

Planning and Implementing EU DEAR projects

Ideas and suggestions from European
Commission supported DEAR Projects

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DEAR SUPPORT TEAM, OCTOBER 2017

The Development Education & Awareness Raising (DEAR) Support Team is a project of the European Commission providing support to the Commission's DEAR Programme, including through capacity building, learning and networking events.



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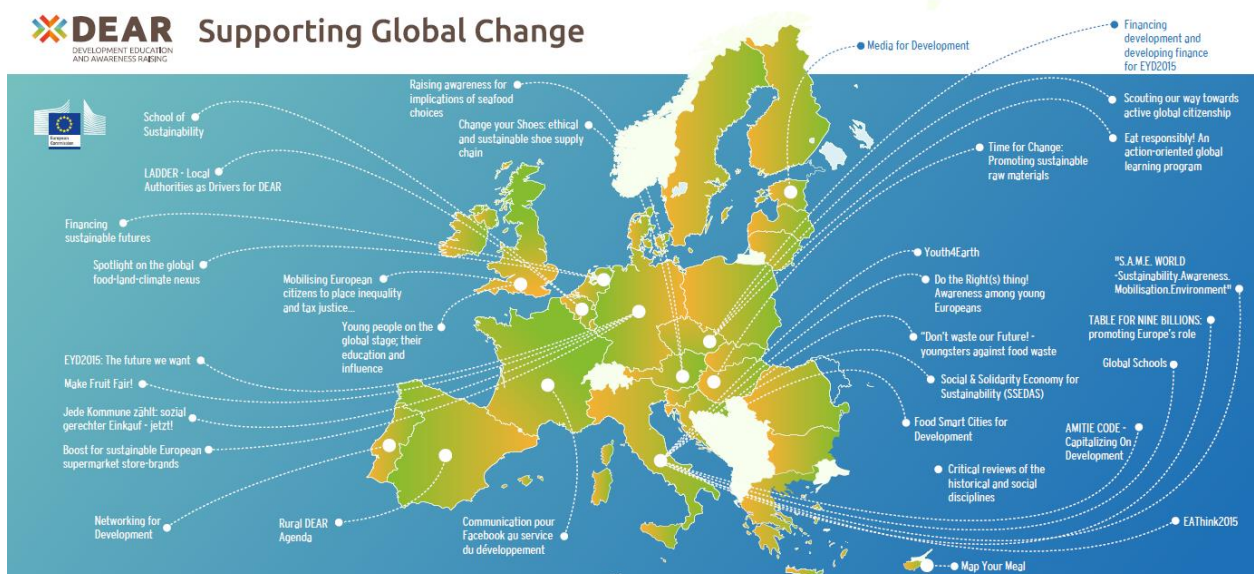


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Introduction: learning from European Commission supported Development Education & Awareness Raising projects



This paper summarises outcomes of work done by representatives of 51 European Commission supported Development Education & Awareness Raising (DEAR) projects. Approximately 250 people from more than 200 organisations, institutions, agencies and local authorities participated in twelve 'Exchange Hubs' and 'Learning & Development Hubs' during a three-year period from 2015 to 2017. The Hubs offered participants an opportunity to draw out learning points from their experiences: learning points which they felt would be of benefit too to colleagues in future DEAR projects.

The *Exchange Hubs* involved representatives of all ongoing EC-DEAR projects. The Hubs looked at 'bigger' questions such as:

- how do projects try to create a sustained impact?
- how do they work in and with local communities?
- how do they organise their work in large partnerships?
- how do they contribute to the overall EU DEAR objectives?

The *Learning & Development Hubs* each brought together a smaller number of projects that had experience of a particular theme or issue:

- using 'multipliers' or 'change agents' in implementing DEAR;
- working with and on issues of social and economic change;
- assessing the results of projects on project audiences and participants;
- using evaluation to help shape the project during implementation;
- engaging people in the Sustainable Development Goals;
- using 'sub-granting' to achieve project objectives.

The discussions and suggestions from the Hubs were captured in reports that are available from the Commission's Capacity4Dev website (www.capacity4dev.eu/dear). The following pages draw on those reports, providing suggestions and food for thought on aspects of DEAR project planning, implementation and evaluation.

The paper is *neither* a project management manual *nor* a formal evaluation of EC-DEAR project experiences. Instead it aims to offer a range of suggestions that are relevant to EC-DEAR projects: useful

to staff involved in designing and implementing projects concerned with awareness raising *of*, campaigning-advocacy *for* or education *in* global development.

The structure of this paper

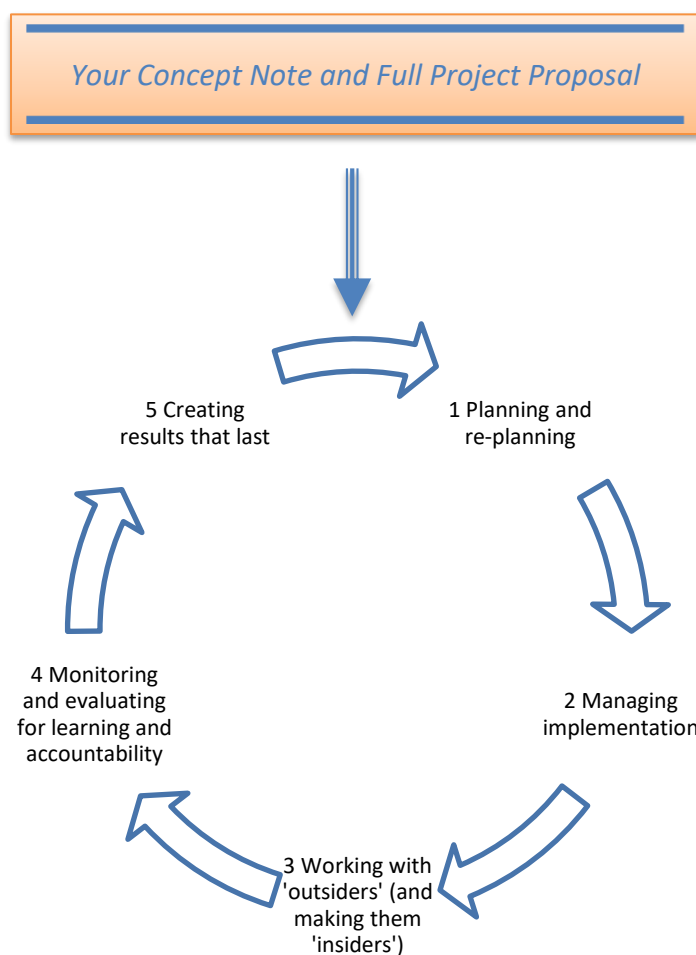
The paper considers that at the start of implementation you and your project team will need to re-familiarise, and probably re-plan, various aspects of the project and that during further implementation you may have to do that re-planning again.

