



Project no. 044702

Project acronym

NewCom

Project title

New Communities and Mental Health – A Needs Analysis

Specific Support Action

Science in Society

PUBLISHABLE FINAL ACTIVITY REPORT

Period covered: from **Jan 07 to October 08** Date of preparation: 15/11/2008

Start date of project: **Jan 07** Duration: **22 months**

Project coordinator name **Prof. Ronaldo Munck**

Project coordinator organisation name: **Dublin City University**

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Executive Summary

1. Project Execution

The main objective of the NewCom project was to deliver a systematic study of migrant mental health issues based on knowledge of local conditions and reflecting the needs of migrant subpopulations. Thus, migrant communities would be provided access to independent, affordable scientific advice and research results through a local community organisation. Based on the Science Shop methodology, the project has provided the ethnic minority communities with the knowledge they require about health inequality risks, to increase their capacity to define their needs and to design strategies to bring about change to meet those needs.

The proposed project was located in and managed by Dublin City University under the auspices of its **Director of Civic Engagement Strategy Professor Ronaldo Munck** and joined by two other partners: Cáirde and Queens University Belfast.

The community partner for this project, **Cairde**, is a non-governmental organisation working to reduce health inequalities amongst ethnic minorities. Cáirde is committed to supporting the participation of communities to enhance their own health.

The advisory partner, the **Science Shop at Queen's University Belfast**, was set up in 1988. The Northern Ireland Science Shop is a link between the universities and the community.

The work performed and results to date

This project has been completed successfully. It has carried out a major study into the mental health issues impacting the new communities of migrants in Ireland and produced a report on the same that is already being used in the policy arena. It has also successfully pioneered university-community organisation relationships around 'real world' research problems and produced an example of best practice in that regard. Finally it has successfully created the momentum for a Science Shop at Dublin City University possible in collaboration with Dublin Institute of Technology. Negotiations are currently ongoing on how to set up a Dublin Science Shop backed by both institutions which have a strong presence in the most deprived parts of the city namely the Northside and Dublin Central. The New Com website will continue to act as resource for Cairde and the migrant health forum it sponsors.

Results and impact

The degree of meeting the objectives

The main planks of the project have all been completed successfully. This includes:

- Research training of migrant communities
- Focus groups with migrants groups
- Preparing of report on mental health needs of migrant communities
- Launching of report
- Holding national conference around migrants and mental health
- Mainstreaming of Science Shop at Dublin City University and promotion of best practice model to other Irish universities
- Academic publications on the results of the project and its methodology

Methodologies that have been used

The main methodologies used were around the focus group but with a much stronger emphasis than usual on training of the actual participants in the methodology. Thus representatives of the various minority ethnic communities received intensive training in data collection and data analysis techniques and philosophies. They are now using this capacity building to conduct more professionalised research on issues of relevance to their particular communities.

Impact of the project

The main impact of this project has been threefold:

- The migrant communities have seen considerable enhancement of their capacity to conduct research and understand the issues regarding mental health they face. The NGO they work with has also benefited from the work in the same sense;
- The project has had impact on health professional and government planners who now have a much clearer grasp of the issues facing migrant communities;
- The sponsoring university DCU has learnt a great deal from this project and it has had a major impact insofar as a DCU Science Shop will now be established under the auspices of the Office of the Vice President for Research.

2. Dissemination and use

A range of dissemination strategies have been used throughout the project:

Publications – Research report

The main publication of this project was the report titled: New Communities and Mental Health in Ireland – A Needs Analysis, published by DCU and Cairde and disseminated to a wide audience of migrant health service users and policy makers. A thousand copies of the report have been printed and distributed.

Conference

The conference provided an opportunity to launch the NEWCOM project report and brought together an audience of academics and health practitioners in a fruitful dialogue around the Principles and Practices of the Science Shop.

Project website

We have redesigned the initial webpage as the Wiki format used in the first iteration of the website did not prove successful in terms of accessibility by the ethnic minority communities. The current website can be found at the following address: www.newcomproject.org. This website disseminates the results to communities, universities, policy makers and other interested parties.

Other dissemination strategies are planned in the near future. Two ***academic journal articles*** have been completed and submitted to two leading International Journals and are now pending approval for publication. The two articles are ‘Mental Health Issues in Migrant Communities – the case of Ireland’ (to be considered for publishing in the *Diversity And Health And Social Care Journal*) and ‘Managing Communities – Mental Health and Ethnic Minorities’ (to be considered for publishing in the *International Journal of Culture and Mental Health*)

A positive outcome of the NEWCOM project was the development of a course in Dublin City University (School of Nursing) on the topic of Community health Education. The beneficiaries of this course are the members of the ethnic minority communities under the Cairde umbrella.