



Civil Society Dialogue Network

Training Seminar on Peacebuilding Advocacy towards the EU, 8-9 March 2018

EVALUATION FEEDBACK FORM

1) Content of the training seminar:

Session 1 – Thursday morning: Setting the scene: Manoeuvring the EU bubble

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
8	15	1		
<p>What worked well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good/useful x6 (to get different perspectives (1)) • Quiz is a good ice-breaker • Good mapping of EU key players x2 • Well-structured • Easy to follow and understand • Clear lessons and key tips x2 • Great overview to start the workshop • Good to have readings in advance • Interactive • Straight to the point <p>Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend some time to get to know the various organisations <p>Criticisms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A bit too short 				

Session 2 – Thursday morning: Who is “the EU”? Group exercise on the EU institutions and peacebuilding

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
10	12	2		
<p>What worked well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good activity as an icebreaker x2 • Good recap/overview x2 • Good to learn things about the institutions x2 (with which one to engage on which aspect (1)) • Excellent facilitation technique x2 • Well-managed x2 				

- Good interactivity/dynamic **x6**
- Good to put into practice what was discussed in the previous session
- Great to have resource people to answer immediately
- Smart way to help participants learn the material
- Good to have background readings
- Good to have a common starting point
- Insightful
- Good way to engage with other participants

Suggestions:

- EPLO staff could correct participants stating something wrong

Criticisms:

- Not very useful for people with an EU background
- Not efficient for the goal of the exercise
- Questions in the box were not answered
- Inconsistencies amongst resource people in the guidance from table to table
- Quick turnaround and changing tables were confusing
- Very little time at the table

Session 3 – Thursday afternoon: How the EU operates in conflict-affected countries (Andrew Sherriff)

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
13	10	1		

What worked well:

- Good/great/helpful **x13**
- Clear presentation **x2**
- Useful information **x3**
- Engaging Q&A **x2**
- Gave concrete tips for advocacy
- Only session to present the EU as an international actor and not as a simple institution
- Broadens perspectives
- Good overview of in-country operations
- Good at highlighting critical aspects

Suggestions:

- Could provide a handout of the presentation in advance
- Could be more interactive

Criticism:

- Could not understand power and flexibility of EU delegations
- Too fast/difficult to follow **x3**
- Difficult to draw out the relevant elements

Session 4 – Thursday afternoon: Case study on the development of the EU Strategy for engagement with Iraq

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
1	15	6	3	
<p>What worked well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interesting x3 (to hear about the role of CSOs in the process of drafting the Strategy (1); to give a hands-on perspective on how to apply theoretical knowledge in practice (1)) • Helpful/good x5 (for understanding procedures (2)) • Detailed • Great to have a policy maker perspective <p>Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could provide visual presentation x3 • Could have been more interactive x2 • Could give an introduction on the content of the presentation • Could give a printed timeline of the process of development of the Iraq Strategy • Could have focused more on advocacy examples <p>Criticisms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to follow x6 • Too much focus on internal EU processes which were not useful • Not all questions were answered • Not interactive enough • Difficult to see how this could work beyond the case of the Iraq strategy • Unclear 				

Session 5 – Friday morning: Discussion with EU officials

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
10	12	2		
<p>What worked well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great/interesting/useful x7 (to have an institutional perspective (1), insight on IcSP Art. 4 and Art. 5 consultations (1); to have variety of institutions (2); to have insights on how they work (1)) • Informative x2 • Gerrard’s presentation was clear and insightful • Pretty good Q&A • Learned a lot on EEAS and EP • Enriching • Contributed to ideas on how to take specific on-the-ground work further • Brought together the learning from day 1 • Clear presentations <p>Suggestions:</p>				

- Make it more like a panel rather than a presentation **x2**
 - Give more room to Q&A
 - Get someone from FPI.2 in order to have even more peacebuilding information
 - Could have a visual presentation
 - Could make it more engaging
- Criticism**
- Difficult to follow

Session 6 – Friday morning: Case studies of past and ongoing advocacy strategies

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
9	12	3		

- What worked well:**
- Interesting **x4** (to see advocacy in practice (1))
 - Useful information **x4**
 - Good examples **x2**
 - Good presentations **x3** (on MFF (1))
 - Slides were useful
 - Good to have best practices/practical tools to use **x2**
 - Good way to start visualising advocacy lessons
 - Good combination of cases
- Suggestions:**
- Focus more on lessons learned
 - Would have been more useful if put in the first hours of the seminar
 - There could have been more reflection on risks of advocacy in distorting messages and providing incomplete pictures
 - Could make it more interactive
- Criticisms:**
- Difficult to understand how to choose specific tactics and targets, theories of changes and identify barriers
 - Hard to follow due to the timing with the previous session
 - Lacked a bit of generalisation discussion on how to apply the lessons in other contexts

