Deliverable Number 7:

Minutes of Core Group Meeting 2

ESD Inds

The Development of Indicators and Assessment Tools for CSO Projects Promoting Values-based Education for Sustainable Development

CONSORTIUM GENERAL MEETING (CGM) 2
Present: Arthur Dahl (Meeting Chair); Alliance of Religions for Conservation (ARC): John Smith; Earth Charter Initiative (ECI): Alicia Jimenez; People's Theater: Curtis Volk; European Bahá'í Business Forum (EBBF): Daniel Truran; Charles University (CUEC): Tomas Hak, Martin Zahradnik, Svatava Janouskova; University of Brighton (UoB): Marie Harder, Georgia Piggot, Elona Hoover, Dimity Podger, Ismael Velasco.
Apologies:
Date: 5-6 November 2009
Where: University of Brighton, UK
Meeting Start: 9am Thursday 5th November
Meeting Close: 5:30pm Friday 6th November

Project Funding | **RTD Partners** | University of Brighton | Univerzita Karlova v Praze | Charles University in Prague | **CSO Partners** | Earth Charter Initiative | ALLIANCE OF RELIGIONS AND CONSERVATION | EBBF European Bahá'í Business Forum | People's Theater mitdenken, mitbewegen!

SEVENTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

Minutes of Core Group Meeting 2:

1. Welcome

Prof. Arthur Dahl welcomed the consortium.

Members of the Consortium acknowledged the work completed by the project team to date.

2. ESDInds Overview

Dimity briefly described the approach the research team has taken over the past six months to developing a pool of values and indicators. For this phase of work, between May 2009 and November 2009, the researchers have followed an approach which has involved studying specific cases and an attempt at engaging broad participation from within the CSOs. The approach can be summarised into the following three steps:

Step 1: Case study research with specific projects or organisations identified by the CSOs. The specific case studies were the Faith and Forests initiative (associated with ARC), PFW Aerospace and AIESEC (associated with EBBF), Peoples Theater (although a CSO its structure and operations lent itself to a specific case study), and CREAD (associated with ECI).
Step 2: Interviews and surveys with interested people from CSOs and document analysis. This was undertaken for all CSOs; and
Step 3: Broad participation involving interviews, surveys, and workshops with interested people from CSOs to help add to and prioritise the pool of values and indicators for later testing. This step may be termed validation.

The data collected was used to:
- to identify the core values perceived by the CSOs to be important in the success/progress of the projects or organisations, or the kinds of value outcomes hoped for through the implementation of projects or work of organisations
- to understand the spectrum of meanings associated with these values gleaned from the examples provided by interviewees, and
- to identify or derive possible indicators and assessment tools that could evaluate the presence of values in the goals, processes and impacts of the CSOs.

We have used a joint qualitative analysis approach for all CSOs. A common coding set was applied to identify important values, indicators and their characteristics from the data. As a starting point, the coding set included a list of values found in the literature. Additional values and value characteristics were added when identified in the data. Values were coded where they were specifically mentioned, and also where a process or description which aligned with a particular value was mentioned. Such a challenging approach enabled us to better understand the commonalities and differences among the CSOs and among diverse areas of particular CSO. It also enabled us to bring together the information from across the CSOs.

The research team determined that it would be feasible trial indicators and assessment tools for five values in the first field phase. Indicators were created for the most significant values for each CSO (based on data), to be presented to CGM2 aid decision-making. These values were: *Trust/Trustworthiness; Unity in diversity; Empowerment; Justice;* and *Integrity.*

3. Discussions and decisions on set of values and indicators

a) Values

Consortium discussed current pool of five values (Empowerment, Justice, Integrity, Trust, Unity in Diversity). The following issues were noted, and Consortium will need to consider how to address these issues in the next phase of research:

- All values contain elements of other values, need to consider how we present the indicators.
- The values were chosen on their relationship to partner CSOs, not on their link to sustainability. However, the partner CSOs are working on Sustainable Development projects, and these values represent values important to their organisations and projects.
- Current pool is missing an important element – care towards the environment and the community of life (or other life forms). Current pool is very human relationship focussed. Desire by Consortium to see this additional element more explicitly included.

