choosing the target groups

based on the previously established job descriptions), creating a timetable for the recruitment and developing the recruitment process (creating the message, choosing the recruiting techniques which best fit the objectives pursued, identifying the resources needed and the persons involved).

3.The recruitment itself. Involves turning into action the strategy developed in the preparation and planning steps.

The literature on recruitment of volunteers in general identifies different types of recruitment. McCurley, Lynch and Jackson present a 5-type classification for the volunteers' recruitment process:

- *Warm body recruitment* – It's useful for those volunteering opportunities that don't require special skills or that require skills that anyone can be taught in a small amount of time. The principle used by this type of recruitment is spreading the message to an audience as wide as possible, presuming that somewhere in this audience the organization will find the people needed. As methods used, it relies on tools such as: flyers and posters, advertising on websites or in the media (newspapers, radio, etc.), using the organization's website to promote the volunteering opportunity, contacting local community groups and spreading the message among their members (such as the Scouts), broadcast emails and telephone messages.
- *Targeted recruitment* – This form of recruitment is extremely useful when the volunteering opportunity you are promoting implies certain specific competences (for example: accounting, face painting or other artistic skills, speaking a foreign language, etc.). In the planning phase of the recruitment you should answer these questions: who are the volunteers we need? what specific competences should they have for this volunteering role? where can we find people with these competences? how should

we communicate with them and what should our message be? Once you answer these questions, you will have the basis for your targeted recruitment campaign.

- *Concentric circles recruitment* – This type of recruitment is based on the assumption that the people already connected to the organization are the best targets for a recruitment campaign, not only by volunteering themselves, but also by motivating others around them to do it. Some of the best groups for building your concentric circles recruitment include current volunteers, friends and family members of volunteers, clients of the organization, friends and family members of clients, staff members or donors, people in the neighborhood, etc. How it works? Using people the organization is already in contact with, such as the groups presented before, you are starting a word-of-mouth campaign that will help you find the volunteers you are searching for. In addition, involving these groups in the recruitment uses the positive connection already existing between them and the organization as well as the impact the organization has generated in the local community as motivating factors for volunteering.
- *Ambient recruitment* – An ambient recruitment campaign is directed to a closed system such as a school, a company, a neighborhood, a church group, etc. This seeks to develop a culture of involvement among the members of the community, that leads to individuals deciding to volunteer. This type of recruitment however does not work for all groups.
- *Brokered recruitment* – Connects your organization with other groups whose purpose is to provide volunteers for the local community and in this way enhances your recruitment efforts. Such groups may include volunteer centers, local corporate volunteer programs, youth groups in schools and universities, etc. All these can place you in contact with individuals seeking volunteering opportunities that can be interested in what your organization is offering.



HOW DOES ALL THIS WORK IN EVS PROJECTS?

One of the most important principles our organization is using in the recruitment of EVS volunteers is: recruit the volunteer and not the partner organization! It's great if you work with partners you have had a good cooperation with in the past, but at the same time making sure the volunteer is compatible with the position you are offering is the first priority. Promote your vacancy among all previous partner organizations, but in the end choose the volunteer based on the profile you define in the planning phase of the recruitment and not based on his/her sending organization.

Another element specific to EVS projects is related to the time limits set for the recruitment by the project flow. The recruitment of EVS volunteers can be done either prior to submitting the project proposal to the National or Executive Agency, or after the project proposal is approved, before the actual start of the activities (if you have enough time to do that). Our recommendation is to recruit the volunteers before the submission of the project proposal. Even though there is a risk to lose the volunteers before the start of the activities, this strategy will allow you not only to individualize the project proposal to include the actual needs of the volunteers, but also to take more time to develop the relationship with your future volunteers. For example, you can use Facebook groups to communicate constantly with the volunteers and allow them to ask questions or share information with the other volunteers involved.

One of the challenges of recruiting EVS volunteers is related to the fact that the organization doing the recruitment is not in the same place (city, not even the same country) as the target group. In addition, there are numerous cultural and environmental differences that can affect the efficiency of your recruitment message as well as of the channels you use

to promote it.

As an organization in search of EVS volunteers you can counter all these by creating a clear and complete description of what the volunteering opportunity implies, as well as use the proper ways to make this description public.

An essential tool used in the recruitment of EVS volunteers is the call for volunteers, a short but clear description of what your opportunity offers to potential volunteers. When writing your call for volunteers make sure you include the following information: short introduction on your organization, details about the location of the activities as well as the exact dates, information about the role of the volunteers and their main task, selection criteria (mention here any experience the volunteers should have or any specific competences you require, if any), what is the application procedure and which is the application deadline. Make sure you include in the call for volunteers the full contact details of the person responsible for the recruitment and you make yourself available for further questions from potential volunteers.

Once your call for volunteers is ready, the next question is how you can make sure the message reaches the volunteers targeted. There are different ways to promote the call for volunteers, some more efficient than others. In all cases however, an efficient recruitment process of EVS volunteers relies on a combination of the following:

- *Database with potential volunteers (warm body recruitment)* – Once your accreditation is approved and your organization's description appears in the European database, potential volunteers will start contacting you. Even if you don't have an active call for volunteers when this happens, it's a good idea to create your own database with volunteers who express their interest in volunteering with you and once you decide to host EVS volunteers you can send them this call.

- *Present or former partner organizations (brokered recruitment)* – Send your call for volunteers to EVS accredited organizations you have worked with in past projects. Of course, if your experience was not positive with a partner (delay in answering, not fulfilling their responsibilities in time, etc.) you can choose who to inform or not. If you decide to start a targeted recruitment (for example for volunteers that have experience in theatre or creation of videos) you can also narrow down the partners you contact with the call, depending on their profile and area of expertise.
- *Former EVS volunteers (concentric circles recruitment)* – Happy volunteers are the best promoters your organization can have! Involve the volunteers you have worked with in the past to promote your call of volunteers among their friends or relatives. They can use their personal experience to motivate others in becoming EVS volunteers in your projects.
- *Online platforms and yahoo groups (warm body recruitment)* – Platforms such as www.youthnetworks.eu or yahoo groups (EVS_host-sending_possibilities@yahoogroups.com; EVSpartners@yahoogroups.com; etc.) offer you the chance to promote your vacancy among young people interested in EVS projects.
- *The European Youth Portal (warm body recruitment)* – In addition to the database with EVS accredited organizations, the European Youth Portal now allows organizations to post also their EVS vacancies. You can find more information on how you can do this on the official website, here is the link: https://europa.eu/youth/eu/article/46/19564_en
- *Use social media* – Be creative in using social media for recruiting EVS volunteers. Use your organization's Facebook page as well as the different Facebook groups where you can post your opportunity.

As a conclusion, a very important principle in building your recruitment strategy is to balance the amount of channels used and resources invested in this process with the number of volunteers you are searching for. If, for example, your aim is to recruit 2 EVS volunteers and you get 100 applications, after an intensive promoting effort, you will need to invest also a lot of time in the screening process and deciding who will be the 2 selected applicants. In this case, maybe a more efficient approach is to promote the project only to your previous partners and then spread out the message through other channels, if they can't send you the needed applications.

Oana Țicle

Ioana Bere

TIPS AND TRICKS IN RECRUITMENT OF EVS VOLUNTEERS:

- Make a time schedule for the recruitment process and set clear deadlines. Make sure you allow yourself some extra time, to extend the call for volunteers in case you don't have enough applications.
- Adapt your recruitment efforts to the number of EVS volunteers you are planning to involve.
- Focus on recruiting the volunteers that fit with your profile, even if you have not worked before with their sending organizations as partners.
- Know your target group: since EVS is addressed to young people (18-30 years old) a creative, original call can work wonderfully! Use prezi, videos, infographic, etc.
- Show interest and try to answer the questions potential volunteers send you, as soon as your schedule allows it. This will be the first contact of the potential volunteers with you and first impressions matter.

3.3. SELECTION OF EVS VOLUNTEERS

The selection of volunteers is closely related to the recruitment process, being based on what the organization designed beforehand as potential roles of volunteers and the profile guiding the selection of candidates.

The literature in this field presents the selection process of volunteers in general, as having different features compared to the selection of paid staff in an organization. This takes into account the characteristic of voluntary work which is the dedication of one's time and abilities for the benefit of others, without expecting financial rewards. From this perspective, in the case of volunteers, instead of "selection" we should rather talk about a "matching process", about finding the suitable volunteer for the activities offered by the organization or finding suitable work for a newcomer if he/she cannot hold any existing positions. With some limitations given by the framework of the projects, this perspective is valid also for EVS volunteers.

The selection process of volunteers balances two sides of the same coin: the context and the needs of the organization, on one hand and the needs, interests and abilities of the volunteer, on the other hand. A volunteer should not be placed in a position for which he/she has not an interest or motivation, just because he/she fits the profile. Neither should a volunteer be given a role for which he/she is highly motivated but doesn't have the competences needed. Therefore, the selection of volunteers should aim to reach a win-win situation for both parts involved.

Matching a volunteer with a task and a working environment they will enjoy is one of the challenges a volunteer coordinator must face. To approach this challenge efficiently, the coordinator has a few instruments that have proven to be useful in the selection of volunteers: the application form, recommendation letters and the selection interview. In most cases, these instruments are not used individually, but organizations prefer a combination of them in order to ensure that all the information needed for the final decision was obtained from the candidates.

The **application forms** are individualized for each organization and present several important advantages: provide specific information, represent a centralized way to collect and retain information for all volunteers applying, can help in structuring the themes for subsequent selection interviews. These forms are used as a means of gathering the information needed in order to guide the candidate towards the volunteering position that suits him/her best. At the same time, the application forms represent in most of the cases a pre-assessment of the volunteer (motivation, abilities, interests etc.) before an actual selection interview. It is common for the application form to be accompanied or even replaced by an English version of the CV and, even more important, a motivation letter underlining the main reasons why the candidate chose the project and the organization.

References or recommendations can be used in addition to other selection methods. References can confirm the existence of skills identified by other methods and at the same time can offer relevant information concerning the candidate, which cannot be captured through application forms or interviews. A core principle for building the credibility of a recommendation is for its author to have a professional relationship with the candidate as opposed to knowing him/her as a friend or family member.

However, the instrument with which we can get the most complete information about a

candidate for a volunteering position is the selection interview. Any selection interview is a two-way process, a reciprocal process that allows the organization to obtain the information needed from the candidate, but at the same time offers the person interviewed the basic elements that define the mission, vision, activities, beneficiaries, etc. of the organization. Therefore, the main topics of discussion during a selection interview are aimed firstly at providing information on the history, mission, values of the organization, details of activities which will involve volunteers, expectations of the organization etc., and secondly at obtainin details concerning the education and training, experience, qualities and skills, attitudes and values etc. of the candidate.

HOW DOES ALL THIS WORK IN EVS PROJECTS?

Our aim is to give you a very practical guide to EVS volunteer management through this manual. So in the next section we want to take you through the selection process of EVS volunteers, as it has been tested and improved by our organization in the last 6 years.

First of all, we are always designing the selection of EVS volunteers as a two-step process: evaluation of CVs and motivation letters received from interested volunteers and conducting skype interviews with the pre-selected candidates (the process is presented from the start in the recruitment call for volunteers, potential candidates being informed on the specific deadlines for each of these steps).

The CVs and motivation letters offer a first level of information about the potential volunteers, including selection criteria (such as age requirements, nationality – relevant if a project proposal is submitted or approved by a National Agency, there are certain limitations regarding the sending countries of the volunteers, etc.), but also aspects related to the volunteers' motivation. If needed, at this point we will contact also the sending organizations of volunteers, which can offer more details about the applicants. This first phase is

ended with a shortlist of candidates selected for the interview and with informing the other candidates on the decision. When deciding the shortlist for the interviews, take into consideration that some of the candidates you invite to an interview will not have a positive answer, so make sure you have a safe number of candidates (not too big, not too small) that will allow you to make your choice in the end.

The interview will verify and complete the information gained already through the CV and motivation letter. Although the most common means for facilitating the interview is the use of tools such as Skype, interviewing by telephone is also an option. What are the essential steps for preparing an interview?:

1. *Make a clear schedule with the interviews* – Decide the period for the interviews together with your team and announce it in the public call for volunteers, but then allow each candidate to choose the day and hour that suits them best. You can do this via email, but also using tools such as Doodle, that will allow you to use predefined interview hours for the specific days you have planned and then invite all volunteers to choose the one or the ones that fit with their own schedule. Warn the volunteers to check if there are any time zones differences between their country and yours, before choosing their availability interval and send them the invitation to the interview with at least 3 or 4 days in advance.

2. *Prepare the interview guide* – Once you are face-to-face with the candidates (via a screen at least) it will be very useful to have an interview guide that will help you start the conversation. Make sure you don't stick to the interview guide just because you have to do it and allow yourself to explore also other areas not included in the initial questions. To give you a more concrete idea of what can be asked in an interview for an EVS placement, in the appendix of the chapter you can find an interview guide we are using in our interviews.

3. *Prepare an interview form for writing down answers* – This is optional, but it can be very useful to have a way to collect the information you get from potential volunteers in the

same way for all interviews conducted.

4. *Decide who is doing the interview* – Especially if you have a big number of interviews planned, it can turn out to be a good strategy to have 2 people carrying out the interviews. One of them can ask the questions and the other one can take notes. This will not only ease the workload of your staff members (asking the questions can be as resource-consuming as answering them), but it will allow the selection process to be more objective, by having two sets of opinions on the candidates. As for the competences of the person doing the interview, he/she should have: good knowledge about the organization, ability to communicate with different types of people, ability to listen and ask right questions according to plan, ability to say “no”.

5. *Conduct the interviews as planned* – Make sure you are online at the time of each interview and you are ready for them. Read again the CVs and motivation letters of the candidates and write down specific questions that arise from them. Choose a proper place for the interviews, a quiet one that can offer privacy to both you and the candidate, and double-check the technical arrangements before you start (camera, microphone, internet connection, etc.).

6. Once the interviews are finished, *make a shortlist of candidates* to present to your team and decide together who will be selected. Include a list of reserves in case you will not get the final confirmation from all selected candidates.

7. *Inform all applicants interviewed* on the decision you made and answer other questions on their side.

8. One last element that can be added to a selection interview is a *practical task* given to the volunteer, so as to show you a bit more how the candidates would integrate in their role, if selected. For example, for the volunteers applying for a clinic animation program in the children’s hospital, this task would be to briefly design a 3-hour schedule of activities that could be done in the hospital (description, aim of the activities, materials needed). Volunteers

are then required to send this via email before the interview itself and the proposed activities are then discussed during the interview. Depending on the specific of the activities, different practical assignments can accompany the selection interview.

