



PROJECT REPORT

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CROSSING BOUNDARIES THROUGH COOKING AND ROLE PLAY:

AN EXPLORATION OF GENDER, MIGRATION, AND PRIVILEGE

ANNA BACHAN | NAWOJKA MOCEK | MALGORAZATA
GALINSKA

Teenagers love food, especially when it's free. That's why we decided to organize a workshop where they can get to know migrants and refugees face to face through the art of cooking.

During our workshops, they will learn how to make international cuisine from a country while learning about its history. As for the educational part, we'll encourage teens to explore the history of migration in their own families. Through a role playing exercise, teens will also have the chance to step into the shoes of an individual (whether refugee or migrant) and be asked to critically think about and assess their own privileges as Polish citizens.

>> THE TEAM

We come from different backgrounds, and have been all involved with minority groups, and especially with migrants and refugees. Our project reflects a synthesis of various stories we've all heard in the past from people we met as well as pieces of information and experiences we've learned during our work and studies.



WE ARE ACTIVISTS PASSIONATE ABOUT
MAKING THE WORLD MORE CONSCIOUS
ABOUT MIGRANT AND REFUGEE RIGHTS

And we love to eat!



ANNA BACHAN

A recent Princeton in Africa fellow and New York University graduate Anna is most passionate about international migration and women's and children's rights, with a geographic focus on relations between the EU and West Africa.



NAWOJKA MOCEK

Born and raised in Poznań Poland. After two years of studying Law and French for two years, she decided to spend another two years volunteering mostly in France, Belgium and Spain. She was also working with migrants in Marrakech, Morocco in summer 2016 and as a coordinator in Skaramagas refugee camp in Athens, Greece in summer 2017.



MAŁGORZATA
GALIŃSKA

A student at the Institute of Applied Polish Studies at the University of Warsaw, she also works as a Polish teacher for foreigners and volunteers at Polskie Forum Migracyjne, helping to organize different forms of support for refugees and migrants living in Poland.

>> ABOUT THE PROBLEM

The Polish school system lacks official educational programs to cover topics of human rights, equality and intercultural dialogue, especially as they relate to migration. As Polish children and teens cannot learn about the migration at school, they gather most information about refugees and migrants from media and the internet, where harmful stereotypes are widely spread.

MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES ARE OFTEN PRESENTED AS DISTANT 'OTHERS', DIFFERENT FROM US, WITH WHOM WE DON'T HAVE MUCH IN COMMON.

The image of aggressive invaders threatening European values have become so commonly accepted that the words 'refugee' and 'migrant' are now treated as insults even among the youngest Poles.

In Poland, the fear of 'Others' is complex. Poland is a homogenous society, both ethnically and religiously (UdSC, 2017). Thus, the majority of Polish citizens have limited chances to personally interact with people of different national or religious backgrounds. Public opinion surveys with Polish citizens show many are afraid of the 'unknown', but also of foreign infiltration or threats that could endanger Polish identity and culture (IPSOS, 2015). A major issue is that Poles, especially younger generations, base their perceptions of migrants and refugees on stereotypes images seen in media and perpetrated by the right-wing PiS (Law and Justice) Party (IPSOS, 2016).

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>> ABOUT THE SOLUTION

Our solution is multidisciplinary and combines creating a video and with an educational and cooking workshop for teenagers. It builds on GośćInność's original workshop approach, but offers an innovative approach including a video and focus on the experiences of migrant and refugee women and girls.

THE MAIN GOALS OF OUR WORKSHOP AND VIDEO WERE TO:

- Facilitate personal contact between teens and migrants and refugees,
- Encourage teens to empathize with migrants/refugees and step into their shoes to try to emotionally experience what they must be going through, including
- Teach teens how to make international cuisine from the cook's origin country.
- Examine the less discussed challenges that migrant women and girls face in their new communities.
- Foster intercultural dialogue and make Polish teens interested in getting to know people that are different from them.

THE WORKSHOP

We created an educational and cooking workshop. The overall purpose of the workshop is to teach students about the situation of migrants and refugees in the Polish context and more generally in the world.

THE VIDEO

We created a video with migrants and refugees involved with *GośćInność*. In the video, we asked three individuals (specifically from Belarus, Dagestan and Ukraine) questions about their lives, identities, relationships with food, as well as their perception of the word "hospitality" as foreigners in Poland.

