



EVS

IN

ITALY



PROJECT PLACE: Centro Trentino di Solidarietà

DURATION: 6 months

DATE OF PROJECT START: April 2014

PROJECT ENVIRONMENT:

CTS wants to propose an opportunity to improve the quality of life for its guests by placing them in a particular social and environmental context. The Centre aims to make optimum use of the resources offered by the territory, to help ensure the competitiveness of rural areas. The goal is to use the cultural resources with wisdom, foresight and effectiveness, especially considering that they tend to be scarce. It is therefore necessary to think of a type of exploitation which can produce impacts in several areas, such as economic, social and cultural.

Among the local traditions, the traditional ways of work are valuable signs that remember us of simple way of life marked by rhythms largely disappeared. Sometimes, those are activities that suffered a cultural loss in the traditional sense: the figure of the artisan, the peasant, the farmer. Those figures has in fact changed anthropologically and also the activities carried out by those have lost their role with the advance of industrial civilization. But working is not only produce something for the market, but also to discover one's own capacity to feel useful to the community, to develop friendships, to establish dialogues, to gain autonomy of life ... Creativity, which is the basic element to build the artistic product, has a prominent place in human development, allowing the expression of the inner imaginative world. These then become the basis of the occupational activities of therapeutic communities (both types: in the farm work as well as in handcraft inside laboratories).

The work of young volunteers will be within the therapeutic community, especially Casa Giano, where they will also have their accommodation. Volunteers will live in community with the guests and other staff members. Therefore, it is a very intense experience from a human point of view but at the same time, very rewarding and enriching. EVS volunteers will live inside "Casa Giano", a live-in community. This building is composed by an outer field (with vineyards, olive trees, apiary, small farm, pot herbs...) with 2 houses, each one of 3 floors.

1 - House n° 1: it is only for beneficiaries - there they take care of the very first welcome and the most intense part of the healing process. It is decision of the beneficiaries to be there. All therapy activities, sharing with the group, and bureaucratic activities are developed in this house.

2- House n° 2: it is only for visiting guests, volunteers, educators, and beneficiaries at the very end of their process. This building has just been renovated and therefore has been used for a short time.

The two buildings are close to each other. Volunteers will live in the top floor of “House n° 2” (the whole floor will be just for them). This floor has 3 bedrooms, a living room, a bathroom (all of which to be used only by volunteers). Educators, visitors, and beneficiaries will live on the other floors (also equipped with showers and bathrooms). Thus volunteers will have not only a single room, but will also enjoy an environment of privacy from the activities and the live-in community.

It is important to highlight that beneficiaries living there are at the ending stage of their healing process (they are totally independent and do not need professional follow up). They are there exclusively because they need some more time to regain self-confidence and be able to take the last step – reintegration in society. They do not put in difficulty the rest of the guests of this house.

On the first floor of “House n° 2” there is a shared kitchen fully equipped (cooking facilities, fridge, plates, ...). As stated, it is a shared space but only with people living in this building, who are not many. Beneficiaries normally use the kitchen of “House n° 1”, where they live. The kitchen is used by everybody only for breakfast. Lunches and dinners of educators and beneficiaries take place in a canteen (where food is prepared together; then they eat and wash the dishes always together). During the days of activities, volunteers will be asked to share one meal together with the others in the canteen (mostly lunch – which will be considered part of the activity). These are considered essential moments to share and socialize. For the other meals (free days and dinners, for example) volunteers will be independent in cooking in the kitchen of “House n° 2” (which is not used by the others). Until 20:30 in “House n° 2” there are no educators or beneficiaries (until this time they are all busy in their activities). If night activities are envisaged (movies, games, etc.) they will take place in “House n° 1”. Therefore if the volunteer doesn't want to participate, s/he will have his/her own privacy. There are some specific rules inside the live-in community which need to be respected by volunteers, thus guaranteeing the wellbeing for everyone: alcohol and drugs are not allowed, and neither are external visitors unless under exceptional circumstances and under agreement with the supervisor. Intimate relationship with beneficiaries are also not permitted. It is important to underline that InCo organization - Interculturalità & Comunicazione has visited the buildings to check on the accommodation and, taking into consideration the principles of the program, indications by ANG, as well as the accommodations of other EVS host organizations, it has been considered totally adequate. Unfortunately at the moment the organization cannot rent a private flat for volunteers because Trento is a very expensive town. Other possibilities have been discussed together (like the student house) but it was not possible to implement them right now. For years now CTS has been interested in the EVS program but the difficulty to deal with was as to the accommodation: “House n° 1” was not considered appropriate. Only now, with the renovation work to an end and “House n°2” ready, hosting EVS volunteers can become a reality.