- Issue of language and labelling of values: certain words have different connotations in various contexts. For example
  – Justice in some contexts has judicial connotations, but the indicators we have are far broader.
  - 'Unity in Diversity' is more of a term than a value, and the term Unity may be less appropriate than diversity in some contexts. Vice versa, Diversity is not always seen as a positive value.
- Cultural diversity – not all indicators will be appropriate in all contexts. Wording of indicators need to be altered in different contexts.
- For many people/organisations, the key finding from this project may be not the values or indicators themselves, but the process of coming up with indicators.
- Need to have a diversity of values to respond adequately to different situations.

The Consortium agreed to look at six values in the next field phase, which includes the five suggested (Empowerment, Justice, Integrity, Trust, Unity in Diversity) plus a value of 'Care/Respect', with a particular focus on care for the environment. If there are time pressures in the field, 'integrity' should be the area of least focus.

b) Indicators

The CSO partners reviewed 290 indicators (across the five key values). Each CSO provided information about the indicators they thought were the most meaningful and for each value, and which indicators were troublesome, or which had difficult or incorrect wording. Researchers noted that there was a need to reduce, prioritise and refine these indicators prior to taking them into the field. CSOs felt it was important to keep a diversity of indicators at this stage and see what is relevant on the ground. More indicators (and indicators for new values) may be added in the field. The ROs will post a refined list (including new indicators for 'Care/Respect') on PB wiki for CSOs to provide comments.

4. Discussion of the Next Phase and Selection of Four to Six Projects

a)   Overview and discussion of next phase

Ismael presented the suggested approach the researchers will used in the field:

1) Visit 4-6 projects for 2-3 weeks each, to be selected by the CSOs at CGM2
2) Take the selected list of values and indicators, and what may be needed for a range of assessment methods that could be applied to them.
3) Get to know on the ground the local CSO, its people, its work, its current approach to measuring, its aims and motivations
4) Together identify what values and which indicators from our list may be relevant to them, if any, and also what else may be missing that could replace or supplement the values and indicators in our list.
5) Assist the CSO to initiate the assessment of their chosen values and indicators, helping them think through possible assessment methods, plan and initiate their evaluation activity, and then accompanying them in getting the work on its way.
6) Generate records of the process, from first contact through selection of values/indicators and assessment approach, to the beginnings of implementation (2 weeks is unlikely to be enough to accompany them to a conclusion of their own specific evaluation, but enough to know whether the approach we are taking is working, and what things we may have missed or could be improved)
7) Analyse the lessons we have learned from our efforts to collaborate with the CSOs:
   - how transferrable the preliminary values and indicators were which we chose at CGM2
   - how we can improve the processes by which we arrived at them
   - what additions and modifications are suggested from the field visit
   - what were the obstacles and success factors in implementing our approach
   - how can implementation be improved in future
   - and how replicable the whole process may be by CSOs without Research Officer input.
8) The researchers will meet (likely by Skype) after each field visit, and CSO partners are invited to contribute to this discussion to assist the development of the research.

Consortium agreed that the main focus in this field phase is on our refining and testing our 6 values, but will also focus on helping them understand the approach so they can develop their own indicators.
We will focus on the project, rather than being driven by the CSOs to look at all process within their organisation and other projects that they would like to use in the future.

