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Green Care - Nature Assisting Integration of Aging Somali Women

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Degree Programme in Social Services

Green Care - Nature Assisting Integration of Aging Somali Women

5.12.2014

Author(s) Title Number of Pages Date	Tanja Gråsten and Iina Hokkanen Green Care - Nature Assisting Integration of Aging Somali Women 32 pages + 1 appendix 3.11.2014
Degree	Bachelor of Social Services
Degree Programme	Social Services
Specialisation option	Social Services
Instructor(s)	Jukka Törnroos, Senior Lecturer Seija Mäenpää, Senior Lecturer
<p>This functional thesis was done in co-operation with Blue Ribbon organization's Green Gate project and Kantti association's Jade project. Through the multi-professional co-operation with our partner organizations a new functional and participatory working method was created. We had two purposes. The first one was to report how different Green Care activities could assist aging Somali women's integration into the Finnish society. The second one was to provide new comprehensive knowledge on how to facilitate Green Care activities for groups with immigrant background.</p> <p>This thesis consists of six different Green Care activities. In order to meet the needs of our target group we planned the activities in collaboration with them. During the activities we could survey possible challenges for activities such as religious praying times and holidays, diets, symbolisms and both physical and cognitive limitations. Each activity was reflected individually through Green Gate project's instructor's diary. The instructors and the target group participated in the activities together: communal participation deepens the interaction and participants can learn from each other.</p> <p>The evaluation of the process was based on both immediate feedback and a feedback session in the last meeting. According to the feedback gathered from the participants, activities had allowed them to gain new knowledge about Finnish nature and the rights and responsibilities (of people) regarding it. Learning Finnish language becomes a natural part of the activities as well as getting to know Finnish customs and habits. It was mentioned that the physical and mental wellbeing of the participants had increased. The method also seems to have potential to create interaction between immigrants and the native population.</p> <p>As a conclusion we argue that nature can be used to assist immigrants' integration. The findings in this thesis were from the group of aging Somali women so they might not be directly applied to groups with different age, sex and ethnic background. This working method has gained a lot interest within the workers and students in the field of social services. Ideally, this interest would inspire them to use nature to assist the process of integration.</p>	
Keywords	integration, Green Care, nature, Somali, aging immigrants

<p>Tekijät Otsikko</p> <p>Sivumäärä Aika</p>	<p>Tanja Gråsten ja Iina Hokkanen Green Care – Luontoavusteinen kotoutuminen ikääntyville Somalialaisille naisille</p> <p>32 sivua + 1 liite 3.11.2014</p>
<p>Tutkinto</p>	<p>Sosionomi (AMK)</p>
<p>Koulutusohjelma</p>	<p>Sosiaalialan koulutusohjelma</p>
<p>Suuntautumisvaihtoehto</p>	<p>Sosiaaliala</p>
<p>Ohjaajat</p>	<p>Lehtori Jukka Törnroos Lehtori Seija Mäenpää</p>
<p>Tämä toiminnallinen opinnäytetyö tehtiin yhteistyössä Sininauhaliiton Vihreä Veräjä hankkeen ja Kantti Ry:n Jade projektin kanssa. Moniammatillisen yhteistyön tuloksena luotiin uusi toiminnallinen ja osallistava metodi. Opinnäytetyöllä oli kaksi tavoitetta. Ensimmäinen oli raportoida miten Green Care aktiviteetit voisivat edesauttaa ikääntyvien Somalialaisten naisten kotoutumista suomalaiseen yhteiskuntaan. Toinen oli tuottaa uutta ja käytännönläheistä tietoa kuinka toteuttaa Green Care aktiviteetteja maahanmuuttaja taustaisille ryhmille.</p> <p>Opinnäytetyö koostuu kuudesta eri Green Care aktiviteetistä. Jotta voisimme parhaiten vastata kohderyhmämme tarpeisiin suunnittelimme toiminnat yhdessä ryhmän kanssa. Aktiviteettien aikana havainnoimme mahdollisia haasteita toiminnalle kuten uskonnolliset rukousajat ja juhlapyhät, ruokavalio, symboliikka sekä fyysiset ja kognitiiviset rajoitteet. Jokainen aktiviteetti reflektoitiiin erikseen hyödyntämällä Vihreä Veräjä hankkeen ohjaajan päiväkirjaa. Ohjaajat ja kohderyhmä toteuttavat toimintaa yhdessä: yhteisöllinen tekeminen syventää vuorovaikutusta ja osallistujat voivat oppia toisiltaan.</p> <p>Prosessin arviointi perustui sekä välittömään palautteeseen että palautekeskusteluun. Aktiviteettien johdosta osallistujat olivat saaneet uutta tietoa suomalaisesta luonnosta sekä siihen liittyvistä oikeuksista ja velvollisuuksista. Samalla opitaan kieltä ja päästään osalliseksi suomalaisesta tapakulttuurista. Osallistujat mainitsivat myös, että aktiviteettien positii-visesta vaikutuksesta heidän fyysiseen ja henkiseen hyvinvointiinsa. Metodilla näyttäisi myös olevan potentiaalia lisätä vuorovaikutusta maahanmuuttajien kantaväestön välillä.</p> <p>Palautteen sekä havaintojen perusteella näyttää siltä, että luonto voidaan hyödyntää osana kotouttavaa toimintaa. Tämän opinnäytetyön kohderyhmänä olivat ikääntyneet Somalialaiset naiset jonka vuoksi tulokset eivät ole suoraan sovellettavissa muihin ryhmiin. Tämä toimintamalli on herättänyt alalla mielenkiintoa. Parhaassa tapauksessa mielenkiinto herättäisi myös halua käyttää luontoa kotoutumisen tukena.</p>	
<p>Avainsanat</p>	<p>kotoutuminen, Green Care, luonto, somialaiset, ikääntyvät maahanmuuttajat</p>

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1 Introduction

This thesis has two aims; the first one is to report how different Green Care activities could support aging Somali women's integration into the Finnish society. The second one was to provide new comprehensive knowledge on how to facilitate Green Care activities for groups with immigrant background.

This thesis is a functional one. The core concepts and theories of this thesis are *Green Care* and *integration*. In total we had six different activities with our target group. The need for this thesis raised from our working life partner Blue Ribbon (Sininauhaliitto) organization's Green Gate (Vihreä Veräjä) project. The activities were carried out in aging Somali women group in Kantti ry's Jade project in Helsinki.

There are not many studies done about Green Care methods with immigrants as a target group in Finland, especially with aging immigrants. Many of the earlier studies seemed to focus on how immigrants are using nature individually on their leisure time, but we could not find a study on how to facilitate such activities to immigrants in an effective way. This is why we decided to pay special attention for the instructor's point of view in our thesis.

