Manual on how to organize a KCMEM Educational Project
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1 Introduction

Objectives

This working document draws from our experience from the KC-MEM project and particularly the educational programs we, the six project partners, designed, organized and piloted at national level. It gathers, explains and offers guidance on aspects that should be taken into account for organizing an educational program based on local memories. The following aspects are addressed:

• Identification of topic.
• Local identity.
• Selection of target groups.
• Memory or memories to recover.
• Planning and schedule.
• Necessary resources.
• Communication and involvement of the local community.

Target groups may include the following, however this is an indicative rather than exhaustive list:

• Cultural organizations.
• Local authorities.
• Civil society.
• Other target groups such as researchers, historians, adult education professionals, etc.

In particular, this manual:

• Has been compiled based on the outline of the educational program developed by the partners, the project methodology, the pilot experience implementation plan, and the transnational report on the pilot experience. These were sources from where we drew useful material and experiences relevant to the design and pilot of the local educational projects.
• It aims to facilitate the exploitation and use of the educational project, facilitating information and guidance of the organizational aspects that need to be taken into account when preparing an educational project.

Who is this manual for?

This manual aims to offer guidance on all aspects that should be taken into account for organizing an educational program based on local memories.

It is of interest to a variety of organizations, such as:

• Cultural organizations (museums, libraries, arts organizations, etc.).
• Local authorities (municipalities, community boards, training centres, local educational authorities, etc.).
• Civil societies (cultural, history or local associations, community associations, etc.).

Why is it of interest to these organizations?

Part of the mission of these organizations is the development of diverse services to individuals and communities, which include building collaborations and partnerships, being sensitive to the needs of the community, encourage participation, improve quality of life, etc.
For example, part of cultural organizations’ mission is to collect, preserve and exhibit tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment. Their activities also target audience development and audience participation.

Why is it important to offer a non-formal educational programme for adults?
Non-formal educational programmes can help the organizations to better realize their mission. Educational programmes can nurture higher degrees of adult engagement, build community bonds, and excite participants.

Non-formal adult learning may be understood as planned activities not necessarily designed as learning and not leading to an official certificate, which is undertaken by adults after leaving initial education and training. It is not aimed only at up-skilling or re-skilling for employment purposes, but also at promoting personal development, empowerment, adaptability, and active participation in society; and it is characterised by a variety in the delivery: specificities target groups, duration, methodology, facilities, material available, and the organisation providing it.

Educational programmes can provide individual and community gains. Community gains will largely depend on the outcome of the programmes, which will also support the mission of the organizations. More details on the outcomes are provided in the “Planning and schedule” section below.
Identification of the topic

In order to identify the topic of the educational programme, the host organization needs to acknowledge the varying benefits of working with historical memory for the achievement of the mission / aims of their organizations.

Working with historical memory can:

- Actively engage adult learners with the history of their local community.
- Help learners to develop skills and competences including interview skills, research skills, analytical and communication skills.
- Recover, identify or gather past experiences that may have been forgotten or ignored, creating new knowledge about the history of a community.
- Help combat isolation in older people and boost their self-esteem and confidence through showing that their experiences and memories are of value to the community.
- Help people negotiate their individual and community identities.
- Support communities in understanding others’ experiences.
- Strengthen local and civil society through narrating and sharing memory with the rest of the community.

If the host organization is planning to collaborate with another organization for the implementation of the educational programme, it is important to establish from the beginning the aims of the programme and how these connect with the aims of all the collaborating organizations. Therefore, the identification of the topic of the project goes hand-in-hand with what the organization aims to achieve.

Often non-formal educational programs for adults that utilize the concept of historical memory study different aspects of the cultural life of a community during a specific timeframe. For example, an indicative sample of these aspects is the following:

- Important community events.
- Regional cuisine and traditional foods.
- School life.
- Traditional professions.
- Traditional crafts, arts, songs.
Before proceeding to organizing the educational plan, it is important to reflect on important concepts, particularly the concept of local identity.

You may start from the concepts of “history”, “memory”, and “identity” in general. Words such as history, memory and identity are commonly used but rarely defined. The relationship between formal, ‘official’ history and local and community memory is complex, and the two often differ.

