



Project: 101249763 – COTAF – Connected Towns for a Shared Future
Programme: CERV-2025-CITIZENS-TOWN-NT

ANNEX A7 - EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

(To be filled in and uploaded as deliverable in the Portal Grant Management System, at the due date foreseen in the system.



Please provide one sheet per event (one event = one workpackage = one lump sum).)

PROJECT	
Participant:	[1] - [Fondazione Yunus Italia ETS] ([YFI])
PIC number:	[878313273]
Project name and acronym:	[Connected Towns for a Shared Future] – [COTAF]

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	[WP11]
Event name:	[Voices of Migration: Belonging and Inclusion]
Type:	[Living Libraries]
In situ/online:	[in-situ]
Location:	[Italy], [Bologna]
Date(s):	[02/07/2026]
Website(s) (if any):	https://www.cotafeuproject.info/
Participants	
Female:	18
Male:	9
Non-binary:	0
From country 1 [Italy]:	18
From country 2 [Morocco]:	1
From country 3 [Burkina Faso]:	1
From country 4 [Iran]:	1
From country 5 [Cameroon]:	1



From country 6 [Senegal]:	1		
From country 7 [Ethiopia]:	1		
From country 8 [Ukraine]:	1		
From country 9 [Mali]:	1		
From country 10 [Guinea]:	1		
Total number of participants:	27	From total number of countries:	10

Description

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

The event organised in Bologna was designed to promote social cohesion, democratic participation, and inclusion through participatory methodologies based on dialogue, listening, and the deconstruction of stereotypes. This approach is fully aligned with the COTAF Theory of Change, which assumes that structured encounters based on lived experience can foster awareness, empathy, and more inclusive attitudes and behaviours.

In the work plan of the project, it was envisaged that, within WP11, a Living Library event on the inclusion of migrant people would be held in Bologna, with particular attention to second generations and to the structural, cultural and legal barriers hindering their full participation. The event, entitled "Voices of Migration: Belonging and Inclusion", took place on 2 July 2026 (13:00–19:00) at the premises of Fondazione Yunus Italia in Bologna, in full consistency with the objectives set out in the work plan.

During implementation, the format was flexibly adapted to the actual dynamics of participation. The opening phase of the event registered a lower attendance than expected. In response, the format was promptly redefined: the nine Living Books, the first participants, the project staff, the project coordinator Giulia Zanetti and City Councillor Siid Negash gathered in a single circle of dialogue, in which stories, questions and reflections were shared collectively. This adaptation did not represent a deviation from the original objectives, but rather a context-sensitive application of the Living Library methodology, which strengthened trust and closeness among all those present.

As participation progressively increased during the afternoon, the event moved naturally from the initial collective circle to the standard Living Library format, with one-to-one reading sessions taking place as foreseen in the work plan. After consulting the catalogue and the book plots, Readers autonomously chose the stories they wished to "read", meeting the Living Books in close conversations following the defined structure of approximately 20 minutes of storytelling and Q&A followed by a 10-minute break. The atmosphere of trust and closeness built during the opening phase carried over into the individual readings, making the dialogues more direct and personal, and several Readers chose to read more than one book, extending their stay in order to listen to different stories and perspectives.

According to the final catalogue, nine Living Books were presented, and they shared nine stories, organised around five thematic areas: Migration & Journey; Identity & Belonging; Prejudice & Recognition; Integration & Community; Participation & Contribution. "Appartenere a metà, interamente" (Belonging in halves, entirely) addressed growing up between Italy and Morocco, invisible roots, second-generation identity, and the refusal of forced choices between cultures. "Scrivere per rinascere" (Writing to be reborn) explored writing and rebirth, gender-based violence, forced marriage, women's rights, education as a possibility for the future, and migration and prejudice. "Costruire ponti tra due mondi" (Building bridges between two worlds) focused on migration and belonging, integration as bridge-building, language and communication, active citizenship, and art and social participation. "I semi che ho seminato" (The seeds I have sown) recounted migration, the learning of the Italian language, access to education as an adult, patience, resilience and starting over. "Sempre in mezzo alla gente" (Always among people) addressed migration from Cameroon, leaving one's country under political hardship, integration in Bologna, citizenship, work and autonomy, and service to the community. "Scavare fino alle radici" (Digging down to the roots) explored multiple identities, dual belonging, family origins, prejudice linked to skin colour, and the rejection of labels. "Datti sempre una possibilità" (Always give yourself a chance) recounted migration from Ethiopia, expectations and reality, starting from scratch as an adult, motherhood, and the courage to follow



