Project id: **2015-1-UK01-KA202-013592**

EMPOWER
Women

Facilitator's Guide: Output 5
Empower Others Workshops for Support Workers

Developed by Inova Consultancy, UK
August 2016

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1. Background

In times of economic difficulty such as the current European recession, Support Services for vulnerable adults and particularly for women across Europe, are often cut. Statistics continue to paint the bleak picture of the issues facing vulnerable women which may prevent them from becoming economically or educationally active. 1 in 4 women across Europe experience domestic violence over their lifetimes and between 6-10% of women suffer domestic violence in a given year (Council of Europe, 2002). 68% of human trafficking victims are women (2013, Eurostat). There continues to be a need to provide high quality support and training to vulnerable women at risk of exclusion from the labour market. The sector continues to rely on volunteers working with vulnerable women to provide much needed support in the fields of personal empowerment, confidence and employability or entrepreneurship skills. Support Workers who work to provide support to vulnerable women have been overlooked in terms of the type and variety of training they are provided with. Whilst issue-specific training is provided for Support Workers working with vulnerable women, Support Workers report that they feel less able to support and provide information and guidance on issues relating to employability and entrepreneurship to their female clients.

EMPOWER (Educational Materials for Practitioners providing Opportunities for vulnerable Women's Employability and Resilience) aims to bridge this gap by developing innovative blended training programmes to both target groups (Support Workers and vulnerable women themselves) via the EMPOWER Training Programme (training knowledge, skills and abilities in tools and methods for increasing confidence and awareness of strengths for employability) and EMPOWER Circles Programmes (action learning and increased self-reflection for success).

EMPOWER is a consortium of skilled and experienced organisations from 4 partner countries (UK, Lithuania, Greece and Iceland) who all work in the field of gender and Vocational Education and Training. The consortium of partners consists of two NGOs in social care (KMOP and SIF), an SME specialised in gender projects (INOVA) and a large Directorate of Labour (VMST). EMPOWER focuses on a strengths-based training and coaching programme for volunteers and paid Support Workers affiliated to organisations working with vulnerable women and also to the vulnerable women they support in partner countries.
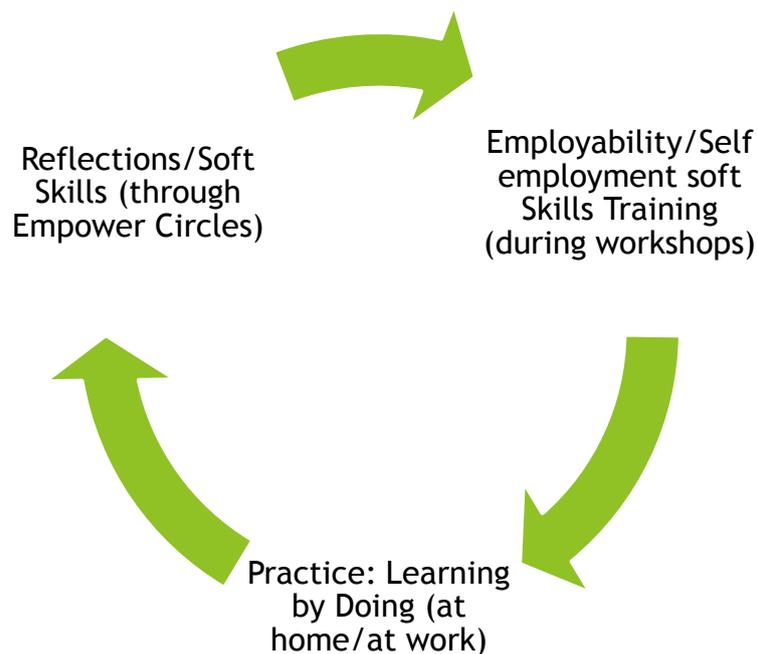
EMPOWER objectives will be to:

- Equip Support Workers (paid and volunteers) working with vulnerable women with the soft skills training necessary to pass these skills onto women in order to increase their employability and entrepreneurship opportunities.
- Equip vulnerable women with greater confidence, belief & resilience to succeed economically.

2. Overview of the Empower Training Programme Methodology

The approach of the Empower training programme is an iterative learning cycle (see Figure 1) for participants (Support Workers and the vulnerable women they work with) where soft skill development (through workshops) is then complemented by practicing these skills in the real world and coming back to further reflect in the Circles.

Figure 1. Iterative Learning Cycle in the Empower Training Programme

Reflections/Soft Skills (through Empower Circles)

Employability/Self employment soft Skills Training (during workshops)

Practice: Learning by Doing (at home/at work)

As part of the EMPOWER project (Educational Materials for Practitioners providing Opportunities for vulnerable Women's Employability and Resilience) two pilot phases of Empower Workshops will be carried out in four partner countries:

1. UK – INOVA
2. Iceland – VMST
3. Lithuania – Social Innovation Fund
4. Greece – KMOP

Each Empower Workshop will consist of a minimum of 10 participants from each of the following two target groups:

1. Support Workers (paid and/or volunteers) who work with vulnerable women
2. Vulnerable women themselves

One trained female facilitator will facilitate the group in each country, following the attendance of a training the trainers workshop in Greece (November 2016) facilitated by trainers from Inova (UK). Eight Empower Workshops (half day length each) will take place for each of the 2 target groups and for each of the two pilot phases being run for Empower.

