



CO-CREATION

WORKSHOP REPORT

D.T1.3.1

15.11.2019

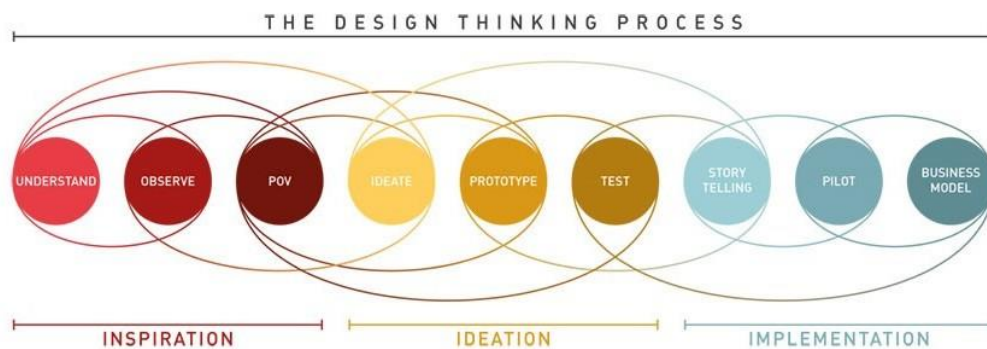




A. Workshop description

The Berlin SiforREF Co-Creation workshop was designed to ensure maximum input from a range of high-quality participants covering a range of Berlin based stakeholders. Through the in-depth research interviews conduction in Summer 2019, SiforREF Berlin partners had the opportunity to network and to develop credibility in the sector. This made it possible to ensure there was a broad basis available to inform and invite key participants. A keen interest in the SiforREF project, and the fruits of its research, supported a positive response.

ISI eV engaged Design Thinker Consultants, [The Morph Company](#), to support the workshop design and to manage the facilitation. This decision was two-fold: 1. Provision of high-quality facilitation to draw maximum creativity out of our participants, and 2. to ensure impartial facilitation.



Interaction Design Foundation



The main **objectives** for the co-creation workshop were the following:

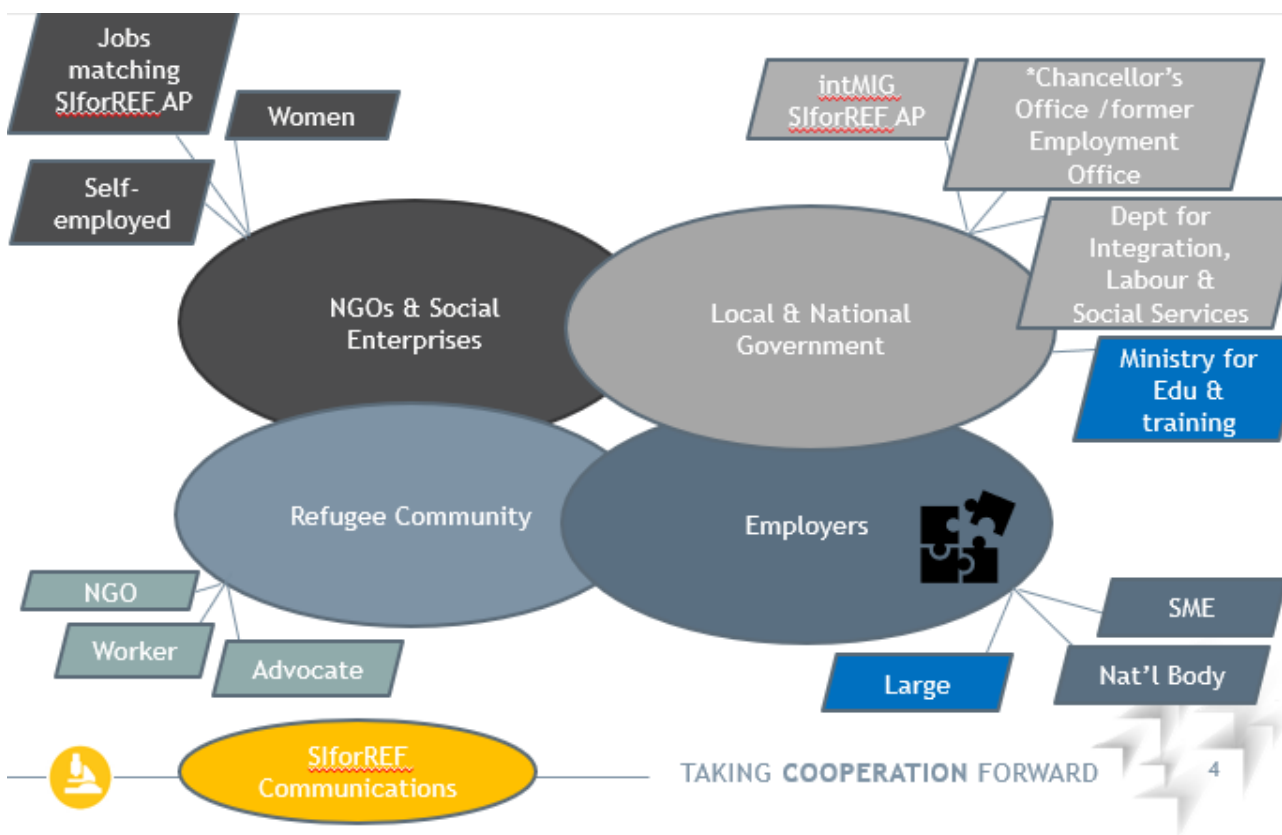
- To introduce a new method of working, using design thinking methodology
- Promote cross-stakeholder dialogue in an intimate setting, where everyone has a voice
- To re-ignite positivity versus the fatigue and frustration that many of the stakeholders are feeling, for a variety of different reasons.
- Strengthen cross-stakeholder working relationships