one's inner voice. "Ogni luogo merita di essere sicuro e libero" (Every place deserves to be safe and free) addressed war and forced migration from Ukraine, motherhood and responsibility, protection and survival, resilience and hope, and the fragility of peace. Finally, "Kapi d'Africa" recounted migration from Guinea, political asylum, bureaucracy and waiting, intercultural friendship and solidarity networks, migrant entrepreneurship, music and creativity, and Afro-descendants and new generations.

This plurality of stories made it possible to address the theme of migrant inclusion in an articulated way, fully consistent with the logic of the Living Library. The focus on second generations foreseen in the work plan was maintained: some Living Books were themselves second-generation, sharing experiences of growing up between cultures, while others were first-generation, recounting their own inclusion pathways and, in some cases, those of their children, who belong to the second generation. Across the stories, the structural, cultural and legal barriers that hinder full participation, bureaucracy and documents, language, access to education and work, prejudice and discrimination, emerged transversally, allowing participants to engage with migrant inclusion not as an abstract concept, but as a lived and situated reality.

From an organisational point of view, the event was preceded by a structured preparatory phase. Informational and communication materials were developed, dedicated illustrations of the nine Living Books were produced, and dissemination activities were carried out through newsletters and social media. A dedicated preparatory meeting was organised with the Living Books at the end of June at the premises of Fondazione Yunus Italia (via d'Azeglio 48), in order to share the aims, functioning and methodological framework of the event, as well as to address in advance the management of sensitive content. During this meeting, it was clearly stated that each Book was free to choose which aspects of their story to address and which not to address, in full respect of their own limits, wellbeing, and the principle of do no harm.

The event spaces were organised so as to accompany participants throughout the entire experience, following the same structure adopted for the previous Living Library in Bologna. At the entrance, there was a welcome and registration phase, including signature collection, signing of the GDPR consent form, and consultation of the information brochure. Subsequently, with the support of the librarians, Readers were able to consult the book catalogue, read the related book plots, and make informed choices about which readings to attend. Before the sessions began, participants were invited to read the guidelines for Readers, which stressed that the Living Library is not a debate or a competitive discussion space, but a place of dialogue grounded in listening, curiosity, non-judgement, confidentiality, the right not to answer, and respect for personal boundaries. Cultural mediators were present throughout the event, and readings were available in Italian and English, ensuring accessibility for participants with different linguistic backgrounds.

The event opened with the institutional remarks of Siid Negash, City Councillor of Bologna, who framed the Living Library within the broader civic and political reflection on migration, belonging and inclusion in the city, before joining the opening circle of dialogue together with the Living Books and the first participants.

The reading sessions followed a defined structure: approximately 20 minutes of storytelling and Q&A and 10 minutes of break. Throughout the event, facilitators were present across the space, supporting both Books and Readers in respecting the timing, the shared rules, and the integrity of all the people involved, and ensuring that the Living Library remained a psychologically safe yet authentic space of dialogue.

To complement the physical experience and extend its reach beyond the event itself, the Digital Living Library was further expanded with four recorded interviews with institutional and academic stakeholders: Pierluigi Musarò, Professor at the University of Bologna; Andrea Tolomelli, Head of CEFA NGO; Siid Negash, City Councillor of Bologna for NEw Generations; and Nader Ghazvinizadeh, poet and Professor at the Primo Levi University with Iranian background. The interviews, subtitled in English, were made accessible through QR codes placed within the event space, allowing participants to engage with additional testimonies independently. Alongside the new interviews dedicated to migrant inclusion, the interviews recorded for the Gender Equality Living Library were also available to participants, enriching the digital offer with a broader range of institutional perspectives.

Both sets of interviews, those on Gender Equality and those on Migrant Inclusion, are now published and freely accessible to everyone on the project's YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/@ConnectedTownsforaSharedFuture>), ensuring the sustainability, scalability and long-term accessibility of the initiative.

The impact of the event was assessed through pre- and post-event surveys addressed to both Living Books and Readers, complemented by qualitative feedback collected during and after the sessions.