This is followed by a look at issues of implementation: building, managing and being part of a project team, setting up and maintaining finance and internal communication systems.

The next section focuses on working with 'outsiders', in particular Change Agents, local communities and 'sub-grantees'.

A section on monitoring and evaluation provides suggestions on how that can be developed so you can learn from what you've done, including during implementation, and account for your project's results.

The last but not least important section looks at issues and suggestions that help in creating results that are sustained beyond the life-time of the project and that help you in considering and implementing future work.



refers to key ideas that are worth taking into account



speech bubbles give a key recommendation from participants in the Hubs

1 Planning and re-planning



A. At the start

You've submitted your Concept Note and your Full Proposal. Many months later you hear that they have been agreed and you or the lead applicant have signed an agreement with the Commission about the work to be done. By the time you start your project it is likely that your initial ideas are more than one-and-a-half year's old and that the more worked out ideas of your full proposal were developed more than a year ago.

In the meantime, some of the staff who you were expecting to work on this project have left their organisation or authority, or they have been assigned to other work. And your own employer has agreed a new strategic plan that doesn't give as much priority to the issues of your project as previously.

In the external environment, laws, regulations or priorities may have changed too: the teachers you hoped to be working with have a new curriculum to respond to, one that doesn't quite fit with your original ideas; the decision-makers you hoped to influence have made decisions that make achievement of your objectives more complicated; and media and society have become more interested in national issues to the detriment of attention to global development.

a) Sounds familiar?

Time to re-assess your original ideas and re-plan them.



Throughout the implementation of your project, the project objectives you specified in your Concept Note and Log-frame can't be changed, but almost anything else can – *if* you have good reasons for this and the agreement of your Task Manager.

b) You think you don't need to re-plan your original proposal?

Nevertheless, do look at it again - carefully.



The plans put together more than a year ago are unlikely to have involved everyone who now needs to be involved in their implementation. Even if they all were involved, you and they may well have forgotten the details or the reasoning behind particular aspects of the plan.

Use your re-planning in the first few months of the project as an opportunity to build your project team

Near the start of the project, organise a multi-day 'getting to know you' and planning event involving all project staff.

Essentials for success	
1. Get to know the different project staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideally within the first month or two organise a face-to-face meeting involving all project staff: to discuss the project, individual backgrounds, interests and expectations, and plans to make the project successful • Find out how your colleagues like to work. There will be cultural, organisational, skills and experience differences between different project partners and personal preferences for a particular way of working, all of which affect your work as a project team. Being aware of this from the beginning is likely to prevent problems later on.
2. Make sure that all project staff know what you are collectively trying to achieve and what you each hope to 'get out of' participating in the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners and different project staff are likely to have different reasons for being involved and they may well want to achieve different things through the project. • Discuss at an early stage your different hopes and expectations for the project, making sure there's a mutual understanding of these – and a collective agreement on the common and shared purpose of the project
3. Make sure that all project staff know what their role is, and that everyone knows that of each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is responsible for which aspects of the project? • How will they relate and report to a) the Project Manager or Coordinator and b) other project staff?
4. Agree and implement key systems (incl. finance, communications, monitoring & evaluation, reporting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will you work together? How often will you meet and communicate? • What will you communicate and what not? Not everybody needs to know everything – but they do need to know about things that affect their role in the project and about how that relates to the project's shared, overall objectives • If you've not already done so: within the first two months of the project's start appoint an external evaluator or critical friend to help you in developing the project's M&E system as part of the re-development of your project plan • Keep your finance, reporting, communications and M&E systems simple: focus on the information you need in order to know <i>how</i> you are doing. Collecting information on <i>what</i> you are all doing is not helpful if it doesn't tell you what those activities lead to.
5. During the whole project set aside at least one-third of the project's time to planning (and learning from what you've done)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't rush into doing activities with your supporters/participants/audiences. In one of the Hubs, a project manager said: "<i>we should have given <u>much</u> more time to planning instead of 'doing things'</i>" Other participants agreed that planning and learning were often neglected to such an extent that the project had not been as successful as it could have been. • Change is inevitable: expect to revise your project plan as previous opportunities disappear and new opportunities appear
6. Prepare your one minute 'elevator pitch'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In not more than 60 seconds explain what your project tries to achieve, why that is important, and how it tries to do it – and use that as an introduction to the project with people who can help you in making it a success



For your first project team meeting (and also for major review meetings) consider using an external facilitator to help you: it will give the Project Manager/Coordinator an opportunity to take a full part in the discussion instead of having to keep track of the agenda and of everyone's input, and it can help in spreading the 'ownership' of the project to all partners instead of it being seen primarily as the lead organisation/lead authority's 'baby'.

B. Understanding the external environment and your project's 'outsiders'

The success of your project depends on working with 'outsiders', i.e. people who are not or not closely involved in the project's planning and organisation, but who are important because they help you to achieve your project's intentions. Your proposal will have described who they are and why they are important in addressing the issues you have identified.



To find out how the external environment affects your project develop a 'situational analysis'. A simple one might use a PESTO approach, asking the question:



What are the (external)

- Political
- Economic
- Social
- Technological, and
- (internal, in your partners) Organisational

circumstances and developments that affect or may affect your issue – and hence your project?

Develop a shared understanding in your project team of the contexts and issues of your project.

Following such an analysis, what are the Strengths and Weaknesses of the individual and collective project partners in making use of and addressing these PESTO circumstances and developments – and what roles do your project's 'outsiders' have in this?¹



Your proposal will have indicated how you plan to work with your 'outsiders' (target audiences, participants, supporters, etc.) and why you think you can work with them. In the first few months of implementation find out more about these 'outsiders' and re-assess if your proposed way of working with them is feasible.

Devote most of the first year of implementation to planning your project: your activities in years 2 and 3 are likely to be all the better for it.

