

In-Service Teacher Training (INSETT) – Providing psychosocial support to young refugees

Intervention Manual – Content, themes and implementation

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Za'atari Refugee Camp, Jordan 2018 Photo: Lutine de Wal Pastoor



This intervention has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 754849.

In-Service Teacher Training (INSETT) – Intervention Manual

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1. INTERVENTION BACKGROUND

1.1 RefugeesWellSchool

The *RefugeesWellSchool* (RWS) project (2018-2022) is an EU/Horizon 2020 funded project. The full name of the project is: *Preventive school-based interventions to promote the mental well-being of refugee and migrant adolescents*.

Abstract - Today, European societies face the challenge of promoting the integration of growing numbers of refugee and migrant adolescents. Supporting the mental well-being of these young newcomers is herein pivotal, with recent scholarly work emphasizing the preventive role of schools in promoting mental well-being. Yet, there is still little robust evidence on how preventive school-based interventions may impact newcomers' well-being. This project therefore aims to further the evidence-base on the role of preventive school-based interventions in promoting refugee and migrant adolescents' mental well-being, and on how they can be implemented in diverse educational contexts (European Commission, 2016).

The interventions that are implemented and evaluated will put specific emphasis on *promoting psychosocial support and social cohesion in the school environment*, since these factors are known to be highly beneficial for newcomers' overall well-being as well as their school functioning

Within the RWS project the following five interventions will be implemented and evaluated: (1) Teaching Recovery Techniques (TRT); (2) Classroom Drama Therapy; (3) Welcome to School (Tutor Method for Newcomers); (4) Peer Integration and Enhancement Resource (PIER); (5) In-Service Teacher Training (INSETT). The evaluation of the interventions will be based on questionnaires, qualitative interviews and focus group discussions with students from refugee and migrant backgrounds, their teachers and parents/caregivers or guardians.

The RWS project that will be carried out in six European countries, i.e., Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Great Britain, Norway and Sweden, results from a collaboration between Ghent University (Project Lead), Katholieke Universiteit (KU) Leuven, University of Copenhagen, University of Tampere, University of Sussex, the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies and Uppsala University.

1.2 In-Service Teacher Training (INSETT)

The In-Service Teacher Training intervention (hereafter INSETT) is being developed by Lutine de Wal Pastoor, Senior Researcher at the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies (NKVTS). NKVTS is the responsible expert for the INSETT interventions that are implemented in the RefugeesWellSchool project.

INSETT consists of three course modules, i.e., two full-day teacher training seminars and an online course. First, an introductory seminar is organised ahead of the online course (developed by the Dutch foundation Augeo¹), and after the online course is completed there will be a follow-up seminar.

It should be emphasised that the INSETT manual presented below does not delineate a strictly protocolled intervention, but describes the core structure of the course content presented on the two seminar days as well as its central themes, including references and suggestions for further reading.

2. THE INSETT INTERVENTION

2.1 Introduction

The INSETT intervention builds on international research that emphasises the decisive role of teachers in promoting the mental health and well-being of newcomer refugee and migrant students as well as in supporting their inclusion in the new school environment (Eurydice, 2019; Hamilton & Moore, 2004; Kia-Keating & Ellis, 2007; Pastoor, 2013, 2015; Peltonen et al., 2012; Tyrer & Fazel, 2014).

However, recent international research highlights that teachers and other school staff are in vital need of more competence concerning the mental and psychosocial challenges encountered by newly arrived migrant students in general, and refugee young people in particular (Brenner & Kia-Keating, 2016; McBrien, Dooley & Birman, 2017; Pastoor, 2015). Therefore, INSETT aims at increasing teachers' competence and skills in supporting newcomer refugee and migrant students' mental and psychosocial well-being as well as promoting their sense of school belonging and social inclusion.

As a thematic framework for the intervention, INSETT will use the Augeo Foundation's online teacher training course "Providing support to refugee young people". The online course consists of 8 sections, 'lectures' that can be followed flexibly and separately by the individual teacher. Each lecture deals with a special theme, including theory, case histories, exercises and recommendations for further reading. Some of these themes will be further elaborated on in the course content of the two full-day seminars.

2.2 Direct and indirect target groups

Direct target groups of the intervention

Teachers and counsellors in introductory-/preparatory-/support-/combination-classes² in lower and upper secondary schools. Although, INSETT basically targets educators in classes designated for 'newcomers', the intervention can be implemented in mainstream classes with newcomers too.

¹ Augeo is a private, not-for profit foundation based in the Netherlands. Their online courses have been developed in close collaboration with professional associations and research institutes (e.g. LOWAN, Pharos, Centrum '45).

² The Norwegian 'combination-classes' are a new kind of introductory classes (1-2 years) providing more differentiated education. In combination classes, students may also participate in mainstream classes in single subjects (e.g. Maths) in order to ease the transition to upper secondary education.

Indirect target groups

Newcomer students from migrant and refugee back grounds as well as their caregivers/parents (enhancing parent-school collaboration). Age group: Adolescents (14-21 years).

However, INSETT can be used for a wider audience than just newcomer students, as its approach may well benefit all students.

2.3 Aims

The INSETT intervention aims to enhance teachers' competence and self-efficacy in:

1. Promoting refugee and migrant students' mental health and psychosocial well-being
2. Supporting social inclusion and strengthening newcomer students' sense of school belonging
3. Providing comprehensive support by incorporating a 'whole-child' and a 'whole school' approach along with encouraging parents or caregivers' school involvement

In other words, INSETT seeks to make teachers and schools (more) 'refugee competent' (Pastoor, 2015).

A reading suggestion regarding strengthening teacher self-efficacy through in-service training:

Bray-Clark, N. & Bates, R. (2003). Self-efficacy believes and teacher effectiveness: Implications for professional development. *The Professional Educator*, 26(1), 13-22. Retrieved from: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ842387.pdf>

2.4 Duration

INSETT is made up of of three course modules, i.e. two collective learning modules and one individual module (online course) in between, that means it has a 'sandwich design':

1. A joint introductory seminar – 2. The Augeo online course – 3. A final follow-up seminar

The INSETT intervention will run over a period of 10-12 weeks. The online course consists of 8 parts (lectures) that can be followed individually and flexibly. In total, the online course contains 4-5 hours of study material. Furthermore, INSETT comprises two whole-day training seminars, an introductory and a follow-up seminar (approx. 14 hours in total). There will also be provided a supplementary reading list (references and suggestions for further reading), which may involve additional reading time.

2.5 Content

The INSETT intervention consists of three interrelated course modules, i.e., two collective learning modules (whole-day seminars) with an individual module (online course) in between:

I. A joint introductory seminar will start off the intervention in order to inform and motivate the course participants concerning their participation in INSETT: explaining its goals, contents and methods (including practical and technical information about the Augeo online module) as well as describe how the refugee/migration experience may have an impact on students' school functioning when resettling

in a new country (Brenner & Kia-Keating, 2016; Pastoor, 2015). Moreover, key concepts (e.g. refugees and migrants), as well as the national and educational context of the intervention will be discussed. Last but not least, this first seminar aims at promoting a sense of belonging to the INSETT intervention's approach and principles among the participants.

II. The Augéo online course “Providing support to refugee young people” deals with the following 8 thematic areas:

1. Characteristics of refugee young people
2. Chronic stress and resilience
3. Increasing a sense of safety
4. Stimulating positive and supportive relationships
5. Managing students' emotions
6. Managing students' behaviour
7. Involving parents /caregivers
8. Taking care of your students and yourself /the teacher

III. A final follow-up seminar will allow the participants to share their experiences (e.g. concerning the online course and its implementation in the classroom/the school), ask remaining questions, as well as provide an opportunity to learn more about certain themes/topics of interest. A relevant topic will be to learn more about trauma and stress, the therapeutic “window of tolerance” (Ogden et al., 2006; Siegel, 1999), self-regulation and other coping techniques (Schultz, 2013). Another central topic will be newcomer students' inclusion and belonging, especially the importance of developing a sense of school belonging, which increases students' well-being as well as the likeliness to succeed in school (Kia-Keating & Ellis, 2007). Finally, the implications of inclusive education in the context of migration and linguistic diversity will be further elaborated in this seminar.

2.6 Facilitation

The facilitators of the intervention are the members of the INSETT project team in each country (i.e., in Norway the RefugeesWellSchool project team at NKVTS). Augéo's online course is an interactive learning module. There is an online User Guide showing participants how to go ahead in the online course. The whole-day training seminars may get assistance from/contributions by various professionals (educationalists, counsellors, psychologists, etc.) affiliated with for instance national research institutions/ universities/ knowledge centres/school counselling services (in Norway, e.g. NKVTS, RVTS, NAFO).

2.7 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework employed in the INSETT intervention, drawing on social ecological as well as sociocultural approaches, implies an integrated perspective on learning, development and psychosocial adjustment (Bronfenbrenner 1979; Hamilton & Moore, 2004; Ungar, 2012; Vygotsky 1978; Wenger 1998). This comprehensive approach considers individual, relational as well as contextual factors regarding the developmental and psychosocial needs of refugee and migrant adolescents.

Within this conceptual framework, the intervention will draw on several other related theoretical perspectives and relevant research fields, such as: Migration and displacement, mental health and wellbeing, trauma-informed teaching, resilience, belonging and inclusive education. Furthermore, the underlying principle for the intervention, strengthening teacher self-efficacy through in-service training, draws on Bandura (1986, 1997).

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2.7 Expected impact

Expected short-term impact

Directly, at the teacher and school level: Increased self-efficacy and competence regarding refugee and migration-related issues, such as traumatic and exile-related stress and psychoeducation. Improved teacher-student relationships and strengthened teacher-parent collaboration. In other words, making teachers and schools (more) *refugee-competent*. Indirectly, at the (refugee and migrant) student level: improved mental health, psychosocial well-being and resilience; student-efficacy concerning stress regulation, enhanced school belonging and connectedness.

Expected long-term impact

The improved mental health and psychosocial wellbeing among refugee and migrant students, as well as better school functioning and academic outcomes resulting in less school dropout, will bring about enhanced individual as well as societal benefits.

3. IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 Introductory seminar

Objectives

- Inform about the Refugees WellSchool project, and the ‘why’, ‘what’ and ‘how’ of the INSETT intervention (including introducing the Augeo online course)
- Presenting migration-related key terms
- Key topic: Psychosocial transitions and psychosocial support: the decisive role of school/teachers
- Motivate the course participants as to their involvement in RWS/INSETT and promote a sense of belonging to the intervention’s approach and principles.

Themes/topics to be covered

Morning session

1. RefugeesWellSchool and INSETT – background and introduction
2. National migration and education context – a brief overview
3. Key terms: Migration, migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and resettlement
4. Group discussion participants – presentation and sharing experiences

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Afternoon session

5. Psychosocial transitions and psychosocial support: the decisive role of school and teachers
6. The Augeo online course – themes, activities and practicalities

Morning session

Welcome

Introduction to the RefugeesWellSchool project and the INSETT intervention: the why, what and how

3.1.1 RefugeesWellSchool and INSETT – background and introduction

See Chapter 1 and 2 for supplementary introductory information about

- RefugeesWellSchool (RWS): background, interventions and design
- INSETT: target groups, aims, structure and duration

It is estimated that about one third of the migrants reaching Europe in 2015 were children and young people. More than half of all Syrian refugees were under the age of 18 (Pastoor, 2016). Many of these young people experienced severe hardship and trauma as well as having their education interrupted. A major challenge for Europe will be how host countries may promote successful integration of young refugees in their schools as well as in their society. Schools are crucial settings for action (Fazel, 2015, Sancassani et al. 2015) and may become an integral part of students' psychosocial adjustment process upon (re)settlement in their host society.