**History**

is the ‘official’ record of past events. It is rooted in the formal, methodical collection and analysis of evidence. However, it is not a neutral record and will always be incomplete and problematic. History is constantly being contested and negotiated.

**Memory**

works on different levels. Individual memories include short-term memory connected with everyday life and deeper memories linked with important events, which can be remembered for a long time. Memories are constantly being made, remade and forgotten in an unconscious process. Memory tends to be transmitted informally from person to person and can become lost after a couple of generations. Memory can be expressed in physical form, such as community memorials or family heirlooms.

**Historical memory**

is the process by which we use personal and community memories to create history. It operates at the interface between individual, personal and community experiences, and the formal expression of the history of a nation or community.

**Identities**

have different forms. Communal identity is constructed in order to create a group with distinct characteristics. It makes the group united, monolithic, with continuous and linear histories. Individual identity defines a person as a homogenous and distinct entity in relation to the other.

One of the two main emphases of the project concerns **local communities**, since its aim, which is to recover, identify or gather **local memories**—whether tangible or intangible—in order to narrate them into a creative output that could be shared with the rest of the community, serves, among other things, the objective of fostering **local identity** and understanding between individuals and communities.

From the point of view of the local community involved, the expected outcomes of the successful attainment of these objectives include:

- The improvement of the learners’ knowledge and awareness of local history and memory.
- The strengthening of the learners’ sense of belonging to the community.
- The increase of self-esteem through being involved in a project to be shared and presented to the local community.
- The motivation and engagement in community life.
Selection of target groups

The selection of target groups is the responsibility of the various organizations that will adopt and implement the program. If an independent facilitator is organizing the program, then the selection of the target groups is suggested to happen in collaboration with the cultural, civic, or local organization that supports the delivery of the educational program. Also target groups are better to be selected after the topic and/or local memories for the community-building have been identified.

The organizers of an educational program aiming to work with historical memory and the development of skills may want to choose participants who:

• Have personal connection with the subject matter. This is considered crucial in generating enthusiasm and motivation. This connection can be direct, that is, through their own memories, or through an interest they have in the topic.
• Want to share and exchange memories, develop knowledge, pass on their memories to younger generations, and work with the particular method or methods of work that are planned. For example, if fieldwork is involved, it is better if participants are interested in site visits or trips, meeting new people, and taking part in activities that interest them. This will be a good way for them to enjoy the program and be motivated to learn.
• Understand the purpose of the educational program. The facilitators must explicate the purpose and the goals and make sure it is clear to the participants.
Some issues to consider relevant to the target groups are the following:

- Participants’ preference to some skills than others: Skill development may not be the main motivating factor for learners. Some skills may be rated more highly at the end comparing to what those selected at the beginning.
- Interest in the subject matter: Learners’ motivation for getting involved in the course may primarily relate to the subject matter, rather than the opportunity to develop competencies.
- Participant expectations and limitations: Participants may be prepared to gather memories or learn ‘facts’ rather than analyse or interpret them or participate in the development of a creative output.
- Dealing with learners: The course tutors may have to deal with ‘dominating’ individuals. There may be learners who are happy to talk, particularly about their own memories or opinions, and not be willing to listen to other people’s experiences or viewpoints.
- In some cases, participants, mainly the older ones, may not perceive themselves as ‘learners’.
- Fluctuating numbers: Facilitators may experience week-by-week fluctuations in the numbers attending the course. This can cause issues in organizing the meetings, the activities, the groups, the material, and the work delivery and presentation wherever this applies.
Memories are shaped socially but at the same time they are deeply personal. One of the findings of the pilot experience was that the participants’ interest in the subject matter is a motivating factor in engaging adults in learning. Specifically, in our example we found that participants’ personal connection with the subject matter, whether direct through their own memories or through an interest in the topic, was crucial in generating enthusiasm and motivation. Participants were most interested and motivated when they were able to determine the topics they would be working on.

Memories shape collective and individual identities. They are of constitutive importance for the individual since their (unaware) narrative processing produces both a sense of personal identity and of belonging–hence of communal identities.

Memories do not have to produce singular identities, although sometimes this is how they seem to work. Memories produce multiple identities for each and every one, which are not mutually exclusive. In other words, I, for example, can be a ‘private self’, but also a member of Lapithos community, a Greek-Cypriot, a Cypriot citizen, and a European citizen.

