



ABSTRACT | SUMMARY

South Hill Men's Shed is a men's group offering a number of learning activities: carpentry, cookery, the "skills challenge" (personal development). As community education is an inclusive practice, learners have been involved in the learning process by discussing with them the course content and arrangements. Learners have been evaluated before and after "the skills challenge" course. Furthermore, a learner has been involved in the steering group and his input was fundamental in adapting the competences framework: the framework language was too complex and the tutor adapted it.

RATIONALE | BACKGROUND

The aim of the learning activity is to upskill long term unemployed men:

- Provide further education opportunities
- Improve their self-esteem
- Increase their chance of getting into the labour market
- Provide/improve learners social skills

The aim of the learning activity is also exploring new ways of working with the learners and keeping them interested in the course.

TARGETGROUP | CONTEXT

The target group - Southill Men's Shed- is a Men's group whose members are adult learners (from 23 to 68 years of age) from a disadvantaged background: long term unemployed, lone parents, members of the Travellers community, migrants and refugees. 41% of the population in the Southill area (over the age of 15) have left education with a primary education only or with no formal education; while 6% have a third level education.



OBJECTIVES

Take up a new challenge; learners took part in the project because the group is supporting them. They wanted to build up their skills and increase their chances of finding employment.

INFORMAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Networking event with Tipperary men's shed
- Table quiz planning and implementation



EVALUATION

10 learners evaluated on the following competences: Leadership, Networking, problem solving. Each session has been documented with notes, videos and photos. The assessment took place at the beginning, middle and end of the course (only the beginning and end were used for LEVEL5). The assessment consists of a conversation with each of the learners (recorded on flip chart paper and also the final session recorded as a sound recording).



RESULTS

The evaluation of the project was a learning process: it provided the opportunity to explore ways of showcasing the value of, and measuring, community education practice. The VITA project allows the participating organisation to highlight progress made by learners and therefore it could be a powerful tool to make a case in front of funders/donors.