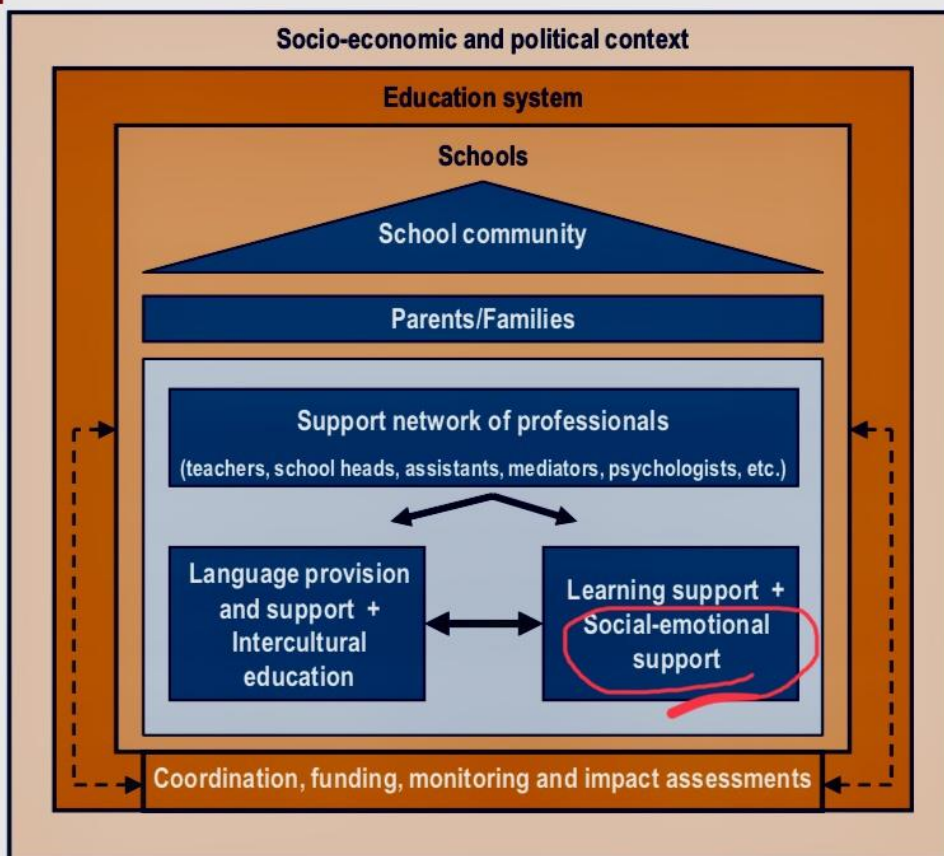
Providing social-emotional/psychosocial support to newcomer refugee and migrants in school settings will promote their mental health and well-being as well as facilitate successful integration into new school systems and the host society (Eurydice, 2019, Pastoor, 2015)

School-based interventions: Adapting schools to a new student population, i.e. 'newcomers'

- (Re)settlement in an unfamiliar society with (very) different demands concerning linguistic, social and cultural competence as the basis for interaction and inclusion entails many demanding challenges for newly arrived refugees and migrants.
- Refugee adaptation is a mutual process: It is not only refugee students who have to adapt to the educational and sociocultural requirements of a new school.
- Likewise, schools, including the broader ecology of local and national educational authorities as well as policymakers at different levels of the system (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), need to adapt by providing enhanced support to newcomer refugee and migrant students.

- A school system that positively adapts to a new situation and deals well with required transitions can be said to display *resilience* (Masten et al., 2008).
- **The decisive importance of school-based interventions providing psychosocial/social-emotional support to newcomer students in order to promote their integration into schools**

Figure 1: Conceptual framework for the analysis of policies and measures promoting the integration of students from migrant backgrounds into schools



Source: Eurydice.

The intervention In-Service Teacher Training (INSETT) is one of five RWS interventions to be implemented and evaluated.

Project design - The RWS study (2018-2022) will assess the interventions' long-term impact on newcomers' well-being (n=3,000), particularly their impact on mental health problems, resilience, academic achievements, school drop-out and social support. The study includes migrant and refugee adolescents who recently arrived in the host country (less than 6 years ago). A mixed methods longitudinal approach will combine questionnaires completed by adolescents, parents and teachers, focus groups with these groups, data on adolescents' academic achievements?, and an economic

assessment of the costs related to the implementation. Additionally, focus groups and national committees with other stakeholders will evaluate the impact of contextual factors (e.g., educational system) in order to design models to implement the effective interventions in other contexts. As such, this study will lead to a solid evidence-base on the impact of preventive school-based interventions on young newcomers' mental well-being and the possibilities to implementing these interventions in differing contexts (European Commission, 2016)

INSETT aims to enhance teachers' competence and self-efficacy in:

1. Promoting refugee and migrant students' mental health and psychosocial well-being
2. Supporting social inclusion and strengthening newcomer students' sense of school belonging
3. Providing comprehensive support by incorporating a 'whole-child' and a 'whole school' approach along with encouraging parents or caregivers' school involvement

In other words, INSETT seeks to make teachers and schools (more) 'refugee competent' (Pastoor, 2015).

3.1.2 National migration and education context – a brief overview

Example – Norway: Migration and Education Context – Some facts and figures (to be updated)

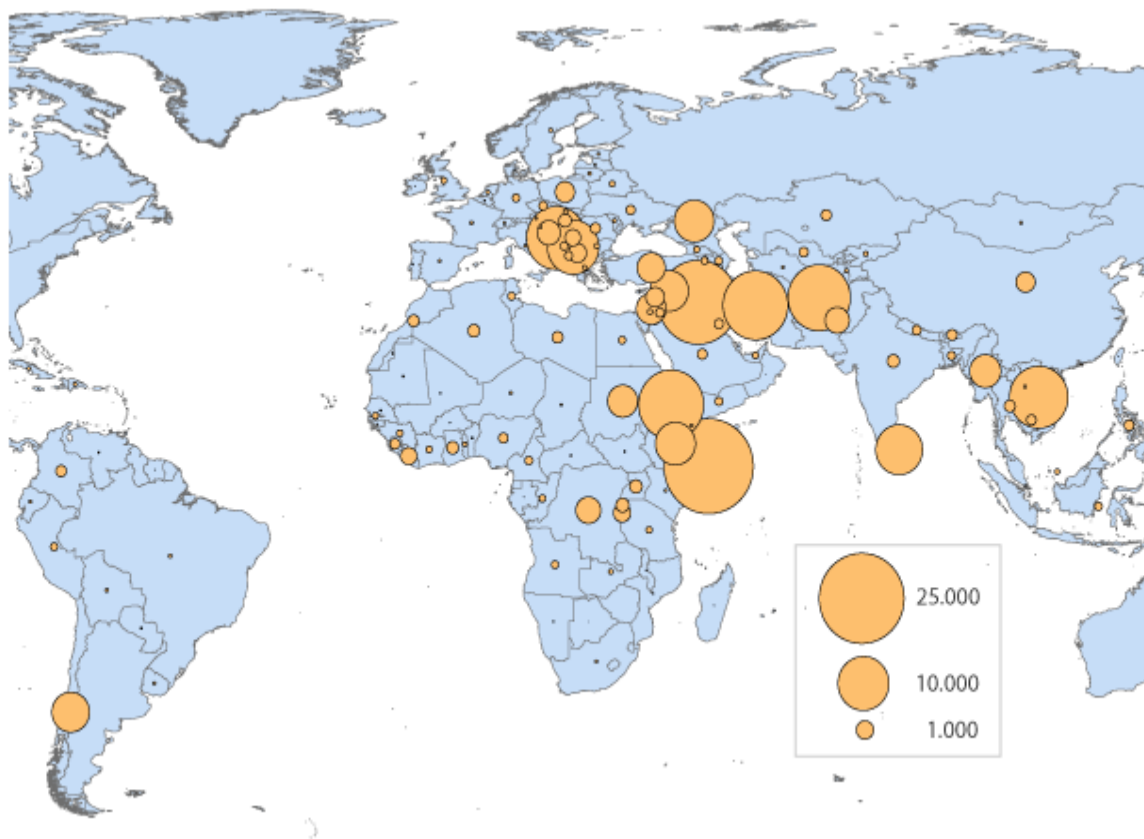
Population Norway – People from majority and immigrant backgrounds

- Population Norway: 5 258 000 people pr. 01.01.17 (5 378 686 pr. 01.01.18)
- Norway's 'immigrant population' makes up 16.8% of the country's total population. This population category (883 751 persons) includes immigrants as well as children born in Norway to two immigrant parents
- 724 987 Immigrants (13.8%) and
- 158 764 Norwegian-born to immigrant parents (3%)
- One out of six people in Norway has an immigrant background.
- The 10 most common countries of origin of immigrants residing in Norway are Poland (97 196), Lithuania (37 638), Sweden (36 315), Somalia (28 696), Germany (24 601), Iraq (22 493), Syria (20 823), Philippines (20 537), Pakistan (19 973), and Eritrea (19 957). (Statistics Norway)

Norwegian society, previously perceived as fairly homogeneous, has changed substantially over the past 50 years. Refugees from Eastern Europe after World War II, labour migrants from Europe and the rest of the world in the 1970s, followed by refugees in the 1980s and 1990s until today, have contributed to a more heterogeneous society (Pastoor, 2013).

Refugees constitute a significant share of the immigrants in Norway (28%), and make up 3.6% of the total population. At the start of 2015, 188 000 persons with a refugee background were living (legally) in Norway. The 188 000 refugees come from a total of 169 different countries ...

Refugees from 169 countries in Norway in 2015



Source: Statistics Norway.

The Norwegian Education system – in short

Ten-year compulsory education (ages 6–16 yrs): Children have the right and obligation to primary and lower secondary education when it is probable that they will reside in Norway for more than three months.

The ten-year compulsory school – a comprehensive ‘one school for all’ (ages 6–16 yrs):

- primary school (grades 1–7): ages 6–13 years
- lower secondary school (grades 8–10): ages 13–16 years

All young people who have completed ten year compulsory school (or equivalent) are entitled to 3 years of **upper secondary education (ages 16–19 yrs)**

- general theoretical education programmes (3 years: Vg 1– Vg 3:)
- 9 vocational education and training programmes (4 years: 2 years education/training at school and 2 years apprenticeship)

According to the Norwegian Education Act, municipalities are responsible for pupils' admission to primary and lower secondary education for all who are residents in the municipality, while the county municipality has to safeguard the right to upper secondary education.

Introduction programmes for newcomer refugees and migrants of compulsory school age (6-16 years):

- Regular classes (mainstreaming model)
- Special introductory/preparatory classes (withdrawal model)
- Combined classes (most common introductory provision)
- Special introductory/preparatory schools (withdrawal model)

Adapted education / Special language education

- Basic Norwegian curriculum (multiple levels)
- Bilingual subject teaching
- Mother tongue tuition

Right to Special education

Based on special needs, for example reading and writing difficulties – or due to mental health problems, e.g. traumatic stress

N.B. There is considerable variation in Norwegian municipalities' education provisions for newcomers!

Education provisions for newcomer refugees and migrants 16 years and older

Newly arrived young migrants and refugees (since 2014 young asylum seekers as well) **aged 16-18** have the statutory right to primary and secondary education (Education Act § 3-1, 12). That is, they have the right to upper secondary education after having completed Norwegian compulsory school (primary and lower secondary school) or equivalent education. However, many newcomer refugees need first to attend an adapted compulsory school programme for adults/adolescents, i.e. Adult Education (1-3 years) to meet the requirement of having completed lower secondary school.

