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DIGITAL COMICS OF MIGRATION

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INTERVIEWS



Interview 1: Amina

Introduction (0:00 - 0:09)

Facilitator: Hello.

Amina: Hey.

Facilitator: Thank you for joining us. Maybe you can start with your name.

Amina: My name is Amina. I'm from Syria.

Reasons for Migration (0:09 - 2:18)

Amina: I came here with my parents and two younger siblings.

Facilitator: Okay. So, Amina, I think my colleagues have briefed you on the project and you understand that we are recording this for the purposes of learning more about your migration process and how you've integrated into Sweden. So probably we can start with how you decided to migrate. What was the reason?

Amina: Due to the ongoing political instability, my family decided it was too dangerous to stay there.

Facilitator: Okay. So the reasons you migrated were political instability and the wars?

Amina: Yeah. Yeah.

Facilitator: Okay. And how can you explain the process before you migrated? How was it?

Amina: Since we didn't plan enough, I can say it was really chaotic and frightening because we had to leave quickly. Just like I mentioned, we didn't have much time to prepare.

Facilitator: Okay. So what were you feeling in terms of emotions?

Amina: I was sad about leaving home and I was also confused and I was scared as well.

Facilitator: Okay. And how did you get ready? You mentioned you weren't there, you weren't prepared for it, so everyone was in a rush leaving and all.

Amina: My parents made sure that we only took what we needed and important documents.

Facilitator: Okay. And why did your parents and yourself choose Sweden? Was it a joint decision or how did it go?

Amina: The world choosing the country was left to our parents and as far as I know, Sweden is known for its refugee-friendly policies and support.

Facilitator: Okay. And how did you feel now that you're here, but on the way coming, the experience?

Amina: I was really scared because I didn't know what would happen next after we got here.



Migration Journey (2:19 - 2:50)

Facilitator: Okay. So while you're traveling, I imagine it's confusing. Yeah, you mentioned and you were sad and maybe you can explain a bit about the process of migrating. How was it? Did you use any means for transportation?

Amina: We used, we traveled by foot. We also used a car at some point and a boat also. So it was both difficult and a dangerous journey.

Duration and Emotions During Journey (2:51 - 3:08)

Facilitator: Okay. And how long did this last for?

Amina: I'd say about three weeks. Yeah.

Facilitator: Okay. And how did your family members feel? You mentioned you traveled with your parents.

Amina: Okay.

Stopovers and Family's Emotional State (3:08 - 3:41)

Amina: So my parents were really stressed. Of course, the whole aspect of traveling with kids and my siblings were scared and looked up to me for reassurance.

Facilitator: Okay. And on your way, was there another country that you stopped over at?

Amina: Yes, we stopped in Turkey and Germany.

Facilitator: Okay. And how long did you stay there for?

Amina: I'd say several days. I can't remember exact number of days.

Experience in Sweden (3:52 - 5:08)

Facilitator: Okay. So after traveling, probably you migrated with your parents and your siblings, as you mentioned. What kind of an experience was it to migrate with your family? Did you get any help or from who and how? How did you?

Amina: I had mentioned that there was the whole aspect of knowing that Sweden is refugee friendly. So we got help from NGOs and also the local government.

Facilitator: Okay. So in terms of housing, you were able to get housing, right?

Amina: Yeah, we were placed in temporary housing by the support organization.

Facilitator: Okay. And in terms of settling in, how has it been in terms of the language or even education? Because I see you're a young girl. How has it been?

Amina: The whole learning the language bit is difficult, but it's obviously essential for me to stay here. And then I'm back in school finally, which is very important to me and my goals.



Facilitator: Okay. Do you now feel integrated in some way?

Amina: Yes. Not fully, but I'm making progress. So it's about yes and no.

Support and Challenges (5:09 - 5:40)

Facilitator: Okay. And what kind of support have you felt from the local communities or even from school in terms of education? How are you feeling about your settling in?

Amina: More language support will be needed, but I can say so far there's no complaint. Generally, there's still some challenges with acceptance, but I'm also trying to catch up with everything.

Communication with Extended Family (5:41 - 6:09)

Facilitator: Okay. And do you have family that you left behind?

Amina: No, we traveled, all of us. Unless you're referring to the extended family, yes, I have a couple of relatives back at home.

Facilitator: Okay. And do you stay in touch?

Amina: Communication is really difficult due to the poor infrastructure back home. But once in a while, I get to talk to my uncles and aunts.

Conclusion (6:09 - 6:24)

Facilitator: Okay. Thank you so much for your thoughts. And I think we wish you all the best as you continue with school. And we'll definitely stay in touch.