Post-event responses from Living Books show consistently high scores (predominantly 4–5, with averages between 4.3 and 4.4) in perceived safety and respect, control over one's own participation, respect of personal boundaries, quality of facilitation, and the feeling that one's story was respected and understood by the Readers. No participant reported discomfort or inappropriate episodes. Living Books described the experience as meaningful and empowering, highlighting the value of being listened to and the hope that their stories could contribute to dismantling prejudice against migrant people; Readers' feedback confirmed the impact of listening to the stories and suggested organising this type of encounter more often.

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.04.2022	Initial version (new MFF).



Management Guidelines – Annex A
M&E Plan & Strategy – Annex 3

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HUMAN LIBRARY EVENT MONITORING TEMPLATE

SECTION 1 – Event Identification

Event type: Human Library

Work Package: WP11

Date(s): 02/07/2026

Location: Bologna (site Yunus Foundation Italia)

Number of participants: 27

The event combined a physical Living Library format with the further development of the Digital Living Library, which made accessible via QR codes during the event four new recorded institutional testimonies, together with the interviews produced for the Gender Equality Living Library.

SECTION 2 – Expected ToC Outcomes (Empathy & Awareness)

Expected outcomes:

- Increased empathy and understanding
- Reduction of stereotypes
- Reflective dialogue

Observed outcomes:

☐ Fully achieved X Partially achieved ☐ Not achieved

The Living Library organised in Bologna on the theme of Migrant Inclusion ("Voices of Migration: Belonging and Inclusion") involved 27 participants and featured 9 Living Books with a migratory background, including first- and second-generation experiences. Although initial attendance was lower than expected, the format was flexibly adapted: the event opened with a collective circle of dialogue bringing together the Living Books, the first participants, the project staff, the project coordinator and the institutional representative. This adaptation created a strong sense of trust and closeness. As participation progressively increased during the afternoon, the event moved naturally from the collective circle to the standard Living Library format: after consulting the catalogue and the book plots, Readers autonomously chose the stories they wished to "read", meeting the Living Books in one-to-one sessions following the planned structure (approximately 20 minutes of storytelling and Q&A, 10 minutes of break). The atmosphere of trust built during the opening carried over into the individual readings, and several Readers chose to read more than one book, extending their stay in order to listen to different stories and perspectives. Feedback collected confirmed meaningful reflection, empathy, and a willingness to question stereotypes related to migration.

The event was monitored through pre- and post-event surveys addressed to both Living Books and Readers, complemented by qualitative feedback collected during and after the sessions.



Post-event responses from Living Books show consistently high scores (predominantly 4-5, with averages between 4.3 and 4.4) in perceived safety and respect, control over their own participation, respect of personal boundaries, quality of facilitation, and the feeling that their story was respected and understood by the Readers. No participant reported discomfort or inappropriate episodes. Readers' responses were equally positive and reported no critical issues.

These findings indicate that the expected outcomes were substantially generated among those who took part, through authentic engagement and real interaction. The outcome is nevertheless assessed as partially achieved due to the lower-than-expected turnout, which limited the scale, though not the depth, of the dialogue.

SECTION 3 – Dialogue Quality

Quality of dialogue:

☐ Low ☐ Medium ☒ High

Safe and inclusive environment ensured?

☒ Yes ☐ Partially ☐ No

SECTION 4 – Risks and Mitigation

Did any risk materialise (e.g. low participation, inappropriate behaviour)?

☐ No ☒ Yes

Were mitigation measures applied?

☐ No ☒ Yes

Comments:

Potential risks concerned delays in organising in-person Human Library events, limited participation of target groups, reputational or safeguarding issues during activities, the possible reinforcement of stereotypes, methodological inconsistencies across countries, staff turnover, and external political or funding changes affecting implementation. To mitigate these risks, the partnership adopted flexible planning and contingency arrangements, targeted inclusive outreach, clear moderation and safeguarding procedures, shared guidelines and coordination mechanisms across partners, internal knowledge-sharing to ensure continuity, and regular monitoring to allow timely adaptation whenever needed.

During the event, the main risk that materialised was low initial participation. Mitigation measures were promptly applied: the format was redefined at the opening of the event, gathering the Living Books, the first participants, the project staff, the project coordinator and the institutional representative in a single circle of dialogue. As attendance increased during the afternoon, the event returned to the standard one-to-one reading sessions, which took place as planned. No inappropriate or harmful episodes occurred, and Living Books reported high levels of safety and respect, confirming the effectiveness of the safeguarding and facilitation mechanisms implemented.