Volunteer interviewing is not about comparing a candidate to a preset profile and deciding he/she fits or not the desired characteristics. It is rather a deeper process of trying to learn who the interviewed person is and how the organization can create a work environment that will be satisfying to both the volunteer and the organization. As mentioned before, selection of EVS volunteers should be a matching process between the volunteer's and the organization's needs. For sure no organization will be able to host all the volunteers interested in their activities, but still, before completely rejecting a volunteer, the organization can do several things: include the volunteer on a reserve list and give them the opportunity to get involved if one of the selected volunteers withdraws from the project, assess if the volunteer is more suited in a different EVS placement planned by the organization and direct him/her towards that, recommend the volunteer to apply to placements of other organizations, etc.

As a conclusion, the selection process represents rather a matching between what is needed or provided by the organization and the individual characteristics of the applicant that can be integrated into the services offered by the organization. Therefore, adapt your selection process to this and make sure you are not asking too much from the candidates (such as numerous levels of applications forms and selection interviews, etc.), in the end we are selecting for a volunteering position and not a highly paid, Wall Street job!

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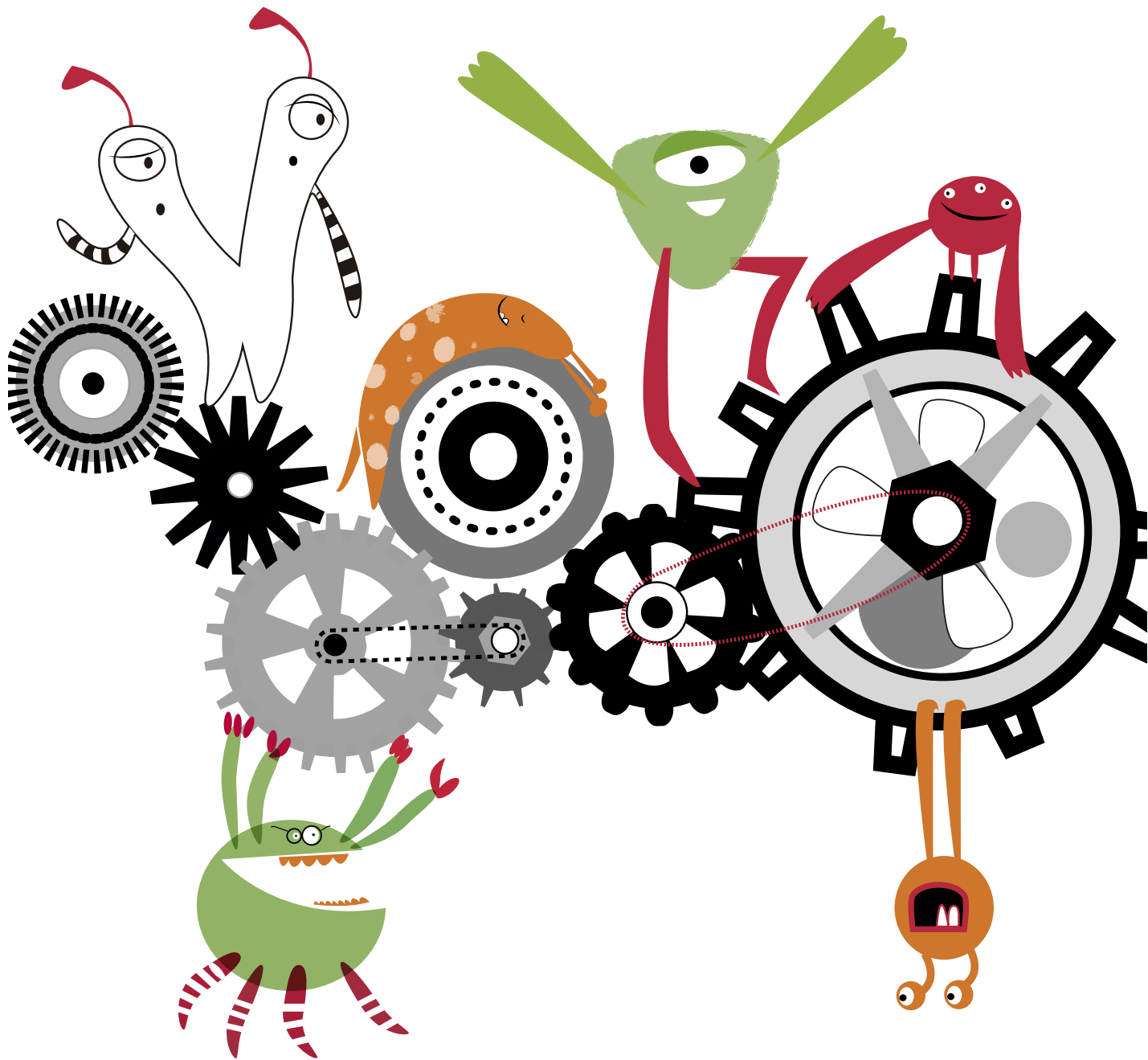
TIPS AND TRICKS IN THE SELECTION OF EVS VOLUNTEERS

- Inform volunteers even from the recruitment announcement about the steps of selection, including the period for interviews, if this is the case.
- Decide together with your team who is involved in the selection process and what responsibilities each team member has. If you are planning on a big number of interviews, you can have two people conducting them (people with different approach can be involved in order to give a more complex perspective to the final decision - for example task orientated and relation orientated staff members).
- Ideally, have the same contact person for both the recruitment and selection phase and make sure the communication with the potential volunteers is not slowed down by having different responsible persons assigned for each phase.
- Design the interview as a two-way communication process: create a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, reassure the volunteer on the need to have a sincere and honest approach (valid for both parts), allow time for the volunteer to formulate his/her answers, show understanding towards different levels of English, etc.
- Allow the volunteer to ask you questions during the interview as well!
- Take notes during the interview to allow you to look back and assess each applicant, once all interviews are done.
- Use open questions.
- Use “proof” question: “can you tell me something more about it”.
- Listen to the volunteer, what he/she speaks about but also when he/she is not speaking silence can also have a special meaning.

- Pay attention to the volunteer's personal presentation.
- Involve the entire team that will work with the volunteers on the final decision on who is selected and who is not.
- Send an email to all applicants, even the ones that are not selected, and make yourself available to give more details on the decision, if requested.

ANNEX: INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Please tell us a bit about yourself, about the person behind the CV.
2. Can you tell us more about your education or any special courses or other trainings you attended?
3. Do you have any previous experience in volunteering – on local or international level?
4. Do you have any international experience – Erasmus student, travelling for a longer period, etc.? If yes, please describe the hardest circumstance you have experienced in this international context?
5. Why did you decide to become an EVS volunteer?
6. What do you know about our project? What made you choose our project for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity?
7. What five adjectives describe you best? (please think of the project you applied for)
8. Describe the most difficult problem you had to solve related to working in a group. What was the situation and what did you do? Would you do anything different next time?
9. Please present shortly how would you plan the activities for the children in the school, for one hour. Give a short example of an educational activity (10-15 minutes) based on non-formal education.
10. What would be your expectations from this EVS project?
11. What kind of difficulties do you anticipate you could have in adapting to the cultural and working environment?
12. Practical aspects: do you have a sending organization? Is the timeframe of the project suited for you? etc.
13. Why are you the best candidate for this volunteering position?



3.4. ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

The preparation process that helps the volunteers get introduced to their work within the organisation can be divided into two parts:

Orientation: the process of preparing the volunteer to adjust to the organisation and their job and to become effective as soon as possible (also known as induction).

Training: the process of preparing the volunteer to perform the work for the organisation.

ORIENTATION

Orientation is understood as a process of helping volunteers understand and feel comfortable with the organisation. It is designed to provide them with background and practical knowledge of the organisation and let them understand how they can contribute to the organisation's cause. This practically is translated into understanding the organisation's cause, system, operations and procedures.

There is a saying that first impression matters. Orientation may be seen as the first date, a date between the volunteer and the hosting organisation. Making a volunteer feel comfortable and an important part of the organisation is crucial and it mainly happens during orientation sessions, where the intellectual, practical, and emotional bond between the two is established. The volunteer orientation programme is more than simply telling people a few things about the organisation. It is a coherent, planned introduction that combines information, experiences, and transmission of the values and culture of the organisation, all of which are aimed at giving new volunteers the base they need to do their jobs and to

integrate themselves into the organisation and the community as easily as possible.

Specialists in volunteering divide orientation into different categories. We present here an updated version of the structure designed by S. McCurley, R. Lynch and R. Jackson, that is, in our opinion, more clear and easy to follow. According to these authors, a proper orientation period should cover three main areas: (A) cause orientation, (B) system orientation and (C) social orientation.

A. CAUSE ORIENTATION

This is a part when the volunteers are informed about your organisation's reasons to exist, about its mission and values. Cause orientation creates an emotional bond between the volunteer and the organisation. The following areas should be taken into consideration when running a cause orientation session:

HISTORY

Even if the organisation is new, it has a history: how it was started and by whom and how it developed to the point it is today. Equally important, it gives the volunteers access to people and events that are part of the common language of the organisation, and that allow them to become an "insider".

MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

Your organisation has a mission statement and new volunteers should be given a chance to know it, to discuss it and digest what it means. It can also be a good opportunity to discuss the organisation's philosophy, values and ethics. There is no better way of keeping the motivation up than to connect the volunteers you host to your organisation's mission and to show them how they can contribute, through their work to that mission.

BENEFICIARIES

If the organisation's work is targeted at a particular group, the volunteers should learn as much about this group as possible in the orientation period. Whether we talk about race or ethnicity, age, gender, native language, disability, or unemployment, the volunteers should know the features of this group. The target group may also be the whole community.

PROGRAMMES & PROJECTS

What programmes have you run so far? What are your main areas of work and types of activities? In what field do you have expertise? Answers to these questions can help the volunteer get a clearer idea what directions you take and how they can fit in. No matter if it is home assistance for the elderly or organising festivals for children, it has to be clear what you do to achieve your mission in order to present it to the volunteers.

B. SYSTEM ORIENTATION

This is the part where you introduce the volunteer to the organisation's system of management. Its purpose is to provide an organisational context to the volunteer and help them understand how they fit into the organisation. It deals with more practical aspects of the organisation: the structure, the rules, the space, possibilities, and the job position.

STRUCTURE

It answers the following question: how does the organisation work? From the departments (promotion, administration, accountability, etc.) to the programmes and projects run, to who reports to whom, who is responsible for what areas of the organisation's work. This part should be done with presenting where, what and how the volunteers can contribute to those programmes/projects. It should also clearly state where the volunteering programme fits in the whole structure, what is its purpose, achievements or directions of development.

We will develop this part further, specifically in the EVS projects.

LOGISTICS AND DAY-TO-DAY ROUTINE

This area covers the "rules" of the workplace, and the small pieces of information that make it possible for everyone to function and generally refers to things such as: **equipment**: the availability and location of copiers, computers, phone systems, etc., and instructions for and restrictions on their use; **space**: the structure of the office and other relevant room, the physical place the volunteer will work in, and the beneficiaries meeting place; **materials and supplies**: where everything is kept; how you get access to what you need; cash; **office routine**: who opens and closes the workspace, where the keys are, who answers which phones, and security procedures; **quality of life**: good places to eat lunch, location of nearby shops, smoking rules.

INTRODUCTION INTO THE POSITION

Everyday work. Even though, at this stage, the volunteers know for what position they signed in, it is fair to give them an insight look on what that actually means, especially for those that have never done this job before. Basically, we should provide an answer to the following questions: How will an average day look like? What are the activities? How much time will they spend directly with participants/beneficiaries or doing paperwork?

Time expectations. The timetable was previously agreed with the volunteer but some organisations expect the volunteers to work much more, while others are far more relaxed. Subjects as: extra hours and free days, how to take a holiday, sick day leave, should also be discussed.

Special work requirements. There are certain tasks that a volunteer might be asked to do, in certain situations, that are not necessarily part of their job position and this is a good

moment to talk about them. This may include things like: picking-up people from a bus/train station, cleaning or closing the office.

Supervision and evaluation system. The orientation should specify in what conditions their work supervision takes places: who is in charge, how the supervision system looks like, how much flexibility the volunteer has while doing their job. The same applies to evaluations: how often evaluations are conducted, what form they take, what is done with the final evaluation, and who has access to it.

C. SOCIAL ORIENTATION

SOCIO_ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

One of the most important tasks in the orientation period is to familiarise volunteers with people that work in the organisation and to explain what each of them does. Whenever possible, volunteers should meet individually with all people working in the organisation. An introduction to the other members of staff is necessary for the volunteers to feel they are part of the team.

ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

Every organisation has its own culture developed over its life. The culture is the result of the organisation's history and of the thinking and behaviour of its founders and former and current staff. Here are some areas of the organisational culture that volunteers should be aware of: dress code, smoking and food (Is smoking in the building allowed? Is food in the office ok? Are there any specific food and drink rules (no food near the computers, for example) or work relations (How do people treat one another? Is there a family atmosphere, or is everything kept formal? What about language? Gender relations?).

Understanding the organisational culture will help the volunteer become "one of the team"

quicker, and reduce the uncertainty (and the stress) of a new situation. It will make their transition into the organisation and the workplace easier.

HOW DOES IT WORK IN EVS PROJECTS?

Due to the usually long-term engagement the EVS project requires from the volunteer and because of its international aspect, orientation in the EVS is a process that starts long before the volunteers arrive to their host country. In this sense, we find the first contacts to be exceptionally important in building the feelings of safety and confidence on both sides. Let us not forget that, most of the time, we deal with young people that, in some cases, leave their homes for the first time. We will build trust by offering the volunteer access to information coming from more than one source and using different channels, answering their questions and doubts, inviting them to address questions, and initiate contacts. Specifically, it means email exchanges, putting the volunteers in contact with their mentors, sending the EVS info-kit and Info pack before arrival, sending videos about the host country or city, etc. Some organisations also encourage the volunteers that are currently doing their service to contact the newcomers, as a way to facilitate a friendly, fast integration, since some of the information that is essential from volunteers' perspective, might be overlooked by the coordinator.

In this pre-arrival phase, the sending organisation has an important role to play, too, by providing orientation sessions related to the Erasmus+/EVS context, expectations, etc. during the pre-departure training and meetings. What is more, due to the complexity of the EVS project: international volunteering, a lot of information to be communicated, relations to be built, and many actors involved in the process of orientation, it is rather an orientation period than an orientation session. It requires time, planning and communication skills.

