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Mentoring Methodological Framework for MINT Project

Developed by



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List of acronyms

CtC	Child to Child
CYAM	Children and youth affected by migration
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus group discussions
KII	Key informant interview
MINT	Mentoring for integration (for children affected by migration)
TCN	Third country national
TDH	Terre des Hommes

Some notes before we begin

A few notes on observations the consultants have made – and of how we have envisaged the process going forward:

Framework versus methodology

What we offer here is a framework and guidelines within which individual partners can build the methodologies they will use. These methodologies will consist of implementation plans and detailed workshop and activity descriptions. We hope that the guidelines we have provided and the links to sources of activity ideas provide a strong basis on which to build these. The ‘innovation’ aspect of this work will come from 2 main areas:

1. The strong focus on child rights and participation that frames the MINT approach to the mentorship programme
2. The space this project offers for MINT project partners to share their methodologies, learn from each other in terms of works best in specific circumstances, and combine their learnings into a shareable format that can form the basis for adaptation, contextualisation and replication going forward. We anticipate that the approaches used by individual partners will differ to best fit their contexts and the communities in which they are working – but that exploring differences and similarities will provide a rich resource to establish good practice and recommendations for replication.

When developing this Framework, we have worked within the parameters of the MINT project as expressed in the project document. Should these shift during the development of the log frame and deliverables, adjustments will need to be made to the Framework.

Moving forward

The MINT project structure offers several good opportunities for reflection, revision and innovation. Here we discuss mainly the concrete deliverables – i.e. the Methodological Framework and the methodology itself. Project partners will of course also be concerned about the direct impact on beneficiaries that their work is having and monitoring and evaluation of this will require separate planning. The way in which we would see this working is:

- **Inception phase (up until July 2019)** - drawing on the methodological framework, MINT project partners design their initial mentoring programme in detail. Regular calls, the shared Dropbox, emails and Skype offer opportunities to discuss problems, share ideas and hammer out and issues where joint decisions are required. This is also the period when the baseline will be completed.
- **First mentoring cycle** – MINT project partners implement a full mentoring cycle, collecting observations around what works and what doesn't, and reflecting on improvements that could be made. These observations and reflections can be recorded directly into the Framework document, or directly into the documents developed in support of implementation. All partners should upload copies of their implementation plans and their comments and reflections into the shared Dropbox.
- **Mid-term review** – this provides an opportunity to share reflections on how the first cycle went and, based on individual and group learnings, to adjust both the Framework and the more detailed methodologies before the second cycle. We would anticipate that the Framework will be revised to better reflect project partner learnings and needs. Furthermore, a joint draft implementation manual, giving detailed activities, training agendas and instructions, would be developed, drawn from the work of all four MINT project partners, and reflecting their learnings around good and effective practice.

- **Second Mentoring cycle** – this provides the opportunity to test and refine the implementation manual.
- **End-line review** – The implementation manual will need to be finalised, based on observations and reflections from the second cycle. Any final changes to the framework can also be made. Both documents should be in an appropriate state for broader sharing.

Safeguarding

While we have made mention of safeguarding throughout the Framework document, we have also relied on the fact that Terre des Hommes and MINT project partners all have strong safeguarding policies and good safe guarding practice. We have assumed that you will draw on these when considering safeguarding in your implementation design. Should this not be the case, a stronger focus will be required in the revised Framework document developed during the midterm review.

Ideas and supporting documents for the development of the implementation plan

We have included a list of useful links as Appendix 1 to the Framework but would urge MINT project partners to explore what is available within their own organisations and beyond. ChildHub is a rich source of materials and guidelines, and the resources section of the Child to Child website offers many strong examples of programmes and activities.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The world is currently facing unprecedented numbers of people on the move. Migrants can face a myriad of risks before, during and after the journey – especially migrant children. It is daunting to have to adjust to a new country when you are traumatised, homesick, alone and scared. Recognising those needs and challenges, the MINT project aims to contribute to the successful integration of third country national children (TCN) in the EU, by enabling them to fulfil their full potential in their host countries.

Mentoring has proven to be an effective way to share knowledge, increase children’s social and emotional skills, and promote integration, giving young people the tools and support that they need through a structured programme. Different forms of mentoring programmes exist around the world, such as the Big brother, Big Sister project in the US; one thing they have in common is that they prove to be beneficial for both mentees and mentors. During the MINT programme, recently arrived children will be matched with youth volunteers, who will be able to provide the children with support, advice, and friendship in order to facilitate easier integration.

The mentoring program will last for 9 months and two cycles of mentoring will take place. Through the programme, a minimum of 120 TCN children will be supported in their integration in local host communities (at least 30 in each country, approximately 15 per cycle). The programme should include individual meetings between children and mentors, indoor group activities and outdoor cultural and recreational activities.

Six interrelated and mutually reinforcing principles guide this work. They are drawn both from the commitments made in the MINT project document and from recognised good practice when working with vulnerable children. The foundational principle is that MINT project work is child rights-based, and in order to achieve that overriding objective, four core principles need to inform all work, underpinned by the bottom line that the work must do no harm.

1. Child-rights based
2. Child participation
3. Non-discrimination
4. Best interests of the child
5. Respecting and building on strengths
6. Do no harm

The purpose of this Mentoring Methodological Framework is to inform the design of the mentoring component of the programme which is to be designed by project partners of the MINT project. During the project, this Framework will be tested, adapted and added to, if necessary. This manual is to be used as a guide: different contexts and children require different approaches. A contextualised, adapted and tested model is an important outcome of the MINT project and is the responsibility of all project partners. This initial framework provides guidance – and a suggested harmonised and coherent framework – within which MINT project partners can begin to build their methodology.

This framework sets out guidelines drawn from existing documents and recognised good practice. MINT project partners are encouraged to experiment with what works best for their particular set of circumstances and the particular communities they are working with – and to share reflections on their action learning towards the end product of an effective and

innovative mentoring methodology. Certain of the parameters, however – for example, numbers, duration and timing - are drawn from the MINT project document. Should MINT project partners wish to shift or adjust these, it is advised that this is done in consultation with project leadership.

The MINT project is framed by Terre des Hommes’ theory of change for their Children and Youth in Migration programme, and by the strategies and priorities of the MINT project partners.

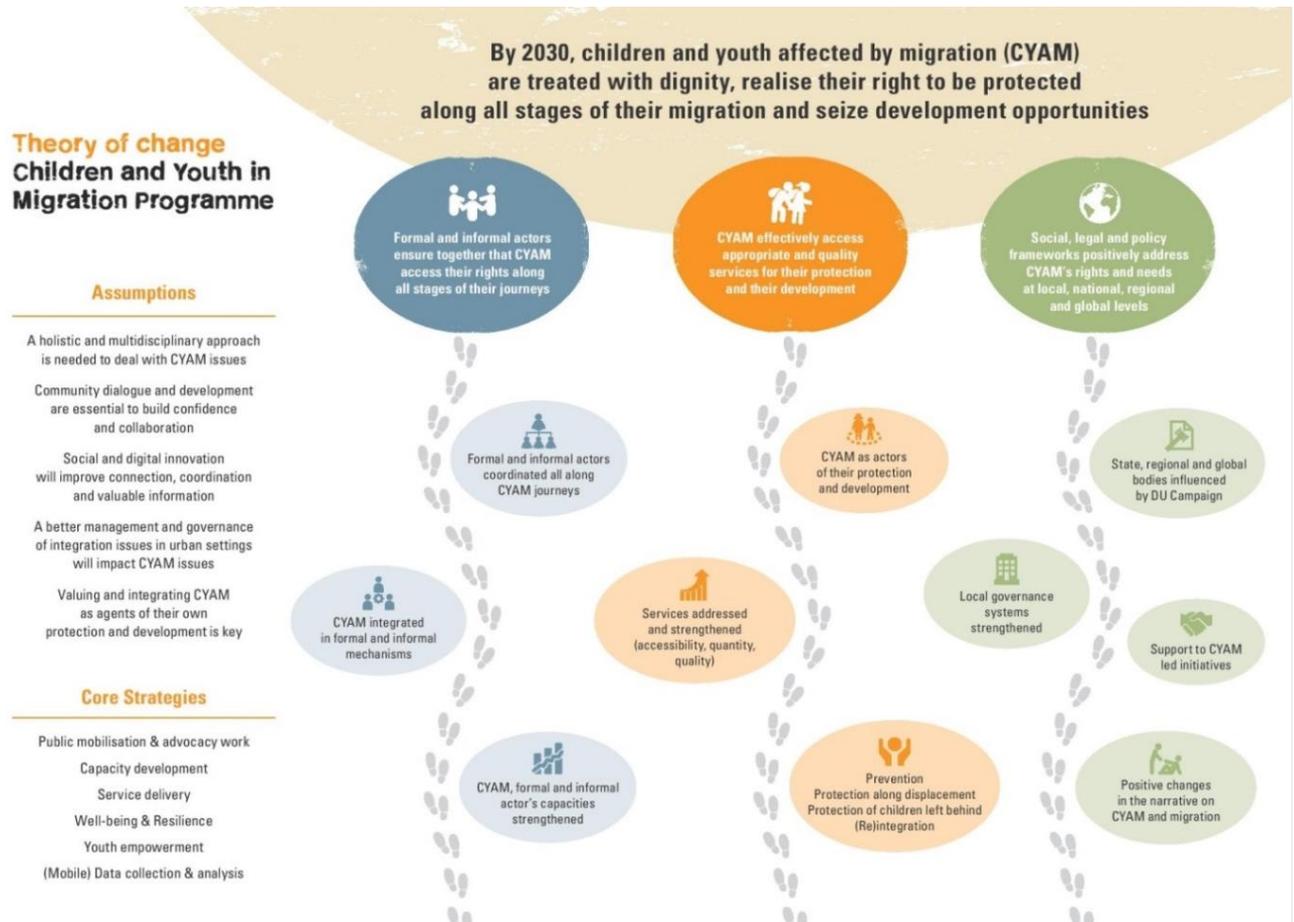


Figure 1 Tdh Theory of Change

MINT Project: Summary of the Action

Recognizing the growing presence of children among third-country national (TCN) migrants and refugees, the need for the European Union (EU) and its Member States (MSs) to implement effective integration measures, and the challenges faced by Central European (C/SEE) MSs to fulfil EU commitments, the general objective of the MINT Project is that 240 TCN children and youth are successfully integrated in Romania, Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovenia, and that many more children benefit from increased stakeholders’ integration capacity in other EU MSs, thanks to the piloting and replication of an innovative and child and youth-led intervention.

The Applicant is Terre des hommes (Tdh) in Hungary. Co-applicants are the Organisation for Aid to Refugees (CZ), Tdh (RO), Slovenian Philanthropy (SLO) and Ocelanie (PL). Supporting Entities include key authorities and networks at national and international level¹.

The Project will promote the inclusion of TCN children in the social, cultural and political life of the host societies, as well as in education, through mentoring support (WP 2); online language courses and cultural introduction (WP 3); child-led awareness raising and advocacy actions on their lived realities and the huge benefits for host societies (WP4).

Main outputs include a methodological framework comprising of a replicable mentoring guidance complemented with child-led awareness raising and advocacy guidelines, child-friendly e-learning integration tools and national and international advocacy events supported by child-led video material.

Beneficiaries: TCN children; EU youth; host communities; local and national authorities; NGOs and IOs; EU agencies (EASO; FRA).

Gender equality and child rights mainstreaming will be ensured through child participation, child safeguarding, proactive outreach to marginalized children, age and gender disaggregation of data

Innovative ICT tools will boost project outputs' use after completion to ensure long-term sustainability.

1.2 How to use this guide

This Methodological Framework will act as a starting guide for Work Package 2, Mentoring Programme of the MINT project and provide useful examples of good practice for the project partners. The details of local contexts, and children's and youth volunteers' individual characteristics and needs must always be taken in consideration. The guide offers broad suggestions for content to be built upon by the implementing entities based on the goals to be achieved by the mentoring programmes

Key objectives for this initial document are to:

- Inform the project partners on best practice when developing a mentoring programme
- Provide the project partners with a Mentoring Framework that they can test and adapt during the programme

Core messages for partners

- Mentoring brings together a recently arrived TCN child and a youth volunteer from the host country to facilitate successful integration.
- Project partners need to start with defining the country programme parameters, including who the mentors and mentees will be, based on what they want to achieve.
- Documenting and sharing learning among partners is a key element of the project.
- It is important to understand a mentor's role, and what they are expected to do. Mentors are not professional teachers or psychologists and cannot be expected to replace their role.
- For a successful programme, periodic check-ins and mentor support mechanisms are key.
- Cultural sensitivity, gender sensitivity and participation are cross-cutting considerations for every stage of programme design and implementation.

This document is divided into four main sections:

1. Introduction
2. Programme design: this section contains guidance and good practices to be considered at the outset, to design a successful mentoring programme.
3. Mentoring in practice: this covers some samples of activities and points project partners to useful resources.
4. Cross-cutting considerations: this covers overarching issues such as ensuring effective child participation, overcoming cultural and language barriers and ensuring equality.



Action and reflection points for the MINT project partners are highlighted in boxes

One of the main MINT project outputs is an innovative, effective and tested mentoring Framework, and the MINT project partners are a Community of Practice who together are exploring, adapting, developing and testing this Framework. **It is very important that partners keep records of how the mentoring programme is structured and run – and of their reflections on what worked and what needs improving.**

This methodological framework has been provided in both PDF and Word formats. Please use the Word version as a workbook in which to record your reflections, activities, plans and ideas. This can be shared with other MINT partners through the MINT project Dropbox.

The mid-term review provides an opportunity for a formal review and updating of this Framework – after the first round of mentoring. The end-line review provides an opportunity to finalise the Framework.

The MINT project is an action learning and innovation programme. By the end of the project, you will have collaboratively developed a Mentoring Framework and methodology that can be shared with others seeking to support the successful integration of migrant and refugee children into host communities. This is a first step towards developing a framework and will be revisited at the midterm review. A first draft of the methodology should be developed by the time of this midterm review, drawing on the practical actions of all four MINT project partners. This methodology will be further refined during the second round of mentoring activities – and the end-line review will provide an opportunity to update and revise the methodology and make any final changes that are necessary, resulting in a Framework and methodology that can be shared with others for adaptation, contextualisation and use.