After each Workshop, participants will complete an evaluation form and the facilitator will write up their working notes from the facilitator's perspective. The facilitator will keep all evaluation forms at the end of each session. At the end of the final workshop session, participants will complete a final outcome evaluation form. The facilitator will write up a Summary Report in English which summarises the individual evaluation forms per session, the final outcome forms and their own facilitator's notes/experiences. The Summary Report should contain interesting quotes from participants (from within sessions or from evaluation comments) and audio files/photos of the workshops where possible. All signed attendance lists will also need to be included. This Summary Report should be approximately 10 pages A4 and should be sent to the Output Leader, Inova UK in English. Please note that workshops should be evaluated and written up separately as a report from the Empower Circles report.

3. Learning Outcomes

Unit 1:

At the end of this unit participants (*Support Workers*) will:

- know women's motivation factors to become economically active;
- know the organizations, programs, tools in their countries and across Europe which could help vulnerable women to solve their problems: become more confident, resilience and believing in themselves to succeed economically;
- know how to use role models- success stories in order to motivate vulnerable women to become economically independent.

Unit 2:

At the end of this unit participants (*Support Workers*) will

- know how to use SWOT during the training Empower yourself;
- know how to help vulnerable to set their goal;
- know how to facilitate vulnerable women to evaluate their softs skills coherent with the social and civic, learning to learn, sense of initiative and entrepreneurship and digital competences.

Unit 3:

After the end of this unit participants (*Support Workers*) will:

- have a better understanding of how to help clients identify their strengths and how to make the most of these to potential employers/for business start-up;
- gain understanding in how to support clients to understand their personal and work values and to prioritise what they want to get out of a job/running a business.

Unit 4:

After the end of this unit participants (*Support Workers*) will:

- better understand how to support clients to connect with positive ideas about their futures and start to have a more positive outlook about future possibilities;
- be able to support clients to present themselves positively to others for jobs/business opportunities;
- have the tools to support clients with guided relaxation to support themselves and clients in stressful situations such as job interviews.

Unit 5:

At the end of this unit participants (*Support Workers*) will:

- increase their capacity to aid women to improve their employability;
- have a better understanding of how to help their clients present themselves;
- increase their knowledge and have a better understanding in supporting their clients develop their communication, motivation and interview skills;
- guide their clients on how to create a CV

Unit 6:

At the end of this unit participants (*Support Workers*) will:

- increase their capacity to aid women to improve their skills for entrepreneurship or intrapreneurship;
- increase their knowledge and have a better understanding in supporting their clients on decision making, leadership and business planning;
- gain a deeper insight on the Business Canvas Methodology;
- have knowledge of the most relevant and up-to-date resources where they can find information about entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship and could suggest them to their clients.

Unit 7:

At the end of this unit participants (*Support Workers*) will:

- identify their and their client's resilience factors;
- to be able to help their clients to improve their resilience;
- to be able to use the tools on the website;
- to be able to teach their clients how to manage time effectively.

Unit 8:

At the end of this unit participants (*Support Workers*) will:

- to use the methodology of SMART goals;
- to assist vulnerable women to work on their goals using SMART goals;
- to assist clients to work with collages.

4. Your Role as Trainer

Your role as the Empower Workshops trainer is to facilitate the involvement and learning of participants. As a reminder, you will be expected to share the values of effective facilitation which include:

Listening	Asking questions to truly show you understand learners' concerns or worries Not making assumptions about learners based on appearance, background etc.
Asking	Not telling people what's next but asking them if they are ready to move on
Sharing	Encouraging learners to direct what they say to each other sometimes and not always to you Sharing relevant information and experiences you have
Chairing	Keeping people on task/theme during discussions Getting clarification from learners
Valuing	Appreciating learners' strengths and experiences Encouraging learners' efforts to be open to change
Challenging	Tackling disruptive or discriminatory behaviour accordingly.

5. Structure of the Workshops

5.1 Introduction to the Workshop Session

It is worth reiterating your expectations about confidentiality to participants. Remind participants that everything that is said in the workshop must stay within the workshop. This is particularly important considering the difficult background many of the women attending workshops will have had. As the Facilitator you could discuss the following with participants in the introduction:

- What do we expect about openness and honesty?
- What level of self- awareness/self-reflection do we expect people to aspire to?
- Attendance; explain any expectations you have regarding attendance, informing of non attendance, timekeeping, communicating with you or others if there are problems, getting messages to one another in emergencies.
- Explain your expectations about doing work between meetings e.g. going online to the Learning Zone.

For an overview of the content of each unit please see **Annex 1 – Lesson Plans** which provide a detailed overview of each unit and proposed timing for delivery, including information on resources required by the facilitator.

