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TOPPSY

Transcultural competence enhancement for the follow-up of persons with mental health vulnerability in the Fedasil refugee shelter network.

Mental health care for people with a refugee background: a front-line perspective

Context

Increase in residents with a very **complex vulnerability profile** (psychological, psychiatric and behavioural problems, addictions).

Need to develop **knowledge** to deal with this vulnerability in a targeted, evidence-based way and to set up collaborations with more specialized centers.

Objectives

Develop **training and intervision** adapted to the needs and specificities of the refugee shelter network (1st and 2nd phase reception) focused on frontline workers (multidisciplinary teams).

Design thinking proces: iterative process with end users, steering committee and management

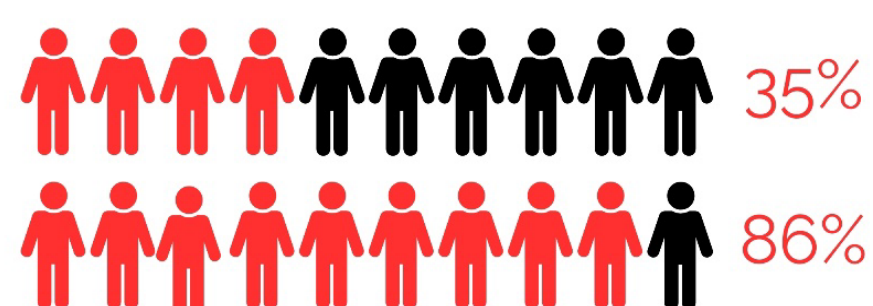
Online Survey FEDASIL

Participants

391 Participants
85% Fedasil
75% Second phase
82% Frontline professionals

Training needs

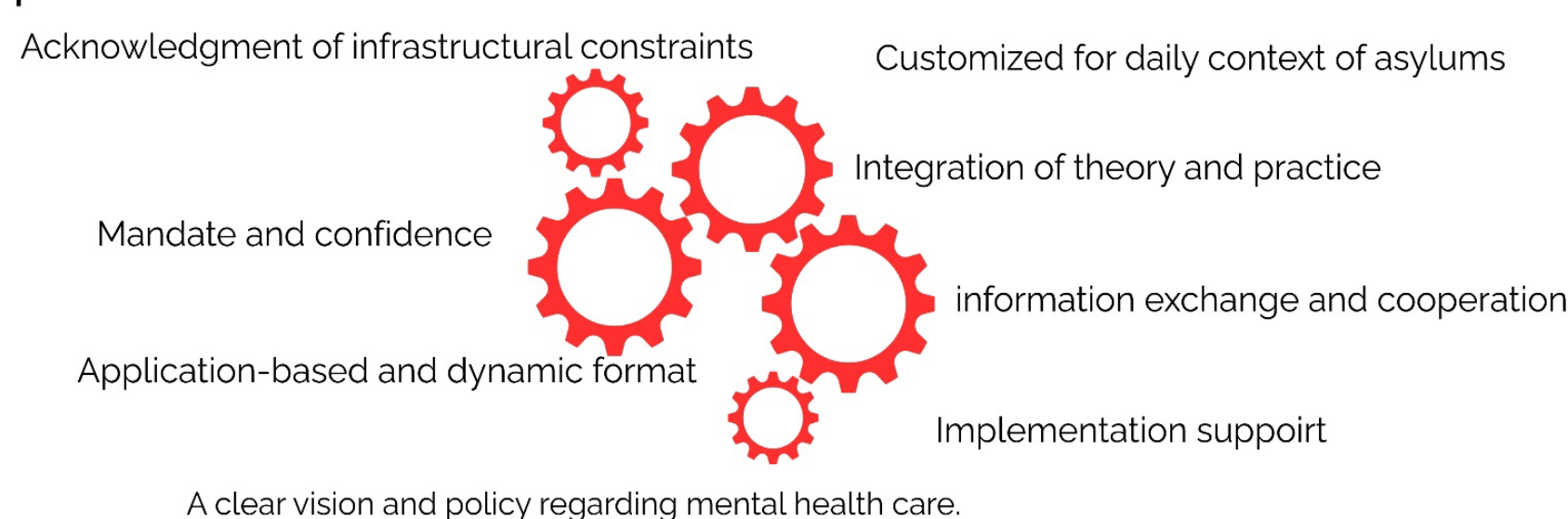
85% Important
71% Realistic



Training Priorities

- 1) **Cultural influences** on perception of mental health
- 2) **Self-care** and care for colleagues
- 3) How to administer **mental health "first aid"**
- 4) Impact of **experience of fleeing** and **shelter context** on mental health
- 5) Establishing a **supportive context** and mitigating stressors.
- 6) **Trauma-informed care**
- 7) Addressing **powerlessness** and **resistance**