Participants

There were 11 external workshop participants in total. Participants came from the refugee community, local and German government, NGOs, social initiatives supporting access to the labour market and self-employment, and businesses were invited to attend the Co-creation workshop. Two balanced discussion two groups were formed.

While a wide variety of stakeholders were represented, it would have been useful to have had the Dept for Education & training and a large employer present. The Integration Division of the National Body of Chambers of Commerce were also due to attend, but had to cancel at short notice.



Group work

Two balanced groups were formed, each led by a facilitator. An ice-breaker was conducted, and the teams worked on the programme below.

- Participants were encouraged to explore ideas with the concept of quantity over quality. This form of brainstorming should be rapid and non-judgemental to present as many ideas as possible to a specific objective: to improve labour market integration. This **encourages as many innovative ideas as available to think and visualize outside the box.**



- Refugee representatives, who contributed in German as a second language were allocated more time to speak. For two reasons: 1) because it was a critical view based on experiences often not heard or understood, 2) to relieve the pressure of speaking in a second language.
- To kick-start a **positive atmosphere**, the first focus would be on the positive initiatives and opportunities in Berlin. This was used to remind stakeholders of the volume of work done in the last four years to support new migrants in the city.

What is positive in Berlin in relation to labour market integration?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Each team member writes multiple ideas (3 mins) 2. Present ideas to team and stick to board 3. Cluster to find common themes
What is problematic in Berlin in relation to labour market integration?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Each team member writes multiple ideas (3 mins) 2. Present ideas to team and stick to board 3. Cluster to find common themes 4. Vote to select key ideas to move forward with for discussion.
<p><u>Wheel of opportunity</u></p> <p>What is the status quo for chosen issues?</p> <p>What if....? Vision creation</p> <p>How do we get there?</p>	<p>Using selected ‘problem points’ for integration into the labour market, the teams were asked to identify the status quo (e.g. previous qualifications of refugees are often not recognised in Germany). Cluster to find common themes</p> <p>Participants were then asked to imagine what the ideal scenario would be (<i>what if ... Qualification recognition would be less complicated?</i>). Cluster to find common themes</p> <p>Finally, participants were asked to consider ideas/initiatives that would support the ideal scenario. This was done through quick-fire brainstorming over 10 minutes for two selected <i>What ifs</i>. All ideas were then clustered highlighting common ground and themes. Voting done to rate importance.</p>
Cross team presentation	
Workshop process selection <i>I liked, I wished, I learned.</i>	Participants were asked to reflect on three areas of the workshop process; what they liked, what they wished for/felt was lacking; and what they learned.
Close and refreshments	