A note on Communities of Practice

The MINT programme brings together several organisations working in the refugee sector, essentially creating a Community of Practice. The concept of a Community of Practice was first defined and described as "*a group of people who engage in collective learning in a common area of interest*".¹ Practitioners with diverse experiences collaborate around a common purpose (in the case of the MINT programme, developing an effective and innovative approach to support TCN children's integration through mentoring) to share ideas, experiences, best practice and support each other. Acting as learning partners, community members have the

¹ Wenger, E. (1998). Communities of practice: Learning, meaning and identity

principal purpose of sharing knowledge. Valuable learning gets pooled and new knowledge gets created, which the members take back out again into their domain.

Research indicates that Communities of Practice have three important dimensions:

- Purpose - the community's aims as understood by its members.
- Function - members are engaged in related activities or projects.
- Output - published and unpublished resources, events and discussions developed or sourced by community members.

Communities of Practice:

- Encourage knowledge sharing.
- Give members a networking platform to share personal knowledge, information and experience.
- Provide a platform for turning knowledge and research into practice.
- Combine practitioner knowledge and experience with published information to support evidence-based practice.
- Are open to both explicit (published) knowledge - articles, reports, websites, and guidelines - and tacit (personal) knowledge gained through experience and reflection.
- Share good practice.
- Transfer and develop best practice.
- Encourage personal and professional development.



This guide can be used to inform the activities of project partners, but they can further benefit from creating a Community of Practice to share practical learning on an ongoing basis.

1.3 What is mentoring?

Mentoring is a process in which a competent individual offers guidance, support and advice to encourage someone less experienced to develop competencies and become equipped with more life skills for improved outcomes. Mentors create an enabling environment in which appropriate activities will be implemented to encourage their mentees to apply critical thinking, develop self-efficacy and improve upon their social skills. This in turn will aid the mentee to improve on their self-awareness, goal setting and helping them to identify and develop their potential. Mentoring is not a solution for all the problems facing TCN children and their families, but if implemented appropriately, it can have a positive impact on children's wellbeing.

The most important aspect of successful mentoring is an on-going personal relationship between the mentor and mentee. The aim of the mentoring section of the MINT programme is to enhance the efficacy of this personal relationship by supporting activities and opportunities for TCN children to develop social skills through group activities that promote further social integration and learning.

Advertisements for mentors may include slogans such as: *“Change a life, be a mentor”* or *“If you see someone without a smile...give them one of yours”*. Whilst these slogans are well-meaning, they create a misguided image of the mentor role. Dispelling misconceptions is

critical in helping volunteers understand the parameters of the relationship and enables them to have realistic expectations about their role.

A mentor **is someone who:**²

- Is a loyal friend and advisor.
- Is a facilitator, guide, coach, and role model.
- Can be entrusted with the care and education of another.
- Has knowledge or expertise to nurture another person's interests and life skills.
- Is willing to give what he or she knows with no expectation of reciprocation or remuneration.
- Has an understanding that mentoring is reliably volunteering one's time to provide guidance and support to another.
- Has an understanding that mentoring develops specific personal skills and employability.
- Is open to developing their mentees' creative problem solving, decision making and confidence through new opportunities.
- Can establish a strong connection with their mentee and can in turn use that connection as a catalyst for positive change and growth.

A mentor is not:

- A mentor is **not a parent** – a mentor is not there to take over the role of a parent; no one can take over the role of a parent no matter how difficult a home life can be for the child. Not being a parent allows the volunteer to have a very different relationship with youth.
- A mentor is **not all knowing** – only the TCN children know what it is like to wake up every day in their home, go to their school, walk in their neighbourhood, or handle the realities of their daily life. A mentor who comes in with an “I know best” agenda runs the risk of losing the trust of their mentee or offering ineffective advice.
- A mentor is **not a tutor/teacher** – a mentor can be there to offer resources and to provide help, but only if and when the mentee wants it.
- A mentor is **not a provider** – mentors have an important role in a child's life, but it is not as a source of financial support. Mentors should not feel obliged to provide any monetary assistance or intercede in familial situations which are not their place. If asked, mentors may be able to help find other resources but taking on the role of direct financial support can jeopardise the relationship.
- A mentor is **not a saviour** – adopting a saviour attitude creates a power imbalance and inappropriately focuses the relationship on goals of salvation, enrichment, or betterment. The child's social and educational goals ideally emerge from exploration; For one child, the positive mentoring relationship may inspire them to go to university or identify a productive career goal. For another, it may simply give them the comfort of knowing that there is a reliable and supportive person in their lives.

Approaches to mentoring

A US follow-up study to the National Big Brothers Big Sisters evaluation sought to identify the characteristics that contribute to how mentoring relationships form, last, or break up. They sought to identify the distinguishable traits associated with positive relationship development and relationships that ended prematurely. They examined 82 matches across eight different

² Both lists were adapted from: Ace Africa and Child to Child, 'Training Manual – Child welfare mentors', 2012.

Big Brother Big Sister sites. The study found two broad differences in approaches to mentoring which they classified as developmental relationships versus prescriptive relationships.³

Developmental Approach: The Unconditional Friend

- Initial efforts concentrated on establishing strong relationships with mentees first.
- Efforts were centred on building trust.
- Once a relationship was established and the mentees were receptive then mentors moved onto other goals.
- Incorporated the mentee in the decision-making process.
- Mentors were flexible.
- Mentors were satisfied with the process and the relationship.
- Mentees felt supported, wanted to continue the relationship long-term, and felt they could talk to their mentors about anything.

Prescriptive Approach: The “Rescuer”, “Saviour” or “Reformer”

- Initial efforts were outcome based.
- Time was spent primarily setting goals and working towards those goals.
- Mentors had their own goals or agenda as the priority.
- Mentors were reluctant to change their agenda or to change their expectations for relationship.
- Unrealistic expectations.
- Out to “transform” their mentees.
- Expected equal responsibility from mentees.
- Both mentors and mentees felt frustrated with the relationship.

Research on successful mentoring practices has pointed to some key areas as critical in developing healthy relationships between mentors and mentees:⁴

1. The relationship is the intervention

Again, those mentors who take the time to develop trust and get to know their mentees are able to create a nurturing environment to take positive steps to be made for the mentees’ personal growth. Successful mentors focus on relationship building and not the outcomes.

2. Take responsibility for the relationship

It can be challenging in itself to maintain a relationship. Maintaining a relationship in a contrived setting with an individual who is often going through a great deal of change and internal turmoil can be even tougher. Successful mentors need to be consistent, persistent and dependable. They need to be able to follow through on their commitment even when things get tough.

3. The longer the duration of the match the greater the impact

It takes time and patience to develop trust, become familiar with each other and to establish strong bonds. Given this is a process which cannot be ‘fast tracked’, the longer a relationship lasts, the more likely it is the relationship will make a positive impact in the lives of mentees.

³ From: Building Relationships with Youth in Program Settings: A Study of Big Brothers/Big Sisters by Kristine V. Morrow and Melanie B. Styles May 1995

⁴ “Mentoring Adolescents: What Have We Learned?”, Cynthia L. Sipe, 1998.

The benefits of mentoring

The benefits of mentoring are not one-sided; both mentors and mentees have much to gain from the experience.

Benefits for the mentors:

- Gain personal/professional satisfaction
- Gain recognition from peers and community at large
- Gain improved interpersonal skills
- Promotes a better understanding of social problems in general and children's issues in particular
- Improved empathy
- Gain knowledge on other cultures and customs

Benefits for the mentee:

- Promotes better integration by gaining knowledge on the host communities' culture and customs
- Increased self-esteem and confidence
- Prepares them for greater responsibilities
- Have fun and enjoy activities
- Develops confident youth in the community
- Gain new knowledge, skills and attitudes

2. Programme Design

2.1. Setting the programme parameters

In order to design effective mentoring programmes tailored to the needs of the context, each country office should define the programme parameters first. Some of this was done at the MINT project inception meeting. The following questions can be considered as part of this process:

- **Who are you looking to recruit as mentors?**
 - What is the age and gender breakdown of the mentors going to be?⁵
 - How and where will they be recruited?
 - What will their ethnic background be - will they be primarily from the host populations or include youths from migrant communities?

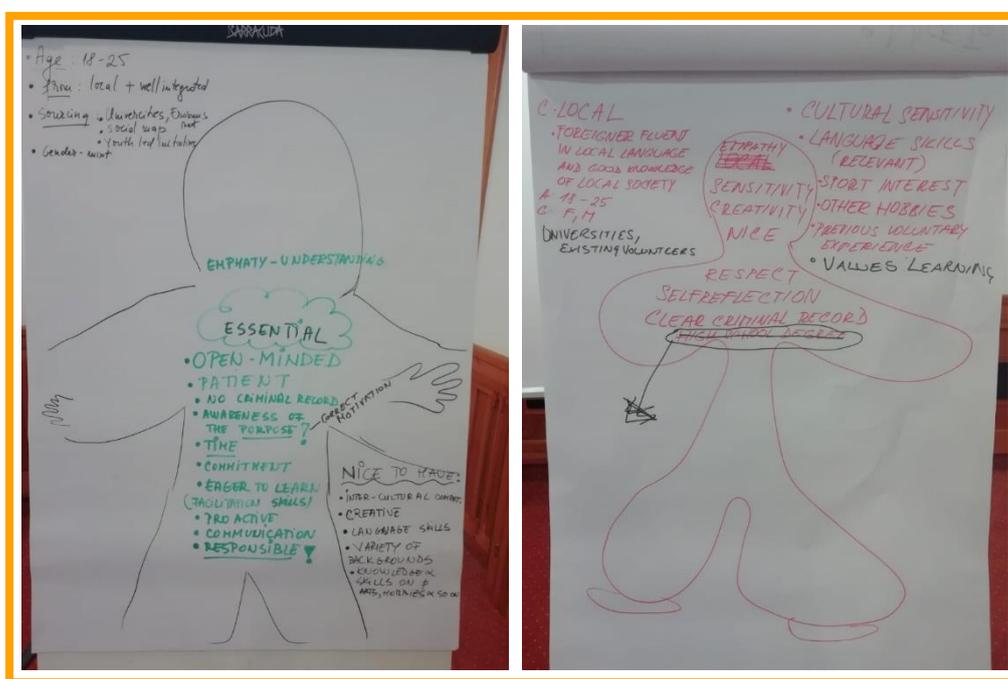


Figure 2: Sample brainstorming on mentors from the kick off meeting

- **Who are the mentees?**
 - What are the characteristics of the recently arrived TCN children (e.g. age, gender, level of local language, how much free time do they have to engage in the programme)?
 - Are their sub-groups within the populations you are considering (e.g. unaccompanied minors)?
 - Are there any special constraints that would not allow them to join the programme (e.g. agreement from a legal guardian/legal authority in case of minors)?
 - What are their needs (educational/physical/social/psychosocial)?

⁵ Other considerations could include disability, race or sexuality. While this programme must aim to be as inclusive as possible, families might have some criteria for their children's mentor, such as a same gender pairing. Some religions or cultures might not be tolerant of homosexuality; partner organisations need to decide whether they want to challenge prejudices like these, or whether this would create too much risk for the mentor and/or mentee.

- Can those needs be addressed through a mentorship scheme, and are there some (e.g. addressing trauma) that lie beyond the capabilities of the mentors?
 - What are the strengths, positive skills and behaviours of the TCN children, their families and communities?
 - What are the barriers and enablers to the TCN children integrating into education (formal or informal), local recreational activities and social events?
- ***What logistics need to be considered?***
 - **Location:** Where will the mentoring take place?
 - **Location:** Is the location safe and child friendly?
 - **Location:** Is the location in an accessible location for both mentors and mentees?
 - **Timing of the mentoring sessions:** Ensure the scheduled time of the sessions takes into consideration the availability of the mentors and mentees.
 - **Timing of the mentoring sessions:** How often should the sessions be held?
 - **Timing of the mentoring sessions:** The length of the mentoring must suit the age, ability and needs of the mentee. Please note that all children have varying concentration spans and this needs to be taken into consideration when considering the length of the sessions and how breaks are scheduled. Children who have experienced trauma can also have challenges with concentration.
 - **Timings of the mentoring sessions:** For the purposes of longevity, consider any cultural, religious or social commitments in the mentee's calendar to minimise any absenteeism or rescheduling.
 - **Translation:** Is translation required for any facilitation (interpreter), hand-outs or materials to be used?
 - **Resources:** What are the resources needed for facilitating the mentoring sessions? Consider what materials, finances and staff (e.g. coordinating adults) are required.
 - **Documentation:** Who will document the sessions and the experiences of the mentees?
 - **Safeguarding:** TCN children have vulnerabilities as a social group and individual vulnerabilities, especially those newly arrived children who have been separated from their families or unaccompanied. Consider what additional safeguards are required to protect their welfare (this can be addressed in the mentor training package).
 - ***What are the overarching goals (at the programme not individual level)?***
 - Are these different across programme countries e.g. language acquisition, cultural assimilation, development networks and social skills?
 - What is needed to achieve these goals?
 - ***What are the intended outcomes?***
 - What change will the programme create for mentees as well as mentors?
 - Are the programmes intentionally designed to influence economic/social/civic participation of participating individuals?
 - How will the mentors and mentees complement the child-led awareness raising advocating for greater social cohesion?
 - Consider how the mentoring activities will link to the local language trainings and sensitisation of local socio-cultural norms.

Factors for success to be considered

There are a number of factors which will contribute towards a successful relationship between mentor and mentee:

- An understanding of participation and how it applies to the mentor-mentee relationship.
- Clear guidelines for the roles and responsibilities of both parties
- Agreed and shared understanding of the nature and type of support
- Commitment towards the principles and values of the mentoring scheme
- Consideration of the skills (plus willingness to build them) and attitudes of both the mentor and mentee
- Clear and transparent communication in both directions

Clear communication is the cornerstone on which all the other factors sit. It is through constructive and empathic dialogue that the relationship can develop, allowing both parties to bring forward their ideas, enter discussions democratically and continue to develop the trust in their relationship. It is within this environment that both parties can flourish.⁶

It is imperative to understand that the success of a mentor-mentee match is dependent upon the strength of the relationship between the two. Research has shown that mentoring is effective if mentees feel that *they* - not their performance or achievements – are the number one priority. Once a mentee feels supported and is able to build a strong bond with their mentor, then and only then, can we expect improvements in areas such as social skills development, academia or improved behaviour.