2 Background

2.1 Aim of our thesis

The main aim of our thesis was to introduce Finnish customs and culture to our target group. In our activities we made use of nature as an instrument and environment. Learning about Finnish customs, culture and nature can have a positive impact on one's integration process as well. Another aim of our thesis was to provide new, comprehensive knowledge on how to facilitate Green Care activities for a group of aging Somali women. In the activity reports presented in our thesis one can read a description about each session, its background, implementation and evaluation. In conclusion, we have presented what kind of realizations we had during the journey, and what one could learn from our experiences with this group.

2.2 Work life partners

The idea for this topic came from the Blue Ribbon organization. Since 2011 until the end of 2014 Blue Ribbon organization have had Green Care-project called Green Gate. The project aims to offer nature related hobbies to people living in challenging situations, and to promote the wellbeing of their clients. In the project they are developing Green Care methods that are suitable in Finland for variety of client groups. In their project they have chosen four main methods; gardening, activities in farm and with animals, recreation fishing and crafting from nature materials (Vihreä Veräjä 2014.)

In spring 2014 Heidi Backman from Novia University of Applied sciences did her thesis in co-operation with Green Gate project. As a result of her thesis she has produced a booklet that introduces nature related activities monthly which could specifically serve the immigrant population. In process of planning the activities we met Backman and also studied her findings from her thesis.

Activities were carried out in already existing group of Somali women in Jade project. Jade project is part of Kantti association. Kantti association provides services for aging people in Helsinki and Jade project is specifically aimed for immigrant women. Jade project is funded by Finnish Slot machine Association (RAY) for years 2013 – 2015. Jade project supports ageing people's integration requisitions for good everyday life. Primary aim at Jade project is to work towards and support ageing immigrant's integration into Finnish society. (Jade projekti 2014.)

We adapted our project into Jade project's current activities such as conversation, wellbeing and exercise group. Activities in Jade project are targeted for women over 55-years. Currently all of the clients using Jade project's services are originally from Somalia. Regarding this fact, it felt natural for us to focus on the special characters of working with aging Somali women. Some of our activities take place in Kantti association's service house in Helsinki. Kantti service house also served us as a meeting point before every activity.

2.2.1 Co-operation with work life partners

In December 2013 we met first time two workers from Green Gate project. During this meeting we discussed about the Green Care activities for this thesis and about our target group in general level. In next meeting we met Heidi Backman and familiarized ourselves with her thesis. In last meeting before the actual activities there were workers both from Green Gate and Jade project. During the last meeting the actual activities were chosen. Besides the meetings we have been interacting with our work life partners mainly through emails. Before every activity we formed an activity plan and sent it to our work life partners. After the activities we filled Green Gate's instructor's journal (Appendix 1). In the journal we would discuss our realizations about good practices and give improvement suggestions for the future activities. These journals also served us as a source for the activity reports reported in this thesis.

As mentioned earlier, our group of clients already existed inside Jade project. It has been a major privilege for us, as we did not need to spend time for advertising the group or finding the clients. The fact that clients knew each other from prior was helpful as well, because they could pass the word about upcoming activities as well as support each other within the activities. Moreover Jade project has been our experts of Somali culture, and language.

In September 2014 Green Gate and Jade project introduced the findings of our thesis in Good Age event in Tampere. In November 2014 our work life partners together applied for Innovillage's Innovation prize which is to be given for good new practices in social and health care field. At the end of our thesis project we participated on workshop together with both of our work life partners, in order to combine our findings to the application. Innovation prize is worth of 3000euros, and it is given by social and health minister Laura Rätty. (Innokylä 2014.)

Having had opportunity to work with such a good informational resources, our job has been mostly focusing on planning the activities, and monitoring our group. Some of the activities that were carried out during the process of this thesis had expenses. These expenses were paid by Green Gate project and Jade project.

2.3 Immigrants and nature in other publications

Closest to our topic is a bachelor's thesis done by Backman (2014) of which result she has produced a booklet of nature related activities for immigrants. She had done her background interview with women from Somalia, but in contrast to our thesis, her sample consisted of rather young women between ages 20-40. These women had small children which could have resulted that they were interested especially about activities that could be done with children. (Backman 2014. p.30)

Our sample and later on target group consist of aging women, which might add a new viewpoint for the discussion. Moreover, Backman's thesis did not include testing the of the booklet in practice. This is why we are going to carry on with her project by making use of the booklet, and report our findings. We hope that the professionals willing to use the booklet can from our experiences gain a better understanding on how the activities work in practice, and what needs to be taken into consideration while using it.

Most of the activities presented in our thesis can be found from Backman's booklet (visiting Seurasaari, Finnish Nature Centre Haltia, and a farm, fishing, picking mushrooms, gardening, and everyman's rights)

Leikkilä has studied how immigrants are using and experiencing urban nature, and how it could support their process of integration. She found out that many immigrants seem to use the nature in similar way they had been used to in their country of origin (Leikkilä 2010, p.66). In our opinion this is a good starting point, but we were willing to challenge our participants' idea of what nature could offer for them, and therefore introduce also some new ways of enjoying nature. Some of Leikkilä's interviewees had tried new activities that are typical to Finnish people, such like picking berries and skiing. This seemed to promote their process of integration. (Leikkilä 2010. p.66)

Leppänen, A-M. (2009) has focused her thesis around urban farming. According to her findings, many of the immigrants had been farming in their homeland, and they were wishing to continue this after moving into Finland. (Leppänen 2009. p.87)

It seems that it is important for many immigrants to maintain the connection with the ground, because while working in farm they can imagine themselves back into their homelands. For an example in the urban farming area of Fallpaka, every third or fourth farmer is an immigrant. (Leppänen 2009. p.89)

The hobby can also be a source for new knowledge. Many of the interviewees mentioned that they had learned about the Finnish culture, and habits from other urban

farmers. Also their language skills had improved as they were interacting within the farming community. (Leppänen 2009. p.85)

The Nature institute of Göteborg organized a project for immigrants to encourage them into nature. According to the findings of the project it seems that getting to know nature together with a trustworthy instructor has a potential to decrease some fears of the participants. During the project participants had learned more about the local nature for an example by identifying plants and trees that are found in their homeland as well. They realized that the difference between the countries was not as big as they had been thinking, and this made them more relaxed in the new surroundings. (Moshtat cited in Backman 2014) The unknown nature can seem scary at first. Especially for those coming from countries where dangerous animals live close by, and can even threaten the lives of the people. (Moshtat as cited by Backman 2014) For an example fishing excursions done in the evenings seemed scary at first due the darkness, but once the immigrants found the encourage to participate, their fear for nature and dark decreased. (Moshtat cited in Backman 2014)

2.4 Target group and its special characters

In this section we are going to present some of the points that one might need to consider while planning a nature related activities with immigrants. Later on, in the theoretical background of this thesis, we are going to discuss more about the integration of aging immigrants. However it is important to remember that as we all are individuals, and the way we express our culture and religion do vary, the best way to learn about one's preferences is to simply ask. This is why we include our target group in planning of the activities, in order to hear their individual expectations and needs. We wanted to find out the aspects that we would have to take into consideration when modifying Green Care activities to meet the special needs of our target group, aging Somali women. The results of the background discussion with the target group are presented later in this thesis.