Casa Giano has 2 houses on 3 levels each: one of them is dedicated exclusively to users - First reception and treatment. The second one is partially dedicated to users but also to workers and visitors. It's surrounded by countryside (olive trees, vineyards, gardens, herbs) that have been cultivated by users and workers together. Volunteers will have a single room on the last floor of the second house (newly renovated). The other rooms of the house will be occupied by operators, eventual visitors and some users in the final stage of the reintegration procedure (ie,

completely independent and without need of accompaniment). There are common bathrooms (on each floor) as well as a kitchen at the disposition of the volunteers where they can have breakfast and cook in non-working days (if they wish). It's foreseen that the other meals will be consumed in the canteen, together with the community that self-manages it: those are considered very important moments of sharing and socializing. There are some specific rules within the community that must be followed by volunteers in order to ensure the welfare of all: it's not allowed to drink alcohol and use any kind of drug; it's not possible to host outsiders in the house with the only in exceptional cases agreed with the mentor; intimate relationships with guests are not admitted.

Casa Giano is located a few kilometers from Trento (Vezzano - a small village and a bit isolated) and it's easily reached by bus (20 minutes from Trento). Trento is the capital of Trentino and one of the cities with the best quality of life in Italy. It is located in the Adige Valley, a region characterized by mountains and all sports / tourism related. The local culture has been strongly influenced by the Austrian one.

Volunteers will have free board and loading for the duration of the service. They will be accommodated in the Casa Giano where most of the volunteer's activities will be developed. From Vezzano, it takes only 20 minutes by bus to Trento - where the office of CTS and also Casa Lamar are located. They will have a bus card in order to move freely. There are foreseen information and formation activities regarding psychological difficulties and pathological addiction. CTS is available to offer an Italian language course suited to the needs of volunteers as well as personal support with a dedicated mentor. Further support activities and intercultural trainings will be managed also by the InCo. The training on pathological addictions and its difficulties held to the volunteers will be provided by trained staff, supported by professionals who deal with the problem. The course provides training on the specific subject as well as meeting with the guests willing to talk about their experience. All this will be done together with the workers, other volunteers and qualified staff. The EVS volunteers will be integrated in the daily life of the community; they will develop activities with the guests and staff in the various areas of the house (agriculture, livestock, laundry, therapeutic handcraft workshops). There are foreseen several practical training initiatives, in particular aimed at pruning of vines and olives, apple trees, opportunities for agricultural and environment recovery (with reference to the ancient crops and the care and maintenance of forest and undergrowth).

Practical activities will be divided basically between:

> Occupational and leisure time activities inside the therapeutic community (including agricultural activities such as animal care, harvest of grapes, management of olive trees, vegetables and herbs' gardens; trips on weekends, recreational activities, therapeutic workshops - for example ceramic -, etc.).