Find out about your audiences, participants, supporters and others who can help you, before you plan the detail of activities to involve them. Unless you've already worked with your 'outsiders' before and know 'where they are coming from', finding out about them and developing ideas of how to contact and work with them takes time. It is time well spent because it increases the chances of your project's feasibility and relevance: helping to make your 'outsiders' into knowledgeable and skilled 'insiders' who are able to sustain and build on the project's achievements once the project is finished.

¹ For these and other techniques see for example: <https://www.odi.org/publications/5258-planning-tools-problem-tree-analysis> and <https://www.mindtools.com/>

THINGS TO CONSIDER ABOUT YOUR PROJECT'S OUTSIDERS (AND ABOUT YOU)

What is your organisation's credibility to be working on the project?
 What will give you the authority, understanding, skills, interest, enthusiasm to
 target or work with your project's 'outsiders'?

How well do you understand your participants/targets/supporters and other influential people who can affect
 the success of your project? What are their priorities, concerns and perspectives?

Participants	Target audiences	Supporters	Influentials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are their priorities – and how can your project help meet those? What are their constraints – and how does that affect how you work with them? How can they be involved in shaping what you do and how you do it? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is their perspective on what you are trying to achieve? What, <i>from their point of view</i>, are the drawbacks to your objectives or activities? Which areas of shared interest are there between you and your target? How can you use those to build trust in what you are doing? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why might they support you – what is 'in it' for them to give you their support? How do they prefer to be communicated with and to be involved – and how does that affect what you ask them to do? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who are the people who can speak up for your project? How can they help you to make contacts and to give ideas for activities and strategies? Who are your 'negative stakeholders'? Why are they against all or parts of your project? What can you do to minimise their influence over the success of the project?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the relevant information and other evidence you have for use in your project? How will you present it in a way so that your participants/targets/supporters/influentials can use it? How will you build your participants'/targets'/supporters'/influentials' trust in you so they feel that you know what you are talking about? 			

C. Your European Commission Task Manager

A key 'outsider' who is also a key 'insider' of your project is your DEAR Task Manager. She or he will sign-off on your interim reports and accounts, and will have to agree to any major changes in your plans.



① Try to arrange a face-to-face meeting in Brussels between your project manager and the project's Task Manager in the first few months of the project. Most Commission Task Managers have no experience of the practical implementation of a DEAR project, and the content and organisation of your project or the reasons why it is taking place may also be new to them. However, your Task Manager's understanding of the opportunities, constraints and ways of working of your project can be very important, particularly when things may not go according to the original plan. Getting such an understanding through face-to-face discussions is much better than through written or telephone contact alone.

② At appropriate times in your project invite your Task Manager (and other relevant Commission staff and MEPs) to take part in events you organise: for them to get to know about your project in action. Invite them in writing. It is usually very difficult for your Task Manager to be allowed out of the Brussels. What can help is if the event involves different organisations, stakeholders and participants from across a range of EU member states. Task Managers tend to be keen to get to know their projects better, so discuss with them what kind of event or invitation might make it more likely for a Task Manager to be allowed to accept an invitation to visit your project.

YOUR REVISED PLAN

It may take three months or it may take a year, and it may need to happen in the first, second or third year, but at some point your original plan may need some relatively major changes.

Keep your Task Manager informed if you think results or major activities need revision or re-development, or if the budget needs changing.



Before submitting a formal suggestion to change your plans, use informal e-mails and telephone calls and ask your Task Manager for any suggestions they have or about potential problems they can foresee from their side with the changes you want to make. The version of the PRAG that is applicable to your project may be helpful too when considering possible changes to your plans.²

If changes need to be made to your plans and/or budget, submit them formally explaining what is to be changed and why that change is needed.

During the past years Task Managers have become less concerned about changes in the activities that are carried out by a project. Instead they are much more interested in results and in explanations of how those results will be or have been achieved. Therefore, focus on your results and explain how they will contribute to achievement of your project's objectives.



² The edition of the PRAG that is applicable to your project is mentioned in the lead applicant's contract with the European Commission. For the latest edition of PRAG (not necessarily the one that applies to your project!) see: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/?header_description=DEVCO+Prag+to+financial+and+contractual+procedures+applicable+to+external+actions+financed+from+the+general+budget+of+the+EU+and+from+the+11th+EDF&header_keywords=ePrag%2C+europa Links to previous editions of PRAG are also available via this page.

2 Management

A. Working with partners

Your project will be implemented in a wide range of countries involving multiple partners, with different backgrounds and working in different cultures and languages. How do you keep this together, effective and efficient in working towards shared results and objectives?

TO BEGIN WITH

- Take your time in getting to know each other:
 - why is each of your organisations/authorities involved in the project: what do they hope to gain and what can they contribute to the project?³

Don't rush into doing things. Instead, consider how what each of you wants to get out of - and wants to contribute to - the project can be met in the project plan

- what do each of you consider to be the individual and the shared opportunities and threats to the success of your project?
- what ideas do you have to build on the individual and the shared opportunities, and to minimise the threats?
- what can each of the project staff members and partners contribute to the project: what do they consider to be their strengths and their weaknesses, and what do they hope to be able to write on a future CV that they have learned, managed or experienced through the project?
- in working together as an international project team, what do you think the greatest problems will be, and how might you reduce those problems?

LARGE AND SMALL PARTNERS

In most DEAR projects some of the partners will be large, able to devote more time and attention to the project, while others may be relatively small, with only part-time input available. This can easily lead to an 'in-group' who is closely and almost daily involved in the project, and an 'out-group' of those who are or who feel less engaged. There is a risk that amongst smaller partners this may lead to demotivation and a de-prioritisation of work on the project. How do you make and keep a partnership real for large and small partners alike?

DEAR project participants in one of the Hubs came up with the following suggestions:



Ensure that *all* partners (large and small) can input into the overall project plan and the direction or overall strategy of the project on an equal basis.

- As part of your team building activities identify which partners have particular skills and experiences, and which skills and experiences they would like to develop: skills that can be brought to bear on the project.

³ Even if you and your partners belong to the same international alliance, agency or network, do NOT assume that you are all taking part for the same reasons.

- Explicitly use the implementation of the project and the allocation of tasks to build on and improve partner capacities and capabilities, assigning the lead roles in specific areas of work to partners across the partnership, including amongst smaller partners.⁴

CHANGING PARTNERS

How do you deal with a change of partner when one of the original partners is no longer taking part? If that happens it is likely to take your Task Manager some time to approve changes in the partnership composition or structure.