Firstly it is good to find out beforehand about religious holidays, and possible praying times. For an example we did not arrange any activities during Ramadan, and later in our activity reports you can read more about the importance of knowing those daily praying times. Islamic praying times can be asked from the local mosque. There is also an internet service where all the religious holidays can be checked (For an example

www.uskontokalenteri.fi in Finland). If participants wish to pray while being in nature, it might be a good idea to have a blanket and water for hand washing.

Secondly, if the activities are going to have something to do with animals (e.g. visiting farms, playing with dogs), one will need to consider the animal symbolism in different religions. For an example according to Salovuori it is not recommended to introduce Somali people with pigs and dogs due to religious reasons (Salovuori.2014. p.41). However, we argue that the knowledge should not become a limitation; we wanted to expand the thinking of our participants. Therefore one would not necessarily need to leave any activities out due the religious reasons, but to be sensitive. Facilitator should not be afraid to introduce something new, and to challenge the participants' thinking, but either should he force or hurry. Internalizing of a new thought or practice requires time.

A Swedish research of immigrants and integration made a notice that many of the immigrants in their project did not know how to swim. (Mohstat cited in Backman 2014). As we have plenty of water in Finland, and many of the nature sights are close to water, the clients could be in danger if we do not address this issue in the beginning of any activities close by water. It is important to confirm if the participants know how to swim. In case there are people who do not know, it is important to have life jacket as well as remind clients on how to be close to water-safely.

Probably the most obvious question when planning multicultural activities would be the language. Whether or not to employ an interpreter, and is it better to have heterogenic or homogeny group regarding the spoken languages of the members. Abakumova (2011) has addressed the issue in her thesis. As a part of her thesis she had facilitated a group of Russian speakers and another group where the participants spoke multiple languages. She describes that the Russian speaking group felt easier to facilitate first of all, because the group shared the same language and they had rather similar backgrounds with each other's. Having a common language enabled her to describe some words meanings in a deeper level, because she could try to find synonyms from participant's mother language. On the other hand she was questioning whether it was "too easy" for the group to get everything ready; in "real life situations" they might not get such support. (Abakumova 2011. p.33)

Wit the multilingual group she had found it sometimes challenging to explain Finnish words in Finnish. However, overall she thought that this type of group could offer a bet-

ter platform for learning the language as the participants would really need to use Finnish in order to get understood. She also argues that this will prepare participants for the reality when they are using different services; interpretations are not available everywhere. (Abakumova 2011. p.34)

We decided not have an official interpreter, because one of the instructors was a Somali woman.

Having someone who speaks Somali was crucial in our case to make sure that the participants have completely understood the safety related instructions for an example while picking mushrooms. As the language level of our participants varies, we might not have received as in-depth feedback from them without an interpreter either.

In addition, Gullichsen´s interviewee has mentioned the fact that translating only the words do not guarantee that people would completely understand each other, because our approaches are dating back to the deeper significance of the meaning systems. In order to reach fully understanding between people from different cultures, not only language, but the meaning systems should be interpreted. (Gullichsen 2012. p.78)

The Somali woman working with us was a great source of such underneath information about the Somali culture. Her knowledge assisted us in the project of planning the activities as well as in understanding our target groups needs and opinions.

3 Theoretical framework

3.1 What is green care?

Green Care is an umbrella term for different types of nature based activities. These activities are meant to benefit and maintain people's wellbeing. Green care has developed internationally as multivolume activity that has many different focuses. These focuses are for example animal based therapy, rehabilitative farming, therapeutic gardening, landscaping etc. In Finland the term "Green Care" was presented for the first time in 2008. Green Care Finland association was registered in 2010. (Green Care Finland 2014)

There are three main elements in Green Care which also plays a vital role in this thesis. These elements are nature, activity and community. This means that *nature* is

either place for activity or in some cases instrument for the activity. In Green Care activities nature as an instrument can either mean a whole forest in countryside or a garden in a city or different animals. Nature as a place for activity can also mean different things from forest to the gardens, parks and farms. *Activity* is then the part that brings people and the nature closer to each other. When the activity is done together in groups it makes one feel like a part of the *community*. A part from the interaction with other people one can also get a feeling of involvement also from interaction with the nature and animals (MTT 2014).

In Finland the benefits of nature have been well known for long time and nature has been used in supporting wellbeing in social- and healthcare services. For example different institutions have been located close to nature. This way the patients and clients had the opportunity to participate in for example gardening and farming activities. (Soini et al. 2011. P.1). Throughout history attitudes and relationship towards nature and animals have changed. According to Yli-Viikari the assumption where Green Care is largely based on is that “nowadays people have differentiation from nature, its rhythm and its conformity to law” (Yli-Viikari et al. 2009. p.19)

3.2 Integration and aging immigrants

According to Ministry of the Interior (2013), integration could be determined as immigrant’s adaption to the Finnish society. This includes learning new skills and life style. Finnish law has recognized the need of promoting immigrant’s integration. Purpose of this act (493/1999; amendments up to 324/2009 included) is to support and promote integration and possibilities to participate actively in society. Law is also meant to promote equality and positive interaction between different communities (Finlex 1386/2010).

This means that there need to be resources and services provided by authorities of the municipalities. There also needs to be consideration for the needs of immigrants in planning and providing public services and measures. These measures promoting and supporting integration are only available for persons who have municipality of resi-

dence in Finland under the Municipality of Residence Act. Costs incurred from this act are met on the state budget (Finlex.Lainsäädäntö1215/2005).

In addition to municipality's services, there are some third sector organisations.

For an example Green Gate- and Jade project with whom we have co-operated in our thesis are good examples of organisations operating in third sector. The funding of such organisations can come from various sources such like donations, Finland's Slot machine Association (RAY) and also from the state budget. Both Green Gate- and Jade project get their funding from Finland's Slot machine Association (RAY).

It can be argued that the challenges of integration process vary in different phases of a life. First of all, migration in elderly years can be more difficult because so much of the life and memories are left behind and the skills for adaptation are often lower than in young age (Salokangas, Tossavainen 1999. p. 58).

Despite the fact that aging immigrant might not need to learn the language for the sake of the working life, it is important for the sake of life management (Salokangas and Tossavainen 1999. p. 36).

Interacting with the local community as well as being able to use different services independently requires at least basic level understanding of the language (Salokangas, Tossavainen 1999. p. 58).

Aging immigrants without any language skills have a high risk of exclusion, and the society could prevent this by offering activities locally in those areas where many immigrants are living (Salokangas, Tossavainen 1999. p. 58).