Moreover, an amendment in the Education Act §4A-2 (new paragraph 2) in 2016 allows municipalities and county municipalities to offer **extended** primary and lower secondary education following initial training to those who are entitled to upper secondary education, but who need more primary education to be able to complete upper secondary education.

This special offer is for recently arrived young migrants and refugees (approx. 16-24 years of age) who:

- Do not have an educational background from their home country that corresponds to the Norwegian compulsory school
- Have completed regular lower secondary school in Norway, but who, due to short residence time, need more training
- Have a diploma from the home country that corresponds to Norwegian compulsory school but need more Norwegian language and subject education before starting at Vg1.

Education provisions facilitating the educational transition to regular upper secondary education:

Several upper secondary schools have **Introductory Classes** (Class '0' before starting in class 1) for 'newly arrived refugee and migrant students'. These students are entitled to two extra years in upper secondary school. And another, rather new provision is the **Combination class** (1-2 yrs).

Upper Secondary School: introductory classes and combination classes

As a way to get prepared for mainstream upper secondary education, newly arrived adolescents may attend an **introductory class** (usually one year) at an upper secondary school, where they are taught various compulsory school subjects with a special emphasis on learning the Norwegian language. Another, rather new, kind of introductory class is '**the combination class**' (1-2 years), which provides the opportunity of more differentiated education (subjects at different levels). The students may also host Vg1 classes in single subjects in order to get prepared for upper secondary education.

The combination class is the result of collaboration between the municipal and county educational authorities and facilitates more flexible provisions. Both the introductory and combination class aim at facilitating *good educational transitions* to the regular upper secondary school courses³.

3.1.3 Key terms: migration, migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and resettlement

In the literature on migration you may find a large variety regarding terms of migration related terms. International agencies as well as scholars may make use of either narrow or wider definitions of 'migrants' or 'refugees', for instance. Even though the various definitions and concepts tend to have a 'common core', the contestation may lead to misuse and misunderstandings. In order to clear up, a number of key terms and concepts used in the INSETT intervention are presented below.

Several international organizations, such as the International Organization on Migration, IOM (2018) and UNESCO (2018) for example, have own webpages with relevant definitions of migration related terms (glossary). See IOM: <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms> ; or UNESCO: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/international-migration/glossary/>

As UNESCO (2018) states: "The dominant forms of **migration** can be distinguished according to the motives (economic, family reunion, refugees) or legal status (irregular migration, controlled emigration/immigration, free emigration/immigration) of those concerned. Most countries distinguish between a number of categories in their migration policies and statistics. The variations existing between countries indicate that there are **no** objective definitions of migration."

Migration –The movement of a person or a group of persons, either across an international border, or within a State. It is a population movement, encompassing any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition and causes; it includes migration of refugees, displaced persons, economic migrants, and persons moving for other purposes, including family reunification (IOM, 2018).

³ More on the subject of schooling newcomers in Norway (in Norwegian), can be found in Evensen (2018) and Pastoor (2012; 2019)

Migrant – The term migrant can be understood as "any person who lives temporarily or permanently in a country where he or she was not born, and has acquired some significant social ties to this country", according to UNESCO (2018). However, IOM (2018) has a more elaborate definition: "any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a State away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of (1) the person's legal status; (2) whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary; (3) what the causes for the movement are; or (4) what the length of the stay is."

According to IOM (2000) we can distinguish between two categories of international migration:

1. *Voluntary migration* – e.g. labour migrants ('immigrants'), irregular labour migrants, family reunification.

Work is the major reason that people migrate voluntarily. Migrant workers constitute a large majority of the world's international migrants. These migrants/Immigrants move (more or less) voluntarily to another country looking for/searching for improved economic well-being, and better overall opportunities for themselves and their family.

2. *Forced migration /displacement* – asylum seekers, refugees, displaced persons, irregular migrants, victims of human trafficking.

The fundamental difference between a refugee (forced migrant) and a voluntary migrant is that refugees need to flee their homes due to war or persecution, whereas voluntary migrants have more of a choice. Moreover, migrants usually have not had the kind of traumatic experiences that many refugees have faced, either before or during their flight.

Asylum seeker – An asylum seeker is a person who has fled his/her home country in search of safety and applies for protection (asylum) in another country. If the applicant is granted asylum he/she is recognised as a refugee. In case of a negative decision, the person must leave the country and may be expelled, as may any non-national in an irregular or unlawful situation, unless permission to stay is provided on humanitarian or other related grounds (IOM, 2018).

Refugee – The UN 1951 Refugee Convention adopted the following definition of 'refugee' to apply to any person who: "owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it." (IOM, 2018).

However, many countries use a *wider* definition of refugee, i.e. also applying it to persons who have been granted protection for reasons other than stated above by the UN Refugee Convention, e.g. granted asylum on humanitarian grounds.

Some refugees are so called *quota refugees* or *resettlement refugees*. They have been granted refugee status - usually by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) - before they come to

the country of asylum. As these refugees cannot be offered a permanent solution in the country they are currently, they are offered resettlement in a third country. These refugees are resettled directly in the host country. Since they do not have to go through an asylum process, they do not stay at a reception center first.

Unaccompanied minors (also referred to as *separated children*) are refugee children and young people under 18 years of age who have been separated from both parents and come to the country of asylum unaccompanied by parents or other caregivers with parental responsibility.

Either they are unaccompanied or accompanied children, it is important for teachers to be able to distinguish between asylum-seeking children and refugee children and young people who have been granted asylum. The asylum process brings about a great deal of stress and concerns regarding the outcome of the application. Being able to go to school - like other young people in their age group means a lot to young asylum seekers in a time that is often characterised by the processing of past upsetting experiences as well as concerns for the future (Pastoor, 20012/2019).

Resettlement – The relocation and integration of people (refugees, internally displaced persons⁴, etc.) into another geographical area and environment, usually in a third country. In the refugee context, the transfer of refugees from the country in which they have sought refuge to another State that has agreed to admit them. The refugees will usually be granted asylum or some other form of long-term resident rights and, in many cases, will have the opportunity to become naturalised (IOM, 2018)

In this manual, the concept of resettlement will be broader, as described by Wade, Mitchell and Baylis (2005, p. 3-4): “In its original coinage, it was used to describe international arrangements through which some governments permitted the development of resettlement programmes to provide durable solutions to the needs of some groups of “quota refugees”. ... Over time, however, the meaning of resettlement has become more elastic, less confined to officially designated refugees, and used to describe the processes by which refugees and asylum seekers attempt to re-root their lives within host countries over time... “. Consequently, in INSETT the term *resettlement* refers to the multi-faceted process involving complex transitions necessary for refugee and migrant newcomers to adjust to life in their new country of residence.

Differences between recently resettled refugees/migrants and migrants born in the host country – Resettling refugee and migrant students have different educational as well as psychosocial needs from migrant students who were born and grew up in the host country. In the school system, newcomer students are often subsumed within the larger category of ‘language minority students’, which they in some sense belong to, yet, they are so much more (Pastoor, 2015). This calls for a more complex

⁴ Unlike *refugees* who are forced to leave their home country, *internally displaced people* (IDPs) have not crossed a national border to find safety.

representation of ‘newcomers’. Newcomer students are a heterogeneous group who share certain experiences, but who also may differ from each other in many ways, regarding educational, sociocultural and migration background, for instance.

Yet, newcomer refugee and migrant students often share a number of educational and psychosocial challenges due to the following reasons:

- Short period of residency in the host country
- Interrupted and/or incomplete education
- Being here without established social and/or family networks.
- Traumatic pre-migration experiences as well as exile-related stress.

To be able to overcome the challenges encountered and to reach their fullest potential, students need additional support. If they do not get adequate support, it may result in academic as well as socioemotional problems in school. International research indicates that access to *adequate* schooling is key to better physical, mental and emotional health and well-being of refugee children (Fazel et al., 2009; Mock-Muñoz, 2009; Montgomery, 2011; Pastoor, 2015, 2016, Rutter, 2003).

3.1.4 Group discussion participants – presentation and sharing experiences

In groups

- Participants introducing themselves and their teaching context
- Sharing experiences from own teaching practice (good practice, challenges)
- Discussing need and expectations

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Afternoon session

3.1.5 Psychosocial transitions and psychosocial support: the decisive role of schools and teachers

Young refugees’ psychosocial challenges upon resettlement – The need for a refugee-competent school (see attachments 5.1 and 5.2 for a full-length presentation and PowerPoint on this central topic)

- The psychosocial role of schools concerning newcomer refugees and migrants
- Three critical psychosocial transitions upon resettlement: socialisation, integration, rehabilitation
- The significance of teachers’ abilities and competences in making a difference in the lives of young refugees/migrants: *the refugee-competent school*.

The psychosocial role of schools concerning newcomer refugees and migrants

In today's world, with a significant increase of refugees and migrants in Europe and worldwide, schools may expect highly diverse groups of students and, among these, young refugees with little or interrupted formal schooling. School plays a significant role in the lives of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. It is not only *a place to learn*, i.e. an arena for learning and development, it also is *a place to be*, i.e. an arena to meet peers, establish friendships and build new social networks (Pastoor, 2012/2019). The RefugeesWellSchool project as well as the INSETT intervention emphasise the school as *a place to be*, with an emphasis on the school's psychosocial aspects: an arena where newcomer students will meet responsible teachers and can socialise with classmates, in other words be "ordinary" children and young people. Moreover, the everyday classroom routines and procedures provide a safe and stable environment that is important for young refugees who are in a vulnerable and uncertain situation in unfamiliar surroundings. School participation strengthens newcomers' opportunities to cope with their new life situation and helps them to become independent and active participants in the host society.

Three critical psychosocial transitions upon resettlement

Although newly resettled refugees and migrants may struggle to adapt to the new conditions in their host society, as well as may have to cope with traumatic experiences from the past, they are also adolescents who cannot take breaks from their lives and their development from childhood to adulthood (Bengtson and Ruud 2007; Pastoor 2013, 2015, 2016). Their life in exile/in a new country may time and again become difficult as these young people experience a number of critical transitions simultaneously.

Three transitional processes, which are important in relation to the role schools play, are emphasised here:

- *A socialization process*, i.e. the development from childhood to adulthood through interaction with other community members – both adults and peers – in order to acquire the expertise needed to become an active and independent participant in the community and society they are part of.
- *An integration process*, i.e. the adaptation to their life in a new and unfamiliar country – a society with other demands concerning social, cultural and language skills as the basis for interaction and inclusion.
- *A rehabilitation process*, i.e. the construction of a new and meaningful life in Norway after potentially traumatizing events from before and during the flight, as well as the mental strains that life in exile often brings about.

The many challenges that adjusting to a new life in an unfamiliar environment entails makes young refugees at times quite vulnerable – especially unaccompanied refugee minors who do not have a family supporting them. Nevertheless, with support and help from significant others, this critical phase of resettlement also provides opportunities for development and mastery. A school environment that promotes learning, social inclusion and coherence in life gives newcomer refugees and migrants hope for a better future.

The significance of schools and teachers' abilities and competences in making a difference:

the need for a refugee competent school

Access to school, as a place to learn and a place to be, is essential to provide refugee and migrant young people with the opportunity to reach their full potential while finding their way in the host society. Even though refugee and migrant students⁵ show both high motivation and great efforts in school, many fail to complete upper secondary education (Markussen, Frøseth and Sandberg 2011; NOU 2010: 7).