Memories can separate us or bring us together.

The aim of the project, which is to recover, identify or gather local memories, can have a strong appeal to the participants, and boost the objectives of fostering local identity and of breeding understanding between individuals and communities.

That is not always an easy task, both on the local identity level and on the level of the dialogue between individual and community.

As it is characteristically (as far as personal vs communal memory is concerned) remarked in the pilot experience, “some of the participants were unwilling to create permanent or semi-permanent products from their memories, or did not want to share their memories with the wider community. Sometimes memories were personal, or participants felt that they would not be of sufficient interest to the wider community.”

Similarly, it is not always easy to shift the focus from the national to the local experience, but it can prove a rewarding procedure. A facilitator during the pilot experience noted that, in a national level, historical memory is linked solely to events of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), and it has been fruitful for the adult learners involved in the municipality of Segura (Basque Country) to broaden this perspective. During the process, they became researchers of the local milestones that happened four decades ago.”
And on the European level, several partners commented that, “they struggled to bring in the European dimension to the project work. If the topic chosen was very local (such as specific aspects of past life in the local area) it was difficult to bring in a European dimension apart from through comparison with experiences elsewhere in Europe”. One partner reported that, “to make the European dimension appealing was one of the main challenges faced, as some learners weren’t interested in it”.

Awareness of the role of memory, of narratives, and of point of view for the shaping and reshaping of identity, is even more demanding, but the pilot experience has shown that it is achievable. Here is a characteristic remark by one of the participants: “I have realised just how confusing and complicated “historical memory” is and just how many facets it has (collective, social, political and personal). How do we remember the past as a group or community? It has encouraged me to look beyond just individual memory; how collective and historical memories can define us and future generations and it has been valuable to discuss and agree (or not) with other people their opinions and ideas of memory”.

Memory, memories to recover and their narratives will empower local identity, but such their triggering and recovery or gathering must be approached neither as a detached search for ‘facts’ (some partners found that participants prepared to gather memories or learn ‘facts’ rather than to analyse or interpret them), nor as a private or separatist quest, ending up to the alienation of the individual from his / her community or of the community from other larger groups.
So, make sure that the topic chosen:

- Feeds on the personal connection of the participants with the subject matter. As it is noted in the pilot experience, the methodology seemed to run most smoothly when it was focused on a topic within living memory. Also “All partners felt that the project was effective in engaging the learners with the subject of historical memory. This was particularly the case where the memories and stories involved had an emotional dimension. Some older participants felt it was their responsibility to pass their memories on to the younger generation as a contribution to their community and their country.”
- Encourages a sense of local identity that serves both as a common ground between the individual and the community, and as a site of dialogue between the local, national and European community.
- Offers an opportunity for exploring differences and similarities, continuities, influences, or common enterprises between individual and local, national and European communities.
- Creates contexts of contact between people belonging to a specific community to various non-local sources of memories that can serve their research and learning purposes, such as archives, museums, historical sites, but also living witnesses that belong to other local, national, or European communities.
- Entails occasions for self-reflection so as to make participants aware of the role of memory, narratives, and of point of view for the shaping and reshaping of identity.

Also, make sure that not only the topic you choose, but the activities you plan, and, most important, any learning methods you employ, nurture the connection between personal and communal memories and the connection between the local community and other national and European communities. The methods suggested by the KC-MEM educational project (project based learning, dialogic learning, learning by doing, and object-based learning), are methods carefully chosen and proven successful, because they require:

- Active participation of trainees in collaborative and intergenerational efforts.
- Involvement in dialogue interactions and communication tasks.
- Understanding and benefiting by other peoples’ memories and practices.
- Recognition and acceptance of different points of view.

Such a learning framework will facilitate the merging of personal and communal memory.
Planning and schedule

The following is a guideline on planning and scheduling. It draws from a number of sources and outputs developed in the KC-MEM project, including findings from the initial survey conducted, the final project methodology, the transnational report on the pilot experience, and the outline of the educational project. We recommend planning around a total of 20 hours of delivery time for the educational program. In these 20 hours, teaching time and the completion of the creative outputs must be included.