Also Linderborg has been discussing about the importance of social contacts and locally arranged activities. According to her, aging immigrants are lacking direct contact with people outside of the family. Children, grandchildren and interpreters will be used for communication, or there will be no contacts at all. The aging population, including aging immigrants, have the need for contacts outside of their family, especially with their coevals. Specially targeted activities are primarily important to secure aging immigrants social interactions and to prevent exclusion. (Linderborg 2005. p.4)

Gullichsen's interviewee has listed some of the factors that might prevent aging immigrants from participating: problems in health, lacking in ability to focus and economic issues. If an aging immigrant will need to buy a bus ticket to be part of the activity, they might need to decide not to come due to low income level. (Gullichsen 2012. p.70)

Linderborg wrote that some might question why to use resources for aging immigrants. Would it not be more beneficial to focus on the younger generation? She continues by remembering Masoud Kamal's speech from 2008's nationwide seminar about aging immigrants: many of those aging immigrants have children and grandchildren who will see how we treat their elderlies. If we do not have respect towards the older generation of immigrants, the younger generation can read it as an indirect message, showing them that there is no need to respect our society either. He claims that this results a lack of trust, and can escalate to conflict situations. (Linderborg 2012. p.26-27)

To summarize, the integration might be more challenging for an aging immigrant than for an immigrants in working age or younger. They have strong memories from their country of origin, and adapting skills might have lowered from younger age. It is equally important for them to learn the language to be able to communicate with the surrounding community and to use services independently.

In order to prevent exclusion the society needs to offer easily accessible, preferably free or cheap activities locally in the areas that aging immigrants are living.

4 Methods

4.1 Design of our work

Part of a functional thesis is to collect background information about the target group and their needs. The importance of collecting this background knowledge becomes even more vital when there is very little, or not at all publications about the topic. (Vilkkka, Airaksinen 2003. p. 56-57)

4.1.1 Qualitative research methods in functional thesis

Qualitative research methods are useful when one seeks to understand a phenomenon, and its background or one is aiming to implement an idea based on the views of a target group. The quality of the collected information will be ensured by using research methods in basic level. This means for an example collecting research data, but not necessarily analysing the data as strictly and efficiently than in an actual research. (Vilkkka, Airaksinen 2003. p. 57-58)

Interviews can be made for individuals as well as groups depending on what kind of a knowledge one is willing to gain. For an example if the aim is to study preferences of a group, it might be practical to interview them as a group. It is characteristic for qualitative research methodology to ask questions “what, how, why” so that the participant is able to freely express his thoughts and visions. (Vilkkä, Airaksinen 2003. p. 63). We had prepared qualitative oriented themes for the discussion. During the actual discussion we were using them only to give directions but not to dominate the discussion.

4.1.2 Group discussion

According to Marjeta many Somali people were afraid of the word “interview”; it reminded them about interviews with police, and about the long asylum seeking process (Marjeta 2001. p.6). This might apply to many immigrants with a refugee background. Alitolppa-Niittamo (1994. p.5) had noticed that semi structured interviews awaked some negative feelings amongst Somali people, and often they had refused to complete the interview. What is more Marjeta mentioned that one of her interviewees opposed the recording of the interview. The reason behind is that Muslims believe that the voice would remain alive after their death (Marjeta 2001. p.6). According to these experiences we decided not to have an interview, but a group discussion, and not to record anything. As mentioned before, we had only chosen the themes, but were trying to avoid strongly structured interview.

In our questions during the group discussion we were interested in learning about the nature relationship that our target group had in their homeland, and here. We are also interested in what kind of meanings nature has for them. We were hoping to gain deeper understanding of what kind of nature related activities our target group is familiar with, or enjoys. We thought that was interesting to understand whether our target group views nature as a resource for mental wellbeing e.g. as a place for relaxation or whether they see nature as a resource of goods such as fish, and berries.

Robson (2001. p.259) talks about the challenges of a group discussion. He claims that sometimes it can be hard to know which opinion was common to all, and which was from an individual, because there might be participants who likes to act more as a spokesmen. Robson says that conflicts may arise between personalities. This problem demands well managed interview process so that the less articulate also shares their

views and so that extreme views do not dominate and create biases. This is why it was important to create space for everyone to speak. Also we could not take the answers as a common opinion of the group, but as a sample of different individual viewpoints.

4.1.3 Findings from group discussion

According to these findings and meetings with Green Gate and Jade project workers we decided which green care activities to use. In our discussion we had eight participants from Somalia, interpreter and three workers. As we had a discussion not a research interview we simply wanted to start a discussion, hear some general opinions of theirs as well as get them inspired about the upcoming activities.

All our group members are from very different backgrounds; some of them were from city areas, some of them from countryside. One had been a nomad taking care of goats. Ages vary, but all of them are already adults. Due to the different backgrounds they also had very different experiences in nature. It seemed like most of them viewed nature as a functional resource which provides food. Same functional viewpoint was characteristic to all activities that interested them; there seemed to be a lot of interest towards cooking from fresh seasonal ingredients as well as fishing. Especially the participant with nomad background was interested in visiting a Finnish farm, even though there was concern about if the people in countryside would be less welcoming than in city areas. In contrast there seemed to be no interest towards crafting from nature materials unless the end product would be something useful such as soap.

Attitudes towards crafting made an interesting contrast between our sample, and Backman's sample; in her research crafting was seen as something that they would like to try and learn more about (Backman 2014. p.20). As mentioned before, her sample consisted of 6 women between ages 20-40 with small children, which might be the reason behind the different interests of her group, and our group.

Also Silvennoinen reported that the participants of her activities, immigrant families with children, enjoyed crafting. According to her, even to see different kind of crafting materials awoke interest amongst the families. She claims that it might be due the fact that some of the families cannot afford buying such materials to their homes. (Silvennoinen 2012. p.31) This is again one example of the fact that we cannot make generalizations about the interests of specific ethnic groups and that it is always best to ask participants' preferences individually.

When we first introduced the idea of urban farming, there was some suspiciousness within the group. They mentioned the fact that one can buy all the vegetables from grocery store, so why to bother growing them yourself. Despite this we decided to try urban farming with our target group because we saw it as a good opportunity to learn language, discuss about gardening and food cultures around the world, as well as source for a personal fulfilment.

Also Leikkilä mentioned in her research findings that some of the nature related activities, including urban farming, could be even more popular amongst immigrants if they would be aware of such possibility. (Leikkilä 2010. p.69). We thought that it might be beneficial for our participants to learn about this possibility as some of them had the concern if one could do gardening living in a blockhouse.

Also it seems that immigrants will get lots of information from other immigrants, by so called word of mouth information (Leikkilä 2010. p.57), in best scenario our participants would pass the word for others and so spread the knowledge.

As a conclusion it seems that the functional viewpoint was important for our group. Reason behind the activities has to be clear, whether it is to do exercises in nature walk, or learning to utilize seasonal fruits and vegetables. Another important point seems to be to provide knowledge on public rights e.g. what can you grow and where, what and how much are you allowed collecting from nature.

The findings of this discussion cannot be applied to the entire immigrant society, not even to an entire ethnic group, as seen below. Different ages, life situations, gender and individual's personality has an impact on what kind of an activities interest them. Our findings served us a source of information when planning activities for our target group, and can provide some examples on what kind of experiences and wishes immigrants do have. We recommend to have similar kind of a background discussion with one's own group to be best able to answer their needs. Similarly we recommend challenging your group to try out some activities that might not seem interesting at first. Only in this way they have the opportunity to widen their idea of local nature and its possibilities.

5 Activity reports

5.1 Waiting for the spring and planting seeds

There are both individual and social meanings in growing plants. Japanese professor Matsou claims that it makes one feel like a human and distinguishes people from the animals. People also have a tendency to nurse life and one example of this besides taking care of children and animals can be growing and taking care of plants (Nuorten ystävät ry. 2003. p. 29.) This is important aspect in our target group, ageing immigrant women. These women might have struggles on finding their “own place” as society might not need them in same way in Finland as it might have needed them in Somalia. For example in some cultures grandparents and especially grandmothers have important role on taking care of the small children whereas in Finland this is taken care of in kindergartens. Therefore taking care of plants has important individual and social meaning. “We can find value for our existence through the feedback we got from others” (Evers 2000. p.119). This means for example the feedback we got from others when they admire our plants or when one can exchange the products that they have grown with others. We thought that our target group might have similar need for nursing and nurturing something, so we decided to try gardening with them. In this first activity we would plant some seeds, and in latter activity we would shift them to the patio of Kantti so that our participants as well as inhabitants of Kantti could enjoy them.

5.1.1 Implementation

The core idea of our first Green Care meeting was to learn vocabulary as well as discuss the spring season in Finland and in Somalia. We had also decided to have some hands on gardening activities. During the activity we were making use of pictures combined to words; we had pictures of the flowers we were going to plant, and pictures of different objects characteristic for spring in Finland, such as coltsfoot. In our first meeting we had 8 participants (1 was just observing as she had back ache), and 4 leaders. We were planting chilies, tomatoes, basil, parsley, marigolds and violets. For some reason tomatoes, chilies and violets were most popular amongst our participants.

We began by introducing ourselves, the materials and our idea of what we were going to do. Participants got to choose which seeds they wanted to plant. The size of our

group allowed us leaders to guide the participants closely. In the end of the session we had tea and small snacks while watching a slideshow of spring in Finland. In each picture we had a Finnish word explaining what the picture is about. Very important part was to discuss the objects in pictures. We had a very good discussion about cultures, and we were also able to share some knowledge. For an example crossed viper is the only toxic snake in Finland. Usually the case is that they are more afraid of people than people are for them, so stomping while walking in forest should be enough to avoid contact with them. We think it was good to talk this through to release some unnecessary fears; one does not have to be afraid of dangerous snakebites while in nature.

It was also interesting to hear their observations of Finnish customs. The picture with a willow branch awaked discussion. Our participants could tell that children are collecting branches in Easter time, and some participants had even had children coming to their door with decorated willows. At first they had been wondering what do these kids want, but finally they realized that those kids wish to exchange their decorated branches to candies or other small gifts. It was good to have such discussion in order to share experiences and knowledge as well as gain understanding towards different cultural characters.

5.1.2 Reflection

We had an ideal amount of participants regarding of this kind of an activities. As mentioned before, we were able to commit to each participant individually. The group was active from the beginning till the end, making questions and commenting. Another indicator of the interest within the group was that one of the participants was making notes in order to practice her Finnish language skills. Members in our group are already familiar to each other, which allowed us to go straight to the day's topic. If the case was not so, it would have been good to include some warm up exercises at the beginning of our session. As all of the participants are Muslims, leader has to be aware of daily praying times. Information of the daily praying times can usually be found from local mosques webpages. Once the times are known, leader can incorporate praying as a part of the activity.

In case that we would have similar activities later on, we suggest that besides Finnish words could also be interesting to have Somali words in pictures. Our target group

could also benefit from pictorial guidelines to activities. We have planned our activities to follow the changes in nature. Next time we are going to enjoy a walk in one of the islands in Helsinki. This makes continuum to our activities; we can see the spring changes in nature as now we saw them from pictures.

5.2 Nature walk

According to Finnish research, development and training institute's (TTS n.d.) briefing about Green Care (Green Care – esimerkkejä Vihreästä Hoivasta Suomessa n.d.) green surroundings and outdoor activities have positive effect on people's quality of life, wellbeing and ability to function. Safety needs to be taken into consideration always. According to Leikkilä learning Nordic walk can also assist one's survival of Finnish winter and its slipperiness. (Leikkilä 2010. p.66). This was a great way to combine something that is very Finnish into the activity itself.

5.2.1 Implementation

With all together 14 participants we took a trip to Seurasaari, which is an island in Helsinki. By the request of the participants, we had taken Nordic walk poles with us. Many had previous experience about Nordic walking, and Seurasaari Island was a familiar location for them. At the beginning of the activity some of the participants noticed that they had forgotten their bus tickets to Kantti. In order to reclaim missing tickets one of the instructors had to return to get them. During the activity we made an interesting notice about the group dynamics within our group. It seems to be very tight group lead-ed by the voice of majority. There was an argument whether would we continue to walk, or wait for our bus cards to arrive. As facilitators we tried to remind that we can also split the group; those who want can keep on walking, those who want to wait for bus cards can do so. The end result was that because majority of them wanted to continue walking, everyone did so.

As we knew that praying time is going to be in the beginning of our trip, we had made preparations; Jade's project workers had looked for the water points to wash hands, and took mattress for praying. When the praying time was on, we could not find those water points. One participant headed to beach to get the water straight from the sea. One of our instructors noticed this, run to warn the participant, and fall herself to water.

Participant, who was supposed to be warned at the first place, fell in water too, as she tried to help the instructor.

Luckily the sea was not deep at that point, and nobody was hurt. However this accident affected the atmosphere a lot; it took a long time to process what has just happened, and there was some tension in the air till the end of the activity. After the accident, approximately half of the participants continued Nordic walk with us, whereas half left to home. We had planned to have some discussion about spring, and learn new words, but because of the tension in group decided to leave it out.

5.2.2 Reflection

Participants said that they enjoyed green spring colors in nature, and that it was good to have some exercises. Nordic walking had been the wish of our group, and we could clearly see that they enjoyed it. Flexibility with timetables seems to be important, as participants were coming one by one before and after the activity had started. Fortunately one of the instructors was in Kantti to reclaim missing bus tickets so that the one's who were late could still participate the activity. In latter activities we were prepared that some of the participants might arrive late and had one of the instructors in Kantti to wait for them.

For the next time it could be good to take with us some water bottles or confirm the water points before hand. Praying is important for our participants, and us instructors have to facilitate it by proper preparations. As a conclusion could be said, that the activity did not go at all how we had planned it, but we learned a lot about it!

5.3 Community gardening

The idea of this activity was to be a continuum for our first meeting where we planted different seeds. As in this point the spring was longer and already warm outside we could move the plants outside. In Kantti they have a patio in their inner yard. This yard is for the elderly people and workers to use and relax in during the summer time. Also Jade project's women and other people who live or visit Kantti can use it. We also wanted to make our participants to see how their efforts of taking good care of their

plants get a new life in the yard and how it benefits not only themselves but also the whole community of Kantti.

Moreover, gardening can be much more than planting seeds or nurturing flowers. Nikkilä has been writing about the physical extent of gardening and plants. He states that roots are important to plants, but similarly important they are for us. He continues by suggesting that some of the following questions could be used to inspire discussion about one's roots. Where do I have my roots and from where do I gain my power to grow as a human being? Who or what provides me with light, love and water that I need to build a good life? Or am I rootless, wondering around?. (Nikkilä 2003, p. 17)

Unfortunately we did not have an opportunity to process these themes with our target group as a part of our community gardening activity. We still wanted to present Nikkilä's ideas here, because we think that it is important to keep in mind that many activities can have more in-depth meanings that one would think at first.

5.3.1 Implementation

Usually Jade project's women have their activity at Kantti on Mondays and Fridays. This time activity was on Wednesday. These kind of changes in timetable seems to be difficult for them to assimilate, and could result that less people will show up. Besides, the weather was instable; there was a chance of rain, and Jade project's women have took part to another activity in the morning. Together these reasons resulted that in this activity there were not any of Jade project's women taking part.

Fortunately though we had planned a multicultural activity where both Jade project's women and other elderly people from Kantti would participate together. In this kind of joined activity Jade project's women would have had a better opportunity to speak and practice their Finnish. As there were no Jade project's women we had elderly people from Kantti taking part. There were approximately ten elderly people, two of them were immigrants. Despite the fact that Jade-projects women did not participate this time, we are reflecting our experiences with Kantti's elderlies on the elements that could be applied to our target group as well. These kind of elements are for example complex needs of aging population such as physical capability.

5.3.2 Reflection

We noticed that this kind of activity demands an intense personal instruction. If there would have been Jade project's women we also would have needed to think how to handle the situation with only one instructor who speaks Somali. As mentioned before it seems to be preferable to maintain the weekly meeting times that our participants are already used to. They had been informed about the fact that this activity will take place in different day than their activities in Kantti usually do, but still none of them came. After the activity we heard that some of Jade project's women had been little shocked to realize and see that the plants that they had planted had been moved outside without them. This could have been a problem later on if they would have felt like they could not trust us anymore.

5.4 Fishing and cooking in the nature

In our background discussion, we had got impression there was a high level of interest towards fishing in our group. Similar interest was found amongst Backman's interviewees; only one of them had tried fishing before, but three out of six were interested about it, and two out of six wanted to learn more. Especially learning about different species of fishes awaked interest within her sample. (Backman 2014. p.21.)

According to the interest of the group, the idea of this activity was to introduce our participants with the secrets of fishing. We had a professional guide, who knew the best techniques, and was able to share knowledge about some of the most common types of fishes in Finnish lakes, as well as everyman's rights. He also provided us with the fishing equipment.

5.4.1 Implementation

Due to our experiences in Seurasaari trip, we decided to head to the location in smaller groups. In first group there were three workers, and all of those participants who had arrived till then. One worker stayed in our meeting place for half an hour to wait those participants possibly coming in late. We had all together 11 participants. Before starting the actual fishing activity, we had an opportunity to enjoy the weather and each other's company. We have experienced that this kind of a relaxed atmosphere and flexibility

with timetables suits the best with our group. This time we have also prepared for the praying times; we were aware of the place where participants could wash their hands before, and there were no planned activities during the praying time.

By the help of the Somali speaking instructor, the fishing guide explained how to use a fishing rod, and how would you know if fish was biting your bait. Half of the group members were willing to try to catch some fish. Rest of the group took a look for different kinds of booklets about fishes that can be found from Finnish lakes. Those who were fishing got a good catch, and very soon we had plenty of fish. It was rewarding to see how the suspiciousness that we sensed in the beginning, turned to excitement and pride once the participants had a success on what they were doing. Even some of the participants who had refused to try at first place, wanted to try after they had seen other's catches.

Both fishing guides were men, and that they took the major responsibility of cooking the food. This was something that made our participants wonder. They found it refreshing to see men cooking, when they had been used to that woman would be responsible of that sort of tasks. Having men to cook for us was not planned to be an educational experience, but it turned out that we were able to challenge our participant's thinking of gender roles, and awake some discussion.

5.4.2 Reflection

Only one of our participants had tried fishing in Somalia, others did not have any prior experiences. Therefore they had an opportunity to try out something completely new, and as mentioned earlier, the success in catching fish seemed to be rewarding for them. Even though all did not want to try fishing, others had opportunity to learn new vocabulary by going thru some of the fishing booklets. They were also able to gain new knowledge on how to practice fishing, where to get equipment and about everyman's rights. According to the feedback we got during the activity, it sounded that making food in campfire, and enjoying the meal with others was the best part of the day.

5.5 Visiting a farm

Countryside and farm houses are very typical in Finland and a big part of our culture. The core idea of this meeting was to introduce this part of Finnish culture for our target group. By a suggestion of Green Gate we decided to go to organic farm Varpula in Sipoo (Varpula 2014). Even though it is not in Helsinki it is still possible to go there with a public transport so it would be possible for Jade project's women to go there on their own too.

As a milieu Varpula is a unique place to visit, even for Finnish people. The hostess of Varpula told about the history of Varpula. The main house was built in 1835 and it was located in Ostrobothnia, Finland. In 2003 house was moved into Sipoo where it got a new life. In this house Jade project's women got to see and feel a part of Finnish history. Hostess of Varpula described to us that originally the main house in Varpula was a church. Hostess did not mention this to Jade project's women as she thought that after this might not feel comfortable for example to pray there.

In Varpula we also had an opportunity to to pet and see chickens, one rooster and sheeps. According to Salovuori immigrant people seem to be eager in getting to know Finnish nature. Salovuori emphasises that one in trips like this instructors should remember to allow the participants to have time to explore the surroundings on their own too (Salovuori.2014. p.41). That became naturally into our activity as while others were enjoying the warmth of the house others wanted to go and see the animals.

5.5.1 Implementation

In this activity 8 women from Jade project, 6 children and 4 instructors participated. Hostess of Varpula was in charge of introducing us to Varpula and activity that we had chosen. Varpula provides different courses by request. For this activity we had reservation for a course of how to make original Finnish Karelian pies with egg butter. Karelian pies were made from the scratch and all women got to participate. Activity was divided into different sections. Few women did not want to participate but they observed what others did. This also served the idea that we have had with every meeting; all the activities are voluntary and if some one feels like only observing it is also possible.

As mentioned on previous activities Jade project' women are all religious Muslims. We informed Varpula about this beforehand so that also they could prepare for this. We did not need to take anything with us for the praying times as in Varpula they could pray indoors. It was unique moments too see how cultures really met in Varpula when there were eight Somali women praying in old Finnish farm house. When the Karelian pies were ready the table was set together and everyone get to eat pies that they had been making. They got take instructions with them so that they could in future make Karelian pies at home too.

5.5.2 Reflection

This activity again brought us all to the same line as many of the Jade project's women had never made Karelian pies and us instructors had not been making them in a long time either. This was again an opportunity for all of us to learn something together. Women were also happy to see and pet the animals. Few of them said that they would like to live on a farm and have animals of their own. One of them has had animals in Somalia. Children seemed to enjoy as well, but it seems that they were already familiar with such lifestyle in Finland. They might have visited farm already with their kindergarten or school groups.

Before visiting different destinations it is important to confirm, whether there are places for participants to wash their hand and feet before praying. Also that is it possible to do the praying indoor and if not will the weather allow doing it outside. Similarly important it is to think about the possible interactions with animals. Is there some special preferences or does someone have fear for animals. In Varpula we only get to see and pet the animals but if we would have been doing some actual activity with the animals we would have needed to think that which kind of interactions with animals would best match to our target group in order it to be safe for all. Instructors need to remember that there are risks when communication with animals for example some animals might feel the situation unpleasant. One example is that people have natural tendency to look straight into eyes or have physical contact which can be unpleasant for the animals (Soini, Lilja 2014. p. 64).

5.6 Mushroom picking and cooking with seasonal ingredients

Similar kind of activity with immigrants has been done by Finnish Metsähallitus in Lieksa where immigrants got to explore the national park Koli. One of the instructors at Koli was Fatbardhe Hetemaj who has discussed about using Finnish nature to support integration. She came to Finland as a refugee twenty years ago. Hetemaj has claimed that there are many physical and mental advantages in exploring nature. It relaxes you, and makes you feel better. (Metsähallitus, 2012).

Through out the times Nordic people have noticed the effect of forests for one's wellbeing and mind (Salovuori 2014. p. 72). According to Sievänen (2001 cited in Salovuori 2014) Finnish people visit forests approximately 150 times per year. We wanted to make our target group understand how big part of Finnish culture forests are. At the beginning of this activity one of the mushroom instructors told that in order for one to find mushroom she or he must be one with the forest and to calm them selves down and relax. If one goes to the forest to think about business or school she or he will not find any mushrooms.

When planning an activity such as this we need to think about the security. There will be 6 workers and we need to pay attention that no one gets lost. This time Green Gate and Jade project had paid for special instructor to introduce us to mushrooms in forest, but this kind of activity could also be arrange free of charge if some of the participant or instructor knows the mushrooms.

5.6.1 Implementation

As in all the other activities too Kantti activity centre served us as a meeting point. There were 4 Somali women participating from Jade project and 2 elderly women from Kantti's service housing. One of the Kantti's women was an immigrant lady from China who also participated in community gardening with us before. There were 1 worker from Green Gate project, 2 workers from Jade project and a photographer. Green Gate and Jade project had together paid for two mushroom instructors who guided us in the forest.

The location that Green Gate had chosen for this activity was a Finnish nature centre Haltia in Espoo. It is possible to reach Haltia by public transport during the summer time. During the bus journey to our destination we could see that the women in our

project observed and admired the landscape with lakes, countryside houses and horses. In Haltia there is info house with restaurant so our group could use the facilities there. Timetable was planned so that we would return back from the forest before the praying time so that Jade projects women can wash their hands in Haltia's bathrooms.

With the help of the professional mushroom guides we picked up the mushrooms. In forest we had water and some snacks to give us more energy. It was important to have breaks every now and then as our group consists of aging women; eldest participant was 80-years old. During the walk in forest mushroom instructors talked us about every man's right in Finland. This was very good repeat for our group, as we had talked about these rights in other meetings as well. In Finland one can go to any forest to walk or to pick up berries or mushrooms regardless who owns the forest. You do not have to pay for this or ask permission. In order to enjoy this privilege one cannot do any harm or damage. For example do not through your trash to the forest, do not go too near houses with inhabitants (Tuunanen et al. 2012).

After approximately two hours in the forest the mushroom instructors cooked for us. The participants in this activity were invited to participate the cooking but all of them felt like resting and only observing. Instructors cooked mushroom soup from the scratch and also let us taste different types of mushrooms as fried. As both of the instructors were men we could again introduce our participants the part of Finnish culture where now a days also men do prepare food. We had lively discussion about this with the participant who explained that in Somali culture women will prepare the food. They found it funny to wonder what the woman would do then while the man is cooking. Would she be lying on the sofa? They also wondered why a woman would not like to cook. One participant was suggesting that perhaps they have so much make up on that they cannot go close to the heat.

From 4 Somali women that had never eaten mushroom 3 tasted the soup. All of them liked the mushrooms and seemed to be very surprised how tasty the soup was. After eating the women were already gathered around and sitting in blankets. We refreshed our memories about all the activities that we had done together and had a feedback session. Results from this feedback session are explained in details in discussion part.

5.6.2 Reflection

Before this activity we found out that Somali people usually do not eat mushrooms; they would not even qualify as a food for animals. One told that she had seen mushrooms in supermarkets here in Finland, and she had wondered would someone actually buy them. This formed an interesting starting point for our activity, as the idea of eating mushrooms was so clearly new and even disgusting for them. However we saw the positive side; at least everyone could enjoy the walk in nature. Also the participants had joined us, aware of the fact that we were about to go to pick mushrooms. Maybe they then had some hidden interest towards the topic. From the very beginning all the participants seemed to be very excited about finding different mushrooms and to ask if they are eatable or not. As for all of them mushrooms and forests are not familiar we assumed that they would have been more scared and not willing to touch the mushrooms, but they prove us wrong.

The route in the forest could have been planned differently to be suitable for aging people. Even though all our participants walked the whole way and even the few hills that were there too it would have been better with easier route. Luckily there were enough instructors so that we could divide into two groups. First group was going faster and second group could rest longer and then continue walking. There were no problems with the praying as participants could use the facilities of Haltia.

6 Ethics

In a process of this thesis we were following the ethical guidelines of Green Care Finland Association. In 2012 Green Care Finland association established ethical principles and guidelines for green care activities (Green Care toiminnan eettiset ohjeet 2012.).

