

# How to



# organise creative expression workshops



[www.crisalisproject.eu](http://www.crisalisproject.eu)

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# 1st session

How to implement activities aiming at "translating" imagination into positive and inclusive visual representation of the female nature and women in general

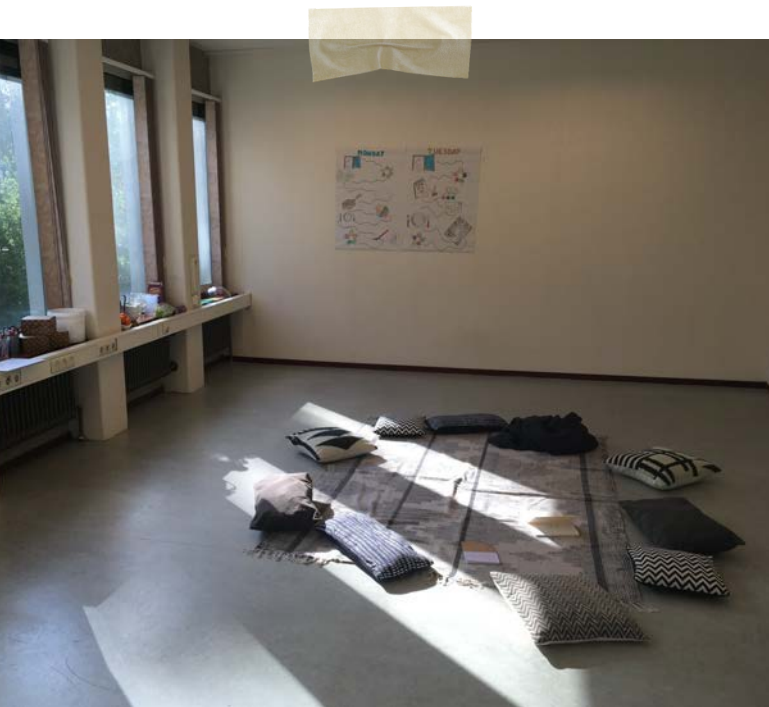
## Setting the workshop values

In the beginning, the co-creation workshops were a bare tree craving for Spring. Each participant contributed by adding green leaves, where they wrote the values that mattered to them, or put any yellow leaves on the ground below the tree, where they wrote what they wanted to exclude from our gathering.



## Creating a safe place

The safe space also had a corner called "The Cloud", where any of the participants had the chance to take a break, reflect and when ready, come back and rejoin our group. Near the cloud, the group "trapped" all of the distracting thoughts inside a transparent fishbowl. With this symbolic act of creating a comfortable distance between them and our bodies, the group managed to be more present and focused on the creative process.



## Positive Brainstorming

The participants were invited to brainstorm collectively on advice they would share with all the women in this world, on future goals and finally on completing the phrase "I am..." with inspiring words that could represent all women. Practising positive reflection in a team setting helped the women to embrace their strengths, discover common grounds and feel empowered.





# 1st session

## Using colours to express feelings

With the help of the Feelings Board from the Emotions Museum, each woman identified the 3 main feelings about her past, present and future. Then, these were “translated” into 3 different colours. Afterwards, the participants used their colours to make a creative mess painting large canvases with unconventional material.

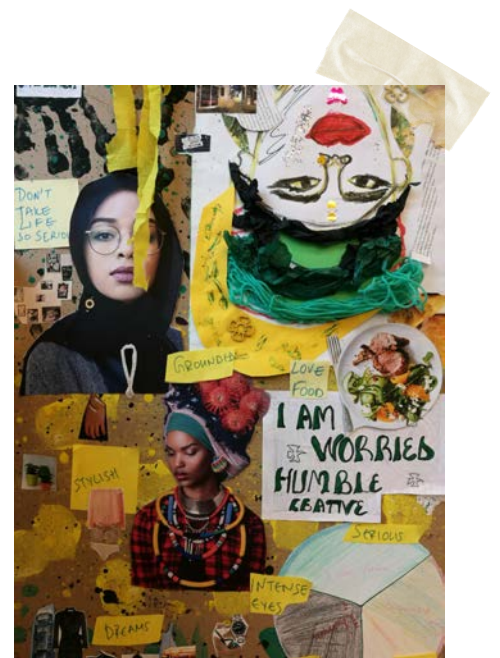


## Collaborative self-portrait

In this activity, each participant contributed to everyone’s self portrait and the result was breathtaking. Then they were asked to describe the person depicted on the drawings. Strong and meaningful words came up, giving the women the courage to embrace positive denominations about themselves.

