

DEAR in France 2019: contexts and project observations



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This report is based on documentation reviews and a one-day workshop with staff involved in some of the EU grant funded DEAR projects in France carried out during September 2019. Reviews and the workshop aimed to gather information, examples, perspectives, opinions and experiences of the context and work of DEAR projects in the country.

Introduction –terminology

Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) is mostly called by civil society stakeholders in France “**Education for Citizenship and International Solidarity**” (ECSI)¹. The terminology “Education for Development and International Solidarity” (EADSI) is also used, mostly by institutional stakeholders², even if some of them have also started to use the term ECSI in recent years. During the workshop, the evolution from EADSI to ECSI was explained by 1/ the need to clearly distinguish DEAR activities from the activities linked with the promotion of development policies, and 2/ the fact that Education for Citizenship was perceived as a more ‘active’ concept, which is less about understanding and critically reviewing issues relating to development than about promoting an active engagement of citizens for the (global) common good.

This terminology shift in France seems to correspond to a wider shift in Europe, which is described in the GENE (2018) report as “more prominently includ[ing] global citizenship education and the links between global citizenship education and education for sustainable development³ in DEAR. Three thematic areas are generally considered in the literature review as concentrating the highest share of DEAR efforts in France in the past years: **sustainable development and climate change** related issues, **migration** related topics and more generally **youth-related** initiatives⁴.

1. The DEAR context in France

The following general context elements should be highlighted, before entering into more specific context elements for DEAR in France:

- **Development cooperation** has been pursued in France historically since the 1960s and the independence of former colonies – this has manifold implications: relatively high historical interest in development issues in comparison with other EU countries; existence of a large and powerful international development community in the country; importance of development issues as part of a perceived French *soft power*; important economic interests in some developing countries; long-standing migration relationships...

¹ Education à la citoyenneté et la solidarité internationale (ECSI)

² CONCORD (2018): ‘Global Citizenship Education in Europe: How much do we care?’, page 65

³ GENE (2018): ‘The State of Global Education in Europe 2018’, page 19

⁴ Ibid, page 65 and Educasol (2018), État des lieux de l’éducation à la citoyenneté et à la solidarité internationale en France, 2018, page 8

- There are powerful **public institutions** involved in development cooperation in France: these are mainly the MEAE (Ministry of European and Foreign Affairs) and the AFD (French Development Agency). Not surprisingly, these two key stakeholders are also the biggest donors for DEAR activities in France⁵.
- On the **civil society** side, there is a large number of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in France of all sizes. A limited number of large NGOs enjoy relative access to decision-makers and public institutions and, for some of them, media access; while the majority of them are of smaller size and active on a local basis⁶.
- There is a large **National Platform** coordinating DEAR in France. The platform currently has 26 member-organisations as well as 3 individual experts who are members⁷. Within the NGO sector, the members of this platform can be considered the most significant DEAR stakeholders, including when it comes to accessing funding and influencing policy⁸.

1.1. A short recap' on the DEAR policy context in France

This first section provides a short recapitulation of the **policy context** in France concerning DEAR. Elements related to broader elements of context are tackled in the two subsequent sections of the report.

A 2014 law defines a framework for French development cooperation. This law includes **provisions on DEAR** (see also box 1 below). The 2014 law also foresees DEAR as part of the action of **local authorities**⁹. The 2014 law is currently in the process of being revised, but the content of the new law is yet to be known.

Box 1: DEAR in the 2014 French law on development cooperation¹⁰

Section 2.3 of the law provides that Education for Development and International Solidarity is an important element of the French development policy, notably in terms of transparency and in terms of the consistency of public policies. The law provides for actions to boost the general awareness of the public about global solidarity issues, for awareness raising actions of the Government and for a strengthening of Education for Development and International Solidarity in the formal French education system.

The InterMinisterial Committee for International Cooperation and Development (CICID), which plays an important role in coordinating development cooperation actions in France, has also **worked repeatedly on DEAR subjects** in the past years: conclusions regarding DEAR were produced by CICID in 2016 and in

⁵ CONCORD (2018): 'Global Citizenship Education in Europe: How much do we care?', page 65

⁶ See <https://www.coordinationsud.org/ongrama/le-secteur-des-ong-francaises/>

⁷ Educasol Website at the date of the 11th of September 2019

⁸ CONCORD (2018): 'Global Citizenship Education in Europe: How much do we care?', page 65

⁹ See Title III ('Action extérieure des collectivités territoriales') of the 2014 law on development cooperation (Loi n° 2014-773 du 7 juillet 2014 d'orientation et de programmation relative à la politique de développement et de solidarité internationale)

¹⁰ République Française (7 juillet 2014), Loi n° 2014-773 du 7 juillet 2014 d'orientation et de programmation relative à la politique de développement et de solidarité internationale

2018. In 2016, CICID's conclusions highlighted the need to promote citizens' awareness of sustainable development goals and development and solidarity education in France and abroad¹¹. The 2018's conclusions were again favourable to DEAR. However it seems that the original intention to produce an inter-ministerial roadmap on development education seems not to have been acted upon¹². This might also be linked to the current work on a new law for development cooperation.

Overall, **a public framework for development education activities does exist** in France (and this also translates into the availability of funding). However, there is a feeling among some civil society stakeholders that development education related issues are **not fully mainstreamed into development cooperation as pursued by the main public development institutions**, with rather limited time and staff dedicated to DEAR activities¹³.

In terms of **financing**, an important evolution in recent years concerns the role played by local authorities (regions, *départements* and cities mainly). Whereas they used to be very active in providing grants of small amounts for local DEAR projects, obtaining funds is perceived as having become lately more difficult notably due to pressure on local budgets (and, at times, following changes in local political majority). Some participants in the workshop mentioned in this regard that the recent endeavour by AFD to further **regionalise funds** has been helpful in partially compensating for this relative decrease of regional and local funds; even if it is also perceived as creating difficulties (competition between organisations, administrative burden...).

1.2. Is the general context in France rather conducive to DEAR?

The national context in relation to DEAR issues in France can be considered as **mixed**. On the one hand, the national context has been conducive to a renewal of DEAR activities in recent years¹⁴; whereas on the other hand, a number of unfavourable context elements have also grown. As one participant in the workshop pointed out **"the context in France has never been that conducive to DEAR, but, at the same time, it has never been that unfavourable"**.

The following elements were considered as conducive to DEAR in France in the literature and/or in the country workshop:

- France is a country with a long-standing tradition of **individual and collective engagement** on a broad range of economic and social issues. Civil society is vivid in the country and activism is generally perceived by most of the population as positive. There has also been a renewal of civic engagement of younger generations in particular on topics related to environmental and climate change related challenges. Campaigning and advocacy approaches are generally perceived as legitimate by the population;

¹¹ See also GENE (2018): 'The State of Global Education in Europe 2018', page 16-17 and page 20

¹² Ibid, page 16-17 and 45 and Educasol (2018), État des lieux de l'éducation à la citoyenneté et à la solidarité internationale en France, 2018, page 31

¹³ Opinion expressed by some participants during the country workshop.