Crossing Boundaries through Cooking and Role Play:

An Exploration of Migration,
Gender and Privilege

Gość
Inność



HUMANITY IN
ACTION
POLSKA



>> ABOUT THE SOLUTION

EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP

The educational aspect of our workshop will teach students the basic vocabulary needed to understand the difference between migrants and refugees, asylum seekers, and unaccompanied minors among other terms. In addition, it highlights the experiences and challenges migrant and refugee women and girls face, such as harassment, gender-based violence, exploitation or human trafficking.

We will also explore the other side of migration (that of Polish emigration abroad), by having participants share their family stories. We will help teens realize that migration is universal and the stories are similar: whether of their grandparents fleeing Poland during WWII or Syrians escaping to Europe today.

Our role-playing exercise will then allow students to step in the shoes of migrants and refugees in various situations around the world, and bring them to question their own privileges as Polish citizens and experience emotions connected to migration, exile, and struggle in forging a new life abroad.

In our video, we concealed the identities of our interviewees, by filming their hands preparing various food items that would make up one meal. For example, we filmed them cutting up eggplants and tomatoes, and making dough. Once this part was filmed, we overlaid it with the

THE VIDEO

audio from the interviews. Our overall aim with the video was to reflect the diverse situations migrants and refugees face in Poland while connecting their stories to the art of cooking.

COOKING WORKSHOP

The cooking part of our workshop will give Polish teenagers the chance to personally interact with refugees/migrants from different countries while creating a safe space for dialogue and communication. They will also have the opportunity to gain a new skill, that of cooking a meal from the cuisine of a different country.

>> REFLECTIONS & LESSONS LEARNED

SUCCESSES / CHALLENGES / LESSONS

We wanted to share what we found successful, what we felt could use a little more work, and lastly offer some advice for fellow social activists.

Generally, we found that the workshop scenario was an accomplishment: we integrated various different types of activities together in a cohesive manner and it worked. We didn't want to overwhelm the teens but give them just enough background knowledge to think about migration from different perspectives in order to participate in the final role play exercise. We also finished the workshop in time to send to a graphic designer to help us create a professional version Nina could use and share with other NGO's as well as businesses interested in diversity workshops. Lastly, we feel that filming and editing the video in less than a week was a success in itself (with the help of a great filmmaker co-fellow as well as a volunteer sound engineer of course). We were also able to put English subtitles in the film in order to screen it at the HIA Pitch Event.

On the other hand, we felt that the presentation could have been better. We faced lots of issues finding current data about migrants and refugees in Poland, and also with presenting the history of Polish emigrants in an exciting way. We also struggled to effectively integrate the gender component into every activity (as refugee/migrant women's and girl's experiences was the main topic). Another disappointment was that we didn't have time to try the workshop out on teens and actually organize the event. We also did not get feedback from our target audience, teenagers in Poland, in time to integrate it into the final draft of our scenario. We learned that it is better to choose one project and focus on making it the best it can be, rather than integrating several projects together. Lastly, we learned that getting feedback from the target group is crucial, both prior to creating the product as well as afterwards to test it. We did not have the chance to organize a workshop and ended up asking teenagers to read through our scenario last minute for some feedback.

ADVICE

There are a million ideas and strategies to engage in and implement social change. The difficult part is narrowing down and choosing one of these. We would recommend making a decision with one project and then sticking to it. If it doesn't work or you run into too many obstacles, you can go back and adjust it or scrap it completely. Don't get discouraged. Sometimes it might seem like working on a grassroots project aimed at solving a tiny social issue is pointless, but a journey starts with a single step! Another thing is not getting caught up in "evaluating the impact" of social activism. Social change is difficult and sometimes impossible to record and gauge, as it can take a very long time. Not being able to immediately see change as a direct result of one's social activism work can be demotivating and discouraging. It is important to be cognizant of how to track and report changes in attitudes and behaviors, but also accept that sometimes it just won't be possible to determine with 100% accuracy.

>> THE FUTURE?

As GosćInność is a local initiative that will continue its activities after our departure. Nina is especially interested in potentially expanding her reach to organize diversity workshops for businesses in the Warsaw area. Anyone who is knowledgeable about this topic (or how to best take advantage of Social Corporate Responsibility) or interested in general should definitely reach out to Nina and ask how to get involved.

>> PICTURES



>> Nawojka interviews Khavra, a refugee from Dagestan during our video shooting.



>> Group photo with two of our interviewees, Olga and Khavra.

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