



## Creating Policy Change:

Report on a two-hour Learning & Development Hub for DEAR Projects, online - 30th September 2020

*DEAR Support Team*



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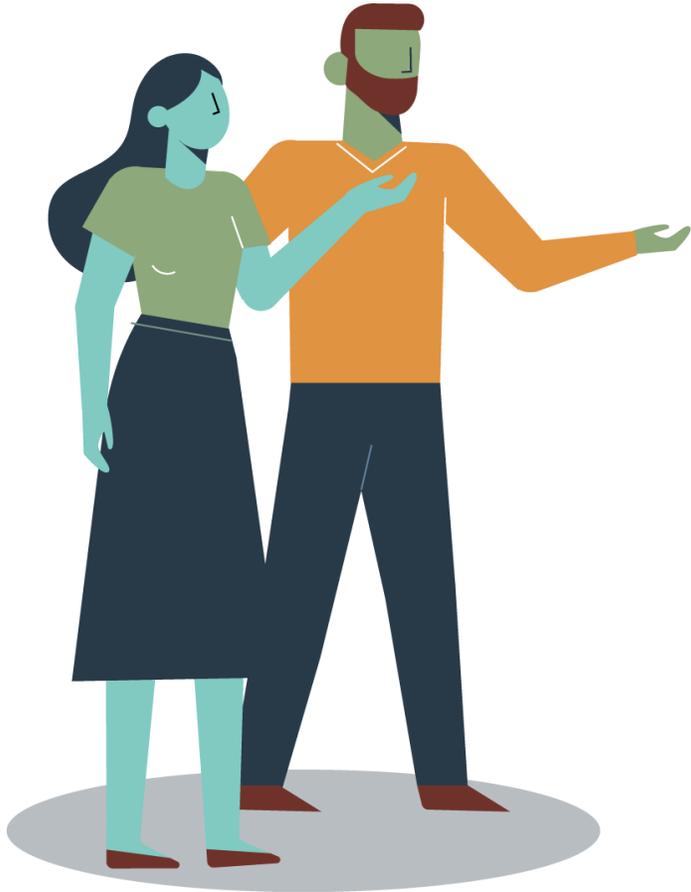
# Purpose and participants

## Purpose:

- To exchange and identify good practice experiences of creating change in policies (of political decision-makers or of businesses), including by means of public involvement and lobbying

## Participants:

- Representatives of the following DEAR projects:
  - [Citizens for Financial Justice](#),
  - [Coherent Europe for Sustainable Development](#),
  - [Make Europe Sustainable for All/Europe in the World](#),
  - [Fish Forward II](#),
  - [Make ICT Fair](#),
  - [Trade Fair, Live Fair](#).
- DG DEVCO B1 DEAR staff

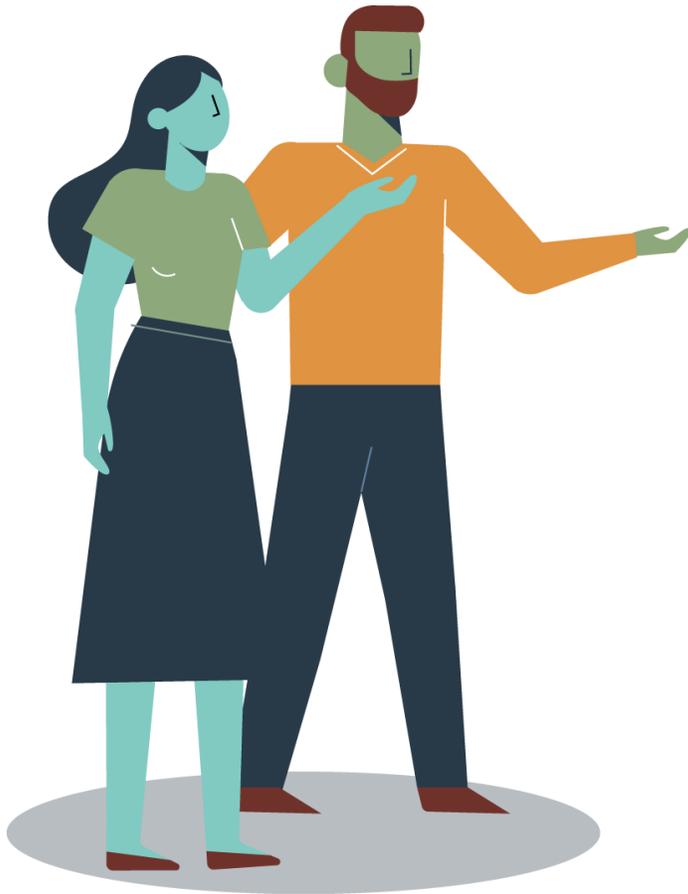


## Background: successful international policy change campaigning

(based on the findings of [M E Keck and K Sikkink](#), reported in 'Activists Beyond Borders – Advocacy Networks in International Politics')

Successful international policy change campaigns appear to have a number of things in common:

1. They have 'created the issue' - and are able to set the agenda as a result
2. They have influenced the discursive position of states, international/inter-state organisations, or businesses - so that targets find it difficult not to express an opinion about the issue
3. They influence institutional procedures - so that targets take the issue into account, for example in their Public Relations
4. They influence the policy change that is taking place in targets.



# This Hub

Many DEAR projects focus on Policy Change, creating [“incremental shifts in existing structures, or new and innovative policies”](#); structures or policies that are controlled by political or business decision-makers.

The two-hour long Hub investigated how projects do this successfully, focussing on two aspects of the [Campaigns Cycle](#):

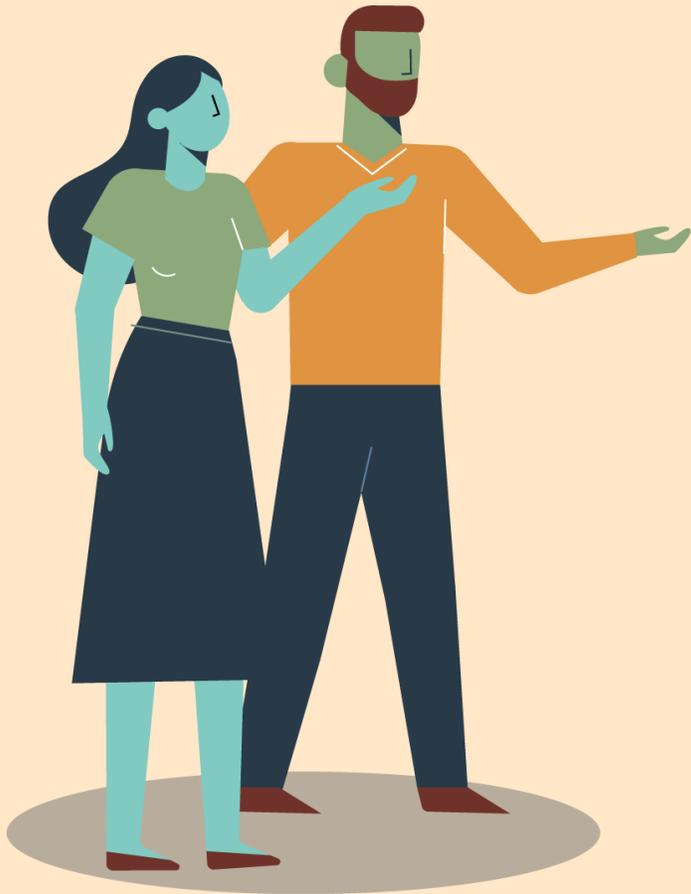
- How they **researched** their issue and their target(s),
- The **use made of the research** in informing the target, key activists and media activities.

Attention was also given to the challenges of **sustaining created change** once a project is finished.

The following slides summarise the findings from the Hub focussing on participant suggestions of

- [what Policy Change focussed projects usefully should take into account when designing and implementing their work.](#)





# Policy Change issues and targets

The six EU DEAR projects participating in the Hub focussed on the following issues and targets:

- Sustainable *energy policies*: dis-investment in fossil fuels. Target: European Investment Bank
- Textile *waste reduction and recycling*. Targets: Ministries of the Environment and MEPs
- Sustainable *fisheries*. Target: corporate policies - influenced by consumers
- Promoting *policy coherence* in support of sustainable development. Targets: selected European Commissioners and Member State governments
- Sustainable *IT use*. Target: public authority purchasing policies
- *Fair trade practices* in leather and garment production. Target: European Commission

## Researching the issue and the targets - suggestions

Participants suggested the following as required or helpful in creating and implementing successful campaigns:

1. **Understand the political or (for businesses) commercial environment of your target** – what are the challenges for them?
  - do a [PEST analysis](#)
  - in the different countries where your campaign takes place: what way are the different (political, economic, social, technological) contexts?
2. **Know your project partners** – and be aware of what and who they know
3. **Use your initial research to recruit allies**: identify (political or business) friends who are interested in/supportive of the issue – and understand why they are interested/supportive
4. **Keep your research up-to-date** during implementation and if need be adjust your tactics (and communication messages) accordingly

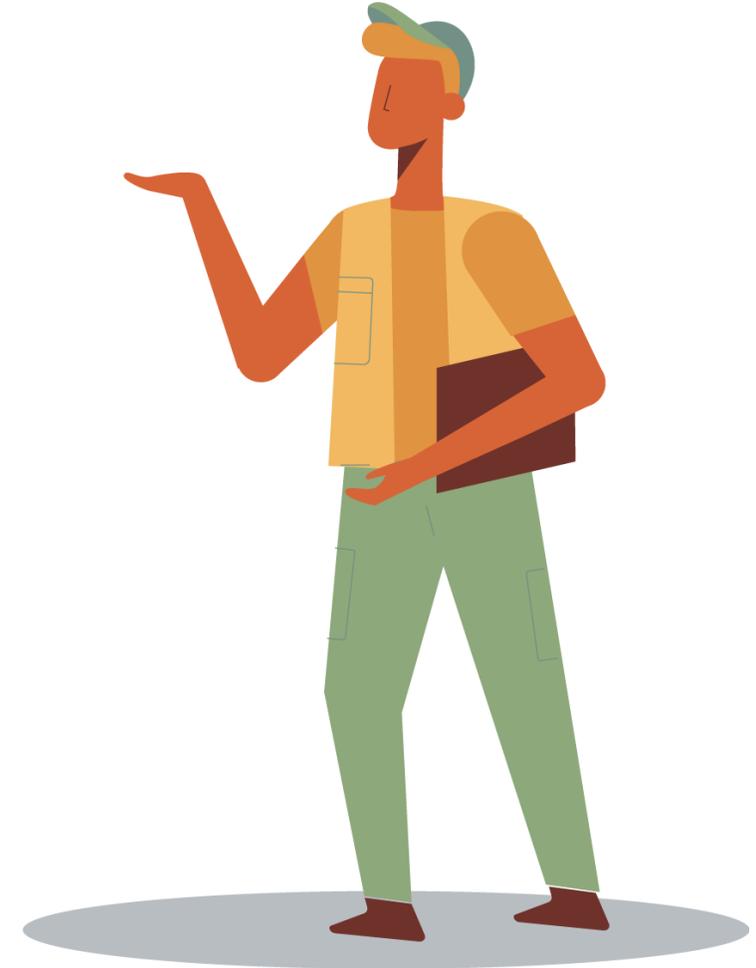
[For related suggestions see, for example, the [‘Planning and Implementing EU DEAR projects’](#) paper, pp 8 and 9.]



# Using the research: successful tactics

In using their research, projects have found the following particularly useful:

- Development of **research papers** identifying the problem and suggested ways forward (for use with and by key activists and/or for use with targets in lobbying meetings)
- Development of **proposals** that meet the needs of the target while addressing the problem. (In some cases the research can usefully be the basis for the design of parliamentary motions or legal texts.)
- Development of **media briefings**, including social media messages.



# Sustaining the change

A DEAR project is finite, but Hub participants suggested that its results can continue by:

- **Developing the understanding, disposition to act and tools to act:** of staff and of supporters
- **Maintaining the tools and resources** of the project on a website
- **Developing alliances of supporters**, e.g. amongst consumers or politicians who will continue to give attention to the issue
- **Being part of a network** that continues to give attention to the issue, building on the project's achievements – for example the “Make Fruit Fair” project concerned with tropical fruit supply chain campaign & advocacy (2015-2018: 27 organisations in 20 EU Member States).
  - After mobilisation of existing networks and a two-year public campaign that engaged MEPs in multi-stakeholder discussions at the parliament, this led to a [European Commission Directive](#) aimed at protecting suppliers from abusive practices.
  - Another result of the project was that Lidl supermarkets announced that it would provide “100% Fairtrade and 0% conventional” bananas for sale from 2019. However, during 2019 this was withdrawn by the company “due to market pressure“. Continued contact by the Fairtrade movement (and the organisations involved in Make Fruit Fair project) led in April this year to the company introducing a ‘human rights policy’ in their supply chain.
- **Developing teaching and learning resources** that inform a next generation of the issue – thereby keeping it on future agendas
- **Designing a follow-on project** that builds on the achievements of the earlier project
- **Considering how the project's results will be maintained at the start of the project**



[For other suggestions on [making project results last](#) see this report based on findings from DEAR projects.]



# Feedback from participants

After the event participants were asked to provide feedback on the Hub. (Scores out of 10 maximum.)

Extent to which participant expectations were met	7.2
Extent to which Hub objectives were met	7.7
Relevance of the Hub to participants' work	6.9
Appropriateness of Hub methodologies	7.8
Quality of workshop facilitation provided by the DEAR Support Team	8.3
Value of European Commission staff participation in the Hub	8.0
Quality of technical support and tools used during the Hub	7.7
Overall success of the workshop	7.3

Amongst the responses to open ended questions were the following suggestions:

- Greater attention to the effect of Coronavirus on the organisation of advocacy work  
[N.b. it is the intention that this will form a significant part of a November 2020 Exchange Hub]
- Make the online Hub more interactive, e.g. by use of quizzes or similar tools
- The breakout groups were useful but it would be helpful to get to know individual projects better.