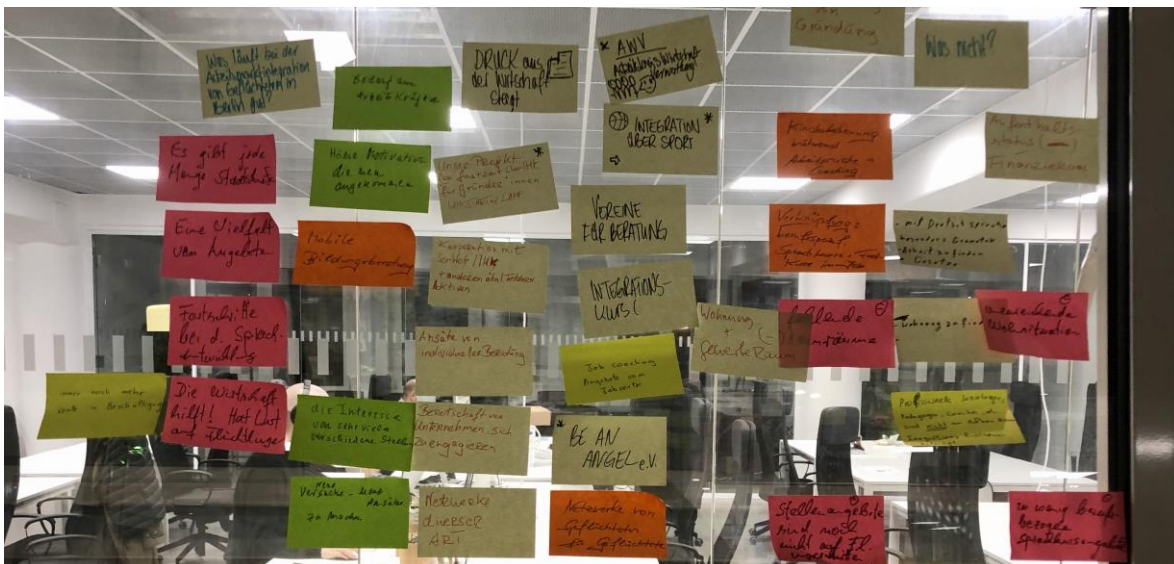


Group Work Findings

Workshop discussion summary

What is positive in Berlin in relation to labour market integration?

- Employers are open to change
- Major firms are involved in networks to facilitate labour market integration
- New forms of cooperation networks have been initiated between business, NGOs and the public authorities. E.g. Chamber of Commerce funding for Self-employment training for new arrivals. Some pressure from the business world toward the public administration and occupational, e.g. education training system (adaptation of programs)
- Labour market demand for skilled workers
- More support and networks available. There are a wide range of business/NGOs/Govt programs available. State funding has become more available for programs and new methods e.g. coaching
- Refugee challenges and solutions are becoming clearer (less chaos)
- More available statistics, though not complete
- Improved language skills
- Motivation in the community – high motivation of job-seeking refugees
- Some gender specific programs for women (Mentoring, Self-employment)



What is problematic in Berlin with respect to integration into the labour market

- The insecurity of permission to stay, legal status limited. Employers concerned and committing to, and training a worker who may be deported.
- Bureaucracy and information flow – system difficult to understand for newcomers, and for employers. Few Employers have capacity to manage complex processes
- Not enough employment opportunities for refugees (risk)



- Assessment skills and tools not widely known or practiced in job centers
- Matching of persons home country's on-the-job learned skills and qualifications to be recognized for similar jobs available in Berlin
- Mismatch between German occupational system and the occupational systems of countries of origin; persons with higher qualification receive poor counseling, discouragement
- Lack of childcare for women seeking work or further education
- While there exists a variety of programs, many individuals are still not reached
- There are limited further training courses available for persons over 30 years of age
- For those who find jobs or apprenticeships there is a need for technical language training
- Despite language courses little chance to practice German, limited contact to German speakers
- Some employment offices can make investment money for small business available, but the advisor refuses the business idea of the refugee
- Rents and infrastructure costs are too high for self-employed migrants

Permission to dream

Being permitted to dream of how an ideal world would look gave stakeholders the opportunity to step back from the constant concerns relating to challenging integration policies. Creative ideas can breed a positive atmosphere, where all ideas are welcome and valued.

Group 1 voted to focus on the lack of recognition of foreign received qualifications and on-the-job learning. It was the group's perception that as Germany has such rigid procedures around qualification recognition and policy and (some) employers lacked flexibility to allow refugees use their experience in the field of their choice.



What if... qualifications/learned on the job experience could be recognised?

- Employers, Chambers of Commerce and Unions would be open to change
- Alternative to standard qualification recognition
- The effort/practical experience and not the qualification would be valued
- Employers would think outside of the German qualification system
- Skills and potential would substitute the certificate
- The criteria for Ausbildung education would be simplified
- Refugee workers would be attractive for employers
- Qualification recognition would be less complicated

Brainstorming: How do we create more ways for refugees to enter the Berlin Labour Market?