The researchers should be taking notes and documenting how the CSOs are reacting to the approach.

b)   *Overview of the projects identified as possible case studies and CSO selection of four to six projects with which indicators and assessment tools can be considered.*

Martin outlined the criteria to be used to guide decision-making on project selection. It was suggested that the projects selected should:
  • cover a range of fields/sectors of activity
  • include different numbers of participants/employees
  • have different levels of implementation (individual, community, organisation, societal etc)
  • have an educational aspect
  • have a connection to sustainability
  • are in different locations (to include one project based in a developing nation)
  • have different life cycle lengths
  • do not involve manipulation or coercion of participants or affected stakeholders
  • have people in the projects available and willing to assist the researchers

Each of the twelve projects suggested for field testing were discussed briefly.   These projects were:
  • People's Theater Youth Year of Service- Germany (PT)
  • Lush Cosmetics – Italy (EBBF)
  • EBBF Itself – 68 Countries (EBBF)
  • Youth as Agents of Behaviour Change Project (YABC) – Sierra Leone (Red Cross)
  • Conciencia Ecologica, Los Cuartos – Mexico (ECI)
  • University of Guanajuato – Mexico (ECI)
  • Juatarhu, Michoacan – Mexico (ECI)
  • Fundacion Valores, Madrid – Spain (ECI)
  • Foundation to Support Civil Initiatives – Tajikistan (ECI)
  • Youth Development and Empowerment Initiative – Nigeria (ECI)
  • Conservation International, Islamic Boarding Schools Initiative – Indonesia (ARC)
  • Working for Water Program, Eco-Coffins initiative – South Africa (ARC)

The Consortium made the following decisions on project selection:

1) Four projects will be used for field testing of the indicators and assessment tools. These are:
  • People's Theater Youth Year of Service- Germany
  • Lush Cosmetics – Italy
  • Youth as Agents of Behaviour Change Project (YABC) – Sierra Leone
  • Juatarhu, Michoacan – Mexico

2) If time allows, and the field visit can be combined with travel to the Juatarhu project, the University of Guanajuato ECI initiative will become a fifth project.

3) An additional 'project' will be completed with EBBF and ARC, whereby the researchers will support staff internally within each organisation to apply and refine the indicators within their own organisation, and to consider how the cultural variations between their diverse partners may be addressed within the indicators proposed.

4) If any of the projects are not able to proceed, a replacement project will be chosen through email consultation with all of the Consortium partners.

5) As no ARC projects were chosen in this field testing phase (at the suggestion of the ARC representative that it may be appropriate to postpone until the next phase to allow more time to develop projects), it will be a priority in the next field phase to select an ARC project.

5. Consortium Business

a)   *Departure of BASED-UK as a partner and redistribution of responsibilities and funds*

BASED-UK have left the Consortium. The International Red Cross/Red Crescent potentially may become a new Consortium member in their place, but must go through the validation process with the EU first. Currently all BASED-UK responsibility for work package is transferred to Brighton but is under the veto of ECI. Decision: UoB to continue to take responsibility for BASED-UK funding and work packages under the veto of ECI in the next Work Package. When a new member (likely Red Cross) is ready to join the Consortium, the CSO partners will make a decision about the disbursement of the remainder of the BASED-UK funding, and will amend Consortium agreement accordingly. ARC & ECI will take over BASED-UK role in monitoring gender issues in the project.

b) *Proposal to invite the Red Cross to the project*
Arthur noted that the Red Cross Principles and Values department have expressed an interest in joining the project.
Decision: Consortium agreed that Red Cross would be a good member. CSO partners agreed that if the Red Cross join the Consortium and require funding, they would be eligible for any remaining BASED-UK funds.

c) *Status of Arthur Dahl as an independent consultant*
The EU are unable to fund Prof. Dahl in his current status as an independent consultant. UoB are willing to take Arthur on as a consultant. He would retain his current role as an independent mediator, but would be working through the University of Brighton.
Decision: The Consortium agreement could be amended to remove Arthur Dahl as a participant. He will retain all of the same functions as outlined in the current agreement, but will be working as a consultant to UoB.