Orientation might feel like a slow period especially for those volunteers who want to get right into action as soon as their plane lands. In these cases your role, as a coordinator or a mentor, is to remind them the importance of having a proper integration period for them, for the organisation and for the group they are part of. It is also an investment of resources for the organisation but, as such, it will help you build solid foundations for the whole period volunteers will be with you and it will help the organisation prevent difficult situations and potential conflicts.

Additionally, another two important aspects, that are characteristic to the EVS projects exclusively, should be addressed: the culture and community orientation and the Erasmus +/EVS programme orientation.

D. CULTURE AND COMMUNITY ORIENTATION

What are the defining elements of the culture? What do people from hosting country eat, wear, and believe? What are their families typically like? Are they, as a group, hospitable or suspicious, tolerant or intolerant? Are they religious and in what way? How well do they speak an international community language, such as English? Do they have particular social taboos or imperatives? All this and much more can be the subject of the introduction session but also, partially, fall into the responsibility of the mentor that helps the volunteer discover the culture of the hosting country.

Community can be interpreted in different ways by the organisation. It may mean the town or village in which the organisation is located, but it can also mean an urban neighbourhood, a particular cultural or social group. Moreover, such aspects as demographics (the size, diversity and education level), economics or other general characteristics should be taken into consideration. Integration into the local community is also a shared responsibility

between the hosting and/or coordinating organisation and the volunteer's mentor.

In the orientation period, we draw attention to underlining safety and security aspects when it comes to community and culture. This is translated into telling your EVS volunteers: (a) what are the safe/unsafe areas of the city; (b) what are potentially risky behaviours; (c) how to react in conflict situations; (d) what are emergency numbers; (e) and informing about the existence of groups not very open towards foreigners, such as strongly nationalistic groups, etc.

E. EVS PROGRAMME ORIENTATION

EVS projects follow an already established frame and the volunteer should be very closely familiarised with it. The orientation session, at the beginning, can remind the volunteer certain conditions, rules or rights and can also answer possible doubts the volunteers might have. Generally, the EVS programme orientation should cover:

- Volunteer's rights and responsibilities, also foreseen in the Activity Agreement;
- Programme and project timeline (including on-arrival training and mid-term evaluation organised by the National Agency);
- Financial and administrative rules: pocket money, travel reimbursement, other project related costs;
- Roles of the involved actors: National Agency, Hosting Organisation, Sending Organisation, Coordinating Organisation, mentor, work supervisor;
- Practical arrangements: language classes, accommodation and food, health insurance, address registration, visa;
- EVS as a learning experience: learning agreement, key competences, Youth Pass Certificate.

TRAINING AND EVALUATION CYCLE IN EVS

One of the key features of EVS is the training and evaluation it provides, guiding young volunteers through a non-formal learning process before, during and after their period of service abroad. To harmonise EVS volunteer training and evaluation, and to make it more professional, the Commission has designed a Training and Evaluation Cycle, for which the national agencies or regional SALTOs are responsible.

Generally it consists of two parts, for which National Agencies and SALTOs in the hosting country are responsible:

On-arrival training (EVS for 2 months and longer);
Mid-term evaluation (EVS of 6 months and longer).

Complementary to on-arrival training and mid-term evaluation are two more trainings/meetings:

Pre-departure meeting/preparation provided by a sending organisation
Annual EVS Event provided by the National Agency of a sending country/ evaluation meeting in a sending country.

Even though the name might indicate that these are training sessions, the first two parts of the cycle: pre-departure and on-arrival sessions are more related to preparing the EVS volunteers for their service and introducing them to the EVS programme and, therefore, act as orientation.

Pre-departure training should take place 1 month to 2 weeks before departure and it is organised and provided by the Sending Organisation. The usually addressed topics include: the Erasmus + programme and EVS, the role of the actors involved, background information about the hosting environment, safety rules, expectations, and the EVS as a learning

experience.

On-arrival training. Upon arrival in the host country volunteers in projects with duration of more than two months have the right and obligation to take part in the on-arrival training. Organised by the National Agency of the hosting country or by Salto Youth, in case of Partner countries, the on-arrival training focuses on introducing the volunteers in the host country, preparing them for the service period and the EVS experience. In addition to supporting volunteers to adapt to cultural and personal challenging situations the training also provides guidance on conflict prevention and crisis management, communication and intercultural learning.

Mid-term evaluation allows volunteers to share their experience and reflect on activities carried out and the role of the host organisation. This meeting is very important as it aims to prevent risk situations and solve conflicts, if necessary. It gives EVS volunteers the space to self-assess their service and also to learn from other EVS volunteers. In the same time volunteers are offered tools for reflection and planning their future after their EVS is completed.

Annual EVS event brings together potential EVS volunteers and the volunteers who have already completed the voluntary service. The volunteers have an opportunity to reflect on the knowledge and skills acquired and their application in everyday life after the EVS. Another important objective of this event is the feedback that the National Agencies and SALTO receive on the programme in general.

TRAINING

Training is directly related to the skills and knowledge necessary for the volunteer to have in order to do a particular job. It can include teaching them new skills, giving them a chance

to practice and get feedback on particular styles of working with people. To determine the type of training you should give to your volunteers, you need to find out the answer to the question: What skills, knowledge or attitudes (SKA) does the volunteer need to perform their work?

The training should meet the requirements of the position but also the learning needs of the volunteers: What makes them most nervous? In what areas do they feel least prepared or least competent? What and how would they like to develop? The answers to these questions can help you structure a useful and effective initial training. The training should be conducted as soon as possible after the volunteers have joined the EVS project and should run all throughout the life of the service.

TRAINING CONTENT

Some general training topics such as youth issues, counselling skills or conflict resolution, could be relevant to many organisations besides those particularly working on those issues, while other can be specific to the particular job position: how to handle a person in a wheel chair or how to teach foreign languages to kindergarten children.

SPECIFIC JOB SKILLS AND INFORMATION

Any training, especially the initial training, should cover the particular skills and information the volunteers need to do their jobs. Teaching techniques, communication to international partners, medical information, and office administration might all be useful training topics. The job position training should point to what the volunteer needs to do and accomplish in their job, what they should not do and what to do if they encounter the X or Y situation.

It is a three-step process:

1. demonstration of the skill to be learned or improved
2. observation of the volunteer trying out the skill

3. feedback and analysis

In some cases, of course, volunteers may already have possessed most of the skills and information they need, therefore, training should focus on upgrading these skills, or on information that is new or specific to the organisation.

TRAINING METHODS

There is a variety of methods to structure different types of training but we find the following one most practical.

A. On-the-job training. It takes place in normal working conditions and can take different forms such as: apprenticeship, job rotation (provides volunteers with an exposure to range of skills and disciplines in the organisation), job instruction training, counselling, coaching, and mentoring. The volunteer should receive appropriate task-related support and guidance to enable her/him to carry out the agreed tasks.

Apprenticeship. Any job position that implies learning a skill (graphic design, introducing data into a system or measuring blood pressure) can be the subject of apprenticeship as a training method. It literally means that the volunteer works under the supervision of a skilled, qualified person in order to learn the “profession”.

Counselling. The goal is to assist the volunteer in solving a problem or improving a type of behaviour. The coordinator can use questions to help the volunteer identify the problem and its cause, see alternatives, identify a better course of action, and learn from their experience. The role of the facilitator is not to give answers but rather to empower the volunteers to come up with their own solutions by addressing the right questions.

Similar to counselling, **coaching** is about having a series of conversations to improve performance. It encourages volunteers to reach their goals and to improve their working style.

B. Off the job training. It takes place external to organisation's regular working hours and

working environment. Also known as a formal training, it includes: a lecture, a case study, role-playing, a field trip, simulations, videos, a panel discussion and many other methods that you can find in more detail below.

HOW TO CONDUCT AN ORIENTATION/TRAINING SESSION?

Even though the purpose of orientation and training is different, they can be treated jointly when it comes to the way they should be conducted. The format of your session is the medium through which material is presented. Varying the format is a way to keep the orientation/training interesting and fresh. If your organisation uses specific teaching or presentation methods, such as non-formal education methods and tools, it should be reflected in the way you conduct your orientation/training. Some of the following techniques can be of use:

Conversation and discussion: for many volunteers personal contact helps in the learning process

Observation: seeing the actual practice of what you have talked about or learned

Text: reading printed theory, policies or other material

Computer-based learning: on a website (your own, Tool Box, or some other) or through some other channel (by email or chat group)

Multimedia: video and audio, computer, audio-visual presentations

Direct experience: role plays, simulation games

Group activities: small-group problem-solving, collaborative projects, games, etc.

Physical activities: movement, managing equipment or materials

Individual problem-solving

Arts activities: creating pictures, structures, poems, etc.

Regardless what type of training you use, the main goal is to ensure the volunteer learns

from the experience. The mix of methods that you may choose varies from volunteer to volunteer and might even vary over time in case of the same volunteer.

HOW DOES IT WORK IN EVS?

WORK COMPETENCES DEVELOPMENT TRAININGS

As mentioned before, training is directly related to the skills and knowledge necessary to do a particular job. In the EVS context/perspective, the coordinator is responsible to plan a series of trainings or workshops delivered for EVS volunteers and focused on developing the skills they will need in order to do their activity. For example, an organisation that involves EVS volunteers in children hospital animation activities year by year has developed a training agenda that aims to equip them with a set of practical skills, such as: making balloon animals, face painting, origami, theatre, juggling and other circus skills. All workshops are conducted by professionals. This helps the EVS volunteers develop some practical skills before starting their work with children, and also has a positive influence on their self-confidence level.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAININGS

Moreover, EVS is an important learning experience for the volunteer and participation in the EVS enhances their professional skills and competences. To help them reflect and express what they want to learn or have learned, the organisation should introduce a training system that could help the volunteers (1) develop their own personal goals for their period of service, (2) plan their learning path, (3) support reflection or self-assessment and (4) be able to present the outcomes, with the use of the Youth Pass certificate. **Youthpass** is an instrument that supports young people maximising the experiences they have had during their period, and that describes the learning outcomes of the EVS project to future

employers or to formal education institutions. Here you can find more about Youthpass: www.youthpass.eu/en/youthpass.

LANGUAGE COURSES

Sending Organisation ensures, in cooperation with the receiving organisation, that the volunteer receives support in carrying out language preparation or an online language course and assessments provided by the Commission. The volunteer can get support in learning the language of the host country or one of the six international languages. Some organisations prefer to organise intensive courses run by language teachers, while others opt for more non-formal ways, like involving local community members or mentors. Our recommendation is to use the resources you have available. Please remember that a language barrier is one of the biggest obstacles in the volunteer's integration in the organisation and in the community.

Dana Solonean

Alicja Zachert

TIPS AND TRICKS ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

- Orientation and training should also be delivered online, before the volunteer physically joins your organisation, by sending him/her an info-pack with all information needed, videos about your city or culture, online quizzes and many more!
- If you are already hosting a group of EVS volunteers, why not ask them to write one or two pages of tips and tricks for the next group of volunteers? This method will present the perspective of the volunteers that have already gone through the process and may be very valuable for the newcomers!
- If you lack financial resources to conduct a full training program, join other organisations with similar needs to conduct joint trainings. Check for organisations that are hosting EVS in your surrounding area!
- Some members of staff may have expertise, passion or want to do some research and therefore they might be willing to conduct some trainings themselves. Ask in the team!
- In the EVS a great option for organising interesting workshops and trainings is to encourage volunteers to exchange their skills among each other! Some might know handcraft or animation while others project management. Peer education does miracles!
- The EVS Info-Kit serves a perfect tool for orientation into the programme! Don't forget to send it to volunteers before their arrival!

- One effective, low cost way to introduce the volunteer to their job position is simply organising a Skype session with the previous volunteer doing the job!
- Introduce the volunteers to their mentors via email before their arrival. It will help them create a bond with the local community and make them feel they already have a familiar face once they arrive in their hosting city.
- Don't forget to prepare a welcome bag for each volunteer! It should contain a welcome letter, a map of the city (with important addresses, and their flat and organisation marked), emergency numbers, and the info-pack! Additionally, it may contain flat rules, city guides and any other info you might find relevant!

3.5. MENTORING AND COORDINATION IN EVS

Organisation that is implementing the EVS project is in position of hosting or coordinating organisation and needs at least one partner organisation to cooperate with. After the approval of the project, organisations can start to implement it. The main project management role of an EVS project is taken by the grant recipient -hosting or coordinating organisation, that needs people to manage and implement the project successfully. There are several actors involved in it and, in this chapter, we will describe two of them, **a coordinator and a mentor**. Both of these positions are necessary when implementing an EVS project. But what are coordinating and mentoring all about? What are the roles, tasks, and relations for each and what is the difference between them? We will focus on these topics in this chapter.

It is important to mention that each organisation can have different perspective in terms of job descriptions within an EVS project. Some will have a coordinator who acts as a supervisor. Some will have both, a supervisor and a coordinator. We will describe the roles as they come from our experience, without claiming that it is the ultimate best way.

MENTOR AND MENTORING

Having a mentor or mentors in the EVS projects is not only one of conditions of implementing the EVS project but it is a “must”. Several guides and materials about EVS see the mentor as the key actor in EVS because he or she is giving personal support to the volunteer and guides the volunteer in the hosting country and culture. Mentors support their volunteers/ friends socially, emotionally, culturally and learning-wise. They should create a

supportive and trustworthy atmosphere in the process of setting and reaching volunteers' personal goals.

A mentor role includes several responsibilities and requires commitment, motivation, and energy. According to the Erasmus+ Programme, there are no professional requirements when "hiring" a mentor but there are definitely some personal qualities that this person should have, in order to be confident and happy with his/her important role. We admit that, following the profile we described below, may seem that we suggest looking for a kind of the Superman or the Superwoman. Well, not really, but very close ;).

Let's start easier with a description, who IS NOT the mentor in EVS. Mentor is not a person, who assigns and controls the tasks, is not a therapist, a parent, a teacher or a director.

It is very welcomed if the mentor has his/her own volunteer's experience (preferably EVS) and knows the community, the hosting organisation, culture, language, administrative procedures in the country, in order to navigate and support a volunteer. Then, he or she should be a good listener, open-minded, respectful, reliable, flexible, motivated and interested in supporting a young foreign volunteer. Of course, we would suggest for the mentor to have some coaching skills, abilities for giving and receiving feedback, to be able to encourage and facilitate non-formal learning and to manage conflicts. It would be good if the person is external to the organisation or has completely different tasks and can work in this position, in a long term.

The main responsibilities are:

- Providing the volunteer with personal support for the duration of the service;
- Helping the volunteer to integrate into the local community, socialize, to meet other volunteers, people similar in age, interests, beliefs etc.;
- Meeting the volunteer regularly;

- Supporting the volunteer in carrying out a self-reflection on the learning outcomes of the EVS activities.