Amina: Thank you.



Interview 2: Yuliya

Introduction (0:00 - 0:30)

Facilitator: Hello, nice to meet you. My name is Wendy. I hope my colleagues have briefed you on what we are doing today and welcome to this session.

Yulia: So maybe you can start with your name. My name is Yulia. Thank you for inviting me.

Facilitator: Okay, thank you Yulia. So you migrated from Ukraine, right?

Yulia: Yes.

Facilitator: Okay, and maybe you can start with why you decided to migrate.

Reasons for Migration (0:32 - 2:04)

Yulia: Yes, so my family initially fled Ukraine to Poland due to the conflict in eastern Ukraine that started in 2014. The situation was becoming increasingly dangerous with ongoing military clashes and it was clear that staying was not an option. Later I decided to move to Sweden alone for better educational career opportunities, hoping to build a stable future.

Facilitator: Okay, so the reasons why you moved specifically from Ukraine was for the wars, right?

Yulia: Yes, yes.

Facilitator: And then moving to Poland. So why move from Poland to Sweden then?

Yulia: Definitely a safer environment and access to better living conditions.

Facilitator: Okay, so your move to Poland was for the environment and access to better living conditions because in Ukraine things are difficult. How about in Sweden?

Yulia: Yes, Sweden motivation from the desire to explore a stable environment, quality education and definitely job prospects.

Facilitator: Okay, and how can you explain the process before migration? How was it for you?

Yulia: Migrating to Poland, we gather important documents, pack special belongings and sort information from human organization.

Preparing for Migration and Journey to Sweden (2:06 - 4:59)

Yulia: Before moving to Sweden, I did thorough research on universities and gathered necessary documents, apply for student visa. International organization and Swedish migration provide valuable information and support.



Facilitator: Okay, and what was your experience moving? How was it like?

Yulia: My family back home, emotionally challenging, constant fear in Ukraine. We already took a toll and now facing starting over in a new country alone.

Facilitator: Okay, and how did you get prepared in terms of materials or emotionally or even your documents?

Yulia: Emotionally supporting each other through difficult decision, packed necessity, plotting documents and sentimental items, reminders of back home. Emotionally it was tough but driven by hope for a better future.

Facilitator: Okay, and how did you plan the travel with your family you mentioned?

Yulia: Yes, plan our travel to avoid conflict zones, rely on information from organizations like UNHCR for guidance and planned travel seeking advice from the education organization.

Facilitator: Okay, and why did you choose Sweden specifically?

Yulia: Sweden for the further education.

Facilitator: Okay, so you moved from Poland to Sweden to further your education?

Yulia: Yes, correct.

Facilitator: Okay, and how do you feel now that you're away from home and your family or even when you moved from Ukraine to Poland, how was it?

Yulia: Mixed feeling, mixed relief, leave conflict zone, sadness, leave our home behind, hope Poland will provide safety, mixed nervousness.

Facilitator: Okay, so you traveled all the way to Sweden but less focus on you being in Poland. What kind of transport did you use moving from Ukraine to Poland?

Yulia: Car and bus.

Facilitator: You used car and bus?

Yulia: Yes.

Facilitator: So no parts walking, no parts...

Yulia: We walk a little bit, we walk through the journey.

Facilitator: Okay, and how long did this last for?

Yulia: Several days, break for rest, break for safety.

Facilitator: Then to Poland several days.

Yulia: Okay.

Facilitator: And was there another country you stopped over while you were coming?

Yulia: No, no, no. We stayed in Poland.

Facilitator: Okay, okay, and what did you do on the way probably while you were coming?

Yulia: Focus on safety, find a place to rest and manage belongings.

Facilitator: Okay, and what kind of difficulties did you experience?

Yulia: Language, language, communication, language just to environment and certainty about our future.

Facilitator: Okay, so I imagine you've now moved and probably how can you explain the process after migration?



Yulia: I arrived and registered for Swedish Migration Agency and enrolled in Sweden from a community education organization.

Integration and Education in Sweden (5:56 - 7:18)

Facilitator: If I got that right, you moved to Sweden and then registered for Swedish Migration... registered with the Swedish Migration Agency?

Yulia: Yes.

Facilitator: And then you enrolled on a community education organization?

Yulia: Yes.

Facilitator: Which is the Fox University?

Yulia: Yes, Fox University.

Facilitator: Okay, and how do you feel or how did you feel when you arrived in your new residence? How was it?

Yulia: In Poland, feel relieved, found safety, stability in Poland. Other challenges ahead and Sweden, I felt relieved, place to stay and eager to start my new life.

Facilitator: Okay, so any advantages you can tell about being a migrant?

Yulia: Yes, my family are safe, access basic services and the opportunity to rebuild lives in a versatile environment.

Facilitator: Okay, disadvantages probably?

Yulia: Language, language barrier, cultural difference and the challenge to integrate.

Facilitator: Yeah, okay. Well, thank you so much for your thoughts, Yulia. We wish you all the best while you continue and yeah, we'll stay in touch of course with your furthering of your studies.

Yulia: Thank you, thank you.



Olena's Journey: A Migrant's Tale from Syria to Sweden

Introduction

In this interview, a facilitator from the Nordic Horizon Institute speaks with Olena, a migrant in Sweden. Olena shares her harrowing journey from Syria to Sweden, highlighting the challenges, fears, and hopes that accompanied her and her family throughout their migration experience.

The Decision to Migrate

Facilitator: *Hello, thank you for joining us. This is the Nordic Horizon Institute, and we are joined here by Olena, who is a migrant in Sweden. We'd like to hear a bit more from Olena on her migration. So first of all, welcome Olena.*

Olena: *Thank you.*

Facilitator: *I'd start by probably asking how you decided to migrate.*

Olena: *For me, the ongoing conflict in Syria left us with no choice but to seek safety.*

The ongoing conflict in Syria forced Olena and her family to leave their homeland. The decision to migrate was driven by the need for safety, a secure future for her children, and the constant threat of violence.

The Journey Begins

Facilitator: *How can you explain the process before migration? How was it for you?*

Olena: *It was filled with fear and uncertainty. We had to act quickly and leave everything behind.*

Before leaving Syria, Olena's family had to quickly gather essential documents and pack only the minimum necessities. The emotional preparation for the unknown was as crucial as the physical preparation. They relied on a network of refugees and smugglers to facilitate their journey.



Choosing Sweden

Facilitator: *Why did you choose Sweden specifically?*

Olena: *Sweden is known for its refugee policies and support systems.*

Olena's family chose Sweden because of its well-known refugee policies and support systems. The prospect of safety and support in Sweden gave them a glimmer of hope amidst the terror and uncertainty.

The Journey to Sweden

Facilitator: *How were you feeling before you started the movement?*

Olena: *Very, very terrified.*

The journey was fraught with fear. Olena, her husband, and their two children traveled by foot, car, and boat. The journey took nearly a month and was marked by exhaustion, harsh weather conditions, and a constant lack of food and water.

Facilitator: *How can you explain the process of migration? How was it for you?*

Olena: *We traveled by foot, car, and boat. It was very exhausting.*

Facilitator: *How long did this go for?*

Olena: *Nearly a month.*

During their journey, the family stopped in Turkey and Germany for a few days to a week at each location. These stops were essential for resting, gathering necessary information, and replenishing supplies. However, finding safe places to stay and dealing with smugglers remained significant challenges.

Challenges and Feelings

Facilitator: *What kind of difficulties did you experience?*

Olena: *The harsh weather, lack of food and water, and threats from smugglers.*



The harsh conditions and threats from smugglers made the journey extremely challenging. Despite these difficulties, the family remained hopeful. The children were scared, but Olena's husband tried to stay strong for the family.

Facilitator: *How were you feeling?*

Olena: *Fear, anxiety, but we were hopeful.*

Life After Migration

Facilitator: *How can you explain the process after migration? How has it been for you?*

Olena: *It has been difficult, but with the support, it's now getting better.*

Adjusting to life in Sweden was challenging, but with the help of local support systems, including language learning programs, the family gradually began to settle in. Despite the difficulties, Olena expressed gratitude for the support they received, which has made the transition smoother.

Conclusion

Olena's story is a poignant reminder of the struggles faced by migrants seeking safety and a better life. Her journey from Syria to Sweden, marked by fear, uncertainty, and hope, reflects the resilience and courage of countless individuals fleeing conflict and hardship. As Olena and her family continue to adapt to their new life in Sweden, they are hopeful for a brighter future.



Ogla's Journey: From Ukraine to Sweden

Introduction

In this interview, a facilitator from the Nordic Horizon Institute speaks with Ogla, a migrant who fled Ukraine due to escalating conflict. Ogla shares her experiences, from the decision to leave her home country to adjusting to life in Sweden, highlighting the challenges and support she encountered along the way.

