Mentoring for human trafficking survivors

Libes

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Funded by the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Programme (AMIF) through the project *Life Beyond the Shelter* (Libes)

Project partners: CAW Antwerp, On the Road Cooperativa Sociale, Payoke, SOLWODI Germany, SURT

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Published in July 2021

Co-funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) of the European Union

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Acknowledgments

This publication could not have been accomplished without the help of many people. We are deeply grateful to our project partners for setting up and piloting mentoring programs, and reviewing this publication. Under the exceptional circumstances of the Covid emergency, the pilots required increased and unforeseen effort and investment from the teams and posed new, unanticipated challenges to their work. Special thanks go to Erik de Cnodder for CAW (BE); Silvia Bisconti, Elisa Ricci, Luna De Angelis, Domiziana Acciarri, and Marika Salatino for On the Road Società Cooperativa Sociale (IT); Anthony Verhasselt, Stefanie Duysens, Julie Jadoul for Payoke (BE); Anja Wells, Sophia Haneke and Veronika Richler-Yazeji for Solwodi (DE), Laura Parés Martín and Laura Sales for Fundacio Surt (ES).

We wish to express our gratitude to our clients who participated in the mentoring program and provided feedback on their experience.

We are deeply indebted to the many experts and practitioners who have offered, on a voluntary basis, their independent knowledge and views and their invaluable contribution through resources, evidence-based practice, and anecdotal reports.

We would like to mention Kalyani Gopal, PhD, HSPP, Clinical Psychologist, Forensics and Neuropsychology, (USA); Glauco Iermano, Association Dedalus (IT); Roos van Dijk, Sexologist and Senior Prevention Advisor at IrisZorg (NL); Valérie Carrette, Senior Consultant for social and sustainable entrepreneurship, on behalf of the MeMoRe[1] project which helps refugees through mentoring (BE); Szilvia Simon, community manager and founder of the European Center for Evidence-Based Mentoring (NL); Mar Avendaño, coordinator of Coordinadora de Mentoría Social, a Spanish platform for mentoring associations (ES);

Robbert Leysen, Dorian Van Etterbeek and Theo Vaes, from the Antwerp-based mentoring association ArmenTeKort through which Payoke's clients have been registered as buddies and who have provided unparalleled support and unique insight on mentoring practice (BE); Charlotte Goede and Jesse Romein from DeRogenboog Groep, a Dutch association that runs mentoring programs for victims of human trafficking whose stories, examples, guidance and templates have been of invaluable help (NL); Peter De Cuyper, integration expert and research manager at the Research Institute for Work and Society (HIVA) at the university of Leuven (BE); Nusha Yonkova, Gender and Anti-trafficking Expert at Immigrant Council of Ireland (IE), Laura Perés Martin, Project Manager at Surt (ES), and Katerina Hein, social worker at Solwodi Germany (DE), who related about their mentoring intervention to the benefit of trafficked women within the framework of the EU-funded ASSIST program.[2]

We gratefully acknowledge the generous financial support we received through the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, that made the "Life Beyond the Shelter" project possible.

Introduction

When we started designing a mentoring program for survivors of human trafficking to launch in four European countries as part of the EU-funded project *Life Beyond the Shelter* (Libes),[3] we were faced with a shortage of models to replicate. Yet, we needed a roadmap to guide our planning and execution, tailored to our clients' needs,[4] aware that lack of clear planning can cause more harm than good with vulnerable populations.[5] This publication compiles the knowledge, resources, best practices, and lessons-learned we have both collected and put into practice through our project.

This booklet is a starting point for further research and for what we hope to be a continuing dialogue between mentors and mentees, practitioners, researchers, and, ultimately, policy-makers.[6] We hope it will offer inspiration and ideas for other victim support organizations that wish to embark on a mentoring journey.

Methodology

Through Libes, five civil society organizations from Belgium, Germany, Italy, and Spain developed mentoring programs for victims of human trafficking. The beneficiaries were approximately 38 men and women transitioning from the victim support program to independent living. They were paired with mentors, in most cases on a one-to-one basis, for a period of 6 months to one year.

We conducted a literature review to develop a theoretical base. The research focused on mentoring programs and evidence-based research about mentoring vulnerable youth,[7] migrants, and refugees. Due to the scarcity of dedicated programs for trafficked people, [8] these groups have been considered a proxy target population.

Specifically, we aimed to ensure the highest protection standards and promote appropriate safeguarding policies and practices using vulnerable youth as a proxy population. The "Elements of Effective Practice," developed by the US-based MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership, was our primary reference.

Key informant interviews and focus group discussions with the project partners have been conducted to reflect the program's different needs, visions, and intents in the four countries, and their individual approach to the pilot implementation.

We consulted with several experts and practitioners all over Europe and in North America, in some cases through personal interviews and sometimes through their review of the draft materials. They provided knowledge and views, together with resources, evidence-based practice, and anecdotal reports.

Examples from the pilots, best practices, and lessons learned collected through interviews with project partners, experts, and practitioners, have been incorporated in boxes marked as *case study*.

Feedback from the clients who joined a buddy[9] program has been collected through surveys and interviews to gauge experiences, perceptions, and opinions. This qualitative data has been used in combination with the findings of surveys administered to the case managers, psychosocial counselors, and psychologists assisting the clients. Although at the time this publication goes to print, our clients are still engaged in mentoring relationships, a recent survey indicates that the majority of our clients (71%) believe the program has helped them improve their social life and provided assistance with daily living. Amongst the personnel interviewed (social workers, project managers, and psychosocial counselors) 90% of respondents believe the clients benefited from having a mentor, and 86% think the program should continue after the Libes project comes to an end.[10]

Why a mentoring program specifically designed for victims of trafficking?

Most mentoring programs revolve around the essential elements of recruitment, screening, training, matching, monitoring, support, and closure.[11] A program for trafficked people makes no exception. So what are the distinctive features of a program for trafficking survivors? Considering their unique needs and vulnerabilities, a tailored mentoring program must be:

Trauma-informed - For survivors of trafficking, like most victims of crime, psychological wounds often endure long after the physical wounds have healed. The victimization may produce an altered state of mind that continues even when the event is over and negatively affects the person's thinking, behavior, and psychosocial wellbeing. Incorporating a trauma-informed approach into the mentoring program means teaching mentors to appreciate the physical, social, and emotional impact of trauma and avoid secondary victimization by side-stepping triggers that lead to re-victimization. For instance, mentors can learn about the six principles of trauma-informed care. Safety, trustworthiness, peer support, collaboration, empowerment, voice and choice, cultural, historical, and gender issues can guide them to communicate with the mentee, establish a relationship of trust, and create a safe environment for the mentoring relationship to thrive.[12]

Victim-centered - A victim-center approach goes hand in hand with a trauma-informed intervention. It is characterized by the systematic focus on the victims' concerns and needs to deliver services in a compassionate, sensitive, and non-judgmental way.[13]

Adapted to migrants' needs- Nearly half of registered trafficked victims in the European Union are migrants.[14] Migrant survivors, especially third-country nationals, face the many challenges of integration. They are often vulnerable and isolated because, for example, they do not speak the host country's language, have limited or no independent finances, or do not know much about their rights, available services, or legal status in the host countries. Within this context, the mentoring program shall consider the specific concerns of the mentees related to their integration path. At the same time, it should be framed within the notion of integration as a dynamic two-way process. To paraphrase ECRE's definition of integration,[15] one could say that a mentoring program will help the mentee adapt to the host society's lifestyle without losing their own cultural identity. From the mentor's point of view, their job is to welcome the mentee as part of the national community, be a cultural broker while cultivating awareness and appreciation of the diversity of cultures and people. Against this backdrop, mentoring can be seen as the interpersonal aspect of the quest for social inclusion and integration. Positive interpersonal interactions between local and migrant buddies can reduce discrimination and promote diversity.[16]

Gender-sensitive- Recognizing that the majority of assisted victims of trafficking in Europe are girls and women,[17] a mentoring program shall incorporate an assessment of the needs of women, a gender participatory approach of women survivors, [18]the use of sex-disaggregated data throughout monitoring and evaluation, and the use of gender experts.[19]

The basics

Mentoring is defined as a structured, non-judgmental relationship with mutual benefits for all parties involved, in which a more experienced individual (mentor) voluntarily gives time to support and encourage a less experienced person (mentee).

