



A regional project supporting new migrants towards employment and integration.

Connecting Opportunities –
Final summary evaluation
June 2023

This report was written by Migration Yorkshire and provides a final summary evaluation of the Connecting Opportunities project, based on its delivery from July 2017 to March 2023. The aim of the project was to support the most marginalised new migrants in moving closer to employment and becoming better integrated into their local communities, across the Leeds City Region.

This report provides a summary overview of the project and reflects on key challenges, strengths, impact and learning.

Project delivery was during an ever changing political, migration and health climate, which all had various impacts on the project. For example, Brexit (2016), which created a more hostile environment for migrants; COVID 19 pandemic (2020-2021), which acutely affected BAME communities and the arrival of some new migrant groups to the UK, from Hong Kong and Ukraine (2021-2022).

Information in this report draws upon project performance achievement data, ongoing internal qualitative feedback collected from its participants, volunteers and staff and two independent external evaluations undertaken, during the project's delivery period.

Who would benefit from reading this report?

- Organisations and consortiums delivering a regional programme, with multiple partners
- Those planning on or currently delivering a service supporting hard to reach migrants
- Funding and research bodies looking for key learning based on experience
- Services supporting migrants into employment and towards integration
- Services delivering mental health/wellbeing support to migrants
- Projects looking for ideas on how include women centred ways of working
- Those interested in learning how volunteers can add value and impact
- Those interested on learning about the benefits of migrant involvement and participation

How to use this report?

- Read the summary for brief overview on the difference the project made.
- If you want to learn about different areas, dip into the different sections of interest, with each providing an overview of key challenges, impact and learning.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to all the new migrants, who joined CO, they have been inspiring and taught us a great deal about what support is most important to them and what has the biggest impact on their lives. We would also like to thank all CO project partners, their staff, volunteers, CO champions and all other stakeholders, who supported the project over the years. Your commitment, passion, resilience and enthusiasm were invaluable to the project's success. In addition, thanks to our funders, the European Social Fund and the National Lottery Community Fund.

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Summary

Connecting Opportunities was a BBO project supporting new migrants towards employment and integration. It was jointly funded by the Big Lottery Community Fund and the European Social Fund and was delivered across Leeds City Region, by a partnership of 10 VCSO's, led by Migration Yorkshire.

CO was unique nationally offering a holistic model of support to all types of migrants and not just refugees, on a regional scale. Its main aim was to support the most marginalised and vulnerable new migrants and empower them to enter the job market and become fully integrated into the UK.

BBO projects were required to fully integrate two ESF cross-cutting themes, Environmental Sustainable Development and Equality and Equal Opportunities and the project created action plans for these as part of its commitment to these themes.

Delivered from July 2017 until March 2023, the VCSO partners collectively delivered all core elements of the CO model. The delivery model included employment, training, English language, mental health/wellbeing and mentoring/befriending support for participants to access. This was co-ordinated and underpinned by 1:1 Keyworker support to ensure a plan of action was created, with support being provided for up to 12-months. In addition, the delivery model included a specialist partner to embed women-centred working to ensure the project responded to the distinct needs, faced by women migrants and extra employer engagement capacity was included, from 2020 onwards. User involvement and participation was also built into CO throughout, to ensure the views of its participants were heard and considered.

Project Delivered:

**July 2017 –
March 2023**

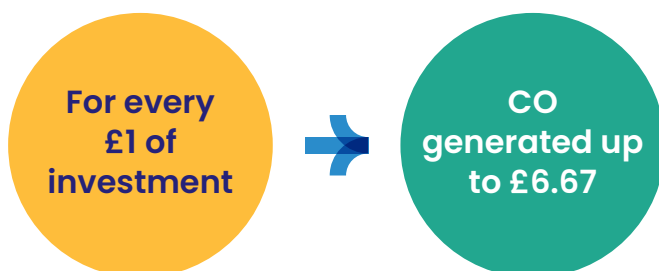


What difference did the project make?

- ✓ By the end of March 2023, the project had supported 1875 new migrants from across the Leeds City Region.
 - ✓ Over time, due to word of mouth, the project became increasingly successful in reaching more economically inactive migrants, who had never even considered employment as a possible goal they could achieve in their lives.
 - ✓ The project was able to engage with most of its original key target groups, with 44% participants having little or no English, 41% being refugees, 14% isolated family joiners along with supporting separated young people, victims of trafficking, Roma and those that had arrived via family reunion.
 - ✓ Throughout its delivery period, CO engaged with migrants and refugees from up to 114 countries.
 - ✓ Despite the many political, migration and health challenges, 27% participants exited into employment and 23% into education/training and on average across all BBO results, 100% achievement was made.
 - ✓ The project model worked exceptionally well in supporting the needs of female migrants, with them over-achieving on average 138% across all project results, with 71% exiting into education/training, 86% progressing and achieving ESOL qualifications, 61% feeling more integrated and 50% feeling more empowered.
 - ✓ In terms of participant progression, the highest areas of improvements were in language progression, with 66% having increased confidence in speaking and listening to English; employability, with 75% feeling closer to the job market and 54% feeling they had achieved greater financial independence.
 - ✓ In terms of social value and wider gains to society:
- ✓ Based on SROI, wider social outcomes were generated for CO participants by the project, with 41% gaining increased levels of wellbeing, 25% making new friends and finding work and 21% feeling more integrated into British society.
 - ✓ In addition, wider social outcomes were also generated for volunteer Mentor/Befrienders with 40% gaining an opportunity to make a difference to the lives of others and for CO delivery partners, with 25% feeling they had improved their services by being part of CO.
 - ✓ Migrants are amongst the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in our society. CO has made a significant difference to many of their lives and future life chances. It also created valuable changes for its volunteers, staff and partner organisations that could never have been envisaged. It added value and created valuable learning way above its separate elements, that will hopefully have an impact in the future and beyond.

“The project made a massive difference in my life by setting me up for a brighter future. I feel hopeful and confident for the future. Thanks to CO I can dream again.”

“The success of CO is largely due to the hard work, skills, knowledge, experience and attitudes of the people working to deliver it.”



About Connecting Opportunities

The Connecting Opportunities project received total £7.7 million from the National Lottery Community Fund and the European Social Fund (ESF) as part of the Building Better Opportunities programme (BBO).

The overall aim of the BBO programme was to combat the root causes of poverty, promote social inclusion, address long-term unemployment, empower socially excluded people and help drive economic growth. It also had two cross-cutting themes, environmental sustainable development and equality and equal opportunities, to help ensure that BBO delivered a fairer and greener engagement support to a range of people.

The CO project was unique due to its regional scale and in that is focussed on supporting new migrants and refugee groups, to move closer to the job market, remove barriers and enable them to become more integrated into their local communities.

Migrants and refugees are often amongst the most disadvantaged groups in society and can face many barriers into employment. For example, lower levels English language, different qualifications, little UK work experience, poor physical and mental health, lack of knowledge of UK systems and culture. Research indicates that this makes the UK job market more inaccessible for refugees in comparison to the rest of the UK population, whereupon refugees are more than 20% less like to be in employment, taking more than 25 years to bridge this gap. Their skills, strengths and potential often remain untapped if they are not supported to remove these barriers.

The CO project started delivery 1st July 2017 and aimed to support specific marginalised migrants, who had been living in the UK less than 10 years, were not British passport holders and were 15 years age, upwards. It was initially funded for two years but due to its ongoing success it gained two additional funding extensions, with delivery ending 31st March 2023. To support with its delivery, the project harnessed the expertise of ten specialist partner organisations, from across the Leeds City Region.

Specific targeted groups:

Roma, refugees, asylum seekers with permission to work, people arriving via family reunion for refugees, isolated family joiners, separated young people, victims of trafficking, forced labour and exploitation, individuals with little or no English.

During the lifetime of the project, a range of BBO performance targets and outcomes were set by the funders alongside additional internal project targets and two different independent external evaluations of the project were undertaken, in 2019 and in 2021.

Project model

Partnership Model

CO was delivered through a partnership model, across the Leeds City Region, which included the geographical areas of Leeds, Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Wakefield and parts of North Yorkshire (Selby, Harrogate, York, Craven).

Migration Yorkshire, due to its strategic and coordination role on migration, across Yorkshire & Humber, led on the development, project management, administration and evaluation of the project. Delivery was undertaken by VSCO's, harnessing their geographical reach, specialisms and track record of engaging with migrants and included a mix of national, regional and local organisations. Regional delivery partners included: Women Centre, the Children's Society, SOLACE surviving exile and persecution and Touchstone; local delivery partners included: Halifax Opportunities Trust (Calderdale/Kirklees); Horton Housing (Bradford); Nova Wakefield and Dominion Training (Wakefield); Path Yorkshire (Leeds) and Leeds Asylum Seekers Support Network.



Key Challenges

Due to the regional geographical spread of the project, there were regional variations in the complexity, incidence of barriers, migrant groups and supply of local services, which all had varying impacts on accessibility, levels of demand and local CO project delivery. Also, due to the number and varying sizes of the organisations, involved in the partnership, providing equitable access and quality services, for all CO participants, required ongoing monitoring and collaboration.

Key Strengths

- The Partnership model provided an opportunity to share the different strengths of organisations, from different geographical areas, which facilitated greater learning and added value.
- The project was extremely successful in creating a positive working regional partnership, due to creating opportunities for ongoing sustainable relationship building.

Key Learning

- ✔ The importance of utilising specialist VSCO's for delivery. This was key with them being trusted gateways for migrants, already having established networks they could build upon and due to their nature, they could be agile, flexible and creative, when required.
- ✔ Managing a successful regional partnership delivery approach, required a pro-active approach from the lead partner in facilitating joint working, facing challenges, encouraging positive collaboration, sharing of ideas and good practice.
- ✔ To be aware of differences across regions, which can influence delivery. For example, varying availability other support services to refer migrants to, local funding priorities, labour markets, organisational cultures and approaches.

“Partner feedback described the partnership itself as ‘excellent’.”

“CO was informed by extensive research into client need and consultation with potential partner organisations across the region. The research has paid off- partners bring a range of specialist expertise and knowledge to the project.”

Project Governance and Management

The CO partnership had a specific structure. Migration Yorkshire provided overall regional project governance and management, with a Project Manager post created supported by a central team providing finance, evidence, administration, project, participation, data and development support to the project.

The distribution of responsibilities and functions varied in a multi-layered way across the projects geographical spread and strengths of partners.

| Project Management | |
|---------------------|--|
| Migration Yorkshire | |

| Regional | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Evaluation | Mental Health | Women Regional |
| Migration Yorkshire | SOLACE (Refugees) | Women Centre |
| Women Centre | Touchstone (other migrants) | |

| Local | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|--|-------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Leeds City Region area | Type | Key Worker Support | | ESOL, Employee Support and Work Placements | | Mentoring & Befriending | | | | | |
| | | 21 and Under | Over 21 | 21 and Under | Over 21 | 21 and Under | Over 21 | | | | |
| Kirklees | All | Childrens Society | Halifax Opportunites Trust (HOT) | Halifax Opportunites Trust (HOT) | Childrens Society | Halifax Opportunites Trust (HOT) | Halifax Opportunites Trust (HOT) | | | | |
| Calderdale | All | | Horton Housing Support Ltd | Horton Housing Support Ltd | | | | Horton Housing Support Ltd | | | |
| Bradford | All | | | | | | | | NOVA Wakefield – Dominion delivering | NOVA Wakefield – Dominion delivering | NOVA Wakefield – Dominion delivering |
| Craven | All | | | | | | | | | | |
| Wakefield | All | | Touchstone | Touchstone | | | | Touchstone | | | |
| Harrogate | All | | | | | | | | Touchstone | Touchstone | Touchstone |
| York | All | | Touchstone | Touchstone | | | | Touchstone | | | |
| Selby | All | | | | | | | | Touchstone | Touchstone | Touchstone |
| Leeds | Other Migrants | | Touchstone | Touchstone | | | | Touchstone | | | |
| | Refugees | | | | | | | | Touchstone | Touchstone | Touchstone |

As lead partner, Migration Yorkshire utilised a range of tools to monitor project performance, quality, risk and encourage positive collaboration, peer support and shared learning.

A range of internal communication methods, were introduced and included:

- Quarterly Project Board meetings (strategic and reviewed project performance, quality, risk, finance)
- Quarterly Manager Workshops (operational)
- Initially quarterly Local Area Meetings (CO partners to discuss local area issues)
- Quarterly Keyworker Workshops
- Bi-annual Mentoring/Befriending Coordinator Meetings (peer support/share practice)
- Quarterly 1:1 CO Partner Progress Meetings (to review individual partner performance and progress)

- Quarterly 1:1 Finance/Evidence Meetings (to review individual partner budgets).
- Regional 'End of Year' events for all CO staff and volunteers.
- Regional joint event with other BBO projects, from across the Leeds City Region.
- Regional participant events for all CO staff, volunteers and participants (2018 & 2022)

In addition, to reduce emails to all CO staff and volunteers, a monthly/weekly CO Bulletin was introduced to provide regular, consistent information, updates and news.

