



PORTUGAL



Serviço de Assistência Organizações de Maria, Projecto “Dar Sentido à Vida” (“Giving meaning to life” project)

Country of origin	Portugal
Venue of activity	Urban
Implementation level of the good practice	Regional and local
Typology	Typology 3 <i>de facto</i> WISE

HISTORY OF THE WISE

SAOM is a private social solidarity institution founded in 1976 by Dr. João Rebello de Carvalho, who currently is the honorary president of the institution. Since its genesis, it has several services available in the context of reintegration and social support for elderly and young people, such as day care, home support and meal service, among others.

In 2006 it started the project “Giving meaning to life”, which aims to socially insert homeless people or at serious risk of social exclusion.

STAFF

There is an internal team consisting of a project coordinator, a training coordinator, a full-time mediator, and a part-time psychologist. There are also freelancers working as trainers and mediators.

ADDITIONAL INFO

Website: <http://www.saom.pt/>

Short description of the good practice of SAOM

WORK ACTIVITY

In SAOM the work activities for the vulnerable public are linked to the catering sector, more specifically to the training courses that the beneficiaries attend. Their concrete tasks depend on the training course they attended, which could be: waiter, cook, kitchen helper, floor servant, etc.

DEVELOPED COMPETENCIES

The organisation has an intervention model that touches different dimensions: increasing academic, personal, and social skills (e.g., how to stand or punctuality), learning a profession, etc. The academic skills are developed throughout the EFA (*educação e formação de adultos – adult education and training*) training courses, such as citizenship, language and communication, mathematics, which are essential for the certification of a higher level of education. The professional qualification is obtained throughout the EFA training courses, with practical training, on-the-job training and internships.

EDUCATIONAL PATH FOR PEOPLE IN INTEGRATION

EFA courses are flexible training paths, of variable duration, specifically aimed at adults, which allows the development of their social, scientific and professional skills necessary for the exercise of a professional activity while simultaneously obtaining a basic or secondary level of education. The training has a highly practical character, with the trainees being involved in various types of events along the training path (on-the-job training).

At the end of the courses SAOM tries to employ the beneficiaries in the labour market and those who cannot (the least employable for any reason, such as age for example) are integrated into SAOM's trading activity (Torreão restaurant, Português de Gema store or catering services). Today at SAOM, there are almost 70 employees, around 25% are people with social vulnerability.

SOCIAL, TRANSVERSAL COMPETENCIES - PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDE

The fact that the beneficiaries work in the catering sector, and many work directly with the public, means that the organisation is obliged to teach them certain rules regarding presentation, hygiene, and posture that they must maintain at their workstation. When they are at the on-the-job training, these rules are imparted either by the coordinators or by their own peers, with a person responsible for each department (the kitchen, for example) who will guide them in this respect.

COORDINATION OF ACTIVITIES

(Presentation, description, and forms of learning processes)

The beneficiaries that are integrated into the external labour market are monitored from time to time so that they can give feedback on their job and ask for help, if necessary. The ones that are integrated in SAOM talk frequently with a project coordinator, training coordinator or other members of the team.

As for the training time, the EFA Training Courses have a duration that can vary between one and three years, depending on the level of certification in question and are organised into different types of training paths for basic education or secondary education that comprise three components:

- Basic Training – structured in areas of key competences, it aims to contribute to the personal, cultural, scientific and relational, development of adults;
- Technological Training – organised into short-term training units, aimed at developing a set of technical skills necessary for professional practice;
- On-the-job training – carried out in companies or other employers, aimed at acquiring and developing relevant technical, relational, and organisational skills for professional qualification.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY/ FINANCIAL MODEL

Public funds:

- Public contracting (both tenders and direct contracting)
- Grants/subsidies

The EFA training courses are financed by IEFP – Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional (Employment and Vocational Training Institute). SAOM started a private company, where the profits go directly to the organisation and are invested in the social activities of SAOM. Thus, they have trading activity coming from catering services, a restaurant, and a store. This company was created out of the need that the project coordinator felt to have extra funds to be able to support the beneficiaries in other specific aspects of their lives, such as going to medical appointments.