



## Civil Society Dialogue Network

### Training seminar on Peacebuilding Advocacy towards the EU, 3-4 March 2016

#### EVALUATION FEEDBACK FORMS (Total: 22 forms)

#### 1) Content of the training seminar:

##### Session 1 – Thursday morning: Basic facts about the EU

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
15	7			

#### Comments (what worked well, what did not):

##### What worked well:

- Experts moving around the different groups: 10 (very engaging: 1)
- Clear and easy to understand: 5
- Very useful session: 3 (to have the same understanding: 2)
- Detailed: 2
- Good starting point: 2
- Materials sent before the training useful: Power Analysis very useful and comprehensive (1), able to ask more informed questions based on pre-reading materials (1)
- Presentations: about different components of EU rather than whole EU (1), speakers focusing on main information about EU institutions (1), very good speakers (1), short and effective (1), providing hands-on experience with different EU stakeholders (1), good PowerPoint presentations (1), nice to introduce EPLO staff (1)
- Good logical order: 1
- Useful supporting materials: White-board and PowerPoints (1)
- Keep it as it is for future training seminars: 1
- Print-outs of organigrams helpful: 1

##### What worked less well:

- Maybe a bit more participatory or lively (with visuals) plenary sessions: 1
- Too much information to absorb: 1
- Repetitive: 1
- Very dense and difficult presentations: 1 (with a lot of acronyms)

**Session 2 – Thursday afternoon: How the EU operates in conflict-affected countries (Andrew Sherriff)**

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
12	10			
<p><b>Comments (what worked well, what did not):</b></p> <p><b>What worked well:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Andrew Sherriff's presentation: very engaging (3), very clear and informative (4), useful presentation (3) (of challenges and opportunities for NGOs in relating to EU institutions: 1), very good speaker (1), experienced and knowledgeable speaker: 2 (experienced with field of work of both CSOs and EU institutions: 1, very knowledgeable about the topic: 1), very concrete examples (2), good mix of professional and human/personal inputs (1), key points and tips to be remembered easily (1)</li> <li>Speaker experienced with field of work of both CSOs and EU institutions: 1</li> <li>Useful illustration of basic facts in the morning session: 1</li> <li>Practical insights which are likely to be helpful in the future: 1</li> </ul> <p><b>What worked less well:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The speaker spoke a little too fast: 1</li> <li>Should include more concrete examples: 1</li> <li>Better to have Andrew Sherriff's presentation in the morning and do small group discussions in the afternoon: 1</li> </ul>				

**Session 3 – Thursday afternoon: Case studies of past advocacy strategies towards the EU (part 1)**

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
6	13	3		
<p><b>Comments (what worked well, what did not):</b></p> <p><b>What worked well:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very good choice of two completely different case studies and approaches: 3</li> <li>Interesting: 3 (but not relevant to my field of work: 2)</li> <li>Very useful: 2 (in illustrating how advocacy works in practice: 1)</li> <li>Two excellent presentations: 2</li> <li>Second presentation easier to follow: 2 (maybe because of PowerPoint presentation: 2)</li> <li>Easy to follow: 1</li> <li>Case studies of fundamental importance to assess challenges, steps and tools faced, taken and used by NGOs to advocate peacebuilding: 1</li> <li>Well linked to knowledge acquired in the morning: 1</li> <li>Good contrast after theory and information in the morning: 1</li> </ul>				

**What worked less well:**

- Too much information: 4 (in a short timeframe: 1, too many details to follow: 1, too much time spent on explaining not relevant details of the issue in second presentation: 1, a bit too long: 1)
- PowerPoint presentation would have helped to better follow first presentation: 2
- More interaction would have been better: 2 (Especially as EurAc's example was very topic-specific: 1)
- More time needed to understand case studies: 1
- Handouts would be useful: 1
- Need for analysis/discussion on the different case studies: 2 (Just do an analysis/discussion on case studies: 1, do an analysis in groups afterwards: 1)
- More context information needed on why sanctions should/should not be lifted: 1
- Would have been good to have case study on more recently/directly conflict-affected country (Somalia, CAR): 1
- More effective with a bit of basic facts as background information beforehand (to be able to follow better): 1
- Would have been good to do an exercise on case studies afterwards so that learning sinks in: 1

**Session 4 – Friday morning: Discussion with EU officials**

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
15	6	1		

**Comments (what worked well, what did not):****What worked well:**

- Informative: 5
- Clear and precise: 3
- Terri's intervention: 3
- Very useful to understand point of view of EU officials: 3 (especially about coordination issues: 1)
- Excellent discussion and speakers: 2
- Very frank and honest: 2
- Practical guidance: 2
- Interactive: 2
- Fun to listen to: 1
- Helpful to know that a few policy recommendations can be more powerful than 3-page report and that EU institutions look for concrete, specific proposals: 1
- New pieces of information regarding entry points in addressing challenges of peacebuilding CSOs: 1
- A lot of time for questions/participation: 1
- Targeted/relevant questions in the plenary: 1

**What worked less well:**

- Would have been good to have them move around small groups: 2
- Discussions could have been more structured: 1
- Would have been nice to have more time with EU officials: 1
- Presentations by EC and EP officials less clear: 1
- More formal seating of EU officials (all in one line, without movement around the room) made it more difficult to keep paying attention: 1
- Would have been good to have one EU official from DG DEVCO if possible (to talk about peacebuilding elements of ECHR and CSO-LAs instruments and to promote a different perspective of EEAS and FPI): 1

**Session 5 – Friday morning: Case studies of past advocacy strategies towards the EU (part 2)**

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
5	17			

**Comments (what worked well, what did not):****What worked well:**

- Interesting: 3
- Presentation raised awareness of other strategies and measures to advocate conflict prevention and peacebuilding and try to make Member States more conflict-sensitive: 1
- Concrete questions were answered: 1
- Best explained case study: 1
- Very good Q&A: 1
- Informative: 1
- Clear: 1
- Engaging speaker: 1
- Useful to have an example on very large, long-term issues: 1

**What worked less well:**

- PowerPoint would have been added value: 5 (as it was a more technical example: 1, easier to follow: 3)
- Visual timeline might have been helpful: 1
- Probably more time needed to absorb and understand all the details: 1
- Would be good to incorporate some brief interactive exercise: 1
- Not so relevant to smaller organisations: 1
- Not that interesting: 1
- Too much technical language/abbreviations: 1
- Hard to follow for someone with limited knowledge of the EU: 1

- Would have been better to have it as first presentation in the morning, hard to follow after discussion with EU officials: 1
- Speaking too fast: 1
- Distribution of practical material (recommendations, policy paper) would have helped to understand the case study better and at more practical level: 1

**Session 6 – Friday afternoon: Group exercise**

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
14	7	1		

**Comments (what worked well, what did not):**

**What worked well:**

- Interesting to apply knowledge gained during the seminar: 7 (showed how much had been absorbed during the previous 1.5 days: 1)
- Helpful in putting theory into practice: 2
- Useful: 2
- Helpful to be advised by EPLO staff on who to establish contacts with: 1
- Great practical exercise: 1
- Group dynamics and exchange of different perspectives appreciated: 2
- Very good resource person: 1
- Very well organised: 1
- Very good scenario: 1
- Enjoyed the group work: 2
- Helped to exchange on what was learned in theory: 1

**What worked less well:**

- Exercise could be improved: 1
- Could have been useful to have such a group exercise also on the first day: 1
- Would be better if it was much shorter (e.g. 30-45 minutes to discuss, 15-20 minutes presentation): 1
- Difficult because not sure yet which level/institution is competent for what: 1
- Feedback and presentations could be more interactive (perhaps using round-table model from first session): 1
- Not enough initial context in case study on EU expertise (which meant the group was a bit lost for the first 15 minutes): 1
- Would have been nice to have more time and maybe do it on both days to have more time to process everything: 1
- Too much difference between the scenarios; thematic scenario on EU expertise was more difficult and therefore lack of time to define key actors and timeline: 1

- More information in the scenario might have allowed to think more realistically, e.g. specified timeline and allocation of resources: 1

**2) How would you rate the quality of the background documents that were distributed in advance of the training seminar?**

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
18	4			

**Comments and recommendations:**

**Comments:**

- Very useful: 6
- Well structured: 1
- Background documents helped to follow the sessions without getting lost: 1
- Power Analysis very useful: 4
- Easy to read and understand on complicated EU terminology: 1
- Will use background documents in the future: 3
- Enough as a starting point: 1
- Clear: 1
- Very informative, good overview: 1
- Hard to follow without previous EU experience: 1

**Recommendations:**

- Stress importance of reading the background documents in advance: 1
- Would have been good to also receive in advance the other materials which were distributed at the seminar: 1

**3) How would you rate the overall facilitation of the training seminar and the quality of the presentations?**

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
16	6			

**Comments:**

- Good time management: 4
- Very good resource persons: 3 (friendly and knowledgeable: 1, experienced and competent: 1, steered the conversations in the right direction: 1)
- Very good presentations: 2 (but important to remember visual/pedagogical way of presenting the subject as dealing with difficult concept: 1, understandable: 1)
- Great facilitation by Sanne: 2 (knowledgeable, approachable, encouraging and open atmosphere: 1)
- Very interesting and useful: 2
- Good venue: 2
- Very good organisation: 1
- Professional: 1
- Gave good feedback: 1
- Making everyone feel comfortable: 1
- Great job: 1
- Contents well-chosen and useful in practice: 1
- Good team work: 1
- Perfect logistics: 1
- Seminar tried to cover many different aspects of advocacy: 1
- Very efficient: 1
- Inspiring: 1
- Would be useful for equivalent staff in other regions of participant's organisation: 1
- Sometimes difficult to read details of presentations on rather small screen: 1
- Good programme and variation between types of sessions: 1

**4) Usefulness of the seminar:**

Did you find the seminar useful?

- Useful: 22
- Useful for knowledge: 1
- Useful for networking with similar organisations: 2
- Useful for understanding EU institutions, their structure and internal workings in Brussels: 1
- Useful to gain insight into work of EU institutions on conflict prevention and peacebuilding: 1
- Helps rethinking how to approach peacebuilding strategy: 1
- Great tool for planning a future advocacy strategy: 1

How much did you learn at the seminar? Please give examples.

- Gained more (specific) knowledge on EU institutions/instruments: 11 (EU foreign policy system and evolution of the system since Lisbon treaty: 1, abbreviations: 1, knew very little about EU in general before: 2, EU institutional issues: 1, overall structure of peacebuilding-related agencies/institutions and their role: 1, much better basic understanding of EU's work in peacebuilding: 1, knowledge on programming/financial processes: 1, learned about EP Mediation Support Service: 1, understanding cooperation between EU institutions: 1)
- Learned how to do advocacy: 11 (whom to approach on different issues: 5, entry points and their varieties: 4, do's and don'ts: 1, advocacy tools, methodology, strategy: 1, how to present advocacy strategy: 1, how to maximise chances of success: 2, importance of relationships and brief, clear documentation: 1, how to best engage: 1, new strategies and approaches: 1, being-to-the-point recommendations: 3, right timing: 1, not to forget the human being and personal reaction behind EU structures and officials: 1, some names to contact when moving forward with advocacy: 1, learned how to start if advocacy should be done: 1)
- Learned how it all works in practice: 1
- Realised how much scope there is to work through/with EPLO: 1

Will you apply what you learned in your work? Please give examples.

- Yes: 21
- No specific answer: 1
- Will apply when working with EU institutions and making contacts with EU officials: 5 (when making contacts beyond the focus of our project which until now led us to limit ourselves to DEVCO: 1, in meetings with EU officials: 1, since the project I work in requires reaching out to EU officials and particular departments: 1)
- Will pass on my knowledge to colleagues: 3 (to in-country offices' staff: 1)
- Will inform my organisation which is in the process of building strong advocacy towards the EU: 2
- Will use it more in national advocacy work: 2
- Learning about advocacy was helpful for fundraising in my work: 3 (when gathering information on EU funding on a daily basis: 1)
- Will follow EPLO's work more: 1
- Will use contacts I made at the training seminar: 1
- Will think more about EU institutions and different instruments when planning advocacy towards the EU: 1
- Will use entry points to EEAS and relevance of EEAS in my work: 1
- Will keep EU institutions and EPLO in mind for my work on an Erasmus+ project: 1
- Will use it for engagement on IcSP: 2 (in Brussels and in country: 1)
- Will initiate work with colleagues: 1 (will discuss EU Special Representatives with colleagues: 1)
- Knowledge about effective engagement will help enhance the impact of what our organisation is trying to do in many contexts: 1
- Already got in contact with one EU official during the training seminar by telling them about the project I work on: 1
- Will use it for policy recommendations: 1
- Will use it to re-orient my organisation's and network's advocacy objectives: 1
- Might devise advocacy strategy towards DG NEAR: 1
- Will use it for CVE/refugee crisis work: 1
- Will apply it in co-operation with other CSOs: 1

**5) Please give your suggestions for improving the training seminar or further comments:**

(No comment: 2)

**Suggestions for improvement:**

- Bring in other resource persons: 2 (someone from the field, including EU delegation: 1, members of private sector and other organisations which aren't necessarily working on peacebuilding issues and from grants from developing countries: 1)
- Inserting more concrete examples of advocacy by civil society into the reading materials: 1
- Ensure training is tailored to experience of the participants (different rounds for junior, senior experts etc. if possible): 1
- Bigger screen and higher up on the wall for the presentations: 1
- Table microphones for the panel: 1
- Working on concrete material already used in successful advocacy strategies (including text analysis): 1
- Add session on how EPLO can specifically support participants and their organisations in their advocacy initiatives: 1
- Some changes in timing: 1
- More PowerPoint slides: 1
- More interaction during the example sessions: 1
- Provide more fruit instead of biscuits at coffee breaks: 1
- Session on advocacy impact assessment would be very interesting (if more time available): 1
- Sometimes find more pedagogical way of presenting subject: 1
- Use of one advocacy strategy throughout the two days to be able to go deeper into advocacy process: 1
- More group work: 1
- Maybe visit to the EU institutions: 1
- Provide organigrams for the whole EU Commission: 1
- Consider having 3 days of training seminar: 1

**Further comments:**

- Congratulations to EPLO team: 1
- Offer more of these training seminars: 1