6. Project Review and Dissemination

a) *Reflections on collaboration between CSOs and research institutions*

CSOs and RTDs were given the opportunity to reflect upon the collaboration to date between the partners. Initial expectations were that researchers would come to CSOs as 'experts' who would just give the tools and results to the CSOs, however now the collaboration is becoming more 'equal' between CSOs and RTDs, with the CSOs attending field visits in the next phase and actively contributing to the research. It was noted that collaboration has been successful due to the respect between consortium members, and the common interest in values. The importance of the iterative project design in building relationships and allowing reflection was noted. A full report on collaboration will be included in the first year project review to the European Commission (see agenda item 6f)

b) *Consultation on dissemination strategies for each CSO*

CSOs may use staff time for dissemination, liaising with Georgia. Georgia will circulate information about the EU dissemination requirements. Each partner is encouraged to use their own press/dissemination contacts to promote the project. A page will be put on PB wiki to record any press releases or articles about the project for reporting to the EU. Marie will request information from each CSO about how/whether they are happy for their names to appear in publications.

c) *Consultation on further strategies for each CSO to input into ESDInds*

CSOs will be invited to input into fieldwork design, and take part in skype conversations for post-field-visit reflections with the researchers.
Dimity suggested the idea of using internal consultation groups within each organisation. These would be formed of 'experts' (in values, indicators, handbooks, etc.) who would provide advice to the project, and would advance internal dissemination of information about the project. These 'task forces' can have a platform to contribute to the project at the conference in Nov/Dec 2010.

d) *Recruitment of 50-80 CSOs and approach to implementation*

Recruitment of additional CSOs is a shared task between all partners. Focus is on multiplication – not worried which CSOs become involved. CSOs will need wording for recruitment by Feb, so that they can start contacting organisations with correct information. When promoting, need to be clear that at this stage the handbook is only in English (but CSOs are welcome to translate it themselves). All partners should be identifying networks which we can draw upon to invite participants. Target individuals with an interest, as well as organisations. Especially individuals who work in organisations who need tools to convince others internally of the importance of values. Georgia will put a page up on PB wiki for all partners to list people/organisations/networks which will contact in around May 2010 to invite them to trial the handbook (data protection issues must be considered, and care must be taken that details listed on the site are used only for this purpose).

e)   Format of results of the project: handbook/web

The CSO partners have more experience in creating user friendly handbooks and tools than the researchers, and it is important that this experience is utilised. The handbook may come in several forms – relevant formats for different audiences. Georgia will contact each CSO to discuss resources available to help develop a useful toolkit.

f)   Review of Work Progress and Achievements and Project Management (EU Deliverable)

Marie worked discussed each of the components of the report for the European Commission, and consortium provided comments:

A. Work progress and achievements to date

1. Is the progress of the work in line with the structure of Annex I (i.e. the Description of Work) of the Grant Agreement?
Yes.
2. For Work Packages 2 and 3:
(a) Review the progress of the work towards the objectives and details for each task;
All complete except one small piece of work from WP3 that is behind schedule: preliminary data collection of current and potential improvements to environmental impacts of projects.
(b) Highlight clearly significant results;
We are ahead in many areas (draft handbook created). Collaboration has been good. There has been some additional research visits to increase working relationship between research team. Pilot case studies had taken us ahead of where we were supposed to be. Have already identified values and indicators. CSOs driving research decisions. We have already engaged a large number of CSOs (not just partners – interviewees, additional organisations).
(c) If applicable, explain the reasons for deviations from Annex I and their impact on other tasks as well as on available resources and planning;
More research travel – had to visit some orgs twice. BASED UK has left consortium.
(d) If applicable, explain the reasons for failing to achieve critical objectives and/or not being on schedule and explain the impact on other tasks as well as on available resources and planning ;
No critical objectives have been missed.
(e) Review the use of resources, in particular highlighting and explaining deviations between actual and planned person-months per work package and per beneficiary compared to that in Annex 1 (the Description of Work)
Some concern about travel resources.
(f) Review whether any corrective actions are necessary.
None

