

Deliverable Number 9:

Project Review 1

Project Funding



RTD Partners



University of Brighton



**Univerzita Karlova v Praze
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CSO Partners



Project Review 1 at CGM2 meeting in Brighton November 2009

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1. Review of work progress and achievements

1.1 Progress towards objectives

The progress of the work is in line with the structure of Annex I (i.e. the Description of Work) of the Grant Agreement. As described in the formal periodic report (Deliverable 8), the objectives of WP2 and WP3 have all been met with the exception of one small piece of work from WP3 that is behind schedule: preliminary data collection of current and potential improvements to environmental impacts of projects. This is proceeding and will be completed by May 2010. We are ahead in many areas (e.g. the draft handbook, which has already been created), and there have been some additional research visits to improve the working relationships between research team. No critical objectives have been missed.

1.2 Clearly significant results

It was noted that the pilot case studies had taken the project ahead of schedule and that values and indicators had already been developed, with CSOs driving the research decisions. A large number of CSOs have already been engaged, in addition to the partners (e.g. interviewees and additional organisations), thus putting the consortium in a strong position with respect to later phases in which the involvement of 50-80 CSOs will be sought.

1.3 Deviations from Annex I

As reported in Deliverable 8, the project has involved more research travel than initially anticipated, as some organisations had to be visited twice (although no corrective actions were deemed to be necessary). BASED UK has left the consortium. Detailed discussions of person months were to be carried out between UoB and individual partners where necessary.

1.4 Use of resources

The research partners expressed early concern about travel resources in light of organising additional research meetings between the two RTDs. This would need to be monitored closely in the next phase.

No corrective actions were deemed necessary at this point.

2. Review of project management

2.1 Problems that have been addressed

All BASED-UK responsibility for the work package has been transferred to UoB but is under the veto of ECI. There was a suggestion that this continue into the second work package (two thirds of total funds) although it was anticipated that a new partner would be involved for the third phase, requiring a separate amendment (to be confirmed at the next CGM). BASED-UK responsibilities for monitoring gender bias were transferred to ARC and ECI.

The group briefly discussed issues around having an individual (Arthur Dahl) as a partner. UoB are working on resolving this with AD, possibly through consultancy role via the University of Brighton.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent may be a potential new member, but must go through the validation process. Arthur Dahl commented on how the contact with Red Cross was established in a meeting in Africa on the Red Cross youth behaviour change project. They have developed ways of transforming values but had no way to measure them and were very excited to be part of the project. It was noted that it would not be difficult for them to integrate the consortium as they have already come a long way in terms of understanding the core of the project. It was also noted that Red Cross would be a logical complement and way to strengthen the project without too much of a burden. The consortium must agree the terms of membership. There was general agreement that Red Cross would be a good member and CSO partners agreed to giving them the funds available (last third) if appropriate.

2.2 Project planning and status

The group agreed that this was proceeding as planned

2.3 Impact of possible deviations from the planned milestones and deliverables

Due to additional duties taken on by UoB in WP3, researchers suggested moving CGM3 to May 2010 (originally planned for April). This would not have any impact on deliverables.

2.4 Use of foreground and dissemination activities

The group has not declared any IPR foreground. Two academic papers have been drafted (for following journals: *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development* and *Envigogika*). RTDs agreed it would be useful to work on a plan for attribution and authorship of work.

2.5 Reflections on collaboration between CSOs and RTDs

CSOs and RTDs were given the opportunity to reflect upon the collaboration to date between the partners. Comments from the CSOs were as follows:

European Bahá'í Business Forum

The initial assumption was that the researchers would inform EBBF's values and way of thinking, whereas in reality it has been a two-way process, with results that far exceeded the CSO's expectations. Respect had been built between consortium partners, which was an important factor in the success of the project. One area in which collaboration could be improved is in the use of the PBworks wiki for communication between partners. This has been utilised to some extent but its full potential has not yet been realised, and it could be used more widely.