- Improved networking opportunities (for women)
 - sports, culture etc
- More programmes for women



- Job centre vs job seekers sports events
- Preferred contracting (Affirmative Action) for refugees: public contracting
- Trial jobs – supported by job centre
- More refugee founded orgs -> **Incubator for refugees**
- Subsidised support for updating qualifications
- Arbeitsamt speed dating
- Bologna process for apprenticeships - IHK – open to change?
- Modular partial-qualifications

What if...Minister of Internal Affairs wouldn't fear the Pull Factor?

How to shift perception away from 'they're taking our jobs!'

- Positive campaigns, good news stories
- Relationship building programmes
- Acknowledge and understand fear of local

Group 2 focused on the specifics relating to the Job Centre enhancement.



Group 2 Vision: What if...

Legal Status

What if... all refugees and asylum seekers had a secure legal status?

What if... hiring would not be dependent on the legal status of the new arrivals?

Occupational system

What if... the occupational system became more flexible?

What if... the structure of the occupational educational and training system would be basically questioned?

What if ...we got rid of the dual system?

What if... the system would become more flexible in its recognition of occupational experience?

What if... the occupational system was not oriented toward certification, but to toward measuring one's practical abilities?



What if the Job Centre...

- ... was welcoming to refugees?
- ... did not create fears about my available documents?
- ... was staffed with multilingual personnel or coaches?
- ... was not bureaucratic?
- ... if the job center had more competition for job placement?

Brainstorming: How do we improve access to jobs equivalent to abilities for refugees / new arrivals?

(Middle-range steps toward Vision above)

Transform the Job Centre into two sections: One for bureaucratic documentation and a more intensive assessment center for job seeking new arrivals.

It should be a **multi-lingual open space** where applicants and job seekers may intensify their knowledge of the German occupational system and the types of jobs available. Exchanges, lectures, films, literature as well as digital information points would be available for job search and knowledge about additional educational requirements.

Childcare – Ikea style should be available for mothers seeking work.



Group 2 Summary

There were numerous positive items mentioned in the workshop about improvements in the German context with respect to the past non-focus on the integration of refugees. These range from the new organized interests of the private business sector to the structural changes in the state programmes available in language and integration courses, or with the more advanced structures within the federal employment system and local educational, counseling and training programs.



Nonetheless, major problems were also extensively noted. Especially the impact that the insecurity and unclarity that exist about the length of stay of many of those with protected status. Thus, two major areas were identified as problematic: **clear legal status** and **matching of experience** and skills of the refugees with the occupational system and certification structure.

These structures of the German system are major barriers to an adequate labour market integration of the new arrivals. Many of the new services and programmes were seen as an advantage, but they needed to be improved. As mentioned above, even language learning requires the opportunity to speak with native Germans, to work with Germans to use it. But one also needs for work technical language skills that must be sought in specific courses that are not always available in the normal educational system or on the job.

This new Job Centre should meet the needs of those seeking work instead of what appears to the refugee users as primarily a bureaucratic agency. The Job Centre awakens fears about the insufficient documentation of their work experience and lack of papers required. It also creates an impression that their lack of certification of employment skills means that their will be no jobs available based on their previous work experience.

Numerous specific suggestions were made to add to the value of the Job Centre for individual refugees seeking work. The basic suggestions propose in addition to a multilingual staff, more attention be made available to individual cases. A greater focus should be on more knowledge about available and interesting occupations. One proposal would be a division of labour between bureaucratic documentation and a more highly trained and focused counseling with respect to skills assessment and knowledge about a greater variety of occupations. These should be related to previous learned-on-the-job skills of the applicants. The Job Centre could turn into a meeting place of persons seeking work and learning about jobs, occupations and professional skills. These proposals, as well as those discussed with respect to the rigidity of the German occupational training system, could be a focus for a future workshop with experts and skilled newcomers.





Reflection on the Co-Creation Process

Following the cross sharing of team work results, participants were requested to reflect for 5 minutes on the co-creation process, considering three points: I like, I wish, I learned. Participants then presented their reflections to the group.



'I like'

The workshop atmosphere and the design thinking method were applauded by all participants. Working in an open and positive manner, and being permitted to think big, seemed new to many of the stakeholders. Having the opportunity to hear other points of view and be reminded that we are all working towards the same goal was appreciated. A policy-maker spoke of how useful it was to have the opportunity to build upon former working relationships, with other government staff. In a city as big as Berlin, one does not often have the opportunity to work together often.

There was very positive feedback on the high-quality facilitation and time-keeping of the workshop.

