



TEACHERS FOR LIFE

EMPOWERING REFUGEES TO TEACH
AND SHARE KNOWLEDGE

Teachers for Life

*Empowering refugees to teach and share
knowledge*

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SECTION 1: THE PROJECT

Is a solidarity approach enough? 'The Moving Network' to encourage cultural and educational participation of refugees.

TEACHERS FOR LIFE – EMPOWERING REFUGEES TO TEACH AND SHARE KNOWLEDGE

...any essay that pretends to understand refugee experience is bound to reflect upon the fact that its own premises lie outside the experience.

M. Jackson, The Politics of Storytelling

Who is a refugee? An individual forced to flee the country he/she lives in. There are many reasons for such flight. And there are a variety of scientific definitions for the term refugee, from cultural, political or economic points of view. However, from an external position, it is impossible to understand the emotions, feelings and experiences of refugees.

This observed complexity was the starting point for the research project “The Moving Network”. Experts from different scientific fields and from the “Board of Participation (BoP)” association, along with international students, identified a deficit in knowledge and sought to formulate ways to create an environment in which refugees are able to become equal partners within European civil societies - specifically German, in terms of cultural and educational participation – with the accompanying transparent rights and responsibilities.

Since 2014 we have observed closely a large number of projects designed for refugees in Germany. These projects were seen to be set-up on the values of solidarity and this remains largely the case. Many positive effects have been seen as a result of such projects, however, it has also been observed that in many cases refugees were treated as a homogenous group. The experience of ‘being a refugee in Germany’ was seen as a defining commonality. But what were the expectations, the wishes, the needs of these groups? To what

extent were they able to exercise agency - particularly with regard to participation in the society in which they found themselves? A further pressing question, not only amongst the refugee population, but also amongst German society as a whole is, how is the term 'integration' understood? There seems to be a varied (mis)understanding of the omnipresent and frequently misused term - which is highly politicised in Germany without a clear definition of what lies behind it. Furthermore, how are German citizens being engaged as important partners for answering these questions?

We began to conduct interviews in seven refugee camps in Berlin. On the basis of over 90 interviews with refugees from different ethnicities, genders, ages and educational backgrounds we frequently established there was a strong desire amongst individuals within the refugee population to be more actively engaged in their new societal context. Many interviewees expressed a desire to utilise their unique skills, competencies and goals.

... a strong desire amongst individuals within the refugee population to be more actively engaged in their new societal context. Many interviewees expressed a desire to utilise their unique skills, competencies and goals.

On the basis of these interview results we developed the "Empowerment Trust Circle" model. The aim of the model is not to focus on the term 'solidarity' but rather on the terms trust, empowerment and cooperation to help enable refugees to define their role in the society. The model then seeks to generate, via a multiplier effect, new trust circles amongst the wider community.

We identified so-called multipliers within refugee groups who were established to support, help and teach other refugees. We developed a case study to test the model by appointing four people with a refugee background who independently organised courses in our partner camps. A more detailed overview of the model, and the case study as well as information about our "teachers" (BoP-Ambassadors) is provided later in this brochure.

We hope that our research will both inform and inspire other projects and

initiatives to place greater emphasis on trust in the internal perspectives and competencies of individual refugees. We urge projects to operate beyond the context of solidarity (which leads often to an interpersonal imbalance) to lively, meaningful cooperation where individuals offer mutual respect through the expression their own thoughts and wishes. To make the invisible teachers visible.

Most of the experts in this project have a background from the fields of the Arts, Arts Management or Media Studies. As a result we have enjoyed a variety of interdisciplinary perspectives, unconventional approaches to thinking and reflecting and most of all working on a relevant, practical model which will serve to help identify teachers, facilitators and enablers in and outside the camps.

Many thanks to the research team within the association Board of Participation e.V. and the Macromedia University Berlin who organised the project. We are also very grateful to our experts Claire Burnill-Maier, Prof. Dr. Dr. Ayad Al-Ani, and Dr. Patrick Föhl. Special thanks also to the Dean of Macromedia University, Prof. Dr. Dr. Castulus Kolo and the president of the Macromedia University Prof. Dr. Jürgen Faust who supported the whole project from its conception.

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The Moving Network Team, Macromedia University, 2016



Photo by Pegah Redjai Sani, event at Macromedia University, 2015

About the project “The Moving Network” and the model “Empowerment Trust Circle”



Gernot Wolfram & Claire Burnill-Maier

About the project

The project “Empowerment Trust Circle” has been developed against a backdrop of the current refugee crisis, on the basis of contributions from international scientific experts for empowerment & participation and students from Macromedia University Berlin in cooperation with the Allianz Kulturstiftung. “The Empowerment Trust Circle” project was initiated to develop implementation strategies that assist refugees and wider German society in the process of integration from an educational perspective. The project is based on refugee empowerment, working through the effect of multipliers, enabling them to become active participants in their new society. The project team worked closely with the Berlin based association, established in 2014, ‘Board of Participation’. The aim of the ‘Board of Participation’ association is to support and encourage a greater degree of empowerment for refugees and other marginalised groups within Germany’s civil society. One of the tasks central to the ‘Board of Participation is to strengthen the role of multipliers within refugee camps. Scientific experts and Master students from more than seven countries worked closely together on this project.

Theoretical background

The project began with the observation that the question, ‘what are the expectations, resources, competencies and strengths of refugees?’ is rarely posed. Within the context of the so-called “refugee crisis” many German and European initiatives take care of refugees through the provision of social and cultural guidance as well as the dissemination of information about existing offers and services. There are rarely opportunities for refugees to bring in their own knowledge and expertise in order to contribute to an improvement in their situation and further enable them to become as active and visible as other people in mainstream society.

Therefore, the project sought to adopt a transcultural focus from the earliest stages of the working process. Transculture in this context was defined on the basis of the work of the cultural scientists Homi Bhaba (Bhaba 2000) and Wolfgang Weltsch (1999), who state that a form of implicit and explicit hierarchy presents itself in encounters of different cultures. Accordingly, a clear set of cultural dimensions and features no longer exist intrinsically when a group of new individuals first encounter each other from different countries or cultures.

Volunteers assisting refugees are often unfamiliar with current discourse about education, culture, religion, or social participation in the countries from which refugees come. Volunteers simply aim to help “refugees”. As a result, refugees are treated, on the whole, with good intent but as one homogenous group, bound by the term “refugee”. Differing parameters such as social distinction, ethnic background, religious attitudes, sexual orientation, age, gender and sex (or a puzzle of all of these elements) are not a priority within the debate about how over a million new people may be integrated into European societies. However, from a transcultural perspective, refugees can not be defined as people of complete otherness or as clearly belonging to a particular set of determined cultural peculiarities.

Fundamental to the approach here is to avoid proclamations of homogenous characteristics with reference to refugees who are united solely by one parameter – that is, fleeing one’s own country in order to find security or a

future in another one.

Moreover, a transcultural approach brings into focus the interactions between old and new citizens within a particular cultural environment and raises the question of how mutual resources and competencies may be shared.

Central here is the assumption that in the initial period following their arrival, many refugees remain in so-called “trust circles” which help them to protect their language, common rituals and beliefs or even their identity. These trust circles may consist of family members, friends from their home town, religious groupings, digital communities and new networks etc.

... a transcultural approach brings into focus the interactions between old and new citizens within a particular cultural environment and raises the question of how mutual resources and competencies may be shared.

Many research studies have shown how important such trust circles are for refugees. Trust circles in our context are broadly understood as communities of people where the moral values shared are similar to the personal values and beliefs held, and the behaviour observed within these circles is guided by these values (comp. Uslaner 2008a; Dinesen & Hooghe 2010, Herreros 2004). When taking a closer view of trust circles based upon ethnic groups, we found a clear correlation with existing research in that different ethnic groups reveal different layers of trust behaviour (Alesina & La Ferrara 2002; Smith 2010). In particular, when different ethnic groups encounter one another in one camp, struggles and separation, segregation and mutual mistrust were observed. Nevertheless we also observed that some members of these closed groups, especially younger members with a higher level of education, tend to break away from such closed separation and more importantly, seek to create bridges to other trust circles and particularly to people in broader German society. Our observations identified the three manifestations of trust observable among immigrant groups as described by Örkény and Székelyi: “Trust in others can play various roles in relationships: on the one hand it can play a bonding role within very different, more or less closed communi-

ties (such trust networks keep together families, religious groups or groups based on common ethnic origin). On the other hand it can play a bridging role among individuals, groups and cultures that are distant from one another. Third, trust can bring about linking among groups and individuals that occupy different positions in social hierarchies.” (Örkeny and Szekelyi 2009). Based on the assumption that refugees are able to bridge different trust circles and networks we developed the “Empowerment Trust Circle”, a model, which explores the potential of refugees to play an important role as multipliers within their own trust circles in refugee camps as well as in the society they arrive in. Furthermore, we suggest the empowerment of multipliers initially through developing teaching and mediation skills in order to



Photos by Pegah Redjai Sani, Refugee Camp, Berlin, 2015

analyse and interpret the expectations, resources and values amongst individuals in the various individual cultural refugee scenes. In adopting this

approach, we describe the potential of multipliers to serve as conduits for knowledge transfer and active participation spanning out of the camps into society as a whole.

Time is a key resource with regard to the refugee experience. It is one of the most abundant resources refugees have. Long periods of time spent unable to do anything or simply waiting for appointments with authorities, lead to frustration and depression. The desire to participate and to ‘give something back’ was a theme that came up regularly in our interviews. An eagerness to become actively involved, to experience mutual encounters and a desire to establish working roles was common. A one or two year wait until such aspirations may be realised is far too long.

Therefore, in this project multipliers play a crucial role. Multipliers are seen as communicators and facilitators between different spheres of refugee camps and society. The model “Empowerment Trust Circle” (ETCir), developed within the research project, identified such multipliers in genuine trust circles as found in almost every refugee camp. Trust circles exist within different ethnic groups as well as religious groups or certain social environments. They are the basis for information dissemination and action, which leads to stronger visibility of the needs and expectations of individuals. Currently, political and social action is taken towards generalised groups, namely towards refugees from certain countries. The migration experience serves as the basis for identifying groups and for shaping the way in which refugees are approached and addressed.

On the basis of the results of our research we saw considerable differences between individual refugee’s wishes, expectations and aspirations about their future lives. Whilst many are eager to learn German and to study in Europe, others hope to return quickly to their homeland as soon as peace returns. Many refugees are simply in a situation whereby they are endeavouring to overcome the trauma of their long journey, their experiences of torture, violence and personal loss. This complexity of expectations and experiences needs to be differentiated.

We suggest the empowerment of multipliers initially through developing teaching and mediation skills in order to analyse and interpret the expectations, resources and values amongst individuals in the various individual cultural refugee scenes.



Photo by Pegah Redjai Sani, three brothers from Afghanistan, Refugee Camp, Berlin, 2015

The Case Study “The BoP-Ambassadors”

The research team conducted over 90 interviews with refugees in Germany and on the basis of these interviews developed a model process of actions to identify and support multipliers in refugee camps. In parallel, the team implemented a case study with so-called “BoP-Ambassadors” who independently organise courses, events and workshops within their communities. This case study tests the parameters of the model “Empowerment Trust Circle”.

The research team did not exert any influence on “BoP-Ambassadors” over their choice of courses to offer their communities. Following initial meetings, it was clear that only through consultation with members of individual trust circles could ambassadors select a best fit offer. Important considerations for the ambassadors included, the type of educational or artistic course they would be willing to spend time on, and which courses people would want to join regularly and actively participate in.

After this analysis ambassadors started their own initiatives. Courses including women’s rights and diversity management, language courses for illiterates from Afghanistan, intercultural courses and a dance workshop were implemented in five refugee camps in the city of Berlin.

The “BoP-Ambassadors” wrote regular reports and documented the number of attendees joining their courses. These courses were supported by regular meetings with the research team. All the BoP-Ambassadors stated in their reports that it was a help for them to know and to see that there was a German institution in the background helping them formulate their ideas and indicators.

The “BoP-Ambassadors” were considered part of the research team. A platform for equal exchange was created through the regular meetings and several reflection rounds. An important issue emerging from discussion was the role of digital participation for refugees. Many refugees are frequent users of a variety of social media including Facebook and other social media platforms. In this digital context refugees are familiar with using social media to exchange information, knowledge and how to keep social structures alive even over long distances. They function on a digital level to create communities (comp. Föhl,

p.) and find access to unconventional working opportunities (vgl. Al-Ani, p). The research team found that a number of refugees possess a high degree of technical competence and also have the skills to teach others their knowledge.

During the implementation of the model, obstacles arose within the camps when camp staff responded skeptically to BoP-Ambassadors' requests - for example when asked for space in which classes could be held. Staff members at the camps reacted with surprise that the residents of the camps had formulated their own ideas about how to connect and educate their cohabitants. Self-organisation of groups was frequently perceived as something unusual and curious. That underlined one of the assumptions of the project: that empowerment should be one of the key terms for integration measures in the future. Within this framework it is also clear that local staff should be ready, not only to help but also to learn and to share experiences and knowledge on a transcultural level.

Courses including women's rights and diversity management, language courses for illiterates from Afghanistan, intercultural courses and a dance workshop were implemented in five refugee camps in the city of Berlin.

