



## 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		

##### What worked well:

- 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

##### Suggestions:

- Spend some time to get to know the various organisations

##### Criticisms:

- 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		

##### What worked well:

- 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	

### What worked well:

- 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

### Suggestions:

- 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

### Criticisms:

- 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		

### What worked well:

- 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

### Suggestions:

- 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 "Co-legislation" 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?

- 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.

- 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