While acting in a non-professional supporting capacity, a **mentor** is an individual who can be beneficial to the **mentee** and has received proper training. The mentor can serve as a role model, promote positive reinforcement, and jointly problem-solve. Mentoring is essentially about establishing genuine relationships, as the actual benefit comes from the connection built between the mentor and the mentee over time.

Mentoring **relationship types** can differ based on the needs of those served and the organization's resources. They are traditionally defined as a one-to-one relationship. Still, they can also be delivered in group settings. Research has indicated the benefit of intertwining different formats of mentoring to capitalize on the benefits of each.[20]

The benefits

Human trafficking is a form of exploitation that occurs when a perpetrator uses force, fraud, or coercion to control another person for economic gain.

The trafficking experience often inflicts complex layers of trauma on survivors. The abuse these people endured may have affected their sense of self and those surrounding them, often resulting in pervasive mistrust of others and interrupting their ability to have healthy intrapersonal relationships. Establishing a relationship of **trust** with a buddy can help victims in their recovery and reintegration.[21]

The benefits of having a mentor may vary. A mentoring program may be focused on **personal development**, including, for instance, improved enhanced emotional regulation, self-esteem, self-confidence, and resilience.[22] Sometimes mentors act as positive role models creating a compassionate catalyst for change, especially for survivors who may not enjoy family or community support in their life.

Mentors can also be instrumental in helping survivors **integrate** into society. They can help their buddies access essential services and resources for their everyday life, such as navigating the public administration, managing their household, finding opportunities for continuing education, searching for employment, and accessing healthcare.[23]

Central to mentoring is the notion of **empowerment**. But what we truly mean by it? The term[24] often conjures up images of helpless people. However, this is not always the case for many victims of trafficking. People who initially choose to migrate are searching for a better future for themselves and their loved ones. They have proved to have the drive and bravery to become actors of change, using their resources and skills to make their choices and find solutions to their problems. Through mentoring, they can find renewed hope and be encouraged to continue to do so.[25]

Program design

At the outset, the organization that wishes to set up a mentoring program will outline expectations and goals to establish their parameters, including:

- populations the program will serve
- type of mentoring it will offer -purpose, mentors, format
- partnerships it will build with other organizations
- staff and participants involved.

The population served: the mentees

It is preferable to choose persons who have passed the immediate and short-term recovery phaseas the **primary beneficiaries**, to minimize the risk of re-traumatization. However, because trauma is a subjective experience and the healing journey from the trafficking experience can vary significantly from person to person, there is no specific stage in a client's trajectory that can be universally considered safe for starting a mentoring relationship. Some of the programs reviewed have worked with clients who were two years into the recovery, and others with clients still living in the shelter.

With reference to Maslow's hierarchy of needs,[26] a mentoring program should address the top tiers of self-actualization, esteem, and social needs, to promote outcomes of belonging, connection, and friendship. This focus assumes that services addressing basic needs (material, physiological, medical, and essential psychological support) are already in place or have been provided.

The main factors to consider are:

- Age
- Gender
- Mentoring needs. Do the clients need to connect with others, rebuild a sense of trust, resilience, and self-esteem? Do they need to build relationships and reinforce people skills? Or do they wish to practice life skills? Do they need help to integrate into the local community, find a job, practice language skills?
- Other factors: special needs (like reduced mobility or disability), language proficiency, possible medical or mental health conditions, etc.

The purpose

There are many mentoring models giving organizations options to decide what works best to meet the specific needs of their clients and the population they serve.

In considering the **intended goal**, the organization will first determine whether they want to focus on developmental or prescriptive mentoring.

Developmental mentoring emphasizes emotional support and empowerment. It is generally aimed at building a long-term relationship where resilience and self-confidence can be enhanced.

Prescriptive mentoring includes specific goal-driven activities, such as managing personal finances, improving language skills, or looking for a job. It is often a shorter, less intensive, and goal-oriented relationship -for example, a 6-month trajectory focusing on labor market integration.[27]

A program may also involve a combination of the above.[28] A mentor's role can be complex and multilayered. At any given moment, a mentor may serve as an advisor, coach, teacher, or advocate.[29]

The choice of mentors

In the programs observed, mentors were chosen amongst local volunteers, people who were themselves trafficked, or people with a migrant background.

Victims of human trafficking who have successfully integrated into the host community or are now serving in a victim assistance capacity make great support sources as mentors. It has been observed that trafficked people are sometimes more comfortable with peers who experienced similar harm and can offer understanding in an empathetic way.[30] **Survivor mentors** can help clients build a new identity and remove feelings of isolation.[31] They can instill hope and speak to the experience of exploitation as no one else can.[32] As opposed to locals, survivor mentors can be especially helpful while the person is still in the shelter or in the early stages of the support program, and they strive to recognize their own needs. Very often, indeed, traumatized people, including victims of human trafficking and exploitation, lack self-awareness.[33] [34]Survivor mentors can help them envisage the next steps in the process, imagine and visualize the possible options ahead of them so that they can better decide what future they want for themselves. Moreover, the relationship can become synergetic and mutually beneficial. On the one hand, it is empowering for the mentor, and, on the other hand, it provides hope to the mentee who sees a peer in a leadership role[35] in the service organization. [36] In some of the programs observed, survivors are used to train mentors.[37]

Third-country nationals who experienced life as newcomers are also very well positioned to act as mentors, as they have lived through the challenges of the integration process firsthand. [38]They can serve as "credible messengers" of information and support. A mentoring program can thus be seen as a vehicle to increase the chances of successful integration in the host society.

In the Libes pilots, local volunteers were beneficial to support people in a more advanced stage of their recovery. In many cases, their support went a long way in helping mentees connect to others and their new communities, live more independent lives, and gain self-confidence.[39] In some programs, local volunteers were instrumental in brokering access to services and resources.

The format

The assessment of the needs and purpose will guide the organization to determine the format. The most common forms are:

- one-to-one, with one mentor and one mentee
- group mentoring, where one mentor meets with several mentees
- team mentoring, with multiple mentors and mentees

E-mentoring, using email, social media, or other forms of internet communication, is often used to achieve outcomes that are not easily addressed through in-person connections. It has been tested by various organizations under the mobility restrictions and social distancing measures in effect in Covid-19 affected areas. [40]

Case study

E-mentoring

The Libes pilots took place amid the Corona-19 pandemic. With social distancing, physical routines disrupted, and movements restricted, the partners considered e-mentoring modalities. The use of technology to connect mentors and mentees has been around for the last 20 years to serve isolated groups. It has also been increasingly used in traditional mentoring programs to supplement or enhance face-to-face interactions. E-mentoring has often been used to achieve outcomes that are not easily addressed through standard in-person mentoring formats. For instance, some programs targeting people with physical disabilities who may not be able to meet with a mentor in person have employed e-mentoring tools to provide an opportunity for regular meetings without physical barriers.

