



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

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

LIVING LIBRARY EVENT MONITORING

SECTION 1 – Event Identification

Event type: [Living Library in situ](#)

Work Package: [WP7](#)

Date(s): [15/05/2026](#)

Location: [Lesvos, Greece](#)

Number of participants: [42](#)

SECTION 2 – Expected ToC Outcomes (Empathy & Awareness)

Expected outcomes:

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

Observed outcomes:

☒ Fully achieved ☐ Partially achieved ☐ Not achieved

Short explanation (max 5 lines):

All three expected outcomes were met. Forty-two participants engaged in open, reflective dialogue across institutional and community lines, with feedback consistently describing increased understanding of shared experiences across cultural difference. The life map methodology created a safe environment that visibly reduced stereotyped framings of refugee experience. The request by a local civic leader to display a narrator's map in his office as an ongoing point of reflection stands as a concrete indicator of attitudinal change beyond the event itself.

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: N/A



SECTION 5 – Learning & Follow-up

Key insight from participants:

Dialogue grounded in personal visual storytelling — rather than structured testimony or panel discussion — created a qualitatively different quality of connection. Participants noted that the life maps made it possible to communicate experiences that language alone, especially across language barriers, cannot carry. Several noted that hearing stories from people of different origins revealed unexpected commonalities around gender, family, and dignity that they had not anticipated finding.

Suggested improvement:

Allocate dedicated time after the main session for narrators to debrief with MOTG staff, as the emotional weight of sharing personal stories in a public setting may benefit from structured reflection. Additionally, a short guided closing circle for all participants — beyond the open Q&A — could help consolidate individual insights into shared takeaways and strengthen the sense of collective learning before dispersal.

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



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Feedback

- The discussions took place in a safe and moderated environment, since each of the nine people who shared their stories had previously worked with MOTG staff to create their 'life maps' – so they created the topics that they wanted to discuss.
- Some 40 people from the local community, including from the Ministry of Education and the Municipality of Mytilene, attended the event and discussed the different life maps, while also taking the time to observe the maps themselves and reflect.
- Some quotes by participants after the event:
 - “The discussions helped me understand that many people from different countries face similar struggles regarding gender expectations and family responsibilities.”
 - “I appreciated that everyone had space to speak without judgment. The atmosphere felt safe and respectful.”
 - “Using drawings and mental maps made it easier to explain difficult experiences that are hard to describe with words.”
 - “I learned that gender equality can look different across cultures, but dialogue helps build understanding.”
- The president of the Association of Solidarity and Protection of the Municipalities of Mytilene and Western Lesvos asked for one of the maps that truly moved him, to put it in his office so he can share with his visitors that gender roles and being a 'good human being' is an international responsibility without borders.

Mental maps displayed



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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:	MOTG
PIC number:	899177294
Project name and acronym:	COTAF – Connected Towns for a Shared Future

EVENT DESCRIPTION			
Event number:	7 - WP7		
Event name:	Refugee Women, Resilience & Rights on Lesbos		
Type:	Living Library		
In situ/online:	in-situ		
Location:	Greece, Lesbos		
Date(s):	15/05/2026		
Website(s) (if any):	https://www.cotafeuproject.info/		
Participants			
Female:	28		
Male:	14		
Non-binary:	0		
From country 1 [Greece]:	42		
Total number of participants:	42	From total number of countries:	1
Description			
Provide a short description of the event and its activities.			
The Event			



On 15 May 2026, Movement on the Ground (MOTG) hosted a Living Library in Lesvos as part of the COTAF project's WP7. The event brought together 42 participants across five hours, creating a structured space for refugee and migrant women to share their lived experiences with local residents, civil servants, and civil society representatives in a setting defined by mutual respect and curiosity.

Lesvos was chosen deliberately. As one of the principal entry points into Europe for people fleeing conflict and poverty, the island occupies a singular position in the geography of migration — a place where abstract policy debates become daily, embodied reality for both those arriving and those who have long called it home. Running a Living Library here meant placing the methodology where the need for genuine dialogue is most acute.