2.2. Selection and recruitment of mentors and mentees

The first phase of the recruitment process is to identify who the mentors and mentees will be.

1. **Understanding needs.** It is crucial to gain a deeper understanding of the TCN children's barriers and enablers to social inclusion in the host countries. This does not need to be excessively time consuming, a rapid information collection can take place which feeds into the mentoring process will ensure the activities are appealing, effective and striving towards the MINT project objectives. Simple activities such as Focus Group Discussions (FGD), case studies, Key Informant Interviews (KII), structured/semi-structured questionnaires or Listening Survey can be used.
2. **Using the information.** From the information collection which takes place, consider creating a *Bridge Model* using the data to support the recruitment, mentor training and activity choice. A Bridge Model is a visual tool for clarifying barriers, goals and steps needed to reach the desired outcome. Below is an example of a Bridge Model taken from a Life Skills Toolkit⁷ which demonstrates on one side of the 'river' the harmful beliefs and knowledge children have in relation to HIV; the desirable positive lifestyle the programme wishes to achieve on the other side; the river symbolising all the dangers the children face; and finally the planks/bridge citing the steps needed for the social change.

⁶ There are many good resources on building communication skills available online. Here are a few links to activities that build these skills to get you started: <https://nobelcoaching.com/emotional-skills/> and <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/team-building-communication.htm>

⁷ Life Skills Education Toolkit for Orphans & Vulnerable Children in India, Family Health International (FHI), India Country Office, In Collaboration with the National AIDS Control, Organisation (NACO), With Funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Sonal Zaveri (2007)

THE BRIDGE MODEL

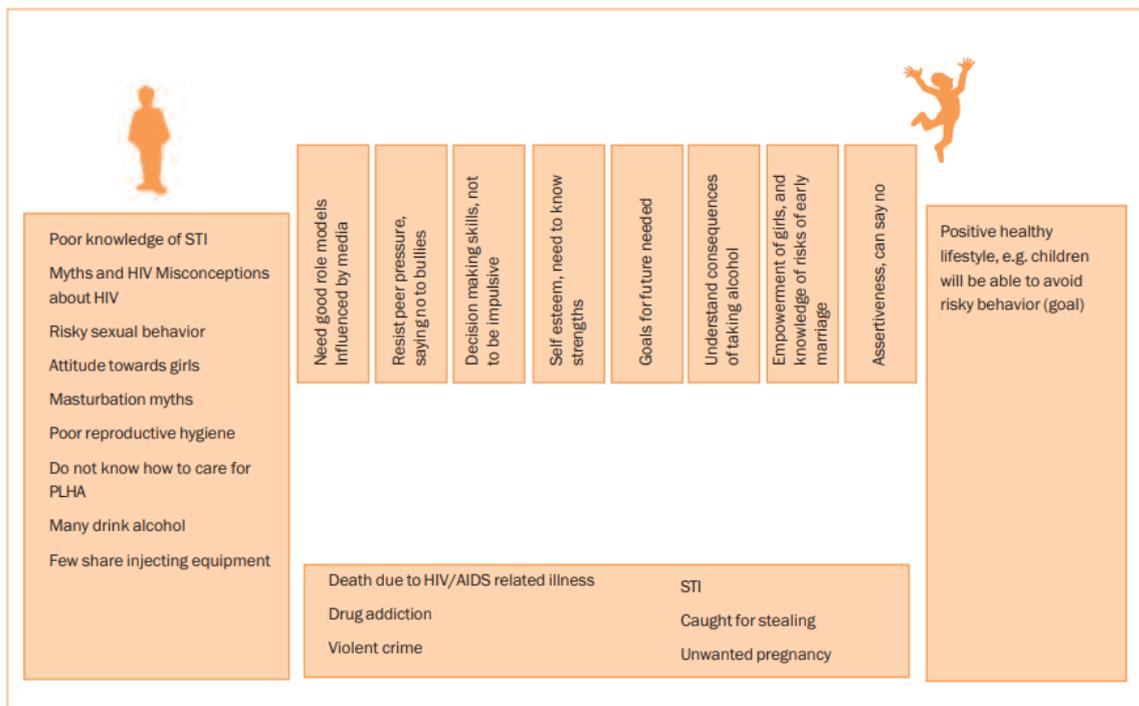


Figure 3: Bridge Model

For the purposes of the MINT project, the Bridge Model could be used to clarify the barriers to social inclusion TCN children face (including their own knowledge, beliefs and attitudes), desirable behaviour in order for the MINT inclusion goals to be met, the dangers excluded TCN children face and, critically, the steps/skills/behaviours the mentoring programme will address.

Once further information is known on the needs and groups of the TCN children which the project wishes to engage, discussions around whether to target specific social groups of either mentors or mentees can take place. These discussions can take place at the start of the recruitment process or when a gap is identified once volunteer mentors and TCN children have been recruited.

Recruiting recently arrived TCN children

A useful method for the identification process for mentees is doing a scoping exercise such as the one shown below (the information in the table was shared by the project partners during the kick off meeting) on which TCN children will be targeted:

	Slovenia	Romania	Czech Republic	Poland
Age	10-18	10-15	10-18	8-15
Country of origin	Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Eritrea, Kosovo, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina	Syria, Iran, Iraq	Ukraine, Russia, Afghanistan, Syria, Angola, Iraq (includes unaccompanied minors)	Ukraine, Chechnya, Tajikistan

Legal status	Refugees, economic migrants	Refugees and economic migrants	Asylum seekers, refugees, economic migrants	Asylum seekers, refugees, economic migrants
Socio-economic status	Low/middle	Low/middle	Low/middle	Low
Arrival within host country	Within the last 5 years (although in special circumstances might include longer term residents)	Within the last 5 years (although in special circumstances might include longer term residents)	Within the last 5 years (although in special circumstances might include longer term residents)	Within the last 5 years (although in special circumstances might include longer term residents)
Where will you find your mentees?	Existing clients, schools, referrals from other NGOs	Schools, other NGOs, migrant centres, WhatsApp groups	Existing clients, the facility for unaccompanied minors, referrals from other NGOs, community representatives	Current clients, word of mouth, schools

Recruiting mentors

A similar table can be drawn for the mentors, focusing on preferred characteristics and abilities. Possible questions to ask are:

- What is their age?
- What is their gender?
- What is their cultural background?
- What experience and abilities are the mentors required to have?
- Have they volunteered (with refugees) before?
- Have they worked with children before?
- Do you need mentors who speak a similar language to the mentees?

If the TCN children are selected first, good practice would be to involve them in the selection of the mentors, if time allows. This will promote buy-in and child participation to the programme. In addition, mentees' families may wish to input into specific criteria for the mentors. Whilst some criteria should be considered (e.g. considering the respective genders of the paired participants), it is fundamental that the wishes of families may help inform the decision-making process, but *not define it*. The strength of a mentoring process to aid integration is to work with people with different backgrounds and experiences in order to learn from each other. Promoting an ethos of cross-cultural understanding and highlighting the value of diversity are crucial for developing social cohesion (*More information on different approaches to matching mentors and mentees can be found in section 2.4*).

Since the aim of the programme is to foster integration, consideration needs to be given to the ethnic backgrounds of the mentors. Whilst it might be easier for mentees to positively respond

and bond with mentors with a similar background, it might also limit their exposure to the host community.

Recruitment strategies

- Partner with local refugee, children or literacy agencies to recruit youth volunteers that may already have experience working with the target population of the MINT project
- Recruit at universities, some of whom might already have schemes to promote their students to volunteer
- Host community meetings to introduce the community to the aims of the project and gauge if there are people interested to join the programme
- Use platforms that youth in the community can easily access. This can be online (e.g. social media or volunteer forums) or offline (e.g. advertise in the local church or supermarket).
- Do not underestimate the power of ‘word of mouth’. If the recruited mentors feel valued in the project, they will share their experiences with their peers, who may wish to volunteer during the second mentoring cycle (or during future projects)
- Work with community leaders or business owners to spread information on the programme and the need for volunteers

Resource: Sample job description for mentors

Position

Mentor of recently arrived migrant children

Purpose

To act as a role model, advocate and support newly arrived⁸ children to promote integration and prepare children for entry into formal and informal education

Duties

- Commitment to building a supportive relationship with a recently arrived migrant child.
- Attends and actively participates in a two-day induction training.
- Meets in person with mentee at least three times a month.
- Attends an ‘outdoor activity’ with their mentee once every two months.
- Works with the mentee to draft an activity plan and guides the mentee through these activities.
- Keeps track of the mentor/mentee meetings to track progress
- Attends regular meetings with the mentoring coordinator to share progress and possible concerns.
- Supports fellow mentors when matters arise.

Qualifications

- Ability to empathise and understand young people from different cultural backgrounds.
- Non-judgmental, with ability to take a developmental approach to working with a young person.
- Active listening skills, or willingness to develop these (further).
- Experience working with immigrant youth or children in general is desirable.

⁸ In the MINT project, it has been agreed that ‘newly arrived’ children are TCN children who have arrived in their host country up to 5 years before the start of the project

Length of commitment

The mentor must commit to at least one, but preferably two nine-month mentoring cycles.

Benefits

- Opportunity to improve on leadership and facilitation skills; you will have the opportunity to practise skills such as team work, decision making in an enabling environment and confident communication. These are key skills which improve employability and confidence.
- Receiving training and ongoing support, which will include an overview of assets and strengths of migrant youth, challenges faced by immigrant youth, a resource manual with activity suggestions and strategies to develop a close bond with their mentee.
- Exposure to new cultures; Opportunity to develop new appreciation for diversity and make a difference in the life of a newly arrived child.
- Opportunity to have fun and engage in free cultural, social and physical activities
- Receiving a certificate at the end of the process to highlight the skills, commitment and impact made.

Safeguarding

In order to ensure ethical and safe mentoring process, informed consent for the participation of both the mentor and mentee is required. Seeking informed consent for a mentee may include: explaining the project, any use of media using their images or quotes, the benefits and possible challenges to them (managing their expectations), ensuring that they are aware that they can withdraw from activities at any stage if they change their mind, and ensuring that the mentee's parents and caregivers have also given informed consent (*sample consent forms and agreements are given in Appendix 2*).

It is important that MINT project partners consult their own organisational Safeguarding and Volunteer Recruitment Policies, and the Terre des Hommes Safeguarding Policy and Commitment.

2.3. Mentor training days

Getting the mentors and mentees started off properly is one of the defining moments for the entire mentoring programme. Trust is built during the first meeting between the mentor and mentee, and if mentors are not equipped with the right tools and do not approach the activity in an appropriate manner, they will not achieve a positive and effective relationship with their mentee.



Mentors must be provided with appropriate guidance materials/manuals, with useful information on how to foster the mentor/mentee relationship and who they can refer to if serious issues arise.

Suggested topics to cover during the training days include:

- Overview of child rights, underpinned by the principles of non-discrimination and the best interests of the child, emphasising that all children deserve access to these basic rights.
- How to support your mentee in setting up their plan for the mentoring process (how to support them to identify challenges, goals and solutions).

- Challenges facing newly arrived TCN children.
- Cultural sensitisation session (customised according to countries of origin of the children expected to join the program).
- Assets and strengths-based approach.
- What makes a good mentor?
- Active listening.
- Ethics of Mentoring (including reflecting on biases).
- Rules of effective communication.
- Facilitating participation.
- How to create a mentoring agreement in a meaningful, participatory way.
- Leadership training.
- Safeguarding and the importance of confidentiality.
- What to do when serious issues arise such as abuse and who to refer to.
- Management of individual meetings (planning activities, schedule, ways of communication, solving of possible problems).
- How to recognise signs of trauma and what are tools to support traumatised children.

One possible post-training activity would be to get the mentors to do a “home-work assignment” – to conduct research on the culture and context of the mentees before meeting, in order to engage them in ensuring a culturally sensitive and inclusive programme.

Ethics of Mentoring

Good mentoring has a strong ethical component, which can be built through the following considerations:

- **Confidentiality:** The issue of confidentiality can be challenging for mentors especially if, for example, the mentee is observed or discloses that they are engaging in dangerous risk-taking behaviours, illegal activities or are a victim of abuse. Ensure the mentoring agreement is clear about the definition of confidentiality and how action must sometimes be taken to keep the mentee and others safe. If a mentor needs to disclose a serious issue to a trusted adult, have them explain to their mentee beforehand why they have to do so and that they can still be trusted.
- **Developing listening skills:** It is good practice to pay attention to mentors’ own learning and development. Developing active listening skills is crucial, and the aim is to enable the mentee to feel they have a trusted adult with whom they can discuss any difficult issues.
- **Adequate training in systems:** A mentor has the ethical obligation to do no harm. Nonetheless, if the youth volunteers are not appropriately trained and supervised, this can happen unintentionally.
- **Ensuring equality:** Because of the age difference between mentors and mentees, as well as the fact that mentors might be more familiar with the host community, there might be a power imbalance. Mentors need to be aware of these inequalities and find ways to bridge them, assuring their mentees that they are equal. Mentors need to be cautious to not force their own beliefs on their mentees and accept that mentees will have different experiences that have shaped their beliefs in a different way. Providing proper training on bias and prejudices helps the mentors to break through their own.
- **Physical boundaries:** Since a mentor is not a professional but more of a guide/friend/role model, there is a little bit more leeway when it comes to appropriate boundaries. For example, holding the hand of a younger mentee while crossing the

road during one of the outdoor activities or giving your mentee a high five can be acceptable. However, it needs to be made clear that not everyone feels comfortable with seemingly innocent touches (especially in a mentor-mentee pairing of different genders) and that mentors and mentees can talk to project staff if they are. It is always best to be a bit more careful; there are many ways to show affection that do not involve physical contact.



