



## Civil Society Dialogue Network

### Training Seminar on Peacebuilding Advocacy towards the EU, 27-28 June 2016

#### EVALUATION FEEDBACK FORMS (Total: 21 forms)

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

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

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
7	12	2		

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

##### What worked well:

- Very good session: 4 (straight to key points: 1)
- Very informative: 4 (short yet informative presentations: 1, concise presentations: 1)
- Good introduction: 4 (providing context and background information: 1, well elaborated: 1, guide and framework for upcoming sessions: 1)
- 'Speed dating' was good: 2
- Reading materials helped to understand session: 2 (Power Analysis very helpful to have before session: 1)
- Information provided in the handout: 1
- Q&A session postponed to end: 1
- Resource persons moving around tables: 1
- Discussions which followed the presentations helped to better understand: 1
- Useful for participants without experience in EU advocacy: 1

##### What worked less well:

- Could have been more interactive: 3
- Information sometimes difficult to digest: 2
- Confusing at times: 1
- Basic for people who already know how EU institutions work: 1
- Would have been useful to have Power Analysis mapped to better see how institutions relate to each other: 1
- Too basic: 1
- Information was already provided in readings: 1

- Session could have been shorter: 1
- Readings could have been shorter: 1
- Could have had more time to talk about EPLO's own experiences: 1

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

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
12	8	1		

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

**What worked well:**

- Insights/expertise from practitioner: 4 (valuable, lots of great lessons learned: 1, very interesting expertise sharing: 1, hands-on and very convincing: 1, feedback on what (not) to do in approaching the EU useful, especially before panel with EU representatives: 1)
- Very informative: 2
- Very good presentation: 3 (Very good presentation of the actors: 1, clear presentation, highly valuable information: 1, overall great: 1)
- New perspective on how EU perceives civil society and their advocacy efforts: 3
- Comprehensive and interesting: 2
- Candid views appreciated: 1
- Concise information on most relevant points: 1
- Useful examples: 1

**What worked less well:**

- Role of Member States (linked to EU delegations and EU in general) could have been explained more: 1
- Quite general: 1
- Would have been good to have examples of good and not so good engagement between EU and civil society organisations: 1
- Specific country case/advocacy case would have been more illustrative: 1

**Session 3 – Monday afternoon: Sharing of experience on advocacy endeavours towards the EU**

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
11	9	1		

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

**What worked well:**

- Very good sharing of experiences: 7 (very good to hear personal experiences: 1, valuable presentations: 1, very rich and engaging: 1, very helpful: 1)
- Variety of experiences from colleagues: 2

- Good discussions: 2 (lots of opportunities for discussion: 1, relevant discussions: 1)
- Good that people had been appointed to share experiences: 2 (this encouraged others to talk too: 1)
- Talking about experience on challenges faced and how to get around them: 1
- Very useful session: 1
- Helped to get a sense of how it works in practice: 1
- Good to hear similarities vs. lessons learned: 1
- Helped in playing down the technicality of the topic: 1
- Very interesting for NGOs based in Europe to hear how NGOs in-country engage with EU: 1

**What worked less well:**

- People could have been asked about experience of advocacy endeavours towards EC and EEAS, not just EU delegations and Member States: 1
- Form of presenting was a bit boring; could maybe be done in form of speed dating/word café: 1
- Would be good to structure session with set of questions if possible/relevant: 1

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

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
11	9	1		

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

**What worked well:**

- Useful: 3 (particularly FPI and EEAS presentations: 1)
- Very informative: 3
- Helpful, honest advice: 2 (on what they expect and want from CSOs: 1)
- Very good opportunity to engage with EU officials: 1
- Multi-dimensional: 1
- Good to put faces to the office: 1
- Very good selection of speakers: 1
- Concrete examples/illustrations: 1
- Good to get first-hand information on limitations: 1

**What worked less well:**

- More time would have been better: 3 (maybe each panellist could have had separate presentation: 1)
- Maybe next time good to also have an EU official who worked/used to work for an EU delegation: 2
- Would have been helpful if EU officials presented case studies of countries they worked in (challenges they faced, successes etc.); broad and technical presentations made it hard to see change on the ground: 1
- Work of each official could have been better linked to local contexts: 1

- Would be interesting to also hear from Member States: 1
- Maybe a bit more clarity needed on different funding instruments: 1

**Session 5 – Tuesday afternoon: Group exercise**

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
15	5	1		

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

**What worked well:**

- Putting acquired knowledge into practice: 5
- Very good team work: 3 (helped clarify lack of practical knowledge: 1, enjoyed interaction/problem solving with other participants: 1)
- Good guidance by resource persons: 3 (made work efficient: 1, helpful guidance: 1)
- Interactive: 2
- Learned a lot: 2
- Helpful to think about how to best approach the EU: 1
- Very thorough: 1
- Step-by-step insight into how to influence EU policy: 1
- Very good exercises: 1
- Favourite part of the training: 1

**What worked less well:**

- Should have used examples provided by participants: 1
- Sometimes lack of practical knowledge of advocacy to contribute to group exercise: 1
- Broad scenarios not easy to deal with and felt compelled to find more information which distracted from strategy: 1 (maybe next time stress that it is possible to create strategy without too much content information: 1)
- Session on the different types of advocacy activities/materials beforehand might have helped: 1
- Would have been good to have more time: 1
- Resource person was very directing which made it less the group’s product: 1
- Resource person could have provided more input: 1
- Could be interesting to get two groups working on the same strategies together to reflect on their strategies together: 1

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

(No answer: 4)

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
12	5			

**Comments and recommendations:****Comments:**

- Very useful background documents: 3 (will be used for future reference: 2, very valuable: 1)
- Very good Power Analysis: 2 (especially the challenges & opportunities section: 1, very useful document: 1)
- Excellent and very thorough mapping: 1
- Good preparation for the training: 1

**Recommendations:**

- A visual of power dynamics in the EU would have been a great addition: 2 (Power Analysis very dense and difficult to conceptualise: 1)
- Would have been useful to also receive some multimedia files, e.g. audio podcasts, videos, infographics: 1
- Would have been good to have some examples of country strategies or EEAS policy documents: 1

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

(No answer: 4)

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
14	3			

**Comments:**

- Excellent time management: 4 (appreciated the respect for people's time: 1)
- Very good facilitation: 3 (very good and attentive facilitators: 1, fun, energetic and positive energy in the facilitation by Laura: 1)
- One of the best trainings I have had: 1
- Sometimes a little 'messy': 1
- Everyone knew a lot and had a great understanding of the EU and CSOs in peacebuilding: 1
- Engaging and lively: 1
- Excellent work by EPLO team: 1
- Excellent presentations: 1
- Perhaps could have been good to have 2.5 days or 3 days to allow for more time for informal networking and group exercises: 1
- Trip to Schuman area and EU buildings might have been valuable: 1
- Good atmosphere: 1
- Very participatory: 1

#### 4) Usefulness of the seminar:

(No answer: 4)

Did you find the seminar useful?

- Yes: 17
- Very useful to understand the EU better: 2
- Will help in advancing and developing advocacy strategies towards the EU: 2
- Very good networking opportunity: 2 (good to hear and meet people from other organisations: 1)
- Very useful to understand the main difficulties in approaching the EU and the 'soft spots': 1
- Quite novel information: 1
- Very useful for dealing with EU delegations and strategizing for present and future actions on peacebuilding: 1
- Very useful sessions and exercises: 1
- Different levels of experience in the room were excellent: 1
- Thanks to EPLO team: 1

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

- Learned about EU institutions: 8 (how to distinguish different EU institutions: 3, connections between EU institutions: 1, seminar complemented existing knowledge on EU institutions (more details information on divisions, informal role) and on advocacy (how to target the different institutions): 1, Power Analysis: 1, learned about dynamics in EU institutions regarding peacebuilding: 2)
- Learned how to do advocacy: 7 (targeting the different EU divisions and bodies: 1, key actors to target: 1, considerably improved knowledge on whom to advocate and how to advocate: 2, how to think through advocacy lens: 1, advocacy entry points: 2)
- Learned about tactics for effective engagement with EU: 2 (being specific on demand and realistic about what could be achieved: 1)
- Learned more about inner workings at EU, structures and how each entity plays a role in advocacy: 1
- Learned that there is still a gap to be filled between local communities and broader institutions: 1
- Identifying relevant actors and advice on how to approach them made EU more approachable: 1
- Learned about approaches to EU and what (not) to do: 1
- Got a good overview of EU advocacy: 1
- Learned about the role of EU delegations: 1

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

- Will use it to do advocacy: 5 (use organigrammes to plan advocacy targets across different EU institutions: 1, will apply the knowledge in different cross-cutting strategies as my area of work is mainly focused on advocacy: 1, to contact desk officers in the EEAS, advisors in the EC etc.: 1, will integrate it into my own advocacy strategy: 2, will produce/update a draft of an open letter to the EU on the Khartoum process: 1)
- Will use it when approaching the EU: 4 (when approaching EU delegations in the country I work in

and link it with relevant EU institutions in Brussels: 3, will be able to identify how best to engage EU on policy work: 1)

- Will bring it up colleagues/partners: 3 (will bring it up with headquarters: 1, will bring it up for discussion with partners and at advocacy meeting: 1, planning to train local country partners: 1)
- Will apply it in future meetings with EU officials: 2
- My work will be far better informed than before: 1
- Will consider the knowledge learned when doing grant writing and formulating recommendations: 1
- Will apply it in at least two projects related to EU peacebuilding support which I work on: 1
- Will know who to talk to for political analysis, policy dialogue and funding: 1
- Might arrange my own EU advocacy tour which I was highly sceptical of organising before: 1

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

(No answer: 7)

**Suggestions for improvement:**

- More group activities: 2
- More time for discussions and more details in presentations, e.g. when presenting the case studies: 1
- Talk about how to link training seminar content to EPLO's actual work: 1
- More meetings with EU officials: 1
- Possible follow-up meetings: 1
- More time for workshops: 1
- Would be good to do a visit to the EEAS and EC: 1
- Dividing the training seminar into modules: 1
- It would be a good idea to give participants the chance to draft policy advocacy briefs at individual level, taking their organisations as examples (could be done after going back to their country or after 2 months): 1
- Provide information on how to monitor lobbying and advocacy efforts (collectively): 1
- Would be good to provide brief overview on role of EPLO and who does what in the team to know whom to approach for what: 1
- Facilitation of the group exercise should be less directive: 1
- Circulate participants' bios prior to the conference: 1
- Have a group dinner on the evening before the training seminar starts: 1
- Set up a Google/Facebook group for the participants to follow up after the seminar: 1

**Further comments:**

- Great logistics: 1
- Very positive atmosphere: 1
- Very good opportunity to meet EPLO team and other EPLO members: 1
- Great time keeping: 1
- Very good variety of speakers: 1