Newly resettled students from both refugee and migrant backgrounds are a vulnerable group of students who need support in different ways to students, who were born to immigrant parents and received all of their education in the country in question. To avoid dropping out of upper secondary school, especially young refugees may depend on getting support concerning academic as well as mental health issues. Furthermore, it is important to look more closely at measures that can promote social inclusion as young refugees often experience difficulties in becoming part of Norwegian peer groups. Struggling with both academic and social functioning at school may lead to problem behaviour and marginalization. Yet, international and national research emphasises not attributing a victim role to unaccompanied refugee minors; one should rather focus on their opportunities as they prove to be resourceful children and adolescents (Eide and Broch 2010; Kohli 2007; de Luna 2009; Pastoor, 2015, Watters 2008).

Policymakers, educational authorities, schools and teachers face many challenges in providing adequate and equal education for refugee young people. However, in order to be able to succeed, it is important that the refugee students' individual needs, as well as their resources, are taken into account in school. Adopting a holistic view, supporting the *whole child*, exposes a need for a comprehensive approach to refugee education, i.e. a 'refugee-competent school' that takes into consideration refugees' educational as well as psychosocial needs. Moreover, such a comprehensive approach requires close cooperation between those engaged in the various provisions supporting young refugees – both at school, at home and beyond.

In order to allow newcomer students to succeed in school, as well as to master their new life situation, their schooling has to take place within a comprehensive range of frameworks supporting their learning, development and well-being. As one of the teachers in a Norwegian study said: "... it's all about frameworks facilitating performance" (Pastoor, 2012,2013).

Making schools more *refugee-competent* implies promoting psychosocial support and school-based interventions as an integral part of educational policy and practice. Consequently, educational authorities must recognise the need for adaptation as well as additional resources to promote resettling refugee adolescents' development and learning. There is much to take in after a childhood on hold.

Moreover, in order to adopt a comprehensive and integrated approach to refugee schooling, schools need to be aware of the mutuality and interdependence of the various systems that are part of children and young people's social ecology. The key to developing *refugee-competent schools* is to mediate supportive interactions and interrelations between the parties involved, such as the educational authorities, schools, teachers, school psychologists, mental health professionals, child welfare teams, parents and, last but not least, refugee students themselves.

⁵This concerns especially language minority students arriving in their late teens, i.e. the so-called *late-arriving* students.

Findings from international research (Fazel et al., 2012; Huemer et al. 2009; Jakobsen et al., 2014; Lustig et al. 2004; Vervliet et al., 2013) indicate that many young refugees suffer from sleep problems, depression and trauma (PTSD). The mental, emotional and behavioural problems that refugee adolescents may struggle with during resettlement (Derluyn et al., 2008) need to be taken seriously and followed up by providing adequate support on site or outside school. However, this does not necessarily mean that the young refugees are in need of large-scale psychological or therapeutic interventions. The findings indicate that attending school in itself has a positive impact on young refugees' well-being. Enhancing the supportive role of teachers as well as school-based interventions is therefore suggested. Consequently, it is vital to train teachers/educators on the psychosocial effects war and resettlement has on young refugee's well-being and development, in order to gain more knowledge and competence concerning mental health and trauma symptoms as well as a sense of belonging and social inclusion in the school setting.

3.1.6 Introducing the Augeo online course – themes, activities and practicalities

Plenary: Introduction to the Augeo online course 'Providing support to refugee youth'

- About Augeo, and why this particular online course was developed and who contributed to it
- Main themes covered by the Augeo course for secondary education teachers
- Presentation methods used in the online course
- Technical and practical information about the Augeo online module (how to register, how to log in, where to find support, etc.)

3.2 Augeo online course 'Providing support to refugee youth'

Augeo's course for secondary education teachers, *Providing support to refugee youth*, will be an essential part of INSETT. The course is made up of several sections (8 themes), which can be followed flexibly and separately by the individual teachers. The online course consists of 4-5 hours of study material in total. In addition, there are suggestions for further reading.

Augeo's online Teacher Training Course deals with the following 8 thematic areas:

1. Characteristics of refugee young people (similar vs differences, interrupted life trajectories, identity)
2. Chronic stress and resilience (causes, dealing with stress symptoms, promoting resilience)
3. Increasing a sense of safety (ensuring child safety – be a 'safe' teacher, safe classroom and school)
4. Stimulating positive and supportive relationships (relation teacher-student and between students)
5. Managing emotions (supporting children to understand, express and deal with emotions)
6. Managing behaviour (supporting children, and encouraging desired behaviour in the classroom)

7. Involving parents /caregivers in their children’s education, strengthen teacher-parent collaboration
8. Taking care of your students and yourself /the teacher (learning when more professional help is needed and whom to refer to – and teacher support to prevent secondary traumatization of teachers).

N.B. Before attending the follow-up seminar participants need to have completed the online course.

3.3 Follow-up seminar

Objectives

- Facilitate participating teachers’ discussions about their intervention experiences so far
- Meet the need to complement and elaborate more on certain themes of the online course, such as stress and trauma (PTSD), psychoeducation and window of tolerance; as well as school belonging, inclusion and inclusive education.
- Closing remarks and ceremony: Issuing of INSETT course completion certificate

Themes/topics to be covered

Morning session

1. Participants’ experiences – INSETT/Augeo course content and classroom implementation
2. Stress and trauma (PTSD), psychoeducation and window of tolerance
3. A socioecological approach: Whole-child and whole-school

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Afternoon session

4. A sense of belonging, school belonging
5. Inclusion and inclusive education
6. Summary remarks: Refugee-competent teachers and schools
7. Issuing of INSETT course completion certificate

Morning session

Welcome

Welcome session, both plenary and in groups

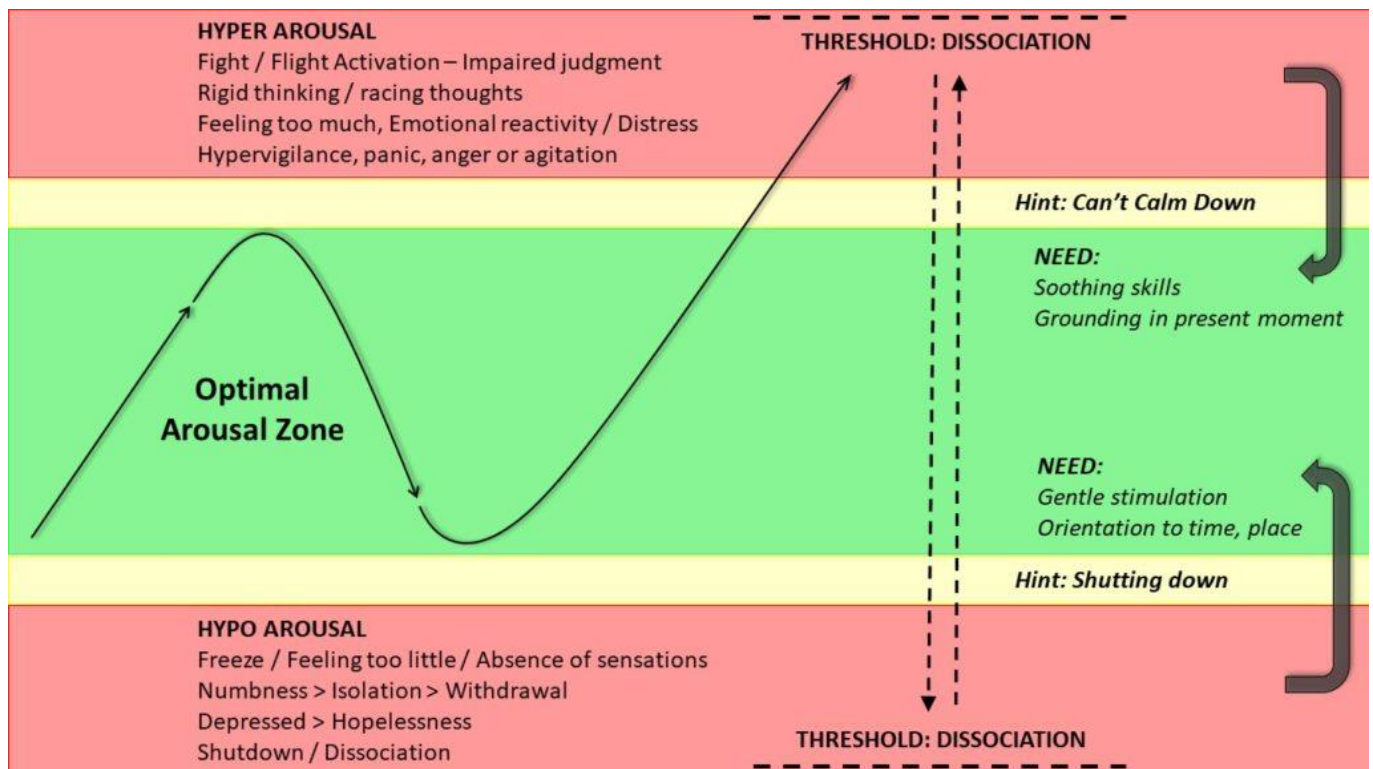
1. Exchange of participants’ experiences with the INSETT/Augeo course content
 - Augeo online course (substantial/technical).
 - Experiences regarding implementing skills and approaches from the online course.
 - Relevance of the INSETT/Augeo course content for everyday classroom practice

Plenary session on trauma, stress and wellbeing (plenary)

2. Stress, trauma and trauma/ptsd symptoms
 - Psychoeducation:

- Self-regulation and the ‘window of tolerance’

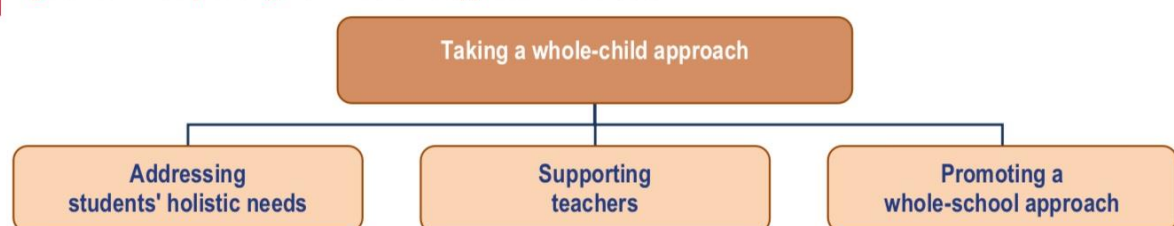
The “window of tolerance”, a term developed by Dan J. Siegel (1999), Professor of Psychiatry, is used to describe the zone of arousal in which a person is able to function most effectively. When in the optimal zone, students are calm but attentive which allows optimal engagement in classroom tasks and learning.



Emotion regulation - Source: <https://mi-psych.com.au/understanding-your-window-of-tolerance/>

3. A socioecological approach: Whole-child and whole-school approach
 - as to learning and development
 - as to wellbeing and resilience

Figure II.3.1: Incorporating the 'whole-child approach' in schools



Source: Eurydice.