Deciding about an optimal time-range regarding the duration of the educational project can be useful and can be agreed together with the participants. There should be flexibility to decide the most suitable schedule and timing. Educational program organizers can also see what works better for them, depending on the local context and the target groups to be addressed.

Here is an indicative, general outline to consider:

- Time per week: 2 hours
- Total duration: 6-10 weeks
- Number of learning hours: 12-20 hours

Generally, the elements that should help organizations define the time and duration of the educational program are the educational program’s purpose and scope, as well as the breadth and depth they wish to have in the thematic units. Some facilitators may find that a program with longer duration may result in less trouble with organizing and elaborating into the various issues.

For the purposes of using historical memory in adult education settings, facilitators are encouraged to develop their programs based on the following five-stage methodological framework:

Prior to Phase 1

Plan for a presentation of the project

During this phase, the project shall be introduced to the learners. Present the problem to be solved, namely how local memories are represented in local, tangible and intangible heritage, and the planned activities. Plan how the aims and learning objectives of the project shall be shared with learners, and how their input into decision-making for the project will be invited. For example, such decision-making may involve the topic and types of historical memory to be studied.

Phase 1 · Introduction to the topic

Plan for historical background understanding

During this phase, develop participants’ understanding of the history of the topic or period. Introduce the historical narrative relating to the subject, with any key disagreements or areas of controversy.

Plan for understanding on memory concept

Introduce participants to the concept of memory, how it is transmitted and constructed.

Think about memory and history

Explore the existing differences between the memory and history of the period chosen. Plan to explore how the memory of the period relates to the historical analysis. Plan to explore how the period has been remembered and/or commemorated in the local community and wider society. What has been remembered, and what has not?
Phase 2 · Identification of memories

Definition of research criteria
During this phase, define the criteria for identifying diverse and relevant memories of the period.

Research and gather memories
Explore different sources for recovering local memories. In this phase plan to incorporate specific skill development, for example, interview skills for working with living witnesses or skills in historical research methodologies.

Phase 3 · Analysis and narrative building

Analysis of the memories
Identify the main findings from the memories retrieved. Collate and summarize the memories. Identify and explain similarities, differences, and conflicting narratives. Identify reasons why some memories may have been prioritized over others in ‘official’ or formal versions of history.

Narrative building
Create a coherent, chronological and diverse story of the period. Put the memories into the context of historical background or events. Create a narrative that acknowledges and explains different versions of events.

Phase 4 · Creative output

Plan for the creative output
During this phase, participants develop a creative output that reflects the local memories and narrative building. Plan to work with participants to identify the most appropriate means of sharing the research with the local community, that is, an exhibition, a publication, a website. This activity could be done earlier in the project if participants have clear ideas about what they want to do. Also, participants develop the creative output with guidance from tutors where necessary, and specific skills can be built into this step, that is, writing the text for an exhibition text, information and communication technology (ICT) skills, and the like.

Phase 5 · Sharing with the community

Plan for sharing with the community
During this phase, participants define, organize and/or develop a framework or space to share the local memories with the rest of the community or society. This stage can also incorporate skill development, such as writing press releases or dealing with local media.

These phases/stages can be used in the teaching plan as a flexible guide to deliver the educational program, rather than as a rigid process. Each stage can be expanded or compressed accordingly, mainly based on the program’s needs. The five stages can be delivered in sequence or, in practice, they can run consecutively. For example, facilitators may consider running stages 3 and 4 together, that is, for instance, building the analysis and narrative as part of the process of writing a community exhibition text. Facilitators may also want to consider returning to the concepts of history and memory frequently during the project delivery to ensure that learners fully understand the concepts and can use them to inform their work.

Before embarking on the teaching plan you must also identify an appropriate space/venue for learning that is accessible to all, and ensure any relevant partnerships are in place.
In order to plan the delivery of each stage, think of who the participants are, what they know already and what they need to know on the selected topic and how you will use the four teaching methods proposed by KC-MEM: learning by doing, dialogic learning, project-based learning, and object-based learning. You may choose one over the other teaching method, or all of them at various degrees or equally. In KC-MEM, based on partners’ experience, it was found that dialogic learning and learning by doing were the most effective methods. Object-based learning was used to trigger memories and as a focus for discussion. You may also plan to incorporate a range of teaching methods.