¹⁴ GENE (2018): 'The State of Global Education in Europe 2018', page 12

- The perceived **scale of global challenges**¹⁵, notably related to environmental and climate change related issues is also mostly considered as being conducive to DEAR. As one participant in the workshop put it: the end of the current energetic model is conducive to bringing individuals to reflect on new ways of producing and living;
- Political parties in favours of **multilateralism** still hold the majority on the French domestic political scene (despite steady growth of political parties that put multilateralism into question). There is also a willingness of a number of French politicians to take a leading role on current global issues: for example hosting the COP21, or putting the SDGs at the forefront of an initiative at the French Presidency of the G20. (Even if the *lack of consistency of public policies* was also highlighted by some participants in the workshop as an unfavourable context element– see also the next paragraph) ;
- The **legal and policy** context for DEAR in France is also considered to be rather conducive to DEAR with development education and awareness raising activities benefitting from a public framework (see also *section 1.1* above), which also provides for the availability of DEAR funding;
- **Terrorism and violent extremism** have contributed to raising the awareness that more action is needed in order to promote a peaceful citizenship. The CONCORD report, which was prepared shortly after the 2015 terrorist attacks already pointed out that this “renewed governmental interest in “questions about citizenship and youth,” was positively influencing public action regarding GCE.”¹⁶ For example, following the 2015 terrorist attacks, the Ministry of Education presented 11 actions, which were meant at contributing to restoring a peaceful public space. These included: better transmitting the values of the Republic in schools, promoting laicity, an active citizenship and a culture of engagement, fighting against social inequalities and reaching higher level of social mix...¹⁷;
- Another context element, which can be considered as moderately conducive to DEAR is the fact that the French society is **not homogeneous** with a long history of various waves of immigrations along the 20th century. These historical migration flows have contributed to putting issues relating to migration, integration, ‘living together’ on the political and social agenda for several decades. The report on the State of play of DEAR in France in 2018 noted in this regards that issues related to **findings ways to living with one another** and of **cross-culture exchanges** are in the centre of DEAR in France¹⁸. There may be more historical depth in migration debates in France than in other countries, which were until recently (or still are) emigration grounds; even if the issues remains very sensitive within the French population and on the political scene;
- **Solidarity, equality and social justice are key values** in the French society. The French motto « liberté, égalité, fraternité » is important in this regard since it puts *equality* and *brotherhood* on the same level as freedom. These values are also considered as “universal” in the French psyche, which is a strong push towards global solidarity.

On the other hand, a number of context elements could be identified in the literature and in the country workshop as being much less conducive to DEAR in France. The following elements can be listed:

¹⁵ CONCORD (2018): ‘Global Citizenship Education in Europe: How much do we care?’, page 7

¹⁶ Concord report page 66 (citation de (Hartmeyer and Wegimont, The State of Global Education in Europe 2015).

¹⁷ Educasol (2018), État des lieux de l’éducation à la citoyenneté et à la solidarité internationale en France, 2018, page 28

¹⁸ Ibid, page 46

- The situation of the job market in France has been marked by relatively **high levels of unemployment for several decades**. In addition, there has been a steady decline of the industrial sectors, which has led to large media coverage of factory closures and factory relocation abroad (to China, North Africa or Eastern Europe...). This **widespread perception that jobs are being taken away fuels economic anxiety** about one's personal economic situation and fears about the future;
- Despite large safety nets and a generous social policy, the French society is still confronted with **poverty** issues. There are pockets of poverties in urban centres and poverty is also important in declining rural areas. Overall, there are **increasing territorial divides** between territories which gain population and are attractive (Paris, the Lyon region, the Western coast of France..) and territories, which lose population and are locked into poverty traps (notably in the North and East of France). This aspect can also be considered as key in the recent social movement of the "yellow vests", which is interpreted by some observers as a movement of protest of the *periphery* against the *centre*;
- Rising **populism** on the political scene is also unfavourable to DEAR. Populist movements have notably developed a discourse of "protection": protection against the negative effects of globalisation, protection of one's values, protection against exclusion and poverty... Far-right parties have been growing steadily¹⁹ in the past 20 years in France, with only limited success in terms of elected posts so far (mostly as a result of the French polling system - a uninominal majority system in two rounds).;
- **Widespread distrust in public institutions and in democracy**, where representative democracy is put into question by shares of the population (this is, for example, a key element of the recent "yellow vest" movement, which campaigns in favour of 'direct democracy' and does not consider representative democracy as a real form of democracy). Parts of the French population do not believe any more than change can occur through voting. Some participants in the workshop indicated that it was sometimes difficult to engage with people in local communities on topics related to elections and democracy;
- France is also affected by **religious extremism movements** (which are strong in some (deprived) neighbourhoods and in prison). These movements do not only generate hate speeches; they also fuel far-right movements, which promote the rejection of foreigners/migrants/Muslims...;
- On a more societal level, the rise of **individualism**²⁰ and materialism were also mentioned as unfavourable to DEAR. The loss of some of the traditional safety nets provided by local communities are also considered by some observers as weakening the social network and as further isolating (more and more anxious) individuals;
- The role of **social media and new technologies** was also discussed in the workshop, with the feeling that these tools are rather unfavourable to DEAR, since they rather tend to diminish exposure to diverging opinions/to different visions of the world and, at times, reinforce existing entrenched views and values at the expense of furthering a pluralistic public debate;
- Finally, some participants in the workshops also mentioned that the **security context** in France is not conducive to organising DEAR activities. Indeed, following the recent waves of terrorist attacks, security measures to be put in place even for small events are high – requiring both administrative and technical capacities and funding.

¹⁹ See also GENE (2018): 'The State of Global Education in Europe 2018', page 9

²⁰ CONCORD (2018): 'Global Citizenship Education in Europe: How much do we care?', page 66

All in all, DEAR projects in France **operate in a society which is affected by growing divides**²¹: cities vs rural areas; geographical divisions between rich and poor regions; perceptions of a growing divide between the rich and the poor; discrepancies between a highly global and connected share of the population and locally enshrined communities that feel somehow left behind... These growing divisions can also be considered as having played a role in the **recent reshuffling of the political scene in France**, where the main division line between 'right' and 'left' is increasingly replaced by an opposition between political parties that present globalisation as an opportunity and those which see globalisation as a threat.

With a growing awareness of public institutions vis-à-vis these divisions, there has been a **renewal of activities related to DEAR, in particular in relation to all the citizenship related topics**. Yet, there is also a feeling **that it is difficult to reach parts of the population**.

Finally, it is interesting to note that, in a recent survey commissioned by EDUCASOL, the French Platform for DEAR, **most respondents considered the institutional and political context in France as rather conducive to DEAR, much more conducive than the international and the European context** (See also box 2 below)

Box 2 : institutional and political context for DEAR in France, Europe and the world²²

In a recent survey of DEAR actors in France, 69% of the respondents considered that the institutional and political context in France is rather conducive for DEAR, whereas the figure fell to 57% when it came to the institutional and political context at the European level and to 42% for the international institutional and political context.