Project partners need to set their own guidelines regarding (physical) boundaries and clearly communicate them with the mentors. It needs to be explicitly stated that any gross misconduct will be reported to the appropriate authorities. Mentees also need to be aware of these guidelines (preferably a child-friendly version) and who they can report to.

What makes a good mentor?

As a mentor, you need to bear in mind:

- The responsibility of the mentee for their own learning within a safe and supportive environment.
- Respect for the mentee's right to make their own decisions and to live as they choose.
- A non-judgemental approach where people are treated with respect and honesty.
- Confidentiality regarding personal issues.
- Clear systems for disclosure of abuse/neglect.
- Be curious about the child's lived experience and challenge constructively when the child engages in behaviours that expose himself/herself to risk situations.

The following are behaviours and characteristics of a good mentor:

- Showing respect.
- Listening.
- Empathising.
- Caring.
- Helping the mentee to look for solutions.
- Establishing trust.
- Demonstrating confidentiality.
- Being flexible and open.
- Being a role model.
- Being a guide.
- Being realistic.
- Being creative.
- Creating an atmosphere of trust.
- Patience when children find it challenging to articulate their feelings.
- Belief in children's rights and participation.
- Calm; providing stability and security.

Sample training agenda

Training Day	Topic	Sample Activities ⁹
Day 1 Morning	<p>Introduction and icebreakers</p> <p>Central aims of the programme</p> <p>Understanding child rights (and where the programme fits in)</p> <p>Participation as a right. Participation in practice</p>	<p>Introduction activity: Mistaken Identities/Double wheel</p> <p>If possible, introduce children's rights using the aid of a video in local language (UNICEF and national Ministries of Education often provide these via YouTube). This video can instigate a discussion on the topic of children's rights.</p>
Day 1 Afternoon	<p>What is a good mentor?</p> <p><i>Building on assets and strengths</i></p> <p><i>Rules of effective communication</i></p> <p><i>Facilitating child participation</i></p> <p>Who are the mentees?</p> <p><i>Challenges facing newly arrived children</i></p> <p><i>Stepping in shoes</i></p>	<p>Communication activity: Passive, Aggressive, Assertive</p>
Day 2 Morning	<p>How to be inclusive?</p> <p><i>Cultural barriers/enablers</i></p> <p><i>Language barriers/enablers</i></p> <p><i>Gender barriers/enablers</i></p> <p>Trouble shooting</p> <p><i>Structures for troubleshooting</i></p> <p>Safeguarding and confidentiality</p>	<p>Sharing culture activities</p> <p>Group work: creating a Bridge Model</p> <p>Trouble Shooting activity: Three C's in Decision Making</p> <p>Good touch/bad touch activity</p> <p>Brainstorm around confidentiality and safeguarding</p> <p>Developing a mentors' support network diagram</p>
Day 2 Afternoon	<p>Monitoring progress and self-assessment</p> <p>Sample activities practice</p>	<p>The T Chart and H Assessment</p>

⁹ All activities from: Life Skills Education Toolkit for Orphans & Vulnerable Children in India, Family Health International (FHI), India Country Office, In Collaboration with the National AIDS Control, Organisation (NACO), With Funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Sonal Zaveri (2007).

2.4. Matching mentors and mentees

There are different ways to match the youth volunteers with the recently arrived TCN children. The project partners need to identify which method of matching mentors and mentees is most appropriate for their specific context.



It is recommended that coordinators meet face to face with both mentors and mentees at the start of the programme to establish the needs of the mentees (i.e. is it purely integration and education or is there also a psychosocial element) and assess the capabilities of the mentors (i.e. could they deal with children with trauma's or behaviour issues?). Coordinators can then assess if more sensitive matching is needed.

Some processes for matching are laid out below:

1. Mentee self-matching

Mentees will receive details of the mentors involved in the programme and will be able to choose their preferred mentor.

Pros: Mentees will feel more comfortable with their mentor, making them more committed to the programme. Shared experiences or characteristics will make it easier for them to share and open up.

Cons: Some coordination is needed since some mentors may be more preferred than others, with more mentees signing up per mentor. Furthermore, mentees will be less exposed to different personalities and backgrounds, since they will most probably choose someone they can easily identify with.

2. Coordinator matching

A coordinator will collect information from both mentors and mentees and will match them based on these details.

Pros: Coordinators can ensure that the mentor/mentee pairings are more diverse, giving mentees more exposure to someone from a different background. The coordinator can take into account some of the mentees' preferences. Gender or capabilities of mentors can also be considered during this matching process.

Cons: Depending on the size of the pool of mentors and mentees, this can add a great deal of administrative work for the coordinator.

3. Automated matching

There are different types of software and applications¹⁰ that can automatically match mentors and mentees based on a 'compatibility score'.

Pros: Easy and straightforward process that will not require too much administration for the mentoring coordinator.

¹⁰ For example: [Mentorloop](#), [Insala](#) or [Instaviser](#). Please note, these examples were selected on the basis of desk-based research; the consultants cannot guarantee suitability.

Cons: Software like this can be very expensive. It can take away some of the initial face to face meetings that mentoring coordinators normally would have with mentors and mentees in order to properly match them which can be negative for the programme.

4. Random matching

Mentors and mentees are randomly matched by the programme coordinators.

Pros: A quick process with little administrative burden for mentoring coordinators.

Cons: Mentors and mentees might not feel comfortable with each other, since no consideration is given to preferences and capabilities.



MINT partners will need to explore the most effective mechanism for their own groups. Please keep records of the method you use – and the outcomes – to share with project partners and to help evaluate which method is most appropriate.

3. Mentoring in practice

3.1 Individual mentoring versus group mentoring

Both individual mentoring and group mentoring have a range of benefits for the children engaged in them, as well as potential drawbacks. MINT project partners need to carefully consider each of the positives and negatives to decide whether they would prefer to focus on 1:1 meetings, group meetings or if a hybrid approach is more appropriate. In this section, the pros and cons of these approaches will be laid out and a recommendation will be given as to which method would benefit the mentees (and their mentors) most.

Which approach will be most appropriate for this mentoring programme, depends on what skills the mentees (and to an extent the mentors) are expected to develop over the course of the programme. Individual mentoring and group mentoring have very different outcomes:

Individual mentoring promotes children's personal growth and development. The mentoring process can be specifically adapted to the child's needs and goals. Mentors and mentees will develop a strong personal relationship that will help the mentee thrive.

Group mentoring supports the development of children's social skills and their ability to connect with their peers. Skills such as team work, problem solving, decision making, and leadership skill development will be focused on.

Earlier on in this Mentoring Framework, the benefits of mentoring that were touched upon were mainly derived from sources related to individual mentoring. Thus, in this extra section we will just focus on the potential benefits and drawbacks related to group mentoring.

Potential benefits of group mentoring

- *Less time intensive* – It will take less time to implement a group mentoring programme since less work will need to be done to recruit, select, train and match mentors for each mentee.
- *Reduces risk factors* – By having all the mentors and mentees meet as one big group and under the supervision of staff, it will be easier to safeguard all mentees (and mentors).
- *Easier recruitment* – Research has shown that group mentoring programmes have higher levels of applications, since some volunteers might feel uncomfortable with the level of intimacy and commitment needed for individual mentoring.
- *Reduces the risk of 'mentee let-down'* – If a mentor has to miss a session or even if they drop out completely, there will be other mentors to pick up and continue the programme, without a mentee feeling abandoned.

Potential drawbacks of group mentoring

- *Cannot replace one-on-one mentoring* – While group mentoring still has its benefits, it will not provide the mentee the personal support that they will need to thrive.
- *Difficult to develop personal relationship* – The strength of a mentoring programme lies in the fact that a strong relationship forms between the mentor and their mentee. There is much less chance of this happening in a group setting, since intensive individual sessions are needed. It could be difficult to promote integration between mentors and mentees.
- *Need to develop a curriculum* – Generally, group mentoring is more curriculum-based than individual mentoring, meaning that programme staff will have to spend more time developing and refining one. Next to this taking up more staff time, this

will also take away one of the key points of skill and relationship development for mentors and mentees: designing the mentoring process together.

- *Disruptive behaviour more likely to occur* – Children are more likely to act out in a group setting than when they are receiving individual attention from a personal mentor. Especially in a programme where some of the children might be traumatised or experience more stress than other children, this might call for more professional staff to deal with these children and may disrupt the sessions for the other mentees as well.

The consultants believe that while group mentoring can be very beneficial to recently arrive migrant children, they will also need individual sessions with carefully matched mentors. They need the opportunity to form a strong relationship with a trusted mentor in order to develop themselves and be able to integrate more fully within their host community.

We recommend that a hybrid approach be implemented to get benefits from both the individual sessions as well as group meetings. We suggest that individual meetings are balanced with group sessions, with at least as many individual sessions as group sessions, perhaps alternating the two. Holding the individual meetings with all the mentor-mentee pairs in one room might be best to ensure that mentees are safeguarded properly which they are not if they meet alone with their mentors outside of the organisations' facilities.

During the first few individual meetings, mentors and mentees should work together to design their mentoring process, adapted to the mentees' self-identified goals. The sessions following these will incorporate the activities that the mentors and mentees have identified that correspond with these goals. The advocacy component of the programme can be explored during the group meetings, by using the Step Approach outlined in section 3.3

3.2 Guidance for individual meetings

For safeguarding reasons, it is recommended that the individual meetings take place in one shared space with the other mentor-mentee pairs, although care must be given that each pair has enough relative privacy to build trust and confidence between them. This way, the mentoring coordinators can monitor (from a distance) to see whether the mentor-mentee pairs have an initial "click". It might be useful to organise a first general meeting – and more during the course of the project – with all the mentors and mentees, to create a sense of belonging to a larger group and to promote getting to know the other mentors and mentees within the programme.

Establishing a safe space

Children and young people need safe spaces where they can come together, engage in activities related to their diverse needs and interests, participate in decision making processes and freely express themselves. If youth have safe spaces to engage, they can effectively contribute to development, including peace and social cohesion. For people in marginalised groups, psychological safety and physical safety are closely related and not easy to separate. Wherever you choose to hold your meetings – in either permanent or rented space – lay down guidelines and put in efforts to ensure that you offer the children and young people you are working with a safe space in which they feel free to talk, raise issues of concern, relax, grow and develop. Making a space visually child-friendly will help make the children feel more at home.

Preparing the mentors

At the start of the mentoring relationship it is often the mentor who needs to take the responsibility for building the relationship. The first meeting can be exploratory to see if the mentoring relationship would work. Getting off to a good start is important and trust must be built from the beginning. It can be helpful to look for shared experiences or characteristics, even if it seems like the mentor and mentee are completely different! It is important that mentors have good emotional intelligence in order for them to properly respond to the learner's emotions and feelings. It is thus imperative that the mentors receive sufficient training and induction so they can immediately start building their relationship with their mentee.

Expectations

It is important that mentees and their families are completely aware of the goals and aims of the programme and that their expectations are managed. Mentors need to know that they should never feel pressured to provide more than the mentoring support they offer during the mentoring sessions. If mentees or their families start to ask for more, such as money or visits outside of the programme, mentors must know how to decline. Furthermore, whilst mentoring can be very beneficial both mentors and mentees, it will not solve ALL problems in a recently arrived child's life, mentors and mentees must be always reminded of this fact.

Setting boundaries

The following are some questions mentors may want to consider and be prepared to answer at the beginning and during the programme:

- What if your mentee asks for money?
- What if your mentee asks for your phone number? What about home or email address?
- What kind of longer-term contact would you be comfortable with?
- What if your mentee asks to meet outside of scheduled meetings?
- Is it acceptable to accept a friend request from your mentee on social media?
- Do you share a personal problem with your mentee?
- Should you meet together at your or your mentees' home?
- Your mentee arrives for their mentoring session with a friend. Do you ask them to leave?
- You have an old computer that your mentee could use. Is it okay to give it to them?
- You know your mentee will not be celebrating Christmas. Do you invite them to your families' celebrations?
- Your mentee makes a passing remark that you feel is racist. Do you tell them they are wrong and that you find the comment offensive?¹¹

Project partners need to establish what their organisations' boundaries are and provide the mentors and mentees with guidelines. If mentors feel they need stricter boundaries, those need to always be adhered to!

The process of mentoring

Mentoring is a process that needs to be adapted to match the context that it takes place in and the needs of the mentee. With the support of the mentoring coordinator, mentors and mentees need to co-create the content of their sessions. While the underlying goal of the MINT project

¹¹ Questions adapted from: Wonder Foundation, A Toolkit for Running a Mentoring Project for Young People

is to promote integration and prepare TCN children to enter education in the host community, each mentee will have their own needs and capabilities that the mentoring process needs to be adapted to.

TCN children can be facing a range of issues, some more difficult to deal with than others. They can range from wanting to build confidence to learning a language, and from wanting new friends to having to deal with trauma. Mentors need to be aware of their own capabilities and shortcomings. They are not highly trained psychologists or teachers and thus need to manage the expectations of their mentees in what can be achieved during the course of the mentoring programme. Project partners need to provide guidance on what support mentors can and should offer, and what is most age-appropriate for the mentees. For example, mentors might not be able to address the actual trauma a TCN child is experiencing, but they can offer distraction in the form of fun activities or help mentees feel more comfortable around other people by offering a listening ear.



Mentoring coordinators need to provide guidance to the mentors on how to design the mentoring process – in collaboration with the mentees – to fit with the mentees' individual needs and capabilities.

The process of mentoring can be laid out as follows:

1. Identify the issue/concern

During the first few sessions, mentors and mentees talk about their expectations and concerns.

2. Identify the goal of the mentoring process

Through discussion, the mentor helps the mentee to narrow down the issues/concerns and set short- and long-term goals.

3. Explore, investigate and look at opportunities

The mentor suggests options to the mentee on how to address the issue/concern that the mentee identified. We recommend that project partners have a pool of activities and their connected aims available for the mentors to use to shape their mentoring programme. *Some suggested sources for these are included in Appendix 1.*

4. Make a plan of action

Evaluating the possible solutions that the mentors provided, the mentees choose a plan of action to address the issues that they identified. The mentor guides the mentee through this process, offering advice on realistic outcomes and time lines.

