



Atlantic Social Lab

Cooperation for the promotion of Social Innovation

ATLANTIC SOCIAL LAB STUDY VISIT REPORT - STUDY VISITS HELD IN GUIMARÃES

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A. GENERAL INFORMATION	
Date	17-03-2023
Location:	Guimarães
Name	Social Emergency Shelter of Guimarães
Legal Status	Public Institution
Contact Details	<p>Chã de Bouça 4800-227 Guimarães (CAES)</p> <p>Rua Camilo Castelo Branco, n.º 1, R/C 4810-435 Guimarães (Delegação da Cruz Vermelha)</p> <p>dguimaraes@cruzvermelha.org.pt dguimaraes.cvp@gmail.com</p> <p>Tel: +351 253 412 522</p>

B. SHORT DESCRIPTION	
<p>Objectives <i>(identify the main goals of the project and target groups addressed)</i></p>	<p>The Centro de Acolhimento de Emergência Social (CAES) - Social Emergency Shelter of Guimarães - emerged from the pandemic in March 2020 to address homeless people, victims of domestic violence, migrants and citizens needing international protection, among other emerging cases. This response was the result of a joint emergency effort between the Civil Protection Services, the Municipality of Guimarães and the institutions that make up the Rede de Apoio Social de Emergência (Emergency Social Support Network).</p> <p>This action has generated a huge wave of solidarity in the community, as hundreds of citizens of Guimarães have shown their willingness to join the volunteer work exchange to support isolated and socially vulnerable people.</p> <p>Since October 2020, this centre has been managed directly by the Delegação da Cruz Vermelha (Red Cross Delegation). It is located in temporary premises provided by ADCL at the Chã de Bouça Primary School and kindergarten in Atães (Guimarães). It has already integrated more than 125 people in need since its creation. Currently, 15 people are living in its facilities. Most are elderly, with addiction problems and physical and mental health problems. The majority of these people do not have any source of income. Although a high percentage of these people have family, they have no contact with them, and therefore no family support.</p>
<p>Methodology <i>(identify the methodological principles, mode of operation and level of intervention)</i></p>	<p>The measures implemented at the pandemic's beginning were adapted, increasing the response capacity in areas where it was most warranted.</p> <p>A direct contact point was set up with the IPSS and the Guimarães Public Health Service. A psychological support team was established, emergency lines were set up, personal protective equipment was distributed and a volunteer exchange was set up, with more than half a thousand people signing up.</p> <p>The team of CAES consists of 9 members: a coordinator, a full-time social worker and a psychologist, an animator, a nurse, an assistant and three guards. The multidisciplinary nature of this team was a bet of the Red Cross delegation.</p>

	<p>In CAES, all activities are developed with the aim of reintegrating users into society. The team is committed to a routine that promotes the empowerment and responsibility of the users. This will enable them to meet their own needs in the future.</p> <p>Users can be identified by a municipal department or even by a citizen in the process of signalling. This identification is sent to Social Security that has the task of carrying out a preliminary analysis and examination of the situations reported. Social Security will signal the citizen to the reception centre if it is certain that all other housing alternatives have been exhausted and that the citizen wishes to be housed in the CAES. Once signalled, the citizen is registered in the user management platform. If there is a vacancy, the admission process is immediately initiated. At this stage, an integration interview is held with the social worker and the team psychologist. This interview explores citizens' motivations for joining the CAES and clarifies the centre's functioning and intervention methodology.</p> <p>This type of response is temporary in nature and is based on the assumption that the beneficiary will be able to take advantage of it for three months. In exceptional circumstances, this period may be extended for a further three months or more.</p>
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C. MAIN FINDINGS	
<p>Social Needs <i>(identify the social needs the organisation intends to fill)</i></p>	<p>With the pandemic, there was a growing need to protect the homeless by providing them with comfort, hygiene and safety - ensuring that their basic needs were met.</p> <p>The majority of users have characteristics of illiteracy, digital illiteracy and financial illiteracy and therefore do not have the necessary conditions to integrate into society and live independently with their own housing and employment.</p>
<p>Social Innovative Practices <i>(identify the main social innovative practices developed and the extent to which the work developed responds to those needs)</i></p>	<p>The shelter provides the homeless, victims of domestic violence, migrants and citizens needing international protection with adequate comfort, food and hygiene. In this space, four main meals, textiles and hygiene products are provided.</p> <p>The centre is not just a temporary response to the pandemic. It also aims to stimulate and develop the personal and social skills of its beneficiaries, most of whom have not had the opportunity to develop a sense of purpose in life, which makes them feel that they are of no value to society.</p> <p>Additionally, it seeks to encourage its beneficiaries to become independent and to prepare them for reintegration into society.</p> <p>This residential care response develops an intervention that focuses on empowering its beneficiaries, promoting their inclusion and autonomy. It aims to empower these people by developing their personal and social skills, home management, employability and other relevant skills.</p> <p>To this end, CAES aims to develop a number of activities. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sports activities; - Artistic-manual practices;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basic cooking; - Cinema sessions; - Gardening; - Training sessions on household management and digital literacy; - Personal hygiene awareness; - Support and supervision in the acquisition of skills related to cleaning; - Psychological and psychosocial support; - Nursing care; - Support related to addictive behaviours; - Technical support for socio-economic integration. <p>They are also trying to provide social housing commensurate with the number of households, with the municipality's support. The Municipality of Guimarães has built around 500 dwellings, from which it selects candidates according to a priority assessment grid. Once users have moved out of the shelter and are living in the social houses, the team keeps in touch with them to continue to help them with any other needs they may have.</p>
<p>Collaboration and Networks (<i>identify the main connections of the organisation</i>)</p>	<p>Operated by the Guimarães Red Cross, this centre is supported by the Municipality, the Sol do Ave Association, the Social Canteen and a large group of volunteers. This shelter is articulated with the Emergency Social Support Network, which has as partners the Fraternidade de Nuno Álvares, Corpo Nacional de Escutas, Casa da Juventude, White Angels and other informal support groups.</p>

D. MAIN CONSTRAINTS TO SUCCESS

<p>Challenges and Barriers (<i>identify the main problems that the organisation faces: financial resources, human resources, networks, innovative environment...</i>)</p>	<p>The Red Cross team that operates this facility has identified as main challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Physical and mental disabilities of the beneficiaries. Most of them have emotional problems and lack confidence in the services and the team, some even refuse help; - Difficulty of maintaining the centre with limited financial resources; - Changing beliefs and values, especially regarding the social and professional integration of users and their use of alcohol and drugs; - Managing the expectations of users and the technical team; - Manage to meet and resolve users' needs within the integration period; - Raise awareness in society, starting with the school context, about the acceptance of these people who have a whole history behind them and who have the same right to basic living conditions.
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E. CONCLUSIONS

<p>Key Concluding Lines</p>	<p>Faced with the current reality of a society that is increasingly demanding and vulnerable to situations of poverty and social exclusion, the Guimarães Social Emergency Shelter, together with the Municipality, felt the need to create a concerted response to support and empower homeless people.</p> <p>Through a wide range of activities, they support the reintegration of their beneficiaries into society, enabling them to become autonomous and capable of meeting social demands.</p>
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Other information considered relevant	Nothing relevant to add.
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Study Visit Photos



Figure 1. Official information poster of the shelter at the entrance



Figure 2. Inside the Social Emergency Reception Centre (canteen and living room)

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