What can we actually offer to a mentor for using his expertise, knowledge, skills, time and energy in favor of running our project successfully and having satisfied volunteers? This experience is a unique self-development experience for a mentor and a mentee. He/she can improve language skills, learn more about another cultures, habits, beliefs, history and, moreover, gain a professional experience in mentoring.

Now, when we identified and found our mentor, we need to help to build a mentor-mentee relationship.

Mentor needs to be aware of:

- Volunteer's characteristics: age, gender, needs, culture, expectations, motivations, goals, language skills,
- Roles in EVS project: competences and responsibilities of the stakeholders,
- The EVS project: the goal, activities, timeline, the target group, hosting organization, sending organization, other volunteers involved.
- Mentee (volunteer) needs to be aware of:
- The role and competences of the mentor in the project
- Mentor's characteristics: age, gender, needs, culture, expectations, motivations, goals, language skills.

It may happen that we recruit the mentor and he/she simply “doesn't click” with the volunteer and cannot build mentor-mentee relationship. It is important to keep in mind that mentoring is not only about guiding but it is more about building, maintaining long-term relationship and the glue that can hold it together is **trust**. “Trust is a feeling of confidence

in someone that shows you believe they are honest, fair and reliable.”(www.macmillan-dictionary.com). Emotions associated with it include friendship, love, agreement, comfort and relaxation. We can help a mentor in building trust by providing as much information as possible about the volunteer before the meeting e.g. related to such things as – hobbies, values, family, beliefs, CV. If this relationship is not working, it is better to find another mentor before any serious conflicts appear.

MENTORS WELL-BEING

To be a mentor is not an easy thing to do and mentors are just humans, even if we have found the perfect one. We need to support them as well, for e.g. with organising the group supervision sessions for mentors, providing a mentor with his or her coach, recognizing their work and help him/her to understand that this relationship is not about teaching and that a mentor himself /herself is not 100% responsible for the results.

COORDINATION AND COORDINATING

In this part, we will try to describe the role of the other important actor in the project – **the coordinator**. The main difference between these two actors is that a mentor is providing a volunteer with personal support, while support of a coordinator is more a task related one, or let's call it professional, connected to the activities and the tasks of the volunteer during the service. Usually, there is one coordinator in the EVS project that overlooks the activities and there can be more mentors depending on the number of volunteers.

Roles of the coordinator:

- Providing volunteer with support (more professional than personal taking into account that a volunteer has a mentor);
- Assisting with setting up volunteers' personal development and learning goals;

- Defining the tasks and discussing them, taking into account space for the volunteers ideas, creativity and experiences;
- Organising and facilitating regular staff meetings;
- Setting up the timetable;
- Monitoring and evaluating the learning process of the volunteers;
- Ensuring that volunteer receives EVS Info Kit and attends the full EVS Training and Evaluation Cycle;
- Ensuring the participation of the volunteer(s) in the on-arrival training and mid-term evaluation organized by the NA ;
- Arranging language learning opportunities and support to volunteers undertaking language courses ;
- Managing the administration of the project (sometimes, it can be covered by another person in the project-project manager).

Coordinator's relationship with volunteers should be rather professional than personal. It is still perfectly fine if the coordinator is very friendly and helpful. This position of the "boss" in the project can help in managing the tasks and activities, as well as, possible conflict situation.

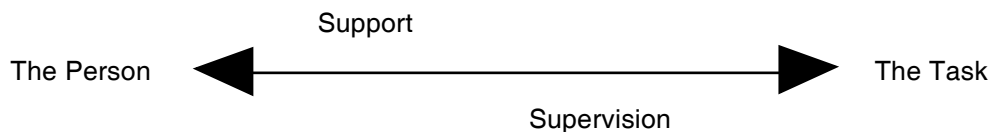
Ida Adolfová

3.6 SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION IN EVS PROJECTS

All EVS volunteers need support and supervision. The form that this takes will vary wildly. Short-term EVS volunteers and volunteers who work with children in hospital will need different support and supervision to a long-term EVS volunteers and volunteers who mainly do administrative work. What is important is that it is appropriate role and the individual volunteer. The words “support” and “supervision” are often used almost interchangeably and, in practice, they are frequently delivered through the same activities or methods. Also we can find a lot of definitions and understandings of word supervision. In this chapter we want to share with you our view on support and supervision as key tools for the EVS volunteer management in balancing the needs of the organization with those of the volunteer to achieve a productive and fulfilling volunteering experience. This view is based on literature and our experiences with supervision in helping professions, mainly in social work, and with local and EVS volunteers.

SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION

In EVS volunteer management it is useful to think of support and supervision as a continuum with the needs of the volunteer at one end and the demands of the role at the other:



Support has been defined as, “The interest, understanding and care which is provided for volunteers, which keeps them going all the time and additionally in times of crisis and enables them to satisfy their needs and those of the organization.” (As good as they give, 2012) The functions of support are focused on the person.

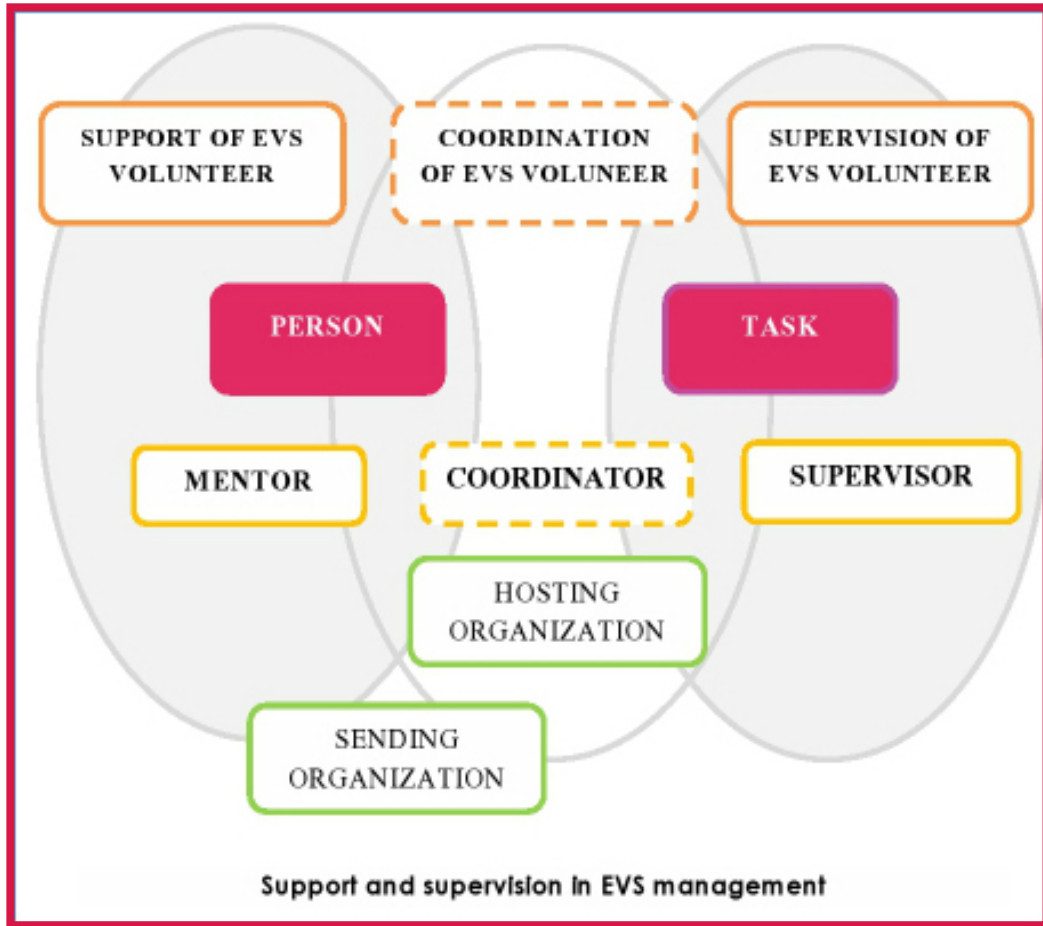
Supervision, on the other hand, is described as, “A way of monitoring a volunteer’s performance to help them benefit from their placement, to make sure they are carrying out tasks appropriately, encourage problem solving and provide guidance.” (As good as they give, 2012) Piers and Rowell (2006) define supervision as a developmental process designed to support and enhance an individual’s acquisition of the motivation, autonomy, self-awareness, and skills necessary to effectively accomplish the job at hand.

The support and supervision should reflect following four key principles:

- **Climate.** It is vital that you foster a climate that allows volunteers to ask for help. A point of contact for support should always be available. Equally supervision must be seen as a part of volunteer experience not something that only happens when there is a problem.
- **Accessibility.** Support and supervision must be provided at appropriate times and places for volunteers.
- **Flexibility.** This is the ability to accommodate the needs of individual volunteers.
- **Appropriateness.** The support given must bear some relationship to the work that volunteers are being asked to do as well as being obviously helpful for them. A balance should be maintained between the primary needs of the organization for the completion of the tasks and delivery of services (supervision) on the one hand and on the other, the personal needs of the volunteer (support). (As good as they give, 2012)

SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION IN EVS MANAGEMENT

The mentor, the coordinator and the supervisor have the main responsibilities for support and supervision in EVS volunteer's management.



PERSON RELATED SUPPORT IN EVS

The main functions of support in EVS volunteer management are connected with the role of mentor. Support for EVS volunteers can be offered also by coordinator, supervisor and other staff/volunteers or members of hosting organization and in can be offered also by sending organization. Support for EVS volunteers can be focused on:

- setting up and environment where volunteers can express themselves;
- combat isolation;
- helping volunteer to express and resolve personal problems;
- helping a volunteer feel good about what they are doing and show they are valued;
- helping a volunteer acquire or develop life skills;
- providing a volunteer with the information they need in their personal life and in work (for example relevant contact);
- assisting a volunteer on obtaining additional resources (providing awareness of community, educational, and economic resources available and how to access these resources);
- increasing a volunteer ability to interact with people/groups/things from various backgrounds (cultural, racial, socioeconomic, etc.).

Support for EVS volunteer can be offered in both formal/structured ways (e.g. introduction, training, one to one meetings, group meeting) and informal/unstructured ways (e.g. listening and communicating with volunteer). Good support system can accommodate any strategy or combination of strategies and should use variety of methods and activities.

SUPERVISING THE WORK IN EVS

Supervision of volunteers in EVS programs is the main role of supervisor. In some cases coordinator and supervisor can be the same person, but the better is when for these roles take responsibilities different persons. Coordinating is not the same as supervising the EVS volunteers and in working with EVS volunteer there can be also need to resolve problems between coordinator and EVS volunteers.

Supervision is still often perceived with doubt because supervised volunteers or professionals have a fear from control. When they hear the word “supervision,” they have in mind picture a large, mean person looking over their shoulder trying to find fault with everything they do. There may be some supervisors who fit that description, but, in helping professions and volunteer management, supervision should be the opposite. It’s helpful and often welcomed by supervises as a source of advice, information, and emotional support for work that can be demanding and difficult. At the same time, supervisors are responsible for making sure that the people they supervise are doing a good job – that they’re where they’re supposed to be when they’re supposed to be there, and that the work they do is of high quality.

The supervision has three main functions: managerial or administrative, educative and supportive. They are strongly connected together, but in supervision process one function can predominate over others. (Vaska, 2012). We can good apply this function to supervision of EVS volunteers.

Managerial or administrative function is connected with responsibility for quality and it is about making sure the EVS volunteer is doing what is expected of them. The aim of this function is support and preservation of work quality standard and coordination of volunteer’s work with the organization policy. It may also involve exploring how they are

balancing the conflicting expectations placed on them by the organization and its clients, as well as their own standards and values.

Educative function is focused on the development of knowledge, understanding and skills of the individual volunteer. An important aspect of this will be giving feedback to enable people to reflect on particular situation in order to learn from them, identify strengths and weaknesses, and explore areas for development and training. This proves will mainly focus on enabling the volunteer to draw insights from their experience, but may also include sharing information by the supervisor in order to develop someone's understanding or knowledge.

Supportive function is in supervision process often used parallel with administrative and educative function. (Vaska, 2012) It is focused on emotional processed connected with volunteer work. The main role of the supervisor is within this function to create the safe space in which volunteers can talk about their feelings about their work and any problems or issues around it. It may also involve enabling someone to explore and deal with feeling in their personal life witch are affecting their volunteer work. The aim is not to resolve these problems, but to identify ways of getting appropriate support. The other key aspect of the supportive function is giving recognition and encouragement which helps a volunteer to feel valued and empowered.

The supervision in EVS need not only volunteers but it is important also for mentor and coordinator. It is ideal when mentor and coordinator have a space for regular external supervision. The aims of supervision for all volunteered and paid staff in EVS programs are:

- Recognizing and dealing with problems;
- Learning new skills;
- Professional and personal development;

- Motivation;
- Verification of working methods;
- Dealing with conflict situations on workplace;
- Supporting of work efficiency
- Expansion of possibilities of work with clients;
- Establishing and empowering good relationships;
- Encouraging attitudes that motivate people towards their performance;
- Interpreting and applying the organization's policies, systems and standards;
- Prevention of burn-out;
- Getting the feedback;
- Empowering the autonomy;
- Breaking down barriers and fears;
- Protecting clients against incompetent work;
- Applying basic ethical standards;
- Protecting the interests of clients and organization;

The process of supervision has to take place in atmosphere of trust, where volunteers feel listened, accepted and not attacked. Supervision meeting may not be appropriate for all models of EVS volunteer involvement, but for many volunteers it is the best way of ensuring that they get a chance to give and receive feedback. They offer the chance for an open two way conversation about the volunteers work. The supervision meetings can be individual or group. The most important principle is confidence between volunteer and supervisor and in case of group supervision also between volunteers.

It is important to remember that supervision is not the same as support, or having friendly chat. Supervision is making sure that the needs and interests of the individual are being balanced with the need and interests of the organization.

Tree helpful questions in the supervision of volunteers

Sarah H. Elliston (1999) offers tree help question with you can use in supervising EVS volunteers. The questions are oriented on self-evaluation of volunteers as a key to continuous improvement and they were developed by Mame Porter years ago.

1.What do you like about what you did? 2.If you had the opportunity to do this again, what might you do differently? 3.What help do you need from me?

With these questions volunteers come away from asking of the questions feeling pride in their work, able to reflect on what worked and what didn't work and willing to get help. All three questions allow supervisor the opportunity to share expertise without having to give negative criticism.