5. Carrying out the mentoring programme

The mentor's role is to guide and encourage the mentee through the process of carrying out the plan and activities that the mentee has chosen. Very important: activities just for the sake of having fun are just as important and educational as those focused on an actual goal!

6. Evaluation and assessment of the goal and the process

Mentors evaluate whether the plan of action has led to the accomplishment of the goal. If not, a different approach needs to be discussed and chosen. Otherwise, new goals and a plan of action can be identified. We recommend that this assessment takes place every three months.

Individual goal-setting

While the overall goal of the MINT programme is to promote integration for recently arrived migrant children, this is too big a goal for individual mentees and not something that they might understand exactly. It is thus important for them to understand their mentoring process in smaller, more attainable goals, which will ultimately lead to more integration and prepare them for enrolment in formal or informal education. Having the mentees identify the goals themselves will ensure that they are more invested in the programme. Identifying issues, goals, and corresponding actions is an important skill for children (and adults) to have in order to thrive in life.

We are linking to a guidebook on how mentors can help mentees identify their goals: https://www.preventionworksct.org/file_download/3bcd9e45-5687-479a-b176-b953a46c302d. Some of the main points from this guide:

- Working towards short- and long-term goals will build children's self-efficacy and confidence in their capabilities and teach them how to tackle challenges.
- Mentees need to lead the goal-setting process but must be provided with encouraging and gentle guidance from their mentors.
- Goals need to be SMART: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ction-oriented, **R**ealistic, and **T**ime-bound and trackable.
- Goals do not just have to be academic or serious; 'fun' goals are very important too!
- Trust needs to be established between the mentor and mentee before successful goal-setting can take place.
- It is important to check whether progress is being made to achieve these goals and adjust them if necessary.

Guidelines for mentors

During the recruitment process and the training days, mentors need to be made aware that, especially in the beginning, and depending on the experiences that the mentees have gone through, a mentoring process will have its ups and downs. By showing the mentees their commitment and that they care, mentors need to carefully nurture the mentor/mentee relationship.

Some important guidelines for mentors:

- Be honest and respectful to the mentee.
- Give the relationship time to develop.
- Be on time; if you are running late or have to cancel a visit, give the mentee as much notice as possible.
- Give your mentee your full attention when you are together.
- Never make promises you cannot keep.
- Be consistent and clear with your expectations. You also need to make sure that your mentee has realistic expectations. Do not provide money or materialistic items!
- Encourage your mentee to be open about their thoughts, feeling and values – but do not pry.
- Ask for the mentee's opinion and respect it. Never make fun of them or their views.
- Value diversity. Whilst they can learn from you about their new country, you can also learn a lot from them.
- Set a positive example by obeying laws and rules.
- You cannot solve every problem that your mentee is facing. Talk to the mentoring coordinator if serious issues arise.

- Help your mentee make decisions and formulate their own conclusions without telling them what to do. Explore alternative solutions together.
- Have fun!

Supporting mentors

The mentors in this project are relatively young and thus need to be provided with sufficient support from each of the project partners. After establishing enough trust, they might be involved in difficult conversations about the experiences that the mentees have gone through before, during and after their journey. It is important that the mentors know who they can talk to – confidentially – to process this information. During the training days and initial meetings, they need to be equipped with tools on how to address such difficult conversations. Especially if a mentor/mentee pair is struggling to bond, more support is needed from the mentoring coordinator to establish a good relationship.



Monthly/periodic meetings with project partner support staff must ensure that mentors are coping well with possible difficulties.

Mentors can also support each other, for example in a WhatsApp group or during regular mentor group meetings. Providing mentors with the opportunity to solve their own problems will empower them and make them able to show the same sort of support to their mentees. While some of these meetings should be supervised by project staff in case serious issues arise, it is also recommended that mentors are in contact more informally, to let off steam and brainstorm together.



Systems need to be set up if mentors are to support each other, bounce ideas off each other or troubleshoot.

Consistency and reliability are key when it comes to building a trusting relationship with their mentees. Mentees will not feel comfortable to share their experiences and insecurities if they feel that their mentor is not completely invested in the programme and in them. Showing up on time and giving them all your attention will showcase that you are a reliable mentor. It can happen that the mentor must terminate their participation in the programme prematurely. Just not showing up for your session without any explanation can be detrimental to your mentees' wellbeing. It is thus imperative that mentors learn what their responsibilities are towards their mentees, even if they have to quit the programme. Preparing mentors for possible challenges and giving them tools on how to deal with them, will ensure that less mentors will drop out of the programme because of avoidable reasons.

Supporting traumatised mentees

Mentors need to be made aware of the topics that their mentees might, eventually, need to discuss. What do they do if they see that a child is struggling massively with trauma? Who do they go to if serious abuse or family problems are confided in them? How do they balance the need to confidentiality and safety?

It is possible that some of the mentees in this programme have gone or are going through difficult times, and their lack of self-esteem may make them lash out to people willing to help them – including the mentors. Mentors might feel frustrated by the mentees’ seeming lack of interest in the programme. On the other hand, mentees might also become too clingy, expecting that the mentors will be available to them all the time or help them solve all of their problems. In cases like these it might take longer for the mentor-mentee relationship to get in place. Mentors need to remain patient and keep working on establishing a trusted relationship.

Mentors must be prepared for situations like this, both during the mentor workshop (during the session on the challenges facing the TCN children) as well as when these problems occur. Therefore, mentoring coordinators must organise regular check-ins with the mentors and promote an open and honest environment, both between project staff and mentors, and between mentors themselves. Mentors must never feel like they are struggling alone. It is also important the mentors’ and mentees’ expectations and goals are identified and discussed at the beginning of the programme, and that mentors know that it is healthy – and important – to set certain boundaries. They also need to know who they can reach out to if bigger issues arise.

Guidance for children dealing with low self-esteem

- Focus on children’s strengths and not their flaws. It is important that they see their strengths themselves. An example activity is writing “I am...” on a chart papers and having them make a list. They will write both positive and negative characteristics. Focus on the positive ones.
- Help children learn new skills (even very simple ones). If the mentee shows interest in something particular, encourage them to try it. Mentors can see if they can undertake this activity together, or if they can show them how they could learn this skill (e.g. taking football lessons or joining a choir).
- Teach children that it is okay if things do not go right all the time. An example activity is making the children complete the following sentence “I am afraid of ...”. Then have them make a list of why they should not be afraid or what they can do to overcome this fear.
- Making decisions feels powerful, so help children make choices. The steps outlined above as the mentoring process are helpful for this. Mentees will feel empowered by shaping their own mentoring programme. However, be aware of what level of choice might overwhelm your mentee. Sometimes just starting with “Where do you want to sit?” or “What colour pen shall we use?” is a good start for a child with low self-esteem. Slowly show children that they are perfectly capable of making more complex decisions themselves.
- Solving a problem makes you feel like you achieved something. When a child is struggling, support *them* finding the solution (do not give them one!). Again, the mentoring process steps outlined above will help achieving this.

Guidance for children dealing with trauma

- Know how to recognise serious trauma, when to refer the child and to whom.
- Keep calm if a child tells you about their traumatising experiences, let them share if they want to and never judge. If they have questions, answer them calmly, briefly and in a reassuring manner.
- If the child does not want to talk about their experience, never press the issue and do fun activities to distract them.
- Act normal around the child. Never show them your shock or your own anxiety.

- If your mentee starts to panic, help them breathe through it. You can try the following exercise: make them name 5 things they can see, then 4 things they can hear, then 3 things they can touch, then 2 things they can smell, and finally 1 thing they can touch.
- Stay positive.
- Some children might struggle to talk about their experiences but want to share through different forms of communications, like drawing or role play. Make sure that you do not get drawn into a negative repetition of trauma (e.g. children might provoke you to replay an abusive situation at home).
- While some traumatised children may lash out and exhibit disruptive behaviour, other children may become withdrawn and quiet. Be aware of the different signs of trauma.

Signs of trauma can include:

- Constantly replaying the event in their minds
- Nightmares
- Beliefs that the world is generally unsafe
- Irritability, anger and moodiness
- Poor concentration
- Appetite or sleep issues
- Behaviour problems
- Nervousness about people getting too close
- Jumpiness from loud noises
- Regression to earlier behaviour in young children, such as: clinging, bed-wetting or thumb-sucking
- Difficulty sleeping
- Detachment or withdrawal from others
- Use of alcohol or drugs in teens
- Functional impairment: inability to go to school, learn, play with friends, etc.



Mentors need clear guidelines on what to do when serious issues arise. Referral systems need to be in place if things such as abuse, or trauma are reported by the mentees

3.3 Suggested activities

Before selecting which activities to undertake, it is important to identify what the aims of the mentoring programme are. Purely educational activities might be too one-sided for traumatised or marginalised children, who could be in need of more support and reassurance.

It might be difficult for the youth volunteers to come up with appropriate activities for the whole of the mentoring period. We recommend each project partner has a database of activities and related aims that the youth volunteers can choose from. Some suggested activities are listed below.¹²

Indoor activities

Aim	Example activity
Getting to know each other	Ice breakers

¹² There are many useful ideas for age appropriate activities freely available on the internet. Here are a few links:
<https://unicefkidpower.org/team-building-activities-for-teenagers/>
https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mentormichigan/Mentoring_Activity_Ideas_288509_7.pdf
<http://connecting-generations.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/52-Mentor-Activities.pdf>
<http://yess.co.nz/mentor/131-fun-ideas/>

	Group art activity Board and/or card games
Building trust	Trust walk
Learning about each other's culture	Cooking together
Building self-confidence	Role play
Building language skills	Story-telling Learning new vocabulary
Building self-esteem	Writing down positive characteristics

Outdoor activities

These will often take the form of cultural and orientation trips – where children and young people gain confidence, learn about their host countries, and have fun. Programme staff and mentors will have many ideas of outings that would work, but some broad recommendations include:

- Visit a museum, aquarium, planetarium, art gallery, natural museum, national park, cemetery, etc.
- Tour the public library
- Visit a job site/do a job shadow
- Interview someone who has an interesting job
- Take a nature hike
- Visit a farm
- Take a historical tour (bus or walking) of the city
- Go to cultural event (concert, play, symphony)
- Go to a sporting event (for example, a football match)
- Watch a film together
- Talk with senior citizens about their life story and historical events
- Go grocery shopping together; plan a menu for a meal, make a budget for it
- Explore public transportation together

Child to Child's Step Approach

One approach that can be used for mentors and mentees to design activities in a participatory way is the award-winning Child to Child Step Approach.¹³ Using a series of linked activities, or 'steps', children think about the issues impacting their lives and the lives of their communities, make decisions, develop their life-skills and take action to promote health, education and development in their communities, with the support of adults.

The steps are as follows:

1. **Choose and understand the topic** - Children identify and assess their problems and priorities.
2. **Find out more** - Children research and find out how these issues affect them and their communities.

¹³ In the resources below, you can see how it has been used to support vulnerable children to address issues that affect them, and children to address issues around disaster risk reduction. Detailed guidance for facilitators is provided.

http://www.childtochild.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Child_to_Child-Supporting_Vulnerable_Children.pdf

http://www.childtochild.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Child_to_Child-Involving-Children-in-Disaster-Risk-Reduction.pdf

3. **Discuss what we found and plan action** - Based on their findings, children plan action that they can take individually or together.
4. **Take action** - Children take action based on what they planned.
5. **Evaluate** - Children evaluate the action they took: What went well? What was difficult? Has any change been achieved?
6. **Do it better** - Based on their evaluation children find ways of keeping the action going or improving it.

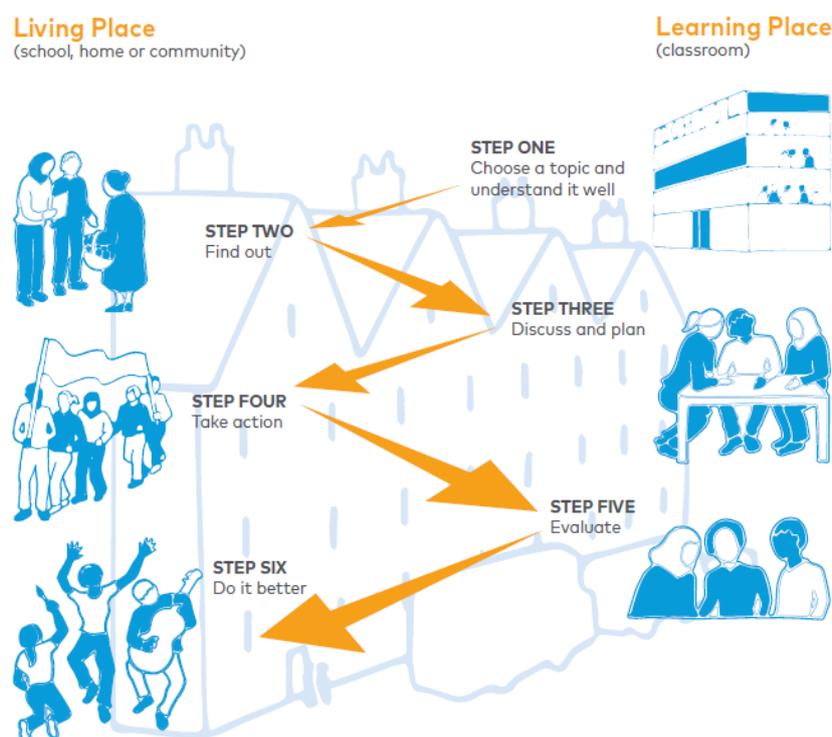


Figure 4: Child to Child Step Approach

Different projects have developed different models with different numbers of steps. There is no “right” number of steps. What matters is that there is a sequence of activities that enables children to understand the issues around them and make positive changes.

Whilst the activities are frequently initiated by or with children, adults are available for support. Increasing meaningful participation is a slow and phased process ranging along a continuum from children’s active involvement to children directing initiatives.

This approach may be a useful starting point for designing a series of activities to support mentors and mentees to advocate for improvement around issues affecting migrant and refugee children.

3.4 Supervision and monitoring of regular meetings

Depending on the availability of human resources, it is recommended to have a staff member responsible for providing ongoing supervision and support to the mentors. Periodic check-ins with the mentors are needed to determine progress on programme and individual goals, as well as to address challenges along the way.