'I wish(ed) for'

Interestingly some participants asked for **more time**, which would allow for the possibility of **more concrete results**. When asked how much time people would be willing to give, it was clearly said that a full day would be too long, but that 4 hours could be feasible. Other participants wished for a more



focused topic. It was agreed that participants would attend a follow-up workshop, but only if there was a specific goal to be reached. It was suggested that specific teams/working groups should be built, based on the discussion topic. Each team would have a different topic. The Commission for Integration and Migration suggested that if a second workshop was to be conducted, it should be within four months so as not to lose leverage.

Showing his pride in being invited to attend and contribute to the workshop, one refugee representative requested a certificate of attendance, which is important in some cultures.

Some stakeholders requested a **follow-up on the workshop results.** The SiforREF team will prepare a report on the discussion points for distribution. In order to keep a dynamic atmosphere, participants stood for the entire duration of the team work and reflection process. This was too strenuous for some.

I learned

Most participants talked of having learned a **new method**, which they were interested in utilising again. Some enjoyed the opportunity to **exchange ideas** and have been given a **new perspective** through dialogue with other stakeholder groups. It was shared in the group that there was **room for improvement** in relation to integration for refugees in the Berlin Labour market. A member of the G100 group, a refugee-led organisation, was motivated by the fact that there was a **consensus on issues.** She was given hope by learning that other stakeholder groups had similar opinions and ideas, and that there would be strength in numbers in pushing for policy change.



Observations

The employer in attendance is a senior manager at an engineer & architect firm. He has hired four refugees, all qualified engineers and architects in their home country. His frustration at the bureaucratic system in Berlin was palpable. His active presence added another layer to the interesting dynamic. Generally, the private sector is systems and solution-orientated in order to run a successful business. There is often impatience from the business community as to why a critical, yet complicated system such as labour market integration is not functioning.



Both groups communicated well and offered respect to all group members. There was a genuine curiosity to hear other perspectives. Particular attention was given when members of the refugee community spoke. One representative's language skills were not always strong enough to follow and contribute to the group. The group and its facilitator supported him when necessary, as did the Arabic speakers in the group.

A key success has been that two of the three policy makers in attendance are now in the process of exploring how they can integrate co-creation into their strategic planning. The representative from the Department (Senate) for Integration, Labour and Social Services suggested that they would propose a follow up applying this method in consultations with representatives of the multi-practitioner/ stakeholder networks inspired by a Berlin Employer Group (The Interest Group for Refugees - IGF) a group of about 60 established Berlin based Employer/ Stakeholders and Practitioners. The IGF meets once or twice a year with the Berlin Minister.

Recommended follow-up

As the Berlin Deliverable D.T1.2. highlighted, based on in-depth interviews with firms and agencies, a major issue for adequate labour market integration is the certification required for all levels of skilled labour in the dual occupational system of education in Germany. In this context it could be useful to plan a co-creation workshop as a follow up to have representatives of the Berlin Ministry responsible for educational training in the dual system as well as the DIHK (German Chamber of Commerce) that tests and certifies partial qualification schemes. Here co-creative workshops with key experts and specialists in occupational training at the university and from the Berlin public authorities could engage with selected firms to identify where adjustments, revisions and new compact modules could be designed to improve the assessment and partial qualification trainings. Since this approach needs cooperation from all sides, this kind of workshop could meet the needs of the employers for the jobs to be done as well as enhance the skills of the refugees. This would be a more focussed workshop.

To further develop the relationships developed during the research period of SiforREF and during the workshop, it is essential to share regular updates from the SiforREF project. Berlin policy makers and stakeholders will see the value in engaging with a multi-national initiative and be inclined to stay involved and engage with upcoming project activities.

The findings of the co-creation workshop which include the vantage points of different stakeholders, expertise and life-experiences mobilizes and involves these actors to work together to create new ideas and practices that are social innovative. The social-innovative dimension grows out of this experience. It is based on the assumption that social-innovative is the practice or policy that goes beyond the status quo and permits all stakeholders including the newcomers themselves to participate in its design and implementation. The transnational methodology supports this approach by carrying these experiences to the next level. Exchange of experiences, studying best practices and deducting the social innovative aspects of the best practices gained in visits to each city as well as the peer review of best-practices builds on this multi-perspective approach and evaluation. The exchange of experiences and insights gained from the peer reviews feeds back into the local community that in turn enlightens policies and the design and implementation of pilots and practices. Refugees voices will be heard and their potential will be recognized, a potential contribution to transforming mind-sets and impacting on the wider community.