Although e-mentoring solutions don't ensure the sense of togetherness and immediacy that face-to-face meetings do, they allow for conversations, exchange, learning, and the expressions of feelings.

An e-mentoring quick guide has been developed to help social workers and volunteer coordinators facilitate connections between mentors and mentees.[41] However, none of the partners was able to resort to e-mentoring. Different obstacles and risks have been associated with the use of technology, including:

• the social anxiety mentees may associate with meeting new people online

• safety concerns

• the digital divide, as some clients (or survivor mentors) may not have reliable access to the technology needed to participate in the program, such as laptops, tablets, and an Internet connection,

• mentors or mentees may not be at ease using technology or possess the skills needed to communicate effectively -poor language skills, illiteracy, no typing skills, etc.

Building partnerships

In offering mentoring to their clients, an organization can choose to be in the driver's or passenger's seat. If they decide to set up the mentoring program in-house, they will have the advantage of tailoring it to their own needs, policies, and processes.

Conversely, the organization can partner with a volunteer association, thus outsourcing, fully or partially, the recruitment, training, and monitoring of the matches. This type of partnership can translate into significant time and cost savings. The organization will avoid stretching the scope of its staff's job descriptions to cover the operations of the mentoring program. It will benefit from enhanced expertise and solutions that might far outweigh what it could afford to provide in-house. Even more important is the benefit in terms of clients' privacy.

Because a partnership involves handing over direct control over the program to a third party, it comes with certain risks. For example, the organization may experience problems if the volunteer association's performance is below expectation if they lack flexibility and prove too rigid to accommodate changes that may be needed for clients with special needs. Another downside is the lack of internal skill development: when the program is outsourced, the organization will not cultivate its employees' skills.

The organization will also experience some degree of lack of quality control. In this respect, it is vital to carefully select not only a volunteer association with a proven track record of successful performance and a good reputation, it must also share the same values and hold the same commitment to the organization's vision. Indeed, a poorly managed mentoring program could ultimately do more harm than good. Because the personal bond is at the heart of mentoring, when the program fails to support connection and consistency, the resulting negative relationship can impact the client's vulnerabilities in ways that can undermine their very sense of self.

Securing privacy

The right to privacy[42] is critical to protect victims from further harm. Failure to protect privacy can increase the danger of intimidation and retaliation. It can cause stigma, prejudice, and hurt to victims and compromise their recovery.

Privacy can be guaranteed in full when mentors are not aware of the mentee's past. However, this is not always possible, for instance, where the organization serves only victims of human trafficking. On the other hand, where the organization serves multiple populations or target groups, or it partners with an external volunteer association, disclosure can be easily avoided.

Staff involved

The organization should ideally appoint a staff member to oversee the mentoring program. The person, that will be herein referred to as **volunteer coordinator,** shall take responsibility for the development and delivery of the program, liaising with other staff members such as social workers and other psychosocial counsellors, collating information, and ensuring the wellbeing of all participants. The volunteer coordinator will also monitor the relationship, provide initial orientation, training and ongoing support, and evaluate the program outcomes.

The client's primary professional **caregiver**, whether a social worker, a psychosocial counselor, a psychologist or case manager, can play an important role. According to some experts, connecting mentoring to the social worker may help the relationship's longevity.[43] However, in other programs observed, a direct connection between mentor and social worker is strongly discouraged or even banned. There is always an intermediary between mentor and mentee, usually a staff member, to ensure communication without violating the client's confidentiality and trust.[44]

These are some questions to guide the design of a mentoring program:

Table - Outlining the mentoring program

Questions	Answers
MENTEES - Who are the mentees? -What are their needs (educational/physical/social/psychosocial)? -What is their gender? - What are their strengths, skills, and behaviors? - What are the barriers and enablers to the mentees' integration?	
MENTORS - Who are you looking to recruit as mentors? - What is the age and gender breakdown of the mentors going to be? - How and where will they be recruited?	
STAFF INVOLVED -Who will interview the mentors? -Who will train the mentors? -Who will document the sessions and the experiences of the matches? -Who will supervise them?	
LOGISTICS -What logistics need to be considered? -Where will the recruitment and the supervision take place? -Where and how will the training be organized?	
RESULTS -What outcomes do you expect? -What change will the program create for mentees as well as mentors? -Are you setting any indicators to assess the impact of mentoring? -How can you ensure sustainability?	

Recruitment

Mentors' role: co-national, survivor and local mentors

As volunteers, mentors can increase the ability of the organization to serve clients and respond to the needs of the community. They indirectly support the work of social workers and psychosocial counselors. However, **mentors are not social workers**, counselors, or psychologists, and they shall not take on that role.

The relationship dynamics social-worker-client and mentor-mentee have many elements in common. Both are based on closeness, alliance, trust, and support. Both can and do enable change and alleviate distress. In both cases, the personal relationship is central to achieving client outcomes. [45][46] Yet, in social work, care comes with control. The dual and sometimes contradictory responsibility for care and control, coupled with the detachment needed to help people in a professional capacity, is perhaps the most defining feature of a therapeutic relationship. Conversely, the element of control is absent in mentoring.

Case study

Social worker vs. mentor

The different roles of social workers and mentors have been the subject of lively debate, both in the project teams and in conversations with experts.

The notion of the mentor being on equal footing with the client was an emergent theme, although the meaning of "equality" often varied. Some referred to the perception of power distribution in social work practice that disappears in a mentoring relationship. The social worker's perception of their role, as opposed to a buddy's role, reflects the challenges they face in managing the balance between their practice's professional, personal, and private elements.

Some social workers acknowledged the complex nature of their relationships with clients and the need to serve them with empathy without developing an emotional attachment. They seem to fully embrace the notion that, conversely, buddies, unlike counselors, can become friends, as they "fill a niche that lies somewhere between professional and kinship and [they] are thus afforded greater latitude in what constitutes appropriate boundaries."[47]

Some social workers and experts emphasized that a buddy is not there to do things "for" the client but rather "with" them. The buddy is seen as someone working alongside the client, trying to help them understand what they want and need and encourage them to achieve their goals.

The mandate defining the role of social worker and mentor is another fundamental divide. In most cases, the social worker's role is determined by the employment contract. In contrast, the mentor's objectives are less specific, their tasks are not defined in all details, and more space is given to the relationship in its unique evolution as the central focus of the intervention.[48]

The mentor role description should reflect the objectives of the mentoring program and the needs of the mentees. If, for instance, the organization wants to promote social participation and the improvement of language skills, local volunteers could be more suitable for the role. Conversely, where an organization prioritizes social interaction and integration in the host community -helping with paperwork, using public transport, finding an apartment, looking for a job, etc.- it can consider involving former victims of trafficking that have successfully integrated into the host country.