> Dissemination and prevention activities: participation and collaboration with the various events promoted by CTS locally (such as exhibitions, parties, work in schools, etc.). The role of the volunteers will be to assist the staff of CTS and users in carrying out various activities but especially these related with occupational therapy. The act of "do together" with patients and staff becomes the possibility of learning, training and socialization: enriching for the volunteer and therapeutic to those who need it. After a period of integration and adaptation, and understanding of needs of users, the volunteers will be more than welcome to

bring their own ideas and points of view, enriching then the activities together with the community as well as those for education and prevention. The presence of the volunteer - a young person of a different culture and environment, full of motivation - will be very positive for the therapeutic community, not only for users but also for the staff. On the other hand, the volunteers will be able to develop a set of soft skills acquired from the experience of being abroad, as well as being a volunteer, living in community, etc.; in addition, professional skills could be also be developed: managing the difficulties, recovery of addiction, occupational therapy, agriculture, etc...

It's foreseen that the volunteer do a service between 30 to 38 hours per week, including practical activities, meetings, training seminars and language course. They will have 2 consecutive days off and 2 days of vacation per month.

The type of users involved as well as the activity proposed to the volunteers require some special characteristics to ensure volunteer's own inclusion, participation and learning opportunities in a serene and constructive way. It's important that volunteers are mature and emotionally stable. To this specific reality, it's essential to be open to interpersonal relationships, wanting to live in community, sharing spaces and many group moments. It's necessary that the volunteers are willing to perform outdoor activities (including body work on the farm) as well as other occupational activities (preparation of meals, cleaning, etc.): everybody inside the community do those things (patients and workers) - working together becomes therapeutic for users and a unique learning opportunity to volunteers (only in this way they will be able to understand the context, the difficulties and needs). It would be pleased that volunteers have some sense of initiative and creativity because they will be involved in leisure activities and also in those related with information about addiction problems and prevention.

The practical activity of volunteers is expected to be very beautiful, but also very intense from different points of view. Taking all this into consideration, the selection of volunteers will be a very important moment. Motivation, expectations and characteristics of volunteers must be evaluated together. On the other hand, it is important to provide to candidates accurate information about the structure, type of user, accommodation, activities, ensuring then a compatibility between expectations and learning opportunities. The selection will be managed by InCo and together, we will evaluate the interested candidates. InCo will use its network of international contacts as well as the website, Facebook and other newsletter to disseminate vacancies. The evaluation of the curriculum vitae, cover letter and evaluation of the sending organization will be the first steps of a pre-selection. The short listed candidates chosen by InCo will be then evaluated by our directive board. If the match between candidate's motivation and opportunities offered is considered appropriate, a video conference will be organized for further discussion.

We are open to collaborate with sending organizations of any country. It will be essential, however, that the partners are reliable and very careful in the preparation of volunteers, including an ongoing personal support and promptly collaboration in case of difficulty. As a first experience, we would like to host two volunteers. In the future though, there is a possibility and availability to host 4.

The proposed activities for EVS volunteers do not put them in any risky situation. Volunteers will be informed how to behave in any (unlikely) event of an emergency during the volunteer

activities as well as inside the accommodation. They will go through a period of coaching and training in order to see and understand how to perform the activity as well as how behave towards the patients (which in any case are not dangerous at all). Volunteers will participate in regular meetings to plan practical activities which correspond also to formal moments of confrontation with operators and other staff members of CTS. The mentor will always be available to volunteers and organize meeting moments and evaluations. InCo Association will promote at least four formal meetings with the volunteers together with other EVS volunteers coordinated in Trento: those will be not only intercultural training meetings but also an opportunity to evaluate the project, favour volunteers to speak with someone not directly included in CTS and also to meet other young volunteers performing a similar experience.

We believe that the proper preparation and mentoring of volunteers is essential to prevent situations of hardship or crisis. In any case, in the eventual case of an emergency, the work supervisors, the mentor, the EVS coordinator of InCo as well as the sending organization will work together to provide the appropriate assistance regarding the situation. It is not expected the participation of underage volunteers.