The following is an indicative, rather than an exhaustive, list of possible practices to be planned:

- Some (marginal) lecture.
- Presentations.
- Discussion.
- Individual and group work.
- Participant-led activities.
- Keeping reflective journals.
- Group activities that involve shared experiences—including site visits, meeting living witnesses, conducting interviews or working with objects.
- Active research.

Plan for the creative output and what form it may take. Depending on the organization, the outcome of the educational program may include:

- Development of a website or materials for webpages or a website (e.g. for a community board / municipality).
- Publication of a book (e.g. for community centres).
- Publication of a newspaper (e.g. for a library).
- Preparation of a radio programme (e.g. for associations).
- Preparation of an exhibition (e.g. for museums) that documents the shared memories.
- Preparation of a guide (e.g. a self-guided trail prepared by a historical association).
- A game through which others discover the historical happenings and shared memories.

You may want to present to the learners some options and then decide together about the form of the output.
Three categories of resources are necessary to ensure the smooth and efficient application of the educational programme:

- Human resources.
- Materials/means.
- Infrastructure.

**Human resources**

First the organizations need to make sure that they can have at least one person responsible for the running of the program. This person needs to be available for the duration of the program. S/He does not need to be an expert on every aspect of the program since a different member of the organization can deliver its different phases. However, to ensure the program’s cohesion, there needs to be at least one person in charge. S/He will also be responsible to identify key persons to be involved during the project, either among the personnel of the organization or the group of the participants or the community members. The organization may invite members of the community as guest “speakers” and as part of the “gathering/sharing of memories” activities.

**Materials/means**

Books, online resources, libraries, collections, museums, and the like are part of the materials/means that can be used in the program. The host organization needs to make a list of possible and necessary materials/means. Participants will need to have access to these in order to research/study different aspects of the program.

**Infrastructure**

Depending on the work the participants will be engaged in, the organization needs to ensure that they have access to the appropriate infrastructure. Thus, when planning the program the organizations should consider the following questions:

- Are the participants going to work in groups? Does the organization have an “adaptable” room that it can be re-arranged according to the program’s needs? Does it have large tables, an area to work as a group, and the like?
- Will the participants need to access the Internet? Does the organisation have a computer room/lab?
- Will there be a presentation/exhibition to the public (at the end of the program)? Where will it take place?

Overall, the resources will largely depend on the size of the group. Small organizations can start with a small number of participants, which can grow bigger as they become more experienced.
**Communication and involvement of the local community**

Communicating with your local community and involving its members to an educational program you are organizing, requires good communication, management, and psychology skills. Further, you must be prepared to overcome different obstacles with deal with emotions, attitudes and actions. Remember that adults’ way of learning, also known as andragogy, requires an understanding and support of lifelong education and autonomy related to the learning process. Participants will vary as per age, habits, marital status, and work status and these are parameters that must be acknowledged in the planning and organization. How can these parameters be addressed as you plan to implement an educational program related to personal memory? Are there any aspects that need to be taken into account?

Since memories are shaped socially even if they are deeply personal, it is necessary to enter into a learning contract with the people involved. Facilitators and participants shall ensure that both sides are willing to learn together and that each of the participants has a particular knowledge that is willing to transfer to the others. In this context, all necessary information concerning the program and its processes should be provided, paying attention to the fact that not all the participants have the same experiences and habits.

You must also keep in mind that participants may keep asking questions wishing to clarify aspects of the program. Patience and availability to address participants’ questions and needs and provide adequate details are necessary skills that facilitators should exemplify if they want to have sufficient participation in the program. If those steps are followed, collaboration between both sides will be effective, and efficient implementation of the entire process may be accomplished, avoiding either lack of participation or potential withdrawals from the program.

Further, attention must be paid to participants’ skills and education, involving them all equally and unbiased into role taking; discrimination or favoring of one participant over another must be avoided. Participants will feel more responsible and accountable toward the development of the creative output if they actively participate in the various stages, processes, decision-making, and the like. For example, they may be responsible for bringing material, resources, or other participants to the program, informing other stakeholders or the media about the program, and the like. Participants must be ensured that they will be kept up-to-date about all stages, that there will be clarity, meaningful activities, and a flexible schedule and program structures, ensuring, however, that such will not happen in a way that will affect the viability and creative output of the program.
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