A Management Information System (MIS) was commissioned especially for the project and accessed by all CO staff. It was used for managing referrals, participant progress, project evidence requirements and monitoring quality and performance data.

Key Challenges

Due to the ESF/Lottery funding evidence requirements, the project was required to collect and monitor a range of paperwork and input this onto an MIS system. This required, a large amount of staff resources, administrative support, ongoing training and communication, across the project, which for some was underestimated and at times caused frustration due to impacting on delivery capacity. In addition, due to the regional scale of the project, establishing communication strategies that worked across the partnership required trial and error.

Key strengths

- Having a project lead team located, within Migration Yorkshire, added value and access to wider knowledge, networks, learning and resources from the migration sector field both regionally and nationally.
- The project management and range of internal communication structures helped to provide direction, support, facilitate learning, peer support, generate new ideas and respond to challenges.
- The CO Bulletin was particularly useful and important in providing timely and organised flow of information across the whole project, particularly during COVID times.
- The range of communication methods used helped CO staff, volunteers and CO Champions feel valued and supported, with it resulting in an increase in their contributions and involvement in the running of CO.


Key Learning

- ✔ The importance of treating all delivery partners, irrespective size and specialisms, with transparency, equal time, support, respect and valuing their input and contributions. This helps in building trusting relationships, encouraging collaboration and the sharing of ideas and good practice.
- ✔ The importance of proactively creating and using a variety of communication methods to facilitate a whole regional project team working approach.
- ✔ To ensure the 'lead' partner is provided with adequate resources, funding and capacity to manage the infrastructure of a regional scale project thereby enabling specialist organisations to concentrate their time and resources on delivery.
- ✔ It would have been beneficial to have been able to introduce a 'live' communication tool for delivery staff to share information, but the project did not have capacity to manage, host and monitor such a shared regional tool.

Independent evaluation from both external evaluations revealed that CO partners felt that MY's project management approach was a contributing factor to the success of CO. Partners felt their views and experiences were recognised and appreciated and felt MY helped maintain productivity and working collaboratively as an equal partnership.

Delivery Offer

Based on learning from research, past delivery experiences and the needs of new migrants a holistic CO delivery model was devised and delivered by CO partners via the core elements below:

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>Keyworker Support – every participant was allocated a named Keyworker, who was their main point of contact for the duration of being on CO and agreed a package of support, for up to 12 months.</p> |
|  | <p>Employment and Training Support – to enhance participant employability, skills and gain and convert qualifications.</p> |
|  | <p>English Language Support – including ESOL and conversational English.</p> |
|  | <p>Mentoring/Befriending Support – support from volunteers to build confidence, reduce isolation, cultural orientation and develop new friendships.</p> |
|  | <p>Mental Health & Well-Being Support – access to 1:1 therapy and group well-being sessions.</p> |
|  | <p>Migrant Involvement & Participation – through focus groups and recruitment of CO Champions, who can represent ‘user’ voice.</p> |
|  | <p>Women Centred Advice, Training & Evaluation – women centred ways of working embedded across the project and ensure women’s’ voices are heard.</p> |

In addition, CO support included practical help to remove barriers via a participant budget to pay participant costs for childcare, training courses, interpreters, qualifications and transport.

Key challenges

CO partners were provided, with different budget allocations, based upon estimated local migrant populations and element of model they were contracted to deliver. However, at times this created inequitable access to some elements of the model for CO participants across the region.

In addition, due to varying geographical availability of other external support services to refer CO participants to this resulted in some CO partners having to compensate for this and support CO participants with a wider range of issues, particularly exacerbated during COVID 19 restrictions e.g., housing, domestic violence, food parcels.

Key strengths

- The CO model elements worked well overall due to being informed by research and based on migrants needs.
- CO was unique and only service nationally offering such a holistic model of support to all types of migrants and not just refugees.
- The availability of funding to pay for participant training, qualifications, transport, childcare costs, interpreters and for translation was key to removing access barriers to the service.

“My Keyworker helped identify nursery provision for me. My child is in safe hands and I feel content to come to study or do my voluntary work.”

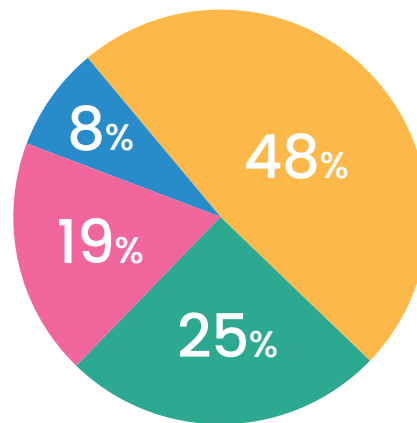
Key Learning

- ✓ Ensure all partners deliver a minimum level of all core elements of the service model, in each geographical area, and then allocate additional funding based on other variables.
- ✓ The project model elements successfully met most of the needs of many migrants but not all. The model could be enhanced further by adding outreach worker roles; more direct access to specialist advice on housing, benefits, debt, immigration, domestic violence, disabilities and physical health issues and vocational pathways for migrants, with professional qualifications/ higher skills.

Referrals and engagement

Referrals to the project came through centrally to Migration Yorkshire and were then allocated to CO partners. Most participants (48%) were recruited directly from CO partner organisations, through their own networks and 25% came in from over 200 external agencies from across the region. This included for example, Jobcentre plus, local councils, RETAS, Refugee Action, British Red Cross, Hope for Justice, Adult Social Care services, Huddersfield Mission, Fusion Housing, Action for Children, City of Sanctuary, Connect Well, Children Centres, Salvation Army.

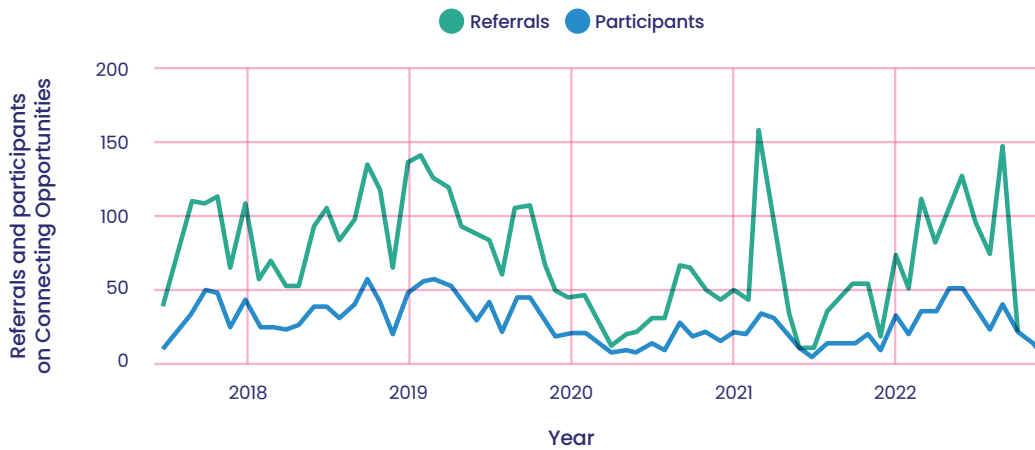
CO Referral Sources



- Referred by internal CO partner
- Referred by external partner
- Self referral by participant
- Referred from other internal CO Partner

Levels of referrals and composition of migrant groups varied geographically, throughout the delivery of the project. For example:

- Initially the project struggled to engage with economically inactive but as more isolated women migrants joined the project this steadily increased.
- Due to level of demand and staff capacity the project had to close to new referrals in some geographical areas at different times e.g., Calderdale, Bradford and Leeds.
- The project received an influx Hong Kong and Ukraine migrants onto the project in 2022, especially in certain geographical areas i.e., Leeds and Bradford.
- COVID had a major impact on referral rates during 2020 & 2021.



Promotion and publicity

As the lead partner, Migration Yorkshire, was responsible for overseeing any regional promotion and CO partners for their own local marketing plans.

CO was promoted in a variety of ways:

- Through a dedicated CO webpage on Migration Yorkshire and CO partners websites, which was regularly updated.
- A range of project leaflets and posters in 20 languages were produced, with new promotional literature added, when required.
- Local radio interviews were undertaken along with several press releases, with good news stories.
- Extensive ongoing outreach work was undertaken by CO partners either in person or online with jobcentres, community groups, local mosques, churches, cities of sanctuary, colleges, VCSO's, faith groups, housing and health providers, migrant networks, children's centres alongside hosting drop-in and information sessions for potential participants.
- Using social media, including facebook and Twitter, particularly from the start of COVID and thereafter.

Key challenges

The project struggled to recruit some of its key target groups. For example, Roma, due to many working a few hours per week, so they were not eligible to join the project; from those geographical areas, with no prior established presence by a CO partner e.g., North Yorkshire areas. In addition, the wider promotion of CO was challenging throughout and had to be carefully considered, due to the varying political environment around migration, with the project having to rely more on discrete promotional methods e.g., word of mouth, local promotion, good news stories.

This also had an impact on referral agencies understanding the aim of CO and making appropriate referrals to the project, which required ongoing communication and clarity, with many inappropriate referrals made, especially in the first couple of years.

Key strengths

- Due to positive feedback from participants accessing the service, this gradually led to more referrals via word-of-mouth, especially economically inactive isolated migrant women.
- Employing CO staff and volunteers, with migrant backgrounds and the ability to speak different languages was key to effectively engaging with migrants.

“You can't signpost and communicate with diverse communities via emails and online links to reach a targeted group, that is still at entry levels of ESOL'.”

Key Learning

- ✓ The recruitment of participants was most effective in geographical areas where CO partners already had well-developed networks and an established presence.
- ✓ From the outset, to clearly promote aims and expectations of the project, with more clarity and simple messaging to ensure receipt of appropriate referrals.
- ✓ To overall allocate more dedicated staff resources to specialist and targeted outreach/promotional work, with appropriate skill set, experience and capacity.
- ✓ To create an additional CO Champion volunteer outreach role, dedicated to support with the promotion of the project amongst migrant groups, with the ability to speak varying languages.

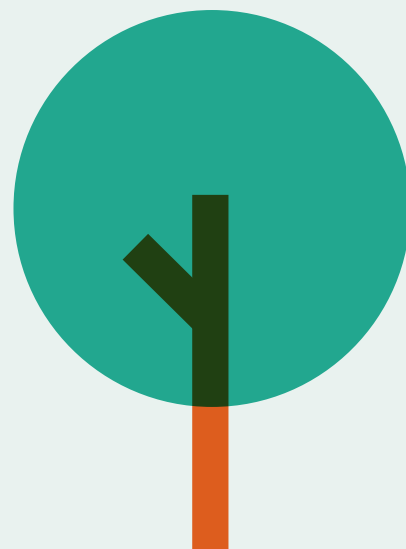
Cross-cutting themes

BBO projects were required to fully integrate two ESF cross-cutting themes, Environmental Sustainable Development and Equality and Equal Opportunities into their development and delivery plans. To support with this the project created an Environmental Sustainable Development Action plan and an Equalities Action plan, which were updated quarterly and were reviewed in 2021.

Environmental Sustainable Development

CO's action plan objectives were too:

- 1 Enhance and protect the environment by promoting the use of modes of sustainable transport, enable staff and participants to access some services / activities remotely and reduce the need to travel to venues, for example via telephone appointments and online courses.
- 2 Minimise our environmental impact by encouraging staff and CO participants to participate in environmental activities and increase their environmental awareness, through sessions covering waste, recycling, water and energy use.

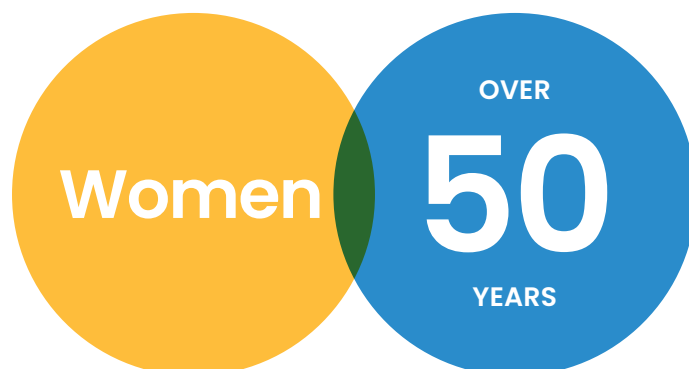


Equality and Equal Opportunities

CO's action plan objectives were focussed on meeting the specific needs of women; men; under 25 years; over 50 years; those with disabilities; ensuring all participants were equally and consistently aware of all CO support they could access; reducing any barriers to participating in the project and supporting all staff/volunteers to understand cultural differences and everyday stresses of migrants adapting to life in a new country.