Case study

Survivor mentors and local volunteers

Different scenarios have been observed throughout the Libes pilots regarding the choice between former clients, co-nationals or local volunteers as mentors. Some clients expressed a preference for a mentor of the same nationality.[49] The perceived benefit lies in the fact that the mentor is familiar with the mentee's cultural background ("I don't have to explain things to her"), that they went through the same experience as a migrant, that they speak the same language and that the mentee can have a success story to look up to and draw inspiration from.[50][51]

Other beneficiaries have firmly rejected the possibility of being matched with a co-national, mainly due to safety concerns about the mentor's possible links with the environment where the exploitation took place, and fear of being judged or stigmatized.[52] Two persons with the same nationality or origin may, in reality, be culturally, ethically, or religiously incompatible. People who share the same language may come from neighboring communities or groups with long-running inter-ethnic, cultural, or religious tensions. In one case, the client rejected the option of a co-national as a buddy because she was eager to meet locals and gain a stronger sense of being part of the community.

When preparing for the match, the volunteer coordinator should refrain from making assumptions. They should ask questions to understand whether the mentee is more comfortable with a co-national or a local volunteer.

The mentor's motivation

The mentoring plan must be beneficial to all parties involved, and all participants must get a meaningful sense of worth in return for their time and effort. To ensure high levels of engagement, it is essential to explore how potential mentors see their role, their primary motivations and drives, and frame them within the mission of the organization they serve.

Voluntary involvement with victims of trafficking may occur for reasons that include:

- expressing values related to altruistic beliefs, i.e. "give something back"
- "contributing" to the cause or the community
- helping people in need
- developing new friendships and social networks
- practicing existing skills or developing new ones
- gaining practical experience and increasing employability prospects
- earning education credits
- trying something different either as a potential career option or career change
- effecting change in the local community
- enhancing own feelings of wellbeing or improving self-confidence.

In the recruitment phase, the mentor should be asked to set realistic expectations for their relationship. Throughout the support and monitoring process, the volunteer coordinator will go back to those motivations to see whether there has been a change, bearing in mind that the volunteer may experience unanticipated benefits.[53]

Equality, diversity, and inclusion

The organization has to plan and commit to promoting, as far as possible, **equality, diversity, and inclusion** at all stages of the program. Mentors can be of any gender identity or ethnic background. Still, special attention must be paid to the gendered nature of trafficking and the unique needs of victims belonging to gender minorities. Some studies recommend the involvement of female survivors in the provision of services to women trafficked for sexual exploitation.[54]

Some programs typically match individuals of the same gender and ethnic group. Others do not. The decision should be made in the program design phase. Individual differences in gender and ethnicity can reflect how the relationship impacts the mentee's trajectory and the social networks they enter.[55] It is thus essential to honor explicit preferences from the mentee.[56]

Case study

Gender-matching

In the case of women survivors of trafficking for sexual exploitation, it has been observed that, in general, female mentors are recruited to minimize trauma triggers and ensure a better sense of safety and trust. However, in the Libes pilots, there have been cases where women indicated a preference for a male buddy. Assuming that a person with a history of trafficking will always be at ease with a same-sex buddy minimizes the experiences of those abused by people of the same sex, whether in the trafficking circumstances or in different times of their life. Moreover, non-binary people may have preferences that can be difficult to anticipate. For all these reasons, gender-matching should not be predetermined. Instead, the volunteer coordinator should always ascertain the person's will and preferences and accommodate their requests.

What makes a good mentor?

When recruiting a mentor, several factors can be taken into account:

- what the person can offer in terms of time, skills, and opportunities
- that the purpose of the mentoring program is one that the volunteer feels passionate about
- whether a match can be made based on shared interest, as this typically results in a more successful pairing
- whether the objective of the mentoring program relates to the mentor's educational or occupational background
- that there are no logistical barriers for the match to meet in terms of transportation, schedule, and location[57]
- when engaging survivors of trafficking as mentors, that the person feels stable and has a genuine interest in helping other people who experienced trafficking, and that there is no indication that the experience might be retraumatizing for the mentor or the mentee,
- that the mentor and the mentee have the time to invest in the relationship, taking into account that the most impactful relationships involve consistent contact for a period that can go from 6 months to 1 or even 2 years [58][59]

There are several characteristics that a mentor should have to be effective. Here are some of the things to look for in a good mentor:

- positive attitude
- open-minded
- cultural and gender-sensitive
- able to adapt to the needs of the mentee

- open to feedback
- communicative
- good listener
- encouraging
- empathizing
- respectful
- being a role model
- realistic
- creative
- patient
- reliable.

The recruiting organization may also set boundaries to avoid specific categories of candidates, for instance:

- **occasional volunteers**: people with very limited spare time who cannot adequately invest in the relationship
- **minors,** as they may not be emotionally mature enough to deal with trauma survivors
- **former victims of trafficking** who are considered **not fit** for the role either because they do not have the necessary emotional stability and distance from their past or are at risk of being retraumatized
- **people who can harm** the mentees or the program in any way should be screened out through thorough background checks.

Recruitment tools and channels

The volunteer coordinator will create a role description.[60] The following is an example of terms of reference for a mentor:

Table - Example of mentor job description

Component	Definition
Job Title	Mentoring program at [organization's name]
Purpose	To engage in a one-to-one relationship that provides an opportunity for social integration and self-actualization to victims of trafficking through everyday life activities.
Key Responsibilities	Establish a positive, personal relationship with the mentee Help the mentee to develop life skills Assist the mentee in obtaining or accessing services and resources
Location	Organisation's premises/ public space, etc.
Supervision	volunteer coordinator the appointed social worker or case manager
Length of Appointment	1 year
Time Commitment	Bi-monthly for 2-3 hours

Qualifications	Essentials: Motivation for the mission Strong communication and social skills Active listening skills Open-minded Punctual and reliable Ability to commit to four-six hours monthly Certificate of good conduct /criminal record clearance Desirable: References Experience with vulnerable groups
Benefits	Training Insurance
Reporting line	The mentor is supported by the volunteer coordinator, who is in charge of: training guidance monitoring

Once the overall program framework is clear and the mentor's profile has been created, the volunteer coordinator will launch the recruitment phase. There are different ways to recruit mentors:

- **direct contacts and word of mouth,** for example, through volunteer centers, social welfare organizations, churches, companies, and NGOs
- i**nternal contacts** with former volunteers and/or former clients of the anti-trafficking organization
- **other mentoring programs** thatmay show examples for recruiting or recruitment channels the organization could use
- **announcements through websites and social media**.

Recruitment may include the following steps:

- candidate application
- criminal background check and related checks
- character reference checks
- face-to-face interview
- participation in pre-match training.[61]

Candidate applications

There are several important reasons for having mentors (and mentees) use written applications to apply for mentoring positions. The application should be designed to collect information for creating effective matches, including the candidate's motivation, personality, interests, hobbies, skills,[62] location, and availability. This information will be instrumental in constructing the initial pool of eligible mentors.

The screening process should include **background checks** for criminal history to ensure that the mentor meets all program safety requirements. It is essential to consider what criminal charges may disqualify someone from being a mentor. This is particularly true if the organization is recruiting survivors as mentors, as they may have criminal charges for their involvement in illegal activities they were compelled to commit as a direct consequence of being trafficked[63].

The interview

Mentor interviews are another critical component of the screening process. In-person interviews are the best way to assess the applicants' motivation, expectations, personal attitude, and skills.