Furthermore, the **importance of the local context** can also be highlighted, with significant differences pointed out between regions and cities, depending on local economic, social and political factors.

1.3. The media context - how do the media assist or hinder the work of DEAR projects?

The **media context in France can be considered as mixed**.

On the one hand, the media scene in France remains diverse, with multiple stakeholders (despite a tendency for concentration in the sector). This **allows for a variety of opinions and points of views** to be

²¹ Le Bras Hervé (2019), Se sentir mal dans une France qui va bien – la société paradoxale

²² Educasol (2018), État des lieux de l'éducation à la citoyenneté et à la solidarité internationale en France, 2018, page 20, 23 and 24

presented. Whereas the Press freedom situation is considered to worsen in several EU Member States, press freedom is still considered to be “satisfactory” in France (see *figure 1* below).

In the same vein, according to recent research from the Oxford Internet Institute, **the consumption of ‘junk news’ is (still?) lower in France than it is in the US (or even in the UK or Germany)**. The research found that, during the last presidential elections in France, there were seven pieces of professionally produced news for every piece of junk. In the US, the research found a one-to-one ratio between ‘junk news’ and professional news shared over social media during the 2016 election. In the German and UK elections it was about a four-to-one ratio. So, it seems that the ‘junk news’ phenomenon still rather affects France less than other countries.²³

Yet, there are also worrying news about the media in France. A number of the traditional media struggle with their economy model, leading to more concentration in the sector. In addition, the latest assessment of *Reporters without borders* (2019 assessment) points that “attacks and harassment targeting news media and journalists increased dangerously in 2018.”²⁴ The NGO reports that ““media-bashing” and hate-filled attacks by politicians” has increased in recent years.²⁵

It can also be noted that the French population is relatively critical of its media scene, with **a higher level of distrust of media reported among French people than among Europeans**: in a recent Eurobarometer, 47% of French people said that they had “relatively low confidence” in media compared with an UE average of 38%²⁶. A double analysis can be made of these figures:

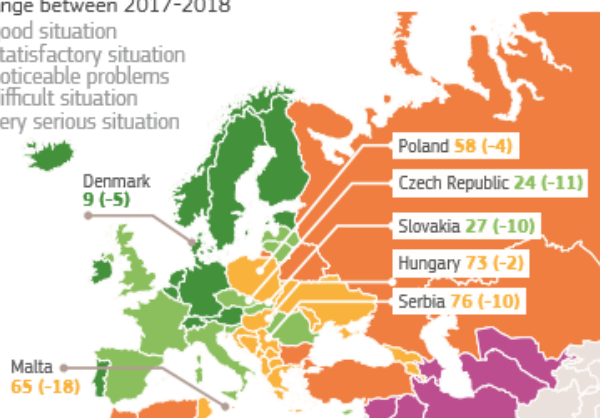
- on the one hand, there is relatively low trust of French citizens about the quality of media in their country;
- on the other hand, a certain habit of *critical thinking* may also explain some of the distrust of the French people in their media.

Figure 1: Press freedom evolution in Europe between 2017 and 2018.

Press freedom deteriorating in Europe

Change between 2017-2018

- good situation
- satisfactory situation
- noticeable problems
- difficult situation
- very serious situation



Source: 2018 World Press Freedom Index, Reporters without borders as presented in the issue 6 of the European Political Strategy Centre's newsletter on “Democracy and Governance in the digital age”

This may explain part of the paradox, according to which French medias tend to rank rather better than the EU average on their level of independence and on their quality, whereas the level of distrust of media in general in France seems to be above the EU average.

This may also explain (part of) the **perception of workshop participants that mainstream media do rather hinder the work of the project rather than assisting it**. Participants were concerned by the fact that **most mainstream media tend to over-simplify issues** and that it is increasingly difficult for their organisations to “sell” content that

²³ Philip Howard - EPSC, High-Level Hearing Preserving Democracy in the Digital Age 22 February 2018

²⁴ Reporter without border – France <https://rsf.org/en/france>

²⁵ Reporter without border – France <https://rsf.org/en/france>

²⁶ Commission européenne, Eurobaromètre n°86, L'OPINION PUBLIQUE DANS L'UNION EUROPEENNE, Rapport National France, page 11

involves a certain level of complexity. The growing need for media to have punch-lines, to create the “buzz” was also mentioned as a difficulty when it comes to getting quality content through media. One participant mentioned a “culture of zapping”, whereby the quality of some content does not seem to matter that much anymore; with a disproportionate importance to generating emotions and reactions quickly. Another participant mentioned the “twitter culture”, whereby the format is contributing to formatting thinking. Participants were also concerned about the phenomenon of **fake news**.

On the other hand, some participants also mentioned the **existence of quality media**; with which it was possible to work. Several participants also explained that their organisations were regularly contacted by various types of media to ask for their stance on specific topics; sometimes also providing opportunities to pass messages.

All in all, it can be concluded that impact of the media on DEAR projects in France is mixed – whereas the general tendency to over-simplify issues in mainstream media is a concern; it is also possible to find media in France, which support the work of projects (see also *section 3* below for examples)

2. Education policy and practices in France and their impact on DEAR

There is a lot of, sometimes, contradictory material on education policy and practices in France and diverging views were also expressed during the workshop. All in all, education policy and practices in France may be assessed as **moderately supportive of Global learning approaches**, the level of support also strongly depending on local initiatives. There are also **important differences between formal and informal education**.

2.1 Formal education policy

As a preliminary remark, it is important to point out that it is **somewhat difficult to assess the scale of DEAR in the French formal education system, since DEAR related activities are implemented under different labels**²⁷: there is at least one school subject (‘civic education’) and one transversal initiative (‘education to sustainable development’) which each entail strong DEAR components. In addition, some of the competences, which are promoted by DEAR (e.g. critical thinking) are also part of the general set of competences to be acquired at school. There are also differences between the general education system and the agricultural and vocational systems²⁸.

²⁷ Educasol (2018), État des lieux de l’éducation à la citoyenneté et à la solidarité internationale en France, 2018, page 27

²⁸ It was not possible to carry out a systematic comparison of the different types of school training in the framework of this study. Therefore main differences, which could be found in the literature or which were mentioned by participants in the workshop were included in the report. However, the report cannot be considered as providing a full global picture.

Overall, ‘education to sustainable development’ has been **growing steadily since the mid-2000s**²⁹ and ‘civic education’ has seen renewed interest, in particular following the 2005 crisis in French suburbs and the recent waves of terrorist attacks.

The subsequent sections analyse the context for DEAR in the French formal education, by focusing on the positioning of various stakeholders, on resources available for global education, on the curriculum, on teaching practices and on partnerships with civil society stakeholders.