Deciding to Migrate

Facilitator: *Hello, thank you for joining us today. Maybe you can start with your name and then we can start.*

Ogla: *Hi, my name is Ogla.*

Facilitator: *Thank you for joining us, Ogla. So, how did you decide to migrate?*

Ogla: *We decided to migrate when the conflict in Ukraine escalated. It was no longer safe for my children and we needed to find a secure place to live.*

The escalation of the conflict in Ukraine prompted Ogla and her family to seek safety elsewhere. The lack of security and the need for a stable environment for her children were the primary reasons for their decision to leave.

Preparing for the Journey

Facilitator: *What were the reasons or motives for your migration?*

Ogla: *It was about the ongoing war, lack of security, and the need for a stable environment for my children.*

Facilitator: *How can you explain the process before migration?*

Ogla: *Before migrating, we spent weeks gathering the necessary documents, packing essential items, and seeking advice from local NGOs and the UNHCR. We also contacted Swedish organizations like Refugees Welcome to Brygge for guidance.*



In the weeks leading up to their departure, Ogla's family meticulously prepared by collecting important documents, packing essentials, and consulting various organizations for guidance. The emotional preparation, especially for the children, was a crucial part of getting ready for the unknown journey ahead.

The Journey to Sweden

Facilitator: *What did you experience when preparing for the journey?*

Ogla: *The experience was so stressful, filled with uncertainty and fear for the future.*

Facilitator: *How did you get prepared for this?*

Ogla: *We prepared by collecting important documents, packing essentials, and emotionally preparing the children for the journey ahead.*

Facilitator: *How did you plan to travel?*

Ogla: *We planned our route through Poland, then Germany, and finally to Sweden using information from the IOM.*

The journey involved traveling through several countries, with Poland and Germany as significant stops before reaching Sweden. Ogla's family relied on information from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to plan their route.

Choosing Sweden

Facilitator: *Why did you choose this country?*

Ogla: *We chose Sweden because of its strong social support system and reputation for welcoming refugees.*

The choice of Sweden was influenced by its reputation for a robust social support system and a welcoming attitude towards refugees. This gave Ogla's family hope for a safer and more stable future.

The Migration Process

Facilitator: *How do you feel now?*



Ogla: *I felt a mix of fear and hope for a better future for my children.*

Facilitator: *During the travel, how can you explain the process of migration?*

Ogla: *The migration process was long and arduous. We faced many challenges and relied heavily on help from various organizations.*

Facilitator: *What kind of transportation did you use?*

Ogla: *We used trains, buses, and sometimes we walked.*

Facilitator: *How long did this last for?*

Ogla: *It lasted for three weeks.*

Ogla's journey to Sweden took three weeks, during which her family faced overcrowded shelters, lack of food, and extreme weather conditions. They used various modes of transportation, including trains, buses, and on foot.

Challenges and Support

Facilitator: *Who were you coming with?*

Ogla: *We focused on staying safe, finding food, and keeping the children calm.*

Facilitator: *What kind of difficulties did you experience while coming?*

Ogla: *We experienced overcrowded shelters, lack of food, and extreme weather conditions.*

Facilitator: *Were you traveling with your family?*

Ogla: *Yes, I was traveling with my family.*

The family faced numerous challenges, including overcrowded shelters and extreme weather. Despite these hardships, they remained focused on keeping safe and securing basic necessities.

Life After Migration

Facilitator: *How can you explain the process after you migrated?*



Ogla: *After arriving in Sweden, we applied for asylum and were placed in a refugee center managed by the Swedish Migration Agency, the Migrationsverket.*

Facilitator: *Did you get any help? Who did you get this help from and how was it given to you?*

Ogla: *Yes, we received help from the Swedish Red Cross and local NGOs like Arita Sweden, which provided food, clothing, and legal assistance.*

Facilitator: *How did you feel upon arrival?*

Ogla: *I felt so relieved and grateful but also worried about how we would adjust.*

After arriving in Sweden, Ogla and her family were placed in a refugee center and received significant support from organizations such as the Swedish Red Cross and Arita Sweden. This assistance included food, clothing, and legal aid.

Integration and Adjustment

Facilitator: *What advantages can you tell about migration as an immigrant?*

Ogla: *We now have safety, access to education and healthcare, and excellent social services in Sweden.*

Facilitator: *What disadvantages can you tell about migration as an immigrant?*

Ogla: *There are cultural barriers, language difficulties, and sometimes feeling isolated.*

Facilitator: *In terms of cultural barriers, what did you experience?*

Ogla: *Adjusting to different customs and social norms was challenging, especially with the language barrier.*

The advantages of migrating to Sweden included safety, access to education and healthcare, and excellent social services. However, Ogla also faced challenges, such as cultural barriers and language difficulties, which sometimes led to feelings of isolation.

Community and Family

Facilitator: *Do you now feel integrated?*

Ogla: *I feel more peaceful and secure, but there are still many adjustments to make.*



Facilitator: *Do you feel accepted by the local community?*

Ogla: *Mostly, yes. The community has been welcoming, especially through organizations like the Refugee Aid Sweden.*

Facilitator: *What kind of support did you get?*

Ogla: *We received support in terms of social services, the government, and local communities.*

Facilitator: *Has migration changed your relations with your family?*

Ogla: *Yes, we have become closer, relying on each other for support day by day.*

The local community, particularly through organizations like Refugee Aid Sweden, has been largely welcoming and supportive. This support has helped Ogla's family to integrate and adjust to their new life. The migration experience has also brought the family closer together, strengthening their reliance on one another.

Building a New Life

Facilitator: *How have you constructed your life in the new country?*

Ogla: *We focused on learning the language, attending community events, and getting involved in local communities. Organizations like Save the Children Sweden helped us a lot.*

Facilitator: *How many times a year do you see your family?*

Ogla: *We haven't been able to visit yet due to the ongoing conflict and financial constraints, but hopefully, I hope to see them soon.*

Ogla and her family have been proactive in integrating into Swedish society by learning the language, participating in community events, and engaging with local organizations. Unfortunately, due to the ongoing conflict and financial constraints, they have not yet been able to visit their extended family.

Conclusion

Facilitator: *Thank you so much for your time. I think we've gotten enough from you.*

Ogla: *Yes. And yeah, we'll keep in touch to see the possibilities of working with you and other things. Thank you so much for this.*



Facilitator: *Okay. I appreciate it. Thank you.*

Ogla's journey from Ukraine to Sweden is a testament to the resilience and determination of migrants seeking safety and stability. Her experiences highlight both the challenges and the supportive networks that can help migrants navigate their new environments. As Ogla and her family continue to adapt to life in Sweden, they remain hopeful for a peaceful and secure future.



Noura's Journey: From Syria to Sweden

Introduction

Thank you for joining us. Today, we have a special guest, Noura, who will share her journey from Syria to Sweden. We will explore the reasons for her migration, the challenges faced, and the experiences of settling into a new country.

The Decision to Migrate

Facilitator: *Maybe tell us your name and your age.*

Noura: *Okay, thank you. My name is Noura. 30, yes.*

Facilitator: *Thank you for joining us, Noura. So, we are here to discuss a bit about your migration. How did you decide to migrate? What was the reason?*

Noura: *I decided to migrate because of the situation in Syria. It was becoming unbearable due to the war, and my family felt unsafe there.*

The Migration Process

Facilitator: *The constant danger and lack of security were problems, yes? How can you explain the process of migration?*

Noura: *Before our journey, we spent months gathering documents, saving money, and preparing ourselves emotionally. We contacted 3D street crews and other NGOs who helped us with information and support.*

Facilitator: *How did you prepare in terms of materials, emotions, and documents?*

Noura: *We packed our essentials, especially the documents, a few clothes, and personal items. Emotionally, it was tough, especially saying goodbye to friends and family.*



The Journey to Sweden

Facilitator: *How did you plan to travel? Did you pass through any countries? What means did you use?*

Noura: *We planned to travel to Turkey, then by boat to Greece, and finally overland to Sweden.*

Facilitator: *Why did you choose Sweden?*

Noura: *Because of its reputation for accepting refugees and providing good opportunities for education.*

Facilitator: *How was the journey?*

Noura: *It was long and dangerous. We faced many challenges, relying heavily on guidance from organizations like the International Organization for Migration (IOM). We used buses, walked long distances, and the journey lasted around two months.*

Challenges Faced During Migration

Facilitator: *What were the difficulties you experienced while traveling?*

Noura: *The boat was overcrowded, we were often hungry, and there was constant fear of being caught by authorities. The journey was terrifying for us.*

Facilitator: *How did your family feel?*

Noura: *They were worried and afraid. It was a difficult experience for all of us.*

Settling in Sweden

Facilitator: *After arriving in Sweden, how did you find residence?*

Noura: *We applied for asylum and were placed in a refugee center managed by a Swedish agency. Eventually, we were given a small apartment by the authorities.*

Facilitator: *Did you receive any other assistance?*

Noura: *Yes, the Swedish Red Cross, NGOs, and the government provided food and other support.*



Advantages and Disadvantages of Migration

Facilitator: *Are there any advantages to migration now that you're an immigrant?*

Noura: *Yes, we have a safe place and educational opportunities for a better future.*

Facilitator: *What about the disadvantages?*

Noura: *Mostly the cultural and language barriers, and sometimes discrimination.*

Facilitator: *Can you elaborate on the cultural barriers?*

Noura: *Adjusting to the norms here, things like food, social etiquette, and the weather, which is much colder.*

Integration into the Community

Facilitator: *Do you feel integrated into the local community?*

Noura: *I'm starting to feel more integrated, especially through schools and community activities.*

Facilitator: *What kind of support do you feel you need from local communities or social services?*

Noura: *Ongoing language support, help in finding jobs, and education opportunities.*

Facilitator: *Has migration changed your family's routine?*

Noura: *Yes, our daily routine now includes attending language classes, spending time at community centers, libraries, and cultural centers.*

Staying Connected with Family

Facilitator: *Do you have any family left in Syria?*

Noura: *Yes, we do. We mostly stay in touch through social media, phone calls, Skype, and WhatsApp.*

Facilitator: *How often do you see them outside of social media?*

Noura: *We haven't seen them yet, but we hope to visit soon.*



Reflections on Migration Policies and Future Plans

Facilitator: *What are your thoughts on the migration policies you found here?*

Noura: *I think the policies should be more supportive and inclusive. They should provide better integration programs and easier access to services like education and jobs.*

Facilitator: *Do you want to go back to your hometown?*

Noura: *No, I miss my hometown, but I want to build a future here. I hope to visit often when it's peaceful.*

Facilitator: *Thank you so much for your insights, Noura. We wish you the best.*

Noura: *Thank you, too.*



Interview 6: Amira

Introduction (0:00 - 0:28)

Facilitator: Hello. Hi, nice to meet you and I hope you've been able to be briefed by my colleagues about the project. So I can just go straight to the questions where we'd like to know more about your migration. So how exactly did you decide to migrate to Sweden?

Reasons for Migration (0:29 - 0:47)

Amira: My family decided to migrate from Iraq to Syria where I was very young due to the Iraqi war. Later we had to flee from Syria to Sweden because of the Syrian civil war. It was a very difficult decision but we had no choice as the situation in Syria worsened.

Facilitator: Okay, so the motives or the reasons for your migration was the violence or yeah?

Amira: Initially we fled from Iraq due to the violation of stability and years later we left Syria for similar reasons as the civil war made it unsafe to stay.

Facilitator: Okay, and how can you explain the process before migrating to Sweden?

Amira: We had to gather our documents again, seek help from the NGOs like the International Rescue Committee and make plans for a safer future.

Experiences During Migration (1:28 - 2:13)

Facilitator: Okay, and what did you experience on your way?

Amira: We experienced fear, uncertainty, constantly moving to avoid danger. The conflict in Syria was escalating and it became unbearable each time.

Facilitator: Okay, so you mentioned that you prepared with your documents, right? Was there any emotional preparation or you just moved?

Amira: We packed the essentials, secured our documents and emotionally prepared for another challenging journey.



Facilitator: Okay, and why did you choose Sweden? Why specifically did you choose this country?

Amira: We chose Sweden because we heard a lot about its robust asylum system and its commitment to human rights. Sweden also had a good track record of integrating the refugees, emigrating the refugees.

Migration Process (2:33 - 3:15)

Facilitator: Okay, and how can you explain the process of migrating? The whole process, how was it?

Amira: The migration process was exhausting and filled with uncertainty. We had to be constantly on the move, avoiding conflict zones and navigating the political process.

Facilitator: Okay, what kind of transportation did you use?

Amira: We used various means of transportation including boats, buses and walking long distances.

Facilitator: Yeah, and how long did this go for?

Amira: The entire journey took about a month.

Difficulties and Family Experience (3:16 - 4:23)

Facilitator: Okay, okay. So, what were some of the difficulties that you experienced while migrating?

Amira: We faced overcrowded boats, lack of food and water and the harsh weather conditions.

Facilitator: Yeah, and you said you were moving with your?

Amira: My family.

Facilitator: Your family?

Amira: Yeah.

Facilitator: That is your parents?



Amira: Parents.

Facilitator: Okay, okay. And how did your family members feel?

Amira: My parents were constantly worried but they tried to stay strong for us.

Facilitator: Yeah, yeah, I imagine. And was there another country that you stopped over along the way?

Amira: Yes, yes. We stopped in Turkey and then Greece.

Facilitator: Okay, okay. And how long did it last?

Amira: We stayed in Turkey for about two weeks and in Greece for a few days.

Facilitator: Okay, and what did you do on the way?

Amira: We stayed in refugee camps and they received assistance from local NGOs like Doctors Without Borders.