Some examples of questions to ask during the interview:

- Why are you interested in mentoring?
- What are your expectations?
- What do you like to do in your spare time?
- What are you good at?
- What disappoints you? What would disappoint you in the program?
- What qualities do you care about in friends?
- What would your best friend say about you?
- Do you have learning goals?
- Do you respect time and appointments?
- Do you usually take the initiative to make an appointment with someone?
- What do you know about trafficking in human beings?
- Can you commit to participating in the training?
- What kind of activities would you suggest to your mentee for a first meeting?
- Do you have any questions for me?
- Do you have any special needs? [64]

These questions can be a good start for the interview. However, they can be prone to social desirability response bias. To avoid this pitfall, the interviewer may ask the candidate about circumstances where they have acted in a supporting role in someone's life.

Although candidates' place of residence is not a criterion of selection *per se*, some organizations may want to ensure geographic proximity to mentors, as survivors' social integration in their community is often a priority.

Managing expectations

There is no magic formula for the relationship to be successful. Some studies and programs put the stress on mentoring having the potential for being a driver of change and perhaps create a transformational effect.[65] Whereas this can sometimes happen, it is not the norm. It should not be set as an objective for the program or the buddies unless there is a clear understanding of what a transformational relationship entails.

Often matches end early because mentors think that they must have a massive instant impact on the mentee's life.[66] They may step into the relationship with very high expectations of "being here to fix something" or "being here to get my buddy out of these awful circumstances in their life." However, the road to recovery and reintegration is hilly and twisting. When the mentor doesn't see these results, they can get discouraged and walk away. For this reason, some organizations tend to reject applicants whose goals are too ambitious.[67] In the interest of fostering recovery, it is better to focus on the direction of travel rather than measuring or obsessing with the end goals.

Against this backdrop, a transformational relationship can be defined as one:

- based on trust, which can only grow from authenticity[68]
- making the mentee feel safe to enable their self-regulation in a way that suits their individual needs
- being rewarding, fun, and satisfying for all participants
- being about the journey, not the destination.

Internal policies

Candidates should be introduced to internal policies and procedures at the first interview, such as:

- informed consent and confidentiality form
- code of conduct
- volunteer agreement
- child protection policy
- other applicable internal regulations.

To ensure an ethical and safe mentoring process, **informed consent** for both the mentor's and mentee's participation is required. Seeking informed consent means explaining the project to the participants, the benefits and possible challenges (managing their expectations), ensuring that they are aware that they can withdraw from the activities at any stage if they change their mind. Informed consent should also indicate how personal data will be processed, in line with GDPR Regulations.[69]

Ethical rules must be applied to all staff, paid and unpaid, participating in the program. Volunteers are expected to:

-
  - familiarize with the organization's code of ethics and child protection policy
  - be personally accountable, and hold colleagues responsible for ethical behavior and practices
  - share concerns about possible ethical misconduct with the volunteer coordinator, human resources officer, or head of office
- respect the mentees' privacy and confidentiality

  • cooperate with investigations about reported unethical behavior or other misconduct.

The mentor will sign a **volunteer agreement** to clarify the expectations of both parties concerning time commitment, confidentiality, training, and adherence to the organization's policies and procedures. Typically, in the agreement, the organization commits to:

- provide a full induction and any training necessary for the volunteer role
- provide a named supervisor and regular supervision meetings
- provide space for the buddies' meetings, where needed
- reimburse certain expenses
- provide insurance coverage
- ensure health and safety conditions.

On the other hand, the volunteer is expected to commit to:

• follow the letter and spirit of the organization's policies and procedures, including the code of ethics, child protection policy, and other internal regulations,

• meet mutually agreed time commitments or give notice whenever this is not possible.

The frequency of contact between mentors and mentees develops as needed and can change. The aim is to establish a medium-term or a long-term commitment of minimum 6 months (for prescriptive mentoring) to 1 year (for developmental mentoring) to create impactful relationships. To this end, regular contact is necessary, especially at the beginning, for the match to get to know each other. Mentor and mentee will agree on the frequency and schedule of their meetings.[70]

Although the mentor may not be bound to the same clinical requirements as a professional caregiver, there are circumstances where they must **report** certain concerns, should they be made aware of them. Suppose a mentor believes something is worrying about the mentee's behavior. In that case, they should share this concern with the volunteer coordinator and not assume the role of a social worker to attempt to solve the problem. [71][72]

For example, mentors are typically required to disclose to prevent harm if they believe the client may harm themselves or others or appears to be impaired for any reasons (alcohol, drugs or dysregulation). Mandatory reporting requirements and ethical responsibilities must be spelled out in the volunteer agreement and code of conduct and openly discussed with the mentor and mentee.

Training

Induction and orientation are vital components of any successful mentoring program. Volunteers who receive training tend to be more satisfied, which, in turn, can promote greater retention, a key component of effective mentoring relationships and programs. All mentors need training and ongoing support, including survivors.[73] Training should not be limited to the pre-matching phase. Continuous training for mentors can significantly affect mentoring outcomes.

The volunteers might be new to the whole mentoring experience and the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings; thus, they need to receive appropriate insight and guidance. Group training provides the ideal setting for mentors to meet the team, get to know each other, share concerns and expectations, ask questions, and be introduced to the organization's culture, work, and environment.

In some instances, individual training sessions may be more appropriate, for example, when mentors join the program at different times. In this case, the volunteer coordinator will consider organizing an informal gathering for mentors later for team-building purposes. It might be good to offer regular opportunities for mentors get-togethers to discuss common problems and socialize.

Ideally, mentors should be trained before their first meeting with the mentee. The workshop should be delivered by the volunteer coordinator, with the help of social workers or facilitators.

The following is an example of training modules:

Table - Example of training

	Content
Session 1	-about human trafficking, -purpose of the mentoring program -mentors' goals for mentoring -program requirements (e.g., match length, match frequency, duration of visits, protocols for missing or being late to meetings, match termination) -document checklist -ethics and safety issues
Session 2	-initiating the mentoring relationship -relationship development and maintenance -effective communication -effective closure of the mentoring relationship
Session 3	-setting boundaries -available support for mentors -conflict resolution -self-care and vicarious trauma

Intentionality is imperative when developing the training program. Some sensitive issues to address when working with victims of human trafficking are:

Trauma. When mentors are aware that the mentee is a victim of human trafficking, they should have a basic understanding of trauma to be able to recognize the signs and respond in appropriate ways. [74] People affected by trauma can shut down emotionally, may find it hard to have a casual conversation or crack jokes. They may often feel tired due to disrupted sleep patterns or forget about appointments. These behaviors may be confusing or disheartening for a mentor, as they might take it personally or start to doubt whether the mentee has a genuine interest in the relationship. Trainers will explain how certain reactions may be linked to the person's state and should not be taken personally and that mentees often need time to get comfortable with the idea of having a buddy.[75]

Whereas, by necessity, mentors need to be informed about trauma, they should also be reminded that they are not trauma experts. They should refrain from trying to influence the mentee's behavior or how they feel. The trainers will promote a strengths perspective that emphasizes a "what is right with you" versus "what is wrong with you" approach. They will encourage reflection on how trauma might be playing a role in a situation or behavior[76] while stressing that the focus of the relationship should never be on the past and the experience of exploitation. Instead, the mentor can play a supportive role allowing the buddy to regain their wellbeing in the present moment. Practical tips that can be shared with mentors include:

- making the meetings **predictable**: sharing plans in advance and explaining what will happen can go a long way to creating a sense of safety. Showing the website of a place or an activity the mentor wants to share with the mentee can alleviate the anxiety of trying something for the first time

- finding or creating **safe** physical environments, for example, by avoiding specific neighborhoods, underground space, or simply rooms whose exits are not visible or accessible
- employing invitational **language** that encourages choice („If you like," „perhaps, " „if it feels right for you")

Boundaries. Setting appropriate boundaries from the outset is essential for the good of both parties. Common pitfalls that can move the relationship past the limits of appropriateness include:

- the mentee becoming dependent on the mentor
- the mentor coming to believe they can "save" the mentee
- the mentor trying to overprotect the mentee to the point where they are prevented from learning from their mistakes
- the mentor assuming the role of social worker
- the mentee misinterpreting instances of physical contact or seemingly benign gestures or comments.