Nine refugee and migrant women served as the event's "books". In the weeks before the event, each worked with MOTG staff to develop a personal life map — a hand-drawn or illustrated visualisation of their journey, experiences, and aspirations. This preparatory process was deliberate: by giving narrators full authorship over the topics they wished to open to discussion, the format ensured dignity and agency from the outset. No one was asked to share more than they had chosen to offer. The maps themselves became physical artefacts during the event — visual anchors for conversation that allowed experiences resistant to easy verbal description to be held and examined together.

Visitors moved freely between the nine narrators during the three-hour main session, gathering in small informal groups around each life map. MOTG staff circulated throughout as mediators, facilitating deeper conversation where needed and ensuring that the atmosphere of safety and cultural sensitivity that the methodology demands was maintained throughout.

Themes Explored

The nine life maps ranged widely across the terrain of gendered displacement. Emerging themes included:

- Gender roles — household and family responsibilities, economic burdens, and shifting expectations after migration
- Cultural identity in European societies — the challenges of acculturation and navigating multiple, sometimes competing, identity frameworks
- Access to education and skills — adult vocational training, language learning, the non-recognition of qualifications from countries of origin, and pathways toward independent living
- Economic empowerment — informal labour, exploitation risks, childcare barriers, and access to psychosocial and legal support
- Gender-based violence — domestic violence in displacement settings, safety concerns, and workplace harassment
- Motherhood — the particular pressures and strategies of parenting far from support networks
- Spirituality and religion — as both sustenance and, at times, a source of tension with host-country norms
- The challenges facing LGBTQIA+ community members — including the intersection of sexual orientation, legal status, and asylum processes

The breadth of topics prevented the event from reducing the narratives of refugee and migrant women to a single story. Discussions moved fluidly between the personal and the structural, with facilitators steering conversation towards reflection rather than interrogation.

Topics of Discussion

- Gender Roles
- Household roles
- Family Responsibilities
- Economic Responsibilities/burdens
- Cultural Identity and European Societies
- Challenges after displacement
- Acculturation
- Access to Education and Skills
- Adult Vocational Education
- Language Learning
- Recognition of Qualifications from home countries
- Pathways to Independent
- Economic Empowerment
- Informal Labor



- Exploitation risks
- Childcare
- Access to Psychosocial/legal support
- Gender-based Violence
- Domestic violence in displacement settings
- Safety concerns
- Harassment (labor law)
- Motherhood
- Spirituality / Religion
- Challenges of the LGBTQIA+ community
- Sexual Orientation and Law
- European Laws
- Asylum Processes

Outcomes and Feedback

The event achieved what the Living Library methodology sets out to do: it generated genuine, unscripted dialogue between people who rarely share a conversational space, and it did so in a way that left participants changed by the encounter.

Three themes ran consistently through participant feedback after the event. The first was the recognition of shared human experience across cultural difference — the realisation that gender expectations, family pressure, and the struggle for economic independence are not experiences unique to any one community but are felt across borders in recognisably similar ways. The second was the quality of the atmosphere: participants repeatedly described a space in which they felt safe to speak honestly, without judgement and without performance. The third was the particular power of the life maps themselves as a communicative form — the observation that drawing and illustration could carry experiences that words, especially across language barriers, often cannot.

Participants reflected:

"The discussions helped me understand that many people from different countries face similar struggles regarding gender expectations and family responsibilities."

"I appreciated that everyone had space to speak without judgment. The atmosphere felt safe and respectful."

"Using drawings and mental maps made it easier to explain difficult experiences that are hard to describe with words."

"I learned that gender equality can look different across cultures, but dialogue helps build understanding."

The most vivid indicator of the event's impact came from an unexpected direction. The President of the Association of Solidarity and Protection of the Municipalities of Mytilene and Western Lesvos asked, at the close of the event, whether he could take one of the life maps — one that had moved him deeply — to display in his office, so that he could share with his visitors his conviction that gender roles and the responsibility to be a decent human being recognise no national borders. That a civic leader left not with a report or a set of recommendations but with a hand-drawn map made by a refugee woman, which he intends to use as a point of ongoing reflection and conversation, speaks more directly to the Living Library's potential than any quantitative measure could.