Arrival and Integration in Sweden (4:24 - 6:00)

Facilitator: Yeah, okay, okay. And after traveling, probably, and you've immigrated, you've made it to Sweden. You migrated with all your family members? That's your parents? And did you have anyone else?

Amira: I traveled with my immediate family and I met other refugees along the way.

Facilitator: Okay, okay. So you got help getting into Sweden, right?

Amira: Yeah.

Facilitator: Okay, and how can you explain the process after immigrating into Sweden?

Amira: After arriving in Sweden, we applied for asylum and we were placed in refugee centers by migration.

Facilitator: Yeah, and how did you find residence in Sweden?

Amira: We were eventually assigned an apartment through the assistance of the Sweden Migration Agency.



Facilitator: Okay, so you got help to at least settle in.

Amira: Yeah.

Facilitator: Okay, how was the feeling when you settled into Sweden?

Amira: I felt relieved and hopefully for a new beginning.

Facilitator: Yeah, so were there any advantages about migration or you being an immigrant?

Amira: Yes, now we have access to safety, education, health care, and a supportive environment for refugees. Sweden gives.

Facilitator: Okay, and any disadvantages while migrating?

Amira: Yeah, language barrier and cultural differences where I came from under the challenge of integrating into a new society.

Facilitator: Okay, okay. Do you now feel integrated into the culture?

Amira: Yes, adjusted to Swedish customs and social norms took time.

Facilitator: Okay, so you feel accepted by the local community now?

Amira: Yes, the local community has been welcoming especially through initiatives like newcomers youth.

Facilitator: Okay, okay, and the local people are they kind or supportive?

Amira: Yeah, yeah, very kind and supportive.

Support and Future Hopes (6:01 - 8:24)

Facilitator: Okay, and how is it being supported?

Amira: Yes, many people are willing to help and support us in our integration process.

Facilitator: Okay, in terms of support, what kind of support are you getting from local communities?

Amira: The government, we need continued support for language learning, job placement, and educational opportunities.



Facilitator: Okay, okay, and have you been able to communicate with any of your family post moving?

Amira: We use social media and phone calls to stay in touch.

Facilitator: Okay, okay, how many times a year would you say have you been able to visit?

Amira: No, we haven't been able to visit yet due to the ongoing conflict and the financial problems.

Facilitator: Okay, so what would you recommend to people who are about to, I think, to migrate?

Amira: Be prepared for challenges, stay hopefully and seek support from local organizations. Don't hesitate to ask for help from anyone.

Facilitator: Okay, okay, and what kinds of dreams or hopes do you have about the future?

Amira: I dream of seeing my children growing up in a safe and stable environment with access to education and many other opportunities in the future.

Facilitator: Thank you so much for joining us.

Amira: You're welcome.

Facilitator: Yeah, and we hope and wish for the best for you and your family.

Amira: Thank you.



Introduction

In a recent interview for the Dicomi project, Layla shared her poignant story of migration from Eastern Ukraine to Sweden. Her journey, driven by a quest for safety and a better future, sheds light on the challenges and hopes experienced by many refugees. Below is a detailed account of Layla's experiences before, during, and after her migration.

The Decision to Migrate

Facilitator: "So, how exactly did you decide to migrate?"

Layla: "I decided to migrate after the conflict in Eastern Ukraine. My home became unsafe. The primary reason was the safety of my family, especially my children. Additionally, I was seeking better opportunities for our future."

Before making the difficult decision to leave, Layla faced a highly stressful and chaotic period. She had to gather essential documents, sell possessions, and say heartfelt goodbyes to loved ones. It was an emotional and uncertain time, filled with a mix of fear, hope, and confusion.

Planning and Executing the Journey

Facilitator: "And how did you plan the travel?"

Layla: "With the help of my friends and other resources, we had a rough plan but remained flexible."

Layla chose Sweden for its reputation for safety, strong social services, and robust support for refugees. The journey itself was long and exhausting, taking approximately two weeks by bus and train through several countries, including Poland and Germany.

During the travel, Layla had to keep her children calm, manage their belongings, and stay alert. The language barriers and lack of information were significant challenges, compounded by the constant fear for their safety. Traveling with her close friend and two children, Layla found comfort and support in their companionship.



Life After Migration

Facilitator: "So, how can you explain the process after immigration?"

Layla: "It was challenging, but with the support from local authorities and NGOs, it became manageable."

Upon arriving in Sweden, Layla received crucial assistance from a refugee support organization, helping her secure residence. While this was a relief, she still felt anxious about the future. The process of adjusting to a new country involved overcoming cultural and language barriers and dealing with the feeling of being an outsider.