MOTIVATION AND EVS EXPERIENCE:

The active participation of volunteers inside the therapeutic facilities of CTS has always been considered a valuable resource. We already had 4 young volunteers from the National Civil Service but they were not hosted inside the structure seen that they were from Trento or close by cities. Besides that, there are other local spontaneous volunteers developing services in our organization including boy-scouts, parish groups, familiars, etc. The local volunteers collaborates with the staff's as for example accompanying patients to medical appointments, preparing meals, organizing social events to provide patients with moments of entertainment and human contact. There were implemented training programs and updating courses for volunteers, also through the promotion of specific projects aimed to raise awareness and involve people interested in social care issues.

Those good experiences motivated us to enrich culturally our activities through welcoming foreign volunteers. At the same time, this would provide opportunities for young people to develop skills, but especially different approaches to the issues addressed. Doing occupational activities together with the staff and guests, the young volunteer will experience a different model of rehabilitation of adults, having then the chance to reduce prejudices, compare approaches, etc. Motivation, points of views and new ideas brought by the volunteers will be very enriching for our staff and the local community involved in the dissemination activities (such as events, interventions in schools, etc.).

With the support of InCo Association, we will structure the hosting project in compliance with all the conditions laid down in the Youth in Action Program. In addition, InCo will serve as administrative and bureaucratic support, integrating the training and support given to the volunteers and the relationship with foreign partners. Given that there are other organizations in Trentino region hosting EVS volunteers, we will also be in contact with them to exchange best practices and put volunteers in touch with each other.

DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATION:

The “Centro Trentino di Solidarietà” (Trentin Solidarity Center) – CTS, was founded in 1984 and was dedicated exclusively with the problem of heroin addiction, opening a residential community. During the following years, there was an evolution of the problem to new kinds of addiction and a significant increase of the phenomenon of alcoholism in local area; with those complex patients, it was necessary to change and specialize the ways and means of intervention. There was then established a therapeutic project.

By redefining the objectives of treating multi-problem patients, there was established a residential project, named “Casa Giano”. This house deals specifically with people who suffer from both pathological addictions (in particular from substances), and co-existing psychological problems. The project is divided into three modules: First reception; Supporting community; and Re-integration to society. Casa Giano is located in Vezzano (TN) - 20 minutes from Trento - and currently accommodates 30 people. To have more information about the structure, we invite you to visit the website (in Italian, with pictures): <http://www.citiesse.org/casa-di-giano.html>

Since the year 2000, CTS also operates a hosting house for people with AIDS (“Casa Lamar”). This structure provides assistance to guests throughout the day, offering a friendly safe and organized environment; a healthy food and comfortable accommodation besides the opportunity for healing and growth in a human, cultural and spiritual point of view. Casa Lamar is located in Via Alto Adige n. 20, Trento, and there are currently nine persons using these services.

The therapeutic communities of CTS are accredited by the Department of Health of the Autonomous Province of Trento. All units are recognized in the Regional Authorities of prevention, treatment and rehabilitation of people addicted to substances. The association is also in convention with the Ministry of Justice being furthermore a member of the Italian Federation of Therapeutic Communities and the Italian Coordination of Hosting Accommodation.

Besides the therapeutic community, CTS operates a Counseling Center and a Center for Research and Study. The first one offers high quality services in the prevention and treatment of psychological distress and is aimed for people whose lives are direct- and indirectly related with pathological addiction problems, family and psychological problems, loneliness, and HIV-AIDS. The Center for Research and Study deals with the cultural planning and its implementation within the therapeutic community in local and national levels. The main objectives of this center concerns the organization of discussion moments and debates between professional staff in order to share experiences, as well as update training on new emergencies in the field of addiction. The Centre have qualified staff: psychiatrists, psychologists, psychotherapists, sociologists, nurses, educators, and socio-health workers. There are currently 28 employees distributed in the following roles: 1 psychiatrist, 2 nurses, 2 psycho-therapists, 1 sociologist, 2 secretaries, 9 health workers, 14 educators.

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