- In the short-term, wherever possible re-assign work and budgets across the remaining partners to ensure planned work continues.



Because the need for a change in partners is not unknown: during your project's start phase draw up a set of criteria that give an outline of how you will deal with the process of finding a new partner if needed. Discuss this with your Task Manager and make a formal submission to obtain their agreement to the criteria and procedure to be used. The relevant PRAG (see footnote on a previous page) will also give you suggestions of what needs to happen during a change in partners.



B. Your project organisation and management

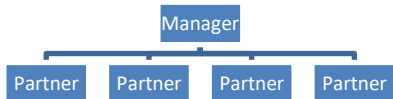
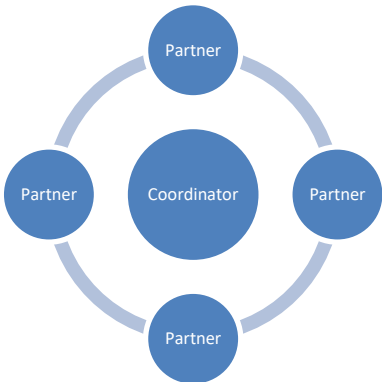
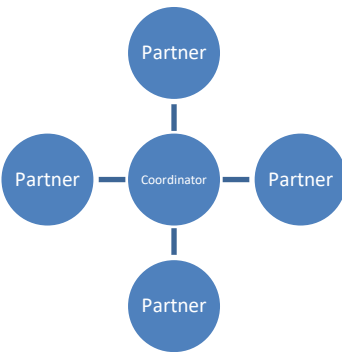
Your proposal will have sketched out how management of the project will be done. Most probably at some point and for specific activities your project will use different management approaches; approaches that may be based on any of the following three 'models'.

In deciding on which approach to use, for the project as a whole, or for particular task areas, what are the advantages and disadvantages of each in helping you to develop and implement a successful project?

Different aspects of the project may use different management approaches: use the most appropriate, allow for creativity, use an approach that can be adapted when needed, but be clear about why you use it.

⁴ A report on the outcomes of an Exchange Hub on 'Working in and with large partnerships' is available at <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/dear-programme/blog/sharing-knowledge-dear-projects>

DIFFERENT PROJECT MANAGEMENT APPROACHES

Centrally Managed Approach	Coordinated Approach	Dispersed Approach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A project team (consisting of all or some of the partners) develops plans and oversees project implementation. Implementation by all project partners is centrally directed and managed by a Project Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A core strategy is agreed across all partners, but exact planning and implementation is the responsibility of each partner or of a group of partners assigned for this Organisation and responsibility for implementation of aspects of the project is delegated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each partner develops its own plans to meet the project's core objectives Implementation is diverse and is the responsibility of each of the partners
Responsibility rests with the lead applicant. A memorandum of understanding or other written agreement between the lead applicant and project partners may exist but it tends to be minimal in describing respective responsibilities	The project plan and a memorandum of understanding or other written agreement between the lead applicant and the partners describe the respective responsibilities of each, but the lead applicant maintains overall responsibility.	A memorandum of understanding, in the form of a legal contract, exists between the lead applicant and all the project partners, so that responsibility (including for finances) is fully shared.
Role of the Project Manager: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> leads the project and the project team manages planning and implementation of tasks by the project team is responsible for the overall success of the project 	Role of the Project Coordinator: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> leads the project team coordinates the overall planning and implementation of tasks is co-responsible for the overall success of the project 	Role of the Project Coordinator: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides liaison between the different partners – so they are aware of, and possibly use, each other's plans and techniques advises on implementation by each partner but is not responsible
		



C. Information systems

Keep it simple!

Develop systems that tell you a) how resources (people, money) will be used to create results and b) how those resources have been used in creating results

The main information systems you'll probably need will deal with⁵:

- Internal project communication:
 - face-to-face communications
 - useful for joint reviewing and planning of the overall project
 - useful for a smaller group of partners to plan a specific area of work of the project
 - telephone/Skype/WhatsApp/Go to meeting/WebEx/etc. conferences
 - useful for getting updates and feedback/agreement on specific proposals
 - useful for small group discussions, brainstorming and planning
 - don't use all-partner calls: telephone conferences with more than about seven participants are very difficult to manage; instead use separate calls with different groups of partners (e.g. just with the partners in a particular project workgroup)
 - a shared 'activity blog', Facebook, Google Drive or similar for use by all partners to keep all partners aware of each other's contributions
 - quarterly and annual reports focussed on
 - reporting against the results you were intending to achieve in the previous period,
 - reporting unintended/unexpected results,
 - reporting key learning points (things you would do differently in the future and things that went particularly well)
 - what the achieved results make possible to do next
 - any changes to the original plan which you think are needed
- Finance:
 - how much money is coming in and how much money is going out:
 - use your EC agreed budget as the basis for your planning and reporting
 - make sure that each expenditure is allocated to the appropriate budget line in a way that enables you/your auditor/the Commission to trace how much each activity costs
 - if possible use a password protected central electronic system which is accessible to all partners to upload information
- External communications:
 - what do you need to communicate, why, how will you do this, and why do you use those methods and not others?
- Monitoring and evaluation of activities and results (see section 4)

*Wherever possible use systems with which people are already familiar – unless a different system makes things easier:
Avoid tools that are complex or take up a lot of time to get used to.*

⁵ For more ideas on systems to be used see for example: <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/dear-programme/blog/sharing-knowledge-dear-projects>

3 From 'outsiders' to 'insiders'



Section 1 suggested that it would be worthwhile for you to get to know your 'outsiders' early in the project. Various Hubs looked at this issue in more detail, investigating how work at local community level, through Change Agents and through the use of 'sub-grants' can help in making 'outsiders' into 'insiders', i.e. actors in support of the project's aims and objectives. Another Hub looked at the challenges and opportunities to engage people in the SDGs. This section gives an indication of what DEAR projects have found to be some of the useful approaches and techniques in making 'outsiders' into 'insiders'. The section focuses in particular on the issues which they have found to be problematic.

Obviously how you work with your 'outsiders' depends a lot on what you want them to do in achieving the objectives of your project. Much of that in turn depends on your intention for the project: is it a Global Learning project or a Campaigning-Advocacy project?