✓ **Institutional stakeholders:**

The **Ministry of Education is mostly assessed as being moderately engaged** in DEAR related topics³⁰. Development education / Education to Global Citizenship in France is still mostly promoted and supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For example, the French Ministry of Education has not joined the GENE, whereas some Ministries of Education of other EU countries are part of the network³¹. This is in line with European-wide findings from the CONCORD report, which concludes that there is “little evidence of well-established partnerships in most of the European countries with the main national education providers, such as the ministries of education and agencies, with regard to GE/GCE delivery.”³²

The engagement of devolved services of the State (*‘Rectorats’*³³) is considered as variable, depending mostly on the **local tradition of involvement in international development issues and on the interest and readiness to action of relevant staff members**.

Some participants also mentioned that **awareness raising activities are also increasingly taken up at the level of local administrations** (cities, *Départements*) that are responsible for managing the school logistics: initiatives relating to various aspects of school organisation have increased in past years (e.g. fair trade and/or local and/or organic food in canteens, initiatives about waste, energy efficiency....)

✓ **Resources**

There was broad consensus in the workshop that **there are sufficient educational resources** available to enable teachers to carry out effective Global Learning activities. There are numerous resources prepared by NGOs. The national resource and information portal for teachers (Eduscol) also offers numerous teaching resources related to DEAR³⁴. Finally, CANOPE, the publishing network for French education also provides resources³⁵.

✓ **Place in curricula**

There is at least one school subject in French curricula (‘civic education’) and a transversal initiative (‘education to sustainable development’) which each entail strong DEAR elements (see also *box 3*

²⁹ Eduscol (2018), État des lieux de l’éducation à la citoyenneté et à la solidarité internationale en France, 2018, page 15

³⁰ See also CONCORD (2018): ‘Global Citizenship Education in Europe: How much do we care?’, page 65

³¹ Ibid, page 27

³² Ibid, page 8

³³ They manage the educational policy for a specific territory.

³⁴ Eduscol (2018), État des lieux de l’éducation à la citoyenneté et à la solidarité internationale en France, 2018, page 29

³⁵ CONCORD (2018): ‘Global Citizenship Education in Europe: How much do we care?’, page 65

below). In France, as in other EU countries, various curriculum reforms in the past decades provided opportunities “to put sustainable development, equity, inclusion and global citizenship, at the heart of education”³⁶. The law of July the 8th 2013 introduces a **common set of core skills**, which need to be worked on at school, emphasizing the fact the education goes beyond acquiring knowledge³⁷. This law also integrated ‘education to sustainable development’ in the education code³⁸. Some of the core skills, which can be found in this “common set of core skills” are core DEAR skills.

Box 3: ‘Civic education’ and ‘education to sustainable development’ in French schools

‘Civic education’ is part of curricula throughout the whole school education in France. The ‘civic education’ curriculum mentions, inter alia, that the school subject aims at developing the following skills: developing a culture of opinion-forming and of critical thinking, acquiring the capacity to have well-argued debates and to present different opinion, understanding the difference between personal interest and the common good, etc.³⁹ Global citizenship issues are also tackled, even if the bulk of the teaching rather relates to understanding national and local citizenship issues⁴⁰.

‘Education to sustainable development’ has been launched in the years 2000 and it has been mainstreamed from the year 2011. ‘Education to sustainable development’ does not constitute a specific subject, but it has to be included in subject teaching (i.e. in history, economy...) The three main objectives of ‘education to sustainable development’ are: 1/ raising awareness on sustainable development issues, 2/ encouraging actions and initiatives in schools and 3/ training teachers and school staff on the subject⁴¹.

Yet, **French curricula are still largely “subject-based”** (with most ‘subjects’ dating back to the 19th century) making it sometimes difficult to integrate transversal teaching into the daily routine (i.e. from secondary schools on, pupils have one dedicated teacher by subject area. Each subject is taught in 50 minutes lessons). **The selection of teachers for each subject still largely focuses on their (academic) expertise in the selected subject.** When adding the fact that curricula are heavy, it makes it more difficult in practice than on paper to focus on the new set of core competences and to find time for transversal teaching.

Finally, **curricula in agricultural and vocational schools also integrate DEAR related aspects.** As one of the interviewees pointed out: agricultural schools have ‘international cooperation’ in their mission statement; they work on the basis of a logic of ‘projects’, which is, generally speaking, conducive to Global education. Equally, vocational schools provide as part of their curricula, general teaching organised around the idea of “understanding the world and finding ones place in it”.

✓ **Cooperation with civil society**

Cooperation with civil society is relatively frequent in French schools. Numerous teachers have contacts with local civil society stakeholders and the doors of French schools are open to various external stakeholders. The level of involvement of schools in local communities and their level of cooperation

³⁶ GENE (2018): ‘The State of Global Education in Europe 2018’, page 13

³⁷ Educasol (2018), État des lieux de l’éducation à la citoyenneté et à la solidarité internationale en France, 2018, page 15

³⁸ Ibid

³⁹ Education Nationale (2018), Bulletin officiel n° 30 du 26-7-2018, Programme d’enseignement moral et civique de l’école et du collège (cycles 2, 3 et 4)

⁴⁰ Educasol (2018), État des lieux de l’éducation à la citoyenneté et à la solidarité internationale en France, 2018, page 55

⁴¹ Source Educasol Website site (date 26th of September 2019)

with civil society stakeholders **depends on the school leadership and on initiatives from teachers**. Box 4 below provides examples of cooperations between schools and different types of external stakeholders.

Box 4 : Opening schools to external stakeholders

- The *Bourgogne-Franche-Comté* region and the *Occitanie* region have institutionalised partnerships between schools and civil society actors in place since 15 years coordinated by the devolved services of the State in the regions. The principle is that a group of pupils is accompanied during the whole school year by an NGO active on Global education topics. A small funding of EUR 500 is also available for the 'tandem' to engage into a specific class project. The experience has been found to be very enriching for both sides of the 'tandem'⁴².

- The *Maisons Familiales Rurales* have a partnership with vocational training schools in the region *Bourgogne Franche-Comté*. They notably work together on vocational mobility issues⁴³. The *Maisons Familiales Rurales* of the *Sarthe Département* welcome volunteers coming from different EU Member States, who work with rural pupils on various initiatives to open up to the others and to difference⁴⁴.

✓ Teaching practices and teacher training

The **use of participatory and innovative teaching methods is promoted by the French Ministry of education** and they are increasingly being used by teachers. Yet, classes' structures (50 minutes long 'subject' teaching in groups gathering 25 to 35 pupils and organised in a classical 'classroom format') makes it challenging to use them. The extent to which they are actually used in France is therefore difficult to say.

A 2015 circular from the Ministry of Education defines that **'Education to sustainable development' is to be included in teachers' pre-service training**⁴⁵. Yet, **it is unclear to which extent this is the case**, since pre-service training of teachers has been subject to numerous reforms in the past decades. As one teacher pointed out in a seminar on the Education for Development in schools: "we are being asked to train pupils to acquiring competences. But no one tells us how are we supposed to do this?"⁴⁶ Providing effective and efficient teachers' training, that is conducive to Global education, therefore rather remains a challenge in France.

