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D 4.3

Analysis of the organisation of the EGS Local Communities Forums Comments and proposal for EU policy makers

WP4 : Building up the Local Community Fora : local communities at school

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1. Overview

1.1 Context

The EGS project starts from the need to involve local communities in **tackling energy issues and improving energy efficiency**. The main actor contributing to involve a whole community and at the same time training the younger generations is the school, and more specifically high-schools. The project focuses on 4 main levels: developing new educational contents for pupils; teachers training; involvement of the local productive sector (SMEs); and governance. EGS will create a network of 13 bottom-up school for involving families, local Administrations, SMEs, training institutions, environmental and energy agencies, public and private financial actors and all relevant stakeholders in 10 different countries.

The project is organised in seven work packages whereas WP1, WP6 and WP7 are dedicated to management and local as well as transnational dissemination activities.

WP2 organises the initial survey to define the state of the art in terms of energy in general and energy education in the participating and interested schools.

WP3 will raise the schools capacities by initiating new educational offers for students, teachers and schools staff.

WP4 and WP5 are closely related: In WP4 local community forums (local communities at schools) will be build up inviting all relevant target groups to participate in a discussion process in which action plans targeting important challenges and highlighting priorities shall be defined.

In WP5 on the one hand methods and tools will be defined on how to select the most feasible priorities and topics for more detailed feasibility studies and finally the pilot actions for which also monitoring and evaluation methods will be elaborated. On the other hand the pilot actions will be implemented by the forums local communities or responsible stakeholders during WP5.

1.2 EGS Work Package 4 objectives

The WP4 aims at making it available all the preparatory activities for schools local communities. In this work package the involvement of local communities will be realised having the school as the point of reference. The forum will be the site where the participated process will be realised.

The main aim of work package 4 (WP4) is:

- to produce a common methodology for the creation, organisation, development and finalisation of the national and international forum (D4.1)
- to organise 13 forums (one in each country and 4 in Italy) and 3 international meetings.
- to collect the action plans defined by the local communities (D4.2)
- to analyse the forums organisation for the EU policy makers (D4.3)

1.3 Objectives of D4.3 in the of the EGS project

This document for EU policy makers is an analysis of the Forum organisation. It reports and analyses the obstacles faced and the results obtained by the school communities in the organisation, management and finalisation of the local fora.

2. Analysis of the forum organisation

2.1 Organise a Local Forum

The Forum is the main factor-structure of a Local Agenda 21 process, as a dedicated public place to engage different stakeholders on several activities to define and implement projects.

A public Forum may offer different advantages to different stakeholders and promoters of a participated process, such as :

- to enlarge the quality and quantity of stakeholders and local communities involved
- to provide more representativeness to the stakeholders involved
- to give the participants the opportunity to contribute to the contents of the action plan
- to reinforce the educational role of schools in the local communities' territory
- to facilitate better contacts with decision makers who have promoted the process
- to facilitate multiple perspectives on problems
- to find shared solutions after structured discussion through different working steps
- to provide more accountability and transparency during the process
- to offer the possibility to organise thematic working groups and focus groups on specific issues linked to plenary session

2.2 Common methodology to organise the EGS forum

The forum will follow a common methodology inspired by the Local Agenda 21 process and the EASW method (European Awareness Scenario Workshops). This methodology was written by ECO-One (D4.1) :

Organization of 3 local meetings with plenary and thematic working groups sessions in each of the EGS forums.

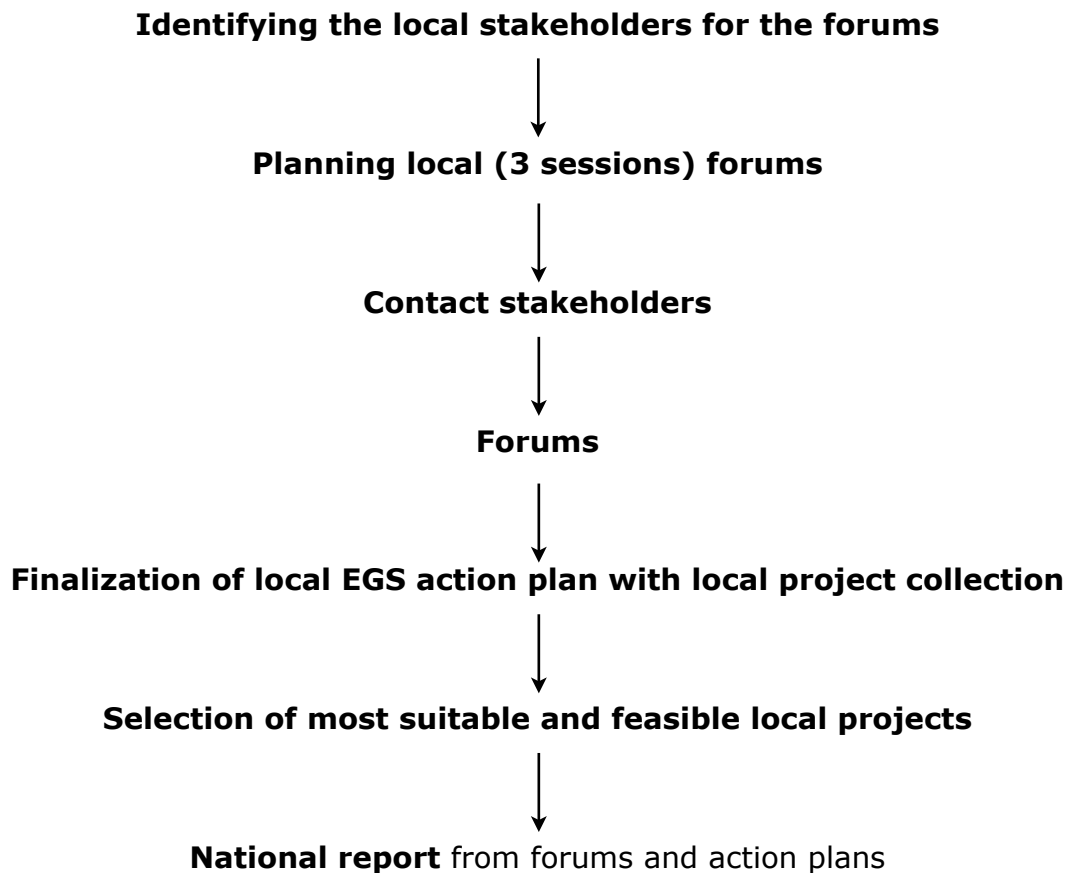
Definition of the forum ACTION PLAN and PROJECT COLLECTION shared among the forum stakeholders.