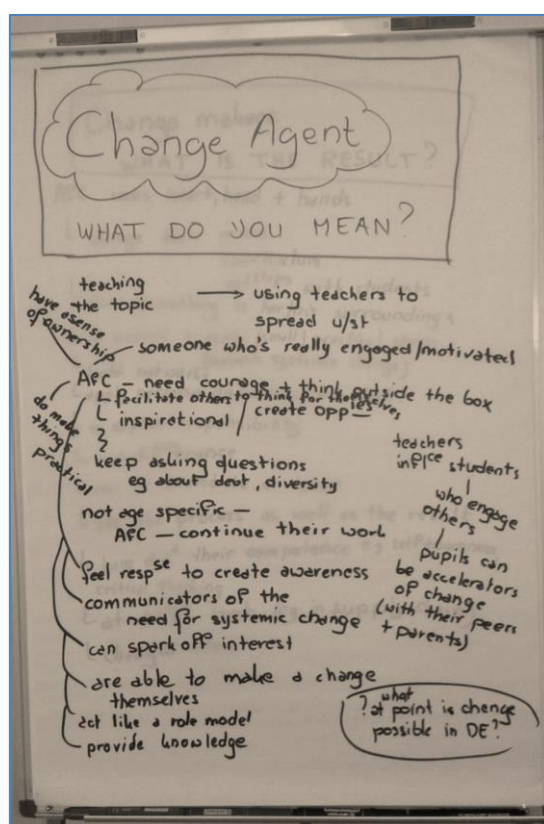
To recap:

- **A GLOBAL LEARNING PROJECT** typically works in a formal or non-formal education setting. It aims to develop understanding of one or more global development issues and how they are related and relevant to what is happening in the learner's environment: developing or implementing a teaching and learning process, module or curriculum. It aims to do this so that the learner (who may be a teacher, community worker, student or pupil) develops the skills to make enquiries about the issues, to analyse the issue and critically assess proposed resolutions to it, and to be creative about how the issue can be addressed: in the local or national environment, globally and by personally by themselves. Good quality Global Learning will do this through an approach in which both the project organisations and the project participants work together on the issue: they are all learners.
- **A CAMPAIGNING-ADVOCACY PROJECT** typically focuses on behaviour or policy that relates to one or more global development issues. It raises awareness amongst particular sections of the public of the current situation and proposes alternatives that lead to changes in the behaviour of, for instance, consumers and/or in the policies and practices of (private or public) decision makers. To achieve such change, it uses not only awareness raising techniques but also, for example, public campaigning actions, lobbying, research, and public debates. In using such techniques good quality Campaigning-Advocacy will not only develop understanding of the global development issues amongst those involved, but also how that issue relates to and is relevant to their own lives. Additionally, it will aim to develop skills of advocacy, organisation and campaigning so that those involved in the project can continue an effective involvement in global (and local) development in the future.

A. Change agents

For participants in the Hub that looked at the use of Change Agents or Multipliers⁶, Change Agents are those who, as a result of their participation in a DEAR project:

- do something in their own surroundings:
 - taking (small) practical steps that assist in creating systemic change;
- are able to change
 - their mind,
 - local policies and practices,
 - relationships (e.g. within their community);
- build networks of people who together create further change;
- are able to see relationships between processes and outcomes;
- have developed their own competences, e.g. in relation to self-awareness or critical or analytical thinking.



In working with members of the public and trying to develop their agency as actors most projects will, usually implicitly, base their work on one of three approaches or thought models about how change is created:

? How will the approach you use affect what your Change Agents will and can do?

⁶ For a fuller report on this Hub see <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/dear-programme/event/dear-site-cluster-meetingprague-0>



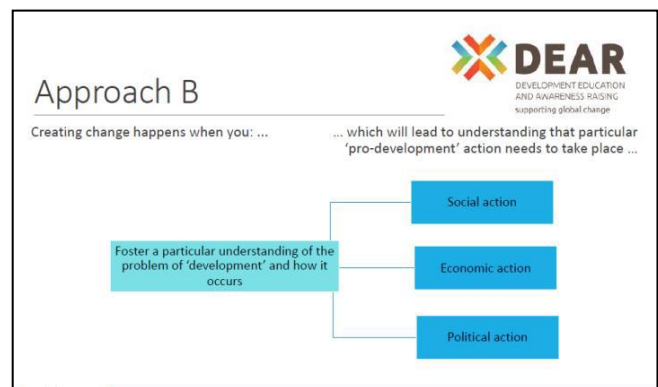
The first approach assumes that by educating the public about development issues (by means of creating understanding and 'pro-development' attitudes) behaviour will automatically be changed.

Although there appears to be no evidence that such a linear approach actually works, it is a fairly common belief and practice in some DEAR projects. Particularly those that focus on providing information and raising general awareness about development or poverty relate to this approach.

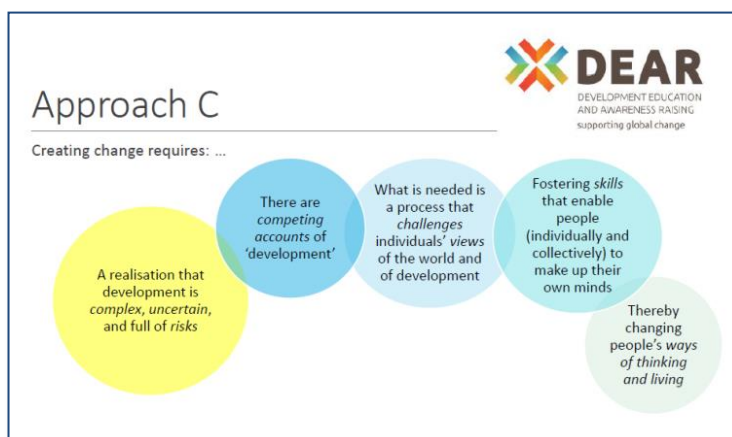
The second approach explains and understands problems of 'development' from a usually political or social, economic, environmental, educational, or communication point of view.

In this approach the thinking is that as long as an understanding is developed based on a particular perspective (a perspective that is assumed to be correct) the public can and will support appropriate actions to overcome the problems.

Various DEAR projects, particularly those using campaigning-advocacy approaches but also many involved in education work, are based on this approach.