Finally, it can be highlighted, that there are also numerous **'class' or 'school' projects** in French schools, which promote sustainable development and/or seek to engage pupils on specific Global education topics. For example, the 'E3D initiative' promotes school projects to boost sustainable development⁴⁷. This initiative has been taken up by numerous schools. This type of initiative reminds of the "whole school approach", where Global education is not only included in the curricula, but nourishes the school culture and values.

⁴² Source Educasol (2018), État des lieux de l'éducation à la citoyenneté et à la solidarité internationale en France, 2018, page 52

⁴³ Source: MFR Franche Comté

⁴⁴ See also <https://europe-en-sarthe.eu/un-reportage-pour-decouvrir-le-corps-europeen-de-solidarite/> And <https://europe-en-sarthe.eu/de-jeunes-europeens-dans-les-mfr-sartheois/>

⁴⁵ Educasol (2018), État des lieux de l'éducation à la citoyenneté et à la solidarité internationale en France, 2018, page 28

⁴⁶ Educasol (2011), La place de l'éducation au développement et à la solidarité internationale dans les programmes scolaires : son évolution, les freins, les leviers, les enjeux, page 3

⁴⁷ Educasol (2018), État des lieux de l'éducation à la citoyenneté et à la solidarité internationale en France, 2018, page 28

2.2 Non-formal and informal learning:

There is a **quite strong non-formal education systems in France**, whose stakeholders range from youth clubs, to community centres, adult education centres (also called ‘popular universities’), or even cultural institutes... There was broad consensus in the workshop that **stakeholders active in the non-formal education system reach a wide audience** (including target groups, which are sometimes difficult to reach via more formal networks, such as rural communities or population living in the deprived suburbs).

Policy makers in France increasingly seek to **rely on these stakeholders in the non-formal education sector to address local challenges**. For example, in the framework of the “Urban policy⁴⁸”, far-ranging support is provided to grass-roots NGOs active in difficult neighbourhoods: in 2017, 25 000 actions carried out by more than 10 000 project promoters were financed. Out of these 10 000 project promoters, more than 8000 were local NGOs active in selected neighbourhoods. EUR 243 million were disbursed in grants⁴⁹. It is unclear, to what extent these grass-roots organisations carry out non-formal Global learning activities, but it is clear that a number of their projects **do involve learning on DEAR related topics**.

3. Communication about and for DEAR projects – different approaches

There was a broad consensus among workshop participants that **communicating about and for DEAR project is not easy**. It has to be noted, though, that most workshop participants did not consider communication and promotion strategies as their main areas of expertise.

This being said, several strategies were mentioned when it comes to activating different project audiences:

- ✓ Some organisations rely on **outsourced public relations agencies**. The perceived advantage of that strategy is that communication on and for the projects is mostly performed by professionals. These professionals have the necessary skills and resources that enable them to be effective at activating the right media and at placing content. One perceived negative aspect of using outsourced public relations agency is that there is less long term relationship building between the organisation and the media.
- ✓ Some organisations seek to **position themselves as knowledge and competence centres on specific subjects**. This strategy involves building the organisation’s legitimacy on a particular topic so as to become a recognised ‘expert’ on that subject. Making one’s voice heard in national reflexion fora can be one way of building this legitimacy. For example, one participant in the workshop mentioned that taking an active role in the national reflexion exercise on food policy (“Les Etats Généraux de l’alimentation”) contributed to increasing the organisation’s legitimacy and visibility on these topics. A related way to building legitimacy and visibility is to organise

⁴⁸ ‘Politique de la ville’

⁴⁹ Autier Grégory (15/01/2019), Politique de la ville : des moyens, enfin !

‘signature events’, which position organisations in the national policy landscape. This would be the case, for example when the *‘Union Nationale des Maisons Familiales Rurales’*, a network of rural grass-roots organisations active in the field of education, co-organises a flagship event for rural territories, the *“Université itinérante des territoires ruraux”*⁵⁰.

- ✓ Some organisations **invest in long-term relationship-building with local communities** Several participants in the workshop insisted on the need to work with local communities in order to boost effectiveness and visibility. Benefiting from a well-established local network is an advantage in this regard. This is the case of organisations such as the network of above-mentioned *‘Maisons Familiales Rurales’*, which has more than 400 local federations, or of organisations such as *‘Artisans du Monde’* Federation, which can rely on hundreds of locally established shops. Being established locally also enables to be recognised in and trusted by local communities.
- ✓ Some organisations seek to build **partnerships with the media**. This is for example the approach, which was chosen by the “Frame, voice, report!” project. (see also *box 5* below).

Box 5: fostering partnerships with the media for a better communication

In the framework of the “Frame, voice, report!” sub-grants were provided to a large number of small and medium-sized development organisations. Selection criteria to benefit from one of these sub-grants included the quality of the proposed partnerships with journalists or the media. Project promoters that applied to benefit from a sub-grant had to propose as part of their application a *partnership with one or several journalists/medias*⁵¹.

- ✓ Some projects invest on **participative digital communication methods**. For example, in the framework of the « Start the change » project, there was not only widespread use of social networks, but the project also launched a strategy to identify relevant *influencers* in different countries and to cooperate with them.
- ✓ Relying on **peer to peer communication in order to create legitimacy and trust** is also a favoured approach. This was done, for example, in the framework of the “Trade fair, live faire” project (see also *box 6* below).

Box 6: peer to peer communication in the framework of the “Trade fair, live fair” project.

The project relied on several types of videos, where project owners explain what the results of their actions are and how the action was carried out. The principle of these videos is to have ‘peer to peer’ communication in order to increase engagement. Two examples of these videos:

- Teachers explaining how to get the fair trade school label:

<https://www.artisansdumonde.org/ressources/espace-multimedia/label-ecoles-de-commerce-equitable-l-exemple-du-lycee-belorme> (Available only in French)

⁵⁰ The event was broadcasted live on the internet.

See also: <https://www.mfr.asso.fr/pages/2eme-universite-itinerante-des-territoires-ruraux>

⁵¹ See also https://www.framevoicereport.org/media/5101/fvr2019_document-dappel-à-projets.pdf page 4

- Canteen staff explaining how to produce fair trade meals:

<https://www.artisansdumonde.org/ressources/espace-multimedia/un-repas-avec-des-produits-du-commerce-equitable> (Available only in French)

In terms of content, one of the difficulties identified by participants in the workshop was **to find the right hook** to get the proper media coverage. For example, each year, fair trade stakeholders in France organise the “fair trade fortnight”. This is an important awareness raising event in this area. Each year, a specific topic is on the agenda. At about the same time, figures for the fair trade sectors are also released. In this context, one the difficulty is to get the media to communicate *not only on the figures*, but also to engage with the year’s topic and to provide more qualitative coverage.

Overall it was felt that **activating the medias at the regional and local level** is somewhat easier than at the national level (e.g. interesting journalists in local events is relatively easy). There are also interesting (notably local) initiatives on “positive (or constructive) journalism”, for example. The idea behind ‘positive journalism’ is to have more solution-focused news, instead of reporting only negative stories. For example, the “Frame, voice, report!” project worked, at times, with a local radio, ‘Radio Plurielle’, which seeks to apply the principles of ‘positive journalism’.

In terms of audience, among the DEAR projects that workshop participants knew, the target groups that are the more commonly included are : student/pupils⁵², young people⁵³, teachers and educators⁵⁴ and, for campaigning and advocacy projects, policy makers⁵⁵. Several projects also target less frequent targets: businessmen⁵⁶, employee organisations / trade unions⁵⁷, professionals from a particular sector. This confirms the results of a survey carried out in the framework of the report on the State of play of DEAR in France in 2018, which found that 8 out of 10 projects target students and pupils; whereas only 3 projects were found to target rural areas and only one to target disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods⁵⁸.

It is interesting to note that some of the **groups, which feel most left behind** (persons living in deprived rural areas or in disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods) also seem to be **the least frequently targeted**. In this regard, one of the general points made is the GENE report seems to be, at least partially relevant for the French context: « reflection should be carried out on the best means of reaching out to the least convinced audiences and those least aware of international cooperation issues... It would be useful to stress the importance of meeting such stakeholders, dialoguing with them and building advocacy in order to define new means of mobilising.”⁵⁹

Measuring the results of communication actions / campaigning is also perceived as difficult. This confirms the results of a recent survey performed by Educasol on measuring the results of ECSI actions quantitatively: Close to half of the participants in the survey judged that they could not measure the number of persons reached via the projects.⁶⁰ Quantitative measurement of the results of advocacy

⁵² Start the change, Frame voice report!,

⁵³ Start the change, Frame voice report!, bridge 47, Europe in the world

⁵⁴ Start the change, Frame, voice, report!

⁵⁵ Frame, voice report!, Europe in the world

⁵⁶ Frame, voice, report!, Bridge 47, Europe in the world

⁵⁷ Bridge 47

⁵⁸ Educasol (2018), État des lieux de l’éducation à la citoyenneté et à la solidarité internationale en France, 2018, page 40

⁵⁹ GENE (2018): ‘The State of Global Education in Europe 2018’, page 45

⁶⁰ Educasol (2018), État des lieux de l’éducation à la citoyenneté et à la solidarité internationale en France, 2018, page 70

projects was felt as somewhat easier: for example, indicators can involve counting the number of Members of Parliament who voted in favour of a specific law / amendment. The general feeling was that the results of **Global education projects were more of a challenge to measure**. Box 7 below presents an attempt to measure the extent to which Global education messages came across *qualitatively* in addition to measuring the number of times messages were delivered.

Box 7: perception studies

A result measurement method involving the organisation of “perception studies” is tested in the framework of the “Frame, voice, report!” project. The method aims at understanding how participants in certain activities *have received various messages and what they take home*. Organisations participating in the “Frame, voice, report!” project were trained on testing this *qualitative* way of measuring results of for their events and campaigns.

Some participants felt that a good way to measure results over time is **to invest periodically in large impact studies**. For example, a big impact study on fair trade was commissioned a few years ago to CIRAD (A research organisation on agronomy for development). This enabled to picture significant trends in the sector and to analyse the extent of changes over a period of years. The DEAR programme can also provide an interesting contribution in co-financing this type of studies⁶¹.

Finally, it was felt that one of the biggest challenges remains to effectively **use the quantitative and qualitative data so generated**. This topic is further addressed in *section 6.1* below.

4. Quality DEAR, ‘public awareness’, critical understanding: what does it mean for you and your project?

4.1 Public awareness

Public awareness was discussed in the workshop around three different aspects: awareness as a *competence*, awareness as an *understanding* and awareness as an *emotion*. Participants in the workshop felt that they were seeking to increase “public awareness” by **working on these three dimensions in their projects**; even if the first two (*competence* and *understanding*) were felt as predominant.

The *competence* dimension of public awareness can be linked to recent OECD work, which is centred around the idea of a “global competence”. “Global competence” is understood by the organisation as “the capacity to examine local, global and intercultural issues, to understand and appreciate the perspectives and world views of others, to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with people from different cultures, and to act for collective wellbeing and sustainable development”⁶². Participants in the workshop highlighted that autonomy was particularly important in this respect: **awareness can occur only individuals enjoy sufficient autonomy** to activate this competence to explore,

⁶¹ For example, in the framework of the “Trade fair, live fair” project a large study on the coffee sector was cofinanced. This study proves very useful for awareness raising activities and for advocacy.

⁶² CONCORD (2018): ‘Global Citizenship Education in Europe: How much do we care?’, page 19

analyse and act. Several participants in the workshop mentioned that their project was **seeking to enhance the target group's autonomy by making sure that they feel empowered to act**.

The *understanding* dimension of awareness was also felt as crucial. In this respect, participants in the workshop noted that their DEAR activities addressed the issue of complexity. **Accepting and understanding the complexity of the world is a central aspect to any awareness raising project.**

Understanding the complexity also means understanding that we are all dealing with interrelated levels of action (the individual level, the local and regional levels, the national level and finally the global level).

Finally, there was also partial agreement with linking 'public awareness' with generating a sense of belonging as a human emotion. This "sense of belonging" is important in UNESCO works which also relate global citizenship education to a **'Sense of belonging to a broader community and common humanity'**. Raising 'public awareness' also goes through implementing projects, which seek to make their target groups *feel* that interdependency.

4.2 'Critical understanding'

As one of the participants in the workshop put it **"critical thinking is in the French DNA"**. Several participants highlighted the fact that "critical thinking" is part of the competencies, which are worked on at school⁶³. It was therefore generally felt that **it is relatively easy to work on this competency in the French context**.

There was a discussion during the workshop as to which *level* critical understanding is applied – is critical understanding rather centred on the individual or on society structures?

- At the individual level, one of the aim is to get individuals "to understand [the] origins of [their] assumptions and implications"⁶⁴ so as to be able to critically rethink one's vision of the world. For example, in the framework of their activities, *Maisons Familiales Rurales* support young people from rural communities to travel abroad. This is found by the organisation as an extraordinarily effective way of getting these young people to rethink their (and the) world⁶⁵.
- Some participants also mentioned that their project rather focuses on critically rethinking societal structures (being at the level of one's community, of one's city, country or at the level of the world).

In this regards, activities which manage to work **both on the individual's system of value and on his understanding of societal structures** are perceived as particularly interesting. In order to achieve this double dimension, there is a need to have both a very good knowledge and understanding of the target group (speaking its language, understanding its codes) and to add value with external contacts. *Box 8* below presents an example of a project, which seeks to work on this double dimension.

Box 8: The example of the CrossVoices project

⁶³ Le « socle commun de compétence »

⁶⁴ CONCORD (2018): 'Global Citizenship Education in Europe: How much do we care?', page 16

⁶⁵ This does not refer specifically to the "Start the Change" project, but to broader activities of the organisation (including on other EU Funds such as Erasmus). Source – Maisons Familiales Rurales

The Crossvoices project benefited from a sub-grant in the framework of the “Frame, voice, report!” project. The project was implemented in the biggest town of a French rural territory, the city of Annonay, the largest town of the *Ardèche Département* with 17000 inhabitants. The project aimed at using a local radio in order to empower inhabitants and to give voice to groups, who are usually unheard in the media. The project was both strongly enshrined in the local community and had a strong outward looking perspective namely contact with the radio world for inexperienced inhabitants, and contacts with voices from the South, etc..

4.3 ‘Quality’ Development Education & Awareness Raising

There is no recipe to ‘quality’ DEAR in France, yet, a number of elements were identified in the literature and discussed in the workshop:

- ✓ *Time* – building trust, constructing relationships takes time. In this regard, the logic of call for proposals and of successive projects was perceived by some workshop participants as a challenge. To be successful, projects need to be embedded in a longer-term action of the project promoter;
- ✓ *It is not just ‘information’* – informing is a key element of DEAR; yet information alone rarely works; it needs to be part of a more holistic approach to engage individuals and get them to *react* to that information;
- ✓ *It is not a linear process* – the tryptic “informing, understanding, acting”⁶⁶ works in certain cases; yet some participants stressed that, sometimes, getting people to act first was also a way to triggering thinking. For example, when individuals collect vegetables boxes produced locally every week, this is an *action*. Yet, this initial action may trigger additional thinking by putting the client in contact with subsequent messages: for example, the individual may meet producers/other clients when collecting boxes. This initial action may therefore generate further thinking and possibly trigger further action;
- ✓ *Putting the human being at the centre* – encouraging exchanges between human beings is important to get messages across. For instance, when producers go to schools, the meeting is often as important as the messages delivered to pupils or students;
- ✓ *Be connected to the grassroot level*– having partners/contacts/networks working directly in the communities was perceived as a key element for long-term success. (see also *box 8* above);
- ✓ *Impact evaluations are important*– quality projects seek to rely on findings of preceding projects in order to boost the effectiveness of specific aspects. See also *section 6.1* below for examples of how this can be done;
- ✓ *Understanding the mechanisms that need to be de-constructed (including psychological ones)*: Educasol has launched a laboratory of innovative DEAR practices, which works also on understanding how DEAR mechanisms can be improved.⁶⁷ Work with academics is also pursued by some DEAR stakeholders in France: for example, work was carried out with the

⁶⁶ Educasol (2018), État des lieux de l’éducation à la citoyenneté et à la solidarité internationale en France, 2018, page 12

⁶⁷ See also <http://www.educasol.org/-Le-projet-O-P-E-I-R-A->
<http://www.educasol.org/-Les-projets-ECSINOV->

‘Laboratoire d’étude et de recherche appliquée en sciences sociales’ of the Tarbes University (Prof. Jean-Louis Pernin)⁶⁸ in order to better understand the psychological aspects related with the decision to buy (or not to buy) fair trade products;

- ✓ *Work in and on partnerships* – partnerships between various stakeholders at the level of one territory can be very fruitful. ‘Quality’ DEAR projects should also construct bridges, create links. This is a dimension which was highlighted in the report on the State of play of DEAR in France in 2018⁶⁹ and which was mentioned by several participants in the workshop. (See also *section 5* below for example of how DEAR projects managed to create such a link)

5. Main achievements

Being in schools, in universities, in rural communities, among consumers or businesses, the main objective of DEAR projects in France is to contribute to generating social change. When discussing about main achievements of DEAR co-financed projects in the workshop, the focus laid on **identifying the (sometimes small) steps, through which the projects contributed to producing this change.**

Achievements, which were mentioned by participants in the workshop in this respect include:

- ✓ *Structuring pre-existing actions:*
For example the “Start the change” project enabled the *Union Nationale des Maisons Familiales Rurales* to better structure pre-existing efforts aiming at extending Global education in their extensive network of local federations⁷⁰. In this case, work carried out in the framework of the DEAR project is not isolated: it was started before the project and it will continue after the end of the co-funded project;
- ✓ *Reinforcing a partnership Europe wide:*
For example, the “Trade fair, live fair” project enabled to reinforce the partnership between the 31 participating stakeholders in the fair trade area. The project enabled to ensure more consistency between actions carried out by the various partners in different EU countries (coordinating agendas, communicating together, preparing events together...). The project also enables all partners to follow the actions carried out in other countries and to learn from them. The fact that the partnership has been reinforced is expected to make future work and cooperation easier;
- ✓ *Supporting grass-roots organisation, which make a change locally:*
Sub-granting, which was done extensively in the framework of the “Frame, voice, report!” project was found as nurturing community efforts on the ground. This is perceived as particularly important since local and regional funding opportunities tend to be more difficult to mobilise in recent years due to local budget constraints;

⁶⁸ See also <https://www.lerass.com/author/jlpernin/>

⁶⁹ Educasol (2018), *État des lieux de l’éducation à la citoyenneté et à la solidarité internationale en France, 2018*, page 57

⁷⁰ Rural Family Homes carry out global education activities under the label ‘éducation aux mondes et aux autres’
autre essai de traduction Education for Reaching out to the worlds and others.

- ✓ *Using experience from other EU countries to improve national actions:*
Box 9 presents an example of strategic change in national actions following feedback and exchanges with European partners;

Box 9: improving the national certification strategy

The campaign “fair trade towns” (‘territoires de commerce équitable’) rewards local authorities for their awareness-raising actions on fair trade issues within a specific territory. After an EU benchmarking exercise, the campaign was found to be (relatively) less active in France than in other countries. This was due to the number and size of local authorities in France, to the administrative burden and to the need to fulfil too stringent requirements to obtain the label... Following exchanges with European partners on the campaign and its results, the four stakeholders that operate the “fair trade towns” label in France⁷¹ decided to improve the system: in addition to the existing label, a new “intermediary” label was created to acknowledge the value of efforts already undertaken by local authorities, even if the latter were not (yet) in the position to get the full label. This enabled some local authorities to keep the local momentum for action and to engage with new local authorities.

- ✓ *Empowering partners with less experience in managing big projects:*
The ‘Maisons Familiales Rurales’ are a network of more than 400 grass-roots organisations in rural areas. These are family-led organisations, which are at the centre of social networks in rural communities. Yet, each of the Federation is of a relatively small size and not all of them have the capacity to manage big projects. In addition, by joining forces they improve their possibilities to implement big projects. Thanks to the “Start the change” project, administrative and financial modalities could be identified and tested to enable various members of the Network to work together on bigger projects;
- ✓ *Providing opportunities to extend successful actions:*
As pointed out in section 4.3 above on ‘quality’ DEAR projects, being able to continue and extent successful actions is important. Therefore providing additional resources to pre-existing initiatives that have proved their effectiveness can also be considered a significant achievement. This was for example the case of the Bridge 47 project, which supported the extension of the pre-existing fair trade school label.⁷²

Finally, it is interesting to note that several project promoters also highlighted the *internal change* dimension of projects. Whereas the monitoring and evaluation systems usually try to capture *external* effects and impact, the *internal change* dimension is rarely explored. Yet several participants in the workshop also highlighted the **transformative effect of DEAR projects on their own organisation** (notably by also generating debates in-house).