## Personal Mood boards

The final outcome of this 2-day workshop couldn’t be anything else but their own “Personal Mood boards”, inspired by professional Mood Board for designers. All the crafts made during the workshops, were glued on the moodboard, creating a meaningful collage, depicting each beneficiary’s self: words, pictures, drawings, and fabric, everything that does represent or is indeed important about herself.



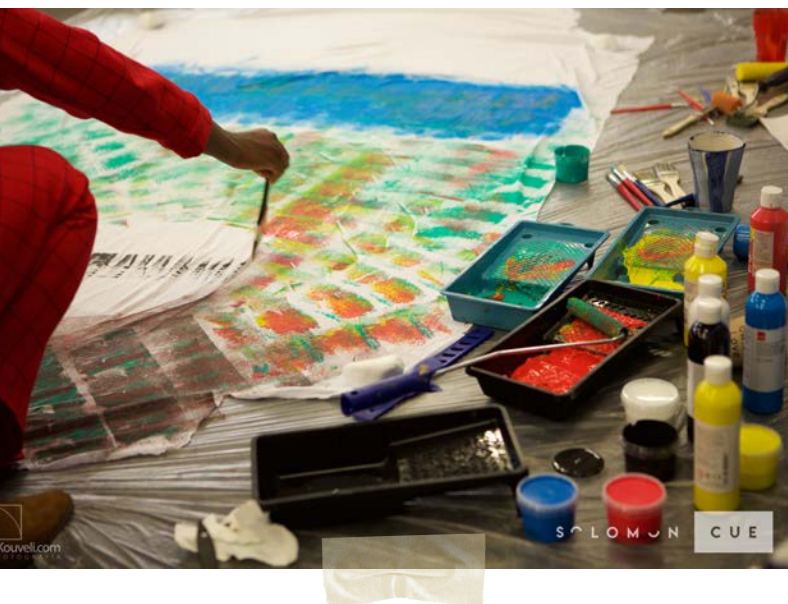
## IMPACT

The activities that we focused on, during the first session of the Creative Expression workshops, aimed at promoting teamwork, encouraging self-expression, discovering new talents and the joy of creativity. Exploring different art techniques in a safe space enabled the women to experiment, express their feelings in alternative ways and in the end ,create their own unique entity that reflects their inner world.

## 2nd session

**How to transform words and thoughts into handmade art items and thus empowering the beneficiaries to become more self-assertive and creative in their lives through movement, positive reflection and arts & crafts**

### Creativity through guided imagery



Through this mindfulness technique that encourages one to use their senses in order to build mental images the participants closed their eyes and wandered away to their own safe places, like clouds getting carried away by the wind. This mental journey encouraged the women to illustrate their visualisations collaboratively. The objective of this activity was to observe their feelings, ideas and thoughts in comparison to, or as a continuity to others, as well as to experience the joy and satisfaction of co-creation in a large scale artwork.

### Empowering messages through rock painting

Participants were asked to paint or write inspirational messages on rocks, and it was such a fun and relaxing moment in our workshop. Each one of them was encouraged to paint two rocks, one to keep for herself and one to leave somewhere in the city, as a random act of kindness and empowerment towards others. The result was colourful and full of empowering messages.





## 2nd session

### Trust building

The participants were asked to stroll around the city in pairs and leave their rocks wherever they wanted. The twist of this activity was that one of the participants was blindfolded each time, and their partner had to guide them safely. Although this trust-building exercise can be very stressful, it helps the participants build stronger connections.

### Discovering the joy of crafts

On the second day of the workshop, participants got hands-on creative, decorating canvas bags and creating our own jewelry with macrame techniques. The women had already expressed their interest in crafts, since the first workshop and as we expected some of their incredible talents and skills were revealed during these activities.



## IMPACT

The second session of the workshop, focused on exploring the power of collaboration, encouraging the participants to work with a different partner in every activity. This way, they had the chance to get to know each other better, find the courage to ask for help and at the same time build their confidence while helping others. Engaging in handicraft activities helped women foster social bonds, improve understanding between individuals, and bring about a sense of joy and empowerment which contributes to improving individual quality of life.