The third approach starts from the point of view that our understanding of the problem of 'development', poverty, inequality or of change (and what prevents and promotes it) is limited and that explanations of this are contested and up for debate.

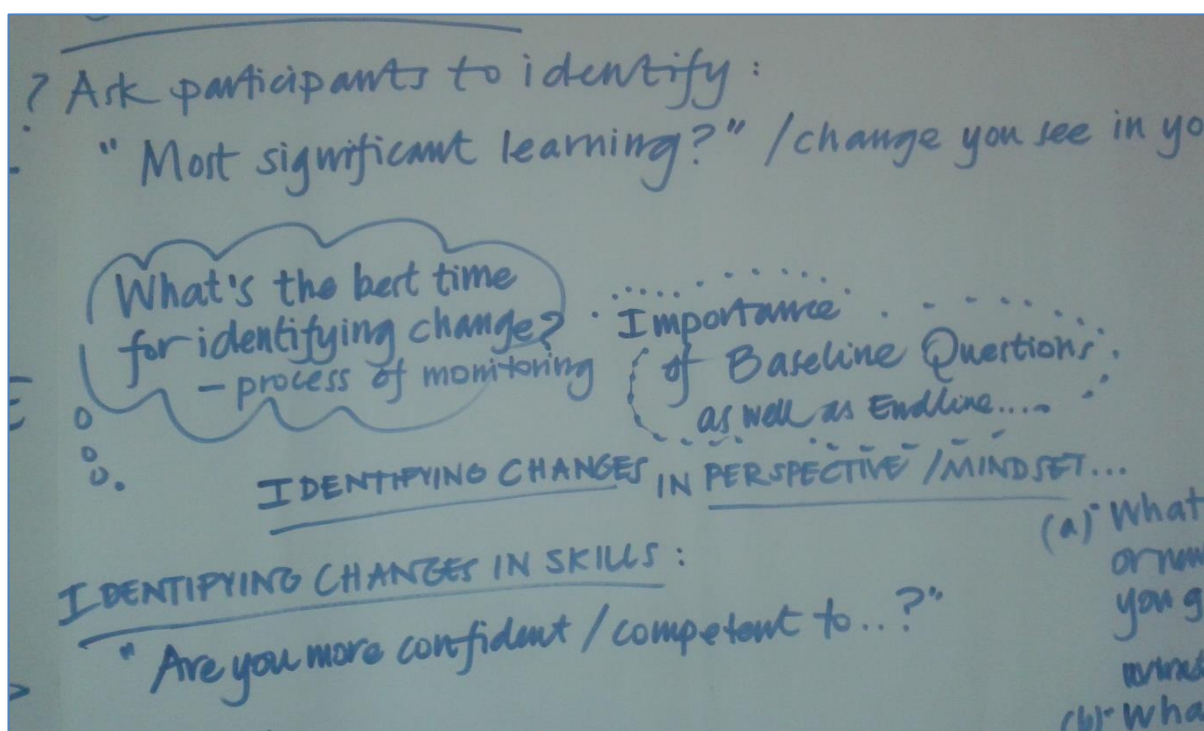
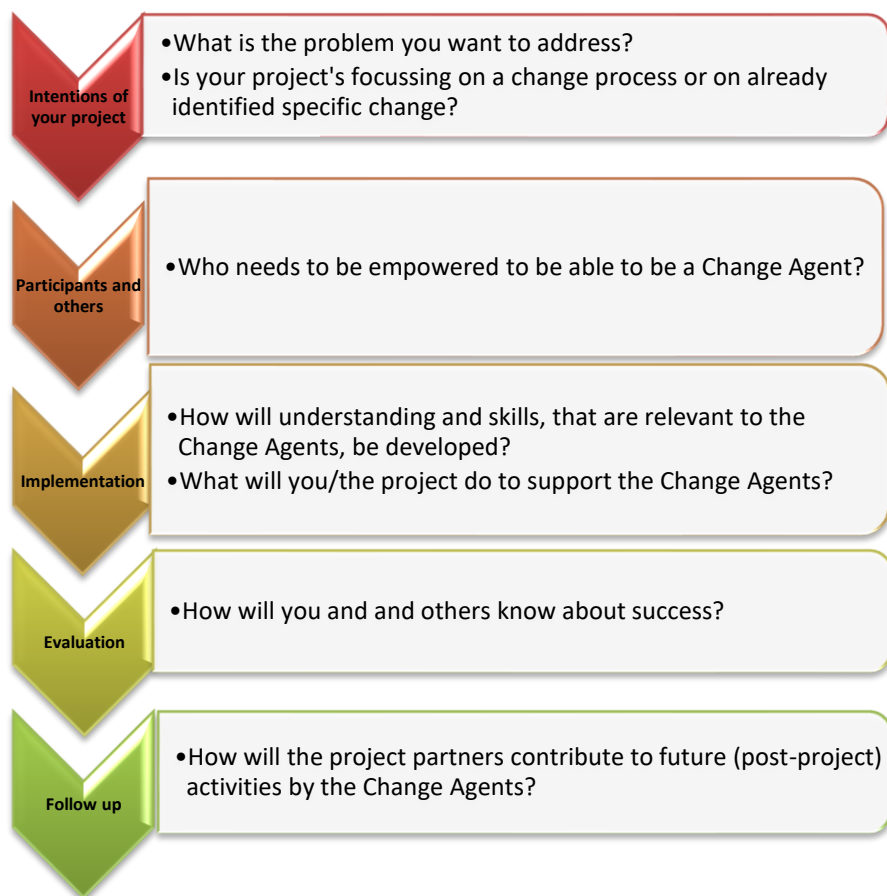


For the public's contribution to development or local-global change to succeed it needs individual and collective re-thinking and discussion of existing and new perspectives, enabling people to make up their own minds about what is needed to promote (global and local) development/change.

Good quality DEAR projects, in particular those working in formal or non-formal education, would aim to relate to this approach.



Depending on your approach your answer to the following questions will vary. Use your answers to help in developing a plan to recruit, involve and support Change Agents:




B. Working in and with local communities

Working at local level forms a key component of many DEAR projects, either as the sole focus of work or as a complementary aspect of national or international DEAR activities.

Working in and with local communities can:

- help make your project's theme relevant to what is alive at local level;
- provide opportunities for action that are of benefit to a known community;
- combine face-to-face local engagement with locally and globally focussed social media communications;
- give communication and feedback based on personal relationships.