Contribution to COTAF Objectives

The Lesvos Living Library demonstrated that community-level innovation in inclusion is possible even in contexts marked by sustained migration pressure and historical tension. By drawing institutional actors — municipal government, national ministries, international agencies, and academics — into direct, unmediated conversation with refugee and migrant women, the event produced knowledge of a kind that surveys and policy consultations cannot replicate: knowledge rooted in relationship, verified by presence, and animated by personal courage.

The insights gathered, and particularly the evidence of how the life map methodology enables cross-cultural dialogue in high-stakes settings, will be brought into the COTAF Policy Lab as concrete examples of community-level innovation in inclusion. They will inform the project's final recommendations on local integration measures and stand as a replicable model for similar interventions elsewhere in Europe.



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



15 May 2026 – Living Library 2026

AGENDA

12: 00	Registration and Coffee
12:15 – 12:30	Welcome Remarks • Movement On The Ground present the event, the topic and the aim of the event
12:30 – 13:00	Presentation of the nine participants (refugees) who are the ones navigating the Living Library Discussions
13:00 – 16:00	Living Library Main Event and Discussions. • Visitors invited to look at display and discuss with nine people facilitating the discussions. • MOTG staff moderating conversations and facilitating deeper discussions on inclusive societies.
16:30	Q & A
17:00	Closing Remarks and Thank you notes



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Η Movement On the Ground σας προσκαλεί στην εκδήλωση «Ζωντανή Βιβλιοθήκη» (Living Libraries).

Μέσα από έργα τέχνης και ζωντανές αφηγήσεις ανθρώπων με προσωπικές ή διαγενεακές εμπειρίες μετακίνησης και προσφυγιάς, ανοίγουμε έναν χώρο διαλόγου, ακρόασης και ουσιαστικής ανθρώπινης σύνδεσης.

Η εκδήλωση φιλοδοξεί να ενισχύσει την κατανόηση, τη συμπερίληψη και τη δημιουργία πιο ανοιχτών κοινοτήτων μέσα από την ανταλλαγή ιστοριών και εμπειριών.

Η δράση πραγματοποιείται στο πλαίσιο του ευρωπαϊκού προγράμματος COTAF – Connected Towns for a Shared Future, με χρηματοδότηση από το πρόγραμμα CERV της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης.

Refugee Women, Resilience & Rights on Lesbos

COTAF

Connected Towns for a Shared Future
Project 101249763 — COTAF





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we don't know what the future holds, but we always hope for the best we will continue.

Indeed, there are always difficult situations you go through and perseverance you will get through them. They helped me (Movement on the Ground) all their love and respect. This is wonderful. In addition to a new life.

Angelina, Nefeli, Wafa, Stratia, to all the staff everyone who helped and supported me here, I thank you so much. You like family to me. I love you.

(Because of you, I now find myself in Greece. Before, I was thinking of going somewhere else, but now I am here.)