Addressing students ' holistic needs: learning needs, social needs and emotional needs

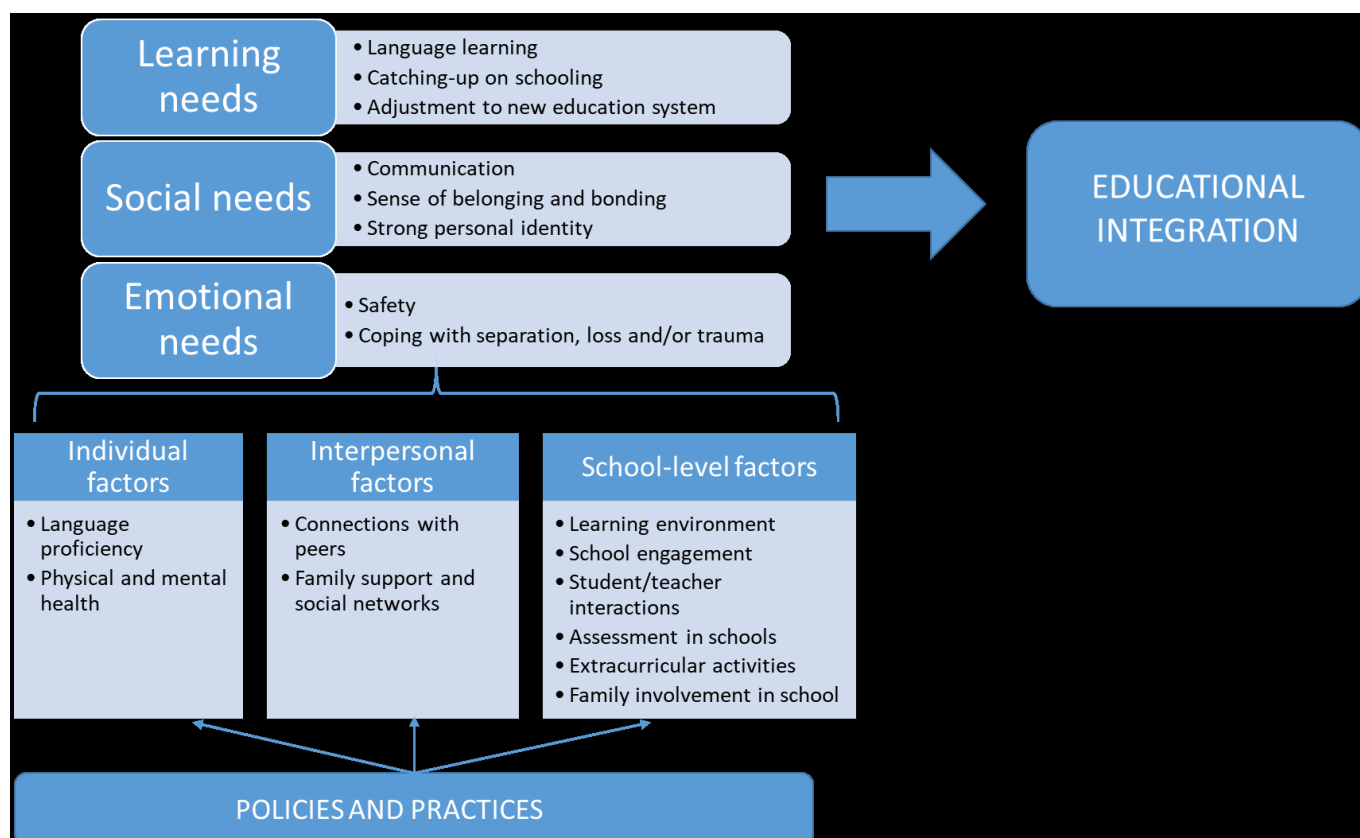


Figure 3.1 Holistic model for the educational integration of refugee children

Source: OECD report *Refugee Education* (Cerna, 2019, p. 34)

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Afternoon session

Plenary session

4. A sense of belonging, school belonging
5. Inclusive education
6. Summary remarks: A refugee-competent school depends on refugee-competent teachers
7. Issuing of INSETT course certificate

4. REFERENCES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

4.1 References

4.2 Suggestions for further reading (for course participants and/or course organisers)

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4.2 Suggestions for further reading

Litterature suggestions (in Norwegian)

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In Swedish

Books

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5. Attachments

5.1 Presentation – Introductory Seminar: Young refugees’ psychosocial challenges ...

5.2 Power Point – Introductory Seminar: Young refugees’ psychosocial challenges ...

5.3 INSETT Course Completion Certificate

5.1 Presentation – Introductory Seminar: Young refugees’ psychosocial challenges upon resettlement

PowerPoint PP-1 Title page

Young refugees' psychosocial challenges upon resettlement: the need for a refugee-competent school⁶

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PP-2: Outline of the presentation

PP-3: The why, how and what of the presentation

This presentation calls attention to some critical psychosocial challenges that young refugees face upon resettlement in a new country and how these may affect their school functioning. Furthermore, its aim is to discuss how schools and teachers may support young refugees in dealing with the transitions needed to adjust to their new life situation. Based on empirical data from a Norwegian research project⁷ comprising interviews with refugee students, teachers and staff in five secondary schools, I will present and explore some interview excerpts as case examples for discussion. The selected examples demonstrate that refugee students may encounter various psychosocial challenges upon resettlement and that the teachers and other school staff not always know how to relate to this. The findings suggest that in order to make schools refugee-competent, schools and teachers may need more knowledge and expertise concerning refugee students’ challenges and needs.

⁶ This presentation draws on my earlier publications about the decisive role of schools in supporting psychosocial transitions among resettling young refugees (Pastoor, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017).

⁷ Unaccompanied refugee minors resettling in Norway, focusing on education, accommodation and care provisions (FUS): <https://www.nkvts.no/english/project/unaccompanied-refugee-minors-resettling-in-norway-focusing-on-education-accommodation-and-care-provisions-fus/>

Introduction

In today's world, with a significant increase of refugees and migrants in Europe and worldwide, schools may expect highly diverse groups of newcomer students. A question of great interest is how host countries' schools may promote newly arrived refugee students' psychosocial adaptation and inclusion into an unknown school environment as well as into a new society (Hamilton and Moore, 2004; Pastoor, 2015, 2016, 2017).

Young refugees face a number of challenges related to uprooting, separation, loss and other traumatic events before arrival (Jakobsen et al., 2014) as well as exile related stress generated by the demands of resettlement in a new society. Moreover, the transition from childhood to adulthood is often more complex for young refugees due to a lack of coherence in their life trajectories as well as the challenge of growing up in an unfamiliar society with or without parental support and guidance (Vervliet et al., 2013). The developmental and psychosocial transitions refugee adolescents experience upon resettlement may lead to mental growth, psychosocial adjustment and inclusion, but may also involve increased vulnerability and risk for maladjustment and exclusion (Niesel and Griebel, 2005).

Young refugees may be vulnerable at times. Yet, having managed to come to a country of refuge, despite adversity and harsh conditions before and during the flight, shows that they also are resourceful young people with a high motivation to succeed in life (Eide and Hjern, 2013; Pastoor, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016; Watters, 2008). Adequate education and care provisions as well as psychosocial support during the asylum and resettlement phase prove to be of crucial importance for young refugees' mental health and long-term adjustment (Kohli, 2007; Montgomery, 2011).

PP-4: School – as a place to learn and a place to be

The decisive role of school – as a place to learn and a place to be

School plays a crucial role in the lives of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. Not only as *a place to learn*, i.e. an arena for learning and development, but also as *a place to be*, i.e. an arena to meet peers, establish friendships and build new social networks (Pastoor, 2012, 2013). Moreover, the RefugeesWellSchool project, and the INSETT intervention in particular, highlight the school's salutogenic potential, i.e., as an arena promoting young refugees' mental health and well-being. At school, newcomer students will meet reliable and knowledgeable adults (teachers and staff) and can socialise with peers (fellow students), and just be 'ordinary' young people. Moreover, the everyday classroom routines and procedures provide a safe and stable environment that is important for young refugees who are in a vulnerable and uncertain situation in unfamiliar surroundings. School participation strengthens newcomers' opportunities to cope with their new life situation and enables them to become independent and active participants in their country of resettlement.

Three critical psychosocial transitions upon resettlement

The resettlement phase can be seen as a liminal period in a refugee's integration process, a transitional phase between being an outsider and becoming an insider in their new society. In this critical phase young refugees experience a number of 'psychosocial transitions' (cf. Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Hamilton and Moore, 2004; Niesel and Griebel, 2005; Pastoor, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016).

PP-5: Change vs transition

It is important to recognise that the process of migration and resettlement implies more than a change of places; it also involves transitions. *Changes* are situational, for instance moving to a new country and may happen from one day to the next. *Transitions*, on the other hand, are characterised by psychological and developmental processes that take time. A change occurs when something in the external environment is altered. However, these changes trigger an internal psychological reorientation process. A successful transition requires a process of restructuring on the inner plane to gain a better understanding of the new life situation and oneself in relation to this new environment.

Although newly resettled refugees may struggle to adapt to the new conditions in their host society as well as may have to cope with traumatic experiences from the past, they are also adolescents who cannot take breaks from their lives and their development from childhood to adulthood (Pastoor 2012, 2013, 2015). Life upon resettlement may time and again become difficult as these young people experience a number of critical transitions simultaneously.

PP-6: Three critical psychosocial transitions upon resettlement

Three transitional processes that are crucial with regard to young refugees' school functioning are:

- *A socialization process*, i.e. the development from childhood to adulthood through interaction with other community members – both adults and peers – in order to acquire the expertise needed to become an active and independent participant in the community and society they are part of.
- *An integration process*, i.e. the adaptation to their life in a new and unfamiliar country – a society with other demands concerning social, cultural and language skills as the basis for interaction and inclusion.
- *A rehabilitation process*, i.e. the construction of a new and meaningful life in Norway after potentially traumatizing events from before and during the flight, as well as the mental strains that life in exile often brings about.

The critical transitions that young refugees have to face when they resettle can at times be quite demanding, especially for those who do not have any parents they can consult with. Nevertheless, with support and guidance from other significant adults that young refugees interact with, such as teachers, social workers and guardians, these transitional processes can lead to development, mastery and resilience (Antonovsky, 1987; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Masten et al., 2008).

PP-7: Newcomer refugee students' schooling situation is vulnerable

The particular educational and psychosocial needs of newcomers

Recently resettled refugee and migrant students have different educational as well as psychosocial needs from language minority students who were born and grew up here. In the school system, newcomer students have often been subsumed within the larger category of 'language minority students', which they in some sense belong to, yet, they are so much more (Pastoor, 2015). However, it has to be emphasised that newcomer students are a heterogeneous group who share certain experiences, but who also may differ from each other in many ways, regarding educational, sociocultural and migration background, for instance.

Yet, newcomer refugee students share a number of educational and psychosocial challenges that may make their schooling situation more vulnerable - due to the following:

- Short period of residency in the host country
- Lacking knowledge about the host society and culture, incl. school culture
- Interrupted and/or incomplete formal education
- Being here without established social and/or family networks
- Traumatic pre-migration experiences as well as exile-related stress.

To be able to overcome the challenges encountered and to reach their fullest potential, refugee students may need additional support. If they do not get adequate support, it may result in academic as well as socioemotional problems in school. Access to *adequate* schooling is key to better physical, mental and emotional health and well-being of refugee children (Fazel et al., 2009; Montgomery, 2011; Pastoor, 2015, 2016, Rutter, 2003).

Findings from international research indicate that many young refugees suffer from sleep problems, depression and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Fazel et al., 2012; Huemer et al. 2009; Jakobsen et al., 2014; Lustig et al. 2004; Vervliet et al., 2013). The mental, emotional and behavioural problems that refugee adolescents may struggle with during resettlement (Derluyn et al., 2008) need to be taken seriously and followed up by providing adequate support on site or outside school. However, this does not necessarily mean that the young refugees are in need of large-scale psychological or therapeutic interventions. The findings indicate that attending school in itself also has a positive impact on young refugees' well-being. Enhancing the supportive role of teachers (Hayward, 2017) as well as implementing school-based interventions are suggested. Consequently, it is vital to train teachers on the psychosocial effects war and resettlement may have on young refugee's well-being and development, in order to gain more knowledge and competence concerning mental health and trauma symptoms as well as how to promote a sense of belonging and social inclusion in the school setting. Concerning inclusive education, it is important to pay attention to both the social and cultural nature of the classroom learning process. Cultural awareness and cultural reflexivity regarding the curriculum as well as the presentation of the various topics in the classroom will facilitate refugee students' access to learning processes (DeCapua, 2016; Pastoor, 2017).