Mentors should develop a work plan establishing frequency of meetings, day of the week, specific roles for the mentor and activities to be carried out. Related to this, supervising staff members can create a timeline with feedback mechanisms for mentors and mentees, as well as periodic feedback from parents.

Sample timeline

- **Meeting 1:** Staff should be present for the first meeting to facilitate introductions to people as well as to the programme, and to ensure that mentors and mentees are comfortable. Have a clearly defined structure and a plan for where, when and how the first meeting is to occur. Programme partners can decide whether the mentees' caregiver(s) should be present.
- **Month 2:** Staff to attend individual meeting in an observational capacity and check in with parents, to gauge the response to the mentoring at the community level.
- **Month 4:** Staff to attend group activity to observe progress on goals (e.g. on child participation) and to facilitate a feedback session with mentors.

In order to build in an element of ongoing self-assessment, programme staff can help mentors create milestones for the development of the mentor-mentee relationship.

Establishing benchmarks for supervision

Know what standards you want to keep to in the programme, so that supervising staff can have benchmarks for performance. For instance, if you say you want to be facilitating effective child participation, the basic requirements are that it is:

1. Transparent and informative
2. Voluntary
3. Respectful
4. Relevant
5. Child-friendly
6. Inclusive
7. Supported by training for adults (mentors)
8. Safe and sensitive to risk
9. Accountable

Monitoring and evaluation processes

Monitoring and evaluation is measuring what works, what doesn't work, and why. The purpose of doing an evaluation is to help the mentors work more effectively, to see what has been accomplished, and learn from experiences.

There are several options for the way that this can be done:

- **Option A:** Regular monitoring can be built into ongoing programme processes by incorporating regular participatory M&E activities into meetings. There could be feedback forms for mentors at the end of every session.
- **Option B:** Periodic workshops and/or focus group discussions and interviews involving key stakeholders to gather the M&E data (e.g. at 3 months, 6 months, 9 months).
- **Option C:** A creative mixture of options A and B. Your organisation may have different creative ideas on how to implement the M&E process in ways that best suit the particular context.



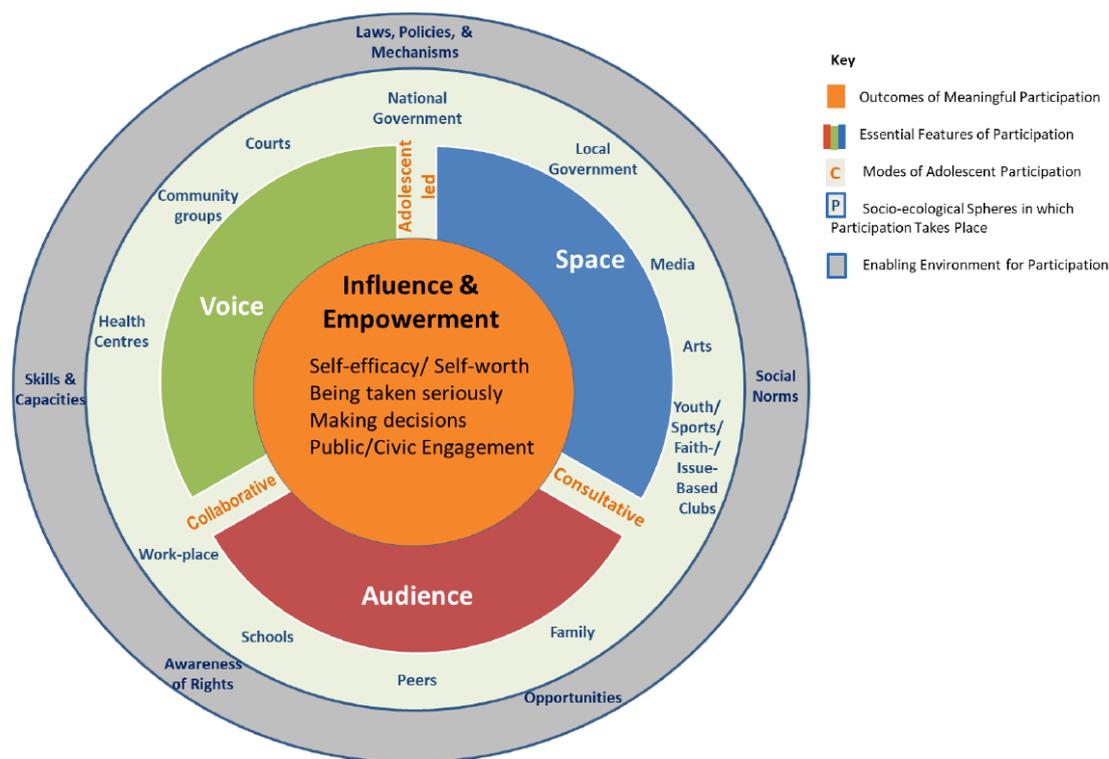
The project partner needs to choose what monitoring process is most appropriate for their mentoring programme and identify which benchmarks are needed to monitor progress. Involving both mentors and mentees in the design of this process and the reporting will lead to a stronger programme.

Defining Outcomes of Participation

The UNICEF Conceptual Framework for Measuring Outcomes of Adolescent Participation (see link in Appendix 1) identifies four main domains for outcomes for youth participation.

1. **Sense of self-worth/self-esteem/efficacy:** self-confidence, opportunities to aspire to goals, ability to challenge injustices, positive environments towards adolescents, safety in speaking out, a sense of personal well-being (supported by changes in social norms, awareness raising and capacity building)
2. **Being taken seriously:** self-respect, sense of influence, growing motivation to speak out, potential to make a difference, respect by adults towards adolescents, opportunities to change one's life, potential for demanding justice and accountability (supported by legal and policy frameworks, changes in social norms, awareness raising and capacity building)
3. **Making decisions:** self-confidence, sense of growing autonomy, improved knowledge, sense of responsibility, adult confidence in adolescents' abilities (supported by changes in social norms, awareness raising and legal and policy frameworks)
4. **Public/civic engagement:** learning and knowledge, potential to influence laws, policies or programmes, awareness of rights, collaboration, sense of group efficacy, potential to bring about concrete changes to practices, provisions and services implemented by public authorities which in turn lead to improvements in wellbeing, reduce inequality and contribute to the quality of life (supported by creation of spaces, capacity building and legal and policy frameworks).

Each one of these outcomes can indicate a wider set of positive changes or implications for young people. A balanced set of indicators will include indicators from across all four domains. The conceptual framework diagrammed overleaf illustrates how these outcomes fit into the broader context, and where indicators might be found:



Engaging children in evaluation

The following are some guidelines for having mentors and mentees participate in evaluating the programme:

- Start thinking about how you are going to involve children in monitoring and evaluation from the earliest stages of any project or programme.
- Introduce confidential reporting mechanisms that are accessible to girls and boys, to ensure that all children can easily share concerns or reports about child abuse. These concerns must always be followed up sensitively and promptly by the appropriate agencies.
- Equip children with the skills and confidence to use participatory monitoring tools to support their active role in monitoring and evaluation.
- Develop child-sensitive indicators with children to enable them to identify their priority concerns and the goals they want to achieve. *Example indicators can be found in the toolkit for monitoring and evaluating children's participation, which is linked in Appendix 1.*
- Make efforts to ensure a safe environment where children and young people feel safe to share negative experiences and criticisms about participation in programming without fear of repercussions.
- Give children rapid and clear feedback on the impact of their involvement, the outcome of any decisions, the next steps, and the value of their involvement.
- Communicate the results of M&E back to all the children involved in an accessible and child-friendly way and make sure their feedback is taken into account in future work.
- Ensure that any mistakes identified through evaluation are acknowledged and that the organisation is committed to using these as lessons learned to improve future practice.
- Evaluate how mentors have understood and implemented children's priorities and recommendations into their strategies.

Core M&E tools to be employed can be:

- Interviews
- Questionnaires or surveys (including knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) surveys)
- Focus group discussions
- Observation
- Participatory data collection and analysis tools
- Stories of most significant change, case stories or oral testimonies
- The T Chart¹⁴
- The H Assessment¹⁵

A monitoring and evaluation plan can take the following form:

Indicators	Any existing reports we can look at?	What methods will we use to gather data?	How often will we collect this data?	Who will we collect this data from?	Who will collect this data?	What are the materials needed?
E.g. Children have enhanced self-confidence	Body map before/ after; stories of most significant change; M&E reports	Self-confidence scoring; body mapping (before and after); stories of most significant change; interviews; observation	Baseline scoring at start of programme; at 12 months and 18 months; stories every three months	Mentors, mentees, parents	Staff	Refreshments for meetings and focus group discussions with parents/ caregivers

In its project document, the MINT project and MINT project partners have committed themselves to the following:

- **Baseline survey of children integration**

In order to demonstrate the positive impact of the mentoring programme on the integration of children, an initial baseline survey will be implemented on an individual and group basis at the occasion of the first group session as well as during the initial meeting between the local youth mentor and the child. At that moment children not taking part in the programme will NOT be approached.

- **Mid-term and End line surveys**

After the end of the first 9-month session, each partner will have collected a set of information and data related to the progress of each child towards local integration divided into several areas which will at a minimum include: mastery of language

¹⁴ Life Skills Education Toolkit for Orphans & Vulnerable Children in India, Family Health International (FHI), India Country Office, In Collaboration with the National AIDS Control, Organisation (NACO), With Funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Sonal Zaveri (2007).

¹⁵ Ibid

(external assessment), educational achievements (external assessment), social integration (self-assessment). The results will then be compared to those of children who did NOT take part in the mentoring programme and who are residing in the same areas and/or facilities where children of the programme live. This activity will be realised in collaboration with reception facilities professionals with the facilitation of the agencies who signed the letter of support attached to the application. The same methodology will be used again at the end of the second session in order to measure the progress of children of the second session towards local integration as well as children of the first session again in order to verify the sustainability of the action after an additional period of 9 months elapsed.

- **Methodological Adjustment**

Based on the results of the Mid-Term and End line surveys, the mentoring programme methodology will be revised in order to reflect project best practices and adjust its contents based on the evidence generated by the project, which will be subject to a wide dissemination at EU level.

4. Cross-cutting considerations

4.1 Child participation – a rights-based approach

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) recognises that children are not merely passive recipients, entitled to adult protective care. Rather, they are subjects of rights who are entitled to be involved, in accordance with their evolving capacities, in decisions that affect them, and are entitled to exercise growing responsibility for decisions they are competent to make for themselves. Article 12 of the UNCRC is a unique provision in a human rights treaty, addressing the legal and social status of children under the age of 18 years. It states that every child who is capable of forming views has the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting him or her, and that their views must be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity. This is a fundamental right, and the Committee on the Rights of the Child has identified it as an underlying principle which must inform the implementation of all other rights.

Together with Articles 5 and 13–17 of the UNCRC, Article 12 introduces a philosophy of respect for children and young people as active participants in their own lives. Article 5 clarifies that when providing direction and guidance in the exercise by children of their rights, parents and other guardians must have regard for the evolving capacities of children. In other words, they need to recognise that children acquire skills and competencies as they grow up and they are able to take an increasing level of responsibility for decisions that affect them. Articles 13–17 address the child’s right to freedom of expression, religion, conscience, association, assembly, privacy, and information.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child has stressed that the right to participate applies without discrimination to all children capable of forming views, irrespective of age, gender, disability, ethnicity, religion, family income, or other factors. It applies to all areas of their lives, from the family, school, local communities and public services to wider government policy. The Committee also emphasises the fundamental importance of providing children with the information (in accessible formats), time and space they need to be able to participate safely and effectively.

Since the UNCRC was adopted in 1989, initiatives actively engaging children have demonstrated that:

- children and young people have unique perspectives and expertise that can shed light on the challenges they face and on the best strategies for resolving them
- children, when provided with the opportunity, necessary information and support, can and do make a significant contribution to decisions affecting their lives
- children want greater control over the issues that affect them, at the individual and collective levels
- adults commonly underestimate children’s capacities and are positively impressed when they see children actively contributing to discussions
- children’s participation can enhance the quality of legislation, policy-making and service provision relevant to their lives, with consequent positive outcomes for the realisation of their rights
- children and adults consistently report that participation improves children’s skills, confidence and self-esteem.

Participation matters!

Participation empowers children in their diverse situations to make decisions about the primary issues that affect their lives (growing, learning, loving) and the lives of others and the environment. It is essential for children and young people to develop their own capacities and skills to participate fully in their communities and society.

Participation is the building block of democracy

Globally, it is the means to create active citizens and thriving civil societies (the foundations for dynamic communities and economies), hold governments to account, and where necessary challenge corruption and undemocratic practices.

Participation delivers better outcomes

If children are listened to, then the services designed to meet their needs will be more effective (and thus more efficient).

Evidence about the beneficial outcomes and impact of children's participation was recently generated by a global initiative, which piloted a framework and toolkit for monitoring and evaluating children's participation. The results demonstrated that children and young people consistently benefit personally from active participation, developing greater awareness of their rights; more self-confidence, heightened self-esteem; leadership skills; and improved confidence to negotiate with adults.