Prerequisites



Interviews caregivers

Participants: 27



Designated training themes

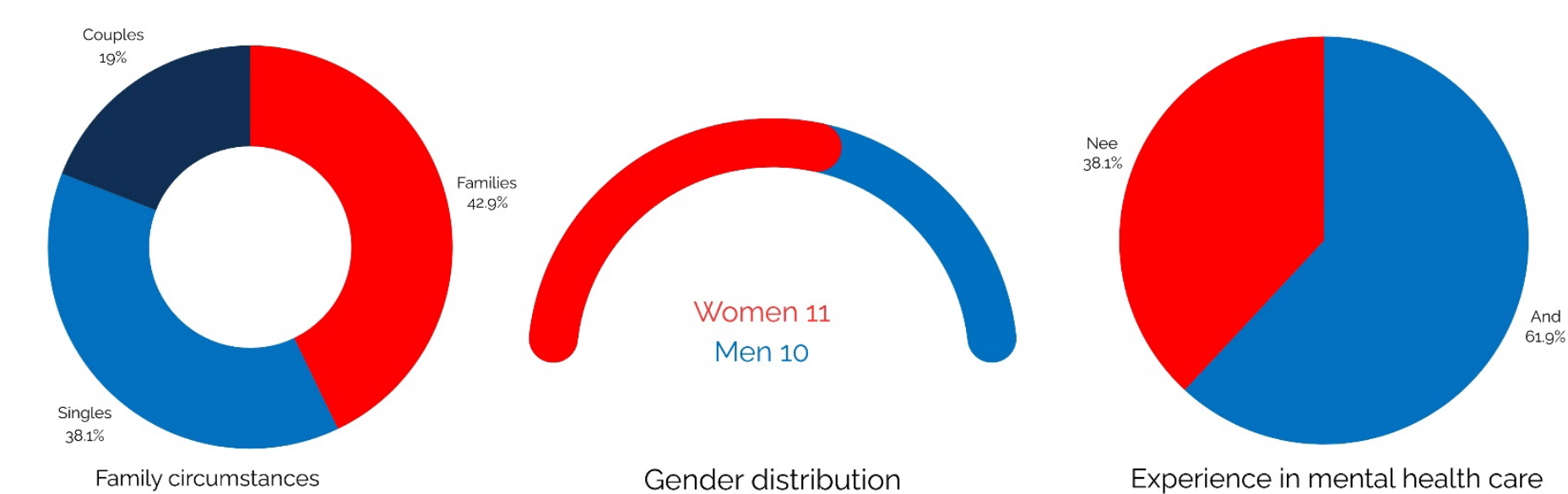
- 1) Insight into **"first aid"** for mental health conditions
- 2) Insight into impact **residential environment** on experiential perspective
- 3) Understanding of **decision-making, follow-up, and referral**
- 4) Addressing **powerlessness** and **resistance**
- 5) **Self-care**
- 4) **Interpersonal skills** and **basic behavioral attitude** in practice
- 5) **Conversational techniques** to achieve depth in discussions
- 6) Normal **age-related processes**
- 7) Influence of **cultural processes** on mental health experiences
- 8) Influence of lived **experience of fleeing** on mental health
- 9) Principles of **professional confidentiality** in professional collaboration

Expectations of the training



Interviews with residents refugee shelter

Participants: 21 from 15 countries



Challenges encountered by residents

- 1) Altered **living conditions**
Loss of family, friends, status, home, network, and culture.
Lack of awareness regarding rights and opportunities in Belgium.
- 2) Addressing feelings of **helplessness, powerlessness, and uncertainty**
Worries regarding family in the home country
Feeling trapped in the situation
Uncertainty about procedure "temporary residence visa"
- 3) Addressing feelings of **injustice**
Remaining on the streets due to insufficient shelter
Comparing with others who obtain formal residence visa
- 4) Managing **stressful memories** and **traumatic experiences**
- 5) Addressing **power imbalances** and **reduced dependency**