However, it won't be plain sailing if you work at local level.  Participants in a Hub that focussed on working at local level identified various questions (and started to give some suggestions for answers) that refer to some of the challenges of working in and with local communities.⁷

Challenges you might face when working at local level	Some ideas to address the challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involving busy people (e.g. teachers, local politicians) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go meet people where they are: don't rely on them to come to you • Be clear about, and from your side adhere to, mutual expectations • Make it exciting! (attractive/innovative activities) • Emphasize benefits to them • Develop good contacts with assistant of decision makers • Make your point clearly and speak their language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mistrust of the European Union 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing success examples e.g. EU exchange of practices • Engage local European Parliament members • Emphasize local partners rather than EU ones • Be honest about the shortcomings of the EU as well as about its provision of opportunities to change our life positively
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to keep long-term goals of DEAR in mind when dealing with short-term projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your project is part of a long term mission/strategy of organisations – build on previous experiences and identify follow-up work • Create contacts with people that can provide sustainability (policy makers; community committees; school directors) • Produce outputs that will survive and that are useful beyond the project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting different interest groups to work together (e.g. a local authority, local school and local farmers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get to know what drives each group: meet them individually first and explore possible connections/shared interests • Define a common and mutually agreed purpose • Get them to work together often • Organic mixed working/debate groups • Organise public events with input from all stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relating local work to global efforts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide examples of similar issues and how they are being addressed by communities elsewhere in the world (make local-local connections) • Relate your project and its local work thematically and structurally to global systems (make local-global connections)

⁷ For a fuller report on this Hub see <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/dear-programme/blog/sharing-knowledge-dear-projects>

C. Using 'sub-grants'

Since 2016 the provision of providing small grants to organisations and others who are not part of a project's formal partnership has -again- been possible in EC-DEAR projects. These 'sub-grants' are meant to contribute to the achievement of the project's objectives. Your project may have included the provision of such grants in its proposal.



EC-DEAR projects that used sub-granting as a feature typically used such grants as a means to do one or more of the following:

- to carry out work in geographical areas where the project partnership did not work (e.g. in a particular EU member state, or at local levels);
- to carry out specific technical work for the partnership (e.g. to do with studies or with the setting up and use of particular systems);
- to test particular approaches on a small-scale and see if they were feasible before using them on a larger scale.

The Hub that discussed experiences of using sub-grants included both project partner staff and sub-grant recipients.⁸ Although they reported favourably on their overall experiences in the use of sub-grants, they also reported various issues which could have been avoided. Their recommendations included:

Avoid DEAR and European Commission jargon.

For most sub-grantees this will be the first time they engage with the Commission. For many it may also be the first time they engage with DEAR. Therefore, keep your language simple.

- Take time to plan the sub-granting scheme and the implementation process well in advance: writing the sub-grant Call, publishing and disseminating it (including translating it where necessary), receiving and evaluating proposals, agreeing implementation with sub-grantees, implementation itself, reporting, etc. takes longer than you think!

Other suggestions made by participants in the sub-granting Hub included:

⁸ For a fuller report on the sub-granting Hub see: <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/dear/documents/report-ld-hub-torunsubgranting>

- Limit the themes or issues to be covered by each sub-grant;
- Make sure you brief the sub-grantees in person (either through one-to-one sessions or, better, through a workshop-seminar with all sub-grantees): explaining DEAR, your project and how the work of sub-grantees is meant to contribute to it;
- During implementation, keep your sub-grantees informed about how their work contributes to the work of the rest of the project;
- Assign one or more of your project's staff members (e.g. in one of the partners) to manage and support the sub-granting process and relations with all sub-grantees.

And be aware that:

- Sub-grantees are often small organisations with little or no financial reserves. For them to be able to do the work for your project they will require most, if not all, of their sub-grant up-front.

D. Engaging the public in the Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be a key component or reference point for the projects supported through the EC's DEAR Programme.



Covering a wide range of development themes and issues, the SDGs are intended to be universally applicable (meaning that they are to be achieved across all countries and societies in the world). For European organisations, authorities and governments whose traditional development cooperation focus is on 'what happens over there' (i.e. in 'developing'/'Southern' countries) this may be particularly challenging: it challenges them to look more closely at, take account of and respond to social, economic, environmental, and political developments in their own 'backyard'.

A Learning & Development Hub that discussed the opportunities and challenges of engaging people in the SDGs suggested a number of principles which they felt were particular pertinent to DEAR.⁹

Two of those suggested principles, relating to the universality and the interconnectedness of the SDGs, may give particular food for thought for the organisation of your project:

⁹ For the report on the Hub that discussed the SDGs see: <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/dear/news/engaging-public-sustainable-development-goals-report>

- ? How does your project relate to and demonstrate the universality of global development efforts?
and
? How does your project contribute to specific SDGs *and* to the SDGs as a whole?

In considering these and other questions the Hub participants made the following recommendations for consideration by DEAR projects:

Recommendations to DEAR projects

- In planning your project be specific on how you will relate to and introduce the SDGs:
 - partially, by focusing on one of the SDGs (but placing that one goal within the wider context of all the SDGs)?
 - fully, by explicitly focusing on the universality and interconnectedness of all the SDGs?
 - directly, by explicitly focusing on the SDGs and using that as your way into engagement with the public?
 - indirectly, by using another theme or issue but then relating that to the SDGs?
- Build your understanding of and perspectives on the SDGs and familiarise yourself with other perspectives on the SDGs:
 - based on your learning decide on how your project will address or contribute to the SDGs
- Explicitly build on and use successful activities and learning from previous work that is relevant to your new project
- Gather and use personal stories that communicate your project's interest in the SDGs
- Involve the public/your audience/participants in investigating and responding to the SDGs in their own way (don't only have predetermined actions which you have decided on and don't be primarily top-down in your approach to the public)
- Build contacts with other projects/organisations/LAs involved in (issues relevant to) the SDGs
- Take the long-term view but be explicit in how your current project contributes to a long-term vision

4. Monitoring and evaluation

To be able to say how you're doing it's always useful to know where you started from.

Get an external evaluator or critical friend involved from the beginning - use their findings as a means of learning to make your project more effective.

Although involving an evaluator in the final year of a project is useful for you to account for what you've done and achieved, and although it can give ideas for future work and ways of working, it will be too late by then to learn for improvements to the project itself.