Checklist of questions for supervision meeting

The other types of questions that prompt supervision with volunteers include:

Volunteering generally: How do you feel about your volunteering generally?

What's going well: What's going well with the program? Is there anything you have done witch you are pleased about?

What's not been going so well: What hasn't gone well? Is there anything that has happened which you are unsure about?

Relationships: How are you getting on with the rest of the team/organization?

Ideas for improvement: How can the volunteer program/project be improved? Did you receive adequate training and support?

Personal development: Do you feel like there is any support or training that you need?

Developments to role: Are you satisfied in your role? Do you feel your time is productive? Are there any tasks in the organization that you want to do? Are there any areas of our work you'd like to move into?

Actions agreed last session: Last meeting you agreed to do..., let's talk about the progress with this.

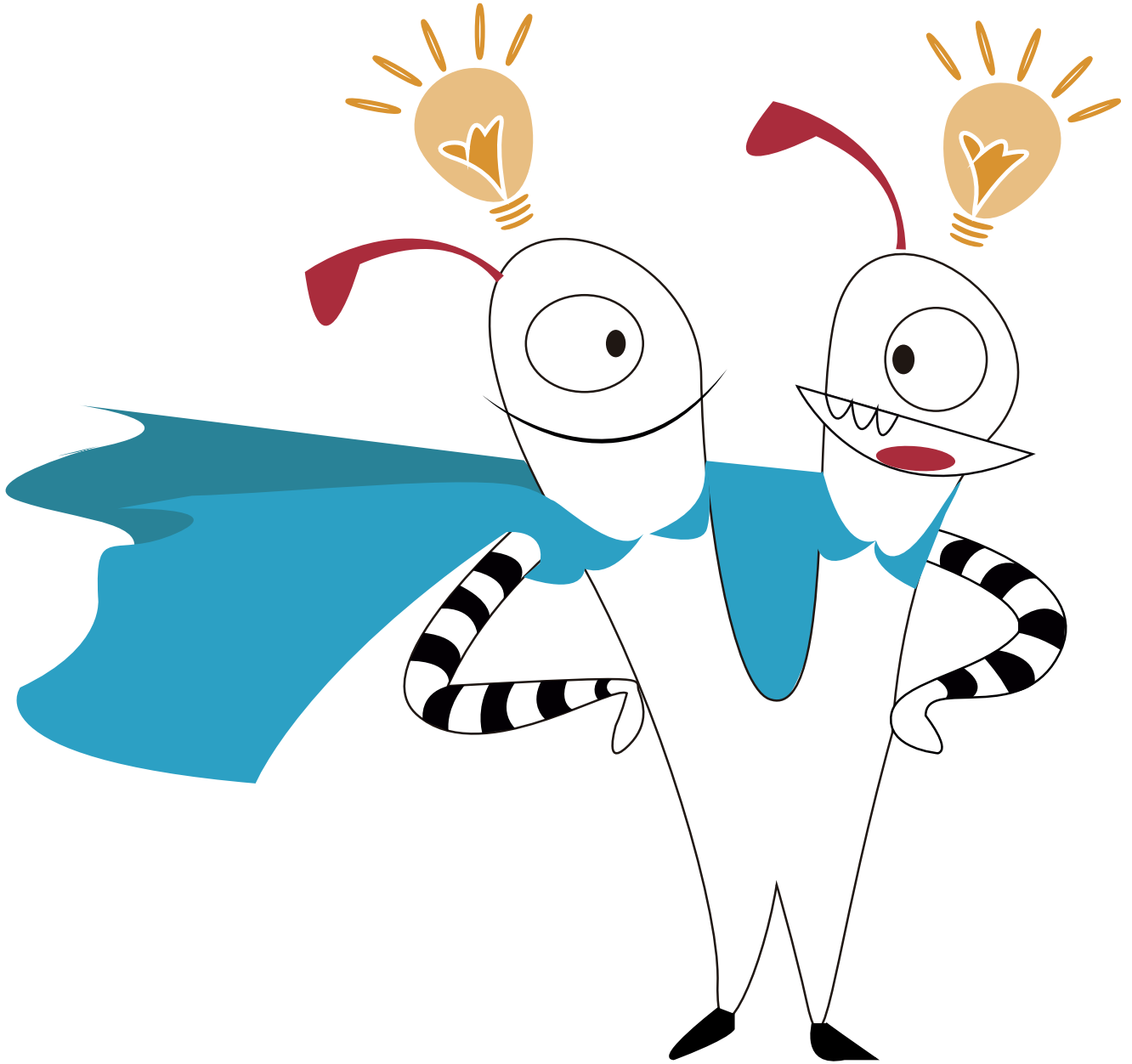
New actions? Are there any actions that we should set ourselves between now and next time we meet?

Alzbeta Brozmanová Gregorová

TIPS AND

TRICKS

- Have regular supervising meetings (example: weekly) with the volunteers and make sure everyone knows about them and understands their importance.
- Postpone answering questions that are not urgent until the supervising meetings – this will help you as a coordinator or supervisor avoid answering the same question several times and also will help you avoid overburdening your daily schedule.
- Create a good atmosphere during the meetings and use them to celebrate success and results obtained by volunteers.
- Instead of pointing fingers at whom is responsible for the „failures“, focus on how individuals and the team as a whole can overcome difficult situations.
- Be sensitive to the needs of volunteers and initiate additional individual or group meetings if you see the need for them.
- During the meetings assess the individual needs of the volunteers and create action plans with the entire team (coordinator, supervisor, mentor) to address these needs.
- Use creative ways to underline the progress and results volunteers gain – for example we use „the wish box“ in which each volunteer sets an individual goal for the week, which then is assessed in the next supervising meeting.



How do we motivate volunteers? How can we keep our volunteers enthusiastic and involved as they were in the beginning? Why do volunteers lose motivation and how can we help them? These are just a few of the questions that organizations usually ask us when we share our experience in local and EVS volunteer management. Maintaining the volunteers' motivation is a hot topic of conversation.

In this chapter we want to share with you our perspective on motivating volunteers, but we should say from the start: we don't believe there is a recipe that can be universally applied in any situation and help boost motivation. As we will underline in the end of it, we believe that motivating volunteers shouldn't be a reactive action to unmotivated volunteers, but rather a persistent set of decisions and actions the organization does, even before volunteers arrive in the organization.

Motivation is the one element that supports, gives energy and directs human behavior. No individual decision or action can be separated from the underlying motivating elements.

When we speak about volunteering, the factors that motivate people to start and stay involved in the volunteering activity, on a short or long term, are very diverse. Understanding them can help the volunteer coordinator not only to support the volunteers through the more difficult moments, but also to create a working environment that suits the individual needs of volunteers.

Looking at the theories and literature in this area, besides the general theories regarding motivation (such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs or Herzberg's two factor model), the efforts of studying the motivation that supports the decision of becoming a volunteer were

started in the '70 and became more concretely structured in the theories outlined in the 1980s. Among these theories, we can identify three main directions:

- **The model based on two or three factors** - In 1981 Horton Smith argues that the motivation to start volunteering is based on either altruistic aspects - intangible rewards such as wanting to help others - or selfish aspects - tangible rewards. In 1987 Fitch adds another factor to these two – social obligations – establishing the three-factor model.
- **The uni-dimensional model** - Cnaan and Goldberg-Glen observed, in 1991, in the data collected, that individuals' motivation in volunteer work is not based only on a certain type of factor but rather on a combination of possible categories of motivations. They identified 28 motives to volunteer and, using them, they developed the Motivation to Volunteer (MTV) scale. Cnaan and Goldberg-Glen observed that volunteers don't distinguish between the different types of motives and they are not acting on just one motive or one category of motives (altruistic and egoistic motivations). They concluded that it is a combination of these motives that are part of the whole volunteering experience and therefore it is a unidimensional model that explains the motivations of those who volunteer.
- **Multifactorial model** - Clary, Snyder et al. identified 6 different factors that are involved in motivating people for volunteer work – values, the need for learning and acquiring new knowledge, career, social compliance, self-esteem and protection from self-negative feelings.

Another model that has been initially developed in connection to work-related behavior and then adapted to volunteer work, is McClelland and Atkinson's theory. This is based on three motives that are general enough to include other motives a person might have for

volunteering:

- The need for achievement – among the characteristics of these volunteers are: they not only want to be the best but also for others to know they are the best, they are comparing their success with the other volunteers and even with the paid staff, they like to take responsibilities and they have good results even in stressful conditions, they want to achieve important things and reach concrete objectives, etc.;
- The need for authority and power – this type of volunteers have: the desire to have an impact and a big power of influence, the desire to generate change and to be different, a concern for reputation and social position, the pleasure of giving advice and presenting their ideas, etc.;
- The need for affiliation – the volunteers motivated by the need of affiliation have: the need to be accepted and liked, the need to interact and a preference for working in a team, a concern for maintaining those around them satisfied, the need to know better their colleagues, a desire to help those who need the help, etc.

Being unable to use the motivational power of money, a well-planned volunteering program must take into account the specific needs of the people involved as volunteers and identify the ways to meet these needs, in order to increase the volunteers' motivation and, together with this, the chance for a positive experience for all actors involved (volunteer and organization).

HOW DOES ALL THIS WORK IN EVS PROJECTS?

Like we mentioned in the opening of this chapter, we believe the principle “it’s better to prevent than cure” strongly applies in relation to motivating EVS volunteers. If we look through

the different steps of volunteer management already presented in the previous pages, there are numerous elements included in them that have a strong impact in motivating EVS volunteers:

- Values (preparation of organization) – when volunteers and organization believe and work for the same values, the setting created is very motivational; volunteers will be more willing to overcome difficult situations and cultural differences when they receive a clear message that the work they are doing is in harmony with the values promoted by the organization, values in which they also believe;
- Policies and procedures (preparation of organization) – these create a clear working environment and reduce the frustration of not knowing what to do, how to react, whom to ask for help, etc. in specific situations;
- Relation with the paid staff (preparation of organization) - ensuring a positive working climate for the volunteers and especially a good relationship with the staff of the organization will always contribute to maintaining volunteers engaged and motivated; volunteers should be treated as team members, as resources of the organization that have the same importance as the paid staff;
- The design of the volunteering position (preparation of organization) – refers to having a clear description of the position and making a link, a clear connection between this and the organization’s mission, setting realistic goals, delegating rewarding tasks that can become in this way self-motivating;
- Volunteering agreement (preparation of organization) – creates an equal relation between the volunteer and the organization and shows how they are both working together for a common goal;
- The recruitment message (recruitment of volunteers) – the recruitment message is one of the first direct communication instances the organization has with potential vol-

unteers; when building the recruitment message, the organization should think how to promote elements that motivate volunteers to get involved, such as values, potential benefits, development opportunities, etc.

- The selection process (selection of EVS volunteers) – maintaining transparency, informing all candidates on the results of each phase of the selection, offering space for potential volunteers to ask for more feedback on their applications, developing a two-way communication during the selection and allowing candidates to ask their own questions, etc. - all these show a professional approach and have an impact on the motivation of EVS volunteers;
- The selection results (selection of EVS volunteers) – sending a congratulating message to the selected volunteers and welcoming them already into your team will be the first step in creating a personal connection between the volunteer and the organization;
- The induction process (induction and training of EVS volunteers) – facilitates further the development of this connection between the two actors (volunteer and organization); volunteers start to understand they are part of something and create an affiliation with the team and organization's mission;
- Offering training and the opportunity to develop further their competences (induction and training of EVS volunteers) sends across the message “the organization cares about us enough to invest in our development” and thus motivates volunteers;
- Offering feedback (supervision of EVS volunteers) – giving constructive feedback not only in relation with positive but also with more difficult or negative situations will also build motivation;
- The support structure developed during the supervising meetings and the overall context of the supervision process (supervision of EVS volunteers) – facilitating get-to-know each other moments with the other volunteers or staff members, having the

context to share the success and the failures in the team, discussing possibilities to improve the activities, having a model of professional and personal behavior in the supervisor, etc. - all these are extremely motivating;

- The degree of autonomy offered to the volunteer (supervision of EVS volunteers) - a balance should be maintained between the need for self-determination and the control of the volunteer by the organization;
- Expressing recognition and appreciation for the work of volunteers will always have a motivating effect;
- Taking into consideration volunteers' suggestions and opinions and including volunteers in the evaluation process (evaluation of EVS volunteers and volunteering projects) will also contribute to the motivation process.

Motivating EVS volunteers is an art, some might say, the multicultural context of the projects adding to this challenge. However, two very simple elements can, in most cases, represent the key to success: a genuine interest in the volunteers' well-being, manifested from the first interactions with them and an individualized approach based on their specific needs.

Oana Țicle

Ioana Bere

TIPS AND TRICKS

MOTIVATION

- Motivating EVS volunteers is a process that starts even before volunteers arrive in the organization.
- Apply the principle “it’s better to prevent than cure” when addressing the process of motivating EVS volunteers.
- Individualize the methods you use for motivating volunteers, depending on their own needs.
- Know your volunteers and build on their internal motivating factors!
- Motivating volunteers doesn’t have to imply using costly methods, sometimes the simple instruments that don’t cost the organization a lot are the most efficient.
- Involve others in this process and especially in identifying the needs volunteers have – mentors, local volunteers, etc.



3.8 RECOGNITION OF MERITS OF EVS VOLUNTEERS

Recognition is an ongoing, integrated component of any effective volunteer program. Recognition is retention tool and in working with EVS volunteers we can see the recognition also as an important motivation tool. EVS volunteers should be recognized for their contributions to the local community, the organization, the clients and the paid staff. This serves not only to satisfy basic human needs but also to motivate volunteers to continue their involvement. Recognition is acknowledging the efforts of EVS volunteers. It shows appreciation for the work that volunteers do for organization and provides volunteers with a sense of belonging and contribution. Recognition and approval give volunteers a feeling of warmth, pleasure and accomplishment. Recognition is also a public proclamation that EVS volunteer's efforts are valuable and making a difference not only to the organization but to the community as well. Volunteer recognition is more than pins or certificates; it is creating a culture within the organization that shows volunteers they are valued, appreciated and important to the success of the program. Recognition can be formal or informal or extrinsic and intrinsic. In EVS programs an important role in recognition can play mentor, coordinator, supervisor and other staff in hosting organization. The specific tool for recognition in EVS projects is Youthpass.

Recognition is the acknowledgment and affirmation of the personal growth of an individual or group (Michigan 4-H Recognition Handbook). Lipp (2011) states a difference between

appreciation and recognition. Appreciation expresses “thank you” for time and effort, which can be done in variety formal and informal ways. Recognition, with its root “cognition”, conveys the message that one is mindful of and values the unique contribution made by volunteer. It is important to give both appreciation and recognition.