Finding stable housing proved challenging, and Layla is still seeking steady employment. However, there were bright spots; her children were able to attend school, providing a significant sense of relief and normalcy.

Community Support and Integration

Facilitator: "What do you think about the local people?"

Layla: "They are generally supportive and understanding."

The local community, including government programs, provided essential support such as language classes, job placement assistance, and social integration programs. These resources were invaluable in helping Layla and her family adjust to their new life.

The Impact of Migration on Family

Facilitator: "Did you experience any difference in your family when you migrated?"

Layla: "Yes, we became much closer due to shared hardships. Everything is new now, and we are still adjusting, constructing a new life."

Layla communicated with her family and friends back home through phone calls and social media, although she hadn't been able to visit since migrating. She expressed a desire to return only if it becomes safe again.



Conclusion

Layla's story is a testament to the resilience and courage of those who seek refuge from conflict. Her journey from Eastern Ukraine to Sweden, while fraught with challenges, also highlights the importance of community support and the opportunities that arise from starting anew. As she and her family continue to adapt to their new environment, Layla remains hopeful for a safer and brighter future.



Kateryna's Journey: A Story of Resilience and Adaptation in Sweden

Introduction

In a heartfelt conversation, Kateryna from Ukraine shared her experiences migrating to Sweden. This blog post captures her journey, the challenges faced, and the new beginnings in a foreign land. The interview provides a glimpse into the realities of migration and the resilience required to start afresh.

Deciding to Migrate

Facilitator: "How exactly did you decide to migrate?"

Kateryna: "My parents made the decision after our town was no longer safe."

The primary reasons for Kateryna's family's decision to migrate were safety and the opportunity for her to continue her education. The decision came during a rushed and stressful time, as they had to pack quickly and leave with little notice. The emotions were intense, filled with fear and confusion, but Kateryna trusted her parents' decision.

Preparing for the Journey

The preparation for migration was minimal. Kateryna packed a small bag with personal items and important documents, essential for her plans to finish her education. The journey itself was planned by her parents, and Kateryna followed their lead. They chose Sweden based on recommendations from friends and the country's reputation for welcoming refugees.

The Journey

Facilitator: "How can you explain the process of migration?"

Kateryna: "I was so scared and uncertain about the future."



The journey to Sweden was daunting, involving train and bus travel through several countries. It lasted about a week and was exhausting and, at times, frightening. Kateryna traveled with her parents and younger brother, encountering numerous challenges, including language barriers and the fear of being stopped by authorities.

The journey included stopovers in Poland and Germany, where the family spent a few days resting, eating, and preparing for the next leg of their trip. Finding places to stay and communicating with locals were some of the significant difficulties faced during this time.

Arrival in Sweden and Settling In

Facilitator: "How did you find residence when you finally came to Sweden?"

Kateryna: "Through a refugee support group."

Upon arrival in Sweden, the family found residence with the help of refugee support groups, NGOs, and the local government. Although relieved to have reached safety, they were still anxious about the future. The advantages of migration included safety and a chance for a new beginning, while the disadvantages were language barriers and a feeling of being out of place.

Education and Integration

Kateryna prioritized completing her education and returned to school. She also participated in language classes, which helped significantly in overcoming communication barriers. Adapting to the cultural differences, particularly in food and school activities, was part of the integration process. Joining school clubs and local events helped Kateryna connect with the local culture.

Community and Family Support

Facilitator: "How do you feel about the local community in Sweden?"

Kateryna: "It is better than before, but still adjusting."

While Kateryna has not fully integrated into the local culture, she finds the community, especially her school, supportive. The language barrier posed initial challenges in joining school, but language classes and integration programs have facilitated her adjustment.



Family Dynamics and Future Aspirations

The migration experience has brought Kateryna's family closer together. They continue to stay, pray, and support each other in their new society. Kateryna noted that her siblings have become more adaptable and understanding due to the migration experience.

Facilitator: "How do you think you'd make this country better?"

Kateryna: "To compare with my home country, Ukraine, students' policies are supportive, but the process can be slow."

Kateryna expressed a desire to contribute positively to Swedish society, acknowledging that while student policies are supportive, they could benefit from being more efficient.

Conclusion

Kateryna's story is a testament to the resilience and adaptability required to navigate life as a migrant. Despite the challenges, she and her family are gradually building a new life in Sweden. As they continue to integrate into their new community, they hold onto hope and the promise of a better future. Thank you, Kateryna, for sharing your journey with us and for being a part of this community.