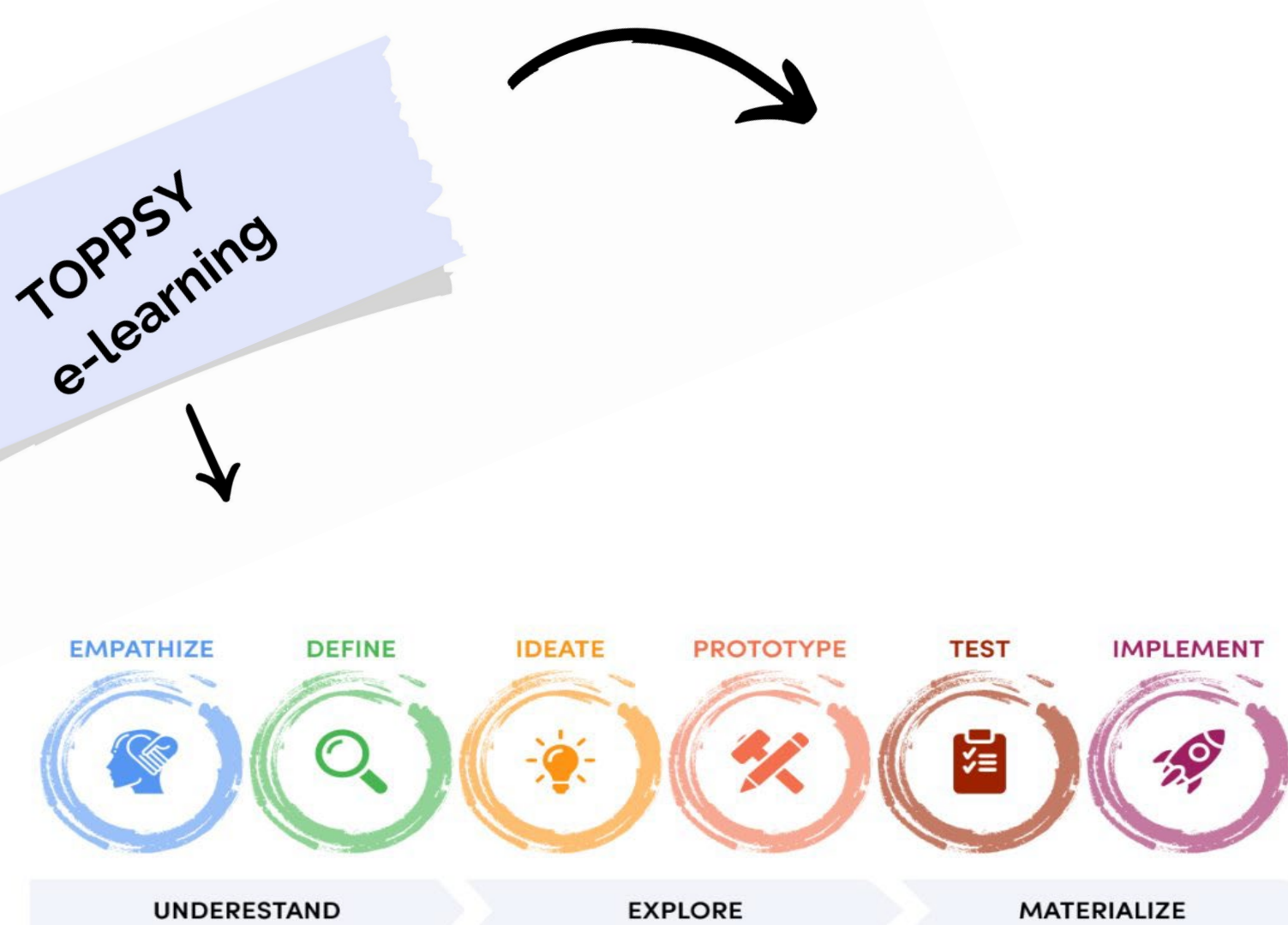
Recognized requirements pertaining to mental health care



Module 1

Comprehensive basic support regarding mental health

- Impact of lived experience of fleeing and asylum context
- Principles of cultural diversity and psychological well-being
- Core attitude and how to be authentic present
- Resilience-focused initiatives, fostering a supportive environment
- Transcultural dialogue



Module 2

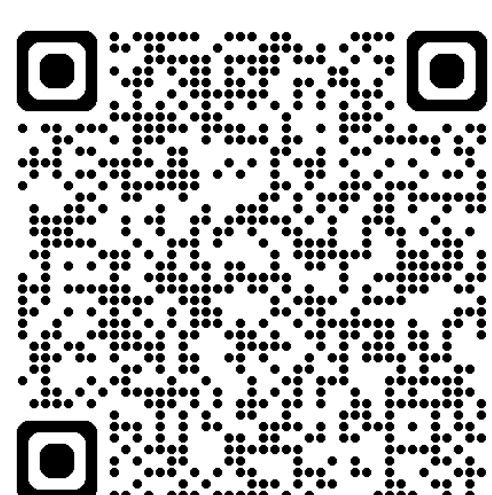
Enhanced support for mental health

- Trauma and trauma-informed care
- Assessment of vulnerability and need for support
- Psychological first aid strategies, crisis interventions and dealing with anhedonia
- Ethical principles and deontological standards

Module 3

Collaborative practices for supporting mental health

- Professional advancement and boundaries
- Prioritization and decision-making
- Professional networking and collaboration
- Sharing professional information in a network-orientated environment
- Navigating powerlessness and resistance



**Funded by
the European Union**