PP-8: A refugee-competent school

The need for a refugee-competent school

Access to school, as a place to learn and a place to be, is essential to provide refugee and migrant young people with the opportunity to reach their full potential while finding their way in the host society. Even though refugee and migrant students show both high motivation and great efforts in school, many fail to complete upper secondary education⁸ (Markussen, Frøseth and Sandberg 2011; NOU 2010: 7). To avoid dropping out of upper secondary school, 'newcomers' – and refugees in particular, very often depend on getting support concerning educational as well as psychological and social issues. Struggling with both academic and psychosocial functioning at school may lead to problem behaviour and marginalization. Yet, both international and national research emphasise not attributing a victim role to refugee young

⁸ This concerns especially language minority students arriving in their late teens, i.e. the so-called *late-arriving* students.

people; one should rather focus on their opportunities as they prove to be resilient and resourceful adolescents (Kohli 2007; Pastoor, 2015, 2016, 2017, Watters 2008).

In order to be able to succeed, it is important that the refugee students' individual needs, as well as their resources, are taken into account in school. Adopting a holistic view, supporting the *whole child* exposes a need for a comprehensive approach to refugee education, i.e. a *refugee-competent* school that takes into consideration refugees' educational as well as psychosocial needs. Such a comprehensive approach requires close cooperation between those who (may) contribute to supporting young refugees' adaptation upon resettlement – both at school, at home and beyond.

It is important to underline that refugee adaptation and integration is a *mutual* process. It is not only the young refugees who have to adapt to the requirements of a new school system in an unknown society. Also schools need to play an active role in supporting refugee students' transition processes upon resettlement. With that in mind, schools have to be aware of their educational as well as their psychosocial role in their encounter with refugee students and develop the competencies needed to become a *refugee-competent* school.

PP-9: How to strengthen the school's psychosocial role

The decisive role of teachers in supporting young refugees' psychosocial transitions

After having called attention to a number of psychosocial transitions that young refugees face upon resettlement and how these may affect their school functioning, we will now explore how teachers may support refugee students in dealing with the psychosocial challenges encountered. For that purpose, some excerpts of interviews with teachers and students will be presented and explored as case examples. The examples selected are not intended to be comprehensive – neither alone nor collected. The intention is rather to demonstrate some of the various psychosocial challenges the young refugees face upon resettlement and how they are dealt with in school.

The challenges that the interviewed refugee students and teachers indicated as having an impact on students' psychosocial adjustment and emotional well-being are presented in relation to the school as an arena for *socialisation*, an arena for *integration* and as an arena promoting *rehabilitation*, i.e. a *salutogenic* arena.

School as an arena for socialisation

During adolescence, young people have to make fundamental decisions about their future, such as further education or a career (Rutter, 2003). Many of the refugee adolescents interviewed emphasised the need for a 'parent figure' or 'mentor', a person providing care and support as well as guiding them to make right decisions.

PP-10: Case Example 1 – Saeed

Several of the young refugees reported that they were suffering from nightmares and sleeping difficulties. Frequent sleep loss affected their ability to engage in daily activities, as illustrated by the story of Saeed⁹, a 19 year old refugee from Afghanistan (two years ago he was granted asylum as an unaccompanied

⁹ To protect their anonymity, the teachers and the pupils have been assigned fictitious, yet ethnically distinctive, names.

refugee minor). At present, Saeed is attending the final year of the compulsory school programme (corresponds to grade 10). Saeed stated during the interview that he often had problems getting up in the morning¹⁰:

Sometimes... many times there is a problem, a well-known problem too. When I go to bed at night I cannot sleep. When I lie down at eleven or half past eleven, my eyes are closed but I feel awake, wide awake. (...) When it is morning, my head really hurts, and I can hardly get up. (...) I don't want to go to school. I think if I go there, I will not understand anything, so it is better for me to be at home.

Furthermore, Saeed told that some time ago, he had been worrying greatly about some close relatives who were in trouble. He had felt sad for several months, which resulted in frequent school absences. Saeed had expected that his teachers might ask him what was going on, but no one had asked.

Interviewer: So you would have liked it if someone had asked how you were doing and had talked with you?

Saeed: Yes, to be able to know what is going on and maybe showing me the way. Because when you are sad or come here alone, you do not know what to do, do you? You need a person to show the way.

Interviewer: And do you think that might be a teacher?

Saeed: Yes, I might suddenly choose the wrong way, isn't that it? I need someone who can tell me what to do, as I have no parents. Someone who can say do 'such and such'.

PP-11: Case Example 2 – Teacher Karin – Teaching a coping strategy

One of the teachers, Karin, teaching at the same school programme that Saeed attended, reported that several of her students had problems getting to school in the morning. Therefore, Karin and some of her students agreed on a coping strategy.

Karin: I definitely get involved in the private lives of my students, perhaps more than I would have done otherwise. So I asked them, 'What is it that makes you not go to school?', and he answered, 'Yes..no..'. I asked the same question to this girl who cannot sleep at night, is crying and terribly depressed. So we made a deal, a joint agreement that they should not decide that they were ill before they got up, had taken a shower and eaten breakfast, unless they actually had a fever.

Interviewer: Did it work?

Karin: Yes, he is at school much more [laughs], and the same applies to this girl. It was rather sweet, one of the first times she did not come to school I got a text message: 'I have done everything you said Karin but I am still not able to come to school.'

¹⁰ The interview excerpts in this article are translated from Norwegian into English by the author. The interviews are transcribed verbatim. Transcription conventions: ..., ... indicate short pauses; (...) indicates that some text has been left out from the excerpt; [text] indicates additional information.

Like Karin, several other teachers interviewed found themselves in a role going beyond the narrow meaning of teaching as primarily transmitting school knowledge as they also mentored students by means of “(...) advice and authority, praise for achievement, understanding their experience before and after flight, help in conflict resolution, further education and career advice. (...) This will require time and patience *and may require teachers to step outside their role* “ (Rutter, 2003, p. 167, emphasis added) The question is, however, whether teachers have ‘to step outside their role’, or can being a teacher be defined to include being a counsellor and a guide; in other words, being a significant adult in their students’ lives?

Having difficulties coping adequately with the encountered transitions upon resettlement can result in internalised as well as externalised symptoms, such as depression and behaviour problems. Many young refugees have missed several years of primary and/or secondary socialisation as a result of disruption and displacement. The mentoring of resettled young refugees should aim at enhanced *comprehensibility* of their new life conditions to increase the *manageability* of the transitions encountered (cf. Antonovsky, 1987).

School as an arena for integration

In modern society, school has an important role in teaching young people about social institutions and conditions as well as the importance of active participation in democratic processes. Accordingly, in Norwegian schools there is a learning culture that values students actively contributing with own reflections, which is very different from what most refugees are used to from their home countries. Several teachers stated in the interviews that their students often feel uncomfortable in expressing own opinions, but rather learn the curriculum by heart.

However, several of the young refugees expressed in the interviews how much they enjoyed the discussions at school. Muna, a 17 year old Somalian refugee girl, attended school in Somalia as well as Kenya, before she came to Norway. During the interview, she recounted her school experiences then and now:

In Kenya, all students are silent because they are afraid that the teacher will beat them. They use what you call it ... a stick or cane to punish, so they keep quiet. (...) Nowadays, we have a substitute science teacher, she usually gives us a booklet and then we have to find out things, and say what our opinion is. We sit in a circle and express our meaning about different things. Renewable energy, for instance, everyone has to give their views concerning energy and nature. It's good; everyone has an opinion and justifies it. (...) We who do not agree, we have to respect it. It is really fun.

Getting an education thus not only implies acquiring formal knowledge, it also includes the acquisition of ‘tacit knowledge’ such as Norwegian school culture, norms and values. As a Norwegian teacher at the compulsory school programme put it:

We are not just occupied with subject teaching, we teach them to be citizens. I talk about voting and paying taxes in the Norwegian lessons, for instance. (...) They should learn to think critically. What is democracy? And all these questions which are typically Social Studies issues, actually.

Teachers and classmates may play a decisive role concerning refugee students' integration into Norwegian society. When attending the adapted compulsory school programme, the refugees do not have Norwegian classmates yet. However, they may meet Norwegian peers through participation in sports and other activities organised by NGOs. The people the young refugees interact with in these settings may not only promote their integration but raise their future aspirations too.

Arman, a 19-year-old Afghan refugee who resettled in Norway with his family, is attending the final year of the compulsory school programme. In the interview, he told that at first he was very scared to speak in front of people. Then he learned to make PowerPoint presentations, which enabled him to convey his ideas.

I was the first or second in my class who became very fond of giving a speech, talking about politics and telling others what is going on in the world. I tell my classmates what my solution is, that this problem can be solved by doing this or that, right? (...) Well, there is quite a difference between Norway and Afghanistan. The largest is, as I see it, that Norway is a democratic country. People are equal here and all young people are entitled to free schooling. While in Afghanistan, many young people have no chance to go to school which is a human right. There is much discrimination and people are not equal.

Moreover, Arman had joined an international human rights organisation and stated: 'My goal is to pursue higher education so that I can work or help people who have it extremely difficult ... I want to go back to work for people in Afghanistan'. To make sense of his life, Arman used his adverse experiences from the past to construct 'a script to live by', a conceptual framework of meaning (Hundeide, 2001), into which he could project his future. This leads to a sense of coherence in his life, which promotes his psychosocial development and well-being (Antonovsky, 1987).

As Arman's story may illustrate, the linkages and interactions between two or more social settings such as participation in both school and NGO activities, may enhance young refugees' development and resilience (Ungar, 2012) as well as their integration into Norwegian society.

School as a salutogenic arena

International research has drawn attention to school as a *salutogenic* arena – an arena that promotes refugee students' mental health and well-being (Fazel et al., 2012; Kia-Keating and Ellis, 2007; Montgomery, 2011; Rutter, 2003). Being able to go to school like Norwegian young people means a great deal to young refugees during a period of their lives that is often characterised by coping with traumatic memories of the past as well as concerns about the future (Bean et al, 2007; Jenesen et al., 2013; Vervliet et al., 2013).

Several of the young refugees interviewed reported that mental health problems affected their *school functioning*. Nevertheless, they expressed joy and gratitude about the opportunity to go to school. Moreover, the social aspect, being together with peers, was often emphasised. Some of the refugees reported that feelings of being lonely and upset were more prominent when they were at home. Daniel,

Head of Department at one of the compulsory school programmes, emphasised the school's central role in the interview:

School, going to school, it's in itself positive, as it is offering structure in everyday life. (...) And that will be beneficial for all students of course, but perhaps especially for those who carry a heavy mental ballast.

PP-12: Case Example 3 - Faiz

The story of Faiz, a 20-year-old refugee, provides some insight into how a 'heavy mental ballast' may impact school functioning. Faiz was born in Afghanistan, but during his childhood he moved back and forth between Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan. After he had lost both his parents, he lived with different relatives and never had a chance to attend school. When Faiz was 16 years old he embarked alone on his journey to Norway, which was fraught with many hardships. During the interview, Faiz stated that he often has problems concentrating at school due to intrusive thoughts:

These thoughts just come automatically, I cannot control them. They just come automatically, feeling sad. I cannot talk, I cannot write, I just sit there. I sit in the classroom or I draw when I feel sad, just draw on the table, on paper and suchlike.

When feeling restless, Faiz often left the classroom. He had told some of his teachers about his problems and while some showed understanding, not all seemed to understand. One of his teachers reminded him every day: 'Come to school and study hard, your education is free in Norway. If you want to sleep and relax here, many others can take your place'.

