**Follow-up seminar for DEAR projects – Minutes of plenary debates** (inputs from PPCM support team)

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# Introduction

This brief summary report aims at presenting the outcome of the “follow-up seminar for Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) project” that took place in Brussels from 25 to 26 November 2014. The seminar built on the “inception seminar” held in Brussels a year before targeting as well beneficiaries of Call for Proposals (EuropeAid Reference No. 131141, 131143). About half of the participants involved in the inception seminar were present at the follow-up seminar.

The objectives of this follow-up seminar was to consolidate the experience in monitoring and evaluation for impact in objective 2 (DEAR) amongst on-going projects, as well as on relevant management matters concerning interim reporting with the view of improving lessons learnt, and create synergies and networks among the different actions co-funded by the EU.

In his welcome, Paul Renier, acting Head of Unit B2 “Civil Society, Local Authorities”-EuropeAid, set the scene (referencing notably to the new paradigm of the post-2015 agenda and to the EC results framework) and the objectives of the seminar. He highlighted that with a good knowledge of the rules and procedures one could focus on what really matters: the impacts of the project and awareness raising among EU citizens.

# DAY 1 - Tuesday, 25 November 2014

## Module 1: “update on the state of play of each project”

**Feedback received on the wall as well as overall comments during the seminar:**

* “So much the same and so much different. Always more to learn! People’s enthusiasm never fails to amaze and inspire me!”
* “A 2-years project duration is too short!”
* “Partnerships – a challenge (and opportunity) where new/outside partners lead work with the past”.
* “Need of more and more focus to doubts/problems encountered by beneficiaries”.
* “Inspired by the scale and ambition of some projects, I realize how contained and relatively straightforward our project is!”
* “Target groups demonstrate positive attitudes towards development awareness & global issues – difficult to measure”
* “Time and energy needed to develop common tools and methods at EU levels”
* “Different projects but similar problems and divert solutions. Networking!”
* “Thanks for fair trade chocolate!”
* “Managing reality : monitoring tools, need of evaluation from the start, feedback from task manager, not overload the reports”
* “Sorry I cannot change the reporting template but let’s make the best of it”

**Some overall expectations on the seminar:**

* “Explore the potential of LAs as actors in DC”
* Town hall - “Examples of cooperation between CSOs and LAs are missing”
* “Include more examples from LAs in the seminars”
* “Difficulties to discuss quality with a large number of partners – Share positive stories and difficulties”.
* “Offer vegetarian food please!”
* “Organise seminars in a more meaningful (not necessarily luxurious) venues with food provided by a social cooperative. Also suggest a more affordable accommodation.”

**Some general questions:**

* “How do you establish your baselines in order to be able to measure behavior-change”?
* “Can a publication be commercialized?” (this question was linked to the module on sustainability)

## Module 2: “contractual obligations…find your way”

**See dedicated annex**

## Module 3: “assessing performance and monitoring outcomes in DEAR”

**Project stories**

1. **Mr. Colin Roche, Nigeria, Friends of the Earth Europe**

Main messages in addition to the PPT: we have to relate on WHO, UN, Nigerian government for impact indicators as: 1) we don’t have the capacity to collect those indicators; 2) they are going beyond the timeframe of the project.

1. **Mrs. Joanne Malone, Suas Educational Development**

An interview was carried out on this project story.

We are working with staff of the university and students with a view of global learning beyond the project (there are spillovers effects). We work closely with them to deliver user-friendly tools. We have specific indicators in each country context (as context-orientated as possible). Some of our tools to measure for e.g. the level of participation; changes in knowledge, understanding, skills, in attitudes: attendance records, learning outcome assessments, observations rubrics with feedback forms; we are asking feedback on the learning to the participants but also to the trainers.

We developed on-line tools for the consortium for e.g. “a living logframe” which includes a space for each partner to fill in and records on the non-expected outcomes.

**Module 3, feedback on “assessing performance and monitoring impact in DEAR”**

Examples and comments on what could we measure in our projects in terms of behavioural change?

1. Copies of the plans teachers are making, case studies from the teachers, lessons.
2. Baseline evaluation: focus group, pre and post-event questionnaires for e.g. for a youth organisations: what is their capacity to organize events (and compare at the beginning and at end of the project).
3. It is easier to measure behaviour change if you have a limited target groups.
4. Campaign actions: you can measure how many people participated and you can also measure the policies. Easier to see if a government is changing policy rather than if educated people changed their behaviour.
5. Local authorities: political decisions as a major point for behavior change. Decisions taken from discussion process.
6. Organisational change – institutions to institutions. With regard to an awareness campaign it depends actually of what you want to achieve, what are your objectives?

Awarness, policy change, behavioural change

## Wrap-up of day 1

* “Some of the sessions were rushed.”
* Would be better to have less questions but to debrief on the answers”.
* -“The last session: it was too much. Too rushed”.
* “Give us fewer things to do”.
* “M&E talk was very useful. Would be even better to have good practice examples”.
* “Longer session to give a proper feedback on the answers – are the answers really the true ones?”
* “Is the EC really interested in reporting?”
* “Authentic experience shared.”
* “A bit more time for dialogue but this is a good attempt.”

Feedback of the facilitator including a reference to an internet link with examples of indicators.

# DAY 2 – Wednesday, 26 November 2014

## Feedback from journalists on day 1

The journalist have asked questions to some participants:

1)Did you capitalize experience since last year seminar?

2)What is your feedback of day one?

3) Choose somebody whom you will remember forever (because you have a link with this person).

1. About half of the participants of the inception seminar are here this year.

On activities:

Some participants commented that since the inception seminar they had: networking activities, exchange of information and some went further: new partnerships were created (writing of articles, participation in training course).

On changes of practices: most of the changes took place in monitoring; as well as in the management of exchange with the task manager; the quality of partnership with the task manager improved (closer relationship).

1. The main feedback from day one is that more feedback is expected on the questions, especially on “pink questions”: more concrete answers are expected today - in plenary or by the task manager.

Clarification from the facilitator: we will clarify to the extent possible. The task managers will answer to your questions but maybe not today.

1. At the end of the seminar, a human chain was created with a ball of wool.

## Module 4: “reporting requirements: DEAR midterm and final reports”

**Valentina Auricchio (Head of Sector DEAR – Unit B2):**

* -You know our inputs for the reporting (Art. 2 General Conditions, Annex VI, specific templates for the final & interim reports)).
* -What is of best interest for us is: the quality of partnership, your risk management capacity (= how did you manage the risk, how did you cope with unexpected events, and how did you cope with delays).
* -The more you follow the templates (structure, format, etc.), the better. The reader will be able to make comparison between what you are reporting and the description of actions.
* -What is important for us is to get an overview: the more you report with aggregated data, the better. There is a balance to find because partners are different. Use annexes. In the report: what is crucial for the reader; and in annexes: you present more details.
* -A “result-based report” rather than an “activity-based report”: the report is an opportunity to give your own assessment. Qualitative aspects have to appear in the report. Evaluate your own partnership with your partners (valid for LAs as well).
* -A report should be credible: it is normal to have issues, challenges. What is interesting is how you cope with the difficulties. And for the EC we can then put measures in place if we see that it is needed (for e.g. capacity building). Be honest and transparent.
* -Visibility aspect: it is important because it can allow us to work more in partnership.
* -You should expect a feedback on your report. The EC can ask further explanations and prove that we understand your project. About 20-30 programmes are managed by each task manager - we have a challenge of time. But we will try to be there with a fair listening and the reporting is a crucial moment for this.

**Feedback of working groups on sharing best practices in reporting progress in DEAR:**

1. Our group discussion was more about questions and challenges than solutions. For e.g. the common challenge we face of receiving good reports from our partners.

=> Task manager feedback: we need to be flexible on the deadline to receive narrative reports.

1. A report reader is perceived as an evaluator for some or as a “critical friend” for others. The report should keep us reflecting with the partners: are we on track with regard to what we would like to achieve? Task managers are not “super people” so we need to find the way to complement their work.
2. Task manager feedback (Anna D.): the monitoring framework helps to collect data from partners throughout the project. How to report impacts at least within the life time of the projects? It is important to have tools at the beginning of the project so that you can use them during the lifetime of the project. For e.g.: questionnaires, interviews that are foreseen 1 year after an event had happened but which still fall in the project’s lifetime. It is important to perceive them as tools (and not only as obligations).
3. Two points from Valentina A.:
4. The lack of feedback from EC task managers is discouraging.
5. There is a tendency to overload the report. Should we envisage different tools to report on this aspect? More questions than actually answers.

## Module 5: “managing reality: partnerships and phasing out for ensuring sustainability of DEAR activities”

**Feedback of working groups – sustainability tree**

Various branches of the tree:

1. There is a “multiplier effect” of the results of our project.

For e.g. building capacity and knowledge. Train the trainers. Individual capacities enhanced => to the project coordinators & target groups.