Maintaining clarity about boundaries is not always easy. Mentors should be mindful of situations in which their buddies disclose information that a professional caregiver would better handle. "Training and supervision can help volunteers recognize the boundaries and limits of their expertise and seek assistance from program staff when needed."[77]

Cultural differences. Trainers may address cultural diversity and the way cultural norms and values affect communication. Mentors can reflect on how people of different cultures use different body language, meanings, signs, and symbols. They can explore the differences between direct and indirect communication styles, how conflict can occur if the two parties are unaware of the other's style and how to interact across cultures positively.[78]

Vicarious trauma and self-care. People who are close to those living with trauma can get emotionally overwhelmed and experience, to some degree, a form of emotional dysregulation. This phenomenon is known as vicarious trauma.[79]Mentors should be able to recognize indicators and risk factors and follow self-care strategies.[80] If, at some point, they feel that, despite their best intentions, being close to their buddies is hampering their path, they should consider setting the project aside for a time.[81]

Case study

Trauma and boundaries

A social worker reported that, after receiving trauma-informed training, a survivor mentor tried to pass this information on to her buddy. She felt inspired by her new knowledge and eager to advise how her buddy could overcome trauma. However, the mentee was neither comfortable nor willing to speak about her past and refused to see the mentor again.

A person may not want to open up about their history for different reasons. They may want to protect their privacy, fear stigma or judgment, wish to forget their past and move on with their lives, or they may be using avoidance as a trauma coping strategy. Whatever the reason, the mentoring relationship may help the survivor take their awareness to the present moment, develop their new life narrative, and show that other people believe in their potential to recover and ultimately thrive.

As one social worker in the Libes project observed, "There is nothing our clients hate more than being called victims."[82]

Preparing the mentees

Like mentors, mentees should be prepared, as they might be new to the experience and the concept of mentoring. The induction helps them understand the potential benefits of being mentored, set goals for themselves, and manage their expectations. They must understand the commitment, be willing to invest time and energy in a mentoring relationship, participate in activities and collaborate on goals.

Case study

"Why would someone spend time with me?"

Some social workers reported having a hard time explaining to their clients what a mentor is and does. One client responding to the Libes monitoring questionnaire said:

"To me, it was not all clear what a mentor is before I actually had one. Now I am very happy about the relationship I have with him, and I want to recommend it to other people."[83]

Another client [84]commented, "He's more than a buddy. He's a friend. He is my best friend and helps me a lot."

Some clients seem to struggle with the notion that someone other than paid staff may want to spend time with them. Some are simply not familiar with the concept of volunteering. It may be helpful to use ideas that they can relate to. For example, some social workers talk about the mentor's motivations rather than labeling their roles (friend, caregiver, helper, etc.). They explain that volunteers seek meaningful human connection and kinship, that they are curious and compassionate people.

Several practitioners emphasized that clients must be explained that the mentor is there "to walk with them," not to "do things for them," thus highlighting the buddy's role as "enabler," as someone who believes in them and help them navigate daily life. These concepts are essential to avoid the pitfalls of dependency and other unhealthy relationships.

The clients must be **psychologically and emotionally ready** to engage in a relationship with a mentor. They shall get a sense of the contribution they can make to the relationship in terms of their roles and responsibilities, existing boundaries, respect for the privacy and confidentiality of the mentor, and what to do in the event they don't feel comfortable in the match. The preparatory work is critical to enhancing the likelihood of their commitment to the relationship and their sense of agency.

A **social desirability bias** may push clients to join the program only to please their case manager, not appear ungrateful towards the organization that helped them, or simply because they have a hard time saying no. It should be made clear to them that their participation in the program is entirely voluntary and that, should they decide not to register, there will be no consequences for them or the benefits they are be entitled to. They must be told that they are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason. These terms must be part of the consent form, read out and explained to them, if necessary, and signed.

Mentees do not need to be trained as thoroughly as mentors, but preparation is equally important. The induction can be delivered in group or individually and may include topics such as:

- purpose of mentoring

- how the match is made
- the format of the meetings
- what the mentors will commit to, their role and boundaries
- mentee goals and needs
- expectations of both mentee and mentor
- ethical and safety issues
- monitoring and support
- closure of relationship

This meeting can also provide an opportunity to address any safety concerns the mentee may have. For example, the person may feel safest to meet at the organization's premises, rather than a public place, to avoid certain areas, or they may report feeling uncomfortable meeting one-to-one, in which case the volunteer coordinator shall consider group or team meetings, at least initially.[85] The volunteer coordinator may also encourage the client to be open about what they don't want, for instance, to be touched, be too close, take public transport, ride in the car with the mentor, meeting in the safe house, etc.

Case study

The mentee's motivation

Mentees were reported wanting to join a mentoring program for reasons such as

-having someone only for them, as opposed to sharing the care and attention they get in the safe house or support program[86]

-having a chance to meet locals, in the case of people with a migrant background –„ It is good because I live here alone without a family, so it's nice to meet a local and to learn about Belgium and get to know people. "[87]

-receiving help and guidance

-going out and doing things they wouldn't do on their own -„I like to spend time in the pool and go bowling with my buddy", „I want to do more things"[88]

The mentoring relationship lifecycle

Every mentoring relationship is unique, but most follow a similar path that can be broken into four commonly identified stages: contemplation, initiation, growth and maintenance, and closure.[89]

Contemplation and initiation

In the **contemplation** stage, the potential mentor or mentee considers entering the program. They learn about terms and conditions, picture themselves in the role, and make an informed decision about their participation and commitment.

The **initiation** stage involves submitting an application, completing screening and training, and, finally, being matched with a mentor or mentee.

With the help of the social worker, the volunteer coordinator will liaise with the mentees and make the match[90]. For both survivor mentors or local volunteers, considerations of their qualifications should not be limited to education, previous experience working with vulnerable groups, and commitment to maintaining the mentoring relationship. They should also consider personality, interests, strengths, and potential fit with the mentees.

There are different ways of matching, with pros and cons:

Self-matching: mentees will receive details of the selected mentors and will make a choice

PRO: mentees have "voice and choice" with possible greater engagement in the program.[91]

CON: the mentee could make an emotional choice and overlook other mentor's important qualities and assets.

Coordinator matching: the coordinator makes the match based on the information collected from the mentors and mentees

PRO: the volunteer coordinator has a broader view of the expected outcome of the mentoring relationship

CON: when the mentor and mentee meet, they may not like each other.

Collective matching: a group meeting or an information session is organized for a small group of mentors and mentees

PRO: to some mentees, the group setting may be less intimidating than one-to-one meetings and facilitate ice-breaking while avoiding push-back. To some survivors, a group setting may also feel safer.

CON: this option de-emphasizes individual needs and preferences.