As states Merrill (2005) managers of volunteers should consider recognition as a process rather than a product.

Recognition of volunteers is important because:

It contributes to morale. Demonstrating concern for volunteers, ensuring that the tasks and jobs they are assigned meet their needs, and recognizing their contribution, will only increase a volunteer’s satisfaction and willingness to further participate in your organization.

It contributes to productivity. If volunteers are given meaningful tasks and rewarded and recognized appropriately for these, they will have a sense of belonging and a feeling of accomplishment. This in turn will result in productivity.

It contributes to retention. As a manager of volunteers, a lot of time, effort and energy go into recruiting volunteers into your organization. It is to your benefit to ensure that these volunteers continue on. Volunteers are more likely to stay involved with your organization if they feel appreciated for the work they do and feel connected to your organization. (Humphrey-Pratt, 2006)

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION IN EVS PROGRAMS

Volunteer recognition in EVS programs has the same principles as in other type of volunteer programs. But there are also some specifics.

In recognition of merits of EVS volunteers play an important role the whole host-

ing organization it is not only the coordinators responsibility. Volunteer recognition in EVS programs is not solely the responsibility of the coordinator, although he/she plays a certain role. All paid staff in hosting organization should be engaged in the on-going recognition of EVS volunteers. Just as every workplace has its own unique corporate culture, an organization's atmosphere can have a huge impact on EVS volunteer experience. EVS volunteers are mostly long term volunteers and they use to work for hosting organization more time than local volunteers. Employees in hosting organization can after few months perceive EVS volunteers as a paid staff and they forgot they are "just" volunteers and they forget about special recognition of their work. It's therefore important for EVS volunteers to feel welcome, part of a team, valued and appreciated. This was confirmed also in our research findings with EVS volunteers: Majority of volunteers felt that their work was recognized by hosting organization. The key person for recognition was mostly coordinator. Ways that organization manifested, respectively, how it volunteers felt, were different. The most common was that they felt to be part of the team or community ("I feel part of the team"; "After 6-th month I had feeling that I was more than member of family volunteer for organization. They had same feelings about me. I become a member of community"; "Actively making me a part of the team, great integration in the local community").

Recognition is closely associated with motivation. If people are rewarded with things that are significant or relevant to them then the recognition process is most effective. Because volunteers are stimulated to serve under various motivations, the same mode of recognition for all volunteers will not be appropriate in all situations (Merril, 2005). It is the same with EVS volunteers. The key to keeping EVS volunteers engaged in organization is to determine what motivates them and then to recognize them based on their motivations. By linking motivations to recognition, you are acknowledging the reasons why volunteers are involved in your organization and placing value on that involvement in a meaningful way to the volunteer. (Humphrey-Pratt, 2006)

Type of Volunteer Motivation	Characteristics of Volunteer	Recognition Ideas
Affiliation	<p>Gets involved with group projects.</p> <p>Likes to have a personal relationship with supervisor.</p> <p>Needs to be perceived as a good person.</p> <p>Needs to be liked.</p> <p>Seeks socialization opportunities.</p>	<p>Cards, gifts, etc. on their birthdays, or special holidays.</p> <p>Letters to supervisors telling of their work to benefit people.</p> <p>Unexpected thank you notes.</p> <p>Awards that are personalized with a thank you from client served.</p> <p>Opportunities to give input about specific clientele needs.</p> <p>Banquets, luncheons, picnics, social outings or attending community events as a group.</p> <p>Include volunteers in slide shows or photos showing their work.</p>
Achievement	<p>Needs specific goals with boundaries and feedback.</p> <p>Has a desire to achieve unique accomplishments.</p> <p>Needs to measure success by seeking goals.</p> <p>Seeks responsibility.</p> <p>Needs tangible rewards.</p>	<p>Tangible awards, plaques, or pins that can be displayed.</p> <p>Letters of commendation for specific accomplishments from board members and to area newspapers.</p> <p>Opportunity to use their own ideas to attain goals.</p> <p>Include in staff meetings when appropriate.</p> <p>Nomination for area, state or national awards.</p> <p>Careful not to waste their time.</p> <p>Color name tags, badges to honor time spent with the agency.</p>
Power/ influence	<p>Needs to impact and influence others.</p> <p>Enjoys teaching others.</p> <p>Can respond to needs of people or programs.</p> <p>Seeks position of authority and responsibility.</p> <p>Responds to titles that depict authority; has strong feelings about status and prestige.</p>	<p>Impressive job title.</p> <p>Ongoing program or site name for them.</p> <p>Recognition that is broad-based that will be seen by people in authority and power.</p> <p>Letter of commendation noting their impact and importance sent to newspapers, colleges, and magazines.</p> <p>Send them to seminars for volunteers and ask them to teach others.</p> <p>Introduce them to people of influence and media contacts.</p>

Source: Fox, Arcemont, Martin: Ideas for Volunteer Recognition.

McClelland and Atkinson et al. (1953) found three types of information that people exhibit which includes: affiliation, achievement and power/influence. This typology can be use also for EVS volunteers.

Recognition should be personalized and individualized. EVS coordinator should make every effort to use personalized recognition to build an ongoing relationship with each EVS volunteer. There can be no “one size fits all” approach to volunteer recognition. The kinds of recognition may be as varied and wide ranging as the individuals. Recognition that is well received and appreciated by volunteers in one situation may not be the most appropriate or effective for volunteers in another situation. Each EVS volunteer is unique. The success of any EVS volunteer project is based on an understanding that individuals come in all shapes, sizes, colours and ages, have a wide range of skills and abilities to contribute, and want to do so for a variety of reasons. This realization allows EVS coordinator to develop appropriate, effective and sensitive recognition responses based on individual preferences.

With the diverse types of EVS volunteers, there must be a balance of informal and formal forms of recognition. Informal recognition should be an on-going part of any EVS volunteer programe. All staff in hosting organization plays an important role in informal recognition. The ways they greet and interact with EVS volunteers on a day-to-day basis are important elements of informal recognition. All staff in hosting organization should make every effort to know volunteers’ names, acknowledge their presence, and appreciate their contributions. For some EVS volunteers is more important and motivated formal recognition. Formal recognition of volunteers involves more traditional and structured methods. Certificates of appreciation and special pins or other tokens may be presented to EVS volunteers as enduring mementos of the organization’s appreciation. Formal recognition for

volunteer contributions may also involve widespread public recognition using newspaper, radio or television media. Other tips for formal and informal recognition you can find below. In ways of recognition EVS volunteers is important also cultural context. EVS volunteers come from different cultures. What is usual in your culture can be unusual in their country. For example touch somebody or kiss when you are greeting can be normal in one culture, but it can be annoyingly for people who are not get used to it.

TIPS AND TRICKS

- Be timely and spontaneous. The longer you wait, the harder it will be to say, and the less effective the compliment becomes. Say it now, rather than saving it for the annual recognition night.
- Be sincere. If you don't mean it, don't say it. If you try to deceive, your non-verbal communication will give you away, and you will end up sounding artificial and contrived.
- Be specific. Give attention to details. Be specific in indicating exactly what the person did that was so important, and why. Compliment the "little" as well as the "big" things.
- Reinforce it non-verbally. A warm pat on the back, a wink, a smile, an agreeing nod of the head, excitement in your eyes will more than triple the impact of your words. The desired effect of praise can be amplified (or negated) by how it is given.
- Do it often. Recognition of volunteers should happen on a year-round, frequent and informal basis. Begin by saying "thank you" often!
- Recognize the person, not the work. It's best to phrase recognition to emphasize the contribution of the individual and not the end result. "You did a great job!" as opposed to "This is a great job!"
- Be consistent. Make sure that whatever standards of recognition you establish can

be consistently maintained by your organization in years to come. Holding a volunteer recognition dinner one year sets up expectations for future volunteers.

- Customize it. Getting to know each of your volunteers and their interests will help you learn how best to recognize each individual and make him or her feel special. (Volunteer Appreciation Guide, Lip,2005)

YOUTHPASS AS A WAY OF RECOGNITION

Youthpass is a part of the European Commission's strategy to foster the recognition of non-formal learning. It is available for projects funded by Erasmus+ programs. As a tool to document and recognize learning outcomes, it puts policy into practice and practice into policy:

While creating their Youthpass Certificate together with a support person, the participants of the projects have the possibility to describe what they have done in their project and which competences they have acquired. Thus, Youthpass supports the reflection upon the personal non-formal learning process and outcomes.

Being a Europe-wide validation instrument for non-formal learning in the youth field, Youthpass contributes to strengthening the social recognition of youth work.

Describing the added value of the project, Youthpass supports active European citizenship of young people and of youth workers.

Youthpass also aims at supporting the employability of young people and of youth workers by documenting the acquisition of key competences on a certificate.

All participants of the projects approved within these frameworks are personally entitled to receive a Youthpass Certificate – and thus recognition for their non-formal learning outcomes.

To learn more about youthpass, its importance and how volunteer can do it, see website:

<https://www.youthpass.eu/en/youthpass/>

Some ideas and tips for recognition of EVS volunteers (Mc Curley, Lynch, 2005):

Daily means of providing recognition:

- Saying “Thank you”.
- Telling volunteers “You did a great job”.
- Suggesting volunteers join you for coffee.
- Asking for their opinions.
- Greeting volunteers when they come in the morning.
- Showing interest in their personal interest.
- Smiling when you see them.
- Bragging about them to your boss (in their presence).
- Jotting small thank- you notes to them.
- Having refreshment with volunteers after work.
- Saying something positive about a volunteer’s personal quality.
- Telling volunteer what happened at the organization since their last visit.

Intermediate means of providing recognition:

- Taking volunteers to lunch.
- Providing food at volunteer meetings.
- Letting volunteers put their names on the products they produced.
- Writing them a letter of commendation.
- Putting volunteers in important task forces or committees.

- Posting graphic displays, showing progress toward targets.
- Mentioning major contributors by name in your status report to management.
- Inviting volunteers to present their results.
- Giving volunteers permission to go to seminar, convention or professional meeting.
- Writing articles about their performance for newsletter or newspapers.
- Decorating a volunteer's work area on their birthday.
- Celebrating the major accomplishment of a volunteer.
- Letting volunteers represent your organization on important meetings.

Major means of providing recognition:

- Making special caps, shirts, bags.
- Encouraging volunteers to write an article about some accomplishment at work.
- Giving the plaque or certificate for most improved results.
- Buying volunteers good equipment.
- Getting a volunteer's picture in the paper for outstanding accomplishment.
- Giving a volunteer additional responsibilities and a new title.
- Renting newspapers space to thank volunteers.
- Suggestion and recommendation box.
- Funny notes during stressful times.
- Field trips.
- Networking opportunities.

Here are also some other tips for recognition of volunteers suggested by Volunteering Australia: <http://volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/VA-Managers-101-Ways-to-Recognise-Your-Volunteers.pdf>



3.9. MONITORING THE ACTIVITY OF EVS VOLUNTEERS

Monitoring in volunteering management is defined as a continuous assessment of the volunteer's activities to ensure that they are on-course and on-schedule in meeting the objectives. In simpler words it means observing, recording with a use of specific tools, the volunteer's work and development process in order to confirm if it is going according to the plan you established. Monitoring helps you identify problems before it is too late but it also means being conscious and attentive.

HOW DOES MONITORING DIFFER FROM EVALUATION?

As monitoring is very closely related to evaluation, for a better understanding of the term, we will try to present the differences between the two management tools. Monitoring and evaluation ask very different kinds of questions, and therefore, need different methodologies to generate the answers to these questions. When monitoring asks: How have the volunteering activities been implemented?, evaluation wants to know: How well have the activities been implemented? When monitoring asks: How many people have our EVS volunteers reached?, evaluation ponders: Have they reached enough people? Were they the right people? The two are independent and inter-dependent, we can even say that monitoring is a “raw material”: the information that evaluation transforms into a complete analysis of a past action in order to plan the future.

Item	Monitoring	Evaluation
Frequency	Regular, on-going	Episodic, snapshot
Main action	Keeping track	Assessment
Purpose	Improve efficiency/adjust work plan	Improve effectiveness, impact, future planning
Focus	Inputs, outputs, work plans	Effectiveness, impact, relevance
Information sources	Routine systems, field observation, progress reports	Surveys, studies, routine systems, field observation, progress reports

Original source: A UNICEF Guide for Monitoring and Evaluation, 1990

HOW DOES IT WORK IN EVS?

The Erasmus+ programme defines EVS as an opportunity for young people to acquire competences and grow as individuals, through non-formal and informal learning that makes monitoring EVS volunteers a more complex process. This monitoring has to follow two processes that sometimes go together, and sometimes are separated. One process is focused on the volunteer and their personal development as a result of fulfilling their tasks as well as participating in other external activities, such as trainings, cultural events and other extra activities. The second is focused on the organisation and the local community and, in this case, what we monitor is whether our project, mainly covered by the volunteer's work, is going according to the plan and whether it has an impact on the community. Further we will take a closer look at both of them.

A. MONITORING THE WORK OF EVS VOLUNTEERS

You monitor EVS volunteers by creating a plan. Starting as early as in the project application you should have defined your objectives and specified activities EVS volunteers should do in order to meet these objectives. Please, bear in mind that volunteers are also

aware of the objectives as they are clearly stated in the Activity Agreement. In order to verify if what you have planned is successful, that is: if the volunteers are doing what they were supposed to do or if you need to bring some changes to your activities; you should create a system that allows for a regular check on the project's state and progress. While monitoring an EVS project with one volunteer may seem an easy job, bigger projects involving several volunteers and hosting organisations need more planning. In such a case, we do recommend you to have a proper monitoring system. We suggest you to design your plan from the early stages of the project and not only apply it in emergency cases, that is, for example, when the volunteer does not come to the office anymore. A monitoring plan should specify who will collect what information, in what form, and when and how it will be used. Proper monitoring of the progress in your EVS project starts with defining your indicators. An **indicator** is a measure that answers the following questions: (1) What is going to illustrate that we have accomplished our objective? (2) What is telling us whether: (a) our EVS project is successful? (b) the EVS volunteers are satisfied? (c) we have a positive impact on the community?

An indicator should be able to tell you:

- Whether your volunteer is doing what was planned
- In what measure he progressed in reaching a project's objective
- To what extent? his/her personal learning objectives are met.

Indicators should always be measurable, meaning that they are represented by a percentage or a number. Some examples of indicators include: (1) a number of products the volunteers have created during their service, (2) a number of people that have benefited from the volunteering activity, (3) a number of training hours provided to a volunteer by the

organisation in order to help him/her develop a skill.

It is important to select one or a limited number of key indicators that are accessible and that will demonstrate you have accomplished your goal.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED WHEN?