Types of activities delivered as part of projects commitment to sustainability and equality.

The action plan focussed on meeting the specific needs of:



| Sustainability | Equality |
|---|--|
| Online 1:1 meetings & workshops | Women only sessions i.e., 'Tea & Talk' and Women Centre Learning sessions |
| 'Cycle to work' & car share schemes | ESOL session topics: exploring employment, barriers for BAME women, gender equality, women role models in history, retirement |
| Travel training | Men's mental health group |
| Awareness sessions: recycling, reducing waste & energy, beekeeping, gardening tips. | International Women day Events' on 'Women's Empowerment' and 'Women in Entrepreneurship' |
| ESOL session topics: fuel crisis, fuel poverty, pollution, renewable energy, climate change | Working with employers positive around disabilities |
| 'Bike Ability' and 'Cycle for Health' sessions & bike maintenance workshops | Gym exercise sessions and apprenticeships targeted at young people |
| Plastic free week, litter picking, recycling posters in offices, 'pledge' not to buy new clothes and supermarket bags | Awareness sessions: Equality Act, reasonable adjustments and employment rights |
| 'Plot to Plate' sessions to raise awareness of low budget cooking and home-grown produce | Participants provided with tablets, electronic devices, dongles (internet access) to support with 'digital exclusion' |
| Swing classes, using old clothes to make something new, raising awareness on reusing and recycling | Staff training on trafficking & modern slavery, NRPF, cyber awareness, bribery act, domestic abuse, trauma informed practice, safeguarding |
| CO partner SOLACE introducing new environmental policy to their organisation | Recruitment of staff and volunteers fluent in a variety of languages |

Key challenges

Several factors, including COVID restrictions had an impact on achieving some objectives across both actions plans.

For example, at times it was difficult to undertake environmental activities; to reduce paperwork due to ESF requirements; to increase number of participants with disabilities, due to stigma and cultural factors in self-disclosing.

Key strengths

- Equality and Diversity was a core element of CO as approximately 80% of those supported by the project were from a Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) background.
- The Women Centre input across the partnership ensured CO focused on overseeing and ensuring women from migrant communities were provided with appropriate and accessible support.
- Despite its challenges, COVID 19 restrictions catapulted the project into becoming more sustainable in terms of remote access and its environmental benefits.

Key Learning

- Cross-cutting themes enhanced CO partners commitment to sustainability and equality by bringing these issues to the forefront and allowing them to consider how to tailor their support for different groups accessing the project and creative ways to protect, enhance and promote environmental sustainability.
- Undertaking quarterly reviews, co-producing action plans, sharing practical ideas and incorporating the cross-cutting themes into events and workshops, helped to motivate and maintain interest across the partnership and ensure progress was monitored and made more achievable.



Project delivery

Keyworker support

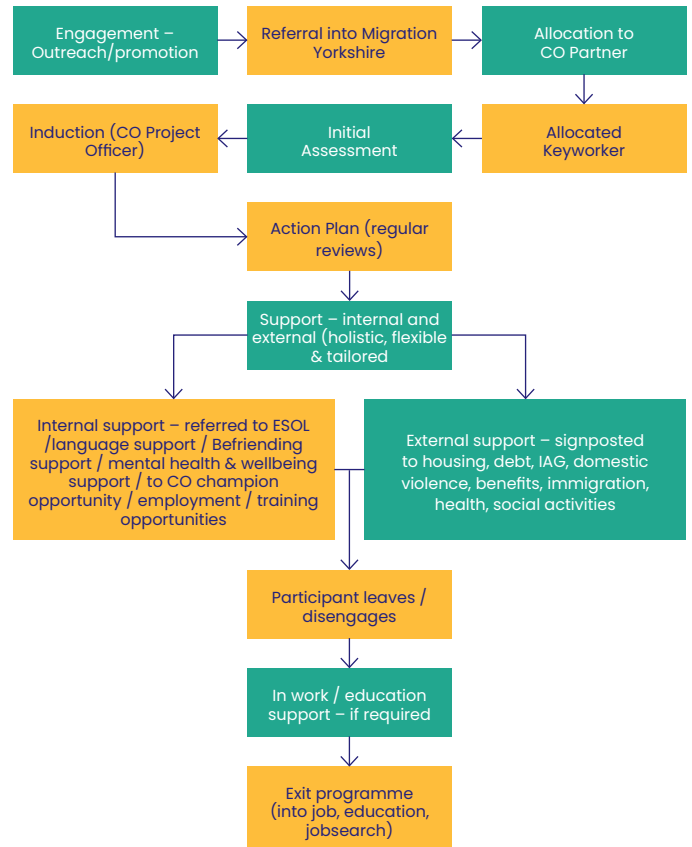
Overview

The CO Keyworker element of the model guaranteed every CO participant an assigned Keyworker, who was their single, accessible point of contact, throughout their time on the project, for up to 12 months, if required.

All Keyworkers were allocated a caseload of CO participants to support, which they would meet on a 1:1 basis either in person in their local areas or online, depending on participants preferences. They undertook eligibility confirmations, initial assessments, action planning, reviews, exit meeting, in-work support and navigated all training and support needs for participants. For example, English language skills, wellbeing, employment and befriending support, qualifications, housing issues, DBS checks, public transport training, acquiring IT and digital equipment, travel and childcare reimbursement, supporting to attend various online workshops, enrolling into college, applying for provisional drivers' licence, finding additional courses to enhance skills, and searching for volunteering opportunities and work placements.

In addition, Keyworkers referred participants to external organisations for any additional specialist support e.g., debt, benefits advice.

“
Keyworkers also undertook wellbeing/ catchup calls particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, due to its acute impact on many CO participants.
”



Key challenges

Due to the varying levels of referrals and Keyworker staff turnover, there was some variations in individual Keyworker caseloads across the partnership, which at times had an impact on consistency in quality of support. In addition, workload pressures on Keyworkers could be variable and dependent upon the needs of individual participants and availability of other local services, that they could refer participants too. For example, some CO partners received more referrals with complex needs, such as survivors of domestic violence, victims of trafficking, young refugees separated from family.

In addition, due to performance targets set by funders to enable appropriate throughput, the project offered 12 months of support. However, many migrants due to their complex needs, including learning English would have benefited from much longer periods of support.

Key strengths

- Keyworking was a unique element of the CO service and a cornerstone to its success. It received excellent feedback from both participants and referral agencies, who were confident their clients would be well supported.
- The 1:1 support was very successful in enabling Keyworkers to build trusting relationships with participants, listening to what motivates and is important to them and what they want to achieve. This was highly respected and valued by participants.
- Flexible communication between Keyworkers and participants, made the service highly accessible, for example, text messaging and using social media such as WhatsApp and Facebook.
- 1:1 Keyworking worked at the participants level and ensured the service met their needs. For example, meeting in venues and locations of their choice that were convenient, comfortable and non-threatening, e.g., community centres, libraries.
- Quarterly project regional workshops were invaluable in providing peer support and opportunities for Keyworkers to share practice.

Key Learning

- ✔ 1:1 Keyworking was popular amongst all groups, particularly young migrants with multiple complex needs and had a real positive impact on participants wellbeing and their ambition.
- ✔ Keyworking with new migrants can take a lot of time, as it usually involves working through a bureaucratic maze, often multi-layered and may require work across many different sectors and involve the use of interpreters e.g., housing, immigration, employment, health.
- ✔ It is important in large partnerships, to try and establish a minimum standard level of Keyworking support for participants. To support with this the project devised a 'Good practice guide for Keyworkers working with migrants.'
- ✔ To be aware that some geographical areas have a more established voluntary/community sector, which meant there was more external support and activities available for some Keyworkers to refer participants onto.
- ✔ Due to their strategic role, it is important that all Keyworkers attend ongoing training and keep up to date on a project's delivery offer and external support and opportunities available to participants.

“A Keyworker works like a compass, “tell me where you want to go, and I will help you find the right directions”.

**“Before I had no one.
Now I have someone”**

“My Keyworker has been invaluable, helping me find my way through things, the right forms, what to say.”



Employment support



103%

progress to project target for participants into employment

27%

participants exited into employment

75%

of total participants feel closer to job market

Overview

CO's Employment support offer aimed to break down barriers new migrants face in accessing and moving closer to the job market, in restarting their careers and developing new careers in the UK.

For most participants, success in finding employment went hand in hand with progress and confidence in ESOL and learning English. Participants action plans included steps to achieving their employment goals and moving closer to the job market. For example, attending work based vocational ESOL; developing IT skills for job search; accessing employment support such as writing a CV, job applications, interview techniques; learning about UK employment rights and practices; accessing self-employment and business start-up support; meeting potential employers; attending jobs fairs and registering with recruitment agencies.

Keyworkers and Employment support staff worked proactively to help secure a variety of jobs, to set up job alert groups on social media and link participants with local employers. In addition, they set up volunteering and work placement opportunities providing employers with an opportunity to see first-hand the potential and skills of migrants and giving CO participants much needed practical experience of UK job market and gaining references for future use.

CO also offered in work support to CO participants, once they had gained employment, which meant they continued to have full access to CO's services and funding, during this transition stage for them.

Key challenges

Employment support and outcomes for CO participants were impacted by a range of issues. Internally, the CO model meant it was difficult to address every individual employment need having to support such a wide and diverse range of migrants, from those who arrived illiterate from their origin countries to those with higher levels of professional qualifications. Also, participant employment outcome levels varied between CO partners due to factors, such as available job opportunities locally, migrant groups they were supporting and organisational experiences, in providing employment services. Despite interventions from CO, many CO participants still exited into more low skilled work. Reasons vary and are complex but include for example, many facing difficult personal financial situations, so they prioritised the first chance of any employment; many felt unable to wait to be trained or have their international qualifications recognised; skilled jobs such as IT, require experience from the UK, which can be difficult to obtain, within a reasonable time frame.

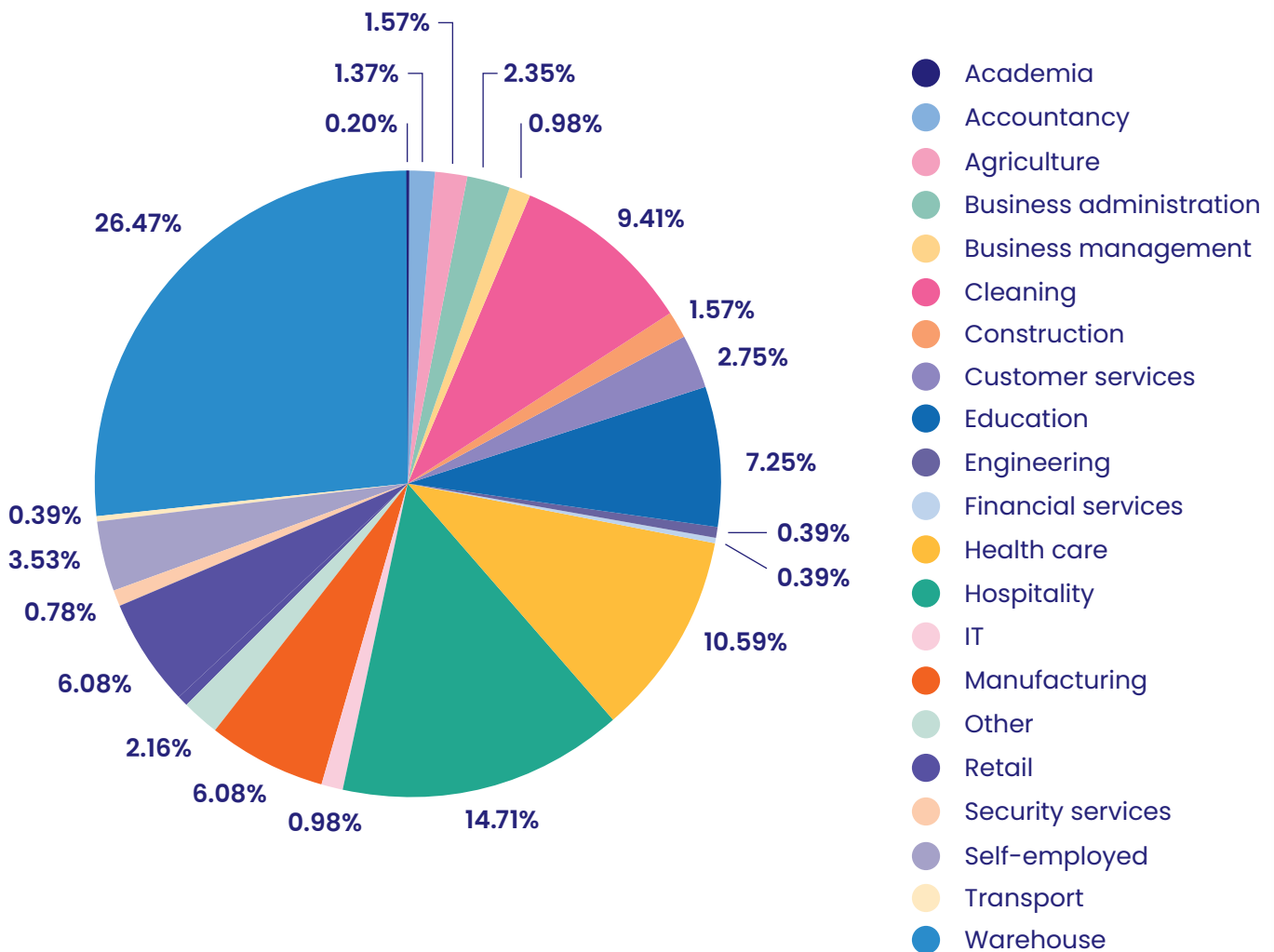
Key strengths

- CO continued to exit CO participants into jobs roles, even during the pandemic and 27% CO participants exited into employment, which compares favourably against BBO national figure 24% (30/09/22) and other DWP employment programmes.
- CO partners appreciated that their participants were not always reaching their full potential, however, many gained a first step into the labour market, which gave them much needed financial stability.
- Feedback from both CO partners and participants identified a need for more focus on employer engagement and specialised employment support. This resulted in the recruitment of a project Employer Engagement Coordinator, ensuring the partnership benefited from a wider range of strategic employment opportunities for participants. For example, a self-employment training package, professional pathway careers information sessions.

“I wasn’t thinking of work but since coming to PATH I now have the confidence.”

“Before I started on CO it was very difficult to find work. I found it difficult to understand questions on applications, to fill out forms, interviews were difficult because I didn’t know how to answer questions in them.”

Sectors exited into work



“CO helped me find a job as an Assistant Chef. I am very excited to get this job, it will give me stability and help to organise my life. My future feels calmer. I have been shown the path to get to where I want to go.”

Participants told us they had benefitted from...



Employment in jobs such as teaching, interpreting, security, warehouse and retail



Help with benefits and job culture orientation during the transition from asylum seeker to refugee status



Help finding work when otherwise they had no recourse to public funds, potentially leading to destitution

Key Learning

- ✔ It was recognised that some migrants with multiple complex needs, require more than 12 months support, to develop their skills, confidence and education levels to move into employment.
- ✔ It would have been beneficial to share CO partners strengths more by providing access to cross-regional employment support services to all participants.
- ✔ An underdeveloped voluntary and community sector limits new migrants continued employment and personal development, after receiving a package of support.
- ✔ Surveying participants skills and aspirations was useful in helping to identify gaps and plan future areas of work to address needs.
- ✔ Additional capacity for more specialist employment advice would have been beneficial to meet needs s e.g., professional qualification pathways, specific migrant employment packages

Education/Training

Overview

A diverse range of accredited and non-accredited education and informal training opportunities were selected by CO partners to support participants in updating their skills, knowledge of UK requirements and boost their self-confidence, for future employment.

| Examples, education and training opportunities and support CO participants benefited from. | |
|--|--|
| Open University Teaching Assistant Course | Degree transcriptions translated for ENIC |
| Apprenticeships | ESOL for Driving in the UK |
| NVQ Level 2 Diploma Engineering | High Speed Training vocational courses |
| Welding courses | CPR |
| Level 3 Emergency Paediatric First Aid (RQF); | Communication Skills |
| CACHE Level 3 Award in Supporting Teaching and Learning | Bursary funds to access FE |
| GCSE Maths | Media studies |
| Level 3 Interpreting course | Emergency Paediatric First Aid |
| HGV Licence | Registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council |
| Level 1 Business Admin and Finance | Driving Theory for Beginners workshops |
| Level 2 Step Up programmes | Supporting with Ecctis statement of comparability applications |
| Level 2 English & Maths | Applying for an SIA security badge qualification training course |
| Level 2 Food Safety course | Door Supervisors training |
| Level 2 Childcare course | Private tutoring for a participant with a law background |
| Teaching Assistant qualification | Living in the UK workshops |
| TQUK SEN Certificate course | Level 2 Engineering course |
| Level 2 Nutrition and Health | Essential Digital Skills |

Key challenges

Participant access to training and educational opportunities could vary across the region depending on a particular CO partners offer and the range of external training/educational provision available locally. Benefits of some training could also be impacted by a participant's levels of English, when joining the project, irrespective of their qualifications and skills levels from their country of origin. For example, meeting the needs of some new migrants, with higher and professional qualifications, which can take time to convert, alongside the requirement of higher levels of English language skills in accessing equivalent professions in the UK. This also meant that some participant education/training expectations could not always be met during their time on the project.

Key strengths

- CO was able to provide workshops that were open to all participants irrespective of migrant status. Some migrants face barriers in accessing mainstream education/training. For example, people with no recourse to public funding, are unable to access government funded employment schemes via the job centre; many schemes for young people have specific age restrictions; people from Hong Kong on BNO visas, are ineligible for adult education budget funded training
- To improve accessibility, courses and training delivered by the project were provided with interpreters and childcare.
- Post pandemic, participants developed digital skills enabling them to access a wider range of online training creating greater accessibility for them and flexibility for the project.

Key Learning

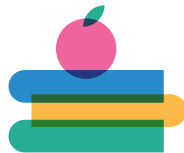
- ✔ It was key to offer a diverse range of accredited, non-accredited and informal training to meet the varying educational, cultural and confidence levels of participants.
- ✔ On a regional scale project, it is important to try and offer a minimum range of training provision as part of the CO offer, so all CO participants feel that they are being offered equality of access.
- ✔ Ideally, capacity for greater regional co-ordination may have resulted in more participants accessing a wider range of opportunities, particularly when provision moved online.

"I completed an open university course on crime and criminology: I enjoyed the course because we learn about new things and develop and extend my vocabulary."

23%

participants exited
into education/
training

English Language



74%

participants engaged in ESOL

64%

participants feel greater ability to access services without an interpreter

Overview

ESOL provision was a fundamental element of the CO offer. It was either provided specifically by CO either as 1:1 tuition, group sessions/classes, online and in person, or by external partners, such as local colleges, which Keyworkers referred participants too.

CO participants could access a range of English language provision, from working toward achieving accredited ESOL level qualifications in speaking and listening to more informal conversational groups and 1:1 language support, via their volunteer befrienders.

Ongoing internal and external evaluations highlighted a high demand for ESOL from CO participants. Across the partnership, ongoing efforts were made to increase the number of classes and promote the befriending element of the CO offer, which could help in supporting with English language progression.

Examples of type of support offered included: ESOL Tutors undertaking English level assessments; encouraging participants to use websites to evaluate news stories, analyse language devices and vocabulary used, thereby gaining a better understanding UK social and cultural issues; offering recognised English language qualifications via ESOL exam boards; linking ESOL classes to interesting and real life situations to improve confidence i.e. a day in the office, the census, life in the UK, describing jobs, looking for work activities, buying goods; introducing role plays to enhance learning of interview communication skills; combining ESOL curriculum with other core aspects of CO activity, like health awareness, wellbeing, employability, citizenship, UK society and culture, green and sustainable activities and equality issues;

providing higher level vocationally focused ESOL classes linking to specific employment fields e.g. health; referring participants for IELTS preparation and exams; paying for private ESOL Tutors for CO participants in areas with limited access to provision e.g. North Yorkshire.

Key challenges

Overall, demand for ESOL far outstripped supply both in the project and externally, which is still an ongoing issue at local, regional and national level. There are no national guidelines on ESOL provision, so assessments and provision can vary between providers, which then influenced CO ESOL delivery provision across the partnership. Due to ESOL Tutors varying working hours and availability across the partnership, it was difficult to organise many internal opportunities for them to share good practice and techniques, which may have helped to achieve more consistency in provision. In terms of class attendance, accessing childcare was a challenge due to the lack of flexible and affordable provision in many areas across the partnership. This was addressed by some partners arranging on-site creche facilities. Also, during the pandemic, a huge amount of staff resources was required to support participants, with little English, to continue to access some form of ESOL support, either 1:1, online or by posting resources.

Key strengths

- ESOL offered by CO was a real strength of the project, both to draw in CO target migrant communities, who were traditionally perceived as 'hard to reach' e.g., isolated family joiners, females with young children, and by adding value, by reducing isolation, promoting integration and facilitating employment.
- Overall, participants were very happy with the provision. Both internal and external evaluations for CO highlighted positive feedback from participants who, were grateful and felt that it formed an integral part of the project that enhanced their progress. For many it was the only required improvement in moving closer to employment and improved integration.
- In some local areas, the CO project offered newly established footprint of accredited ESOL provision, which was highly successful in reaching communities, with local authorities and other agencies drawing good practice from the project.
- Successful engagement of online ESOL delivery, during COVID-19 restrictions, was only possible due to the project being able to provide and fund learning resources, e.g., tablets, mobile phones, ESOL books/materials, wi-fi and dongles to participants.

11%

participants achieved ESOL qualification

66%

participants have increased confidence in listening and speaking English

“My teacher improved my English a lot I am very shy and don't like to make mistakes.... they told me it's necessary to make mistakes to learn.... every day now I try and speak more and more”

“ESOL has been very inspirational. I learnt about suffragettes, when children go to sleep and I feel lonely I read their story. It's all about women and that they can do anything for themselves.”

Key Learning

- ✓ Free ESOL helps attract hard to reach target migrant communities.
- ✓ To ensure equality of access to ESOL it is important to provide childcare, pay transport costs and offer flexible timings.
- ✓ To help to raise standards, avoid duplication, and achieve consistency it's important to provide opportunities for ESOL Tutors to share good practice and techniques.
- ✓ Keyworkers should offer participants access to a wide range of local services and organisations, where they can practice their English and develop relationships with their wider community.
- ✓ CO Mentoring and Befriending support element and the role of volunteers was key and invaluable to complementing any ESOL language classes and helping to improve participants conversational English, which was important to their progress and integration.
- ✓ Due to the varying provision of ESOL across the region any English Language tuition should be used strategically to make best use of the limited provision.

Mental Health and Wellbeing



50%

participants feel they have increased levels of well-being

28%

participants accessed mental health support



Overview

The inclusion of mental health support was a distinctive and a valuable element of the CO model, as new migrants are often at increased risk of developing psychological and/or mental health issues, given the circumstances and experiences many have endured before getting to the UK as well as the sense of isolation they may have once they arrive, particularly if they lack English language skills.

The project model included two regional specialist partners, SOLACE mainly providing therapeutic and 1:1 therapy to refugees and Touchstone providing more wellbeing 1:1 and group support to other migrants. Support was offered either in person, by telephone or online, based on participant preferences.

Internal referrals from Keyworkers to mental health support were slow to build and varied across the partnership. Reviews and varying actions were taken at different stages to encourage uptake. For example, Mental Health Workers attending CO staff inductions, workshops and meetings to increase understanding of their offer; the creation of a checklist for Keyworkers to assess if a referral would be appropriate; Mental Health Workers including wellbeing as part of ESOL curriculum, at some CO partner premises; streamlining the internal referral/evidence process for participants attending wellbeing workshops; being considerate of descriptive terminology used due to stigma and different cultural understanding and perceptions of mental health; widening the well-being offer to include more well-being group sessions in person and online, covering a variety of topics

and introducing a range of well-being activities, as part of the offer. Examples of topics included: managing stress, introduction to wellbeing, food and mood, describing our emotions, keeping well this winter, wellbeing box, better sleep. Well-being activities included: walking groups, visiting local urban farms, sharing cuisines via cooking groups.

Therapy issues ranged from stress, anxiety, depression, complex post- traumatic stress disorders, pain management and problems with longstanding relationship issues. Interpreters would be frequently used to work alongside Therapists and their work would also involve regular liaison with social prescribers, other mental health professionals, medical service providers, the Red Cross and the Refugee Rights Hub.

During the pandemic, well-being and mental health support from not only the specialist CO partners but wider CO delivery staff was invaluable and became more of a priority.

Challenges

There continued to be variations in the number of referrals from CO partners to mental health support across the partnership. This was influenced by several factors: differing experiences/perceptions and confidence of some CO staff in dealing with sensitivities surrounding mental health; many migrants being unfamiliar with UK terminology and word 'mental health;' cultural stigma and fear of discrimination in self-disclosing; understanding the different roles of the two specialist organisations and using appropriate internal referral process.

Key strengths

- Despite some early confusion on roles, having two specialist migrant mental health organisations as CO partners working with specific groups was key to providing the right level of targeted support.
- Regular training provided by both specialists, helped build capacity and confidence within the partnership and beyond to work long term on mental health support.
- Innovative and invaluable training and resources have been produced and delivered e.g., well-being checklist with special consideration for migrants, a suite of videos on guided breathing and relaxation exercises, that can be continued to be shared and used.
- Mental health support helped to build self-confidence, self-esteem and made integration and employment more achievable.
- The Mental Health specialists continued to be flexible, creative and resourceful in their efforts to embed mental health and wellbeing, within the CO delivery model.

“Clients aren’t often so keen to access mental health provision, although we often explain it as wellbeing support, a chance to talk through stresses etc. Those who are receiving MH support find it very useful.”

“I would like to tell everyone – it is my life. I call it half-life. Don’t give up, dream, you can make your dream a reality. If you have problems, tell people, and share it and you can get help. Otherwise, you just sit at home and nothing will happen. You can be happy.”



Key Learning

- ✓ Providing access to a well-being and mental health support for migrants will enhance all aspects of their integration, including employment and confidence.
- ✓ Having mental health expertise in the CO partnership has been instrumental in helping to nurture greater awareness of mental health issues amongst staff, participants and external organisations.
- ✓ It is important to review provision on an ongoing basis to ensure any wellbeing and mental health provision is made accessible to migrants in a way that feels safe and meet their needs
- ✓ CO’s Mental Health Workers emphasised the importance of engaging with participants in their own language, where required, so participants could benefit fully from this intervention.
- ✓ Utilising existing workshops sessions, such as ESOL, was key to gaining access to the most vulnerable participants, especially women, to help promote mental health awareness.

Mentoring / Befriending



CO created over

£534,000

of Social Value for
volunteers

38%

Participants engaged
with mentoring or
befriending

41%

women feel more
integrated with
their community

Overview

The core element of Mentoring and Befriending in CO's delivery model was to support participants integration, help reduce isolation and facilitate participant friendships and peer support. It was the role of some CO partners to recruit, induct and train volunteer mentors and befrienders and to provide 1:1 and group mentoring/befriending activities to those CO participants, who would benefit from this. To assist with this CO partners either recruited specific Mentoring/Befriending Coordinator roles; utilised Volunteer Managers, within their own organisations or allocated this task to other CO staff, like Keyworkers. Depending on the CO partner, volunteer Mentors/Befrienders were either local residents, who wanted an opportunity to give back and support their local community with their knowledge, interests and their friendship; students, gaining invaluable work experience in supporting younger migrants or ex-CO migrant participants, who wanted to contribute to the project and share their own experiences with others.

As the project progressed, regional Mentoring/Befriending Coordinator meetings were introduced to provide peer support, share practice, challenges and ideas on activities to support integration and recruit volunteers. Overall, throughout, Befriending demand remained high and great efforts were made on an ongoing basis in recruiting and training more volunteers to match demand and introduce a wide range of activities. Overall, across the project it developed into a popular and sought-after service.



Examples: Mentoring/Befriending activities and support

| | |
|--|--|
| Project wide regional participant events with workshops, wellbeing activities, music, dancing, food. | Supporting with practicing written and spoken English |
| Coffee mornings after ESOL classes | Going to toddler groups |
| City walk, 'walk & talk' groups and volunteer led walking groups | Support with coursework and exams e.g., GCSE's, driving theory, ESOL |
| 'Cook & Eat' sessions | Visits to galleries, museums, historical houses Scarborough beach, local shopping centres, Christmas markets, urban farms, cinema, law courts, pumpkin field, theme parks, local libraries, bowling. |
| Establishing a 'Tea & Talk' group for women only | Support with accessing sporting activities e.g., football teams, gym |
| Establishing a 'Glad Rags' sewing class | Transport skills support – timetables and accompanying to new places |
| Picnics in local parks and visiting local cafes | Support attending appointments e.g., GP's, Jobcentres |
| Art & craft activities | Support with digital skills and using computers |
| Organising celebration events e.g., 'Milad', Eid, Platinum Jubilee | Meeting local MP'S and visiting Houses of Parliament |

learn * halifax opportunities trust

AS PART OF YOUR ENGLISH LANGUAGE CITIZENSHIP COURSE YOU ARE INVITED TO:

CHATSWORTH HOUSE

"IF YOU WANT TO UNDERSTAND TODAY YOU HAVE TO SEARCH YESTERDAY."
PEARL S. BUCK, NOVELIST (1892-1973)

22ND JUNE
9AM - 6:30PM

FUN & CREATIVE OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Tour the gardens & estate, Discover Life in the UK, British Culture & Values, History of Chatsworth, Contemporary Arts, etc.

Arrive for 9am at:
Hanson Lane Enterprise Centre,
Hanson Lane, Halifax, HX1 5PG

Contact Saraga Bisi for registration
07732901477

Connecting Opportunities
Community Fund



Horton Housing Training Centre
Published by Hootsuite • 19 October at 11:00

#connectingopportunities participant Pankaj and project befriender Vochi struck up a friendship at our job club whilst working together on Pankaj's CV. They recently took on a 'find your way around Bradford' challenge. They had a great time discovering more about Bradford through visiting and answering questions about the city's landmarks.

#TNLComFundESF / The National Lottery Community Fund

Connecting Opportunities
Community Fund
European Union

Key challenges

Mentoring and Befriending support was uneven across CO in the early stages and developing a more consistent service across the region, amongst all CO partners, took time and planning. Some CO partners were very experienced in recruiting, training and supporting volunteers and delivering a befriending/mentoring service, whilst others had no or limited experience of doing this. This improved over time with the recruitment of more Mentoring/ Befriending Co-ordinators, in most geographical areas. The type of befriending offer, ranging from 1:1 befriender matches to more group support and activities, also could vary depending on local migrant needs and individual CO partners offer. At varying times, particular during COVID restrictions, there were ongoing challenges in recruiting, inducting, training and supporting new volunteer Mentors/Befrienders, which meant demand for this popular service could not always be fully met.

Key strengths

- Mentoring and Befriending played a more significant role in the personal development of participants than initially envisaged and they progressed, at a greater rate, when they were matched with the right befriender.
- It helped in building stronger links between local communities and migrants.
- It had many outcomes for participants. For example, improved integration, language skills, confidence, broadened their activities, helped them to establish new interests, taught them about different cultures and beliefs, improved their wellbeing and helped them in getting to know their local areas better.
- Of those participants who had experienced the benefits of Mentoring and Befriending many then became Mentors on CO and volunteered for other organisations, which in turn helped them to develop new friendships, learn new skills and share their experiences.
- At times, due to capacity issues, Befrienders helped fill the gap where Keyworkers were unable to meet as regularly as participants wanted and they helped to create less dependency on Keyworkers.

“I am isolated otherwise.”

“My Befriender helps me with colloquial English, to understand the local accent and sayings. It gives me confidence’.

“Those that have a match seem very happy and befrienders and mentors are also a great asset for Keyworkers, as they get alongside participants well, and often support with things like volunteering etc. ... It’s very much wanted by our participants”

Key Learning

- ✔ Having two specialist mentoring and befriending organisations, within the partnership, really helped with developing good practice with other CO partners, with less experience in delivering this element of the model.
- ✔ Where accessed, mentoring and befriending produced excellent results for participants and feedback was positive.
- ✔ It would have been helpful to have developed more specialist mentoring opportunities to support those CO participants with highly skilled and professional backgrounds.
- ✔ The purpose, timescales and role of Mentoring and Befriending should be clearly explained to participants to avoid any confusion and disappointments.
- ✔ Volunteers Befrienders/Mentors are a valuable resource, linking participants with local people and communities and helping them develop social capital, address problems, make appropriate decisions/life choices and look for work

- ✔ Matching volunteers and participants increases the chances that volunteers will succeed in making a difference.
- ✔ Support for volunteer Mentors and Befrienders should be consistent and well planned, for example providing expenses, organising volunteer meeting and forums, providing volunteer training on challenges migrants face and volunteer supervision to help increase the commitment and motivation of volunteers.
- ✔ Joint working and record keeping enables the volunteer and keyworker to work together to support a participant.

Employer Engagement

398
employers
engaged

Overview

CO partners engaged with a wide range of employers on an ongoing basis, in supporting participants in searching and gaining employment, developing work experience opportunities and vocational training sessions and courses. In addition, because of feedback, in 2020, a central Employer Engagement role was created to further support in establishing and maintaining relationships and opportunities with employers, training and employment providers and to coordinate the sharing of any opportunities, across the CO partnership. Several issues had an influence on how this role developed, within the project. This included the varying COVID 19 pandemic restrictions, Brexit and the end of the EU settlement scheme in 2021 and arrival new migrants from Hong Kong and Ukraine, from 2022. The role developed several priorities to focus on.



Priority 1: In 2020 and 2021, to assess CO participant's employment needs and key barriers surveys were undertaken., Top employment barriers were language skills, lack of UK work experience, lack of social and professional networks and a gap in advice and support for highly qualified migrants.

Priority 2: To establish effective relationships, communication and information sharing on employment and training opportunities across the CO partnership.

Priority 3: To organise, develop and deliver training sessions for both CO participants and staff and develop links with businesses, experts and training providers in hospitality, social care and other sectors. Session subjects included: UK education system; access to higher education; equality and diversity at work and working in Health and Social Care, Engineering and Education.

Priority 4: To engage with employers to create specific opportunities for CO participants to access. Initially, this was extremely challenging and virtually impossible with COVID restrictions but from late 2021 this started to change, with some employers directly contacting the project. In total the Employer Engagement Coordinator spoke with 72 different businesses, training providers and employment support organisations.

Examples of employer engagement included:

DLA Piper an international law firm worked with the project in 2020 and through an employee volunteering programme delivered 'Know Your Rights' online courses for CO participants, covering employment law, health, housing, education, consumer rights and the UK justice system.

Corecom a multi-award-winning recruitment company based in Leeds in 2022 delivered sessions to CO participants on CV-writing, Interview advice, LinkedIn profile, networking and marketing yourself.

High Speed Training a Bradford training company, in 2022, offered CO participants free access to their online vocational training catalogue. The most popular courses were Level 2 Food Hygiene & Safety for Catering, Customer Services, Safeguarding and Working with Children. A short video was made by the company demonstrating the benefit of the partnership.

Yorkshire Mentoring, a company providing mentoring, training and workshops for business start-ups. In 2022, a pilot self-employment programme was delivered.

The Landmark Trust is a charity that restores old buildings to bring them back into modern use. A good relationship was formed with them, which enabled several educational activities to take place at the site over the years.

Key challenges

Initially, it was difficult to build relationships due to the online nature of meetings and lack of informal networking opportunities but this improved as COVID restrictions eased. It was challenging to develop specific programmes for CO participants due to periods of time they were on the project and certain requirements of some employers.

Key Strengths

- Based on participant feedback, in 2021 a migrant employment resource pack entitled "Working in the UK" Toolkit was produced, with input from CO Champions, and 70+ participants at a participant's event, who offered their perspective from lived experience. This is an invaluable legacy document that is now available on Migration Yorkshires' website with translations available in other languages.
- Recruiting a central Employer Engagement Coordinator role for the project, helped increase CO staff awareness and enabled some specific opportunities to be developed.



“Equality and diversity is paramount to our business ethos and culture. The workshops were a great success, it was wonderful to witness the positive impact that they had in building confidence and providing practical tools to those who have recently arrived in the UK.”

“Hiring managers often don’t want to go through that prolonged period of vetting, With the share code, we didn’t have to do any of that because immigration status is very clear and that really helped.”

Key Learning

- ✓ Involving CO participants and CO Champions at every stage of employer engagement development was invaluable as they were able to identify issues they had personally encountered and from their input, clear patterns and common problems emerged.
- ✓ Most meetings held with employers did not result in partnerships or working relationships, or indeed employment opportunities for participants. However, the relationships we did build were very beneficial in other ways, with many CO partners taking part in training and mentoring provided via these partnerships.
- ✓ Successful employer partnerships and engagement involves:
 - **Shared values**, with an employer, with them having strong social values and being open to gaining a better understanding of the barriers that migrants face
 - **Communication** is key to building relationships and effectively managing expectations
 - **Openness**, with all parties being open about their motives for getting involved, clear plan of responsibilities and willingness to find workable solutions to any challenges
 - **Flexibility** in programme delivery due to staff changes, funding ending, nature of the barriers faced by refugees
 - Programmes need to be **accessible** in that they may require an interpreter or take place during school hours
 - **Time** is required to develop and build relationships

Women-centred advice, training and evaluation



Overview

The WomenCentre was included in the CO partnership to support the design and delivery of services that better respond to the distinct experiences and needs of women migrants, to embed women-centred working and support with gender equality issues. Through training, reflection and learning, they supported CO project partners to consider, put into practice and review a women centred way of working approach, within their services.

Compared to the UK population, women refugees are still 30% less likely to be in work. Many women migrants have undergone life-changing experiences and face many further challenges as newcomers to the UK. They can have distinct needs and can suffer most acutely from the difficulties associated with their situation, which can create new and enduring vulnerabilities. For example, isolation, entrenched traditional gender roles, qualified women engaging in jobs that do not make use of their educational qualifications, working in sectors that are less regulated thereby resulting in increased exposure and risks to exploitation, abuse and harm. Faced with gendered challenges, some women migrants are prevented from making full use of the services and opportunities, that should be available to them.

Throughout the project the WomenCentre continually assessed their own input, reviewing and responding to CO partners' and participants' emerging needs. Their activity focused on three key areas: capacity building, women's voices and sharing learning and helping to develop good practice. Activities included: facilitating workshops to support internal evaluation; devising a self-assessment tool for CO partners; delivering women-centred ways of working induction sessions to new CO staff/volunteers; facilitating women-only focus groups; supporting CO partners with creative activities at women only workshops.



Key challenges

Women centred working requires time, commitment to learning and experimenting and an openness to the organic development of processes rather than following rigid guidelines, which could be challenging for some organisations. The role of the Women Centre was to build capacity and increase awareness of women-centred ways of working. However, over time some CO partners stated that they needed more direct support with women CO participants and so the Women Centre had to adjust their role slightly and respond flexibly to requests for more practical ways of support, for example, by co-facilitating some women only sessions, where capacity allowed.

Key strengths

- Women centred ways of working encouraged more creative and innovative thinking in the planning, delivery and evaluation of the CO project.
- With the WomenCentre's help, CO was able to put women's needs at the forefront of CO service delivery.
- The Women Centre developed and trialled creative tools to encourage migrant women 'to explore career and learning options beyond gender stereotypes', thereby contributing to the achievement of the project's target for raising aspirations amongst women.

- The pandemic exerted sudden pressures, particularly on women. With the WomenCentre's help and that of all the delivery partners, the project was able to continue to include women at the forefront of remotely and digitally delivered services, with it creating more flexibility and accessibility for those women with other responsibilities.

Key Learning

- ✔ The WomenCentre's CO evaluations showcase the success of the women centred approach, offer practical examples that have proven to work and uplift the voices of women migrants. They also create a legacy and build capacity beyond the life of the project, by embedding and sustaining this approach. Evaluations include: 'Applying Women Centred-Principles', 'Digital Ways of Women Centred Working' and a 'Women Migrants Dictionary'. **Publications | WomenCentre Calderdale and Kirklees**

"I enrolled into an English summer course at college but they did not offer childcare... It was very hard to sort and pay for childcare ... eventually I found a place for my sons.... It may seem like little help but it was a big help for me..."

| Six principles of women centred learning with women migrants |
|--|
| 1. Provide services informed by women's voices |
| 2. Know your local specialist support for women |
| 3. Provide learning opportunities about gender |
| 4. Support staff learning around gender specific issues |
| 5. Creatively resolve childcare support |
| 6. Offer creative solutions to enable access to wider services |



A woman, a Mum
We are all human.
We are freedom.
It is our initial right
to be happy - for everybody.
Effective.
It was amazing.
Actually, these sessions forced me

To share my experiences.
To release from my scary background.
To come face to face with it.
When you escape from some feelings
you can't treat.

This course caused me to go to
a very deep feeling.
I was very selfish.
I try to show someone
how I feel
and how deep
the suffering
from the past.
It made
a healing
for me
indirectly.

You were friendly.
You were full
of a coach.
I was like
I was in friendship
yet groups.
The atmosphere
was really
friendly.

I found the people
"Nobody come"
It's an alien in my country.
It's just me who can help you.
It gave me the feeling as if.
The first time I didn't want to talk
but it made me feel that
I can heal myself with art,
nature and meditation.

It gave me confidence.
Sharing your story without words,
just pictures.
Another point is that
you can disconnect from real life,
it's like meditation,
you can disconnect from the outside world.

W - what keeps women well
by women from Britain

Migrant user involvement and participation



Overview

User involvement and participation was built into CO to ensure the views and experiences of participants would help inform its ongoing delivery and governance. At various stages, any ongoing feedback received was consistently fed into the project to consider and helped in implementing changes. Feedback was obtained from CO participants via focus groups, online and paper surveys, internal and external independent evaluations, participation on the CO Board and at CO event planning groups. The CO Champion programme was a core commitment to participation and inclusion in CO. It was essential in underpinning and supporting the ongoing evaluation process and helped ensure user perspective and opinions of CO participants were being fed directly up to the CO Board level. CO Champions, who were CO participants, were signed up via a recruitment and selection process from across the partnership, with Keyworkers proactive in its promotion and uptake. This helped to reflect the range of experiences and journeys of participants on CO highlighting different perspectives and strengths of the project across the region. Over time, CO Champions not only contributed to shaping the CO delivery model on issues such as childcare, ESOL provision,

employment and a Keyworker toolkit but they also played a crucial role in the organisation and delivery of regional CO participant events and project end-of-year staff and volunteer events e.g. presenting their experiences and journeys.

Challenges

User involvement and participation can sometimes increase participants expectations, which a project might not always have the capacity to achieve. For example, feedback from surveys usually included calls for more ESOL language classes and Keyworker support, which unfortunately due to funding limits the project could not always accommodate.

39

CO Champions recruited



Key strengths

- Consistent feedback ensured the CO partnership was clear on areas for improvement and what was working well.
- User involvement was at all levels of CO from decisions about service provision, presenting at events to helping with promotion.
- Participants were given ample opportunity to shape the delivery of CO through feedback via 57 focus groups, recruitment 39 CO Champions, 2 online CO staff/volunteers surveys, 5 end of year events and involvement in two independent external evaluations.
- Focus groups and survey results demonstrated enthusiasm for the project overall, which had a positive impact on staff moral especially during COVID lockdowns.
- The recruitment process for CO Champions has been key to its success as participants were required to apply and be interviewed for the role. It gave a taster of the job application and interview process in the UK and was also seen as an achievement.
- CO Champions were involved in the promotion and selection of new CO Champions and as a group they also provided peer support to one another.

Key Learning

- ✓ User involvement and participation is a two- way process and is only successful if there is genuine commitment from all involved, requiring open communication and the removal of barriers, where possible.
- ✓ When working with migrants, obtaining feedback in community languages will ensure user participation is more representative.
- ✓ Both Keyworkers and CO Champions were instrumental in ensuring high levels of participant involvement and feedback.
- ✓ Participants may sometimes feel over evaluated and don't always see their feedback being implemented, influenced by when they exit a programme.
- ✓ User feedback worked well with multiple opportunities to participate and provide feedback, helping to shape the service and inform delivery, through surveys, focus groups and the recruitment of CO Champions.

"I visited various events being a CO Champion: the Migration training, Women in Faith, CO Board meeting, Interview panels, etc. All these activities gave me a lot of opportunity to meet new people, improve my skills & abilities, make new friends & feel my value as a person."

"The programme is excellent as it helped me to get more confidence, get to know people and eventually to find a job".

Project achievements

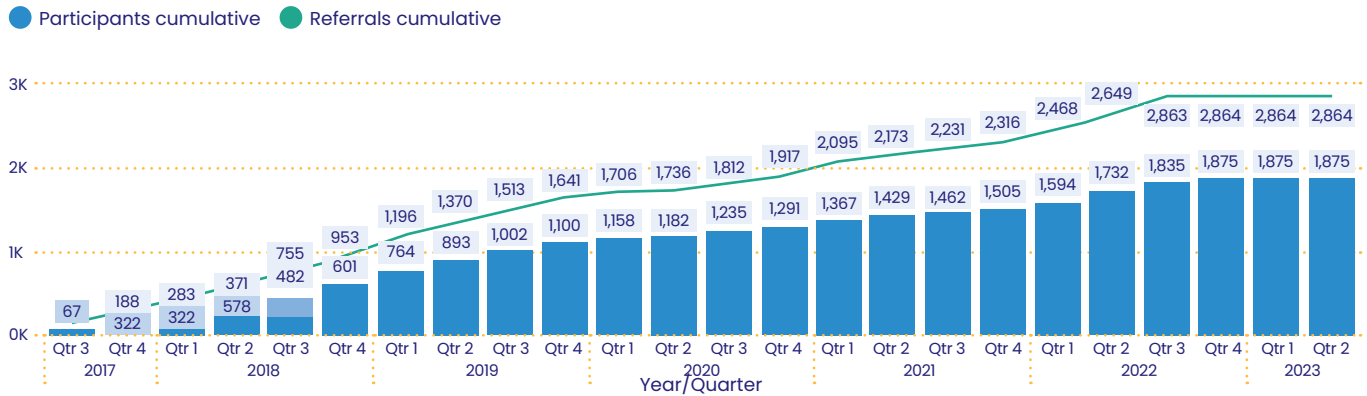
This section provides an overview as to what extent CO achieved its key objectives in terms of outputs and results. The project had several BBO targets as well as additional project targets to meet and each CO partner were set their own individual targets, based on their delivery roles.

Overall, the project had a total target of engaging with 2316 migrants. During its delivery period, it received a total of 2864 referrals, and minus any ineligible and inappropriate referrals, the project supported a total of 1875 participants achieving 81% progress towards its total project engagement target.

81%

progress towards total project participant engagement target

Referrals and participants on Connecting Opportunities (cumulative)



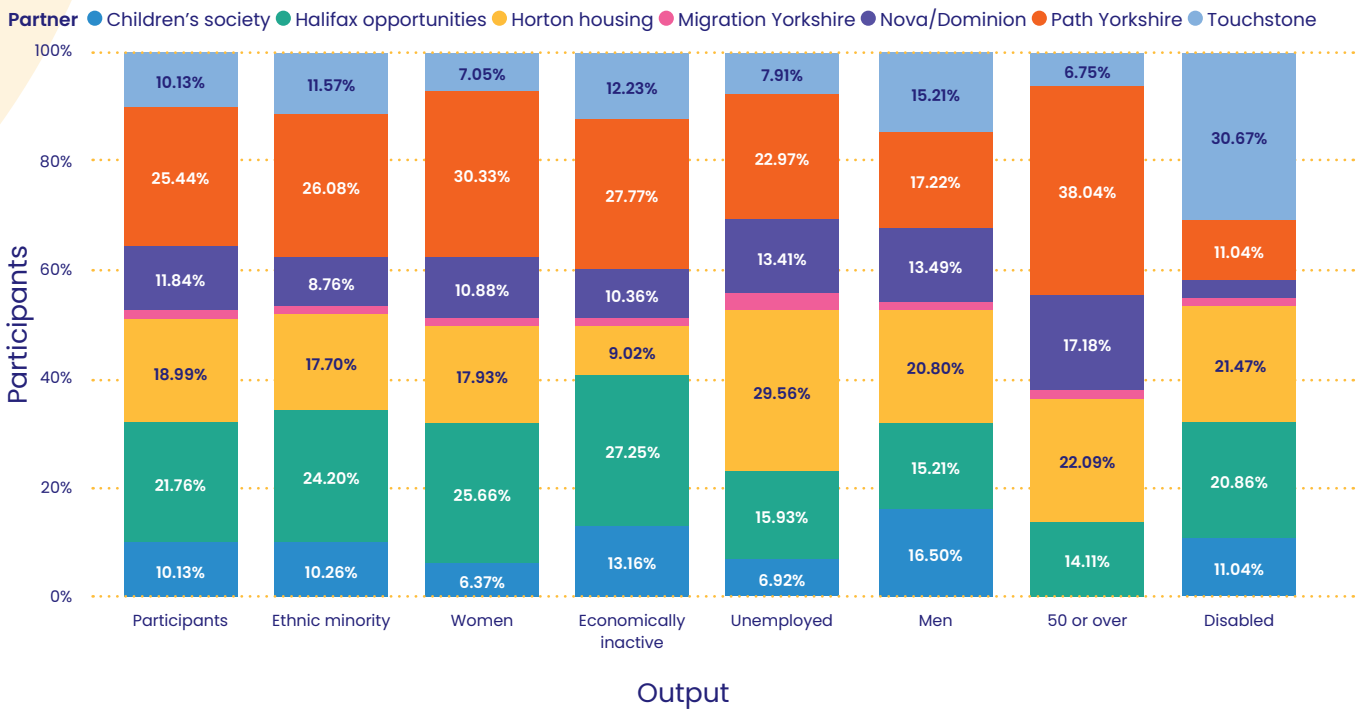
Overall achievements of BBO output targets can be seen below.

| BBO Output target | Project Target | Project % participant target | Participants | % Progress against project target | % Of participants |
|-----------------------|----------------|------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Participants | 2316 | n/a | 1875 | 81% | n/a |
| Men | 1158 | 50% | 697 | 60% | 37% |
| Women | 1158 | 50% | 1177 | 102% | 63% |
| Unemployed | 1158 | 50% | 910 | 79% | 49% |
| Economically Inactive | 1158 | 50% | 965 | 83% | 52% |
| 50 years or over | 308 | 15% | 163 | 53% | 9% |
| Disabled | 411 | 20% | 163 | 40% | 9% |
| Ethnic minority | 1611 | 80% | 1599 | 99% | 86% |

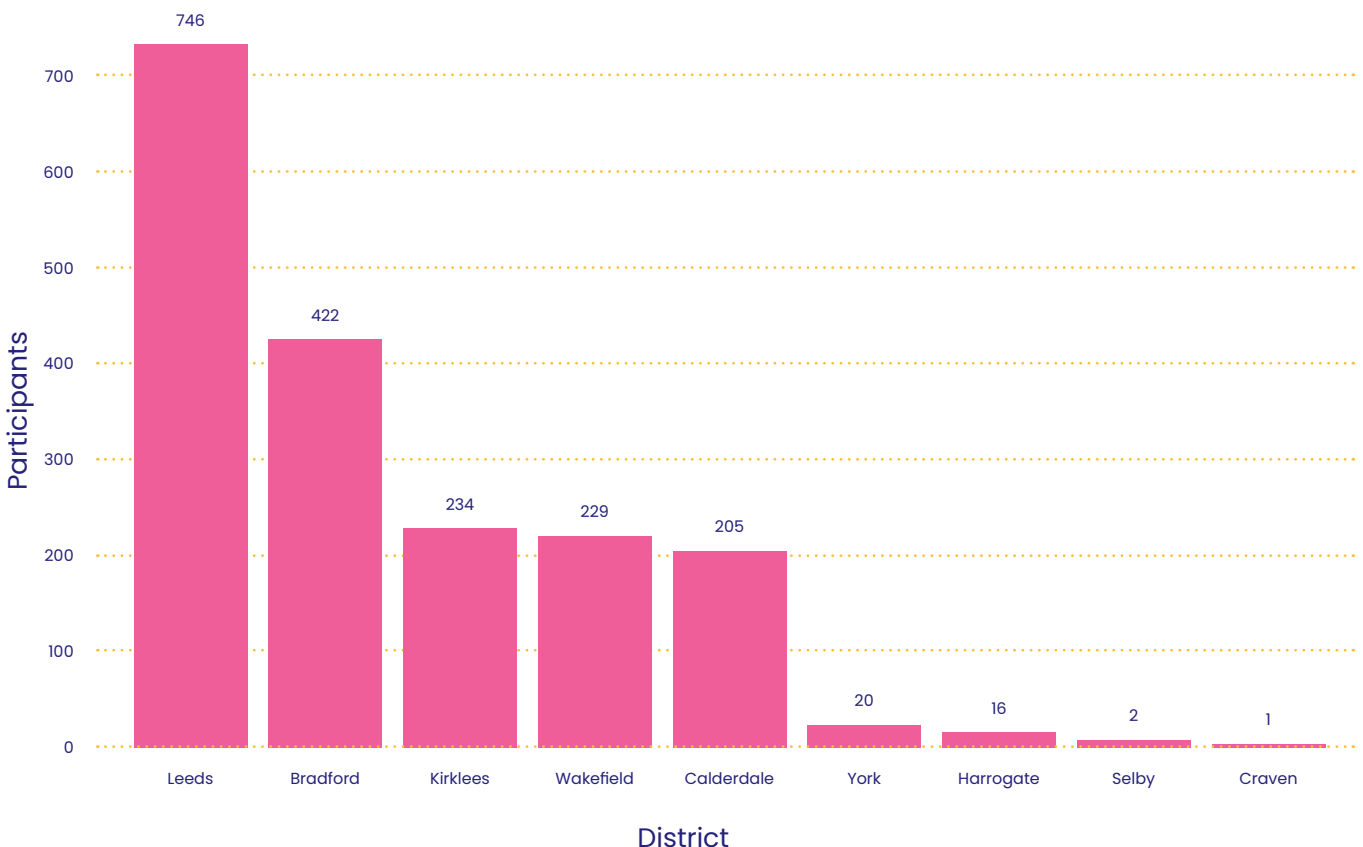
CO can be compared with BBO national output figures (30/09/2022) of engaging with 51% male participants, 49% female, 51% unemployed, 49% economically inactive, 23% over 50 years, 48% disability, 22% ethnic minorities. In comparison, CO was particularly effective in engaging with women and ethnic minorities.

Participant outputs also varied by CO partners from across the region. These differences between CO partners were influenced by several factors including for example, changing local migrant populations, impact local promotional work, existing established networks and experiences and knowledge in engaging with different groups.

Participants by Output and Partner



Participants by area

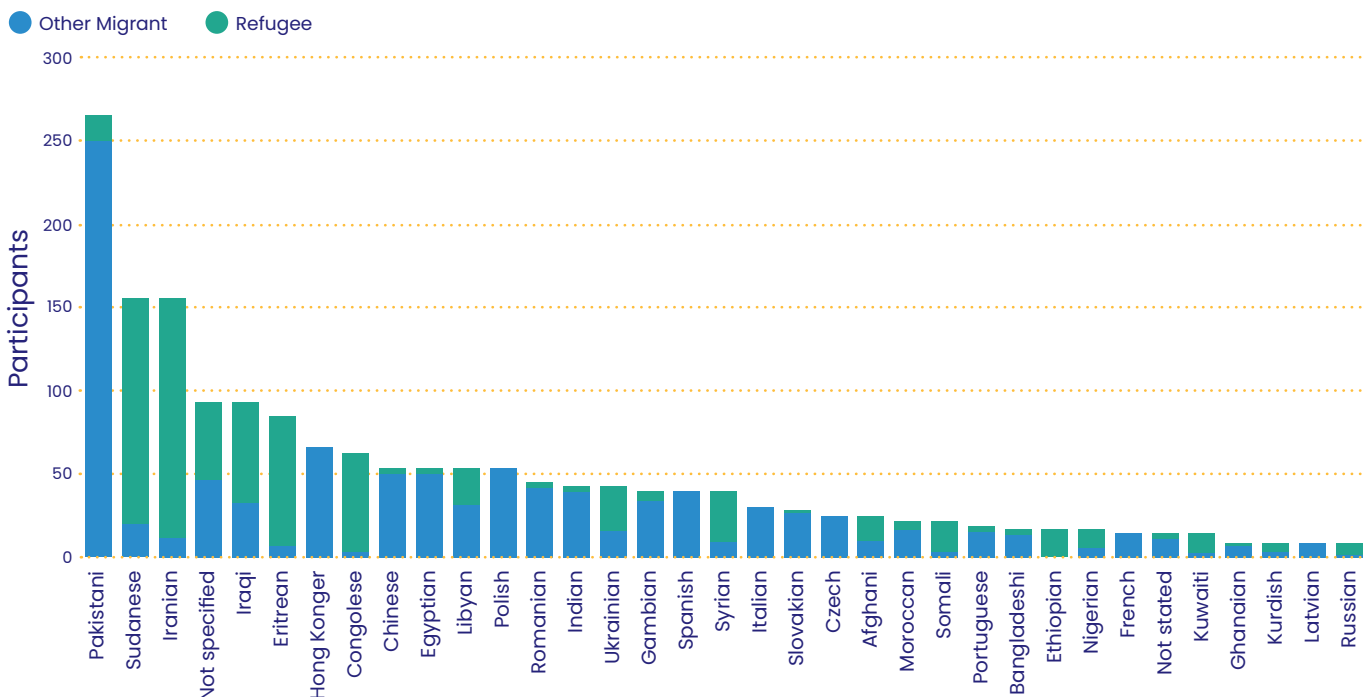


In terms of the project engaging with its key target groups, please see table below. Please note, participants may have fallen into more than one category.

| Key target groups | Number CO participants | % CO participants |
|--|------------------------|-------------------|
| Roma | 40 | 2% |
| Refugees | 761 | 41% |
| Asylum seekers with permission to work | 14 | 1% |
| Arriving via family reunion | 105 | 6% |
| Isolated family joiners | 266 | 14% |
| Separated young people (UASC) | 18 | 1% |
| Victims of trafficking, forced labour and exploitation | 45 | 2.5% |
| Little or no English | 816 | 44% |

CO engaged with migrants and refugees from up to 114 nationalities and speaking up to 39 languages.

TOP 6
nationalities were from pakistan, sudan, iran, iraq, eritrea and hong kong.



Achievement of BBO results targets and other project results can be seen below.

| BBO results | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|------------------|--------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| | Project targets | Project target % | Participants | % progress to target | % of participants |
| Into education or training, on leaving | 426 | 25% | 436 | 102% | 23% |
| Into employment on leaving | 494 | 20% | 501 | 103% | 27% |
| Into employment who were unemployed when joining | 284 | 10% | 305 | 107% | 16% |
| Into employment who were economically inactive when joining | 210 | 10% | 206 | 98% | 11% |
| Economically inactive into job-search | 313 | 27% | 278 | 89% | 15% |
| Other project results | | | | | |
| | Project targets | Project target % | Participants | % progress to target | % of participants |
| Participate in ESOL | 1621 | 70% | 1393 | 86% | 75% |
| Progress to higher levels of English | 811 | 50% | 763 | 94% | 41% |
| Achieve or working towards ESOL accreditation/qualification | 162 | 10% | 198 | 122% | 11% |
| Engaged in mentoring services | 811 | 40% | 713 | 88% | 38% |
| Into work placements or work experience | 347 | 15% | 373 | 107% | 20% |
| Receiving work support to sustain employment | 347 | 15% | 412 | 119% | 22% |
| Engaged in mental health/wellbeing support | 347 | 15% | 527 | 152% | 28% |
| Number of migrant champions | 38 | | 39 | 103% | 2% |
| Number of employers engaged in the project | 560 | | 398 | 71% | |

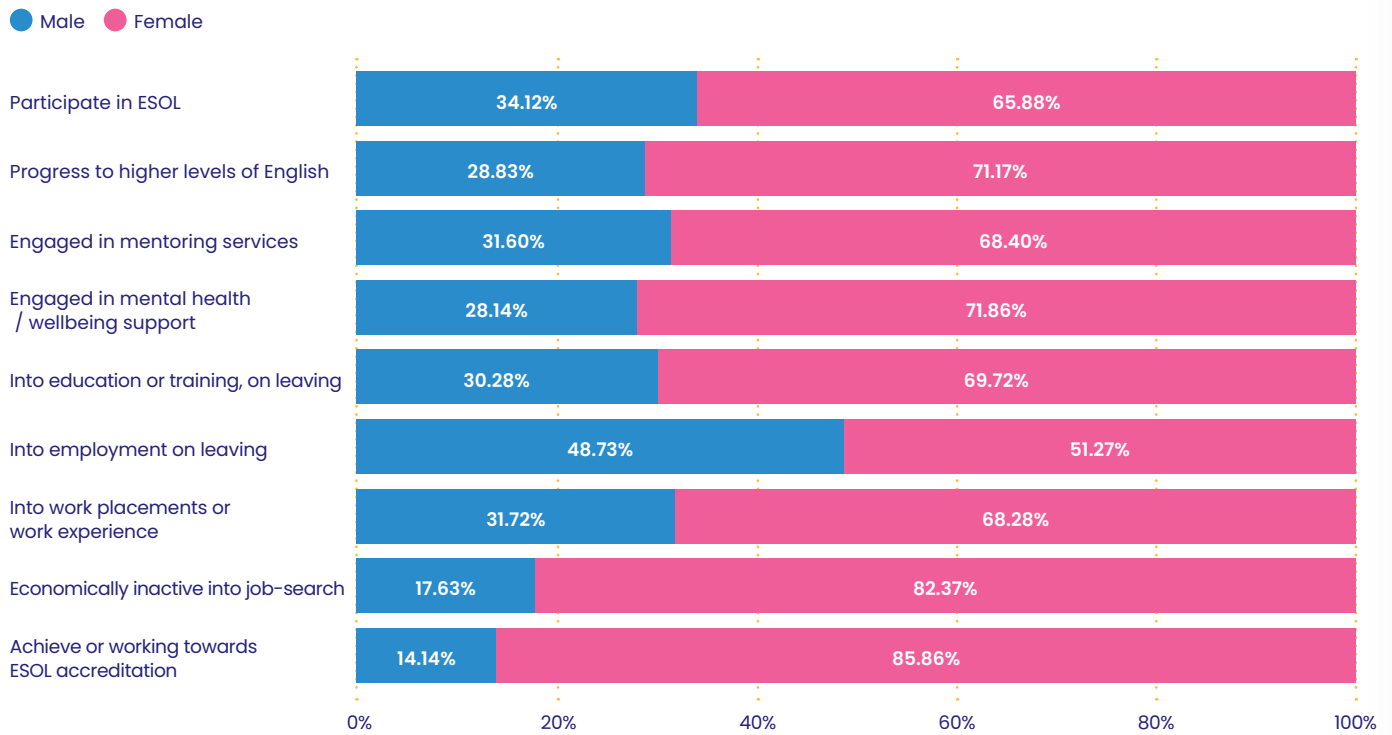
CO can be compared with BBO national result figures (30/09/2022) of 24% unemployed into jobs, 17% education/training, 32% economically inactive into job search. In comparison, CO supported 27% participants into employment, 23% into education/training and 15% economically inactive into job search. Overall, on average across all BBO results 100% progress was made.

For other project results, the project was particularly successful in engaging participants in work experience/placements and in mental health /well-being support; sustaining employment via in-work support and in participants achieving or working towards ESOL

qualifications. Overall, on average across all other project results 103% progress was made. The project model worked exceptionally well in supporting the needs of female migrants with them over-achieving across all project results, particularly into education/training (71%) and progressing and achieving ESOL qualifications (86%).

CO also compared output difference between male and female participants. Notably, females overall achieved higher % proportion across all outputs and female % progress against all project result targets was on average 138%.

BBO results and other project results achieved by male / female



Challenges

COVID 19 pandemic had a huge impact on referrals and engagement with migrants, who had limited English language skills, IT skills, access to IT devices and wi-fi and with them suffering further isolation and poverty. The project had to adapt quickly in purchasing IT equipment, Wi-Fi and mobile phone credit and in teaching digital skills to participants, to remove barriers to engagement. Staff roles had to be very flexible and adaptable in providing additional well-being support and access to more practical support in their communities, with other services being closed. In addition, due to the nature of migrant groups and criteria of the project of referrals having to have lived in UK less than 10 years, the project struggled to meet over 50 years target, with many migrants being of a younger age. It also struggled to reach disabilities output targets, influenced by cultural stigma of self-disclosing any form of disability.

Key strengths

- Despite COVID, project achieved 81% progress against its project participant target.
- The project model worked exceptionally well in supporting the needs of female migrants with them over-achieving across all project results, particularly into education/training (71%) and progressing and achieving ESOL qualifications (86%) and supporting ethnic minorities (86%)
- With most migrant support services usually funded to only support refugees, CO was unique in being able to support 'other migrants', who made up 59% of all its participants.
- The project was particularly successful in over-achieving its education/training and employment results for participants.
- Overall, on average across all BBO results the project achieved 100% progress towards its targets.

100%

average progress
across all BBO result
targets

27%

participants
exited into
employment

23%

participants exited
into education/
training

138%

average progress
females across all
projects result
targets

Key Learning

- ✓ To be clear on the outset of any project its key aims, target groups and what support can be expected and to consistently communicate this message, to ensure appropriate referrals are received.
- ✓ To undertake earlier a more targeted approach across the project partnership in engaging with certain groups e.g., over 50 years, disabilities.
- ✓ To ensure data collection systems can monitor target groups more effectively.

**“Before I joined CO,
there were lots of things
I didn’t know about
myself, I didn’t know
what skills I had...I feel
independent and proud
of myself. And that
happiness when you
get your first wage!”**

Project impact

This section focusses on the impact CO had on participants, volunteers and staff and highlights some of the project's key achievements. It draws upon data from the projects BBO outcome targets; ongoing internal feedback from surveys, focus groups, events and two independent external evaluation reports. The first in 2018, focusing on evaluating the extent CO was meeting its objectives and the second in 2019-2020, a social return on investment evaluation, assessing the wider social impact created by CO.

The project had 4 over-arching qualitative outcome targets, covering language improvement and employability; financial wellbeing; improved integration and wellbeing; empowerment and participation.

Data for these outcomes were collected via evaluation forms completed by participants at initial assessment, review and exit stages.

Language improvement



Increased confidence in speaking and listening to English

1160

participants



111% target met (66% participants)



Greater ability to access services without translation or interpreting

1118

participants



121% target met (64% participants)

Employability



Feel closer to the job market

1316

participants



126% target met (75% participants)



Feel work ready

876

participants



108% target met (50% participants)

Financial wellbeing



Achieving greater financial independence



117% target met (54% participants)

Integration & wellbeing



Having increased levels of confidence



115% target met (54% participants)



Women feeling more integrated



137% target met (61% participants)



Women feel less isolated



120% target met (56% participants)

Empowerment & participation



Women feel more empowered



111% project target met (50% participants)



Women increased confidence levels



110% project target met (49% participants)

In terms of social value calculated for CO project, (1st July 2019- 31st March 2021), that is wider gains to society e.g., improvements in health, educational attainment, reduction in crime etc., CO generated over £14,520,000 of social investment, that is over £12million above the funding for the programme. This value was generated for participants, CO Champions, volunteers and CO delivery partners, with CO participants and especially females reporting the highest outcomes.

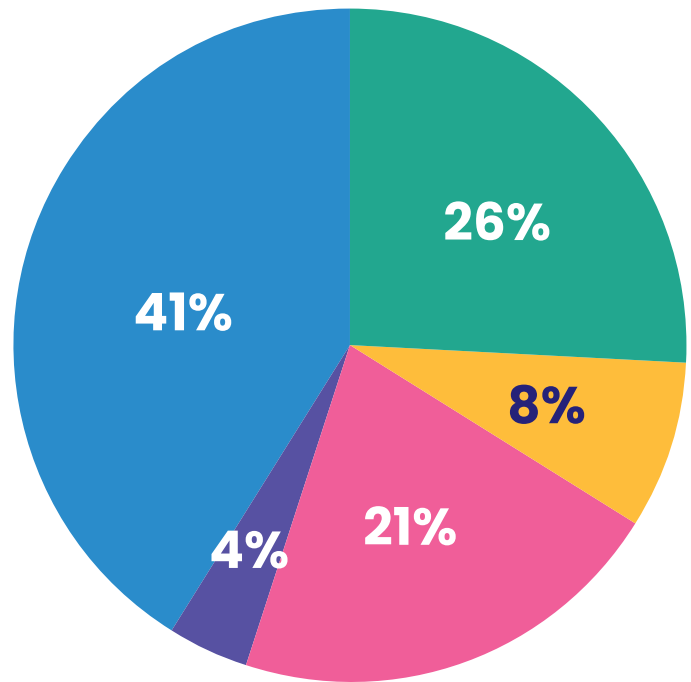
For every £1 of investment, CO generated up to £6.67

CO created at least **£13.6 million** of Social Value for participants

CO Participants

Wider social outcomes generated for CO participants were:

- ✔ **41%** had increased wellbeing and reported feeling more positive. Women were more likely to highlight an increased wellbeing due to increased confidence in communicating in English and having learnt new skills, while men seem less likely to regard their wellbeing as a priority and more likely to be engaged with others outside their family.
- ✔ **26%** making new friends and connections outside of their usual social networks.
- ✔ **21%** feeling more integrated in British society expressing that they understand the UK system and culture better due to taking part in CO activities.

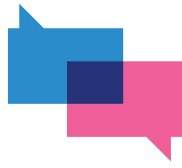


- Increased wellbeing
- New friends and connections with people from different communities
- Have learnt new skills for the future and want to learn more
- Better able to understand British culture, rules and responsibilities
- Have a new job now

Participants told us they had benefited from



A chance to socialise with peers and share problems



Enhanced ability to converse with others in English



Improved confidence to carry out everyday tasks like phone a GP or use public transport



Support with IT skills and access to Wi-Fi and devices to use



Orientation to British culture and history on trips to York and Whitby



Friendship with local people through mentoring and befriending



Reduced sense of loneliness due to being able to phone keyworker at any time



Wellbeing activities

“I was afraid to go the GP and shopping. Now I have the confidence to speak to people. I was afraid, I would take my children shopping, but now I am confident.”

“I joined CO through one of my friends. It helped me to connect with different people, learn about the culture as the culture here is very different.”

“I felt I had a purpose and I started to feel that I belong here.”

CO Champion Volunteers

Wider social outcomes generated for CO Champions were:

- 34% were better able to understand British Culture
- 24% progressed and had new skills or a job
- 26% made new friends
- 14% were better able to understand British culture, rules and responsibilities

“The CO Champions programme is excellent as it helped me to get more confidence, get to know more people & eventually to find a job.”

CO created over **£534,000** of Social Value for volunteers.

CO Delivery Partners

The CO partnership model and management by Migration Yorkshire has been positive and appreciated by partners, with the structure, support and direction combined with being flexible with funding has contributed to improving services and to closer working relationships. Of CO partners:

- 34% have closer working relationships.
- 28% worked with a new and wider target group.
- 25% improved services.
- 13% increased reputation

“Migration Yorkshire values and treats all the Partners consistently (...) no one is side lined.”

CO created at least **£482,500** of social value for CO Champions

CO Project Volunteers

As part of the CO delivery model, volunteer Mentors and Befrienders helped to support participants and contribute to the outcomes they experienced. Volunteering also has an impact on them:

- 40% had more opportunity to help make a tangible difference to the lives of people, who were often vilified by our society.
- 28% gained experience of working with new communities.

“I can’t change the world, but I can make a difference in someone’s life.”

CO created over **£236,278** of Social Value for delivery partners

Challenges

Ongoing evaluation provided invaluable information on areas for improvement. Effort was made to action any feedback but there were challenges in ensuring consistency in some areas and being unable to action all wishes, due to funding constraints. For example, maximising the volunteer befriending offer more consistently across the partnership; increasing more English language provision and conversational English opportunities; providing enough higher level/ professional job opportunities; developing more professional mentoring; increasing staff administrative support with paperwork evidence requirements and improving and creating a more consistent induction onto the programme.

Key strengths

- CO achieved an average 115% progress across all its 4 main over-arching qualitative outcome targets.
- COs had a wider and more sustainable impact not only on its participants but also more widely on its volunteers, CO staff and partners that it could never have envisaged. It added value way above its separate elements that will hopefully have a long-standing impact on all involved.
- CO achieved many of its aims with outcomes indicating that 75% participants felt closer to the job market; 66% had increased confidence in listening to and speaking in English and 54% felt increased levels of confidence, empowerment and financial independence.
- Female participants throughout stated that CO had transformed their lives, developed their sense of self-identity and made them feel more empowered, confident and less isolated.

Key Learning

- ✓ The importance of building in external independent evaluation into a project at different stages as it can provide deeper learning and invaluable insights on project strengths and areas for improvement, which the partnership could then take forward and work on together.
- ✓ For any service, it's important to ask participants what has had the biggest impact on them. It may not be what you think. Although CO was an employment focussed project, interestingly, from a participant's perspective, the biggest impact was in improving their feelings of wellbeing, providing them with an opportunity to make new friends and connect with others and enabling them to learn more about UK culture and life.

“Before I could do nothing. Now I can stand up for myself.”

Conclusion

Migrants are often amongst the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in our society. The skills, strengths and potential of new migrants could remain untapped if they are not supported in removing barriers, they face in becoming economically and socially independent. Without programmes like CO, vulnerable migrants, particularly women, could continue to face long-term unemployment and feel isolated from the wider communities they live amongst.

Connecting Opportunities made a significant difference to the lives and life chances of many of its participants and has created valuable learning for all those who were involved in the project and for the future.

Notes

Internal Evaluations and Reports

- Keyworking Toolkit (2022) Migration Yorkshire
- Employment Support Toolkit (2022) Migration Yorkshire
- Participant Survey & Outcomes (2020 & 2021) Migration Yorkshire
- Staff and Volunteer Survey & Outcomes (2018, 2020 & 2021) Migration Yorkshire
- Volunteer Survey & Outcomes (2020) LASSN Leeds Asylum Seekers Support Network
- LASSN's Guide to Befriending (in a pandemic) (2020)
- Women Centre Focus Groups (Jan – April 2019) WomenCentre
- 'Applying Women Centred-Principles', 'Digital Ways of Women Centred Working' and a 'Women Migrants Dictionary'. WomenCentre.

External Evaluations

Connecting Opportunities Social Return on Investment Evaluation (SROI) (August 2021) - Liz Riley

Evaluation of Connecting Opportunities: Final report ERS (July 2019). ERS Ltd

CO Partners

Dominion Training, Wakefield

Halifax Opportunities Trust, Calderdale/Kirklees

Horton Housing, Bradford

Leeds Asylum Seekers Support Network, Leeds

Path Yorkshire, Leeds

The Children's Society, regional

Touchstone, regional

Solace, regional

WomensCentre, regional

Migration Yorkshire, lead regional partner.

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