



# Hellenic Red Cross – practical discussion sessions with women in migration accommodation centres

In Greece, the Hellenic Red Cross launched information and discussion sessions with women living in migrant accommodation centres as a chance for people to share their experiences, build relationships, and access practical information.

## Introduction

- Case Study was collected in Autumn 2022
- Hellenic Red Cross wanted to develop support and information sessions in a participatory way
- The sessions are supported by HRC, but designed and delivered together with participants

## Participatory discussion and information sharing

Working together with women in the Ritsona camp, the Hellenic Red Cross Community Engagement and Accountability Field Officer, alongside Psycho-Social Support colleagues, have established a weekly information and discussion group.

Topics are set by women living in the camp and, working together with them, Hellenic Red Cross teams have facilitated sessions around these subjects, using various presentation methods including videos, handouts, presentations, and real-life examples.

Aiming to support knowledge and practical skills for everyday issues which participants themselves identify as being important, the sessions also provide an opportunity for participants to share their own experiences, discuss challenges and build friendships.



Sessions so far have looked at:

- Music and culture, with participants sharing their favourite songs, learning about Greek culture and what free events, exhibitions, and concerts that they can access in Athens.
- General information about Athens including key sights, as well as tips on transportation, and searching for an apartment
- Applying for work, with advice on where to look for jobs, the kind of work available, and how to apply, including preparing a CV
- Shopping, including tips on where to find ingredients, the cheapest places and ways to shop, and recipe sharing between participants.



## Results

The participatory design of the sessions has meant that women living in the camp themselves have been able to steer the content and subjects discussed in the group, meaning the session focus on topics which are interesting and relevant to them.

By making the sessions discussion groups, rather than simply information dissemination sessions, they are more interactive for participants, and focus more on peer learning, with participants at the sessions sharing their own experiences and the solutions they have found to the challenges they and others face.

Solutions put forward by people with lived experience and discussed together, are more readily trusted and evidenced as being effective, than one-way information provided by an “expert”, while the discussions themselves provide an opportunity to build friendships and engender greater trust between the National Society and the participants, as well as offering clear psycho-social benefits.

## Lessons learned

The sessions have really demonstrated how involving people with lived experience in planning and delivering Red Cross activities can result in more engaging sessions with more effective results.

At the same time, integrating CEA approaches alongside other areas – such as Psycho-Social expertise - can help ensure we do no harm, and capitalise on the positive opportunities available, for activities to move beyond just information sharing, or answering questions, but to also be able to provide some psycho-social support as well.

## Next steps & recommendations

An example of the impact that participatory or co-produced activities can have, and the importance of including - and allowing activities to benefit from the expertise of - people with lived experience, as well as seeking ever greater participation and interaction within the discussion sessions themselves, they also serve as a useful advocacy tool to demonstrate the value that such approaches can have, and for them to adopted more widely.

### Contact information

For more information on this case study please contact:

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