The beginning of any relationship is often awkward, and mentoring relationships are no exception. When the match is created, the **first meeting** can be exciting but also nerve-wracking. It should take place in a calm and neutral space in the presence of the volunteer coordinator or social worker. It is recommended that the mentor and mentee are briefed in advance so that everyone knows what to expect.

At this introductory meeting, the volunteer coordinator will guide the conversation around the goals and expectations that everyone has. Mentors and mentees will get to know each other, discuss the frequency of the meetings, complete the paperwork and agree on a monitoring schedule with the volunteer coordinator.

At this stage, individuals do their utmost to present the best version of themselves. They might try to avoid conflicts at all costs, use their best manners, avoid controversial topics, and portray themselves in the most favorable light. Their objective is to reduce uncertainty about each other.

Structured activities can give mentors a starting point to begin their relationship, whereas, later in the relationship, the meetings may happen more spontaneously.

The volunteer coordinator can propose a list of activities, for example:

- visit a museum, aquarium, planetarium, art gallery, natural museum, etc.
- do sports, go jogging, or ride bikes
- visit the public library
- take a walk in a park or explore the town
- take a historical tour (bus or walking) of the city
- go to a cultural or sports event
- watch a movie
- go grocery shopping, cook a meal, including typical dishes from the mentee's country of origin
- explore public transportation
- if the mentee is looking for a job or a house, the mentor can offer help with the task, for instance, to simulate a job interview (prepare questions and answers) or search for rental listings
- talk over the telephone to improve formal conversation skills

- if the mentee is having a hard time with paperwork, the mentor could offer help reading administrative letters or bills
- meet up with other buddies
- visit an animal shelter
- help with homework (language class) and practice language skills
- read the newspaper together

The buddies can also meet in a group setting with the help of structured and fun activities. Icebreakers are helpful for the first meetings, for example, having mentors and mentees interview each other.

The volunteer coordinator should contact the mentor within the first two weeks of the match, then follow up periodically for the next few months. Once the relationship appears to be well-established, the volunteer coordinator might contact the participants once a month to ensure that the match continues to progress and address any problems.[92]

Consolidation

Following the relatively short initial stage of the match, the pair tends to focus on getting to know each other, find similar interests, discuss expectations, and start to form bonds. In this **consolidation** stage, the mentee is likely to appear hesitant, detached, or unappreciative of the relationship. This guarded attitude can be a sign of insecurity, stemming from their emotional state, the novelty of the experience or their difficulty communicating or connecting. The client may challenge the relationship or start testing boundaries, often out of their mistrust for others. The mentor will have to show patience, consistency in their behaviors and communication, demonstrate empathy and respect, and use active listening.

The mentee's attitude will gradually take a positive turn as they realize that the relationship is genuine and sincere. The mentor should refrain from speeding up the process or reaching milestones too quickly by going out of their way to accommodate the mentee.[93][94] Pushing can have the opposite effect.

Once trust has been established, the relationship can develop and mature. At this stage, it can be expected that the mentee becomes more comfortable taking the lead in choosing activities, and meetings will become more collaborative rather than mentor-led. The pair will be more at ease, comfortable showing their true selves and sharing, while boundaries may change. When issues arise within the relationship, the volunteer coordinator can assist mentors with advice, training resources, individual support, and mediation.

Closure

The program must have a procedure in place to manage **closure**. The relationship can end for any number of reasons, both internal and external to the pair:

•**mentor and mentee do not get along**. When the match finds it difficult to connect or build trust, if they are dissatisfied with the relationship, experience communication difficulties, or have negative feelings, they should not hesitate to seek support from the volunteer coordinator. Sometimes two people just don't "click." If the coordinator cannot troubleshoot the relationship, the match may be ended prematurely. Regardless of the reasons, there might be negative consequences for mentees regarding self-esteem, disappointment, and guilt.[95] A re-match should be possible for relationships that ended prematurely at the mentor's request or the mentee's. There is some evidence suggesting possible adverse outcomes for mentees who experience premature closure and have been re-matched.[96] Each case shall be evaluated individually

• either the mentor or the mentee **withdraws from the program**. Changed life circumstances make it difficult or impossible for one of the participants to continue the relationship -one partner moves to another city, a change in professional or family responsibility, a severe medical condition, etc.

• the mentee reaches a level of **self-sufficiency** that mentoring is no longer needed

• the **program is over**.

The **dissolution** phase of the relationship must be planned. Participants must be offered a chance to prepare for the parting and assess the experience, while their contribution to the relationship must be acknowledged.

To properly manage the closure stage, the volunteer coordinator and the social worker can:

- talk about closure from the beginning of the match
- in the event of issues that cannot be resolved, having some notice help mentees handle closure and manage their feelings[97]
- help the match express their feelings, such as grief, denial, resentment, satisfaction, achievement, etc. This can be done through exit meetings where participants reflect on the impact of the experience and provide feedback to the organization about the quality and satisfaction with the program experience. The pair may be asked questions such as *What was your favorite activity? What wouldn't you do again? Did you achieve the goals you set for yourself? What did you learn from each other? What will you take from the relationship?* [98]

- provide opportunities for saying goodbye in a healthy, respectful, and affirming way
- inviting mentors and mentees to a special activity or event for their last meeting
- explain that they don't have to stop seeing each other if they don't want to, and suggest appropriate ways for staying in touch when the program comes to an end.[99]

Recognition

The commitment and efforts of mentors should be acknowledged and recognized regularly throughout the program. Recognizing the work of volunteers and celebrating their achievements is crucial for any organization that wants to retain its volunteers and attract new ones.

Recognition can come in different forms, from the informal thank you and unplanned treat, to more formal events. Here are some examples:

- say "thank you "often, and mean it
- use informal, personal forms of recognition such as thank you notes
- tell the mentors about how their work has made a difference
- host an annual recognition of mentors
- host a special event with the Board of Directors or the Organization's Ambassadors
- celebrate International Volunteer Day with a volunteer breakfast
- have a "Volunteer of the Month" and, with their informed consent, post their personal story on your web page or blog to inspire others.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring is about observing and keeping track of progress, hurdles, and setbacks. The volunteer coordinator shall support the matches by providing ongoing advice, problem-solving, guidance, and helpful resources throughout the mentoring experience.

The monitoring process will be a mix of:

- periodic check-ins with the volunteer coordinator
- mentors and mentees' self-assessment
- an overall assessment of the mentoring program to be carried out by the program management team.

Periodic check-ins with mentors and mentees are needed to determine progress' and address challenges along the way. They can be organized either bilaterally with mentors and mentees or with both participants, depending on personal preferences or the organization's resources and schedule. It is recommended to find a balance between the two. No matter what monitoring framework is in place, the volunteer coordinator will keep records of meetings and activities. Through consistent monitoring, staff can detect challenges and anticipate closure. Where the relationship is coming to an end, the volunteer coordinator can step in to prepare the buddies and help prevent any negative consequences.

Case study

Mentoring apps

Some organizations use an app to document contacts between buddies. The volunteer provides basic information about a meeting or contact through the app and may ask for support.