B. Project Management

1. Highlight any problems which have occurred and how they were solved or envisaged solutions.
BASED UK leaving the project (see agenda item 6a & c for resolution of this issue)
There have been problems for CSOs in finding ways to pay their projects and local groups for field work. Finding interesting ways around these – rich solutions;
Issue with having an Individual (DAHL) as a partner (see agenda item 5c for resolution of this issue).
2. Project planning and status
Proceeding as planned.
3. Impact of possible deviations from the planned milestones and deliverables, if any.
Moving CGM3 a little later – no impact on deliverables; taken on additional work in this work package (aided by exchange rate favour).
4. Use of foreground and dissemination activities during this period
Didn't declare any IPR foreground; two academic papers have been drafted; Marie/Tomas are working on a plan for attribution and authorship of work.
5. Provide information on communications between beneficiaries, possible cooperation with other projects and programmes.
There is a greater communication need between other projects and programs than we envisaged – conferences have come up that if we had attended would have helped visibility. Marie suggests that we modify DOW to allow funds to be spent on conference attendance (discussed further in agenda item 8c – see below). Notes have been taken on collaboration between partners (see agenda item 6a) which will also be included in the report to EC.

g) *Date for next CGM – request to shift till end May 2010*

Researchers suggested a move to May 2010 (originally planned for April). This doesn't affect any EU deliverables. Marie discussed a possible event drawing in experts on values in particular contexts tied into CGM.

7. Summary of decisions made at CGM2:

a) *CSOs to agree on four to six suitable projects*

1) People's Theater Youth Year of Service- Germany
2) Lush Cosmetics – Italy
3) Youth as Agents of Behaviour Change Project (YABC) – Sierra Leone
4) Juatarhu, Michoacan – Mexico
   (additionally, if time and logistics permit):
5) University of Guanajuato/ECI partnership – Mexico

As a 'sixth project' ARC and EBBF will apply and refine the indicators within their own organisation, and will consider how the cultural variations between their diverse partners may be addressed within the indicators proposed.

b) *Agreement on new draft indicators (Set 1) and assessment tools*

Consortium agreed that the researchers should refine and reduce the indicators based on feedback given in CGM2. The refined lists will be posted on internal site for partner comment in December, prior to starting field visits.
Decision about whether we publish results so far: Indicators are still unrefined and untested. Best mechanism for presenting current work to date is press releases and newsletters. More in depth information will be available in Feb for 50-80 CSOs.

c) *Report on Gender Issues and the Balance of Faiths (ECI and ARC)*

Project selection – faith balance is good between projects. No gender imbalance. The only imbalance found is toward youth focussed projects.
Case studies – no faith bias detected. ARC brought a diversity of faiths. No gender issues detected.
Indicators – common coding process, originally derived from literature (not faith based literature), then those that emerged were from the faith based organisations. Mixture of background of researchers meant that they were not influenced by a faith. The current indicators were faith neutral (which may be an over-leaning toward secular), but this will be good to take them to the faiths and see how they are relevant. Primary data collection came from people from broad cultural and faith basis, some European bias (not all) due to nature of EU partners. ECI and ARC representatives both reported that did not detect gender or faith biases.

d) *Agreement on any variations to financial agreements*

The Consortium agreed that the following financial variations were permissible:
1) ECI will shift some of its funding for staff time on the project to cover travel costs, enabling them to accompany the researchers on ECI related field visits.
2) The funding for BASED-UK will be transferred to UoB in the next phase (see agenda item 5a & b above) – ECI will oversee the spending of these funds. Some of this funding may be for additional time and travel costs associated with Mexico field visits.
3) Agreement to amend DOW to allow researchers or CSO representatives to attend important events relevant to the project. A process for agreement on what constitutes an important event will be developed.
4) Some CSOs may wish to shift funds towards dissemination to allow them to do additional work in refining the tools and handbook, and in promoting the project.
5) Prof. Arthur Dahl will be paid as a consultant to UoB (see point 5c above).
6) UoB will be changing research staff arrangements, and will be using funds to cover maternity leave for Research Fellow position.

e) *Dates arranged for CGM3*

Next Meeting: 26th – 28th May 2010, Charles University in Prague

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