⁷¹ Fédération Artisans du Monde, Commerce Equitable France, Fair[e] un monde équitable et Max Havelaar France

⁷² See also <https://www.label-ecoles-equitable.fr/actualites/51-le-label-ecoles-de-commerce-equitable-soutenu-par-le-programme-bridge-47>

6. Other significant aspects

6.1. How is learning from the projects captured and shared and with whom?

Capitalisation was perceived by all participants in the workshop as a challenge. There was broad consensus that it is still insufficiently done. Yet, participants provided a few interesting example of capitalisation strategies:

- ✓ *Experience and knowledge sharing via the national platform:*
This is the case, for example, when Educasol sets up a laboratory of DEAR practices (see also section 6.2 above) or when it publishes on its website a database of 400 fiches of good practices for DEAR projects produced by a variety of DEAR stakeholders⁷³;
- ✓ *Using knowledge acquired in past projects:*
This is the ambition of the “Frame, voice, report!” when it uses lessons learnt acquired in three preceding projects (see also box 10 below). The “Start the change project was also partially designed using the lessons learnt of a former project “Parlez-vous global”?

Box 10: Selecting sub-grants based on good practices from preceding projects

The “Frame, voice, report!” built on three preceding projects:

- *Reframing the Message* that wanted to raise awareness about and question the values and frames used in development communication as well as stressing global interconnectedness and causes and context of poverty and inequality;
- *Enhancing Southern Voices in Global Education* that stressed that any development approach and communication that serves for global justice and solidarity must built on equal involvement of participants, concepts and expertise from both the global North and global South;
- *Development Reporter Network* that aimed to strengthen collaboration between journalists and NGOs in order to improve the quality and impact of information in the media related to global problems and international development and cooperation.

Lessons learnt from these three projects were used to develop the *selection criteria used in the 2018 and 2019 calls for proposals* organised by the “Frame, voice, report!” project to select sub-grantees.

- ✓ *Making sure that content produced meets the needs of the recipients:*
This may be obvious; yet, most organisations have their own jargon, their own organisational specificities, their procedures and ways of doing things. Using the same language as the targeted recipient, understanding its organisational set-up increases the chances that material produced is used or that lessons-learnt are understood. For example, in the “Start the change” project, pedagogical fiches prepared by some of the local *Maisons Familiales Rurales* were shared in first intention with all the other local federations. Tailoring the material to the needs of network members enabled material to be 100% ready for use once it reached the recipients.

⁷³ See <http://www.educasol.org/-Echange-d-experiences-et-de->

Finally, participants in the workshop also stressed that the “call for proposal” approach tends to make capitalisation of project results more difficult. It was felt as not favouring continuity (perceived need to propose ‘*something new*’ to be selected) and as sometimes leading to shifting priorities between priority areas.

6.2. Given the national context, what is the perceived added value of the EU DEAR Programme?

Most of the ‘added value’ elements of the DEAR programme in France relate to one of the three following dimensions: the *focus of the programme*, the *partnership and connection opportunities* and *practical aspects*:

The Focus of the programme:

- The DEAR programme focuses on societal challenges, which are perceived as **highly relevant for France**. These include notably issues relating to migrations and to sustainable development, but also more generally to sustainable consumption and living;
- The DEAR programme focuses on interdependencies between developing countries and the European Union, and on enhancing the understanding of global public goods and challenges. This is in line with commitments pursued by numerous civil society actors in France;
- The DEAR programme’s philosophy is perceived as positive: looking for “solutions”, fostering change, empowering to action.

Connecting and fostering partnerships:

- Partnerships and cooperation opportunities are other important dimensions of the DEAR programme. Connections are manifold: between European countries, but also within each Member State, regionally and locally, and even inside one’s organisation. Preparing and implementing DEAR projects enables to open doors at all levels. As one of the participants said it very simply “**The DEAR programme connects**”;

Practical aspects:

- The provision of financing with higher co-financing rates than the corresponding French programmes is valued; thereby also allowing to sometimes consolidate the human resources situation of the beneficiary;
- The length of financing (up to three years) which enables to think the action in the medium term is also considered an added value;
- The possibility to provide sub-grants to smaller, grass-roots organisations, which are perceived as essential DEAR stakeholders on the ground and which have been partially weakened in recent years by local budget constraints is also highly appreciated;

Among the difficulties with working with the DEAR programme, **the size of projects and the number of stakeholders involved is considered a challenge**. One participant mentioned the danger of ending up with a juxtaposition of smaller projects instead of having a consistent whole. Administrative costs

involved with working in very big consortia were also mentioned as a negative aspect of DEAR call for proposals.

In terms of improvement of the DEAR programme, some participants suggested that **additional “partnership-building” possibilities** ahead of big calls for proposals could be useful. These could take different forms (organisation of a DEAR event, project Auction Floors...) to help participants connect the partnership before applying and thereby enable better projects.

Conclusion

A striking finding of this short country study is **that the national context in France has never been that conducive to DEAR; while at the same time being increasingly difficult.**

On the one hand, there is a **vibrant and locally enshrined DEAR community in France**, which benefits from a long experience but is also seeking to innovate. The perceived scale of global and national challenges in relation to better ‘living together’ has been conducive to a renewal of DEAR activities. In addition, local communities and large shares of the population in general can be considered as rather supportive of DEAR activities.

On the other hand, there are **growing divisions in France**; with parts of the society having been weakened by years of economic and social crises and with growing frustrations from territories and groups, which feel ‘left behind’. There is also a growing distrust in public institutions and in the media. This leads to a relative success of political parties promising ‘more protection’ against external threats and to a growing disconnect of parts of the population from a pluralistic public debate. **Reaching out to these groups is therefore one of the biggest challenges for DEAR in France.**

In this context, organisations working on DEAR in France pursue a strategy of **building trust within target groups and communities in the long run**. Peer to peer communication strategies, sub-granting to locally enshrined stakeholders, creative partnerships with the media, schools and/or local authorities are all tools that contribute to that goal. A strong focus on **grass-roots activities and the reliance on (sometimes extensive) networks of partners in the field** also seem to be part of an important part of the response implemented by French DEAR stakeholders. Finally, positioning DEAR organisation as **knowledge and competence centres in order 1/provide better quality DEAR and 2/to enhance DEAR stakeholders’ legitimacy** in the public debate also seem to be an axis of action.

The DEAR programme, whose thematic focus is perceived as **highly relevant for France**, contributes, in turn to **enhancing partnerships and to opening doors, while seeking to further empowering partners** and to continuing financing actions which have already proven to be worthy.

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Projects represented at the workshop

List of projects participating in the workshop by title together with the project website:

- 'Frame, voice, report': <https://www.framevoicereport.org/>
- 'Bridge 47': <https://www.bridge47.org/>
- 'Trade fair, live fair': <https://www.fairtrade.net/>
- 'Start the change'⁷⁴: <https://www.startthechange.eu/>

⁷⁴ The invited project partner could not make it to the workshop. A phone interview was organised.