## 3rd session

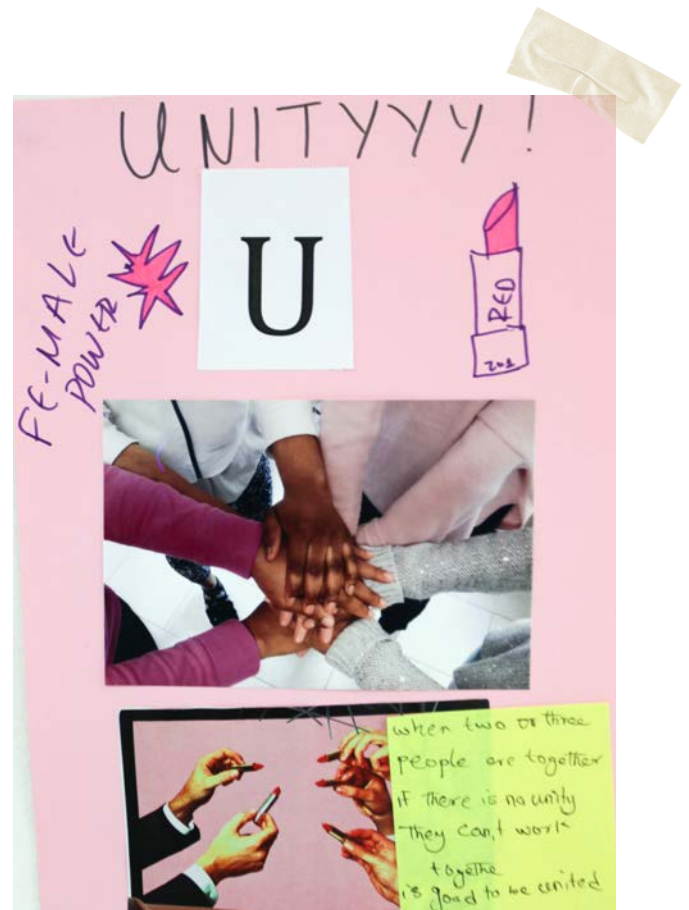
### How to implement a phototherapy workshop specially designed for women survivors of human trafficking

#### Exploring the concept of Self

Using different media, the beneficiaries explored the boundaries between the self and the other, and got acquainted with the group dynamics.

#### ABC of Self and visual poetry

We split the participants into groups and each group got some letters of the alphabet, until all the letters of the alphabet were taken. The participants working in groups used the letters of the alphabet to come up with words that in a way are connected with the notion of the Self. The next step was to convert this literal ABC into a visual poem. Every group had to think of a symbolic or literal way to portray each word they came up with using the language of photography.





## 3rd session

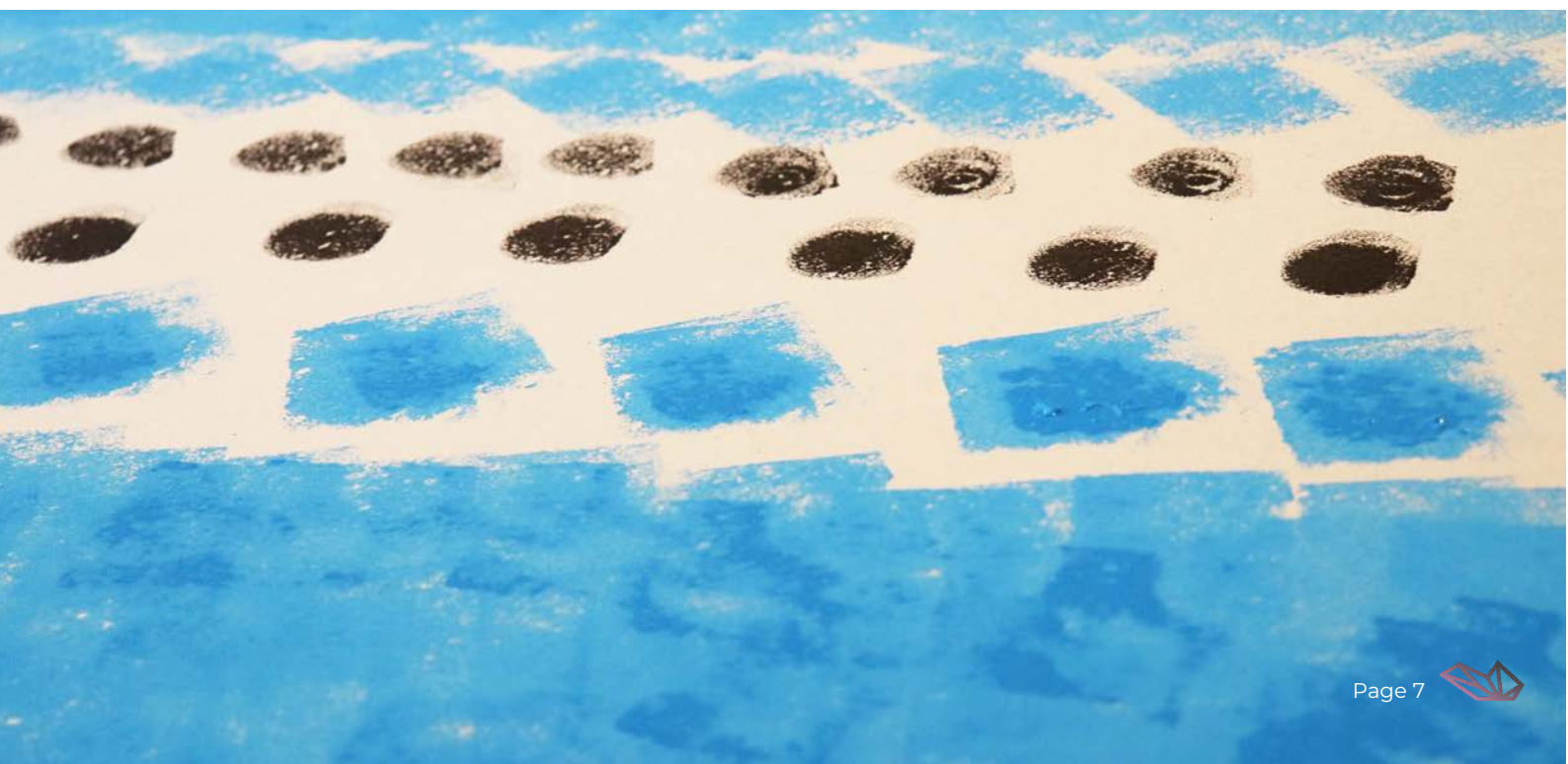
### Photo Collage

Each group got its photos and makes a collage using mix media for every word/photo /concept of Self. The final result is the ABC of Self, in which words are complemented by colours, photographs and longer texts. This group artwork can also be made into a small booklet.



### Using Symbols/ Archetypes

In a second, more personal exploration of Self, each woman has chosen her favourite picture, which might not be necessary taken by her. Using graphic techniques with the help of the instructors, they have created an abstract motive, black line into white paper that resembles a symbol/ archetype. Through the Archetype each woman has symbolized the Self.







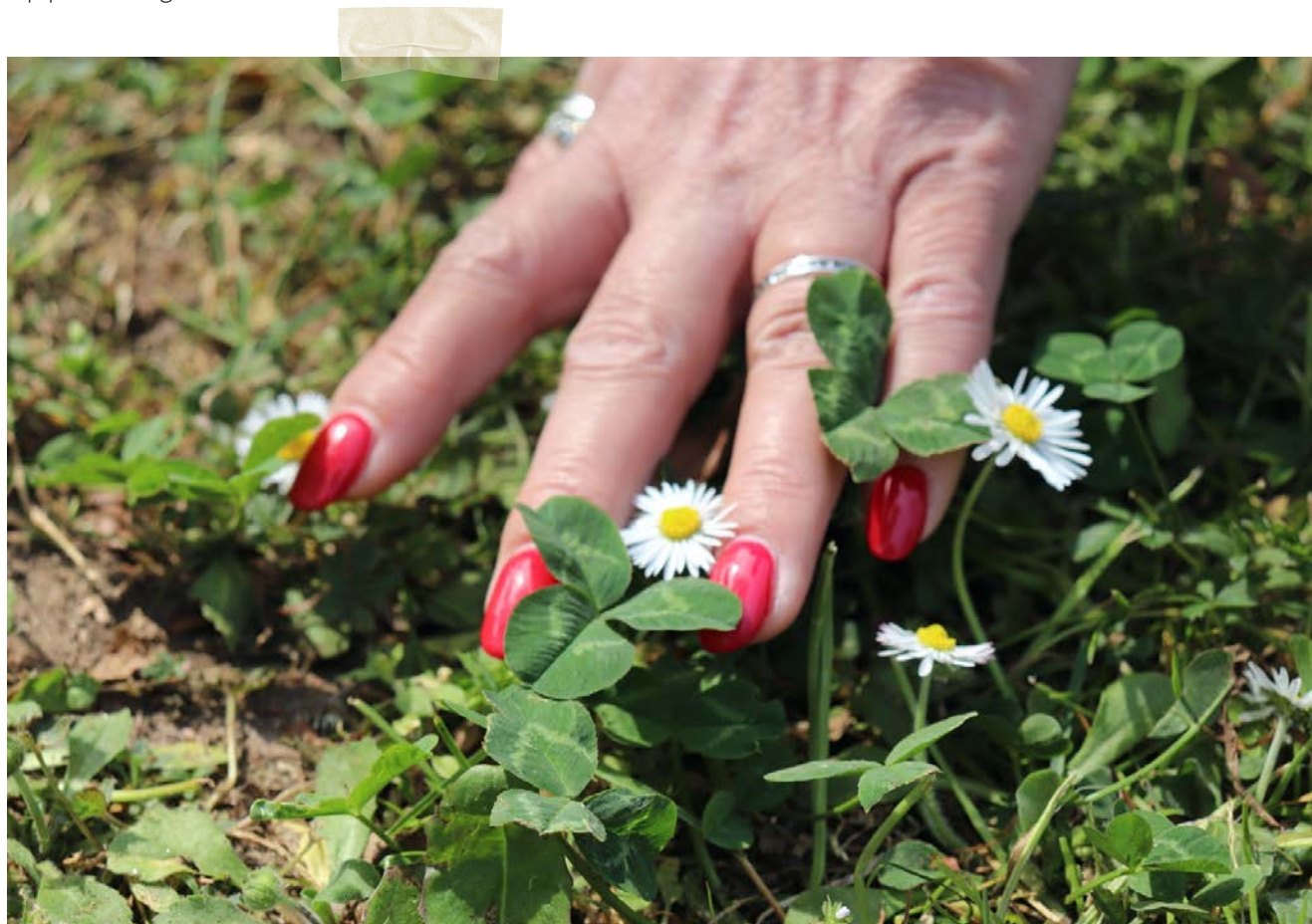
## The silhouettes

Choosing a position and working on one's silhouette in real dimension is a complex work that puts one in motion and helps define one's boundaries with respect to the outside world as well as to define oneself in the "here and now" of the moment.



## Photography

Participants were encouraged to use photography as a way and technique to leave traces, show and reveal themselves, sometimes even without appearing.

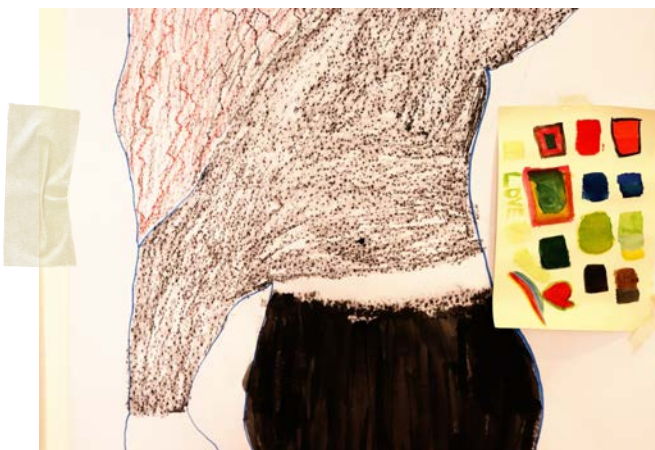




## Graphic and watercolor exercises

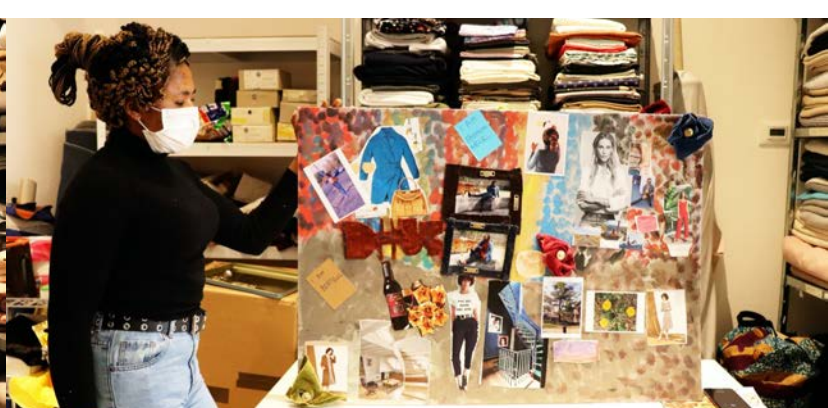
The group engaged in graphic exercises that aimed to loosen up the handstroke. Using different postures to enter into the fluidity of creative movement without judgment helped find one's center and rediscover creativity.

Everyone in the group had the opportunity to create their own personal colour palette, experimenting with watercolors in a playful way. Colors that at times were also transformed into shapes and words.



## Moodboards

Everything that was produced, the result of personal creative work, constituted the material from which to draw to create the final moodboard, leading the way for the action's last co-design action. Each person decided what to include in this representation of oneself to offer to others, of what inspires one in life and in her work.





# Staff

**Coordinator and facilitators of the workshops:** background in translation and cultural management. Respectively co-founder & cultural manager of The Language Project and member of D-Hub. Drawing on their rich experience in organising workshops with vulnerable groups through each organization's cultural initiatives. The Coordinator based at The Language Project organised the facilitators' training sessions, coordinated with the partners who contributed in workshops and served as the main point of contact in coordination efforts between Quid, Makers Unite and The Language Project.

**Educators:** Both educators had a background in translation/ literary studies and worked extensively as educators for refugees in Greece and Turkey, one educator has a migration background. Their experience in working with vulnerable groups in a multicultural environment and dealing with language barriers on a daily basis, has equipped them with the necessary skills to co design the activities, detect possible risks and facilitate the workshops.

**Art therapist** have participated to the workshops both as freelancers and as staff of partner organisations.

## Key partnership



Top is an organization for the professional empowerment of women and equality at the workplace. Using mentoring, lifelong learning, consulting and content creation as tools, we seek to support working and unemployed women and their environment so that together we can create a more equal future for all

**Women on Top co-founders, offered The Language Project team their expertise on facilitation methodologies and women empowerment through a 2-day training session based on the specific nature of CRISALIS scheme.**



A Greek cultural company, which consists of a group of people that share common interest for heritage, community and sustainability. Through services related to the preservation, maintenance and promotion of culture, it aims to raise public awareness and stimulate society's active participation in cultural assets and events.

**The cultural manager of Peripatos contributed in the design of the second session of the Creative Expression Workshops, implementing various creative and meaningful arts & crafts activities. She also joined The language Project team in order to co facilitate the July sessions.**



A Greek nonprofit organisation. Their objective is the organization and operation of art workshops which appeal primarily to young people living urban lives, to immigrants, to under privileged social groups and to all who feel the need to express themselves through art.

**The cultural manager, educator & artist and the art therapist, both members of AMAKA organisation, joined forces with the The Language Project team for the creation and facilitation of the third session of the Creative Expression Workshops, which is focused on creativity and empowerment through photography.**



An Italian, Verona-based non-profit association, DHub champions a gender and individual centre approach to community cohesion and social inclusion through community activities and through its own sewing and handcraft workshop.

**An educator, an art therapist and workshop coordinator based at DHub designed and ran the second pilot of the workshops.**

## Crisalis foulard

From all the images, symbols and words of the many art crafts made by the beneficiaries, comes the **CRISALIS FOULARD**: it tells a story of bravery, redemption and beauty.

## MEET THE CONSORTIUM AND THE PARTNERS

**These are our amazing  
multicultural team, who  
worked together for 22  
months**



If you want to replicate this  
activity or another one in your  
organization, check out the  
dedicated Report & How To  
Guide.