6.1 Green Care Finland Association's ethical guidelines

Green Care Finland association's guidelines are divided into three sections. These sections are relation with nature, professionalism and client relationship. We will give examples from all of these sections and how these can be seen in activities that were carried out in this thesis project.

As most of the activities that were chosen for this thesis are based on nature and outdoors it is vitally important to treat our surroundings with respect and sense of responsibility. According to the guidelines by Green Care Finland association service providers have to take into consideration how their activities affect nature and other visitors. For example in our activities we always took all possible garbage with us or burned the one's that was allowed.

Professionalism is mentioned in the second section of Green Care Finland's ethical guidelines. In related to our thesis it means that we need to know our own professional limits and only do what we are capable of doing. For example knowing that our knowledge of mushroom or fishing is not wide enough for to arrange these kinds of activities without help from professionals from those areas. As we are working in cooperation with many different associations and service providers it is important to remember good manners which are also part of professionalism. Part of being professional is to guarantee the safety of all the participants.

Client relationship in our thesis can be seen from many different aspects. As professionals we need to respect our group members independent choices. In practise this means that if some of them do not feel comfortable taking part in some of the activities we need to respect this decision. As our group members are from different cultural and religious background than we are we need to keep these aspects in our minds are respect these differences but also keep our eyes open for similarities.

One of the most important aspects is confidentiality. According to the guidelines service providers have to protect the confidentiality in client relationship and follow non-disclosure obligation. For example at the beginning of the background discussion we asked the permission to use the material gained at this discussion in our thesis. We clarified that not a individual could be recognized from the results, but we would be talking about our findings in general level, as well as handling the collected data with strictest confidence. We also wanted to tell them that there is no right or wrong answers; we are only interested in their opinions and personal experiences.

7 Discussion

During our last activity meeting we gathered feedback from the participants. As there were only four (4) women from the Jade project participating, these answers cannot be applied to the whole group or whole immigrant population, not even to the Somali population. We are hoping that these answers can inspire professionals who are planning Green Care activities with integrative purposes, and they forward some of the notations we have had during the process.

7.1 Meeting our aims

It is characteristic for green care activities to have clear aim and purpose for the activity especially when working from the professional aspect (Salovuori 2014. p. 85). In this project the aim and purpose have been clear since the beginning and the activities have been planned around them. As mentioned, we had two aims. First of all, we wanted to support our target group's integration into the Finnish society. To reach our aim we were introducing them with the Finnish customs and culture by using nature as an instrument. Our second aim was to produce comprehensive knowledge on how to facilitate Green Care activities for a group of immigrants, in our case Somali women.

7.1.1 Finnish customs and usage

We argue that nature is a part of the Finnish culture; Finns spend time at summerhouses, go fishing, pick berries, and have small plantations on their balconies. We think that integration is not only about learning bureaucracy and language, but holistic realization of the local lifestyle. Based on the feedback that we got we can argue that we met our aims and managed to introduce Finnish culture in more depth for our group. For example the owner of Varpula, a woman living in the countryside was mentioned to be interesting character. Also the fact that in both of the cooking activities men took the lead seemed to be surprising for our participants. Due to that we had interesting discussions about gender roles. It seems that being able to discuss cultural differences and similarities is a good way to develop understanding, and so to promote integration. Because language is a part of a culture, we thought that it might be good to teach new vocabulary through the activities. However, our participants were not convinced if Green Care methods were an effective tool for learning the language. They

learnt some new words, but more importantly they mentioned that they had learnt a lot about Finnish customs and culture.

We argue that it was important to tell our participants about everyman's rights, because it seemed to arise many questions within the group. For example they had been wondering if they were allowed to pick up apples from the trees that are hanging outside of people's yards. We could also find a few blueberries in the forest and some of them asked if they needed to wash the berries before eating them. For the sake of safety it was crucial to receive right information about toxic mushrooms and plants. Our participants told that now they know more activities that they can do in Helsinki but would still like to know where in Helsinki they could pick mushrooms. When asked if they had tried out some of the activities on their own leisure time, the common answer was that they had spent more time walking in nature than they had spent before participating to our activities. One of them had baked Karelian pies at home with her daughter. Fishing seemed to be the most popular activity and something that many would like to try again.

7.1.2 Spreading the information

Through this final thesis a new, comprehensive knowledge is presented for professionals on how to facilitate Green Care activities for a group of aging immigrants.

One can read detailed explanations of each session from our activity reports. To conclude, we could say that the special characteristic of our target group beside their religious and cultural background was their physical capability. We needed to think about the transportation and that there is a possibility to rest during the activities. Also in warm and sunny days consider about the possibility to find a resting place with shadow (Salovuori 2014, p.40). He also emphasizes that when planning Green Care activities it is important to have a backup plan. In activities like these one is usually depended on the weather. Though sometimes even the bad weather can be an experience for some. For the instructor it is important to plan the activities well and have all the necessarily tools at hand. This is something that we learnt during this process for example after Seurasaari we always had water with us for our group to wash their hands before praying.

Together with our work life partners Green Gate and Jade project, and our student colleague Backman we have been able to introduce a new tool to assist integration. Our

experiences have been presented by our work life partners in an event called Good Life 2014 in Tampere. Good Age event displays products and services for the elderly and the professionals of nursing, rehabilitation and social services working with the elderly. Central themes include wellbeing, health and smooth everyday life of the older population (Expomark 2014). Green Gate and Jade project are also participating in Innovillage's Innovation prize competition with the findings gained from this thesis.

7.2 Future studies

As this thesis was only focusing on one target group - aging immigrant women from Somalia we cannot say that the results would apply to for example group of young men. Therefore in the possible future studies it would be important to focus on different age groups as well as different sexes. As requested by our participant we would also recommend that in the future, groups in this kind of activities could have participants from different ethnic groups.

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Green Gate: Instructor's journal

Green Care -hankkeen ohjaajien päiväkirja



Reflektoi tapaamisia ja tapahtumia kokemustesi pohjalta

Työntekijän nimi:

Toimipiste:

Toimintapaikka:

Toiminnan ajankohta:

Toiminnan kesto:

Osallistujamäärä:

Tapaamisen keskeiset sisällöt ja asiat. Mitä teitte, mikä oli tärkeää?

Mitkä asiat toimivat hyvin ja onnistuivat?

Oliko toteutuksessa esteitä tai kompastuskiviä? Millaisia?

Kuvaile, miten yhteistyö kumppanien kanssa toimii:

a. Asiakkaat:

b. Työntekijät (mainitse myös, ketkä):

Olisiko sinulla ideoita, oivalluksia tai kehittämissuhteita toiminnan parantamiseksi?

Reflektoi tapaamisia ja tapahtumia kokemustesi pohjalta:

