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GOOD PRACTICES	
Title of the project, programme	Melissa Network Women's Voices
Duration	The project is ongoing, with workshops and activities taking place regularly since the network's establishment in 2014.
Name of the organisation/service responsible for the intervention, with reference to country and location (specific)	Melissa Network for Immigrants women in Greece-Athens Melissa Network is an organization for migrant and refugee women in Greece. Founded in 2014 with grassroots-based participation, it counts members from over 45 countries. It provides a platform for networking, capacity building, and advocacy and runs an innovative integration program supporting refugee women and children.
Scope (local/regional/national/international)	Primarily local (Athens), but with national and international reach through online platforms and collaborations.
Area	Digital Storytelling
History of the project how it was conceived, development and context strategies;	<p>Conception: The project was conceived as part of the Melissa Network's broader mission to empower migrant and refugee women. Recognizing the power of storytelling, the network began organizing workshops to help women share their experiences.</p> <p>Development: Over the years, the project has grown to include collaborations with artists, filmmakers, and cultural institutions. The stories created through the project have been showcased in exhibitions, film festivals, and online platforms.</p> <p>Context: The project was developed in response to the increasing number of migrant and refugee women arriving in Greece, many of whom faced exclusion and marginalization.</p>



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<p>General description of project/program</p> <p><i>Objectives, actions, main actors and challenges, organizations involved, beneficiaries and n° of beneficiaries involved, partners and stakeholders, budget available, implementation period and other relevant information useful to understand its nature and results);</i></p>	<p>The Melissa Network supports migrant and refugee women and girls in Greece through seven key areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Literacy Support: Language classes (Greek, English, French, German, Spanish) and homework assistance. 2. Psycho-Social Support: Counseling, therapy (drama, music, movement, EMDR). 3. Information: Sessions on legal, social, labor, women’s rights, health, and gender-based violence. 4. Advocacy Support: Media workshops, public speaking, creative writing, and personal storytelling. 5. Art & Creativity: Vocational training, IT and coding, crafts, cooking, sewing, leadership and CV workshops. 6. Skills & Capacity Building: Visual arts, photography, film, poetry, and music. 7. Self/Community-Care: Stress management, mindfulness, yoga, dance, acupuncture, and self-defense. <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Empower women to share their stories and build digital skills ● Promote social inclusion and empathy. ● Advocate for women’s rights. ● Enhance employability through skill development. <p>Main Actors: Migrant and refugee women (story creators), Melissa staff and volunteers, artists, filmmakers, and partner organizations.</p> <p>Beneficiaries: Hundreds of migrant and refugee women in Athens.</p> <p>While the project budget isn’t public, funding comes from donations, grants, and partnerships. The U.S. Embassy in Athens supported the film and creative workshops (2015–2018). The aim is to raise awareness of migrant and refugee women's contributions to society.</p> <p>Legal Representative: Mrs. Deborah Valencia</p>
<p>Outcomes of the practices, relevant results, impact</p>	<p>Outcomes and Impact</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Empowerment: Women gain confidence and a sense of agency by sharing their stories. 2. Skill Development: Participants acquire digital literacy and storytelling skills. 3. Social Inclusion: The stories foster understanding and empathy, promoting social inclusion. 4. Advocacy: The stories have been used in advocacy campaigns to influence public opinion and policy-making.



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<p style="text-align: center;">Transferability</p>	<p>The project’s model can be easily adapted to other contexts and communities. The participatory approach and focus on digital storytelling make it a versatile tool for empowering marginalized groups worldwide.</p> <p>Key elements for transferability include:</p> <p>Multilingual Approach</p> <p>Catering to diverse linguistic backgrounds.</p> <p>Partnerships</p> <p>Collaborating with local and international organizations for support and visibility.</p> <p>Migrants and refugees</p> <p>Digital Storytelling is a powerful tool to use with migrants and refugees. It is also a good tool for language learning.</p> <p>Seniors</p> <p>The method could also be transferred to activities for seniors with the following suggested adaptations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creative Writing & Personal Narratives → Include memory prompts like “My first home” or “A meal I’ll never forget.” - Digital Storytelling → Use simpler tools (e.g., voice recordings with images) and allow longer sessions. - Knitting circles / cooking / crafts → Combine these with storytelling themes (e.g., “Through my hands” series). - Drama Therapy / Music & Movement Therapy → Great for reminiscence work and emotional expression in aging populations. - Yoga, meditation, community massage → Supports mobility, relaxation, and emotional resilience. <p>Additional suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoid overwhelming multisensory activities — prioritize comfort, slower pace, and familiarity. - Provide translation or local dialect support for seniors not fluent in the dominant language. - Include caregivers or peer volunteers to assist during sessions.
<p style="text-align: center;">Sustainability</p>	<p>Capacity Building: By training women in digital skills, the project ensures that they can continue to create and share stories independently.</p>



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	<p>Community Engagement: The involvement of the broader community and cultural institutions helps sustain interest and support for the project.</p> <p>Funding: The network relies on donations, grants, and partnerships to ensure the continuity of the project</p>
<p>Links and Sources</p>	<p>Melissa Network Official Website: http://www.melissanetwork.org</p> <p>Social Media: (4) Facebook</p> <p>(2) Melissa Network - YouTube</p> <p>Women's Voices - NETWORK OF MIGRANT WOMEN IN GREECE melissanetwork.org</p> <p>Melissa Network at the Ethnofest - NETWORK OF MIGRANT WOMEN IN GREECE melissanetwork.org</p> <p>BLOG - NETWORK OF MIGRANT WOMEN IN GREECE melissanetwork.org</p> <p>STORIES - NETWORK OF MIGRANT WOMEN IN GREECE melissanetwork.org</p> <p>https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deborah_Carlos-Valencia</p> <p>18 Feron Str. Victoria Square 104 34 Athens</p> <p>+30 210 82 18 486</p> <p>info@melissanetwork.org</p> <p>melissa.mwnetwork@gmail.com</p>