Towards meaningful participation

Hart's ladder of participation provides a useful bench-marking tool, to assess how effectively MINT project partners are incorporating participation in their programmes:

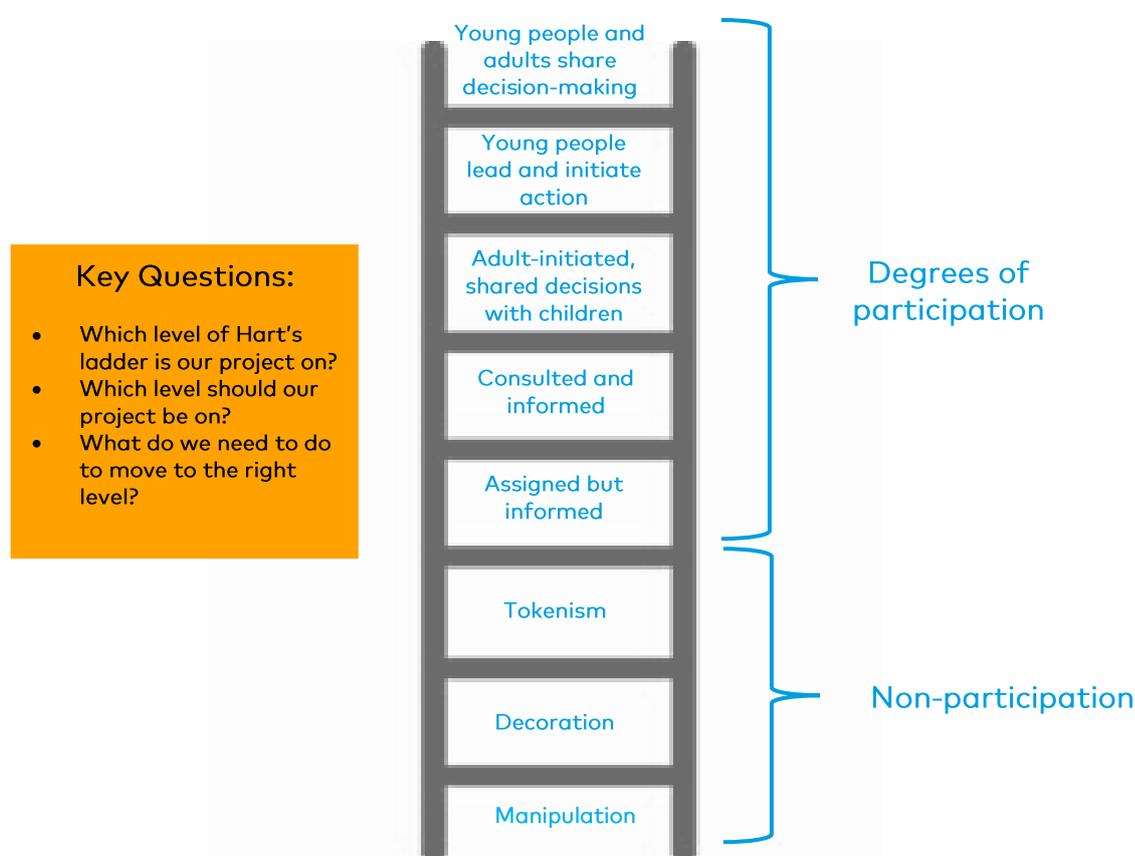


Figure 5 Hart's ladder of participation

Here are some practical tips for mentors to be more participatory:¹⁶

- Body language is very important, and you can showcase trust and openness this way. Make eye contact, angle your body towards your mentee, sit next to your mentee.
- At the beginning of the mentoring process, have your mentee lead on developing some ground rules for your mentor-mentee relationship and future sessions. Reflect on these ground rules every few weeks.
- Support your mentee to identify choices and make decisions; do not tell them what to do. They are capable of thinking about their own goals and expectations for this programme. It is the mentor's job to practice effective questioning, help guide them through this process and support them making a choice of what solutions/activities they think are needed to achieve those goals.
- Keep an eye on the energy level of your mentee. If they seem restless or tired, do an energiser. It is also good to have a variety of activities: you can show them a YouTube video, have a discussion, talk about their day, do something fun, etc. Know when to stop an activity and move on to the next one.
- Ask open questions (questions that do not have a yes/no/one-word answer). Wait long enough to give the child enough time to process and answer.
- Have your mentee do most of the talking. Try to aim for you talking only 20% of the time and them 80%.
- Do not correct your mentee harshly or put them down. Their views and ideas are valuable. If they come up with something harmful, gently steer them in another direction.
- Help your mentee reflect on the activities undertaken. Do not give your own feedback until they have reflected themselves. Possible questions to ask can be: How did you decide to undertake this activity? What have you learned during the activity? How did you feel doing the activity? What would have gone better?
- Be an active listener. When your mentee tells you of their experience, do not start talking about something that happened to yourself. Do not finish your mentees' sentences or give advice before they have explored the subject completely from their own point of view. Do not judge.
- If you are doing an activity that requires you to give instructions, keep them as brief as possible. If there are different steps, just give the instructions for one step at a time. Check if your mentee has understood your instructions.
- Make sure your mentee is enjoying your sessions together.

4.2 Overcoming cultural and language barriers

Creating shared experiences can help overcome biases and pre-conceived ideas with the effect of enhancing community cohesion. However, care must be taken not to create or exacerbate tensions that would undermine programme goals. The ability to navigate cultural differences is a crucial quality to be nurtured in prospective mentors.

Regardless of ethnic and religious backgrounds the relationship to be established between mentors and mentees should be based on mutual understanding and respect. Striving away from traditional hierarchical relationships, the programmes should be based on the premise that all participants have much to learn from each other.

¹⁶ Adapted from: Child to Child, Hearing All Voices Facilitator Manual

Sample mentor training exercise: sharing culture¹⁷

Goal: Cultural sharing-icebreaker

Audience: New mentors

Supplies: Index cards, markers

Length of exercise: 15 minutes

Welcome participants and thank them for their desire to work with a recently arrive TCN child. Let them know that we all come from different backgrounds and cultures and that their new relationship will be a great way for them to learn more about the perspective of a young immigrant.

1. Ask each person to write their name in the centre of an index card. In the top right-hand corner, ask them to write the name of a mentor/local role model that has helped them to achieve success in their culture. In the top left-hand corner, ask them to write three things that their family has given them (i.e. name, security, love). In the bottom left-hand corner, ask them to write one way their culture is different from other cultures. In the bottom right hand corner, ask them to describe one strategy they plan to use when working with a young immigrant from a different culture.
2. Have participants pair up with each other. Tell them that they will use this index card to introduce themselves. They will have 5 minutes to share.
3. After each participant has had a chance to introduce themselves, let them know that their partner will be responsible for introducing them to the group.
4. After all pairs have been introduced, thank them for sharing their culture with the group. Let them know that they will soon be given a chance to learn more about the culture of a young person who will have his or her own background, experiences and culture.

In order to design culturally sensitive programmes, below are some examples of steps which could be taken:

- Collaboratively create a mentoring agreement (an example form is included in Appendix 2 which can be altered following discussion between the mentor and mentee).
- Involve members of the mentees' communities in programme design. This may include a focal person for ongoing "trouble-shooting" if needed.
- Include young people from similar ethnic backgrounds as the mentees in programme delivery – particularly those who have been settled in the host country for a longer period.
- Take care when cross-gender matching (e.g. male mentors with female mentees) and ensure that families are aware and consenting.
- Create linkages with organisations e.g. faith-based institutions that could inform cultural competence.

¹⁷ Source: Mentoring Immigrant and Refugee Youth: A Toolkit for Program Coordinators

Language

In some cases, language acquisition is defined as a programme goal for which appropriate activities should be included to enhance mentees' skills. Where this is not an explicit goal, language barriers can be addressed to some degree by including icebreakers and team-building activities in materials for mentors.

Some general practical considerations¹⁸:

- Speak naturally and at normal speed.
- Avoid using broken language or adopting a foreign accent.
- Keep the amount you speak to a minimum by keeping instructions and feedback short and simple.
- Think about the level of the language that you are using. Avoid using difficult words or and use short, simple sentences.
- Use imperatives to give instructions.
- Learning a new language can take place through targeted activities (like teaching new vocabulary) or just by having a conversation. Do not break up the conversation too much to correct your mentee's grammar or language.
- You can give your mentee some homework, by having them find 10 words that they do not know and bringing them to your next session to discuss.



Each project partner needs to think of practical guidance on overcoming language barriers related to their own language.

Useful tips when working with migrant and refugee children

1. Focus on children's strengths

Every child has their own strengths, skills and knowledge, which we must always build upon. Migrant children have gone through experiences that even many adults have not and can thus bring unique knowledge and skills. Whilst promoting learning about the host society, supporting to maintain their home language and culture is crucial to building the mentees' confidence and identity.

2. Understand and recognise stressors, and the effect of trauma

Refugee children have often developed a degree resilience to cope with the experiences before, during and after their journey. They must not be stigmatised: be aware that some TCN children have experienced adversity, but never think that this completely defines a child. Traumatised children might show disruptive behaviour or be reluctant to participate in the mentoring programme or at school. Mentors must be sensitive to the signs of trauma, support where possible but also be advised on when to refer the child to the coordinating adult or an expert when necessary.

3. Understand the challenges of relocation and acculturation

Recently arrived migrant children may have gone through big upheaval because of their relocation and circumstances beforehand. Having to adjust to a new community, often without knowing the language or social norms is difficult. Some families might go from a tight-knit community to a place where they do not know anyone, having no support system to fall back on. Generally, children develop

¹⁸ Adapted from: Child to Child, Hearing All Voices Facilitator Manual

language skills quicker than adults, which can increase the burden on children when parents rely on them to understand their new environment and act as translators.

4. Access to community resources

Mentors might benefit from receiving resources on how to work with refugee families. These could also include a list of organisations that could help with specific issues, such as housing or psychosocial support, in case mentees bring up issues that mentors cannot – and should not – solve. Project partners already working with refugees and migrants will have these resources themselves, others might need to acquire them.

5. Be a champion for migrant children

Refugees might be at risk for bullying and harassment because of stigmatisation, ignorance and discrimination. Be a champion for the rights of migrant children and put an immediate halt to such behaviour. Show your community the strength of migrant children and how much we can all learn from each other.

Sample mentor handout on diversity¹⁹

Diversity is the vast possibility for differences among all of us. Since every person is an individual, with individual differences, humans are about as diverse as the number of people existing on this planet at any given time!

To make things easier, we tend to group commonalities into different identities or cultures. All of us have a variety of cultures and identities and experiences that make us who we are. This combination of culture, identity, and experience is different for each person we meet! Take some time to think about your culture and identities, which may include:

- Your age
- Your race or ethnicity
- Your gender
- Your sexual orientation
- Your religion or personal philosophy
- Where you go to school
- Where you live
- How much money your family has
- The number of people in your family
- The hobbies you have and your personal passions
- MUCH MORE!

Sharing Culture with Your Mentee

What's important to remember about diversity is to be inclusive – be respectful and welcoming of all of the differences you encounter. Your mentee will undoubtedly have culture, identities, and experiences that differ from your own. Explore those differences with your mentee and also find commonalities. Ask about your mentee's family, their traditions, and what's important to them. Share with your mentee about your culture and identity, and perhaps how things were for you at their age. You'll be surprised at how much you can learn!

¹⁹ From: Be the Mentor, Mentoring Handbook, <http://www.bethementor.sab.co.za> -> SAB-Mentor-Handbook.pdf

The diversity among us helps us to learn more about other ways of life and provides the opportunity to share the wealth of experiences each of us has with one another.

4.3 Ensuring gender balance and equity

In all of our work it is important that we promote, as far as possible, equality, diversity and inclusion. *Links to resources around these are included in Appendix 1, and more about them can be found in the ChildHub Resource Library.*

Migrant children are first and foremost children and they have the same rights as others to enjoy all the Rights of the Child. The principle of the Best Interest of the child means that each child must be seen as an individual, and special consideration must be given to his or her particular circumstances. Migrant children should have the possibility to express their own views and be able to influence their situation. Children coming with parents are not just belongings and could have their own reasons for migrating.

One striking but often neglected aspect is the gendered nature of refugees' experiences. While women and children are often depicted in the media and public discourse as victims, men are often shown as virile, active and even threatening. Although there are important similarities in women and men's experiences of migration, there are also differences. Gender-based violence, for example, is defined as *'violence that is directed against someone because of their status as a woman or girl or that affects women and girls disproportionately. It includes acts that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty.'* While this definition focuses on women, it is important to note that gender-based violence can affect people of all genders, including those who do not identify along binary gender ascriptions.

The table below depicts how gender relates to conflict-related violence. It is reproduced from UNFPA 2015.

	Direct impact	Indirect impact
Men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher rates of morbidity and mortality from battle related deaths • Higher likelihood to be detained or missing • Sexual and gender-based violence: sex-selective; massacres; forcibly conscripted or recruited; subjected to torture, rape and mutilation; forced to commit sexual violence upon others • Higher rates of disability from injury. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of ex-combatants' involvement in criminal or illegal activities; difficulties in sustaining livelihoods; • Increased prevalence of other forms of violence — particularly domestic violence.

Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher likelihood to be internally displaced persons and refugees • Gender-based violence: being subjected to rape, trafficking and prostitution; forced pregnancies and marriage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reproductive health problems • Women’s reproductive and care-giving roles under stress • Changed labour market participation from death of family members and “added worker effect” • Higher incidence of domestic violence • Possibility for greater political participation • Women’s increased economic participation due to changing gender roles during conflict
Common Impacts of Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depression, trauma and emotional distress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset and income loss; • Tendency towards increased migration; • Disrupted patterns of marriage and fertility; • Loss of family and social; networks, including insurance mechanisms; • Interrupted education; • Eroded well-being, particularly poor health and disability from poverty and malnutrition.

All migrants are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, but female migrants are particularly at risk. Women and girls account for 71 per cent of all human trafficking victims, according to a 2016 report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Women and girls also face additional vulnerabilities when they are displaced by conflict or natural disaster. Chaos and the breakdown of protection systems mean perpetrators can abuse with impunity. Lack of shelter, overcrowding and poorly lit public spaces all increase the risk of gender-based violence, including sexual violence.

Families under extreme hardship may also adopt coping mechanisms that jeopardize women’s and girls’ welfare. A UNFPA-supported study²⁰, for instance, found alarming rates of child marriage among some vulnerable Syrian refugee populations. When abuses occur, many migrant women and girls lack the resources, support systems and knowledge to seek help.

Those working directly with youth know that boys and girls respond differently to mentoring, often requiring separate approaches and strategies to achieve similar outcomes. While research is still limited on how gender affects mentoring relationships, there is some evidence that gender difference is an important consideration. Research on gender in the broader field of developmental psychology points to differences in the ways boys and girls develop personal identity, form friendships, and communicate their interests and needs. Helping mentors understand some of these differences through initial and ongoing training and continuing support can help them be more effective in developing a positive relationship with their mentee.

