



Interview - Centro Donna Lilith

WP 2

Activity 1 (Leaders Interview)

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Interview Metadata

Date of Interview:	09.07.2025
Interviewer Name:	Marco De Cave (video making: Francesco Pacifici + Giuseppe Zitarelli)
Consent for data collection	yes
Additional remarks on the interview	

Meet the leader

Name:	Chiara Sanseverino
Age:	41
Gender:	Woman
Current role and position:	President
Years of Work Experience:	+10
Years in Leadership Roles:	2
Organization:	Centro Donna Lilith
Sector of Activity:	Gender mainstreaming
Country / City:	Italy, Latina
Organization Size:	<input type="checkbox"/> Micro <input type="checkbox"/> Small <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Large

Main Interview Content

Interview Section	Summary of Answers	Selected Quotes
The Path to Leadership Key moments, challenges, values	The interviewee's journey to becoming President of Centro Donna Lilith was largely about intuition, passion and seizing the right moments. Joining in 2021 as a frontline anti-violence operator, she quickly advanced to coordinator roles in two other centers before being nominated and elected President. Her leadership style thrives under responsibility, balancing multiple roles while maintaining an empathetic, horizontal relationship with staff. She emphasizes leading by example, assuming responsibility calmly, and fostering collective decision-making. Key values include resilience, empathy, and commitment to the long-term sustainability of the organization.	<p><i>"Every challenge became an occasion to test my resilience and to rediscover why I chose to work in this field."</i></p> <p><i>"I learned that values like fairness and empathy are not abstract principles, but practical tools to guide decisions."</i></p>
Your Approach to Leading Inclusion, decision-making, vision	Leadership is exercised collaboratively rather than hierarchically. The interviewee prioritizes participation, idea exchange, and shared responsibility. Her approach ensures that staff feel supported, involved, and empowered. Maintaining open communication and acknowledging diverse professional backgrounds—psychology, social work, law, and education—enables the team to leverage its collective expertise. Inclusion is not just aspirational; it is operationalized through continuous training, reflection, and awareness of staff needs.	<p><i>"Inclusion means giving responsibility even to those who are just starting out, because that is how trust is built."</i></p> <p><i>"Decision-making is never just top-down: I rely on listening and collective reflection to reach clarity."</i></p>
Driving Change Strategies for sustainable and positive outcomes	She integrates operational, strategic, and community-focused responsibilities. This includes ensuring economic sustainability through funding, grants, and donations, while fostering a socially sustainable work environment where professionals can thrive. Collaboration extends to local institutions, social services, law enforcement, and other NGOs. Visibility and credibility in the community are fundamental to achieving meaningful impact. The organization actively engages in education and awareness programs, particularly in schools, to challenge stereotypes and promote equality. Another key point mentioned is the transformation of NGOs and public administrations in terms of gender-mainstreaming, with great results	<p><i>"Our projects work when people feel part of a shared purpose, not just executors of a plan."</i></p> <p><i>"Impact is not measured only in numbers but in the ability to create long-term opportunities for the younger generation."</i></p>
Bias & Belonging Tools, practices, awareness	Staff regularly engage in training to recognize and mitigate gender biases, ensuring inclusivity in interactions with women and people identifying with the women as a gender. Gender mainstreaming is not a neutral, hence the	<p><i>"Recognizing bias starts with acknowledging that we all carry it, and</i></p>



	<p>operators who are engaged professionally to train others must be the ones to embrace all the aspects of gender-mainstreaming and break their own barriers. The organization emphasizes awareness of implicit biases across generations, professional backgrounds, and cultural contexts. Practical tools include structured reflection sessions, mentorship, and the creation of safe spaces for dialogue. Additionally, training extends to external actors, like local businesses and NGOs, to support gender equality and inclusion in hiring practices, policies, and organizational culture. Especially, gender-mainstreaming is a practice of systematically applying to all the aspects of an organization a gendered approach, for example: decision-making, volunteer recruitment, digital usage, cyber safety, etc</p>	<p><i>creating spaces where it can be challenged.”</i> <i>“Volunteer management requires structured mentoring and clear roles—without that, good will risks being wasted.”</i> <i>“We also need to be vigilant about hidden risks, like gender harassment, and establish prevention and reporting mechanisms.”</i></p>
<p>Sharing What Works Inspiration, examples, transferable tools</p>	<p>Good practices are shared nationally through networks of gender educational centres, as well as other anti-violence centres, enabling knowledge exchange and adoption of effective interventions. Internally, fostering empathy, suspending judgment, and promoting active listening are foundational tools. Externally, the organization provides workshops and webinars for companies to reflect on gender equality in their structures, access to opportunities, and inclusion policies. Concrete, transferable practices include bias awareness sessions, interactive role-play for empathy building, and participatory approaches to decision-making that highlight equitable participation in professional environments.</p>	<p><i>“Delegating with trust and then reviewing together allows people to grow without fear of failing.”</i> <i>“Even small recognition builds belonging; a word of appreciation can be as powerful as a formal reward.”</i> <i>“My inspiration comes from observing, listening, and constantly questioning myself with empathy.”</i></p>





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