1. Continuity. Products that you use - for e.g. toolkit - will remain after the end of the project. Leave products to the responsible persons or organisations. Teaching materials embedded in training modules delivered by teacher trainers. EC can use some of the budget for more content coordination – or do a European research (ensuring a baseline) to measure impact.
2. Ownership. Whether there is demand for the product at the start of the project - needs and interests of stakeholders condition the sustainability approach. Making sure interventions and resources are in demand, accessible and relevant at the beginning. Who do you work with? Appropriate people to ensure outputs are used and continue to be used.
3. Open-sources and the use of social media: on-line resources remain available after the life of a project. “EC could also take some of these questions into account. Why not creating an umbrella site for all projects (sustainable visibility).”

Capacity4dev DEAR group created last year for the inception seminar. We would like to encourage participants to join the group. Moderation of the DEAR group by Unit B2 that can facilitate give questions-answers, develop partnerships, diffuse materials

But also outside of DEAR, you can create a Capacity4dev group for e.g. on global education in primary schools. Partnerships can continue after the project. Public or private groups can be created on Capacity4dev.

1. Policy, curriculum, laws changes.
2. “Irreversible - Changes in ideas”. Changes in attitude and behaviour.
3. Certification: fair trade. Ongoing standards and continuing

Certification of town, schools, so that they are the owner then to continue

1. Financial sustainability. Make your tools “market-able”. Diversified sources of funding. Find economic actors that will be involved and will guarantee sustainability.
2. Networks and partnerships. Mainstreaming: how do you institutionalize?

* Sharing good practices. New actions developed based on previous actions and lessons learned.
* Choose your partners: work with other organisations that are permanent (i.e. not reliant on time-bound funding). Embed your project outcomes in their work and agenda; partners with an interest.
* Multi-stakeholders approach at the beginning, at the design phase
* Mobilisation of CSOs and LAs (change agents).
* Find common aims.

10) Trust.

* Quality lead to sustainability.
* Sustainability from the beginning of the projects the design can give clue for the sustainability.
* Prepare closeout to ensure sustainability: plan, disseminate, involve partners and beneficiaries, identify on-going needs and seek funding to fulfill.

**Presentation on project stories related to partnership, Ms. Sharon Pruski, Developing Confident Global Learning Communities**

-Different ideologies on education.

-2 students from each country to be represented. 12-17 years old.

-Different expectations from the teachers. In UK: rigorous procedures when you take children outside the school.

-Lesson learned: trust, transparency, reciprocity, open-channel of communication in order to resolve issues of project together.

## Module 5 (continued): “managing reality: stock taking on our DEAR projects”

**Feedback discussion: what need to change before the end of the project?**

1. We had a useful discussion with our group. We are right at the point to tack stock on our projects: it is a good timing to elaborate mitigation plans now with our partners and to tack stock on the milestones results achieved on the way.
2. Discussion on how to mitigate non feasible objectives within the remaining timeframe. Some objectives were too ambitious.

We had some good exchanges on ideas to help us concluding the project well. Some ideas that arose: it is important to contract an evaluator well in advance; there is a need for a more specific descriptive audit; the risk analysis is fine – but is very difficult to implement if funding comes too late. For a possible new project with the EC: find partners which already have beneficiated of an EU project.

1. Being too ambitious in the indicators is not good for the calls for proposals. The projects themselves need to be as ambitious as the indicators.

## EYD presentation, EuropeAid-Unit 05 Communication and Transparency

* Main focus: informing and engaging EU citizens.
* Join other stakeholders outside Brussels. Red of national coordinators.
* Thematic months endorsed by management.
* Grant to Concord (sub-grant opportunity).
* Toolkit under preparation for schools, universities, informal education.

Clarification from Valentina A.: technically the DEAR projects were not under the heading of the EYD 2015 but this can help you to capitalize and give you visibility.

**Presentation on project stories related to the EYD : Mrs. Stéphanie de Halleux, Commune d’Ixelles**

* An action will be organised in the framework of DEAR in May 2015: festival on 2-8 May 2015 in Brussels and on 6 May event organised at the EU parliament.
* “Millennium youth project” including various towns in Europe and Democratic Republic of Congo, Palestine, Israel.