The overall assessment of the mentoring program can be conducted on two levels:

The program itself

It is crucial to take stock of the experience and lessons learned. Positive results should be highlighted to strengthen the program and reward mentors, while less successful outcomes can pave the way for introducing adjustments and improvements. Programs should include an evaluation plan to determine indicators and measure program results. Possible indicators are participants' satisfaction, the number of mentors recruited and available for matching, participation in training opportunities, time spent waiting to be matched, the frequency and duration of match meetings, overall match length, and adherence to monitoring and support procedures. Checklists can be a simple and effective tool to gauge progress and evaluate outcomes.[100]

The mentor-mentee relationship

Mentors and mentees can be encouraged towards self-assessment, examine themselves and their connection, and determine how much progress they have made. To this end, the volunteer coordinator can help them create indicators in the initial phase of the match. For instance, to assess effective participation in the program, the basic requirements might be that mentors and mentees can meet with a specific frequency. Participants can be invited to think about and even write down how they feel about the relationship, whether they believe there is a connection, if they feel respected, share information, find the relationship well balanced, if the relationship meets their initial expectations, etc. The match may also be encouraged to take the time to set at least one achievable common goal by asking what the two of them want to get out of this experience or what personal goals they have set for themselves individually.[101]

1. MeMoRe project https://www.memore.be ↑
2. ASSIST project https://cutt.ly/pz67x7C, ↑
3. The EU-funded project „Life Beyond the Shelter“ (LIBES) is designed to help victims of trafficking build resilience as they move from shelter life to independence www.Libes.org ↑
4. The terms victims, survivors, clients, buddies and mentees have been used interchangeably in the text to indicate victims of human trafficking. ↑
5. Spencer, R., Collins, M., Ward, R., & Smashnaya, S. (2010). Mentoring for Young People Leaving Foster Care: Promise and Potential Pitfalls. Social Work, 55(3), 225-234. Retrieved April 13, 2021, from http://www.jstor.org/stable/23719078 ↑
6. The 2021 European Commission’s Strategy on Human Trafficking recognizes mentoring as a valuable tool for integration and encourages „Member States to put in place community-led and peer-mentoring programmes involving victims of trafficking, offering opportunities for education, employment and empowerment.“ COM(2021) 171 final ↑
7. DuBois, D. L., Portillo, N., Rhodes, J., Silverthorn, N., & Valentine, J. (2011), *How effective are mentoring programs for youth? A systematic assessment of the evidence*, Psychological Science in the Public Interest, 57-91. ↑
8. We are grateful to the colleagues from the EU-funded project ASSIST, coordinated by the Irish Immigration Council, and staff from De Regenboog Group in the Netherlarnds, for sharing their invaluable experience about running mentoring programs for vicitms of human trafficking. ↑
9. The terms mentor and buddy have been used interchangeably. ↑
10. Libes monitoring findings MT3 and MT5, collected by Payoke, June 2021. The questionnaire was administered to 31 clients (85% female, 18.5% male, 1.5% non-binary), and 22 social workers (81% female, 19% male). For more information about this data, please contact the authors. ↑
11. Youth Collaboratory (2018), Critical Elements of Mentoring, www.youthcollaboratory.org ↑
12. For more information: 6 Guiding Principles To A Trauma-Informed Approach https://www.cdc.gov/cpr/infographics/6_principles_trauma_info.htm ↑
13. CISS, MDPL, CyRC, ALC, (2019), Guide: Victim-centered Approach for Frontlines Services, SafeHouses ↑
14. Data collection on trafficking in human beings in the EU (2020), European Commission ↑

15. According to the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE),integration is a process that is Dynamic and two-way: it places demands on both receiving societies and the individuals and/or the communities concerned. From a refugee perspective, integration requires a preparedness to adapt to the lifestyle of the host society without having to lose one's own cultural identity. From the point of view of the host society, it requires a willingness to adapt public institutions to changes in the population profile, accept refugees as part of the national community, and take action to facilitate access to resources and decision-making processes. " ECRE (2002), Position on the Integration of Refugees in Europe ↑

16. Laura Parés Martin, Fundacion Surt (2021), interviewed by Payoke. ↑

17. Lancaster University (2018), Data collection on trafficking in human beings in the EU, European Union ↑

18. "A World I Can Trust" The needs of third country national victims of trafficking transitioning from shelter to independent living, Life Beyond the Shelter, Libes, 2020, https://Libes.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/needs-assessment.pdf ↑

19. Two partners in the Libes consortium, Fundacion Surt and Solwodi Germany, are women organizations. They have ensured that gender considerations are mainstreamed in all project outcomes. ↑

20. Duetch, N., Reitz-Krueger, C., Henneberger, A., Erhlich, V., & Lawrence, E. (2017). "It gave me ways to solve problems and ways to talk to people": Outcomes from a combined group and one-on-one mentoring program for early adolescent girls. Journal of Adolescent Research, 32(3), 291-322. doi: 10.1177/07435584186630813 ↑

21. Blöcher, Eyselein, Wells (2020), The Integration of Female Nigerian Survivors of Human Trafficking for the Purpose of Sexual Exploitation - Handbook for Practitioners – project INTAP https://intap-europe.eu/wp-content/uploads/Handbook_Nigerian_SoT.pdf ↑

22. Youth Collaboratory (2019), Mentoring Youth in the Foster Care System Toolkit https://youthcollaboratory.org/toolkit/mentoring-youth-foster-care ↑

23. The Libes need assessment "A World I can Trust" (2020) identified 8 main areas in which people transitioning from shelter life to independence need reinforced support: 1) House-search; 2) Household management; 3) Public Administration; 4) Finance, 5) Self-care and security, 6) Economic inclusion, 7) Social and communication skills, 8) Family. ↑

24. The social work literature views empowerment as a process involving clients' movement from feelings of helplessness to a sense of control over their behaviors and events in their lives. Rankin P. Exploring and describing the strength/empowerment perspective in social work. Journal of Social Work Theory and Practice. 2007;14:1-25 ↑

25. Talens, C., Landman, C. (2003), Good Practices on (re)Integration of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings in Six European Countries, BlinN, Change, Oxfam GB ↑

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27. Leysen, Robbert, ArmenTeKort, personal interview, May 2021. ↑

28. Youth Collaboratory (2019), Ibidem. ↑

29. Gotian, R. R. (2016). Mentoring the mentors: Just because you have the title doesn't mean you know what you are doing. College Student Journal, 50(1), 1-4. ↑

30. Dubois, David & Felner, Jennifer. (2016). National Mentoring Resource Center Population Review: Mentoring for Youth with Backgrounds of Involvement in Commercial Sex Activity. 10.13140/RG.2.2.34771.37923. ↑

31. Human Trafficking Task Force e-Guide, US Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime, https://www.ovcttac.gov/ ↑

32. Countryman-Roswurm, K. (2015). Rise, unite, support: Doing "no harm" in the anti-trafficking movement. Slavery Today Journal: A Multidisciplinary Journal of Human Trafficking Solutions, 2, 1. ↑

33. Libes need assessment “A World I can Trust” (2020) ↑

34. Van der Kolk, B., (2014), The Body Keeps the Score, Penguin ↑

35. Survivor-leaders are defined as those who survive, thrive, overcome, and prosper to a degree in which they are able to lend a helping hand to others like themselves (Countryman-Roswurm, 2012; Lloyd, 2011; Marr, 2013). ↑

36. Countryman-Roswurm, K., Ibidem ↑

37. Leysen, Robbert, ArmenTeKort, ibidem ↑

38. Libes (2020) A World I can trust, ibidem ↑

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Life Beyond the Shelter

"Life Beyond the Shelter" is an EU-funded project designed to ensure positive long-term integration for third-country national victims of trafficking in the host society by reinforcing support in the transition from shelter life to independence

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