In EVS projects, work monitoring is a task divided mainly between the coordinator and the supervisor. The project coordinator monitors volunteer's activities and provides proper evaluation in cooperation with the hosting organisation and the volunteer.

HOW?

Decide how the information will be recorded systematically and reported clearly. A variety of methods may be applied: an observation, interviews, reporting, and visits. Formal and informal, quantitative and qualitative methods may be used to examine certain aspects. Below you will find some methods to monitor activities and the personal development of your EVS volunteers.

KEEP TRACK OF WORK HOURS. You can do this by creating time sheets delivered on paper or by email. You can opt for volunteers filling time sheets on their own – showing that you fully trust them - or it can be collaborative work between the volunteers and their work coordinator/supervisor. Recently, there are plenty of online management applications available, such as Toggl, and we strongly encourage you to use such tools.

MONITORING THROUGH FIELD VISITS. Field visits may provide valuable qualitative and quantitative information that cannot be obtained from written reports or discussions. Field visits are used to monitor volunteer's development processes, results, and participation, and to get a better understanding of the whole context. They should be based on volunteer's activities, issues identified during previous visits that require a follow-up, observa-

tions of unexpected incidents and unforeseen processes and, finally, the elements to follow during the next visit. They are also an opportunity to discuss the volunteering activities with their beneficiaries. For example, if your volunteer is running a series of workshops at schools, a field visit would mean joining the volunteer for one workshop in order to observe his/her involvement, preparation, results and talk to students to find out their opinion on the workshops they have just participated in.

MONITORING THROUGH PROGRESS REPORTS. Depending on the organisation structure and potential, you may also consider reporting. For instance, an organisation responsible for coordinating more hosting organisations where EVS volunteers are placed can require a weekly or bi-monthly report from a person that is in charge of volunteers' work. Generally, a variety of regular reporting forms have been developed. Their major components are standard and include:

- A list of specific objectives/activities for EVS volunteers;
- The activities that have been completed, with numbers (your indicators);
- An explanation why certain activities have not been completed as planned (if it is the case);
- Identification of additional resources, if needed (for example, if the volunteer needs more training or if the amount of money allocated for buying workshop materials should be increased;)
- Aspects that need to be followed up.

USING MONITORING FOR EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK

The information that you collect can be used to make decisions at each level: coordinator, volunteer, mentor, and supervisor. In addition to a direct use for external purposes (such

as filling the mid and final report to the National Agency) feedback should be given to the volunteers. Possible decisions about work plan adjustments have to be made together with the EVS volunteer during evaluation sessions.

B. MONITORING THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE OF EVS VOLUNTEERS

As mentioned before, in all EVS projects an important aspect occurs: measuring and monitoring the learning experience of the volunteer. Apart of the role of the receiving organisation and the volunteer, the European Commission introduces various tools, such as the learning agreement or the Youth Pass, that facilitate planning and later, monitoring and evaluation of the learning plan.

In the planning stage, an instrument available to define our objectives in terms of personal development is the learning agreement. In some cases, it is developed largely as a part of the official European Voluntary Service Agreement, while in other cases, it is pointed separately. The learning agreement states the expected learning process and learning objectives of the volunteer(s). Typically, the learning agreement concentrates, in different ways, on eight key competences developed by the European Commission. The same eight key competences are part of the Youth Pass, a monitoring and evaluation tool designed specifically to track the progress of the EVS volunteers learning experience. These are the following:

- Communication in the mother tongue
- Communication in foreign languages
- Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology
- Digital competence
- Learning to learn
- Social and civic competences

- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship and
- Cultural awareness and expression

In view of the Youth Pass achievement report, the mentor together with the coordinator, plays an important role in discussing the learning achievements, monitoring and assisting in volunteer's progress. The volunteers themselves can monitor their own personal development. An important tool for self-monitoring is keeping a diary, where they can keep track of their progress.

Depending on a project we are implementing, some key competences can be more relevant to our case and our volunteer while others less. Please follow the example below.

CASE STUDY

Objective: development of communication in a native language

Activity: teaching volunteer's native language to local community

Indicators: a number of workshop hours provided by the volunteer in their native language, a number of participants in the workshops, a number of educational materials produced, a frequency rate in the workshops

Methods: a presence list, progress reports, workshops visits, discussions with students and observation.

People involved: the coordinator collects data with a help of the mentor (informal chats, mentoring sessions, and visits, and the supervisor (a presence list, and a field visit) and fills in, on an established time frame, a progress report.

Use: Based on the information collected, various courses of action can be taken, such as: the classes frequency may increase, decrease or remain at the same level; the volunteer may change the format into a less formal conversation class rather than proper lessons; the classes may be addressed to a different group, etc.

TIPS AND TRICKS

- Counter a tendency to collect too much data by carefully selecting a few indicators that focus on the process and results!
- Select indicators that are easily accessible and trustable!
- When defining your indicators please ensure you have an exact understanding of the term. Try to be as specific as possible! If your indicator is “a number of workshops”, define precisely what “a workshop” means.
- Use a “programme” called a ‘coffee morning review’ to monitor the volunteers’ satisfaction level. It simply means that, at the beginning of a working day, you ask your volunteers how they feel.
- If you want to have a high-quality monitoring you need to take a more holistic approach. Rather than observing the quality of the volunteer activity separately, you need to listen to as many people involved as possible, starting from peer volunteers to language teachers and other organisation members.
- Use monitoring as a way to stimulate volunteer motivation! Place texts with their outcomes on the office wall, or in the kitchen. For example: 20 workshop hours in one month!
- In bigger projects, with more EVS volunteers you may use online tools such as: Doodle, Google Drive, etc.

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Alicja Zachert

3.10 EVALUATION OF EVS VOLUNTEERS AND VOLUNTEERING PROJECTS

Evaluation – a word that all of us have heard dozens of times. In many different contexts, fields and meanings. What does it actually mean? What role does it play in volunteering for all its actors? And finally, what role does it play in the European Voluntary Service which, as we already know, differs from other volunteering opportunities? We will try to provide some answers to these questions in this chapter.

EVS coordinators care about their volunteers' **performance**, **efficiency** and **personal development**. They are responsible for offering support in fulfilling everyday tasks and in the process of achieving long term goals. The goals set by volunteers themselves but also the goals of the project. If you want to be sure that volunteers' learning process and the implemented activities are on the correct path evaluation is a way to accomplish that. The evaluation process is something that is not always considered exciting, something that volunteer coordinators not always look forward to. It can be associated with a difficult activity that brings no practical benefits. Moreover, rather often evaluation is considered as a way and a system of dealing with problems occurring to the project or your organisation once something is not going well with the volunteer's performance. We would rather suggest a different approach, that is: understanding of evaluation as **a way to inspire and enrich organisations**, and improve the coordinators' and volunteers' performance. Evaluation as a means of systematic assessment and a way to develop rather than a tool used once the situation is on the edge.

EVALUATION WHAT IS THAT?

Evaluation is an important instrument for receiving feedback and for improving the way your EVS project is organised. In our understanding, evaluation is an opportunity to give feedback as well as suggestions to the volunteer. The evaluation time must be a cooperative, supportive dialogue between the organisation and the volunteer, which means that you should allow the volunteer to evaluate the overall project, the activities, the relations, and the learning experience.

When you evaluate the volunteers' performance you simply:

- formulate questions
- collect data
- analyse data
- modify plans, program, and actions (if needed!)

What benefits does it bring to the organisation, the coordinator and the volunteer?

If we were to name advantages that evaluation brings, we would suggest dividing benefits into two categories: benefits for the volunteers and benefits for the coordinators (and organisations). Obviously, there is an inseparable bond between these two.

Evaluation benefits from the **volunteers' perspective**:

- A chance to upgrade or correct their performance by receiving constructive feedback. Just as every work deserves recognition, so too the EVS volunteers do. A lack of feedback can be frustrating and interpreted as disregarding the quality of their work which, in the long run, might result in poorer performance, less effort and even resigning from the service.
- It helps EVS volunteers reach their potential and receive tasks that match their needs

and abilities. Conducting regular evaluation gives volunteers a possibility to reflect on their achievements, strengths and weaknesses;

- It may be a method and a way for EVS volunteers to share their doubts, complains or achievements in their voluntary work, their environment, and work relations. Not all volunteers will feel free and conformable enough to talk straight forward about things they do not appreciate. Some of them would need a “formal” system to express that;
- Being more involved in the organisation’s activities by seeing/understanding what has been happening in the organisation and how the volunteers can support it with reaching its goals and enforcing its values.
- Giving their input to readapting activities in future projects or in similar situations will have a motivational effect;
- Ensuring the volunteers’ opinion is taken into consideration.

Evaluation benefits from the coordinators’ and **organisations’ perspective**:

- collecting information on the volunteers’ performance (delegated tasks, volunteers’ achievements and development, and project’s implementation) in a regular manner.
- assessing to what extent the goals of the project and the goals set regarding volunteers’ development has been reached and what has to be improved;
- monitoring whether the path and activities taken to reach your goals are leading in the right direction. Thanks to the data collected and analysed you, as the coordinator, have a possibility to assess whether the action taken was a proper and efficient one for the volunteers or not. If you see that simply something does not work, you redefine the action;
- helping assess the structure of the organisation – is it clear who is responsible for what? Is the way the organisation works efficient?;

- regular evaluation, at different stages of the volunteer and organisation cooperation, gives you the big picture and, as a result, more control over the whole process;
- finally, it assesses the effect of your activities, defines recommendations and has an impact on future actions.

EVALUATION IN EVS PROJECTS

A long term mobility project such as EVS can be a learning experience in many different ways. It includes language learning, professional experience, intercultural learning, autonomy and independence, social life and organisational aspects. Evaluation meetings can be used to make distinctions, separate different aspects of the EVS project, acting as a tool for conflict prevention. They also help reflect on how the EVS volunteers can change things or decide together if and what the organisation can do to improve the project. Below you can find the two most important aspects of evaluation in the EVS: work and personal development.

WORK EVALUATION IN EVS PROJECTS

Work evaluation refers to the volunteers' performance at the workplace, and the fulfilment of delegated tasks. Its goal is to find answers to the following questions:

- How do volunteers feel in their position and about tasks delegated to them?
- How are they completing delegated tasks:
- Do they need more support or more freedom?
- Is there some space for improvement? While talking about weak points, do not overdo with underlining the negative side. Try to be constructive giving feedback. Always underline the positive side and the way how the improvement can be performed.
- Does the volunteers' job meet their expectations and reaches their potential?

- It is also a place for the volunteers to share their ideas for actions and for coordinators to share details for upcoming activities and plans.

PERSONAL DEVELOPEMENT EVALUATION IN EVS

EVS is a volunteering programme that puts a lot of attention on personal development of the volunteers. Personal development requires a plan. A plan created by the volunteers with the support of their coordinator. At the beginning of the service, the volunteers themselves should state what they want to accomplish by volunteering (obviously that might change and be developed during the service). The coordinator is a person that guides them, assesses and shapes the process if it is not going in the right direction. Personal development evaluation should be designed by taking into consideration the following elements:

- Are volunteers achieving by volunteering what they have assumed they will?
- Do activities and assignments help them achieve their goals? If not, how to shape the tasks to support this process?
- Do volunteers develop other competences that they did not assume at the beginning?
- How is the process going? Are there any obstacles or delays?
- Is there a need to make some corrective action to support the volunteers' development?

To show what this means in practice, we will take an example of our organisation, where we conduct a multidimensional evaluation with the EVS volunteers, the organisation staff, and the EVS project actors.

- **In the first month there is an evaluation meeting every week.** The accommodation conditions, discovering the culture and the city, adapting to the new life and its requirements, the volunteers' needs and expectations are all subjects of a discussion. These

are group evaluations, but if the situation requires it we can also organise an individual meeting. We use non-formal education methods and tools to evaluate and try to involve other important actors, such as mentors.

- **Every month there is an evaluation session** that focuses on the work of the volunteers conducted by their work coordinator/supervisor. Usually, it is a face-to-face, individual meeting where aspects connected to work time, activities implemented, work relations, delegation and supervision aspects, as well as relations with beneficiaries and future work plans are discussed. Some of the work coordinators opt for a written questionnaire while others use non-formal methods, such as collage, visualisation methods, coaching tools, diary writing, clay modelling, etc.
- In addition, **on a monthly basis, there is a group evaluation**, focused exclusively on the personal development of the EVS volunteers and their learning experience. At this evaluation session all our EVS volunteers are asked to reflect on their past month, on their initially established learning plan and to self-assess the progress they made, to see if they keep the same objectives, to reflect on how they have changed. Taking into consideration that, in our understanding, this is an important part of the EVS, we usually reserve a full day session for this, the project coordinator being the one that facilitates this process. The EVS volunteers have an opportunity to participate in individual or group exercises to help them reflect and plan their future. The main topics are: personal development, professional experience, language lessons, intercultural learning, key competences and Youth Pass. This is also an opportunity for the volunteers to communicate their feelings to the other participants in the project and to prevent or solve conflicts in the group.
- As a result and a continuation of the two important monthly evaluations that we conduct with the EVS volunteers, a **project team evaluation meeting** takes place. This is

the time and place where work coordinators/supervisors, the project coordinator and the mentors can exchange information and reflect on their work. Depending on the case and needs, it can be individual or group, face-to-face or online evaluation. For example, mentors meet in person with the EVS coordinator for evaluation, while work supervisors fill in a monthly online survey.

- The EVS volunteers have **mentors with whom they have regular consultation meetings**. Often these are not officially scheduled meetings because the volunteers meet their mentors frequently and unplanned evaluation conversations may take place.
- **At the end of an EVS project we organise a final evaluation**. Over the years we have developed a “tradition” to hold the final evaluation somewhere outside the city, in a more natural environment, to stimulate the volunteers’ reflection process on the whole experience. The volunteers take the final look over their whole EVS experience, remembering their process and the important steps they have passed through and what they have learned. One session is dedicated to finishing the Youth Pass and, among others, how to use it on the labour market. We also use the final evaluation to help volunteers set new objectives for their life after EVS. Some part is also dedicated to the project team evaluation: work coordinators and mentors assess the overall project and bring improvements for the next EVS project. This evaluation is both quantitative and qualitative.
- The last part of the evaluation happens after the return of the volunteer to their sending country and it is conducted **from the perspective of the sending organisation** as it is responsible for organising a project evaluation with the volunteer and filling in a qualitative and quantitative questionnaire sent by the coordinating organisation, and used in the project final report.