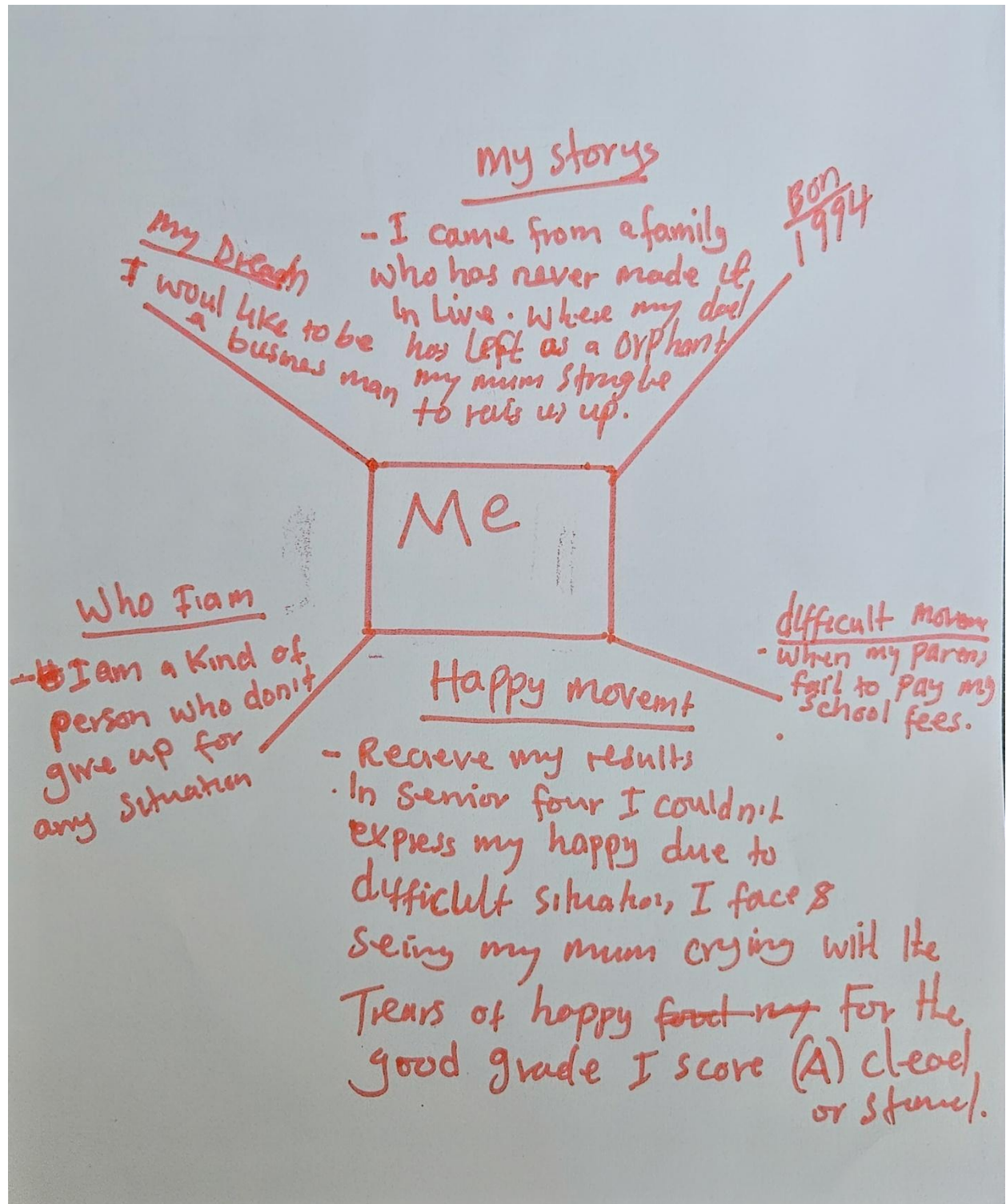
Believe
I'll start soon
I obtained my certificate and also got job.
I took courses with them in hospitality
And here I began to regain vitality after meeting the organization of Movement

2026
in November I managed to enter Greece after suffering
I left for Türkiye and I didn't know what would happen next
I was searching for a way out of this country working and looking for a way to leave.

2025
2024
2023
the hardest part of this period was that my university studies were not completed because of the country's circumstances
the hardest part of this period was leaving home and being separated from my family, not knowing that I wouldn't see them.

2019
This is where it all began. Here I lived and learned for 22 years. Sudan

Ayman Hamdan (2026)



Ahmet

I was a good man. I am a good man. I will be a good man. I want to show this everybody. This is not about anybody, for me.

I want to see my mom face that happy. I want to see my dad face with smile.