**Feedback on the presentations** :

* Unit 05 to send the list of national coordinators contacts as soon as they have the official list so that the participants can contact them. In most cases ministries of cooperation (or of foreign affairs).
* Comment on the toolkit: it would be good to share it as soon as possible so that participants could use it.

-Question from a participant: how are you going to use what we already produced in the framework of the DEAR (previous and current programmes)?

=>Feedback : Member States to come up with their idea. More than half of the MS already shared their instruments. MS have consulted CSO&LAs so that they are pretty aware of what schools and university want. We depend on the feedback from MS.

5 participants in the room were consulted by the MS for EYD. 3 months only of consultation for now.

-We rely on previous experiences. On DG COM website there is a “teachers’ corner” that we will use.

-Feedback on what you recommend is welcome. DEAR ideas are welcome to develop the toolkit. Please channel it through Unit B2.

* Is there any funding possibility in the framework of the EYD?

=>Feedback: DEAR programme. We wanted to go directly to CSO & LAs.

15 millions of financial support + a lot of non-financial support (e.g. free access to toolkits and information through the website).

-Concord grant: national platform of organisations.

## FINAL FEEDBACK

**Participants’ feedback:**

* Network. EuropeAid could help to support project applicants, knowledge sharing, transparency and information sharing cost for the CSOs. A mapping of all projects using the reports is needed – indicating the countries where the activities are organised and categorizing DEAR (current and finalized) projects by subject area (education, capacity building, campaigning).

=>there is a dedicated forum on Capacity4dev (Not possible to have another website).

* One element very important and valuable: to have the chance to meet our task manager. One of the few moments where we have the opportunity to meet them and talk to them face to face. Maybe we can try to find ways to make these direct meetings during the project time more often; or to use Skype meetings.
* Congratulations for having taken on board comments of day 1. Today I felt that I really engaged and shared good practices.
* Suggestion: have a 10 min. slot/corner for individual meetings between each project and the task manager.
* Great to have peer to peer meeting (PM session).
* We need to situate our projects beyond the technical aspects. Where do we situate notably with regard to impacts in comparison to the other?
* Twitter: would be good to have a presentation on Capacity4dev.
* How can we cluster? Use Capacity4dev and create a group for a particular problematic. Then there is the general DEAR group where you can link to your particular group and invite people working on the same issue.

Capacity4dev DEAR is a public group. An option for link-in with each other.

**Journalists’ feedback:**

Some remarks and suggestions received by participants:

* Work on collective reflection during one day. For the next step go into more details and more in depth on content.
* A lot of production, pedagogical support, capitalization. But where to consult them? Could Capacity4dev propose this?
* LAs: by tradition the EC is positioned with regard to CSOs. LAs are involved in development education since recently. The tools are therefore not adapted (e.g. a contract to be signed within 10 days is not possible for LAs). It is important for us that our task managers understand LAs specificities. They are synergies between CSOs and LAs.
* Capacity4dev to be used to get answers to our “non-answer questions”. We really hope that we will get answers. Group on Capacity4dev: “What is next for on-going projects?”

A human chain was created with a ball of wool illustrating the network in construction thanks to this seminar.

**Closure speeches:**

1. **Michel Laloge (Head of Sector Local Autorities – Unit B2, EuropeAid) :**

-Seminar very participatory. Complex topic and delicate: it is hard to measure change in attitudes. The seminar gives some food for thought on which you can work in red. Creativity and innovation are key.

DEAR is interesting because it is multi-sectoral.

Work carried out mainly in Europe but as a bridge between Europe and development issues. Awarness of public opinion. DEAR focus mainly on the youth.

-Next steps: “I commit myself on the fact that you will receive answers from the task managers despite the workload constraints.”

Monitoring tools could be improved.

Capacity4dev: an opportunity of interaction for DEAR and to develop memory.

In the near future we should have a specific session on interactions between LAs and CSOs.  
Thank you for the quality of the organization and for the substance of the debates.

1. **Valentina Auricchio (Head of Sector DEAR – Unit B2, EuropeAid):**

Of the 82 projects invited 70 are present. This is positive.

There is always room for improvement. For e.g. the Finance & Contract session: to be or not to be? It is a learning experience for us. Many topics. We have been listening to your requests (notably: feedback from the task managers, interactions between CSO-LAs). We hope that you have been given a chance to a fair listening and to express your opinion.

Capitalisation, joint learning, networking : not only a single event. Embedded in our working. Systematic way of working. Do not be surprise if you are contacted soon to continue in this spirit (not necessarily for a seminar).