²⁰ <https://www.unfpa.org/news/new-study-finds-child-marriage-rising-among-most-vulnerable-syrian-refugees>

Training mentors in gender-specific approaches

Whether your mentors are matched with mentees of the same or different gender, they will benefit from learning about gender-specific issues and approaches to working with boys and girls. Your mentor training should include information, activities, and discussion about how gender differences affect the development of mentoring relationships. These training enhancements can help both male and female mentors learn how to communicate more effectively with their mentees, encourage mentees to think beyond gender stereotypes, and help all participants better understand adolescent behaviour.

Examples of information that might be covered in a mentor training session include:

- Handouts on stages of adolescent development, with some discussion about whether some developmental tasks are more important for boys or for girls to complete.
- Information on maintaining boundaries as their eager mentees ask for increasing levels of self-disclosure about their personal lives.
- How to use print and media resources that focus on gender-specific issues to generate conversations with mentees about stereotypes.
- Provide reading and movie recommendations where gender is an issue or where stereotypes are challenged and include some ideas on how to stimulate discussion.
- Effective methods of communication for working with young people, and how gender affects the way in which people communicate.

Looking at the differences between boys and girls reminds us that young people are diverse in every aspect of their lives, regardless of gender. While gender is an important consideration in working with young people, tailoring our interactions to address their unique individual needs and attributes is most likely to produce positive results. Mentors should examine their own stereotypes about male and female roles and can encourage mentees to think critically about what it means to be male and female in their home culture, host culture and wider global culture. They can help mentees take on new activities and challenges that make them more rounded human beings. But above all mentors should listen to them and appreciate them for who they really are.

Promoting equity and resilience

For many refugee and migrant children, the experience of leaving their home and managing the transition into a new country with an unfamiliar language and culture will be challenging. Refugee children and their parents have left countries that have conflicts and human rights abuses and they have sought safety and protection. They may have endured difficult journeys. Some refugee children will have experienced bereavements or may be separated from parents and family members. Others may also be vulnerable to stressful circumstances in their new country such as financial hardship, changes of accommodation and school, tensions at home, racism and negative attitudes towards refugees.

However, most refugee children and young people are very resilient, despite experiencing many hardships. Going to school provides daily structure and a sense of normality and stability; it also plays a key role in helping them adapt to the changes they have experienced.

Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union prohibits any discrimination on the grounds of disability, while Article 26 sets out the right of persons with disabilities “to benefit from measures designed to ensure their independence, social and occupational integration and participation in the life of the community”. The European Union and 27 of its Member States are also parties to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons

with Disabilities (CRPD), the preeminent international standard on the rights of persons with disabilities. The CRPD does not explicitly make reference to refugees and migrants with disabilities. Nevertheless, [Article 11 on situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies](#) requires State Parties to the convention to ‘take, in accordance with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, all necessary measures to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict [and] humanitarian emergencies’.

Good practices to promote equity and resilience are:

- **Avoid generalisations about children’s experiences and needs**

It is very important to emphasise that refugee children and families are not a homogeneous group. To speak the same language, or come from the same village, city or country does not mean that people always feel that they belong to the same ethnic or cultural group or that they share the same beliefs and allegiances. It would be wrong to make any assumptions that all children who have had a refugee experience will have been affected by it, or will react to it, in the same way.

- **Identify current factors that may be affecting wellbeing**

Rather than make hasty judgements that refugee children need specialist mental health treatment or support, you should consider the child and family’s current situation. Children may be vulnerable because of the stressful circumstances they face here in their host country such as financial hardships, frequent accommodation changes with resulting changes in schools, uncertainties over asylum applications, as well as the challenges of adapting to a new culture and learning a new language. Young refugees may also experience racism and discrimination due to the negative image of asylum-seekers frequently shown in the media.

- **Focus on resilience and positive coping behaviours**

Activities such as storytelling can help children understand and express their feelings in a safe environment. Creative and group activities such as music, play, drama, art and storytelling also develop social skills and improve motivation and learning. Play and sports activities can help children manage experiences of loss and change. By releasing tension and having fun and enjoyment, children can often cope better and show resilience. Play and sports activities also help children develop their language and social skills.

- **Help children make friendships**

Refugee children have consistently identified having friends as being a major support in school. Having a social network will help children feel less isolated and will also support self-esteem.

- **Find out about support in school and other local resources and services**

Every MINT partner will need a list of appropriate and effective referrals to deal with problems as they arise or to provide support beyond their own organisation’s capability. As organisations active in the social sector, you should have an existing referral network, however, be open to opportunities to grow this in order to address the emerging needs of the TCN children. For example, if you have worked through schools to identify mentees, it would be worth exploring the support mechanisms for migrants that schools might have in place.

Appendix 1 – Useful links

Below are some links you may find useful when designing your programme. Links to further sites or documents should be collected here. This is your list – and enables you to share useful links and resources with your MINT project colleagues.

Other useful materials are housed in the ChildHub online library which is well worth exploring.

[Guiding frameworks and useful sources of support](#)

[The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#)

[Child-friendly Version of UNCRC](#)

[European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights on children's rights](#)

The [Child Protection Hub](#) was initiated by a group of individuals and organisations from 9 different countries, from South East Europe and the wider European region. As a professional community, we strive for a safe, nurturing and inclusive environment for all children. They have come together to realise this ambitious project in order to provide child protection professionals with tools for working and developing, space for constant learning and communication and with an opportunity to become a part of a strong regional community of practice.

More information about the conflict occurring in countries that refugees flee from is available at UNHCR's [Refworld](#).

[A Right to Be Heard: Listening to Children and Young People on the Move](#), UNICEF, 2018: the perspectives of nearly 4,000 young migrants and refugees who responded to a recent global poll conducted by UNICEF. The report highlights many of the challenges faced by these uprooted youth, as well as their hopes and aspirations. It also reminds us of UNICEF's six-point agenda for action to protect the rights of all migrant and refugee children and young people.

Eurydice report on '[Integrating Students from Migrant Backgrounds into Schools in Europe: National Policies and Measures](#)'.

[Safeguarding resources](#)

Keeping Children Safe is a flagship initiative supporting child safeguarding. The Keeping Children Safe website is an invaluable source of guidance, evidence and approaches. They have a lot of useful resources in their [resource library](#).

The Canadian Red Cross provides some useful guidelines. The [Ten Steps to Creating Safe Environments for Children and Youth](#) manual is a guide for developing, implementing and monitoring risk management strategies within organizations to help keep all personnel and participants, especially children and youth, safe from violence, abuse and harassment.

[Child participation](#)

[This module](#) is part of a Resource Pack developed in the framework of the Action for the Rights of the Child (ARC) programme - an interagency initiative launched by UNHCR and the Save the Children Alliance and later joined by other organisations, including Terre des Hommes, whose purpose was to increase the capacity of UNHCR, government and NGO staff to protect and care for children in emergency situations.

[What is Participation and What Barriers Do Children with Disabilities Face When Trying to Participate?](#) [ChildHub Summary]

Activities for mentor training

The Swedish Scout Movement has a [useful toolkit on diversity](#) that contains a number of activities that support young people to explore ideas around diversity and migration:

Activity sources for mentor/mentee interactions

In the resources below, you can see how Child to Child's Step Process has been used to support vulnerable children to address issues that affect them, and children to address issues around disaster risk reduction. Detailed guidance for facilitators is provided. Many of the detailed activities should be adaptable for use in the MINT project – particularly when looking at ways to link the mentorship programme with the child and youth-led advocacy work.

- [Supporting vulnerable children](#)
- [Involving children in disaster risk reduction](#)

Education International has developed [a new toolkit](#) for educators and education unions who work with migrant and refugee children to make the right to quality education a reality for all. See:

Monitoring, evaluation and learning

[Conceptual framework for measuring outcomes of adolescent participation](#)

A toolkit for monitoring and evaluating children's participation: this toolkit provides a conceptual framework for measuring children's participation, for analysing its progress in a particular setting and evaluating the scope and quality of participation. It also gives practical tools to gather the information needed to monitor children's participation. The toolkit consists of 6 booklets:

- [Booklet 1](#): Introduction
- [Booklet 2](#): Measuring the creation of a participatory and respectful environment for children
- [Booklet 3](#): How to measure the scope, quality and outcomes of children's participation
- [Booklet 4](#): A 10-step guide to monitoring and evaluating children's participation
- [Booklet 5](#): Tools for monitoring and evaluating children's participation
- [Booklet 6](#): Children and young people's experiences, advice and recommendations

Advocacy examples

- More stories about refugee experiences are available at:
 - [BBC Road to Refuge](#)
 - [Scattered People](#) by the Brisbane Refugee Support Centre, links stories about refugee people to their journey identifying 11 stages of transition
 - [Road to Refuge](#), stories
 - [Celebrating Refugee Lives](#) (Afghanistan, Sierra Leone, Croatia, Iraq, Burma, Sudan)

Appendix 2 – Important sample forms

The sample forms provided need to be adapted to fit with the partner organisations' contexts and usage. The mentor-mentee agreement needs to be developed by the mentor and mentee together during their initial meeting.

Parent/guardian consent form

I, the parent or legal guardian for _____ hereby give my permission for my child to participate in the MINT programme, run by [partner organisation name].

I fully understand that the program involves mentors, who shall be selected from the community and will be screened (including a criminal background check) and trained before beginning in the program. A mentor will be expected to spend a minimum of [time] with my child at [location]. The mentor is not allowed to take or meet my child beyond this facility without proper supervision.

I understand that my child will participate in an orientation session in which the programme will be explained. The programme is planned to last nine months and continuation may then be discussed.

I understand that during the course of the mentoring programme there may be special group events (incorporating all mentors and youth) planned outside of the regular mentoring location. [partner organisation] will ensure proper supervision for these visits, as well as information beforehand on the exact nature of these activities.

I understand that the staff of [partner organisation] will provide ongoing monitoring of the mentoring activities.

I permit the [partner organisation] staff to utilise photographs of my child taken during his/her involvement in the mentoring program and waive all rights of compensation.

Printed name of parent/guardian

Signature of parent/guardian

Date

Emergency contact information

	Mother	Father	Alternative contact
Relationship	n/a	n/a	
Name			
Home phone number			
Work phone number			
Mobile phone number			
Home address			

Further information

Tell us anything that is important for the welfare of your child.

Confidentiality agreement for mentors

All the information you are told about and by your mentee is confidential and sharing that information with others is prohibited. However, you are required to report certain things. Do promise your mentee that you will keep confidential information secret. Tell your mentee that he/she is free to share confidential information with you but that you are required to report certain things. It is critical, not only for the welfare of the student, but also to protect yourself that you adhere to these exceptions:

1. If a mentee confides that he or she is the victim of sexual, emotional or physical abuse, you must notify [name of program coordinator] immediately. Note on your calendar when this information was reported and to whom it was given. Remember this information is extremely personal and capable of damaging lives, so do not share it with anyone except the appropriate authorities.
2. If a mentee tells you of his/her involvement in any illegal activity you must tell [name of program coordinator] immediately. Again, note on your calendar when this information was reported and to whom it was given.

These procedures are designed to protect the mentees from harm and to prevent even the appearance of impropriety on the part of the MINT programme and its staff and volunteers. One accusation could, at the very least, seriously damage the reputation of all those participating and endanger MINT programme.

Please know that we appreciate your participation in this project and that we appreciate your adherence to these procedures. If you have any questions, please call [name of program] at [phone number].

I have read, understand and agree to strictly abide by the MINT programme's Mentor/Volunteer Procedures. I understand that failure to adhere to these procedures may result in my removal from participation in the programme.

Print Name

Signature

Date

Photography consent form

Please return the completed form to the mentoring project coordinator as soon as possible.

Mentee's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

[Partner organisation] would like to take photographs and or video recordings of our participants to celebrate and promote its MINT mentoring programme. Still or moving images may be published in our printed publications or online platforms. Children's names will never be published alongside their photograph. Electronic images, whether photographs or videos, will be stored securely and will be accessible only by authorised users. Before using any photographs/videos of your child we need your permission.

Please answer the questions below, then sign and date the form where indicated.

Please circle

1. May we use your child's photograph in printed publications?

Yes / No

2. May we use your child's photograph

As part of a large group activity?

Yes/No

Showing an individual activity?

Yes / No

3. May we allow your child's photograph to be used for publication in a newspaper?

Yes / No

Please note that the use of photographs in newspapers is subject to strict guidelines and parents should not have particular concerns about their use.

This form is valid from the date of signing until your child leaves the project. Photographs and videos may be securely archived after your child has left but will not be re-used or re-published externally without renewed consent. Archiving provides a valuable record of the project's achievements.

We recognise that parents, carers and family members may wish to record events and we are happy to allow this on the understanding that such images/recordings are used for purely personal family use.

Print Name

Signature

Date

Mentor-Mentee Agreement

We are voluntarily entering into a mentoring relationship that we expect to benefit both of us. We want this to be a mutually rewarding experience with most of our time together spent in development activities revolving around the mentees' goals. We note the following features of our relationship:

Frequency of Meetings

How often will we meet? _____

Day(s) of the week: _____

Where will we meet? _____

How long will our meetings last? _____

Specific Role of the Mentor

(Model, guide, observe and give feedback, recommend developmental activities, facilitate learning, suggest/provide resources, etc.)

The mentor will provide support without any financial remuneration. They are also not expected to provide any monetary support to the mentor and their families. During the first meeting(s) expectations and boundaries will be clearly defined.

Specific Role of the Mentee

As a willing participant in this mentoring project, I commit to working with my mentor throughout the program, attending all scheduled meetings with my mentor, and communicating with my mentor weekly. Emergencies happen, so if I am unable to keep a meeting date, an advance call will be made to my mentor to reschedule. I will develop personal goals and be open to coaching and feedback from my mentor.

Confidentiality

Nothing that the mentee tells the mentor will be discussed with anyone except the Mentor Coordinator. If the mentor feels it is important to involve another adult, it will be discussed first with the mentee. If there is threat of physical harm to the mentee or to others, the mentor must break confidentiality to seek protection for the endangered individual.

No-fault Conclusion

We agree to a no-fault conclusion of this relationship if, for any reason, it seems appropriate. Either party has the option of discontinuing the relationship for any reason, and he or she will discuss this decision with the Mentor Coordinator before terminating the relationship.

Mentee

Mentor

Date

Date