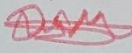




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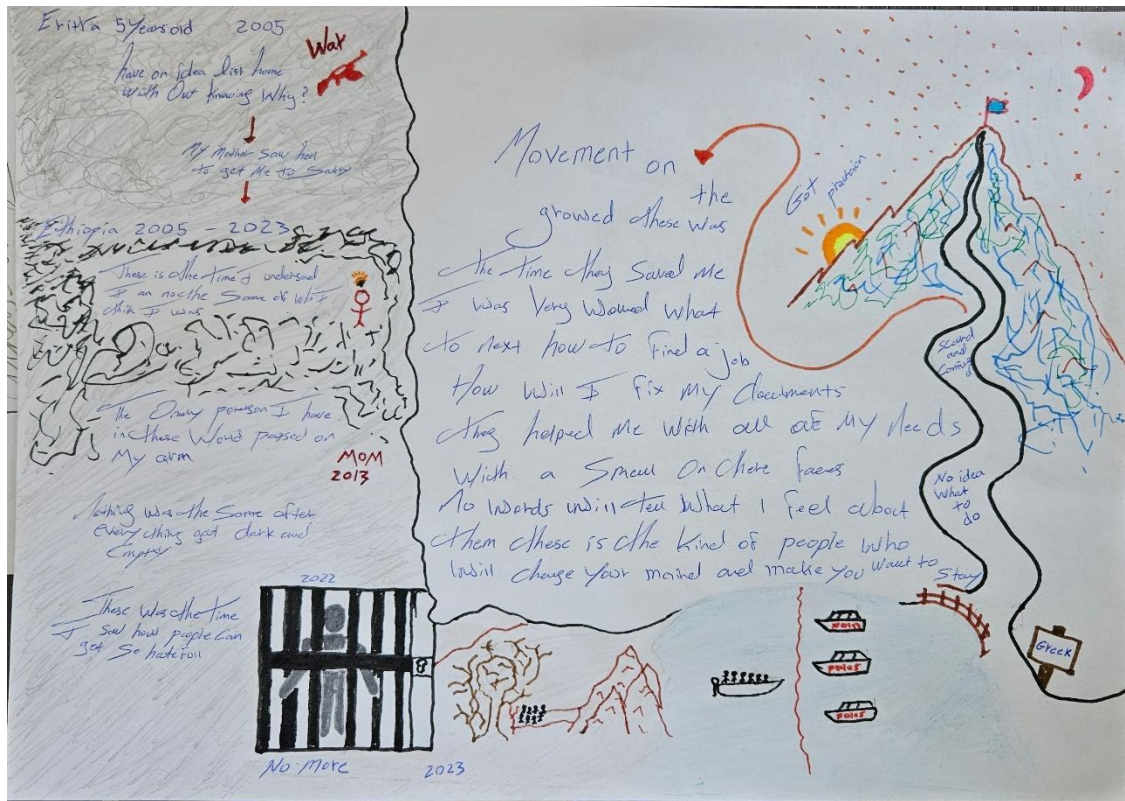
Les sos qui me MARQUE beaucoup dans Ma vie
Je suis TRÈS ouvrier et Je vis des Moments TRÈS difficiles Ma Famille
en 1998 Je commence à vivre l'affaire de Homosexualité
en 2002 Je retourne au Sénégal  MES TRÈS. Complicé de vivre l'aba
en 2024 Je quitte le Sénégal POUR aller en TURQUIE La aussi il m'a
emprisonné l'aba La Je décide de la TURQUIE  OCTOBRE 2024
Je arrive en Grèce  actuellement Je suis TRÈS bien
Parce que J'ai pas peur pour mon orientation sexuelle

My Name is Dauda Chireh; am from Eritrea
The bad way on my life they are many
cause I have passed through by many struggles within
Speran on 2022 cause of war in Eritrea & Eritrea
I lost to many my Best Friends
At this time I have many Plans to future of my life
that was my Plan -
1. I wanna get Job
2. I wanna get my parents
3. I wanna get my husband
4. I wanna improve my English language
and also I wanna get much money
5. the Important thing I wanna get little kids
from my handsome man
IF Gods help me





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My name is Salih hasboon

Born in Sudan North Darfur AlFarshen 21/5/1998.

I studied kindergarten Primary and secondary school

Then graduated from university Faculty of Administrative Sciences Department of Accounting. I Faced Many difficulties and tribal Problems in my life.

including racism Lack of Personal Freedom and

Freedom of expression. I Lived in an unjust and unfair society that considers themselves to be of

noble Arab origins and we are slaves to them

with no country to live in only serving them that's

why I left my country seeking freedom democracy and personal and expressive freedom.

In the future I want to change these wrong concepts

and ideas in societies that there is no one who

is a slave or servant to others except to oneself

I want to become a wise man reform society in

general help myself, my family and those who need help.

Freedom





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