

MASTERING CONVERSATIONS

Supporting refugee entrepreneurs to extend their network and tell their business story

M9C business plan

The aim of this document is to provide a practical guide for relevant refugee NGOs and other relevant organisations on how to implement the whole package, starting with the Mastering 9 Conversations train the trainers course and moving on to implementation of the two-level 9 Conversations programme.



M9C drawing was created by Aušrinė Balkaitytė during M9C multiplier event in Jonava, Lithuania. 2023.

CONTENTS

1	Main information	3
1.1	Introduction to M9C	3
1.2	M9C Train the facilitator handbook: a guide to the M9C curriculum.....	4
1.3	Access to the Train the trainer (facilitator) course	4
1.4	Facilitation Guide	5
1.5	Operational guide to the technical implementation	5
1.6	Two-level 9 Conversations programme toolkit including all learning materials	5
2	Creation of the network that facilitates the implementation of the programme as a whole.....	5
3	Make a plan to run the 9 Conversations programme in your context	5
3.1	Business plan templates	6
3.1.1	Template No. 1. How to set up a social enterprise to deliver the 9 Conversations programme, inspired by the Business Model Canvas (BMC).....	6
3.1.2	Template No. 2. NGOs business plan to deliver the 9 Conversations programme	6
4	Social Enterprise Business plan examples to offer the 9 Conversations programme	12

The following abbreviations are used in the text:

9C – 9 Conversations

BMC – Business Model Canvas

BP – Business Plan

LMS – Learning Management System

M9C – Mastering 9 Conversations

NGO – Non-governmental organization

SWOT– Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

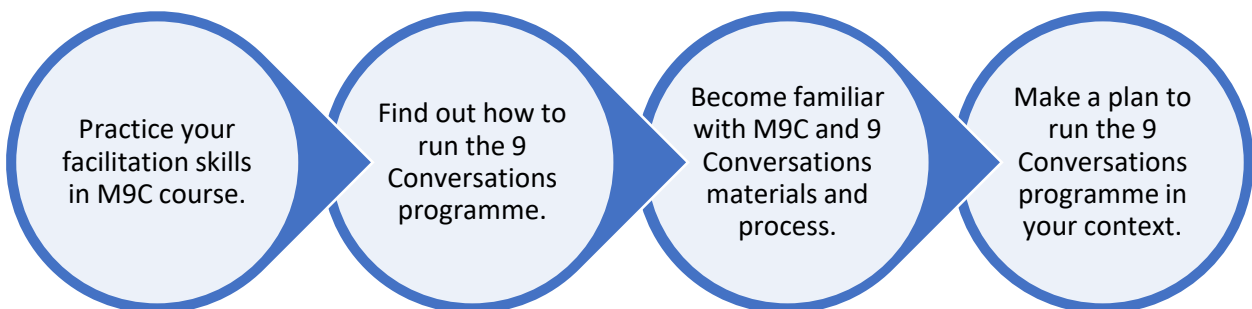
1 MAIN INFORMATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO M9C

The Mastering 9 Conversations project partners consortium has developed two training programmes, the initial 9 Conversations programme aimed at refugees, and the Mastering 9 Conversations programme aimed at supporting facilitators on the implementation of the 9 Conversations programme.

The 9 Conversations programme is intended for refugees who want to start their own business and thus integrate into the labor market of the new host country society. The 9 Conversations programme helps refugees to plan and tell the story of their new business idea, to set up their own business in their new host country by providing a training that tells them both about the specific national requirements and the general principles of setting up and running a small business. An important part of the 9 Conversations programme is meeting people locally who can help them with their own business idea. However, according to the research data (*European Parliament. Labor market integration of refugees: Strategies and good practices. Brussels, 2016.*), many refugees experience difficulties running their own business or starting a new business as an alternative to getting a job – so, they need the help of specialists. Taking this into account, a M9C Train the trainer (facilitator) course was created within the framework of the M9C project for the preparation of specialists-facilitators working with refugees for implementation of the 9 Conversations programme.

The information below is intended for facilitators to prepare and deliver the 9 Conversations programme. You do not have to be a teacher to be a programme guide. It may help if you have some experience or knowledge about running a business in the local area. It would be really helpful if you are happy to learn more as you go along, at the same time as facilitating the programme yourself.



Practice your facilitation skills in M9C course:	Find out how to run the 9 Conversations programme:	Become familiar with M9C and 9 Conversations materials and process:	Make a plan to run 9 Conversations programme in your context:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get familiarized with the <i>M9C Train the facilitator handbook</i> • Audit the <i>M9C Train the trainer (facilitator) course</i> or take the full M9C course for accreditation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get familiarized with the <i>Facilitation Guide</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get familiarized with an <i>Operational guide to the technical implementation</i> • Get familiarized with <i>two-level 9 Conversations programme toolkit</i> including all learning materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get familiarized with the <i>Business plan templates and examples</i> • Make a <i>plan to run the 9 Conversations programme</i> in your context

1.2 M9C TRAIN THE FACILITATOR HANDBOOK: A GUIDE TO THE M9C CURRICULUM

Before starting learning in the M9C Train the trainer (facilitator) course, we recommend you to get familiarized with a Train the facilitator handbook. This document describes what the M9C course is.

Here you will find the link to the M9C Train the facilitator handbook:

<https://m9c.idi.ntnu.no/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/M9C-Handbook.pdf>

1.3 ACCESS TO THE TRAIN THE TRAINER (FACILITATOR) COURSE

The goal of the M9C Train the trainer (facilitator) course is to empower volunteer and professional staff of the Refugee Supporting Organizations, refugee NGOs and other relevant organisations to be able to deliver the two-level 9 Conversations programme. The training course uses the Business Model Canvas approach to support participants in their production of a business plan for the implementation of the 9 Conversations programme in their home area as a social enterprise.

Recommended course duration: 9 weeks. Over nine weeks you will adapt the 9 Conversations materials to suit your local context and learn how to facilitate the programme.

Here you will find all the materials needed for the M9C Train the trainer (facilitator) course, presented in two formats:

1. As a copiable collection of Google documents and slides with speaker notes for portability and editability:

https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1Fp-7yRBjggyLgVmIOzUu-kU_30suZN-D

2. As H5P objects in a non-interactive Lifter course on the project website for reference:

<https://m9c.idi.ntnu.no/index.php/course/mastering-9-conversations/>

You can independently choose a time and place convenient for you learning in the M9C Train the trainer (facilitator) course.

1.4 FACILITATION GUIDE

An important part of the M9C Train the trainer (facilitator) course is the 9C Facilitation Guide. This document will help you set up and run a 9 Conversations programme for refugees in your local area.

Here you will find the link to the Facilitation Guide:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/12gD5sPcx4mtggqslw86vsiHBdXKyhuqt/edit>

1.5 OPERATIONAL GUIDE TO THE TECHNICAL IMPLEMENTATION

The Technical Guide provides the instructions you need to use the Low Tech LMS (Learning Management System) from a technical perspective for the M9C Train the trainer (facilitator) course and 9 Conversations programme course implementation.

Here you will find the link to the Technical Guide for the LowTech LMS:

<https://m9c.idi.ntnu.no/index.php/google-drive-learning-platform-for-m9c/>

1.6 TWO-LEVEL 9 CONVERSATIONS PROGRAMME TOOLKIT INCLUDING ALL LEARNING MATERIALS

Here you will find the link to the two-level 9 Conversations programme and learning materials for implementation of the 9 Conversations programme:

<https://m9c.idi.ntnu.no/index.php/course/9-conversations-en/>

2 CREATION OF THE NETWORK THAT FACILITATES THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME AS A WHOLE

Creating a network that facilitates the implementation of the 9 Conversations programme as a whole involves various components, including establishing connections among users, integrating with course enterprises, and providing ongoing advisory services or more advanced courses.

Social capital – connections that are created during the process of helping refugees integrate into the labor market become the country's financial and social capital (Valentina Demidenko (2019) Educational factors of the integration of forced migrants into society. Dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Social Sciences. Kaunas University of Technology), which helps not only to solve the current operational tasks of the facilitator's organization, but also helps to create new social connections (sharing the good experience of M9C with potential social partners) and developing the financial and social capital created in this way.

3 MAKE A PLAN TO RUN THE 9 CONVERSATIONS PROGRAMME IN YOUR CONTEXT

Before developing your organizations plan for running the 9 Conversations programme, we recommend you to get familiarized with two templates of the Business plan and filled in plan examples. Three examples were prepared using both Business plan templates by two NGOs from Lithuania and Italy – Lithuanian Red Cross and CReA ETS, and a public institution from Lithuania –

Social Service Center of Jonava district. We hope, they will inspire you in developing your own plan for running the 9 Conversations programme.

3.1 BUSINESS PLAN TEMPLATES

3.1.1 Template No. 1. How to set up a social enterprise to deliver the 9 Conversations programme, inspired by the Business Model Canvas (BMC)

In the following points we present in brief the minimum number of sections that a business plan of an organisation, which wants to deliver the 9 Conversations programme in the form of the BMC must have. You can choose yourself which section can be a starting point when filling in the plan, or just follow the sections sequence as it is written.

Business plan template:

1. General information about social enterprise
2. What the target group (refugees as customers) need
3. Value proposition (what your NGO / organisation is offering and to whom? Why do they value your offer?)
4. Key partners (such as local businesses to act as case studies)
5. Key resources you will need (facilitator competences and knowledge, training material for trainer and target group (refugees), recommended facilities for running the course and place to meet, recommended technical platforms for group work as well as for individuals)
6. Stakeholders (could be local government or whichever organization supports the refugees financially)
7. Recruitment channels (how do you reach your 9C customers?)
8. Cost structure (the cost of a course implementation: facilitator salary, place to meet, etc.)
9. Revenue streams (the possible ways to generate income, fundraising, refugee support programs, training projects, etc.)

3.1.2 Template No. 2. NGOs business plan to deliver the 9 Conversations programme

INTRODUCTION: GENERAL ASSUMPTIONS

Usually, NGOs are non-profit organizations, which means that their goal is that all the income they acquire covers the expenses they incur in the context of the social purpose they serve.

NGOs cover a range of objects in order to be consistent with the purpose for which they operate. The management of migration flows is always a part of their activities. There are cases where NGOs have been set up to manage other forms of social problems and have also been involved in the immigration issue.

NGOs, to the extent that they follow some business activity in the form of a social enterprise, should develop an operating model in the form of a business plan.

For the majority of NGOs, business plans represent extremely specialized documents which they do not find useful to develop except when it is a requirement of funding organizations or donors.

A business plan for an NGO is similar to that of a for-profit business plan. It serves as a clear, complete road map for the organization. It will answer questions like "what goals are we trying to achieve?" or "what is the true purpose of our organization?" and clear and simple answers should be given.

However, a business plan can still be a very useful tool for an NGO because even a simple non-profit business plan pushes one to do research and to consider all the variables that will affect its long-term perspective

Additionally, a nonprofit business plan acts as a facilitator for obtaining loans and grants, attracting donors and qualified board members (usually VIPs to lend credibility), and keeping the NGO on track.

A business plan for an NGO should provide answers to important questions such as:

1. What are the activities developed to achieve the organization's high-level goals?
2. What is the plan to secure revenue to finance these activities?
3. What are the operating expenses and specifically how are they analyzed?

Part of the operating plan is also the business model they will adopt. In recent years, the adoption of the **business model canvas** has dominated, which we also have as a dominant tool within the framework of the program.

1. STEPS TO ACCOMPLISH THE BUSINESS PLAN

Before proceeding with the development of a business plan it is necessary to carry out a series of processes.

Articulate a mission statement

A business plan for an NGO should start off with an articulation of the core values and the mission statement. Having a mission statement is essential for any company, but even more so for nonprofits.

The mission statement outlines the vision, the guiding philosophy, and any other principles that provide the purpose behind the work. This will help to refine and communicate the nonprofit message clearly.

Furthermore, a nonprofit mission statement can also help establish milestones, the problems the organisation seeks to solve, who the organisation serves, and its future goals.

Additionally, the aim of a mission statement isn't just about being able to showcase things externally, but also giving the internal team something to realign them if they get off track.

A mission statement is a compass to guide the team and keep the organisation aligned and focused.

Data collection

For the preparation of a business plan, some data from the past and the present are necessary. Data related to operations and finances (such as revenue, expenses, taxes, etc.) is vital for budgeting and organizational decisions.

There is also data that nonprofits collect from third-party sources about how to effectively address the purpose they serve, such as shared data from other nonprofits and data from governments.

By properly collecting and interpreting the above data, the NGO will be strong and ensure that the organization is financially viable.

2. NGO BUSINESS PLAN

In the following paragraphs we present in brief the minimum number of sections that a business plan of an organization must have, regardless of the object of activity, and the business model in the form of the BMC.

Outline

The development of an outline is crucial for an NGO since it has complex activities that touch on social goals but whose implementation requires managerial activities like a for-profit organisation. The outline is a summary of the sections of the business plan.

The outline helps to make sure that all points of the plan are addressed so that if any deficiencies are found it can be routed back to data collection.

The outline should be written in a simple format so that all members of the management team can provide effective feedback.

It should be emphasized that developing a business plan is an ongoing process. This is not a static document, but a strategy and action plan that continually evolves as your organization moves forward over time.

It is also important to hold regular review meetings to monitor progress against the original plan. This process may coincide with regular interim reports or meetings with managing authorities and funding organisations.

A nonprofit business plan will include many of the same sections of a standard business plan.

Executive Summary

This should be a clever short description of the complete plan. The statements for a summary should briefly touch on the activity itself, the “market opportunities”, the financial characteristics, needs and projections, and any other special aspect of the venture.

Business Description

In this section there will be a clear general description of the activity regarding the educational activity as well as the other supporting activities (such as mentoring) so that the beneficiaries can start their own business.

Special emphasis should be given to the special characteristics of the NGO. The special characteristics of each structure should be clearly described, such as the legal form, the fields of their activity and especially those that refer to their involvement in the management of migration flows.

There should also be a description of the environment of each NGO on a political and economic level in the form of a SWOT analysis (see page 10).

Marketing Segment

This section could be considered as the core part of the BP. In this section a detailed description of the activity is developed:

1. A description of the target "market". In the case of NGOs, a description of the target market will include the situation that prevails in the country of its activity regarding the qualitative characteristics of the immigration issue. As regards immigration there are transit countries and countries of final destination for immigrants. This data also creates different qualitative characteristics in relation to what was referred to above as the "market".
2. The strategies to be adopted in order for the NGOs to approach the migration flows and promote the service they offer. Also, these strategies are influenced by national policies in relation to the immigration issue.
3. The business model.

In this section of the BP, the description of the beneficiaries of the training activity will be made in accordance with the profile diagnosed in Entrepreneurship Survey tool. The training material may need to be differentiated depending on the end user. E.g. another structure and focus for skilled persons and another for the less skilled (in accordance to the CREA research findings).

There will also be an analysis of the "marketing" strategies, i.e. the strategies of approaching the beneficiaries, including the communication strategies.

Operations Segment

The operations necessary for the implementation of the activity are described in this section of the BP. In particular parts of this description refer to:

1. The location where the action will be offered (the online activity also has functional requirements).
2. The persons who undertake the provision of the educational material to the beneficiaries or the tutors. Additionally, persons involved as mentors or tutors must be included.
3. Any other aspects of the program such as relationship with suppliers or interactions with the local communities (e.g. Populations living near the camps of immigrants), etc.

Management Support

In this section there is a description of the people who undertake administrative roles and consequently have the corresponding responsibility. For these people, it is useful to have career experiences that qualifies them for those roles.

Financial Segment

This section of the BP describes the financial plan that will support the implementation of the activity.

As mentioned above, the involvement of an NGO in an entrepreneurship training program for immigrants can be one of its multiple actions in supporting migration flows. Nevertheless, an effort should be made to determine the financial data and for this specific activity.

These data should include:

1. The part of the revenues that will concern possible resources of funding from various bodies, whether national or international, that finance the specific activity.
2. The part of the costs associated with the implementation of the action. These include the compensation (salaries?) of those involved in the activity either directly or indirectly (in this case the part referring to the activity will be calculated), whether they are trainers or administrative staff, the costs for the provision and operation of the location where the activity will be offered either in physical form or in an online setting.
3. Any other cost that is associated with the implementation of the activity such as consumables etc.

Critical-Risks Segment

In this section of the BP should be described the significant risks that may arise from the involvement and implementation of the activity. The risks may refer to the economic environment (negative trends for entrepreneurship, e.g. Greece during the years of the memorandums or countries experiencing economic recession) but mainly to the political and institutional environment such as a violent change in the immigration policy of the host country or even in the political treatment in the activity of NGOs.

Milestone Schedule Segment

This section should describe the important milestones that should be achieved with the respective time limit. These milestones should be realistic and can be established within any appropriate time frame such as quarterly, monthly, or weekly.

SWOT analysis

SWOT analysis is a tool that could be very useful in many NGOs. SWOT stands for the Strengths and Weaknesses within the NGO. Strengths and Weaknesses refer to the internal environment of the organisation. Opportunities and Threats refer to factors outside the organisation.

We can also develop a SWOT analysis for a particular section of an organisation and consider it from these four points of view.

At the same time this SWOT analysis helps to scan the entire organization as it is at the time it is being processed.

This analysis is influenced by the political and economic environment of the country where the NGO operates. Also, this analysis is dependent on the time frame in which it is done.

Finally, the points described in the diagram below are indicative and not restrictive. This list can be developed to cover as many aspects of the items under consideration as possible.

STRENGTHS

- Social awareness
- Social recognition from the community
- Flexibility in management
- Eligibility for National and EU funding

WEAKNESSES

- Under developed board of trustees
- Weakness in management and operational model.
- Bad or problematic social image in certain countries or periods
- Understaffed organisations with a variety of non-operational skills
- Inability for long term planning due to environmental instability
- A high degree of sensitivity to central policies, whether governmental or European

OPPORTUNITIES

- Access to a number of donors and funding recourses
- Support from national and EU policies
- Support from the media and advocacy organisations

THREATS

- Operations are not sustainable and they are connected with the social problems they are dealing with
- Subjects of bad reputation due to possible financial scandals
- Audit subjects from all funding sources which have different managerial rules
- Subject to strict government controls

4 SOCIAL ENTERPRISE BUSINESS PLAN EXAMPLES TO OFFER THE 9 CONVERSATIONS PROGRAMME

1. Annex 1. Social Services Center of Jonava district example.
2. Annex 2. Lithuanian Red Cross example.
3. Annex 3. CReA ETS example.
4. Annex 4. Template No. 1. How to set up a social enterprise to deliver the programme inspired by the Business Model Canvas (WORD, download).
5. Annex 5. Template No. 2. NGOs business plan (WORD, download).