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR AN EFFECTIVE EVALUATION

- First and foremost, remember about aims and objectives: What do you anticipate to achieve in your project? In what areas do your volunteers want to develop? How will their work be measured and recognised?
- Do not forget that evaluation is just a part of the management cycle and if you want to have it done properly focus on the whole process.
- Evaluation is a two-way meeting. It is not only the coordinator's time to discuss the volunteers' work. It is also a chance for volunteers to discuss their performance and needs, and to present their suggestions. The time when you are talking, as the coordinator, should equal the time you are listening.
- Listen actively – if something draws your attention – ask further questions.
- Make an effort to pose as many open-ended questions as possible (instead of just asking: Are there any achievements you have been proud of last month? Ask: What have you achieved last month?).
- An evaluation session should be focused on discussing the volunteers' performance in the organisation. Do not get sidetracked talking about topics that are definitely important but not relevant at the moment. Stick to the RAP method: R – review the past, A – analyze the present, P – plan the future.
- The main goal of the evaluation is not about filling out papers. It is to have a substantive conversation with the volunteers about their performance and tasks delegated, therefore, do not focus on creating an innovatory and complex questionnaire if it is not needed.

In the same time, we do recommend to find a system of keeping records of the evaluation results in order, both for the final report and to follow the progress.

- Finally, do not forget that a monthly evaluation cannot replace a day-by-day supervision of the volunteer's performance.

Dana Solonean

Alicja Zachert

4. Conflicts

in

EVS

Prevention

and

Resolution

WHY? WHY NOT?

There is a lot of reasons for conflicts in the environment of diversity. If I would be a conflict, I would love to stay in EVS projects. Why? First of all, there are a lot of differences, for example in expectations, culture, age, gender, stereotypes, habits, values, beliefs. Secondly, volunteers are not alone in the process; they are part of the different relationships and cooperate with many different actors. There are also many elements that can influence behavior and reactions when being in conflict. These can be internal (feelings, needs, emotions, physical condition, etc.) and external (barriers, living conditions, weather, culture, time pressure). Every EVS has more actors involved. Volunteer, coordinator, mentor, project manager, staff of the hosting organization, clients, other volunteers and all of them can be a part of the conflict and manage it in their way and every single one of them is unique and has different individual needs at the same time. All this elements can lead to the conflict situations and can be perceived negatively. Conflict can mobilize a lot of attention and effort, consume a lot of energy. But it doesn't mean that it always has to be seen negatively.

Conflict brings the change, reveals problems, helps to mark personal boundaries, contributes to the formation of identity, connects those, that were not connected before and helps them to realize common interest, strengthens self-esteem of individual or the group. Conflict is challenge for everyone but is important to get maximum benefits and minimum loss out of it. Sounds simple, doesn't it?

It is not sufficient to know how to describe the conflict and analyze it. It is important to know what to do to solve it without any serious harm and find constructive and sustainable solution for both parties.

In this chapter, we are describing different types of conflicts and briefly suggest some tools how to prevent or handle them. We will look mainly at the interpersonal conflicts as they are in EVS most usual.

TERMINOLOGY. WHAT IS THE CONFLICT?

A word conflict comes from the Latin word *conflictus* – meaning clash or bump into some barrier. For the purpose of this chapter, we will use following definition by Bednařík (2001) „ Conflict happens when one or two parties claim the same demand on something or they realize that they have different opinion about the situation that they are discussing or they are part of.“

Conflict has two components, content and emotions. Emotions such as fear, frustration and aggression are also the part of the conflict and they are covering realistic and objective content of the conflict and complicating the situation. We are humans with emotions and we have to live with them but we can also keep them under the control in order to help us to see the content of the conflict. Not easy, but possible. As closer and tighter the relationship is that more intense can conflict arise and it can make it harder to solve it rationally.

Typology of the conflicts (Christopher W. Moore, 1989)

This typology seems to be suitable for the purpose of EVS because it is pointing on the conflicts that arise most often. It is made from the psychological point of view and its focus is on the source, which caused the problem.

Relationship conflict – is arising when we tend to perceive the other person in a negative way based on our bad experience, prejudice, stereotypes, negative attitude. In the conflict we deny to accept other person differences and different behavior, caused very often by lack of communication or no communication. It can also arise when the other person is not behaving as we expect or how we are used to.

Conflicts of values – people come to their service from diverse cultures and with different values that they gained during their life. These values seem to be the right recipe for them and a society to function properly. When they meet with other person or people with

values that are different and it seems that nothing can work out well. They try to convince the others to change the values. This pressure can bring complicated conflict situations. People won't give up their values because they create their identity. But this doesn't mean that people with different values cannot live together and cooperate without conflicts. They surely can, but they should be ready to respect each other and behave without threatening the other person's values.

Structural conflict – this type of conflict is connected for example with the structure of groups, organization and with defining competences, responsibilities and positions. They arise when there is not clear communication about the tasks, roles and expectations in the structure or system of work, decision making. It is possible to prevent it by providing the clear system with possibility to communicate it and get feedback and ideas from people that are part of the team, so they have clear idea about their position in the structure.

Conflict of information – this conflict is arising naturally because everyone has different ideas made up of having various information sources, believes, values, experience and we are interpreting information in our own way. Sometimes it is possible to discuss the differences by using arguments and providing additional information that can help to agree on some conflict outcome. Clever way is to respect others and try to seek solutions that combine both ideas.

Conflict of interest – if needs of each party are not fulfilled in the same situation and one person feels that needs to fight for her or his needs. It is made up of the natural difference of people. To solve it, we don't need to change their needs. We have to communicate out the way how to make both of them satisfied with the situation.

Unfortunately, this typology of conflicts is very basic and in the real life we are facing different types and more complicated combinations that may not be easy to describe or put into the category. It is good to know what causes the problem, if it is not sufficient amount

of information needed, or just misunderstanding or really the conflict of interests and what can we do to help the parties to communicate it and find solutions that both are happy with. Some conflicts happen just because there is misunderstanding in the communication.

When we realize that conflict is going to happen?

Our perception is the first moment in which we consciously or unconsciously register a conflict. This perception is very subjective and the others may feel it differently and this perception itself can cause the conflict. It means that people don't have to be in a conflict situation and they raise it.

What is happening during the conflict? Mr. Labat describes 5 phases of the conflict as follows:

1. Discord and disagreement (initial phase) – differences are presented and it is followed by changing emotions. Behavior of the conflict parties is still under control.
2. Polarization – conflict parties seek to find arguments to enforce their ideas, emotions come into place, it is hard to cooperate or find solution, and it's about winning or losing.
3. Isolation – this may but doesn't need to happen. People avoid meeting each other although the conflict is still present.
4. Destruction – this phase is characterized by decision to hurt the other (physically or psychologically). People can try to damage the reputation of the other, to hurt him or her. It is not possible to cooperate anymore or find the solution.
5. Exhaustion – people are tired of the conflict and it is possible that they will start to suffer (get sick, depressed). People are not able to solve the situation and nor finish the conflict.

Each phase can last for a different time period, sometimes even years. It can stop on each phase. Development of the conflict can be for each party different.

PREVENTION AND SOLUTION OF PROBLEMS

All of us bring prejudice and stereotypes about conflicts that we got in our families, communities, culture. These experiences also influence the way how we deal with conflicts, how we are willing to get rid of them and how we behave and feel about them.

Conflict is not about competing. There are no winners and losers if having the conflict doesn't help to solve an uncomfortable situation.

It helps to believe that actors of the conflict actually trust in interest of the both sides to solve the situation. This requires high level of trust.

A lack of communication as well as a style of communication can be a reason for a conflict. Anyway, it is necessary and with some additional communication skills we can prevent the conflicts or solve them easier. As we can identify uprising conflict that better we can solve it.

The good news is that we can actually learn and use some communication skills to prevent or solve the conflict situation. But what is worth to mention on this point that there is not a universal scheme that would help us to learn to solve every conflict situation easily. We are emotional and individual human beings and if we would just use some methods and suppress emotions our actions won't be trustworthy. We are able to control these emotions.

Here are some examples of the communication tools that can help to prevent conflicts:

Active listening

A lot of conflicts escalate because we are not able to listen actively in the certain situation and we are trying to give arguments and tell our own opinions. Listening is the fundamental component of interpersonal communication skills.

A goal of active listening is to try to understand the other and to express it. It is possible to use it at the beginning of the conflict when we see that the other is indicating different

ideas, interests and needs. It means that we will create the atmosphere when we really want to understand the other and we are not using arguments, not trying to open the “fight”. It doesn’t necessary mean that we have to agree with everything but we can try to find the solutions that can be accepted by both.

Active listening is a skill that can be developed with practice. It means to be fully concentrated on what is being said rather than just hearing the message of the other.

I-Statement

I-Statements consist of a description of how you feel, an indication of the conditions under which you feel that way, and why those conditions cause your emotions. I-Statements take these forms: "I feel... (State your emotion) when you....(describe their behavior or under what conditions you feel this way) because... (explain why their behavior or the conditions cause you to feel this way).

Clearly, giving an I-Statement is more constructive than commanding, threatening, moralizing, judging, ultimatums, mind-reading or other behaviors that create defensiveness. However, this is not an easy concept to grasp. The pronoun "you" is used all the time and many uses are not bad. The problem is we often state personal opinions as facts and over-generalizations are implied by forms of the verb "to be," like "are," "is," "am" and so on.

PROBLEM SOLVING

First of all we need to identify problem and then answer the question if we are able to solve it on our own or we need to ask some third party for assistance. Third party can be any person that the conflict parties see as an authority. In EVS it can be for example a project coordinator or a director of the organization.

Mediation – in non-formal process that is structured and has prescribed rules but it is not

run in the court and the authority is called the mentor. The mentor cannot be directly involved into the conflict situation and her or his role is to assist conflict parties to come to the commonly agreed solution. The goal of the mediation is not to find out who is right and who is wrong and the focus is on the future, neither the past. Successful mediation is finished by the written agreement.

Reconciliation – is the process of finding long-term solutions for further communication, cooperation or living together. Focus is not only on solving one problem but to help people to renew lost trust or to help them to communicate without harming each other. They should be able to find the way, rules, system, how to go on in the relationship. It is necessary to communicate their perceptions, understanding the situation, emotions and behavior. We are interested in getting rid of the negative feeling, anger or disappointment.

Authoritative solution – decision is made by the authority regardless of the interests of the parties. The example of the authoritative solution is a decision of the judge at the court. If you try to solve problems from the position of the authority, you can suppress them but not to solve them. The conflict is still alive but silently hiding and waiting for its chance to arise again and possibly with bigger power.

Adaptation – one of the parties is giving up on his or her needs voluntarily or under the pressure and is accepting suggested solutions from the other party.

Escape – one party or both decide to “leave the conflict” that may be easier and less energy consuming than solving the problem.

Compromise – conflict parties are trying to find the solutions and they are communicating them. Everyone has to give up on some of their needs to solve the problem. They are equally sharing loss and win.

Consensus – parties find the solution that will satisfy not all their needs but only few essential.

There are few things that are good to keep in mind when looking at the conflict. It can be the source of change, prevent stagnation, is relaxing the tension in relationships. If we see it as something that opens discussion and helps us to move or make things to work better and if we manage to be constructive and have motivation to solve it.

Ida Adolfová

5. CONCLUSIONS

Thank you for still being here with us, at the end of this manual! Before we say goodbye, we want to share a few of our own conclusions after managing EVS volunteers for many years. What you have read in the chapters of this manual are all tested principles that our organizations have put into practice in the EVS projects we have hosted. We have seen these elements work and they have helped us lead our EVS volunteers through their own learning processes. Still we believe that each EVS volunteer coordinator or manager should find his/her own personal style in working with volunteers. Not only some of the things you read here will not apply to you because of your personality or own way of approaching things, but they might also be irrelevant for your organization or your cultural context. Take the info and the tips here through these filters and find a way for them to work for you, for your organization, for your EVS volunteers!

Managing EVS volunteers is a continuous process and, if you look at it from this perspective, you will see that each of the steps presented are interconnected and strongly linked to each other. How you make sure that EVS is a good idea for your organization and what you do to prepare yourselves for involving EVS volunteers will have an impact on how motivated and invested your volunteers will be. How you design your recruitment process will facilitate the selection and will ensure you have reached the youngsters you need for your activities. The way you support volunteers and offer them supervision is directly linked to the effort they will invest in their daily activities and the impact these will have in your local community. Managing EVS volunteers is a job that requires your permanent investment in the whole process. You can't put effort in one of the phases and ignore the others, because it will lead to a less happy outcome for you or the volunteers! But if you apply the principle

of prevention and offer time and attention to each of the management steps, you will not have to pay the high price of intervention (which often costs you energy, emotions, time, stress, frustration and so on).

At the end of your reading journey there is one important statement true for all EVS projects and all EVS volunteers, that we want to underline: there is no universal recipe that applies to every project, there is no secret, hidden ingredient that will make managing EVS volunteers a successful process. Of course there are principles that make your work more efficient if applied, or tips that you can follow, but in the end each volunteer and each project is unique. EVS encourages this uniqueness and so do we!

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THE BIGGER PICTURE

The EVSification Manual. Volunteer management in EVS projects was created as part of the EVSification project, a Strategic partnership between Centrul de Voluntariat Cluj-Napoca (Romania), Centrum dobrovoľníctva (Slovakia) and Fundacja Edukacji i Rozwoju Społeczeństwa Obywatelskiego (Poland). All three organizations are active in the field of volunteering in general and EVS in particular. The partners have an extensive experience in EVS volunteer management, the main topic of the project. During the 20 months of the project, the team's main goal was to contribute to the development of EVS by increasing the capacity of volunteer involving organizations in relation with EVS projects. This was done through:

The creation of EVSification Manual. Volunteer management in EVS projects, a guide on how to manage efficiently EVS volunteers (available in English, Romanian, Slovak and Polish);
EVSification Recipe Design, a training course design aimed at youth workers and trainers interested in facilitating training sessions on EVS volunteer management for other organizations;
Webinars on topics related to EVS (recordings of the webinars are available).

In addition, the three partners have organized an international training course on volunteer management in EVS and a multiplier event, EVSification Camp, based on Open Space Technology (this was a space built for all the people that want to learn or to share/offer something in the context of EVS).

For more information on the project and its concrete results you can contact one of the partners involved in it:

Centrul de Voluntariat Cluj-Napoca (Romania) – www.centruldevoluntariat.ro

Centrum dobrovoľníctva (Slovakia) – www.centrumdobrovolnictva.sk

Fundacja Edukacji i Rozwoju Społeczeństwa Obywatelskiego (Poland) - www.ferso.org

The project is financed by the European Commission through the Erasmus+ Programme – Key Action 2, Strategic Partnerships in the field of youth.