SECTION 5 - Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) – Narrative Impact Analysis

The monitoring and evaluation component of the Living Library "Voices of Migration: Belonging and Inclusion", held in Bologna on 2 July 2026, was designed to capture not only measurable outputs, but also the deeper change that direct encounters between people are capable of generating, in line with the project's Theory of Change. The evaluation combined pre- and post-event surveys addressed to both Living Books and Readers, complemented by the



qualitative feedback collected on site, allowing for a comparative analysis of expectations, experiences, and immediate outcomes.

Out of a total of **27 participants involved in the event**, a subset actively contributed to the evaluation process through survey completion. Specifically:

- **8 Living Books (pre-event) and 7 Living Books (post-event)** responded, out of the 9 Books present
- **2 Readers (pre-event) and 1 Reader (post-event)** completed the survey

This corresponds to an overall participation rate of approximately:

- **15 Living Book responses** (across phases, partially overlapping, corresponding to **89% pre** and **78% post**)
- **3 Reader responses**
- **18 total survey contributions**, a figure consistent with the intense and emotionally engaging nature of the activity

Not all participants completed the questionnaires: Readers' participation in the evaluation was limited, also as an effect of the fluid dynamics of the event, in which many Readers arrived during the afternoon. For this reason, the analysis concerning Readers integrates survey data with the observations collected on site. While not uniform across the two groups, the dataset provides a sufficient basis for identifying **patterns, shifts, and qualitative transformations**, which are central to this methodology, with the quantitative core resting, in this edition, on the Living Books group.

Living Books: From Prepared Agency to Situated Experience

Prior to the event, Living Books entered the process with a strong sense of preparedness and agency. In the pre-event survey, most respondents reported high levels of confidence in their ability to control their narrative (predominantly scoring **4 to 5 out of 5**), alongside a clear understanding of their right to refuse intrusive questions. Expectations were consistently aligned with the objectives of the methodology: generating awareness, fostering empathy, contributing to social understanding. In this edition, this capacity for understanding took on a specific connotation linked to the theme, as emerges from the verbatim quotes collected in the open answers of the pre-event survey: "I hope people will understand that the immigrant is not an inferior being, they have abilities and can contribute to the society in which they live"; "to instil in people the doubt that their first thought might be a prejudice or a stereotype, and instead invite them to approach people they do not know and listen to them"; up to the respondent who, again in the pre-event survey, expressed the hope that their story could represent "one step forward to peace in my country".

Notably, **almost no respondent reported specific fears or emotional concerns in advance**; one participant entrusted to the pre-event survey the hope of finding "patience, respect and understanding", confirming that the preparatory phase, training, guidelines and facilitator alignment, created a baseline of trust and psychological readiness.

The post-event survey data shows, however, that the lived experience of the Living Library is inherently more complex than initial expectations. While the majority of Living Books continued to report high levels of safety and respect (scores of **4–5** across dimensions such as respect,



control, personal boundaries, facilitation and the understanding of their story, with averages between **4.3 and 4.4**), a minority expressed lower scores (from **2 to 3**) on some dimensions. These signals do not indicate systemic failure, but rather point to the **authenticity of the encounter**: the Living Library is not a controlled or scripted environment, but a space where real human interaction unfolds. When asked directly in the post-event survey, no respondent (7 out of 7) declared having felt uncomfortable during the sessions, nor were inappropriate or harmful episodes reported: any moments of tension were **effectively managed** by the facilitation system, complemented in this edition by cultural mediation.

This is a crucial finding. The data suggests that the methodology does not aim to eliminate emotional intensity entirely, which would risk producing superficial dialogue, but to ensure that it remains **constructive, contained, and non-harmful**. In this sense, the principle of *Do No Harm* was not interpreted as the absence of tension, but as the presence of **active safeguarding mechanisms**.

From a transformational perspective, Living Books reported significant outcomes. In the open answers of the post-event survey, the moment of sharing emerges as the most cited element: "it gives hope", "finding a kind reader in front of me", "people were very caring and understanding" are some of the verbatim quotes collected. Particularly relevant is the testimony, also drawn from the post-event survey, of a respondent who discovered a reversal of their usual role: "I usually listen. Today I saw that telling is also important". Another respondent acknowledged in the survey an unexpected learning: the discovery of not knowing many important things about people from other countries who carry painful stories similar to their own. The data indicates a consistent process of **validation, recognition, and relational meaning-making**.

Overall, the trajectory of Living Books can be read as a movement **from prepared agency to situated agency**: from a theoretical sense of control and readiness to a lived experience in which agency is tested, negotiated, and ultimately reinforced within a real relational context.

Readers: From Openness to Structured Awareness

The Reader group presents, in this edition, a numerically limited survey base, which does not allow for the comparative pre/post analysis conducted for the first Bologna event. The available data is nevertheless unequivocal in its direction: in the pre-event survey, respondents expressed the maximum score (**5 out of 5**) both on the expectation that the experience would be personally meaningful and on their **openness to changing perspective on social topics**.

In the post-event survey, the element indicated as most significant, a verbatim quote from the response, was "listening to the stories", with a declared change of perspective and **no case of discomfort or inappropriate behaviour reported**. The suggested improvement, also quoted verbatim from the survey, is itself an indicator of impact: "to organise these encounters more often".

These indications are consistent with what was observed on site: several Readers chose to "read" more than one book, extending their stay; the initial circle of dialogue involved the first participants in a direct exchange with the Books, the staff and the institutional representative; the atmosphere of the individual sessions remained respectful and engaged throughout the event. While caution is required given the sample size, the overall picture confirms the **concreteness**



and authenticity of the stories as the factor that allows Readers to move beyond abstract concepts and engage with the complexity of real life.

Interpreting Impact Through the Theory of Change

When considered together, the data from Living Books and Readers provides strong support for the project's Theory of Change.

Participants do not emerge from the experience with uniform transformations, nor is change immediate or linear. What emerges is rather a layered process:

- Readers move **from initial openness to a more concrete awareness** of the lived experience of migration
- Living Books move **from prepared confidence to embodied experience**, testing and reaffirming their agency within real interactions

The interaction between these two trajectories generates a shared space of meaning, in which:

- awareness is increased
- empathy is activated
- dialogue becomes a recognised tool for social transformation

At the same time, the evaluation highlights two critical enabling conditions: **the role of facilitation**, complemented in this edition by cultural mediation, without which the emotional intensity of the stories could become dispersive; and **the flexibility of the format**, with the redefinition of the opening into a collective circle adopted in response to the low initial attendance, which transformed an organisational difficulty into a relational opportunity.

Final Consideration

The data does not describe a perfectly linear experience, and this is precisely what makes it credible and valuable. The second Living Library in Bologna emerges as a **highly effective, yet inherently complex intervention**, capable of generating meaningful impact while remaining grounded in the unpredictability of human interaction and in the real conditions of participation.

Rather than producing simplified or standardised outcomes, the methodology succeeds in activating **authentic, situated, and relational change processes**, fully in line with the ambitions of the CERV programme and the broader European agenda on equality, inclusion, and active citizenship.

SECTION 6 – Learning & Follow-up

Key insight from participants:

Living Books consistently described the experience as meaningful and empowering. They highlighted the value of sharing and of being listened to by caring and understanding Readers ("it gives hope"), and, in some cases, the discovery that telling one's own story matters as much as listening ("I usually listen. Today I saw that telling is also important"). Several Books expressed the hope that their stories could help dismantle prejudice against migrants and show their capacity to contribute to the society in which they live. Readers highlighted the impact of listening to the stories and suggested organising this type of encounter more often.

Suggested improvement:



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The main improvement suggested by participants concerns outreach and attendance: inviting more people and involving wider networks of friends, communities and organisations in future events. Strengthening promotion and mobilisation strategies, particularly towards Readers, will be a priority for the following Human Libraries.

Follow-up actions:

In line with the project's communication strategy, a follow-up post was published on the project's social media channels after the event. The Digital Living Library was expanded with four new recorded interviews with institutional stakeholders, subtitled and made accessible through QR codes during the event together with the interviews produced for the Gender Equality Living Library. Both sets of interviews — on Gender Equality and on Migrant Inclusion — are now published and freely accessible to everyone on the project's YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/@ConnectedTownsforaSharedFuture>). This component will continue to support the sustainability, scalability, and long-term impact of the activity beyond the physical event.

This template is part of the COTAF M&E system and complements the official CERV Event Description Sheet.