Session 7 – Friday afternoon: Group exercise

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
14	9.5	0.5		

- What worked well:**
- Good exercise **x7**
 - Great/good group facilitation **x3**

- Helpful/useful **x3** (to understand the advocacy process (1); to understand how to start the advocacy strategy (1))
- Great to learn from colleagues **x2**
- Good case studies **x2**
- Great to exchange expertise and ideas
- Presentations helped realise what to think about
- Effective in reinforcing theoretical knowledge
- Fuelled ideas of how to engage EU and countries
- Great to bring the training in very concrete terms.
- Fun
- Instructive
- Groups had the perfect size
- No time stress
- Good to be pushed to think

Suggestions:

- More time for presentations **x2** (10-15 minutes each instead of 5 (1))
- Set a more narrow goal for the advocacy exercise
- Have some training in advance whose elements can be used when designing a strategy
- The advocacy goal for the Brussels-based group could have been formulated in a clearer way
- Less proactive facilitation in the working group in order not to have too much steering

Criticisms:

- Guidance was open-ended
- Presentations were rather vague
- Group spent too much time on recommendations rather than on the design strategy

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
15.5	3	0.5		

What worked well:

- Good/Excellent/Useful **x11** (to have an idea of topics **x2**)
- Detailed/Comprehensive **x4** (Mapping of EU Actors (1))
- The Mapping of EU Actors was perfect
- Other participants' bios were useful

Suggestions:

- Could add something to use for a publication
- Make it more concise due to lack of time to delve into them

Criticisms:

- The terms "Codecision" and "Colegislation" are unclear regarding the institutions involved

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

excellent	good	average	poor	very poor
17	7			

What worked well:

- Great/well done: **x13**
- Good pace/energy **x2**
- Friendly staff
- Interesting techniques (introducing the person sitting next, “special hats” for roles in the group exercise)
- Resource people essential for the group work
- Welcoming
- Helpful in keeping the group motivated
- Helped keeping a complex topic light
- Good resource persons

Suggestions:

- Could do more energizing activities between sessions

Criticisms:

- There is no need to comment everything after somebody is talking

4) Usefulness of the seminar:

Did you find the seminar useful?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes x23 (in explaining the complexity of EU institutions, policies and instruments (1)) • Inform advocacy effort • Connect with EPLO • Useful to divide the simulation into Brussels and country context • It provided information to bring back to team and partners • Background readings especially
How much did you learn at the seminar? Please give examples.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learned about EU institutions and dynamics x13 (competencies (1) political vs technical roles (1), difference of the institutions (3)) • Learned more on advocacy strategies x6 • Good to know how to approach EU actors x5 (EEAS (2)) • Learned more about financial instruments x4 (the planning process and who is involved (1)). • Learned about the EU’s work on mediation • Learned how other organisations work on advocacy

- Learned about the importance of linking MS-focused advocacy with work of EPLO at EU level
- Learned about the difference between engagement of EU actors on the ground vs Brussels
- How EPLO works
- Great advice and tools

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

- Yes **x15** (in future advocacy strategies (**10**); ; in dealing with the EEAS (**2**); in dealing with FPI (**1**); using Early Warning system to inform delegations and PRISM (**1**); lobby meetings (**1**); position papers (**1**); working with others (**1**); when referring to EU legislation (**1**); more detailed information on competencies of institutions (**1**); in a dialogue between two opposing groups (**1**))
- Will share information with colleagues **x4**
- Will use contacts
- Will use the EPLO network
- Will use the advocacy strategy table
- Will use the information on the IcSP Art. 3 – Art. 4 consultation
- Will organise an internal briefing on learning points
- Will organise meetings of country-based CSO network to coordinate advocacy on MFF
- Will use lessons learned on own organisation's activities
- Will use the documents for work/share with colleagues

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

- Answer the questions submitted in the box **x2**
- Participants should be encouraged to read documents beforehand since they have very different levels of knowledge on EU
- Pay more attention to questions and interests of the participants
- More flexible schedule in order to extend sessions where there is interest and shorten others **x2**
- Longer Q&A sessions **x2**
- Skip the part on acronyms
- Consider the use of Bosnia and Kosovo as examples
- Give specific training to get people to think about tactics for public campaigning (when, where and how to use them)
- Provide a more critical reflection on advocacy
- Divide and mix table and groups more often in order to work with more people
- Make sure participants asking questions are not always the same
- Give more opportunities to exchange with participants
- Provide a deeper look at key tensions, trends and challenges for peacebuilding at the EU level
- Add segment on critical approach to EU engagement, i.e. how to improve EU participation at local level
- Session 5 could have taken place on day 1
- Have case studies on Africa
- Could be interesting to plan a visit to some EU institution
- Make sure it does not feel rushed from time to time