

1. Case name - Title of the project

Creative multilingual ways to communicate to migrant communities

2. Presentation of the case providers and involved stakeholders – Describe the case providers (organization, people/stakeholders involved, background and role) Approx. 100 words

The Finnish Red Cross (SPR) together with several NGOs (associations).

The Finnish Red Cross has a project supporting various migrant NGOs to carry out different kinds of communication activities. The Multilingual and Multichannel Corona Communications Coordination Project (MMKV) is a project that started in May 2021 and will last until the end of 2022.

The aim of the project is to develop and support the organizations' corona communication in cooperation with their partners, to reach as many multilingual target groups as possible through them and to influence people's health behavior through communication. The project involves more than a dozen organizations, seven districts of the Finnish Red Cross and numerous other partners. It also acts as a gateway for government communications (primarily THL) to organizations and multilingual target groups. Close cooperation, open flow of information and utilization of existing information have been the cornerstones of the project. The project has helped and supported the production and dissemination of existing and new corona-related materials.

3. Presentation of the case – Describe the case/initiative (purpose, background and motivation) Approx. 250 words

Questions:

- What does your case consist of?
- What type of case is this?
- What is the purpose of your case/initiative?
- Why did you start this initiative?
- What challenges did you experience that this initiative should solve?
- What kind of information/communication did they use?

In this case the focus is on video production, especially aimed at Arabic speaking youth and young adults. In this video production the actors were the Finnish Red Cross, SAMHA ry (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Association, for immigrants), Suomi-Syyria Ystävyyssseura ry (Finland-Syria Friendship Association) and Yhteiset Lapsemme ry (All Our Children Association).

The covid pandemic has highlighted that there are groups in Finland that are not easily reached during the crisis. Part of the immigrant population has not had access to information related to the corona. Migrants' own organizations reach people in their own language group flexibly and ensure that fact-based information and authorities health recommendations are received.

For the Arabic speaking youth there was a need to try to tackle the concerns with regard to vaccinations in a way that would be based on grass root experiences and that would reach the target group better than the regular information and instructions given by the health authorities. The core idea was also to pool resources of several smaller NGOs to create a video with "street level" -actors and a narrative. The presumption was that a more authentic story would be more accessible to youth and young adults.

4. Description of target group – Describe the target group (*characteristics and needs*) *Approx. 200 words*

Questions:

- What is characteristic for the target group?
- Why did they have a special need for information? What did they need information about?

Two organizations involved had a good understanding of the concerns among the Arabic speaking youth and young adults regarding the risks of vaccinations. There were some commonplace mis- and disinformation for example on the basic need of young healthy people to take the vaccination, microchips in vaccines and on the risks and side-effects of vaccination for fertility. The vaccination roll-out was just reaching the younger age groups but the official information on vaccinations did not reach well the target group. This was not a unique feature for the Arabic speaking age group but a broader trend among the younger population in general, but all subgroups had some distinguished features and, in general, the need to get the information in their own language. The organizations involved had a good understanding on the discussions among the Arabic speaking youth and young adults.

As the video production was carried out with civil society actors with limited resources, the definition of the target group was influenced also by practical factors, such as the age of volunteer actors.

5. Development, planning and implementation *Approx. 250 words*

Questions:

- How long has it taken to develop the initiative/case?
- Who has been involved?
- What knowledge is the initiative based on? (Theory, practice experience, method)
- What organizational levels are involved in the case/initiative? (Volunteers, staff, professional leadership, political leadership)
- How did you organized yourself in the organization to make the initiative work?

For a video production the process was fast. Planning started in August-September 2021 and the video was published in mid-December 2021. The planning included discussions on what issues and themes should be included in the video, what kind of language to use and what kind of story to create. The idea was to create a video with a narrative, not just a video giving instructions. Such videos already existed, and the desire was to show characters that were more easily accessible for the target audience.

The production required different kinds of knowledge and skills. Thus, it would not have been possible for any one NGO to carry it out. Obviously, it was crucial that there was a person with know-how on video production. For the Finnish Red Cross this provided a possibility to pilot something different. Considering the reach out to the target group Suomi-Syyria Ystävyyssseura ry has been mostly responsible for distributing the video. Various networks of all the involved organizations have been used in distribution.

6. Effect – Describe the effect of the case/initiative? (*Include perspectives from target group if accessible*) *Approx. 350 words*

Questions:

- How was the initiative received by the target group?
- Did the information/communication succeed in meeting the needs of the target group?

- What knowledge have we achieved about communicating to this target group based on this case?

There is no precise up-to-date monitoring on the number of views, but by May 2022 the estimate is somewhere between 9 and 10 thousand, which can be considered to be a good result considering that it was targeted to younger age groups. According to the case study interviewees, the video has also been distributed abroad via different personal networks. There has not been any systematized feedback process, but the feedback received by the organizations involved has been positive. It is not possible to assess the effects of the video on the attitudes towards vaccination, although anecdotal feedback has included such notes. The viewers have considered it to be a good idea that video is not trying to speak from top-down but gives more space to characters' own thinking and discussions. One of the actors (young girl playing football) is also active in social media which might have increased the reach. Despite the video is relatively long (almost 5 minutes) it has been watched until the end quite well.

The video can be viewed here with English subtitles: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B24NTE0TG9U>

All materials from the Finnish Red Cross project can be found here:

<https://www.punainenristi.fi/monikielinen-koronaviestinta/koronaviestinta-materiaalit/>

Among this material there are also other interesting cases, for example, different kinds of video productions in Somali and info cards on many languages regarding mis- and disinformation.

The video production has shown that smaller actors can carry out such projects when given the chance and resources. The production was done with relatively small costs (estimated to be around 7 000 €). Authentic grass-root productions might not be as polished as if they had been carried out with more resources and by a commercial actor, but for the target group it feels more real and realistic. Lots of the media content consumed by the youth is – or looks like – self-made. Only texting was purchased from a commercial actor. Had the whole video been outsourced the makers estimated that it would have doubled the costs.

7. Motivations and barriers - Describe main motivations and barriers to the implementation and execution of the project (*Include perspectives from target group if accessible*) *Approx. 350 words*

Questions:

- What worked particularly well with the case?
- What didn't work well with the case?

Overall, a video on vaccination based on a storyline, ended up being a good choice, as it is easier to get deeper into the theme and the various mis- and disinformation regarding vaccinations. The makers of the video estimated that storytelling is also a natural way to make it more interesting for the Arabic speaking target groups. It was also possible to include some humor to the film to make it more entertaining. Thus, it was a tailored effort exactly for this target group. The close and good cooperation between the persons and organization involved was the key success factor. For all organizations the experience was a good one, and more themes could be handled in a similar way, for example themes regarding mental health or even preparedness in times of crisis for example.

As the actors were volunteers, there were also some handicaps. Two of the initial actors changed their minds just before the shooting of the video. Obviously, personal networks were essential for the production. Acting and the characters' lines were co-created in order to suit the volunteers' way of acting. In addition, the filming in a mall caused some trouble due to a request for a particular permission. As normally in such production, much more was filmed than end up in the final product.

Thus, it required a lot of editorial work, which was made more complex due to the language the producer did not herself speak. All worked out due to good cooperation. Overall, however, there is a lot of work involved (planning, filming, post-filming editorial work, distribution) that means that smaller NGOs cannot do it without support. Specific production skills need also be present in the team.