People's Theater

PT staff also had an initial vision that the researchers would be acting as consultants, and were both surprised and excited to realise that PT could develop its own indicators based on its own values. There had been some initial scepticism about the concept of measuring values, because in German, the language of 'social competencies' is used more frequently than values. However, the interaction between ROs and CSO staff had been very positive, generating a new understanding of values as well as the nature of indicators. Practical examples helped CSO staff to realise the potential usefulness of values-based indicators both in the school projects and among the youth. They had learned a lot about their own organisation through the research visits, which had a strong impact on the staff – generating a realisation of how the organisation works, and which values carry the work, as well as a recognition that there is much more to learn.

Earth Charter Initiative

ECI's initial perception was that the project would be a learning process and that they would be able to gather tools to measure their impact. They felt that they had expected to learn more from researchers, and were surprised by the extent to which the RTD partners wanted to learn from *them*. It was noted that this would change in the next phase, where the collaboration was intended to be more 'equal'. For ECI the project has been less intensive than expected, especially due to physical distance and issues of time. This might have had an effect on developing the first report.

Alliance of Religions and Conservation

There was no shared vision at the beginning, as not all members of ARC were part of the initial conversations. ARC's relationship with academia in the past has not always been a good one, as there is often a conflict of interests, but so far this project has provided a much

more positive example. ARC staff also had some initial scepticism in terms of the meaning of the project itself, but were interested in being able to measure the 'immeasurable'. Modern communications systems are extremely useful, and the topic of the project is also important in facilitating the way in partners interact: everyone has a common interest in values.

Comments from RTD partners were as follows:

CUEC

Tomas Hak reported that he had initial reservations about working so closely with CSOs, as he envisaged that this type of collaborative work would be complex, challenging and very time-consuming. This has not proven to be the case, and on the whole the collaboration has worked very well. One of the realisations was that a CSO's time capacity is very limited, which is something that must be taken into account in the next phases of the project where researchers must assist CSO's in the project.

Svatava Janouskova reported that the collaboration with PT had been excellent, and yielded some very useful results.

Martin Zahradnik added that it was a very new experience for him to discuss research before implementing it, and he had initially felt challenged by the co-design of methodology and unsure how the goals of the project would be met. However, this had become much clearer as time went on, and he was now more comfortable with the process.

Communication with ECI was remarked upon as being particularly satisfactory, as ECI staff were very flexible and always ready to respond promptly.

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Marie Harder said that she felt the project had happened largely as planned, but the quality of collaboration between all members of the consortium (and especially between the different research groups) was even higher than initially anticipated. She noted the importance of the iteration in the project design for developing collaboration.

Georgia Piggot said that she had been attracted to the project because of the collaborative element, and aware of the knowledge and experience of CSOs. She had envisaged, however, that CSOs would have difficulty finding enough time to participate meaningfully in the project, and was amazed by the level of contact and contribution that was achieved.

Ismaël Velasco reported that most things were as he expected, but the degree of everyone's commitment had exceeded his expectations. Collaboration became even better as the project progressed.

Dimity Podger said that initially she thought that there would be more co-design from the beginning. She found it interesting that the CSO partners had expected it to be more researcher-led, but noted that there was now great potential to improve the collaboration even further. The level of collaboration was there, but where it exceeded expectations was in the level of participation. She reported that she was looking forward to the next phase of the project, which would be driven by co-design, and that she had learned a great deal from conversations with the CSOs (especially PT) which had been very positive. Relationships between the consortium partners were growing stronger and she felt they would continue to improve. The respect between partners, as well as the common interest in values, were contributing to the success of the project.

2.6 Challenges in collaboration and how they have been addressed

The group discussed this section in a consultative way rather than presenting individual comments. There was strong agreement that the international nature of the consortium adds to the challenges of carrying out the project, and in particular, communication could be hampered by differences in concepts and vocabularies. One lesson learned during the first phase of the project was that it is crucial to allocate sufficient time and resources to translating and transforming information, as well as being clear on which language would be used for reporting.

It was felt that spreading research time over the length of the first phase is more effective than concentrating time when projects tend to be dispersed. It was crucial that the research teams were available and easy to contact, which was facilitated by having at least one member of the project staff present in the office at all times.

Having a distinction between concepts and vocabulary makes communication between research groups from different countries. It is important for everyone's interests to be captured – there was a common interest in values despite of the CSOs' different backgrounds.