5.2 Evaluation Requirements

Explain to the participants that it is a requirement of participating in the EMPOWER programme that workshop participants agree to take part in evaluation. At the end of all workshops, evaluation forms are required. It is helpful if you can get them completed at the end. The response rate is not as good if you allow people to take the form home. Allow sufficient time at the end of the session for them to be completed (evaluation is built into the lesson plans). At the start of each meeting participants are asked to sign in on the attendance register. This is an important record and provides evidence to the EC that the event has taken place. Please retain it and return scanned copies to Inova with your Summary Report. If possible, please also take photos if participants agree to this for inclusion in the Summary Report.

6. Structure of the Training Sessions

6.1 Introductions

During the first session, introductions between learners may be short as it is likely that many participants (from the vulnerable women target group) will be nervous about speaking in front of a group. Don't forget to introduce yourself and your background as a trainer to the group. You will also need to introduce learners to the Empower project briefly and explain that this is a pilot training taking place in UK, Greece, Iceland and Lithuania to support women and their Support Workers developing soft skills for employability and entrepreneurship.

Ideas for trainers:

- **Pair discussions**: Split everyone into pairs (5 minutes) and ask them to ask each other why they came on the course and what they hope to get out of it
- **Posters**: ask everyone to use felt tips and coloured pens to draw a poster that represents themselves/something they really enjoy doing. Give learners 10 minutes for the exercise and ask them to pin the posters round the room and present one aspect of the poster to the rest of the group.

6.2 Warm Up Exercises

Warm-up exercises help people to:
- relax and get to know each other
- break down barriers and develop trust
- bring a change of atmosphere in the training e.g. reduce tension, increase alertness
- have fun
- regain focus and concentration e.g. after lunch

Ideas for trainers:

People Bingo: People Bingo is an energiser involving communication and teamwork. It's fun, energetic and upbeat, and it creates a tangible result and a great buzz. Trainers need to prepare a BINGO card (with 6 squares) with different attributes in each square. Learners then have 10-15 minutes to find someone who can sign one box on the card. Trainers should read the following rules to learners before starting.

- The individual must sign their name against the statement that applies to them on the answer card
- Each statement must be signed by only one person
- Each statement must be signed by a different individual
- You may sign your own sheet only once

Once your answer card is full shout BINGO! And your facilitator will check answers and award prize!

My Life Story:

1. Prepare a number of drawings (one for each participant) of a 'story-shield', divided into six sections, on large pieces of paper.
2. Have the group sit in a circle and distribute the drawings and pens.
3. Start with yourself as group leader and fill in the different sections of the shield with the following information about yourself:
   a. your name;
   b. the place where you were born;
   c. your ideal job;
   d. your favourite hobby;
   e. your favourite music/singer; and
   f. your favourite food/dish.
4. Ask the participants to fill in their shields in the same way you did.
5. Participants hold their shield in front of them and read out to the group what they have written on it. The shields are then attached to the wall for the duration of the session.

What Animal am I like?

Cut out various pictures of animals and lay them all out on the table (you can do duplicates) and ask people to choose the animal that they feel most represents them. Ask people to explain to the group why they chose the animal they did.

6.3 Ground Rules or How We Want to Work Together

Developing ground rules for a training group is a crucial way of ensuring that the group starts off working in a way that fits with the methodology. Potential issues to discuss as part of developing ground rules could include:
- Confidentiality and respect
- Attendance and commitment
- Use of time
- Questioning and levels of challenge
- Giving feedback
- Communication style
- Different types of 'helping' in the group- what people would prefer. What helps? What hinders?

7. Evaluation

Each workshop session should be evaluated by all participants at the end of the session by completing a session evaluation form which should be handed in to the Facilitator. At the end of the overall training programme all participants should also complete a Final Outcomes Evaluation Form and hand this back to the Facilitator.

The facilitator should write on the Flipchart a statement such as

"The best thing about the workshop today was…"

 Or

 "The one thing I will take away/remember from today's workshop is…"

and ask participants to put one positive thing on a post-it note and stick it onto the flipchart before they leave. All participants should be free to look at everyone's post-its. An alternative evaluation can be to put the above statements on a flipchart and ask each participant to draw around their hand in a coloured pen and write inside their handprint the best things/things they will remember from the workshops.

During the final session, participants should complete the Soft Skills Profiling Exercise which they also completed during the first session. During the final session, time should be allocated by the Facilitator to discuss the changes in the soft skills profiles e.g. any increases in confidence in skills, decreases etc. As part of the final workshop session, the facilitator can choose to do a 'closing ceremony' with participants where they receive certificates of completion and also carry out a closing task such as 'Releasing Your Goal/Barrier Balloons'.

Releasing Your Goal/Barrier Balloons

Ask participants to write one goal that they want to keep pursuing after the Empower workshops have finished or one barrier that they feel they have worked on removing on a balloon. Participants can then go outside and release the balloons into the sky or if this is not possible, they can pop the balloon with a pin as a metaphor for achieving the goal/removing the barrier.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: Learner Pack for Support Workers

ANNEX 2: PowerPoint Handouts for Trainers

- All Presentation Slides can be found on the EMPOWER Learning Hub –

  https://empower.kmop.gr/

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For more information about the EMPOWER project please visit empowerwomen.eu