It may be difficult for a teacher to detect a pupil who is distracted due to intrusive thoughts. When the student fails to complete his task, the teacher may attribute it to being deliberately inattentive. To be able to give adequate support, teachers need to have an understanding of the problems students struggle with. It seems that neither Faiz nor the teachers knew how to actively cope with the problems he experienced. This may bring about feelings of failure as well as not fitting into school. For refugees like Faiz, who have experienced recurrent uprooting, it is of vital importance that they are able to develop a *sense of belonging* (Kia-Keating and Ellis, 2007), which may be mediated through supportive interactions in school.

PP-13: Case Example 4 – Teacher Karin – In need of trauma competence

We learned earlier how the teacher Karin supported her students by teaching them a coping strategy. Yet, Karin confessed during the interview that she did not know how to approach and support students suffering from traumatic experiences:

I do not ask them, because I am very much afraid of picking at traumas, I am not a psychologist or psychiatrist. I cannot. So I must admit that I ask very little, and especially I try to avoid asking those unaccompanied refugees.

Moreover, Karin told that concerning a refugee girl who frequently came to her distraught in tears, she eventually contacted the school psychologist. However, in an interview with the school psychologist, he admitted he knew very little about the problems refugee students struggle with as he primarily dealt with learning disabilities. Karin asserted that neither the school health services, the school psychologist nor the child and adolescent psychiatry outpatient clinic she had referred students to, reported back to her due to their duty of confidentiality. But sometimes she asked her students, ‘Are you still talking with him or her?’

Enhanced interdisciplinary collaboration in and outside the school, such as cooperation with educational and psychological counselling and mental health services, may enable young refugees to reach their full potential (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Ungar, 2012).

Much primary prevention work concerning refugee children’s mental health can be done in the school context (Fazel et al., 2009). In one of the schools participating in the study, the school had an effective ongoing collaboration with a psychiatric nurse from the municipal Refugee Agency’s Mental Health Team. The nurse, Hanne, not only offered students low-threshold ‘psychoeducational’ talks, she also mentored teachers, which they appreciated. However, not all refugee students wanted to talk with Hanne.

Adar, an 18 year old Iraqi refugee student, stated during the interview that he suffers from mental and physical problems resulting in school absence. When the interviewer asked him whether he had talked with Hanne about this, Adar answered very determined that he does not want to talk with her:

I do not believe in ‘psychologists’. When you hear a psychologist say ‘What's on your mind’, when you're just a little sick and think much. (...) I do not need her, and I do not know her. I will for instance never tell her anything about my life, you understand, when I do not know her.

Talking with a therapist seems to be a cultural tool Adar feels uncomfortable with. Also several other young refugees expressed that they do not like to talk about their difficulties and rather keep their feelings to themselves. Maybe because they don't want to bother others with their problems or because they want to be just 'ordinary' young people. As Adar’s case shows, it is important that young refugees who need help have confidence in the person offering support as well as have faith in the intervention. School-based group interventions with a less ‘individual’ focus, such as a whole-class approach (cf. Rousseau et al., 2005), may be a preferable alternative.

The school’s potential regarding primary prevention of refugee students’ mental health problems are highlighted in several studies, as it hits a broad population and because school-based services are considered low-threshold measures (Fazel et al., 2009). Moreover, school-based interventions enhance young refugees’ sense of belonging and connection to school, which may result in lower depression and higher self-efficacy (Kia-Keating and Ellis, 2007).

Concluding remarks

The case examples demonstrated that young refugees encounter various challenges in relation to the psychosocial transitions faced upon resettlement, and that teachers can play a fundamental role in supporting them to deal with the transitions encountered. Schools may thus play a crucial role in the lives of young refugees who have to find their way in Norway. Attending school can contribute to the

rehabilitation and (re)integration of resettled young refugees by offering them a positive and inclusive environment enhancing learning and development as well as psychosocial adaptation.

Furthermore, the case examples revealed that the psychological and emotional problems several of the young refugees struggled with, affecting their well-being as well as their school functioning, were not always followed up sufficiently in the school system. This is often due to schools, teachers and other school staff lacking knowledge and expertise about the psychosocial challenges refugee students meet as well as not having appropriate support systems to ensure follow-up and/or referral of refugee students who are struggling with mental problems.

However, not all young refugees want to talk about their problems, either because they do not want to bother others with their difficulties or because they may not be willing to disclose themselves to people they do not know well. Therefore it is important that they get the opportunity to talk with competent adults they can trust, like teachers, for example (Pastoor, 2015). Consequently, schools should be allocated the necessary resources to strengthen teachers and other staff's competence concerning refugees' psychosocial and mental health challenges.

It is of decisive importance that teachers acquire adequate knowledge of how experiences of war, flight and exile may affect young refugees' well-being and everyday functioning. More knowledge about how trauma disorders and psychosocial problems may affect learning would contribute to teachers feeling more confident to ask and act. In this way, teachers can both detect problems and facilitate follow-up, either in class, in school or beyond, in cooperation with others (both professionals and parents/caregivers/guardians).

Much primary prevention work concerning young refugees' mental health and psychosocial challenges can be done in the school context (Fazel et al., 2012; Kia Keating and Ellis, 2007; Ryding and Leth, 2014). Schools can offer students psychoeducation, so they can learn to deal with the mental and emotional problems they are experiencing. School-based group interventions, with a less individual focus, may be a good option too, since not all refugees appreciate personal talks with a school nurse or a psychologist (Pastoor, 2015). Making schools more refugee-competent may thus imply providing psychosocial support through implementing school-based interventions (such as INSETT and Welcome to School).

In today's world, with large numbers of young people and children on the move, schools may expect highly diverse groups of students and, among these, many from refugee backgrounds. 'Refugee-competent' schools and teachers are therefore more important than ever!

PowerPoints: Discussing two central issues emerging from the case examples

PP-14: Discussion question 1

The questions posed relate to the case examples from interviews with teachers and newcomer students presented here. They do not necessarily need to get a definite answer; the primary aim is to initiate a process that leads to reflection and joint discussions between the participants.

Discussion question 1:

Do teachers have ‘to step outside their role’ in order to meet refugee students’ psychosocial needs? Or can being a teacher include being a counsellor, a guide, a mentor, etc. – as a way of contributing to a safe and supportive psychosocial learning environment for recently arrived students? If psychosocial support is a core aspect of teachers’ educational role, what may be some of the challenges therein?

PP-15: Teaching as a primary therapeutic intervention ...

See for example: Teaching as a primary therapeutic intervention for learners from refugee backgrounds (Hayward, 2017)

PP-16: Discussion question 2

Discussion question 2:

How may a teacher start a conversation with a refugee student when she/he suspects the student’s school functioning and learning capacity is reduced due to chronic stress/traumatic stress symptoms?

PP-17: The trauma-focused learning conversation

‘Trauma-informed practice’ in schools depends on creating room for conversations with individual students in order to identify the student’s educational and psychosocial needs as well as to facilitate responding with appropriate support/actions/strategies.

- An introduction to trauma-informed practice in school: <https://policywise.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/1-An-Introduction-to-Trauma-Informed-Practice-in-School.pdf>
- More about the trauma-focused learning conversation in this Norwegian chapter: “Læringssamtalen- læreren som ressurs for traumatiserte elever” Schultz, J-H, & Langballe, Å. (2016).

PP-18: The NOW trauma booklets

Moreover, the ‘Trauma booklets’ made by the NOW Working Group Trauma Surviving can be of help when talking with refugee students about about trauma symptoms and how these may effect functioning in school and daily life. Especially, the booklets “Sleepless”: <https://www.act-n-o-w.com/trauma-support/booklets/sleepless/> and “I would really like to – but I can’t” concerning avoidance: <https://www.act-n-o-w.com/trauma-support/booklets/avoidance/> are relevant here as these two involve teachers.

- NOW Working Group Trauma Surviving (2019). *Trauma booklets* (in several languages.). Available from: <https://www.act-n-o-w.com/trauma-support/booklets/> Four trauma booklets about are already available in English, German, Arabic and Farsi/Dari. Young people can read the stories with a teacher or another reliable adult – or on their own in a language they are familiar with. The booklets can also be used in various psycho-educational settings and as motivation for young people to seek psycho-therapeutic help in dealing with traumatic experiences.

PP-19: Further reading

PP-20: Thank you for your attention

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5.2 PowerPoint – Introductory Seminar: Young refugees' psychosocial challenges ...

**YOUNG REFUGEES' PSYCHOSOCIAL CHALLENGES UPON RESETTLEMENT:
THE NEED FOR A REFUGEE-COMPETENT SCHOOL**

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  In-Service Teacher Training (INSETT)
Introductory Seminar  

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OUTLINE OF THE PRESENTATION

- Introduction: The why, how and what of the presentation
- The decisive role of school – as a place to learn and a place to be
- Change vs transition
- Three critical psychosocial transitions upon resettlement
- Newcomer refugee students' vulnerable schooling situation
- The need for a refugee competent school
- The school's psychosocial role and the decisive role of teachers
- School as an arena for socialisation, integration and rehabilitation
- Case Examples 1 & 3 – Refugee students (Saeed and Faiz)
- Case Examples 2 & 4 – Teacher (Karin)
- Concluding remarks
- Two 'case-related' discussion questions

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INTRODUCTION –

THE WHY, HOW, WHAT OF THE PRESENTATION

- **WHY:** To call attention to critical psychosocial challenges that young refugees face upon resettlement in a new country and how these may affect their school functioning.
- To discuss how schools and teachers may support young refugees in dealing with the psychosocial transitions needed to adjust to their new life situation.
- **HOW:** Based on empirical data from a Norwegian research project comprising interviews with refugee students, teachers and staff in five secondary schools, present and explore some interview excerpts as case examples for discussion.
- **WHAT:** The selected examples demonstrate that refugee students may encounter various psychosocial challenges upon resettlement and that their teachers not always know how to relate to this.
- The findings suggest that in order to make schools refugee-competent both schools and teachers may need more knowledge and expertise concerning refugee students' challenges and needs upon resettlement.



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SCHOOL PLAYS A DECISIVE ROLE UPON REFUGEES' RESETTLEMENT – AS A PLACE TO LEARN AND AS A PLACE TO BE

> School - As a place to learn

- acquiring formal school knowledge
- gaining relevant formal and tacit 'cultural' knowledge and skills
- receiving guidance and support from reliable and knowledgeable adults

> School - As a place to be

- providing a safe and stable everyday context
- socializing with peers
- (re)establishing friendships and social networks
- facilitating psychosocial adjustment and mental recovery

> School as an arena for socialization, integration and rehabilitation



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CHANGE VS TRANSITION

Changes are situational, for instance moving to a new country and may happen from one day to the next.

Transitions, on the other hand, are characterised by psychological and developmental processes that take time.

A change occurs when something in the external environment is altered.

However, these changes trigger an internal psychological reorientation process. A

successful transition requires a process of restructuring on the inner plane to gain a better understanding of the new life situation and oneself in relation to this new environment.



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YOUNG REFUGEES FACE CRITICAL PSYCHOSOCIAL TRANSITIONS UPON RESETTLEMENT

Three psychosocial transitions that are significant with regard to young refugees' schooling are:

- *A socialization process*, i.e. the development from childhood to adulthood through interaction with other community members – both adults and peers – in order to acquire the expertise needed to become an active and independent participant in the community and society they are part of.
- *An integration process*, i.e. the adaptation to their life in a new and unfamiliar country – a society with other demands concerning social, cultural and language skills as the basis for interaction and inclusion.
- *A rehabilitation process*, i.e. the construction of a new and meaningful life in Norway after potentially traumatizing events from before and during the flight, as well as the mental strains that life in exile often brings about.