Prospects

A much quoted line of 2015 was the appeal of German Chancellor Angela Merkel "Wir schaffen das!" (We will make it!) when she spoke of refugee integration. But who did she have in mind when she used the word "we"? Obviously, the people of German society. However, behind this appeal lies a common misconception about integration - that the majority group makes provision for a minority group which is, in turn, subsumed into the majority. Our work was guided by a different belief. To reformulate the words of Angela Merkel, "We will make it, they will make it - and we will make it together." This would shift the emphasis on integration for refugees away from being a one-dimensional perspective. It would also allow German society to reassess the expectations they have of the new members of their country. Additionally, it would deliver relief from the omnipresent appeal for solidarity.

Instead of placing focus on in the somewhat problematic term "solidarity" the strengthening of the term cooperation is suggested. American sociologist Richard Sennett wrote in his work, "Together – The rituals, pleasures, and politics of cooperation" (Sennett 2013) that the term solidarity was used in the 20th century by several ideologies including Fascism, Stalinism, Maoism and by a number of religious leaders to force people into a particular form of social engagement. In his eyes whilst it is a term coming from a bottom-up perspective, which produces strong bonds amongst differing societal groups it is also flawed as it leads ultimately to political fragmentation and weakness. Sennett suggests, therefore that we speak more in terms of cooperation. Cooperation allows participants to ask: What is the advantage of my own personal involvement? What are the benefits and goals? Certainly, there can not always be an equal outcome from exchanged ideas, services and actions in cooperative work, but at least there is a strong reflection of the individual part everyone has played.

This cooperative approach seems important, on the basis of the results of our work, when it comes to questions of how best to integrate the rapidly-increasing number of people coming to Europe and Germany as refugees. In this context, we understand multipliers like the BoP-Ambassadors as

facilitators for cooperation and collaboration (comp. Terkessidis 2015). It is not solidarity that can be the foundation for a long-term European refugee concept (comp. Wolfram&Henze 2014), especially when the term works as an appeal and not as a stated value. A more realistic and measurable concept is that of enabling refugees. The enabling approach allows participants to contribute their knowledge, their competencies and ideas to wider society on the one hand, and on the other to open a dialogue with broader society that both negotiates, challenges and renegotiates established values including equality, human rights, and tolerance. In this re-reading process of European history, cultural values and beliefs, new realisations and values can be founded and shaped. What is often currently viewed as high risk strategy for our societies can turn into a valid perspective for the future which works towards an open, diverse and powerful continent which has proven that transfer and exchange of knowledge is a renewing process for stability and peace.

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Empowerment Definition

Definition of Empowerment for the project “The Moving Network” following the Ecological Theory approach.

Mafalda Sandrini, Rossella Salzillo, Alen Tabakovic

When attempting to define the word empowerment, many different points of view need to be considered. This aspect of empowerment gives a preliminary insight into the problematic nature of the theme as well as of the different variables acting within of it. It also suggests the adoption of an ecological approach. But what is meant by “ecological”?

Emerging from existing scientific literature, one definition in particular is useful for explaining what Empowerment is. In its Community Empowerment Action Plan, The Department for Communities and Local Government, UK refers to empowerment as a set of policies and measures that are capable of “enabling more people to play an active role in the decisions that affect their communities.” (“What is community empowerment?”, Community Development Exchange, 2008).

From this initial perspective, the centrality of people is a key factor of empowerment, to the extent people have an active role, in decision making about and within their community. How can this rise in peoples’ consciousness be brought about? People should be encouraged to link their own strengths and competencies effectively in a deliberate, ongoing process. By identifying their own capabilities, they may better understand and interpret the environment in which they live. Empowerment also means having mutual respect between individuals, and to reflect on different behaviours and customs critically.

An important consideration is the outcome of empowered behaviours or decisions, which are dictated by motivation. Outcomes are relevant when they happen in the context of organisational networks or coalitions (any group of individuals that are together for a common purpose, sharing same principles and values). An outcome represents evidence of empowered actions made by a certain person. Thus, empowerment is more likely to turn into real action if it is monitored from an ecological perspective.

For a definition of what ecological means in this context we may consider Julian Rappaport’s ‘Toward a Theory for Communication Psychology’, in which he defines empowerment as the subject of an ecological theory in the field of Community Psychology (Rappaport J., 1987).

Empowerment is in fact measured on three levels:

- Individual
- Organisational
- Community

Firstly, empowerment is the individual’s determination over their own life. Following, it is the democratic participation in the life of their own community, as an individual as well as part of an organisation. It is necessary also here to make a distinction between the psychological sense of personal control and actual social influence, political power and legal rights which determine concrete impacts over the community.

Rappaport is convinced that an Ecological Theory is best suited to Community Psychology as it allows the observation of people, policies, programmes and professionals as they change over time. It also places more attention on costs and solutions.

In terms of Ecological Theory, empowerment relies upon three terms:

1. Definitions
2. Conditions
3. Time

According to the definitions of empowerment, it is advisable to study the

phenomena as they are experienced by the individuals directly involved in the research framework. This means that, first of all, there are professionals creating programmes and in turn these programmes take place in settings where people live their lives. Proper settings might be the ones that tend to develop a sense of community and commitment, settings that enable members to become empowered by using criteria applicable to the specific goal of the research.

Empowerment is also dependent upon the conditions or settings in which people act. With this in mind, it might be interesting to investigate institutions such as schools in order to ascertain whether they really give students a sense of espoused decision-making control - or not. Some methods to record such analysis, and that help describing changes at various stages are: interviews, behavioural observations of group meetings, reports, and participant observations of organisational behaviour.

Finally, empowerment has to be measured by its development for both people and settings. This means to arrange descriptive, intensive case studies as supplements to extensive cross-sectional research, in order to understand how one setting is modified over time.

“Enabling more people to play an active role in the decisions that affect their communities.”

Empowerment Definition of “The Moving Network”

On the basis of the results of the interviews we conducted and the practical experiences we gained from the case study, we formulated a definition which was used in our project:

Empowerment is a mutual process of teaching and learning between actors of a society with differing social and/or political status with the goal of equalising existing imbalances. Through measurement of active support, all members formulate within this communication their own expectations and wishes and reflect a potential common basis for common working processes. No one speaks on behalf of another party or member within the process unless there is clear, formulated permission available.

An empowerment definition, based on an on-going dialectic process between equals to enable people to reach their own goals, begins in the refugee camps. There, people with different backgrounds, cultures and religions share the same challenge of building a new life in a new cultural environment. It is essential that the process of change begins in the refugee camps. Such a process is not necessarily dependent on financial resources from associations and institutions. Empowerment grounded on sharing, not only values and traditions, but especially knowledge and experience and fostering a process of a mutual influence through which it is possible to be reciprocally enriched. In negotiating towards a common good; there are many obstacles and drawbacks, which can compromise the realisation of potential ideas, and empowerment aims to facilitate the manifestation of latent potential. Empowerment is an invitation to trust a peer-group, a circle of people and from there, start growing by adopting a mutual responsibility that can be developed on different levels. It is difficult to establish a common theory of empowerment as it may be readily accessed from within by some individuals whilst in others it may require inspiration from other empowered individuals. Empowerment can be revealed in and via various forms, from an enlightened

speech to an improvised concert.

The empowerment definition that this work supports is the possibility to increase resources for the individual and the community, since the value of the individual is recognised, respected, and stimulated and in turn so too is the whole collective.

The focus of the model is education, interpreted not just as simple academic rudiment, but more broadly it is to enable people to achieve their learning goals, of any kind. The exchange of knowledge can stimulate innovation or hidden capabilities.

This perspective of empowerment is just the first piece of a more complex puzzle that requires more time and commitment in order to be complete. What is important, however, is by adopting this approach, the opportunities for refugees may be greatly improved and subsequently assisting them to participate into a new environment, without denying the roots of their identities.

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Interview procedure and BoP- Ambassadors case study

Alen Tabaković

The process of creating “The Moving Network” began with field work, which in turn, led to a theoretical framework which was then taken into the field again – by implementing the case study “BoP-Ambassadors” working as teachers in refugee camps in Berlin.

The scientific research began with informal conversations with refugees in the camps. The research team wanted to avoid being understood as invasive scientists who are “using” refugees contacts simply as a means of caring out their work.

Before establishing an official scientific survey we began to ask questions including, Do refugees consider themselves to be empowered? Does this word have any meaning to them? Do refugees consider themselves as equal in their communications with German hosts?

Seven refugee camps across a number of locations were visited. These included camps at Fehrbelliner Platz, Messe Nord/ICC, Tempelhof, Tegel, Schloss Charlottenburg, Adlershof and Rathaus Steglitz. As a result of such regular presence “The Moving Network” became a known term among certain circles of the camps.

By posing questions such as these and other similar questions about Germany and Germans - the society and its laws and regulations, culture and their experience in a nation somewhat different from the one from which they had come, helped guide the project - which was constantly evolving. As international researchers, some of the difficulties newcomers to Germany face in the form of German bureaucracy were encountered first-hand. The

research team themselves felt disadvantaged by an inability to speak fluent German. How then, does a refugee, who speaks neither English nor German feel when there is a need to see a doctor, or is required to complete a seemingly incomprehensible form?

By using these initial interviews as a basis, a scientific approach to empowerment and participation began to develop.



Photo by Pegah Redjai Sani, Refugee Camp, Berlin, 2015

Of those refugees interviewed, most of interviewees had no specific complaints about their treatment in Germany. They stated that, Germany is a very good place to live, and a place they would want to start their new life. Almost half of interviewees had no formal education and speak only their native language. Only 20% of Interviewees from the camps were attending German courses in the camps while approximately 30% of interviewees attended German classes somewhere outside the camp. Interviews suggested that the reason there is not higher uptake

of German language courses is that most are taught in German/English and since the majority of refugees speak neither of these languages (or only on a very basic level) they do not attend the classes. Only a small number of respondents from the refugee community stated they had friendships other than those with whom they shared the journey from their home country to Germany. The rest of the interviewees stated they were mistrustful of other refugees. They said that there is somewhat easier approach to people from

their own national community, but even within national groups, trust is still limited.

Against this backdrop, it seems inevitable that refugees should find integration, to any extent, hugely challenging.

However, the findings of the research also revealed a small number of interviewees from the refugee community acting in a different pattern. These individuals attended German courses, spoke a foreign language fluently (in most cases English), have a University Diploma, and deemed themselves to have a high level of motivation and social responsibility making them 'parental' figures in their communities. These people were seen to display greater agency than their compatriots, with some of them moving out of their respective camps and living out with German families in a matter of couple of months. Knowing a foreign language, having certain skills, possessing a University Diploma, etc. are just some of the social capital assets enabling this group to access contact with German society. These people also stated feelings of responsibility for their community and a desire to help them harness their own capabilities.

The case study “The BoP-Ambassadors”

After gathering and analysing data, we then created an approach that identified several clear phases of empowerment. The most important research finding was that those individuals from the refugee community who were already sufficiently empowered to assert some agency, should be encouraged to assist others within their community to build their own capacities.

The project began with only a small number of multipliers in order to ensure the time and capacity to support, gather their ideas and accompany their work.

In association with the “Board of Participation (BoP)” we developed the ‘BoP-Ambassadors’ concept. Individuals from refugee communities within camps sought teaching opportunities to share their knowledge with others. The idea central to the concept is to support and encourage individuals, who have been given the “BoP-Ambassador” title, to increase their level of engagement inside and outside of refugee communities.

Our premise, based on the field research, is that refugees in Germany have basic needs provision. However, what often is missing is a connection between them and German society. Our research suggests that many do not consider themselves equal to their German hosts. They often face problems to express themselves through the activities on offer in a German context. With this in mind, ‘BoP-Ambassadors’ serve as links to wider German society, empowering their communities to trust in self-organisation and fostering the agency required to establish life in Germany. They act in the interests of both refugees from camps and German society. They recognise cultural difference serves to enrich communities and should not be regarded as an insurmountable problem. BoP-Ambassadors usually have a high level of education as well as being, charismatic and enthusiastic people, BoP-Ambassadors implement their ideas with the support of The Moving Network Team of students from Macromedia University, as well as members of the ‘Board of Participation’. After the approach based on the field work was developed and defined, the case study was developed to test our hypothesis.

The case study included four BoP-Ambassadors from different locations.

The BoP-Ambassadors team included two female ambassadors – 51 year old Halah Alhayik from Syria and 16 year old X.H. from Albania, and two male ambassadors – 30 year old Bashar Alrifai from Syria, and 18 year old Samir Hashemi from Afghanistan. (Read more about their perspectives and experiences in their own words, in this brochure).

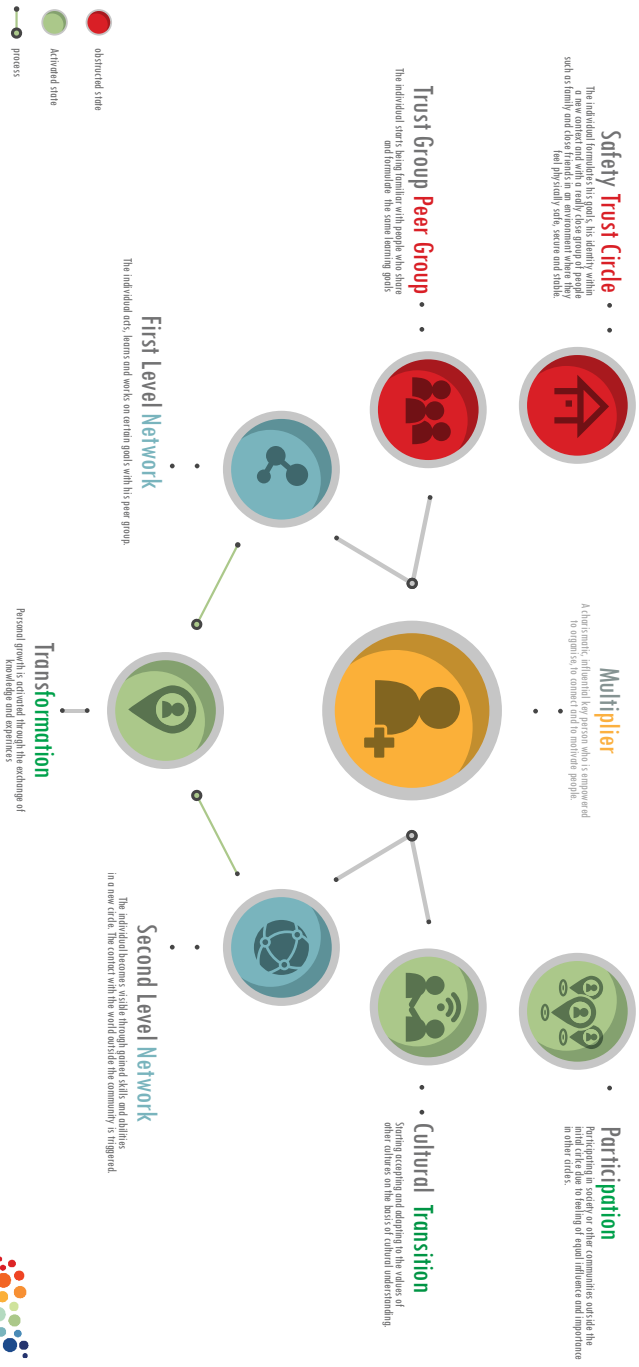
The ambassadors were not given any specific remit. In agreement with ambassadors it was established that they should find what kind of topics people in the camps would be interested in, which topics would be of sufficient interest in the camp for people to regularly join courses and to establish a way of organising these courses within the camps.



Photo by Claudius Grimme, Bashar's within a workshop for the German Police, Berlin, 2016

We developed the ‘BoP-Ambassadors’ concept. Individuals from refugee communities within camps sought teaching opportunities to share their knowledge with others. The idea central to the concept is to support and encourage individuals, who have been given the “BoP -Ambassador” title, to increase their level of engagement inside and outside of refugee communities.

Empowerment Trust Circle



Design by Hasan Abdulnabi



Photo by Pegah Redjai Sani, Samir's teaching lecture at Refugee Camp, Berlin, 2015

One of the enduring problems proved to be the provision of space. BoP-Ambassadors gave reports about the number of attendees, the content of their teaching and their experience with the courses. BoP-Ambassadors receive a certificate acknowledging their teaching experience in the “Moving Network”. They are also offered the opportunity to be listed as lecturers within “The Board of Participation” and to share their experience with others. The first invitations for conferences, speeches and panels have already arrived and the BoP-Ambassadors are not invited as “refugees” but as teachers with a unique background. Through this change of perception it is hoped a real network of international teachers is created.



The Empowerment Trust Circle Model: Model Guidelines

Mafalda Sandrini, Maria Fernanda Prado & Hasan Abdulnabi

The “Empowerment Trust Circle” model was created on the basis of the interviews the research team conducted in seven refugee camps in the city of Berlin between September 2015 and March 2016. A theoretical framework has been drawn from many disciplines and perspectives, focusing particularly on empowerment, intercultural communication and integration theories.

The Empowerment Trust Circle Model aims to promote an empowerment approach to enable refugees. It seeks to access refugees’ competencies in order to formulate goals and foster positive values within a new cultural environment; the model is based on some crucial elements such as the BoP-Ambassador, the role of multipliers and role of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

The theory of The Seven Levels of Organisational Consciousness, developed by Richard Barrett, has been adopted as overall theoretical framework; Barrett built upon Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1970), shifting the focus from needs to consciousness, in the attempt to provide a more complex knowledge of human motivation.

Barrett argues humans grow following seven steps, each corresponding to a need and the seven needs are all triggers for motivation and growth (Barrett, 2006). Although the Empowerment Trust Circle Model has been inspired by Barrett’s model, it diverges from the path the individual must go through. Indeed, if Barrett proposes a vertical model, almost hierarchical, the Empowerment Trust Circle Model sees individuals carrying out a circular itinerary, more flexible and less binding in order to take into consideration that each

individual has a different personal growth. There are some individuals who seize initiative and work with others to realise their goals, thus skipping the first steps of the model, but others need more time to develop their own self-confidence, in order to participate within a new social context. The common denominator for both categories of people is the necessity of taking a synergistic and cooperative path, instead of an individualistic one; the construction of a personal network of people is in that sense the focal point of the Model. By starting with the Safety Trust Circle, which corresponds to the Survival step of Barrett’s Model (Barrett, 2006), the individual will expand her/his network of people by sharing knowledge with other individuals who have the same learning goals.

The turning point of the empowerment process is the point of transformation, which can be activated by different triggers; by experiencing this step the individuals, after becoming aware of their abilities, interests and goals, are able to grow and become visible in the outside world, the actual society. In order to actively participate in the new cultural environment, individuals accept the values of the society (Cultural Transition step), without denying their own roots.


The Empowerment Trust Circle Model does not promote an aggregation’s archetype through which refugees or foreigners must renounce to their origins to be accepted as part of the society. On the contrary, it encourages an on-going dialectic process where adaptation and socialisation are balanced with the need to maintain cultural identity. Talking about participation instead of integration is in this way a stimuli and challenge to all stakeholders - refugees, governments and citizens. According to Allport (1954) it is possible to fulfill “complete” participation when both refugees and citizens are ready to accept each other, putting aside fears and prejudices and starting cooperate.

Motivational factors are the other fundamental element: since it would be unrealistic to build a model based just on the belief that human beings are willing to help each other, the motivational triggers must be considered from both an intrinsic and extrinsic perspective.

According to Deci and Ryan (2000) intrinsic motivation can be defined as the undertaking of an activity for the innate satisfaction rather than acting to achieve a material result. Following these assumptions it is possible to affirm that intrinsic motivation is a personal variable that may emerge in different steps, with various degrees of strengths and eclectic outputs. Therefore, it is impossible to predict a specific activation of it: it can arise for someone as social conformism, as a need to emulate those people who belong to the same first level network and for which the individual feels admiration and trust. For instance if all the people in a community start learning German, the individual will generate an intrinsic motivation caused by the desire to belong to a social group. For others, it already exists in an inner form and it must simply be transformed into motivation for action in thus self-growth.

Extrinsic motivation can be defined as a trigger for action in order to earn a reward, to obtain a second outcome (Deci, Ryan 2000). In this particular situation this can be carried through a workshop or a specific activity that brings people together on the basis of their interests and learning goals; otherwise, it could be externalised by hearing successful stories of people who have already been empowered and went through the same process they are a part of. This can inspire hope and trigger initiatives. Multipliers' intervention is another example of extrinsic motivation; it can occur in every step of the empowering process by stimulating people to reach their own potential.

Daniel Pink (2009) explains that purpose motives are incredibly motivating individuals, which is why we may volunteer precious free time toward a 'good cause'. People like working when the goal or organisation "stands for something" or contributes to society in some way.



The turning point of the empowerment process is the point of transformation, which can be activated by different triggers; by experiencing this step the individuals, after becoming aware of their abilities, interests and goals, are able to grow and become visible in the outside world, the actual society.

1. Safety/Trust Circle:



Photo by Pegah Redjai Sani, Refugees Camp, Berlin, 2015

The initial stage is crucial for carrying out the empowerment process. The mental and physical wellbeing of the individual is the starting point of the model, the feelings of security and stability have a great impact on the individual's self-concept and self-identity in his or her new environment and surroundings.

According to Pumariega et al. (2005), overcoming the migration stressors and obtaining a solid grounding is essential, such that the individual can start re-defining himself or herself as well as his or her goals. Furthermore the person establishes a trust circle of people who accept and support them. This trust circle plays an important role in the individual's identity and sense of belonging through providing basic information and helping the individual negotiate his or her basic needs.

This phase strongly relies on the state and on the social and health services it provides refugees. The feeling of security and trust is gradual and depends on how the new host community manages the situation of the newcomers. It is

also dependent upon how they approach solutions to post-migration stressors and the adaptation process. This includes factors that affect the accessibility and acceptability such as: location, stigma, linguistic barriers, documentation and legal status. (Pumariega et al., 2005)

2. Trust Group/Peer Group:

During this phase the individual solves his or her primary needs and starts generating an intrinsic motivation towards his or her own interests, by starting an identification process with a group of people who share the same learning goals. The peer group is an outcome of social interaction and proximal processes that leads to group member selection based on one or various commonalities between people (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998 mentioned in

Kindermann & Gest, 2009).

The individual begins to filter his or her connections through a selection of people who have the same learning goals as him or her. Moreover these people form a peer group, in which the learning goals work as a collective unifier leading to cooperative problem solving when faced with obstacles that stand between them and their determined goals. Social learning processes are relevant to group processes in two different ways, as an individual's set of interaction partners or by the relational context



Photo by Pegah Redjai Sani, Refugees Camp, Berlin, 2015

of social interactions. Peer groups may also form due to external influences; this applies more often to peer-assigned social categories (Kindermann & Gest, 2009).

Humans have a primary need to compare themselves to evaluate their abilities and opinions. This need for social comparison motivates individuals

both extrinsically and intrinsically to affiliate with groups composed of others similar to themselves. The social interaction mechanisms of peer effects operate in different ways. The social dynamics can either work around a goal or activity, or they can lead the individual to conform to the social norm in order to belong to certain group (Liu et al., 2008).

3. First Level Network:

During this stage, an individual works toward his or her goals along with the peer group. As an outcome of the collective exchange of ideas, the individuals obtain answers to overcome obstacles and hindrances that otherwise prevent them from achieving their goals. The peer group acts as an extrinsic motivation, as it exteriorises the initial intrinsic motivation of the individual by functioning as an assurance that encourages and provides emotional support to work towards the achievement of the determined goals.

In this phase it is essential to establish a sense of loyalty and belonging among the members of the group. This can be done by having open communication, mutual respect and recognition. Harmonious group dynamics lead to a collective engagement and to the establishment of collective groundings such as friendliness, responsiveness and listening. Leaders should not display territorial behaviours such as: internal competition and blaming of other members of the groups (Barrett, 2006).

Friendship and interaction within groups put emphasis on close relationships and social learning processes, but both types of group unifiers are subjective to similar group-level dynamics that involve social comparisons, social exchange, structural balance and variations in the network position and hierarchy. It must be taken into account that, when it comes to learning processes or socialisation, there is the need of a structure than entails the different unifiers in a peer group (Kindermann & Gest, 2009).

4. Transformation:



Photo by Pegah Redjai Sani, Halal's lecture at Refugees Camp, Berlin, 2016

During this stage, that is the initiation of striving to achieve the desired goals and the collective exchange of experiences and knowledge, the individual starts his or her transformation phase. The knowledge, skills, abilities and connections acquired during the learning process bring the individual to personal growth - a product of self-confidence, a new set of skills and knowledge to offer back.

Some of the benefits of the collective performance of networking include the possibility of exploring new ideas and building personal development and relationship skills, which consequently lead to personal growth. In this phase the individual goes through a stimulating conscious process of adaptability, empowerment and continuous learning (Barrett, 2006). Transformation might be linked to personal intrinsic motivation, as, if the goal is to create a collective transformation, extrinsic motivation must be generated through providing freedom and equality among group members and the structure must become less hierarchical in order to assure individuals' participation (Barrett, 2006).

5. Second Level Network:

Acquired knowledge elevates the individual to a new level. The transformed version of themselves becomes visible to other circles. The attained knowledge creates a new peer group for the individual, one that is based on acquired skills, abilities and knowledge. Contact with other communities or circles is triggered as a result. Individuals experience the feeling of equal value and importance of people outside of the initial trust circle and peer group. A key stepping-stone towards the exposure and understanding of other cultures and communities. The intrinsic motivation in this step is triggered by achieving personal growth and goals, while the extrinsic motivation is moved by the possibility to achieve economic success and a better career path. The theoretical approach used in this stage is the work seen in Recognition Theory (Alexander, J., and M. Pia Lara, 1996). Recognition has both a normative and a psychological dimension. Arguably, if you recognise another person with regard to a certain feature, as an autonomous agent, for example, once you admit that this person has this specific feature or skill, you develop a positive attitude towards this person for having this feature as a part of him. Such recognition implies that you hold responsibilities to treat them in a positive way, that is, you recognise a specific normative status of the other person, e.g., as a free and equal person. Recognition is of vital psychological importance to developing a practical identity, as it does not only matter normatively. Most theories of recognition assume that in order to develop a practical identity, people fundamentally depend on the feedback of other subjects (and of society as a whole). In accordance with this view, those who fail to experience sufficient recognition, i.e., those who are portrayed by the locals or the societal norms and values in a one-sided or negative way, will find it challenging to embrace themselves and their projects and goals as valuable. Thus, misrecognition hinders or deters the individual's positive relationship to themselves. Research exploring the impact of racism and colonialism shows how individuals suffered psychological harm by being treated as inferior humans (Fanon 1952). Thus, recognition constitutes a "vital human need" (Taylor 1992, 26), which serves as the core of the process in which the

individual begins to be part of a second circle of society based on recognition and its effects.

6. Cultural Transition:

Continuous interaction and collaboration with people of other cultures initiate the process of mutual cultural understanding. Cultural transition and integration occur when communities and governments work together to celebrate diversity, improve community services, meet different community needs and address community problems.

The approach our model uses is the acculturation approach rather than the assimilation approach.

Acculturation explains the process of cultural change and psychological change that results following the meeting between cultures (Berry, John W. Sam, David L.; 2010). The effects of acculturation can be seen at multiple levels in both interacting cultures. At the group level, acculturation usually leads to changes in culture, customs, and social institutions. At the individual level, differences in the way individuals acculturate are seen to be associated not only with changes in daily behaviour, but with numerous measures of psychological and physical well-being.

The Empowerment Trust Circle Model strives to celebrate the culture and identity of the newcomers whilst also familiarising them with the most important aspects of the host culture, a process of bi-culturation from the perspective of both host and new-comers.

The Empowerment Trust Circle Model strives to celebrate the culture and identity of the newcomers whilst also familiarising them with the most important aspects of the host culture, a process of bi-culturation from the perspective of both host and new-comers. The host culture should be very sensitive about the background of the newcomers to understand specific patterns of behaviour, values, principles and to avoid a cultural clash that would hinder the acculturation process and leads to a marginalisation acculturation

process, in which the newcomers feel inferior to the host culture. The host culture should be receptive and welcoming. Willingness to learn about the culture of the refugees aids in the actualisation of this stage and the process of empowerment as a whole. Refugees should feel a degree of acceptance and understanding in order to encourage the inner will to breakout of the comfort zone or of the fear of judgment and rejection.

It should also be noted that most individuals show various degrees of disparity in both their ideal and chosen acculturation strategies across different domains of their lives (Rudmin, Floyd W. 2003). For example, among immigrants, it is often easier and more desirable to acculturate to their host society's attitudes towards politics and government, than it is to acculturate to new attitudes about religion, principles, and values. Therefore, it is of essential importance that the host culture meets the newcomers halfway or at least accepts and understands the restrictions and limitations of it throughout this process.

7. Participation:

The consequential result of cultural transition. Individuals begin integrating into the other communities and overall society having reached a mutual feeling of importance and acceptance by society as a whole. Full cultural integration is achieved when everyone's culture is equally celebrated, respected and accepted.

Social integration has a number of important benefits for immigrants. First, it facilitates intergroup contact, and, consequently, improves intergroup relations between immigrants and host nationals. Second, it enables immigrants to access the social capital of host nationals and, therefore, access better employment and lifestyle opportunities. Moreover, it can help to reduce health risks that may be greater among immigrants, such as psychological distress and the risk of suicide or feeling alienated (Kposowa, A. J., McElvain, J. P., & Breault, K. D., 2008). Given these benefits, the model was designed with the aim of enabling refugees to become increasingly pro-active with the issues that are of importance to them. The model seeks to encourage them to devel-

op a proactive approach which studies have shown to have a significant positive effect on integration (Dalgard, O.S., & Thapa, S. B. (2007). However, this process is twofold, it requires equal contributions of effort from the host culture to facilitate and support the transition to this stage.

The host country and culture should understand that participation takes various forms and is dependent on individuals' own goals, values and beliefs. It is therefore, crucial that the host nation gains knowledge and awareness about the culture of the newcomers in order to enable the full potential of the model. Such knowledge would assist understanding the limitations, ideals and principles that influence the formulation of goals, actions and decisions made by the newcomers. Upon understanding the new cultures from both points of view, various forms and degrees of participation begin to take place. Since all stakeholders are aware of cultural differences in approaches, cooperation based on mutual acceptance and trust results in benefits for society as a whole.

Multipliers:

The multipliers are key figures of the model, they are the triggers able to initiate waves of change in communities. The origin of the term is of course related to maths: multiplication is one of the four basic arithmetic operations and the term "multiplier", also known as coefficient, denotes a number used to multiply another number. In macroeconomics a multiplier is a proportionality factor that indicates how a variable reacts to changes applied to another variable (Hegeland, 1966). The implied connotation is necessarily connected because the mechanism of reproduction, emulation, and in a broad sense



Photo by Pegah Redjai Sani, interview with Chu Eben, Berlin, 2015

inspiration, that multipliers activate is the same. Multipliers are those charismatic, motivated, influential local heroes who have the capacity to encourage individuals around them. The multiplier is moved by both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation: he/she is a person who is already (self) empowered on a certain level, obtaining an adequate degree of self-confidence. The multiplier is aware that by exchanging and sharing knowledge, everyone is able to achieve their personal goals. Leadership Theory provides a similar definition to describe how leaders can support and encourage their employees, exploiting their best capabilities; according to Liz Wiseman (2011), multipliers are the leaders who inspire employees to stretch themselves to deliver results that surpass expectations (...). Leaders can use their intelligence to multiply the intelligence of the people around them.

The multiplier profile expressed in the Empowerment Trust Circle Model has been built to take into consideration two different types of multipliers: the motivator, who may be an influential person; the educator, the one who possesses a specific educational background to deliver required knowledge. The former has been already described - the charismatic individual able to inspire people by engaging them. The latter is the person who wants to share his or her learning with others, in order to achieve a better community experience, by stimulating a collective exchange of knowledge (as for example by organising a German course).

It is impossible to predict when multiplier intervention will occur as each path through the model is different, with different goals to achieve and differing difficulties to overcome. Multiplier intervention can occur at any step of the model, depending upon the personal inclination of each one: so for some, the multiplier can represent the turning point in the First Level Network, by connecting people who share the same learning goals whereas, for another individual, the mediation takes place in the Second Level Network, by connecting him with the external world. As Pumpuang and Valente explained (2007) there are different techniques to distinguish opinion leaders within communities but in this case is essential that multipliers are spontaneously identified. Considering that multipliers must act for community's interest, they must be an active part of it and have the full trust of its members, in order to reach the

most successful result as possible. Following these assumptions, the method applied to identify multipliers is self-selection, in the terms of Pumpuang and Valente: 'This technique requires the solicitation or recruitment of individuals to volunteer to be an opinion leader. Potential leaders are selected via word-of-mouth, printed material or other forms of media solicitation' (2007). This technique has been applied in order to avoid bias such as overestimating the opinion leadership of an individual or intentional falsified answers (Pumpuang; Valente, 2007).

BoP-Ambassador:

BoP-Ambassadors are the quintessence of multipliers. They represent individuals who have established their empowered capacity to fully participate within a new cultural context. They are willing to take responsibility for themselves and for the whole community by acting as a bridge between refugees and German society and for this reason they are respected and trusted by the community. The BoP-Ambassador's role is to mediate and assist individuals during their process of transformation, by identifying multipliers and by giving them the tools - both material and emotional, to realise their initiative. The BoP-Ambassador is a key figure in the process, starting a chain reaction in which refugees start building their own networks and futures in a new environment. In practice, the BoP-Ambassador should be able to organise activities (e.g. learning group), provide technical and other relevant information and to support individuals. By activating them, BoP-Ambassadors identify multipliers, who may not yet be aware of their role but involuntarily start a series of improvements around them based on the construction of networks and the sharing of knowledge. The whole process is driven by motivation and, according to Pink (2009), by giving people tasks and by encouraging values and ideals, they will be motivated to create connections. As the process is guided by extrinsic motivation, in order to encourage ambassadors' engagement a "rewarding step by step process" has been introduced.



The performance of BoP-Ambassadors and multipliers could be further enhanced by clarifying the relevance and importance of the tasks they undertake for their communities and peer groups and having them pass on those ideas and values to their peer groups and communities.

Once the ambassador is identified, he or she receives a form of ID, which provides public recognition (Taylor, 1992). The ambassadors receive business cards to project them further in the direction of wider society. At the end of the process, the BoP-Ambassador receives a statement which certifies his or her engagement and cooperation in solving refugees' issues, in order to provide him or her an official document for his or her future career.

The ongoing nature of the process makes it difficult to draw precise conclusions as each case is different: one ambassador may achieve his or her goal immediately, whilst another one will need more time and a third, may want to continue working on it. The concept of the model is to give ambassadors the autonomy to organise activities or to solve problems according to their situation. The BoP-Ambassador is a person who demonstrates initiative and creativity. Ambassadors represent the ideal multiplier able to identify the best people around them and take advantage of resources in the interests of the whole community.

In accordance with Pink's Purpose Motivation Theory (Pink, 2009) the performance of BoP-Ambassadors and multipliers could be further enhanced by clarifying the relevance and importance of the tasks they undertake for their communities and peer groups and having them pass on those ideas and values on to their peer groups and communities. A few suggestions on how to introduce purpose are the following:

- Introduce the overarching relevance of your project/task goal at the beginning. Be clear from the beginning why the project is relevant to the group. Who will this project help? How? How can finishing this project help people to be better contributors to society/humanity and improve themselves?
- Structure tasks around higher-purpose contexts. Experiencing a context first-hand or wording a project's goal in a meaningful context, can reinforce the relevance of the project's goal.
- Allow the target group to determine the relevance of the task given. Why is it important to know this information?
- Allow the target group to choose their own purpose for a project or a task.

The responsibility for conclusions about the relevance of specific projects can be put to the target group, informal discussions can be a good example of this (new perspectives might be found using this approach).

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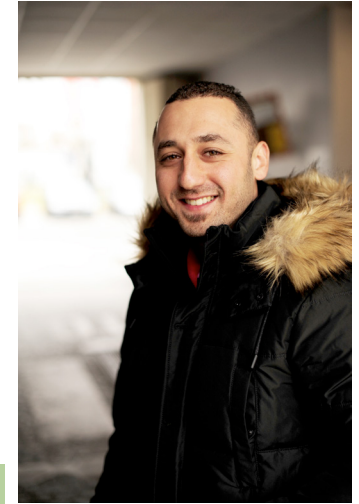
Photo by Claudius Grimme, The Moving Network Team at Institute for Cultural Diplomacy, Berlin,



Photo by Claudius Grimme, The Moving Network Team at Institute for Cultural Diplomacy, Berlin,

SECTION 2: INTERNAL PERSPECTIVES. *The experiences of the first BoP-Ambassadors as teachers and facilitators of knowledge by acting as multipliers within the refugees' community.*

The BoP-Ambassadors



Bashar Alrifai (30, Syrian)

My name is Bashar Alrifai and I am a Syrian refugee in Berlin. I'm a 30 year old veterinarian doctor. I graduated from ALbaath University in Syria. Recently I moved out of my camp and found my own apartment.

Even though I gained a lot of experience working as a sales and public relations manager in my father's company (garment industry and exportation), volunteering was a big part of my life. I was an active member of Albir Foundation for social services which was concerned with the poor and the needy in Homs city providing them with food, medicine and monthly payments.

In 2007 I joined the Junior Chamber International (JCI) for young active citizens, which was concerned with developing the skills, knowledge and understanding of young people by supporting creative projects and workshops. We achieved remarkable success at that time.

Then, the war began. I lost absolutely everything. Unfortunately, I was forced to move out of Syria.

I came to Berlin on 16th of August 2015 and as soon as I arrived I started

volunteering at the camp. It was the place I lived in. I was helping as a translator for refugees and I was a connection between Arabic refugees and German volunteers.

My social activism didn't go unnoticed and soon I moved in with a German family. That didn't prevent me working in the camp as a translator and in several other sections like clothes distribution, legal and formal paperwork and even as a guide when refugees needed help - it is not easy for those who speak neither English or German to go to hospital and explain their medical case to German doctors, or to go to court.

My progress was visible, refugees along with volunteers became my friends. I earned their love and trust. Refugees began to ask me about their situation, and volunteers always nominated me for any press or TV interviews, always asking me to help them with solving translation problems. I developed a strong relationship based on mutual trust between us.

I am aware that I am here today but maybe not tomorrow. For that reason I decided to try and help solve some of the biggest obstacles both refugees and volunteers face, which prevents them communicating properly. These obstacles are:

1. Language: The government, social organisations and even German volunteers are making concerted efforts to overcome language barriers by providing German language courses in all camps, universities and even individually. There is a lot of attention already on this issue.

2. Cultural Differences: This is another considerable obstacle, but unlike the language, there is little attention paid to it. I believe that there is no understanding of the variety of traditions and customs which lead us to misunderstandings of what is acceptable. Both cultures met under strange circumstances but the link that connects the two was missing.

This made me thinking what my duty is, and how to break the barrier between refugees and volunteers? As an instinctive reaction I started giving advice to try and help refugees understand the nature of the country they are living, trying to raise awareness of different sets of social and cultural standards.

Maybe this will look simple and some people will see it as not very important, but from where I am standing I see them as simple but yet indispensable for achieving the concord we need. These are the points that I wrote in minors' camp Ella Kay House:

- 1) Respect, smile and German language are the main keys of success in Germany.
- 2) Don't cross the street while the light is RED. You may see some Germans do it but you must respect the regulations.
- 3) Don't throw cigarette butts, papers or garbage on the ground.
- 4) Don't harass German girls under any circumstance.
- 5) Never disturb, insult or attack anyone. Call the police instead, in case of problems.
- 6) When you talk keep your voice down and pick your words nicely.
- 7) Don't work in the black market or any illegal work because the government is spending enough to keep you educated and to help you build a good and decent future.
- 8) Don't sign any paper unless you read it carefully, and if you don't know German language you can ask any German person to help you.
- 9) When you use the escalator, always keep in the right side to make way for the people in a hurry to pass you by from your left.
- 10) If you have a bank account, always check your balance before buying with a credit card. Some purchases take a week to appear on your account statement.

This is only the tip of the iceberg, for there are a lot of essential and deep issues that need to be addressed. Therefore, with the help of "The Moving Network" team, to whom I'm expressing my gratitude - professors and students - for the full support they gave me through the BoP-Ambassadors program, I will make lectures to the newcomers in Germany.

What do the refugees need to start their new life? I believe, if the Syrian refugee had the key for a peaceful life he would immediately start working and producing. We are a hard working and self-sufficient nation which was the

exporter of its own products to neighbouring countries.

As for the non-Arab volunteers who have direct connection with refugees, they can play an important role in overcoming the cultural gap. Learning the basics of Arabic language and an introduction with refugee culture will help them connect with others. In this regard I have spoke with the camp manager in Sophie-Charlotte-Platz. She was very welcoming of the idea and offered her help with finding a location and advertising the idea.

Concerning the German government and those who host us and offered us a decent living conditions and safety, I will, as a BoP-Ambassador, organise a blood donation campaign in Berlin. This will be the chance for refugees to express the gratitude to the German nation which continues to do its best for us. It is a chance to show the real picture of us, Syrians, unlike the bad news that circulated especially after the events of Paris and Cologne.



Halah Alhayik, (51, Syrian)

I work as a BoP-Ambassador in several refugee camps in Berlin and teach courses about Womens' Rights, Culture and Diversity Management. Sometimes I say to myself: "But Halah, you cannot visit any place in Berlin,

museums, ruins and parks. You can't enjoy the views of lakes and nature in Berlin, no shopping, no clothes, no tasty food, no respect and no dignity - because you are a refugee... Just cry and pray to have the energy to continue your trip in this county."

Some people may understand how it is difficult to be a refugee but they don't have the bitter feeling of human beings in such experience. Time is running and procedures are very slow, I am, I will be part of this society and should be, as I used to be, active, happy and hard working. The most important thing that can give back my real personality is learning. So I started with official German classes.

To live or visit Germany and to send our children to a German university is a dream for many Syrians but to come to this country as a refugee is very harmful to our humanity. We are very thankful to this country which gives us basic needs - food, clothes and safe place, but there are still important needs for us; we need the feeling of acceptance, we need the feeling of belonging, we need to live a normal life. We are very tired and worried about our future here and about our families in Syria.

I studied English Literature in Syria at Aleppo University. In 1999 I moved to the United Arab Emirates and worked for The Ismaili Council as program officer for the Syrian Ismailis (Muslim Shaii sect). During that time I received various training courses that helped me to develop my skills on a personal and professional level. In 2004 I got a certificate of Islamic studies for one year from the Islamic Ismaili Studies Institution in London. After that, I planned to go back to Syria but I wanted to learn something new that would provide good work opportunities.

I chose to study Human Resources Management which I love because it means for me working to make people dignified. I did a one-year HR management at American University in Sharja (UAE). And because I believe in "Life -Long Learning", I attended many professional courses including Translation and TESOL.

In 2010 I went back to Syria, before the Syrian Revolution. In Salameih, my hometown, I had a good job as Manager Assistant in a private Tourism Institute and after two years I became a manager of a branch of the same insti-

tute. I also worked with civil institutions in Salameih like “Friends of Salameih Association” and “Aga Khan Development Network” as a trainer and program officer. Last year I worked in Turkey as a project manager for “Syrian Women Network “ for six months.

The term Ambassador is very close to my thought and my practices in my daily life. As I am Ismaili I have the responsibility to present myself in a good way. Moreover, here in Germany, this responsibility appears to be very important for me and many other refugees. I would like to be an example for a large number of Muslim refugees. I tried to convey this idea through discussion with some German people at schools and with people who work in the camps. I had good responses from them. I talked about our sufferings as refugees, our love for Syria, our social life and culture. My English helped me to communicate with Germans, but others can’t do that. Some people are unable to express their real feelings and opinions. Sometimes they misbehave as a reaction to the difficulties they face as refugees.

So, there is a big need for institutions to sponsor such objective as universities and civil organisations: institutional work is more organised and helps us reach out better to German society; voluntary work is an essential part of my culture as an Arabic Muslim Ismaili. So, I helped many refugees in the camps with translation and I accompanied many women to hospitals.

But we need to work on wider level. I would like to help people to understand the richness of diversity, the meaning of identity which does not contradict integration. The stronger the belonging to our own identity, the more we can integrate with others. These thoughts are important for both refugees and Germans. I would like to have various activities like workshops, entertainment programs, training and lectures to enhance our real ethics as Arab Muslims and change the ugly picture of our identity and motivate others to contribute their positive role.

Mutual activities can help both refugees and society as a whole to express cultures, knowledge and ethics. People will understand that negative thoughts are the only thing separating them. Being human beings is the strongest bonds amongst us. All people experience crisis, and injustices and that should help them to understand each other.

Therefore, I believe personal efforts are not enough, institutional work is needed. Being an Ambassador, for me, needs support on two sides - the personal one to develop my skills in some areas to relate to Germany and on the other side to have the opportunity to express my experiences to help the Syrian refugees.

X. H. (16, Albanian)

I am a sixteen year old refugee who came to Berlin from Albania. I’m also a BoP-Ambassador and organise dancing courses in my camp.

In Berlin I have the experience to see a whole new culture and a lot of locals who treated me well from the moment I arrived. I am a very active girl and I always participated in various activities back home. I was very happy when “The Moving Network” project was presented to me. It means a lot to me to be able to cooperate with a German university on such an important project. For that reason, it means a lot to me.

I always dreamed to have the chance to get the best results and to have a chance to fight for what is mine. Actually I always want to be a step before the others. I know that’s not so easy to achieve, but being in Germany it makes me realise that hard work is valued more.

I had a chance to experience many cultures, traditions, religions etc. in Germany. It looks like it’s a whole new world in front of my eyes. I have the chance to learn so much from this. On another side of this culturally rich society I noticed people that come every day in search for a better life or are just escaping from a war. This is the world of refugees that came into Germany. For all this time I was living in camps, I was asking people how they feel now, being in Germany? Are they being treated well or badly? They would most often answered that they are not in Germany to live from social help. We can not generalise. There are a lot of different people among refugees too. But that was the most common answer I would get. One kid said that he feels strange being out in the street and having people looking at him. Is there something that he can do to change their perception? He is a child like every

other child who only wants love and care from others. That's no different to a wish from any other child in the world. Small things make me sad.

I want to change opinions about refugees and I know the only way to do it is through education. So I enrolled at the school. Even if I experienced some negative things, experiences are shockingly positive. I asked a German kid I saw why is he so cold towards me? Was he afraid of me? I was so surprised by the reaction. I asked him how does he feel about another child from Syria in his classroom. He answered that he would love to get to know more about him, his culture, traditions and language! I was a little bit surprised how he answered me. I just said thanks, and went on my way. Another girl told me not to ask her about the refugees as they are so disgusting and so rude, don't know how to communicate with us and they are only good at taking things from our bags and pockets. She asked me not to talk about the topic because she didn't want to hear anything about them. I asked many different kids and I got many different responses.

The only conclusion is that everyone has different characters and different opinions. Everyone can say either a bad or a good thing about others countries. No one is perfect and no one can say the same thing for another. You have just have to try to find the way how to talk and to act with them. No one is perfect.

For that reason I decided to form a dance group and communicate through a universal language that everyone understands – dance. My group is formed from kids of different nationalities, cultures, and a mix of refugees and Germans. It is a perfect way to make a bridge between the cultures who sometimes struggle to communicate.*

*This ambassador stays anonymous because she left the project due to family issues. We had been very grateful that she was part of the case study and contributed to the project.



Samir Hashemi, (17, Afghan)

My name is Samir Hashemi, I am from Afghanistan and I work as BoP-Ambassador in camps in Berlin. Mostly I teach courses for illiterates from my home country.

I was a student in Iran and then I came to Berlin: here I am continuing my studies in a German school in order to become a student with the same rights as other people. My mother tongue is Persian but I can also speak English and I learned French and Turkish. I am interested in modern life and its expression through technology and for this reason I started exploring the computer world, from Microsoft Office to computer networking.

I have lived in a refugee camp in Berlin since August 2015: there are many people who are live together in this place. The majority of these refugees are from Syria and Afghanistan although there are other people from Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, Eritrea and Albania. Many people are satisfied with their situation in the temporary residence; indeed we have some facilities in this camp like German classes, doctors and Arabic/Persian translators.

I have lived in this camp for long time so I know most of refugees there. These people have good relations even though sometime they cannot understand each other because they speak different languages. Many adults and

children go to German classes but there are many others who still cannot start; many refugees from Afghanistan have problems in this sense because the language-learning centre does not accept them due to their residence status in Germany. Many people from Afghanistan and Iran are also unable to speak English: some of them are analphabetic due to the long wartime so to learn a language, especially German, can be hard for them.

In this situation, I believe that people should support each other and I started taking my responsibility by translating for Afghan and Iran people, from Persian and Dari to English, in the camp for ASB office and doctors; I started also to help people outside the camp, offering my translation skills in hospitals.

I also teach analphabetic people the basics of language and literature of the Latin alphabet, so they are learning what is a noun, a verb, a subject, an object and slowly they are learning how to write and read and how to make a sentence. I'm also supporting them in searching German courses and by accompanying them for registration.

I think that for all these people who have to start a new life in Germany, it is so important to learn German in order to communicate with other individuals, but also to work and to study; I'm trying to give them suggestions and information about this new environment, this new culture, that I read in websites and I heard from people who work with and for refugees.

Since many refugees have lost their family, their life and are now facing a different culture and society, I think it is important to make them feel calm in a new environment, to provide elements that are familiar, that can bring peace and love and that usually people feel good with. I decided to contact one of the volunteers who had my same idea of organising music groups in the camp and she actually did her best: she contacted a big music company which offered many good musical instruments for the project. Now we have a good music group which is open to all people who are interested in the activity.

I'm a musician in this group and we are having a good time. We play

performances for all refugees; it is important to highlight that all the members of our group come from different countries, they speak different languages but the music brings us together. I think education is an important element for everyone and a refugee should not stop learning. You can find education in different types of activities (music, It learning) and these activities can become an inspiration for your new life.

I hope all these people can have a good life in Germany, that they can improve their lives by learning and studying and in the future to join all German people. I also want to improve my language skills to be part of this society and to help as many people as I can.

All human beings deserve a good and safe life; to shape a world full of peace and love is maybe an utopia since we see some parts of this world where people are living the war and many other problems that forced them to leave their countries. To start a new life in a different environment is hard at first but, with the passing of time, it will be fine; but, people need the support of other human beings and I'm really happy to see that in Germany many people are really helping refugees.

Since I am a refugee I know some of the needs of other refugees and The Moving Network project is an opportunity for me to help other people in a more structured way; this is an innovative approach to help refugees by starting directly from camps with the support not just of external institutions, but especially of people who are facing the same situation. I feel my social responsibility towards other refugees and I hope that by becoming a BoP-Ambassador I can inspire and motivate other people in doing the same.



Photo by Claudius Grimme, Samir's lecture at Macromedia University, Berlin, 2016




Photo by Pegah Redjai Sani, The Moving Network meeting, Berlin, 2016



I'm a musician in this group and we are having a good time. We play performances for all refugees; it is important to highlight that all the members of our group come from different countries, they speak different languages but the music brings us together. I think education is an important element for everyone and a refugee should not stop learning. You can find education in different types of activities and these activities can become an inspiration for your new life.





OBSTACLES: Overcoming and understanding challenges. These cases have been analysed as feedback from the project implementation to better inform the empowerment processes of individuals.

Alen Tabaković

Potential multipliers can encounter motivational barriers

Although the “Empowerment Trust Circle” model defines a new approach towards the sustainable empowerment of the refugee community it must be emphasized that every human being must be seen individually. There can be no guarantees that once empowered person will stay that way forever. That person can always reverse the whole process from an individual point of view and come to the position of need for empowering again.

People lose motivation in life, face many obstacles and their lives change daily and that’s why it is crucial to have as many empowered persons who will act as multipliers within their communities and spread the empowering as a domino effect.

In the process of identifying BoP-Ambassadors we were very convinced with the enthusiasm and motivation of a specific ambassador who appeared to be fully empowered. That particular ambassador showed great language skills and regularly attended German classes where, in a short period of time, has shown remarkable talent.

We introduced to that person the BoP-Ambassador idea and the reaction was enthusiastic. The person was eager to participate in a scientific program and further involve with both refugee community and German society.

We were presented with the idea of contributing to the project with some interesting creativity. At first, the reports were on time and fully explained.

But, over the time they stopped coming and the ambassador stopped being active. We were told that this ambassador had some family problems.

Unfortunately the ambassador with no free time and from that moment on it was impossible was to left participate in the project. Although the ambassador never expressed directly about leaving the project it became clear that a person who has a daily obligation of approximately ten hours can’t physically cope with anything other than work. Lack of activities on the project only confirmed it.

Unfortunately this case of a potential multiplier who failed will surely not be the only one during the project. Many things affect people lives and that is not something that can be easily predicted. Whether it would be a family drama (like in case of our unsuccessful BoP-Ambassador); sudden loss of intrinsic motivation caused by variety of different reasons; change of place of stay; or any other thing that can be taken into account but can not be affected. It only highlights the fact that human beings are unpredictable as their very lives are. This example only shows that even the fully empowered person can go all the way to the beginning and return to the small Trust Circle consisting of family or few close friends.

The unsuccessful BoP-Ambassador story only serves us as a further motivation to persist in our approach as the refugee community needs multipliers.

Camp administration issues

The importance of The Moving Network project was never questioned by camp officials. It never faced direct opposition to what we stand for and what we proclaim to be our aim. However, in terms of the practical implementation of our theoretical framework some issues occurred.


The aim of the project is to treat both BoP-Ambassadors and The Moving Network team on an equal level. We are partners with different responsibilities within the project but united by the same goal – to empower as many refugees as possible and to help them find their own way towards German society. This is not the task of the Moving Network team only. It is a continued, joint effort of a team trying to implement a new approach to refugees

and their status in Western society.

The task of The Moving Network team is to secure support for BoP-Ambassadors when they try to establish contact points in German society. This is reflected in helping them to establish formal communication to camps' officials if needed and inviting them to lectures which are aimed to raise their level of presentation skills and understanding of German society. Another task is to offer daily support to ambassadors in their activities, providing them with minimum equipment and other stationery materials necessary for their classes. It is clearly stated that both parties act as one team. However, when contacting camp officials, despite positive reactions from people to whom the project has been explained, it can be difficult to set up a class, especially on a regular basis. In order to organise a class, having a space is a necessity. The response ambassadors received in most of the cases is to send an email and set up an appointment, so that they could explain the project. However, emails often received either no reply or a delay in final decision on the classes.

It is difficult to speculate what are the reasons for such reactions and intolerance towards the BoP-Ambassadors and their lectures, but these are issues that make the implementation of such an important project even harder. People from the refugee community who joined the project on a volunteer basis could begin to doubt themselves and question the sustainability of the project where support from German society fails.

Another potentially problematic aspect in communication with camps officials comes from cultural misunderstandings. There were cases of camp officials delaying the decision to allow classes in their camp because the title on the billboard used by the BoP-Ambassador was written only in Arabic. A translation in German was required.



People from the refugee community who joined the project on a volunteer basis could begin to doubt themselves and question the sustainability of the project where support from German society fails.

SUCCESS STORIES. Personal stories from empowered people.

“ I’m an artist who had to flee, not a refugee who wants to become an artist.” An interview about the role of artists as multipliers with the actor Ramadan Ali.

Ramadan Ali is a Syrian actor, musician and comedian who came in 2009 as a refugee from Syria to Germany. He is involved in projects of ‘The Moving Network’ as teacher, actor, musician. He is an active member of the Board of Participation e.V. and is engaged in the cultural field to enable refugees to work not as amateurs but as professionals in the contexts where they have experience and educational backgrounds.

Mr. Ali, you are an actor and you fled from Syria. Could you tell us something about the reasons for your flight?

The explanation is quite simple. I lived as an artist and right now, the arts are not free in Syria. I’m not only Syrian, I’m also Kurd. In Syria Kurdish language, music, books and parties were forbidden. I know the time quite precisely. The 21st of March is the Kurdish New Years Eve. It has the name „Newroz“. On this day, kurds celebrate with dance, music and more. On the 21st of March 2009, I remember I was celebrating together with my people. I was on stage, performing in a Kurdish language play. I did that in Beirut in the Lebanon because, as I said, such events had been forbidden in Syria. When I came back from Beirut, they captured me at the border. They took me to prison. I spent 2 months and 28 days in a very small cell and could not leave the country. I had an employment ban and I was hiding from the secret service day by day. Then I paid 350 dollars to a thug who helped me to cross the first border.

Sometimes I used my art of acting to cross the other borders, to play a role to survive.

What was your experience of the German refugee camps? Did you feel treated as an individual? Did you feel free there?

To be honest, this was another kind of prison. I spent seven months with five other men on seven square meters. I could not work and had forty euros pocket money. I was not allowed to leave the city without permission. After one year I was worked for several refugee camps as translator.

Do you think, that refugees should try harder to establish their own initiatives to come in a closer contact with German society?

No, I don’t think so. It’s not that difficult. You have to look at the personality of a human being. If you are able to accept other people and how they are, it is not so complicated to come in contact. Unfortunately many of us refugees don’t have this talent. I, personally, had never difficulties to come in contact with Germans. Of course, most of the Germans want to have a feeling of security if they are speaking with us. I believe, it shouldn’t be so difficult for us to create that atmosphere. But we have to be honest with them and with us.

Do you see a difference in the way you are treated as artist in Germany when you compare it to other artists with a foreign background?

Not, not at all. Maybe the only difference is that I always HAVE to play terrorists or refugees. (laughs) But that is normal in our profession.

In the meanwhile you are playing in German theatres in German language? How have you learnt the language so fast?

If you have the will to reach something, you can reach it. Without language I couldn’t stand on my feet and I couldn’t work. I want to mention something here. I never joined a German language class. I always fought with the dictionaries, I always listened closely to the German people and I was learned from the theatre plays I was involved in.

Would you agree with the statement that refugees tend to place more trust in people from their origin countries when they arrive here in Ger-

many? Are they more willing to share their thoughts, wishes and fears with them?

I'm not quite sure if I would agree to this statement. It depends on the character and the history of every single person. For example, seen from the perspective of a refugee, I trust more alien people than my own people. But there is a long personal story behind that...

What can refugees teach other refugees, aside from the offers coming from the German civic society and the authorities?

Most of all, that they should learn to start a completely new life here. That can be both difficult and easy at the same time. And of course, they can inform others about rules and values existing in their new country. But at the end of the day, every refugee has to make a decision. Is he interested in integration or not? But refugees can help other refugees that the most important rule is: live and let live...



Photo Private, Ramadan Ali, Actor

What does the term “integration” mean to you?

To live in peace, together with others. And it means to me that I could come from Syria to Germany and that I don't intend to bring Syria to Germany. So it is a MUST for me to integrate myself here to have a comfortable life.

Do you think it makes sense for refugees with particular skills and competencies and a certain educational background inform other refugees about cultural norms and values in Germany? Or would it be better for German experts to do that job?

Yes, here I would agree. If they work as a kind of role model. There is a symbolic level involved. Other refugees can see that knowledge and skills are also accepted here. That they don't have to be seen all the time as “refugees”. They can be teachers, artists, whatever...

How do you react if someone invites you as a guest speaker to events where you are expected to present your experiences as a refugee, and not your artistic knowledge and experience?

I always want to know: what is the goal of such an event? I have joined a lot of talks in schools and also events for adults where I have spoken about my personal experiences. And I like the feeling when others see, especially kids, that one can turn something bad in something good. But when I understand that such an event has the goal to raise money with my story or when I am asked to arouse compassion, then I say no. Very often refugees are used for careers. They are an instrument for several issues to become more visible or prominent...

I'm an artist who had to flee, not a refugee who wants to become an artist.

What, in your eyes, are the biggest problems currently within the so-called refugee crisis?

What connects all human-beings? Food. Drink. Breathing. Sleeping. What is dividing us? Things, invented by humans. Politics. Religion. Nationality. Language. Tradition. And wars. Everyone is fighting for himself. If we don't change this principle, we will “enjoy” that problem much longer...

You have worked on artistic projects with the Berlin based association “Board of Participation e.V.” and perform together in this context with several artists on German stages. Do you see yourself treated as an equal in these projects?

Yes, very much. It is totally equal. In the work with the „Board of Participation“ I always feel myself seen purely as an artist and not as a refugee. And exactly this is what we need to reestablish our normal lives.

How can refugees help other refugees in your eyes best?

I deeply believe as long as we call them all refugees we cannot expect any help. Refugees who found a way here to live, a topic, a profession or just a passion should be named on the basis of their skills. Then they can help like anyone else. There is no special feature being a refugee.

From a refugee to an empowerment fighter

Mr. Chu Eben is a former refugee who came a long way to become someone who defends the rights of refugees. Coming to Germany in 1998, from Cameroon, he faced the difficulties of refugee life. In his own words, it was even harder back then than today. He spent 7 years in a camp. The rules were much stricter back then. At that time, refugees could move only within specific areas. They could shop only in specified shops and they had no right to continue their education. Mr. Chu Eben came to Germany in search of a better life. He faced many obstacles in his journey, but his motivation and determination allowed him to succeed.

Unlike many others who were, each from their own reasons, unable to follow his example, he attended a German course (at that time it was possible to attend it only once a week as a part of a church program and, by his own confession, it took him at least a year before he learned the basics) and he managed to get the scholarship from a German University. Unfortunately, he

“Power is in numbers”



Photo by Pegah Redjai Sani, interview with Chu Eben, Berlin, 2015

wasn't allowed to use that scholarship because of his refugee status. He still didn't give up. He persevered in his intention to integrate into German society and even though he had to wait for 7 long years before he managed to leave the camp. Today he is a founder of Refugees Emancipation e.V. with the aim to empowering refugees to improve the quality of their lives and reduce their isolation. He has managed to positively influence many refugees to start working towards their own goal of being independent and equal members of German society. These days, people come to him, asking for an advice on how to deal with certain issues. He participates fully in German society and has become a powerful social figure through his own statement “Power is in numbers”.



Photo by Pegah Redjai Sani, interview with Nahid at Refugee camp, Berlin, 2015

Making a new life

It took Nahid Alsukkari (24 years old) three months to continue her life from the point it stopped back in Syria. When the war in Syria spread and reached her home town, it was difficult for her to continue her first year studies in Biology. The transportation between her home and her university was impossible most of days, the roads were dangerous and closed most of the time but even though she tried her best to continue her studies it became a threat to her life and at some point she had to give up. However, Nahid trained and worked at a beauty centre, and when she felt ready she left her job to start her own business.

She used all the money she and her husband had saved.

Her family, her friends and everyone helped. She worked for three successful years in her beauty salon, but the war grew and spread.

Her Beauty Salon was bombed, the war reached to the streets of her town and neighbourhood. Eventually she and her family realised that they could not stay anymore after they had lost everything. They fled from Syria making their way to Germany, across Turkey and Europe.

She arrived in Berlin in the summer of 2015 with her husband and family. However, within three months she had learned enough German and tried to start a new life. Dissatisfied with her life without work, she asked camp managers to allow her to work as a hairdresser and requested that they might provide her with some equipment. The camp management provided her with a fully equipped room and a team to work with her. Now, Nahid works and trains her team in their beauty salon in the camp.

Section 3 POSITIONS. Topics of empowerment and participation: what experts say.

Cultural Community Building for Refugees and Non-Refugees



Gernot Wolfram and Patrick S. Föhl

1. Status-Quo of arts and culture as an important space within integrational measures “Willkommenskultur”

For many years a lot of German cultural initiatives have started to offer programs, projects and artistic training workshops for refugees. In the context of the so-called German “Willkommenskultur” theatres, museums and cultural associations created many ideas to integrate refugees in their work and performances. Unfortunately, often these approaches see refugees appear on German stages presenting their stories, telling their biographies, frequently linked to experiences of torture, violence and personal loss. Occasionally, refugees appear as cultural multipliers, as genuine actors who bring in their own aesthetic and artistic values and ideas and open a public debate about the discoveries locals and new citizens can make if they are interested in different artistic positions. Mostly they are addressed as a “special group” without properly reflecting the potential of working together with German inhabitants and their own need for transformation. Therefore it is important to

integrate them in measures in the context of community building approaches. Not to treat them as “material” for public reflections about the refugee crisis, but to invite them as relevant players in the processes of forming stable communities which exchange experiences and knowledge. “Changing external circumstances are forcing cultural organisations to adapt, and the ones that are adapting most effectively are becoming affirmatively integrated.” (Sidford/Frasz/Hinand 2014). That means that cultural institutions in particular could moderate and initiate forms of participation for refugees which would have a transformative character for all members involved. Cultural community building is seen here as a process of mutual participation and responsibility exchange within local or urban environments with the aim of creating new forms of diverse cultural representation. Importantly, refugees should be regarded as equal members in such communities with duties and rights beyond their legal status. Transcultural encounters, from this perspective, can lead to significant discursive impact for old and new inhabitants of the country.

Empowerment Trust Circle

Within the project “Empowerment Trust Circle” developed by the association Board of Participation e.V., cultural activities played an important role from the beginning of the project. Strengthening a diverse cultural identity was considered a key measurement for integration and as an approach which deals with transcultural assumptions and methods (for the concept of Empowerment, see Wolfram 2015).

For example, a German-Arabic Literature Performance was created, and presented at the international literature festival in Berlin where artists from Syria, Afghanistan and Germany acted together on stage on equal terms. They sang songs from Germany and the Arabic world, touching topics of otherness and strangeness, sharing texts about fleeing a country and trying to find a new life in another one. The goal was to make clear in a sensory way that simply using refugees as “material” for performances is both unhelpful and unnecessary. The mutual exchange of professional artists was targeted to show that only through transcultural encounters is it possible to gain something ap-

proaching a sensitive understanding of the differing views and expectations of people from different cultures. But the association also collected tickets for cultural events in the city of Berlin where refugees could join non-language based performances like concerts, shows and theatre performances. Afterwards they could discuss their impressions with students and members of the Board of Participation. (www.boardofparticipation.de)

Artists as multipliers

Artists can be multipliers with considerable impact on the various dimensions of culture. Artists can portray emotions, fears and hidden views on societies through their approach to the expression of ideas and thoughts. But this also means reflecting on how artistic work is able to act independently towards the integration of different cultural views and opinions.

The first question arising from this is: On what level does cultural work with and for refugees start? Alison Jeffers in “Refugees, theatre and crisis” (Jeffers 2012) states that cultural performances start for refugees, even if they are not artists, very early on following their arrival in the new country. She argues, they have to “perform” in front of authorities, as they have to learn how to present their story, their life, their wishes in order to find legal acceptance. Jeffers calls this kind of behaviour “bureaucratic performances”. Therefore it is advisable for every cultural and artistic project working with refugees to reflect from the beginning that there are particular lines of distinction. Breaking these patterns mean, first of all, to see them and to analyse them. Then, to support the partners from the refugee scenes to formulate their goals, perspectives and contributions. At this point it is interesting to take a closer look at the concept of “Equity” which aims for equal access to arts and the fundamental right to express their culture through the arts – as an employee, practitioner, audience etc. pp. (see Föhl 2015).

2. The concept of Equity

What does equity mean in this context? We would like to refer here to a statement from the United States, specifically from the Regional Arts & Cul-

ture Council (RACC) Portland, Oregon: “Arts and culture help spark conversations, spur social change and make our community strong. But too many of our residents – including communities of colour, immigrants and refugees, and people with disabilities – experience vast disparities in terms of access to publicly funded services, including arts and culture. RACC is committed to ensuring that everyone in our region has equal access to arts and the fundamental right to express their culture through the arts.” (<https://racc.org/about/equity/>) These assumptions could be adapted for a German and European environment. Particularly in rural areas of Germany one can observe that cultural structures within institutions, projects and artistic initiatives may be useful resources for integrating the ‘unheard voices’ of marginalised societies. Refugees belong often to these parts of the society. International concepts can be used as basis for a change in understanding how to address engagement especially for those who possess the valuable resources of knowledge, time and creativity but are seldom asked to bring in these resources. “We are thoughtfully researching and implementing new methods of thinking within our organisational culture, starting with an in-depth assessment of our services, policies and procedures. We are seeking out and listening to voices that have not been heard, and fully engaging under-represented populations in dialogue that will help us improve.” (<https://racc.org/about/equity/>) Instead of trusting in activities of institutional solidarity which lead often to a loss of engagement in the long run (comp. Jeffers 2012), concepts of equity see cultural institutions as a mirror of society which should help to make visible how rapidly society is changing within their cultural influences. Empowered refugees who form part of organisational and conceptual processes within cultural institutions can act and work as multipliers who are able to teach, train and integrate other people from their communities. To bring these elements and actors together there is a strong need for a corresponding “inter-space management” (comp. Föhl/Wolfram/Peper 2016).

3. A road to community building through arts and culture in the context of the “refugee crisis”

Equity can conceptually pave the road to community engagement and building. The question that follows is how to implement it within concrete community development approaches and how to foster a practice of engagement. We have learned that we need – besides a basic concept – different layers and entries to foster honest community building processes through arts and culture – especially against the background of the “refugee crisis”. As Doug Borwick stated in 2012, it’s about “Building communities, not audiences” (Borwick 2012). He outlines a multidimensional perspective of cultural development and that classical “audience development” concepts focus too much on the gaining of new audiences and not on what they can contribute and how to create genuine dialogue and exchange with them. Borwick writes: “The economic, social, and political environments out of which the infrastructure for Western ‘high arts’ grew have changed. Today’s major arts institutions, products of that legacy, no longer benefit from relatively inexpensive labor, a nominally homogeneous culture, or a polity openly managed by an elite class. Expenses are rising precipitously and competition for major donors is increasing; as a result, the survival of established arts organisations hinges on their ability to engage effectively with a far broader segment of the population than has been true to date” (Borwick 2012). That means, that within the so-called “refugee crisis” lies potential for a common process of transformation in which refugees play an active role as speakers, listeners, partners and colleagues who reflect upon existing challenges. When we bring these connected approaches together (comp. Föhl/Wolfram 2016 and Föhl/Sievers 2015) we create a circle of central elements which, combined, lead to a stronger community through arts and culture and to sustainable arts engagement initiatives in cities and regions:



Fig.: Central selected elements of community building through arts and cultural (fig. based on Sidford/Frasz/Hinand 2014)

4. Best practice examples of transformation and community building Multipliers and their strengths

Refuges can be integrated as multipliers for culture and within (socio-)cultural scenes. They are the experts on the subject “refugees”. Their internal perspective reveals aspects of complex knowledge which is not easily attained by Germans who work with them. The following projects outline how refugees can work in the process of community building within the context of empowerment as outlined in the Moving Network Project. Three examples have been selected as space restrictions prevent us presenting more from the host available. This work also suggests ways in which the projects may be improved in order to maximise their contribution to integrative strategy (see also Föhl/Wolfram 2016).

Refugee Radio

To assist the settlement of refugees from many different countries and to help disseminate information NDR (North German Public Radio & TV) broadcasts news for refugees in English and Arabic. NDR Info Spezial airs “Refugee Radio” from Monday to Friday at 11:55 and 23:55. The news shows cover up-to-date-information as well as political discussion about refugee issues – in Germany and in the countries that refugees pass through on their way to Germany. In addition, listeners are provided with useful information on topics including health, law, integration as well as reports on volunteer initiatives supporting refugees. “Refugee Radio” is a joint project of Funkhaus Europa and German public radio stations WDR, RBB and Radio Bremen. (comp. <http://www.ndr.de/infospezial/Nachrichten-fuer-Fluechtlinge-Refugee-Radio,refugeeradio108.html>) By addressing issues of specific relevance to refugees, the project tries to create a community of listeners and followers who understand there is awareness amongst German society. The broadcasts help to inform listeners of opportunities to participate in local and national activity. The title “Refugee Radio” of the broadcast may be questions as it suggests neither involvement or relevance for those outside the refugee community. To allow this community of media consumers become a creative community of active users it would be pertinent to stress the involvement of Germans in this programme. From an empowerment perspective, the programme should consider offering volunteer jobs for refugees, to allow them to participate in the design and content of the broadcast.

Multaka – Meeting Point Museum

The “Deutsches Historisches Museum Berlin” (German Historical Museum Berlin) has trained six refugees as guides for the exhibitions. They present the tours in Arabic and try to introduce a reflective aspect concerning central challenges to the perceptions of German history in the museum from an Arabic point of view. Multaka is an Arabic Word and means “Encounter”. The project is an exceptional example for empowerment measures as it trusts refugees to work and act as cultural and intellectual partners in Germany. These

free tours address refugees and refugee communities in particular and invites newly arrived people in Germany to see, discuss, reflect, and ask about the cultural fundamentals of the country. It also approaches the long history of documenting the past, especially in the period of fascism. By conducting the tours in Arabic with people from the Arabic world an authenticity is created through language, common experiences and cultural traditions. In this project, it would be interesting to provide the wider German audience e.g. on the website about the didactic and discursive principles of the museum within this project.

Sharehaus Refugio Berlin

The Sharehaus is a project in which the organisational skills of refugees is at the focus of attention. It is based on the idea of community building and on the power which can be harnessed through the exchange of ideas, resources and inspiration.

“Since Summer 2015, the Refugio on 5 floors lives and works with people who have lost their homes or were forced to flee, or who seek for a new life and new communities. The Refugio provides refuge, community and renewal of wanderers from different cultures. At the Sharehaus Refugio we encourage each other to develop our unique skills and talents. It is the Sharehaus we started in Africa and on which we have been working on for years with a growing number of friends. At the Refugio a coaching program runs so all can enjoy learning German and start a good job or meaningful education as soon as possible. All in the house commit themselves to an individual program to offer their skills and talents, in the Refugio and in the neighbourhood. We cook and eat together daily, we share stories and experiences, and live in a creative community in which storytelling and singing, art and theatre are important. And we are telling a new story. Not one of pity, or rejection, of crisis or politics, but one of joy and communal wealth, a story that is a chorus of many voices. We live in private rooms and share communal spaces for 12-18 months, and organise our daily community life together. Together we operate a café, organise events and a neighbourhood market in the large hall. We

develop co-working and workshops and start social enterprises and networks with likeminded initiatives. The new roof garden, the refugee city tours as well as many others are built and planned in cooperation with initiatives that work meaningfully with refugees.” (<http://sharehaus.net/refugio/>)

Refugio is an example of socio-cultural projects based on community building. It serves as beacon of good practice not only in the context of refugee issues.

The learning potential within this crisis is enormously high. The question is if German societies and people entering the country are willing to learn from each other or to choose separate paths to establish their lives.

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Great Diversity and Few Opportunities: Overcoming Institutional Discrimination



Ayad Al-Ani^{1,2,3}

“[...] it is very important to have a network to get into school or to get a job-it is not enough just to send your résumé in.”

Saunders, 2011, 239.

Empowerment in the context of refugee issues also means looking on options of participation for refugees in different job markets. But not as an act of solidarity. Skills, competencies and creative approaches of individuals should be targeted in the same way as for the ‘old inhabitants’ in European countries. The change in working structures leads to a general transformation of the job market. Breaking down institutional borders is a challenge which offers insights for a new understanding about how working conditions and accessibility can be changed in the 21st century.

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Exclusivity challenged

States, companies, and schools can only exist if they employ some kind of exclusivity. If everybody may enter an institution - these organisations would arguably disintegrate due to a drain of resources and complexity generated by the conflicting targets of opportunistic members. In other words, open institutions would lead to a “tragedy of the commons” (Hardin 1968): if everybody could participate and use institutional resources these would diminish and everybody will lose in the end. This is the legitimisation for deploying the often complex procedures and processes one has to negotiate in order to enter an institution. It is noteworthy, however, that some of these procedures are formal (grades, achievements ...), and some are more informal, not visible or – even worse – those we are unable to influence (place of birth, postal code ...) reflecting existing inequalities and biases within a society. These entry criteria are usually in constant discussion and are the result of the bargaining power of different interest groups (Olson 1982). With the inflow of a huge group of newcomers, who in many ways do not appear to comply with the formal let alone the informal criteria, we can suppose that this group will have difficulty entering important institutions (schools, universities, companies). If entrance is possible at all, it will – we surmise – only be possible in institutional segments, which offer less quality, income and status. This has always been the universal fate of immigrants. However, considering the huge number of refugees that have now entered Europe within a very short time frame, Western society finds itself, in its entirety, challenged and stretched by a “refugee bulge” in an unprecedented way. If nothing changes, it is feared, this new population segment may be forced to exist in isolation, disconnected from the rest of the society creating its own peculiar sub-culture that will be considered as threat or menace to society; evoking all sorts of antiliberal repercussions (cf. Wallerstein, 1995, 142f.). The Turkish community in Berlin’s Kreuzberg quarter is in many ways an example of this negative scenario. Not being able to become German citizens for a long period of time and therefore blocked from developing their own businesses, achieving academic success or having a say in political representation, this isolated group created a grotesque caricature of their home country’s culture in a kind of “time warp”

(Saunders, 2011, 245).⁴This paper in the context of the project “The Moving Network” seeks to show that new institutions based on inclusivity are possible. These new platform-organisations are driven by the self-managed capacities of its “free producers”. Thus, the underlying message in the context of the current refugee discussion is that these individuals can and – recognising the limited capacities of the state – must be considered potentially active producers of private and public goods and services and can be integrated into traditional institutions via adapted interfaces.

Are open institutions possible?

With the advent of new forms of collaboration that are constituted in cyberspace we now have different organisations that might lend themselves to overcoming some of the current restrictions. This is so, because these network organisations have a central attribute, whose characteristics differ from those of traditional organisations: Their network effect makes resources more valuable the more they are used (Bauwens, 2007). The more people visit a web site, the more relevant it becomes. The tragedy of the commons is reversed.⁵

In addition, people who join each other via the internet as free producers or peers to form collaborations using platforms to exchange information and work deliverables usually create and use a common, an idea, a line of code, a learning script, a massive open online course that can be used without any restrictions. In addition, many of these peer-to-peer (p2p)-productions like Open Source collaborations or Wikipedia are inclusive, geared towards the usage of a surplus of self-directed and self-identified skills and resources not absorbed by traditional institutions and utilised in the past for passive consummative and isolated behaviour (watching TV etc.) (Shirky 2011; Benkler 2006).

4.The Turkish writer Dilek Güngör noted that Turkish woman moving to this enclave were “[...] shocked to find themselves forced to wear headscarves by their mothers-in-law, sharing a flat with their husband’s family, and to see that Turks in Germany were 20 years behind those in Istanbul [...]”(Hurriyet 2007)

5.For some economists, like Nobel laureate Elinor Ostrom, this came as a novel which she nevertheless later on acknowledged: “[...] open access to information is a horse of a much different colour than open access to land or water [...]. With distributed knowledge and information the resource is usually nonrivalous.” (Hess/Ostrom, 2011, 13)

There are often no entry criteria and the role and reputation of the joining free producer is strictly evaluated by his/her performance (meritocracy).⁶ In summary, these new kinds of inclusive organisations seem very much geared towards the absorption of skills and resources from refugees and also of the surplus of the society in general which can be directed towards providing services and support for this group.

New forms of productions for refugees

This concept in its many shapes and forms can now be employed to create services that enable refugees to advance in a society and also integrate them as producers, creating learning effects, income and credentials that would not be available in traditional institutions.

Education: Traditional universities and other higher education institutions enforce formal and informal entry hurdles that serve to keep refugees and newcomers away. New educational platforms that use open educational resources (OER) will be more open to these target groups and may potentially serve as an intermediary between this group and formal education.⁷ In addition, resources produced by citizens wishing to support the educational path of refugees can be made available using platforms that match supply and demand.⁸ Of course, in all these forms of educational offerings, refugees can also be integrated as producers who create, refine and offer assistance.⁹

Jobs: Increasingly, companies constitute themselves as platforms, transforming peers into employees or rather free-lancers. Despite this commercialisation of the former P2P production, the principle of meritocracy prevails in

6.For an overview of protocols and procedures of these peer networks see Jemielniak (2014, Pos 513ff.). Some of the protocols are specially meant to facilitate the integration of newcomers, like (DNB): Do Not Bite Newcomers, or (ASG): Assuming Good Faith.

7. See here the example of the Kiron University that offers education to refugees that could be used as a credit in formal education once necessary requirements have been brought by (Pauli 2015). For an overview of available OER see Bhaskar (2013).

8. For the principle of making available the surplus of skills and motivation within a society to support educational activities see Gelernter (2012). A good example is the “Granny Cloud” already in use to provide online support from British “grannies” to students in India and South America (The Granny Cloud, n.d.a.).

9. This also leads to the requirement of opening up libraries that feature blueprints and content to be downloaded for free (Al-Ani, 2016, 238).

many of these companies meaning that they are inclusive (anybody can join) and evaluate their producers mainly on their contribution and not on past performance (credentials, degrees ...), making them ideal for contributors lacking formal requirements. Besides the income generated here as a marketing creative, IT developer or software tester, the credentials developed on those platforms can also be capitalised in the traditional economy (Al-Ani/Stumpp, 2015).¹⁰

Public & Social Services: A large part of the initial activities for accommodating refugees has been delivered in a self-organised and self-directed manner in the best of p2p traditions - in a way that has perhaps surprised even the political establishment. It is to be expected, that this kind of service delivery will also be made more effective and delivered via platforms that “upload” offerings of services, and assets for refugees (rooms, coaching, conflict resolution, advice). It is increasingly likely, that refugees will also become producers on these platforms helping others and also creating their own platforms.¹¹ Thereby, not only supportive capacities are increased and social costs minimised but also credentials and skills are generated that can be used in other sectors of the economy (cf. Al-Ani, 2016, 236ff.). Similar tools could be used by political actors to integrate the political voice of the refugees, connecting them with traditional political institutions.¹²

Connecting with traditional institutions

While these new forms of inclusive organisations may provide easier access, possibilities for supplying services and products, and building up much needed capabilities and credentials, a connection to established institutions

10. Some of these platforms are already experiencing a presence from the Arab world. The German based innovation platform jovoto.com for instance, has more than 600 of its 30.000 creatives coming from Arab countries (Al-Ani 2015).

11. This is a general tendency of the 'Digital City': "The networked city sees citizens as 'co-designers, co-producers and co-learners,' with government." (Bollier, 2016, 6). For a first platform from refugees for refugees offering support and practical advice in Germany see Zukar.org (n.d.a.).

12. These tools are already available (e.g. nationbuilder.com, n.d.a.) and could be easily adapted. For an evaluation of the situation in Germany see Hackmack (2014).

(companies, universities) makes sense. Not only can companies profit from skills and ideas that haven been developed in the “p2p world”, the fabric of society can benefit if its different segments become connected; reducing social friction and costs. The following examples show how these interfaces and bridges may be set up.

Opening of Higher Education: at some point it becomes necessary for universities to alter their entry protocols and accept different entry criteria form a variety of societal segments. The most famous example in this regard was the decision of France’s Institut d’Études Politiques de Paris, known colloquially as Sciences Po, which has trained two out of the past three French presidents, to open up for underprivileged students. Normally students would seek admission based on their grades or test results. Sciences Po singled out 85 secondary schools serving disadvantaged areas which were simply told to send over their best students for Sciences Po’s review. The schools provided whatever financial aid necessary (Horn 2012). Using this example, it would make sense for universities and higher education institutions to offer similar adapted entry procedures to ease the integration of refugees.¹³

Opening of the firm: traditional firms are already in the process of adapting to the needs of the digital economy and seek to integrate p2p production in order to capture the productivity and innovation of the Crowd (Al-Ani/Stumpp/Schildhauer 2014). Refugees that started their career as producers of the p2p economy could become part of the firm’s value creation using these new inroads: traditional companies co-opt ideas, solutions and innovations that have been generated outside their boundaries and try to add them to their portfolio (Al-Ani, 2013, 126ff.). This development could make it easier for refugees to enter the firm. In addition, companies could also create new forms of collaboration geared towards the segment of refugees. A good example is the use of mentoring programs that connect employment-seeking

13. Of course this would come at a price of heating up the debate about levelling of quality standards. This discussion also took place in France: "Critics accused the school of flashy political correctness, and of losing sight of excellence while focused on cosmetic issues." (Horn 2012)

refugees with contacts within a company easing the collaboration and making the entry procedure more reflective of the personality of the candidates and additionally triggering learning effects for all involved.¹⁴

Connecting beyond borders: Collaborations and start-ups created by refugees in their host countries could be used to connect with similar organisation and firms in the MENA region, making them even more attractive for Western companies who are in constant search for innovations and markets: The upcoming rebuilding of the Arab economy could be a focal point for these firms and connections to traditional Western companies could serve as a bridge to this attractive market.¹⁵

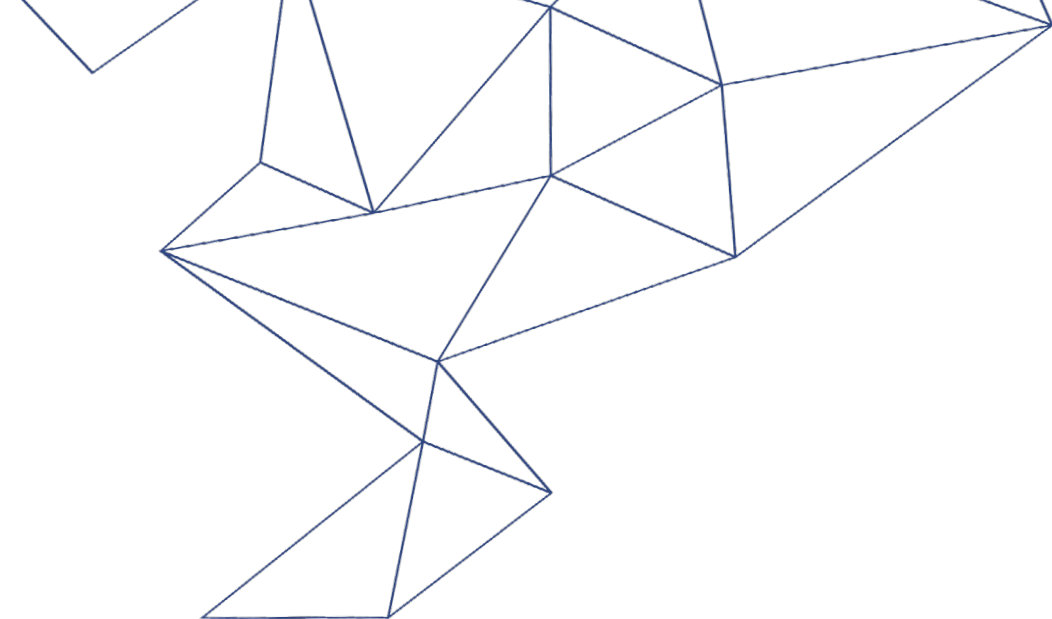
Conclusion: If nothing else matters

The institutional changes described here are by no means a self-executing process. It is an equation with many variables and with an uncertain outcome: “We are in a systemic burofication, which means that very small actions by groups here and there may shift the vectors and the institutional forms in radically different directions” (Wallerstein, 1999, 132). Nevertheless, the rational for institutions to adapt must be made clear. That is - segregation and discrimination ultimately prove poisonous to a society which is built upon principles of equal opportunity, suffrage and security. Returning to the example of Scienes Po, remarkably, it was the fear of ending up in a hierarchical, caste-like society, which drove its former president to start his ambitious transformation.¹⁶ The current refugee crisis makes it even more urgent to start similar undertakings in all relevant sectors of the society.

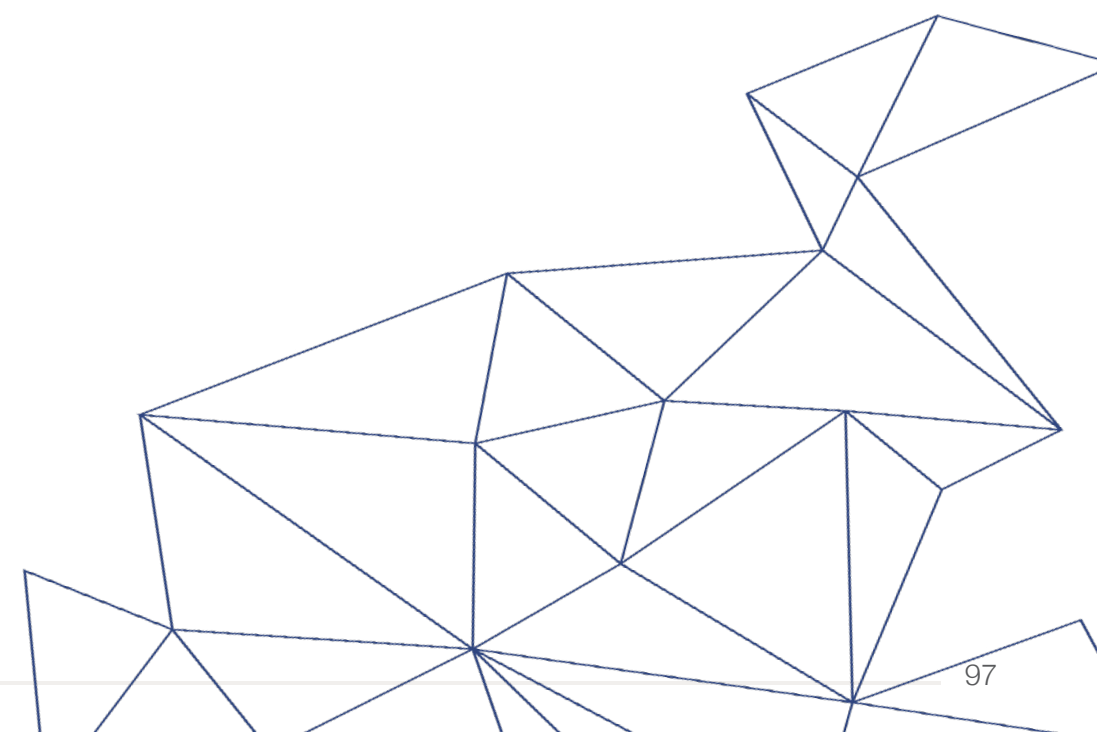
14. For an example of such mentoring projects in Germany see Hamburg's Impact Dock (n.d.a.) program.

15. See here the example of a platform for Arab start-ups that builds interfaces to German companies: Zenith Talk (n.d.a.). Platforms of this kind could be used as well to “upload” start-ups in Germany with a refugee background connecting them to Arab and German companies.

16. He forwarded the following reasons: “Le premier est d'affaiblir la légitimité de ces formations. Qu'une élite puisse devenir synonyme de caste, qu'un enseignement d'excellence puisse apparaître comme une simple machine à reproduction sociale, et c'est le pacte républicain qui n'est pas tenu.” (Le Monde, 2001)



Segregation and discrimination ultimately prove poisonous to a society which is built upon principles of equal opportunity, suffrage and security



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CONCLUSION

Thus far it has been a very interesting and rewarding journey. The whole group has been extremely pleased by the valuable data that could be gathered, the people that could have been met and the interesting and positive feedback from the community that was shared.

In setting the theoretical framework evolving around the key concepts of Empowerment, Participation, Multipliers and Integration, it was extremely helpful to acknowledge and contemplate to the different theoretical works that evolve around those specific topics. In thoroughly scrutinizing the secondary research, the group had a well defined understanding of the difficulties, but ever so more the advantages of an empowered community, which is in effect confident, inclusive, organized, co-operative and influential.

The Bop-Ambassador case study has been incredibly useful to understand how to enable the creation of future prospects inside of one's self. Instead of trusting in the term "solidarity", the project aims at presenting a valid future perspective towards an open and powerful community, which has proven that coordination and exchange of knowledge are a renewing process for cooperation and stability. By empowering the individual, it is now quite safe to say that this individual will itself empower others.

The networking approach clearly shows that these interconnections are used for the better, helping a whole community to strive for new goals and giving themselves the support dearly needed. But instead of clinging to themselves, keeping within their cultural and societal boundaries, building again structures of parallel-societies and modern "ghettoism", we now find here a unique way of opening up the possibilities of a shared communal life rather than coexisting in the same place.

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