Hub participants who focussed on the use of evaluation came up with the following recommendations¹⁰:

Before and at the start of project implementation

- Familiarise yourself with the evaluation outcomes and recommendations from previous DEAR projects
- Identify where the possible evaluation of this project will feed into your organisation's strategy and strategic planning
- Integrate planning of the M&E approach with the planning of activities and outputs
- Establish a baseline survey relevant to your intended project's key processes and/or outcomes
- Do not forget to include a budget and time for one or more mid-term evaluations (they are often the most useful for learning and improving your project)

Build your capacity for M&E

- Develop the project's M&E structure and processes with your external evaluator and dedicated project staff as soon as possible in the project
- Allocate (plenty of) time and money for monitoring, evaluation and learning throughout the whole implementation process
- Include planning for monitoring, evaluation and learning in your implementation planning within and between all partner organisations/LAs:
 - 'harvest' experiences after all major activities and periodically for the whole project: using questionnaires, feedback forms, reports, focus groups, informal meetings. Creating a 'lesson log' or 'learning journal' can help in collating perspectives and experiences from across all of the stakeholders in your project
- Depersonalise criticism e.g. by allowing for anonymous feedback and observations from within and from outside the project team

During the implementation of your project

- Focus on outcomes: re-visit the proposed logframe and re-assess the viability and relevance of proposed activities and outputs. Involve your external evaluator or critical friend and, if possible, one or more of your project's intended beneficiaries in this process. If changes are needed to the logframe keep your Task Manager informed (see section 1 for suggestions on this)
- Decide what you are going to measure and why (impact-driven monitoring)
- Keep the processes of gathering evidence as simple as possible: give more time to learning from the M&E evidence than to the implementation of the M&E processes
- Make your logframe and your M&E system work for you and your project – instead of for the funder. Make changes to your approaches if needed. As long as you can show that changes to the logframe help the project in improving its results, the Commission is unlikely to object,.



¹⁰ All Exchange and Learning & Development Hubs gave attention to evaluation, but two reports include particular suggestions from EC-DEAR projects. See <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/dear-programme/documents/learning-and-development-hub-report-ljubljana-2017> and <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/dear-programme/event/dear-site-cluster-meetingreading-2015>

5. Creating results and outcomes that last

How do you create lasting impact? How do you develop a process and results that are sustained beyond the life-time of the project?

In some cases the policy change you achieved will create a continued effect of your work. In other cases the processes, networks or structures, knowledge and skills which you developed during the project will have to contribute to a long-term effect.

Representatives of EC-DEAR projects discussed these issues and made the following points¹¹:

Towards lasting, sustained impact ...	
... amongst project audiences/ participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the project has had, and will continue to have, local relevance • As part of the project's implementation process, develop the audience's/participants' skills for self-sustained action beyond and outside of the project • Ensure that 'tools'/ideas developed during the project continue to be accessible in the post-project period • Within formal education: suggest and develop opportunities for whole-school teaching and learning (instead of focussing on one or a few modules or subjects)
... within the project's own organisation or authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relate project results to the organisation's/authority's long-term plans and strategies • Explicitly identify how project learning can feed into future organisational planning
... amongst other organisations, institutions, authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the project's implementation process develop and apply a framework for building networks: to share project learning etc. and to build multi-stakeholder collaborations for the future • Build contacts with other organisations, institutions, authorities based on development of mutual trust and shared recognition of different expertise: e.g. time for joint critical reflection on learning and experiences from a range of related projects or work
... within the policy arena	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop contacts (while the project is going on) with decision makers (ministries, parliamentarians, etc.) and policy influencers (e.g. media): keep them informed of the project, its achievements and next (post-project) plans
... within wider society and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support wider society/ community to act in response to the issues raised by the project (this may be a policy action, education action, community practice action, or personal behavioural action; at a minimum it will require continued access to relevant project tools and approaches) • During the project's implementation process, train multipliers: with skills to use beyond the project itself and within their own communities and societies

To create lasting results, plan from the start how your audience/participants/supporters/targets will be able to use the project's ideas and tools once the project is finished.

¹¹ See <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/dear-programme/documents/dear-programme-cluster-meetings-ec-grant-funded-dear-projects-brussels-18th-21st-april> for a fuller report

The European Commission's DEAR Programme

The Development Education & Awareness Raising (DEAR) Programme aims to promote understanding and engagement of Europeans in global development efforts. Information about the Programme and the projects it supports can be found at www.capacity4dev/dear and www.dear-programme.eu



DEAR Exchange Hubs and Learning & Development Hubs 2015 -2017

From 2015 to 2017 various workshops involving EC supported projects were organised for the European Commission by the DEAR Support Team. They were concerned with the following issues and themes:

- *Creating Sustained Results*, Brussels 2015: involving all 51 EC-DEAR projects ongoing at the time participating in workshops focussed on either Global Learning in the formal education sector, or Global Learning in the non-formal education sector, or Campaigning-Advocacy
- *Working with Agents of Change and 'Multipliers'*, Prague 2015: involving organisations, authorities and participants of five EC-DEAR projects that were using such approaches
- *Assessing results of DEAR activities on project participants*, Reading 2015: involving staff and participants of four EC-DEAR projects that had focussed on this issue
- *Engaging EU publics in issues of social-economic change*, Dublin 2015: involving staff and participants of three EC-DEAR projects that focussed on this
- *Working in large partnerships*, Milan 2016: based on the experiences of participants involved in 15 EC-DEAR projects
- *Working in and with local communities*, Milan 2016: involving 13 EC-DEAR projects
- *Using evaluation during implementation*, Ljubljana 2017: based on the experiences of project partners and external evaluators involved in four EC-DEAR projects
- *Towards engagement in the SDGs*, Athens 2017: involving staff and participants of four projects that were using their experiences of work on the MDGs to inform future work on the SDGs
- *Using sub-granting*, Toruń 2017: involving project partners and sub-grantees of four different EC-DEAR projects
- *Contributing to the European Commission's DEAR objectives*, Brussels 2017: involving representatives of the 19 EC-DEAR projects ongoing at the time

Reports on all these Hubs are available from the capacity4dev/dear website at:

<https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/dear/news/learning-dear-projects>

A paper with questions for DEAR projects to take into account during planning, implementation and evaluation is also available - see:

<https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/dear/documents/asking-questions-about-dear-projects>