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NEWCOMER REFUGEE STUDENTS' SCHOOLING SITUATION IS VULNERABLE

Newly arrived refugee students have to face various **educational and psychosocial** challenges upon resettlement in a new country due to the following:

- Short period of residency in the host country
- Lacking knowledge about the host society and culture, incl. school culture
- Interrupted and/or incomplete formal education
- Being here without established social and/or family networks
- Traumatic pre-migration experiences as well as exile-related stress.

Consequently, refugee students' schooling situation is more vulnerable than minority students who were born and grew up here (cf. school dropout).

Schools and teachers need to be aware of the various challenges and the additional needs newcomer refugee students may have and develop the required 'refugee competence' to meet them.

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A REFUGEE COMPETENT SCHOOL

Schools have to be aware of their **educational** as well as their **psychosocial** role in their encounter with refugee students and develop the competencies and skills needed to become a **refugee-competent** school.

The resettlement of young refugees requires a comprehensive approach, involving significant adults – both in and outside school, supporting their learning, development and psychosocial well-being.

Successful resettlement requires mutual adaptation.

Refugee students need to adapt to a new school system and a new society. Similarly, schools have to adapt to resettling young refugees complex needs by providing educational and psychosocial support. And thus become refugee-competent schools.

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HOW TO STRENGTHEN THE SCHOOL'S PSYCHOSOCIAL ROLE IN ENHANCING REFUGEE STUDENTS' PSYCHOSOCIAL WELL-BEING

Much primary prevention work can be done in and by schools ...

Strengthen the teacher's role

- Providing background information about the refugee and migration experience, as well as traumatic and exile-related stress – and how it may affect students' social and cognitive functioning in school.
- More knowledge and competence concerning refugee students' psychosocial and socioemotional challenges may make teachers feel more secure to ask and to act.
- How to introduce newcomer students to a new school/classroom and show cultural awareness regarding the curriculum and in teacher-student communication.

Strengthen collaboration with other professionals as well as significant adults looking after the newcomer's needs and interests (parents, guardians, social workers, NGOs, etc.)

Strengthen students' mastering and coping: psychoeducation, creative expression workshops, drama therapy, social support groups, school-based interventions, etc.

➤ **Preventive school-based interventions** as an integral part of educational policy and practice (Pastoor, 2015) ... Such as the 'RefugeesWellSchool' intervention INSETT ©

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CASE EXAMPLE 1: SAEED (19 YEARS OLD) REFUGEE STUDENT WORRYING AND HAVING SLEEP PROBLEMS

Saeed: Sometimes... many times there is a problem, a well-known problem too. When I go to bed at night I cannot sleep. When I lie down at eleven or half past eleven, my eyes are closed but I feel awake, wide awake. (...)

When it is morning, my head really hurts, and I can hardly get up. (...) I don't want to go to school. I think if I go there, I will not understand anything, so it is better for me to be at home.

=====

Interviewer: So you would have liked it if someone had asked how you were doing and had talked with you?

Saeed: Yes, to be able to know what is going on and maybe showing me the way. Because when you are sad or come here alone, you do not know what to do, do you? You need a person to show the way.

Interviewer: And do you think that might be a teacher?

Saeed: Yes, I might suddenly choose the wrong way, isn't that it? I need someone who can tell me what to do, as I have no parents. Someone who can say 'do such and such'.

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CASE EXAMPLE 2 – TEACHER KARIN TEACHING A COPING STRATEGY TO SHOW UP AT SCHOOL

The teacher Karin reported that some of her refugee students had problems showing up at school in the morning. Therefore, Karin asked them, 'What is it that makes you not go to school?', and he answered, 'Yes..no..'. I asked the same question to this girl who cannot sleep at night, is crying and terribly depressed. Then Karin and her students agreed upon a coping strategy.

Karin: ... we made a deal, a joint agreement that they should not decide that they were ill before they got up, had taken a shower and eaten breakfast, unless they actually had a fever.

Interviewer: Did it work?

Karin: Yes, he is at school much more [laughs], and the same applies to this girl. It was rather sweet, one of the first times she did not come to school I got a text message: 'I have done everything you said Karin but I am still not able to come to school.'

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CASE EXAMPLE 3: FAIZ (20 YEARS OLD) REFUGEE STUDENT HAVING CONCENTRATION PROBLEMS

During the interview, Faiz (Afghan unaccompanied refugee minor) stated how he often has problems concentrating at school due to intrusive thoughts.

Faiz: These thoughts just come automatically, I cannot control them. They just come automatically, feeling sad. I cannot talk, I cannot write, I just sit there. I sit in the classroom or I draw when I feel sad, just draw on the table, on paper and suchlike....

According to Faiz, carrying out classroom tasks, especially those that involved reading, often was difficult, as he could not concentrate for more than five to six minutes. When feeling restless, he often left the classroom. Faiz told that some of his teachers showed understanding, though not all seemed to understand the problems he was struggling with. One of his teachers reminded him every day:

Teacher: 'Come to school and study hard, your education is free in Norway. If you want to sleep and relax here, many others can take your place'. (Pastoor, 2015)

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CASE EXAMPLE 4 – TEACHER KARIN IN NEED OF TRAUMA COMPETENCE

We just learned how the teacher Karin supported her students by teaching them a coping strategy that enabled them come to school in the morning. Yet, Karin confessed during the interview that she did not know how to approach and support students suffering from traumatic experiences:

Karin: I do not ask them, because I am very much afraid of picking at traumas, I am not a psychologist or psychiatrist. I cannot. So I must admit that I ask very little, and especially I try to avoid asking those unaccompanied refugees....

Moreover, Karin stated that in connection with a refugee girl who frequently came to her distraught in tears, she eventually contacted the school psychologist.

... However, in an interview with the school psychologist, he admitted he knew very little about the problems refugee students struggle with as his special area of interest is assessment of learning disabilities.

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SOME QUESTIONS ... DISCUSSION QUESTION 1

The questions posed here relate to the case examples presented. They do not necessarily need to get a definite answer, they are primarily asked to initiate a process that leads to reflection and joint discussions 😊

Question 1: Do teachers have 'to step outside their role' in order to meet refugee students' psychosocial needs?

Or can being a teacher include being a counsellor, a guide, a mentor, etc. – as a way of contributing to a safe and supportive psychosocial learning environment for recently arrived students?

If psychosocial support is a core aspect of teachers' educational role, what may be some of the challenges therein?

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TEACHING AS A PRIMARY THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTION FOR LEARNERS FROM REFUGEE BACKGROUNDS (HAYWARD, 2017)

Maria Hayward is a Senior Lecturer at the Centre for Refugee Education at the Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand. She has been involved in refugee education for over 25 years.

In the article she presents a range of therapeutic pedagogical strategies which can provide interventions for refugee backgrounds learners. It makes particular reference to the New Zealand on-arrival programme for refugees. She writes:

Refugees almost invariably have a history of traumatic experience and significant loss. However, for some, therapy is neither a practical nor a readily available solution and for others, it may present further challenges in terms of stigma or cultural inappropriateness.

On the other hand, a classroom is generally considered unthreatening and, as teachers are with their learners on a regular basis, the opportunity exists for them to provide support and a form of healing.

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DISCUSSION QUESTION 2...

How may a teacher start a conversation with a refugee student when she/he suspects the student's school functioning and learning capacity is reduced due to chronic stress/traumatic stress symptoms?

It is important to create room for conversations with individual refugee students about their school functioning, needs and resources.

This is particularly important if we suspect the student's school functioning is reduced due to traumatic stress symptoms (see Schultz & Langballe, 2016, p. 227). See the trauma-focused learning conversation – next slide ...

More about trauma-informed practice in school: <https://policywise.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/1-An-Introduction-to-Trauma-Informed-Practice-in-School.pdf>

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THE TRAUMA-FOCUSED LEARNING CONVERSATION

The trauma-focused learning conversation [*Læringssamtalen*] implies that the teacher and the student have a conversation about - and map - the student's learning premises:

«One of the basic educational measures in trauma-informed teaching is the learning conversation. The main goal of the conversation is to identify possible needs and measures within two main areas:

Psychosocial support is about the pupil feeling safe and cared for at school. It involves identifying strategies and measures that can mobilize social support and promote the student's psychosocial school environment.

Learning deals with enabling the training so that students can get the best out of schoolwork even if the prerequisites for learning are reduced.» (translated from Norwegian; Schultz & Langballe, 2016, p. 227)

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THE NOW - TRAUMA BOOKLETS

The 'Trauma booklets' made by the NOW Working Group Trauma Surviving can be of help when talking with refugee students about about trauma symptoms and how these may effect functioning in school and daily life.

Especially, the booklets "Sleepless": <https://www.act-n-o-w.com/trauma-support/booklets/sleepless/>

and "I would really like to – but I can't" concerning avoidance: <https://www.act-n-o-w.com/trauma-support/booklets/avoidance/> are relevant here as these two involve teachers.



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FURTHER READING – PUBLICATIONS RELEVANT TO THE PRESENTATION

NOW Working Group Trauma Surviving (2019). Trauma booklets (in several languages). Available from: <https://www.act-n-o-w.com/trauma-support/booklets/>

Hayward, M. (2017). Teaching as a primary therapeutic intervention for learners from refugee backgrounds. *Intercultural Education*, 28(2), 165-181.

Pastoor, L.d.W. (2016). Enslige unge flyktingers psykososiale utfordringer: Behovet for en flyktningkompetent skole. I C. Øverlien, M.-L. Hauge & J.H. Schultz (Red.). *Barn, vold og traumer. Mater med unge i utsatte livssituasjoner* (s. 200-219). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!
ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS ARE WELCOME 😊



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5.3 INSETT Course Completion Certificate

Course completion certificate

In-Service Teacher Training (INSETT) – Providing psychosocial support to young refugees



Za'atari Refugee Camp, Jordan 2018 Photo: Lutine de Wal Pastoor

Text to be further developed:

This is to certify that ...

Name:

Intervention course organised by

Date

Signature(s)



+ Add Logo: National INSETT partner

More information concerning the course content on the backside of this document (PTO)

In-Service Teacher Training (INSETT) – Providing psychosocial support to young refugees

Give some information about the INSETT intervention... to be decided on later ... draft text:

The INSETT intervention is one of five interventions to be implemented and evaluated as part of the EU/Horizon 2020 funded project *RefugeesWellSchool* - Preventive school-based interventions to promote the mental well-being of refugee and migrant adolescents (2018-2022).

Aim of the intervention

The INSETT intervention aims to enhance teachers' competence and self-efficacy in:

1. Promoting refugee and migrant students' mental health and psychosocial well-being
2. Supporting social inclusion and strengthening newcomer students' sense of school belonging
3. Providing comprehensive support by incorporating a 'whole-child' and a 'whole school' approach along with encouraging parents or caregivers' school involvement

In other words, INSETT seeks to make teachers and schools (more) 'refugee competent' (Pastoor, 2015).

Structure and duration

The INSETT intervention consists of three interrelated course modules, i.e., two collective learning modules (whole-day seminars) with an individual module (the Augeo online course) in between.

The intervention runs over a period of 10-12 weeks. The two whole-day training seminars, an introductory and a follow-up seminar total approx. 14 hours. The online course consisting of 8 parts (lectures) that can be followed individually and flexibly contains 4-5 hours of study material. There will also be provided a reading list (references and suggestions for further reading), which will involve additional reading time.



Za'atari Refugee Camp, Jordan 2018

Photo: Lutine de Wal Pastoor

Acknowledgements

This work has been carried out as part of the RefugeesWellSchool project that has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 754849. Related resources and materials Website: www.refugeeswellschool.eu

How to cite this document

Pastoor, L. d.W. (2019). RefugeesWellSchool Intervention Manual: In-Service Teacher Training (INSETT) – Psychosocial support to young refugees. Working Paper, 20.02.2019. Oslo: Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies