



Housing First Belgium : An innovating approach in the fight against Homelessness

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Presentation Plan

I. Presentation of the Handbook of HFB

- 1.1. Methodology and purpose of the Handbook
- 1.2. Content of the Handbook
- 1.3. Examples of good practices from the Belgian experiment

II. Which tools are needed to facilitate the implementation?

- 2.1. What do we have in Belgium?
- 2.2. What would we like to have in Belgium?



I. Presentation of the Handbook of HFB



1.1. Methodology – Context of the Belgian implementation

- 3-year experimentation with 10 support teams (social workers, psychologists, nurses, doctors, ...);
- Mainly statistical evaluation to measure the effect and impact of HF model in Belgium;
- **Challenges :**
 - (1) Implement the same model (from abroad) in different contexts (political, institutional, legal, ...)
 - (2) Pressure from the context of an experimentation, from the sector, from the media, on the political level, from the project's public, ...



1.1. Methodology –

Needs of the Support and the Evaluation teams

- Need of exchanges with the other Belgian partners for the support team ;
- Need of complementary information for the evaluation team.

Develop a process of **collaborative research** (Lefrançois, 1997) and create qualitative methodological tools.



1.1. Methodology – Methodological protocol

With HFB's support team :

- Mainly Focus group (15 : 2 on a national level and 13 on a regional level);

Purpose : identify the challenges (communal and/or local) and the good practices to deal with it

- Data collection also with individual interviews (7); Observations (team meeting; home visits with the client, during the “official meetings”); Informal moments, ...;

With the external professionals from the sector of Homelessness:

- Mainly Focus Group (5 : only on a regional level)
- Also individual interviews (3).

Purpose : to test and improve the first draft(s) of the handbook

And, indirectly create spaces to debate about HFB with external actors from the sector

→ Material for the handbook of HFB



1.2. Content of the Belgian Handbook (1)

General purpose : Develop some tools and suggestions for the Institutions (and also political actors) which would like to start a HF project

Our wish = write a very practical handbook for the support team BUT we need to keep in mind :

- the Belgian experiment showed how important it is to ADAPT the **operationalisation** of the HF model's theoretical principles to the specific reality of each context;
- Each person requires a **specific and individual support** : there is no "one solution"



1.2. Content of the Belgian Handbook (2)

- This handbook is NOT “a recipe book” but more of a guideline with ideas from the belgian support team, a tool for other teams’ reflexion;
- Content of the handbook : we start with the challenges that the support team met ; examples of solutions from the belgian team; suggestions of tips in practical way (several tips) with their advantage and disavantage.



1.2. Content of the Belgian Handbook (3)

Chapter 1 : **How to develop a HF project in my specific context** (Knowledge of the model, building a network, target public, ...) ;

Chapter 2 : **How to concretely organise the support** (first contact with the client; Multidisciplinary support; intensity, end of the support, ...)





1.3. Examples from the Belgian Handbook

1.3.1. Access to Housing

- Reality of the Housing market in Belgium, especially in the big cities (lack of social housing// waiting time, high percentage of landlords, discrimination on the private market, ...);

Answer of HFB team :

- (1) Develop a high diversity in the choice of kinds of housing (advantages/limits described in the Handbook);
- (2) Develop “new professions” in housing specialisation, directly linked with the support team (ex: “housing catcher”)



1.3.2. Importance of the network

- **Before** and **During** all the steps of the project :

- (1) Identify the needs from the field;
- (2) Try to avoid the concurrence and encourage the complementarity ;
- (3) Create a multidimensional support with the partners;
- (4) Prepare the return in the network of common law.

Answer of HFB team :

- Creation of multi-institutional teams ;
- Steering and support Committees (at local and national levels);

CCL : HF Team has to be seen as a partner in the network and not as a concurrent



II. Which tools are needed to facilitate the implementation of the HF model?



2.1. What do we have in Belgium?

1) Network from King Baudouin Foundation (set up by the three institutions responsible for the evaluation; all the support teams from HFB are invited and encouraged to participate) ;

- Nov.2015 – Dec. 2017 : 7 meetings (one full day);
- Deliverable : input and output paper for each meeting; final product (including video support) to communicate with the external partners and other sectors.

Purpose :

- Continue to exchange about the HF model based on the Belgian support team's experiment ;
- Increase knowledge about HF;
- Establishment of a model of HF's practices



2.1. What we have in Belgium?

2) Local initiatives developed by the institutions from HFB project :

- Continuous training;
- Intervision and supervision about individual support (for ex. In case of death, violent episode, ...);



2.2. What we could like to have in Belgium?

- Encourage the exchanges at a European level for the team (and not only at the institutional level) ;
- Debate about concrete practices between different countries;
- Visits of the national experiments



2.2. What we would like to have in Belgium?

- Develop a way to encourage and allow participant observation between the support teams (at a regional and national level but mainly at a European level);