The ACTION PLAN includes (problems, objectives, priorities, actions, responsibilities).

PROJECTS can concern different items related with energy efficiency: education and training, governance, SMEs cooperation (e.g. internship programs; job opportunities), technical services (auditing, buildings refurbishing, renewables), etc.

For each of them, the local partnership, the contents, the budget, the responsibility, the financial sources, etc. will be defined and presented in a common **ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE**.

2.3 Task to complete by each EGS partners



2.4 Get stakeholders

Each partners had to defined the potential actors which may contribute to the EGS objectives. This is the target groups who had been involved :

- Students
- Teachers
- School boards and educational authorities
- School building owners
- Local / Regional / National education authorities
- Local / Regional Administrations
- Financial actors (banks, foundations, financial institutions)
- Civil society and its organizations
- Architects and building services
- Industrial and agricultural enterprises
- Trade and professional associations
- Chambers of Commerce
- Energy Agencies and other experts
- Families

The main difficulty faced by partners was to get the stakeholders :

« The issue of sustainability is not hot in the Netherlands. It is difficult to get people involved on an issue for which they are not really motivated. » **ROC Nijmegen, Netherlands.**

« The only problem was to find a suitable date for pupils and stakeholders. » **ZIEL21, Germany.**

« The main problem was to activate schools and stakeholders. For the forums session, we had only 4 and 6 participants...» **UBN, Germany.**

« We had problems to involve local authorities. », **Klub Kon-Tiki, Slovakia.**

« There has been some difficulties in involving teachers and employees of schools, given the political constraints between the government and teachers. » **IEBA, Portugal.**

« Lot of stakeholders are very busy and It need much work to get contact and involve stakeholders specially from companies.» **ECO-One, Finland.**

In France, the main difficulty was that we were only facilitator of the project. It is the reason why we were not able to take all the decisions for the forum. So, we had to manage the forum organisation and the school engagement too.

This is a comparative charts showing the invitations compared to stakeholders actual participation.

STAKEHOLDERS CATEGORIES	Stakeholders involved in France	Mailing	Actual stakeholders in France
Students	Representative students only	50	0
Teachers	All teachers from the 4 partners schools	200	20
School boards and educational authorities	YES	25	5
School building owners	YES, regional authorities	10	1
Local and Regional education authorities	YES, only regional and local	10	1
Local / Regional Administrations	YES, owner of the buildings	10	3
Financial actors	Only one contact with a local bank	1	0
Civil society and its organizations	NO contact	0	0
Architects and building services	YES	5	0
Industrial and agricultural enterprises	YES, enterprises working with high school	5	0

STAKEHOLDERS CATEGORIES	Stakeholders involved in France	Mailing	Actual stakeholders in France
Trade and professional associations	YES, from the city	5	0
Chambers of Commerce	YES, from the city	2	0
Energy Agencies and other experts	YES, regional and local agencies	10	0
Families	NO, lack of time to involve this community	0	0

This charts showing the difficulty to involve stakeholders.

Some categories of stakeholders were particularly hard to mobilize. It was the case for enterprises, because of lack of time and interest. In Portugal and Finland, the enterprises mobilization was good because the relationships with local EGS partners were usual.

Concerning the mobilization of students, a difficulty was to get them during the school courses hours.

2.5 Logistics difficulties

Some partners reported that they had difficulties to find a place for meetings. They had to mobilized stakeholders and local authorities to help for organization.

An other difficulty was to find people for logistics (help to prepare the meeting, to prepare the room, etc.).

« The problems that occurred while organizing the forums were related to finding a place to hold the first forum and inviting the stakeholders and media representatives. » FPMG, Bulgaria.

3. Organization facilitations and success

3.1 Using the D4.1 methodology

Following the common methodology was a great opportunity for managing the forum.

« I like the local forum methodology very much, and I gathered positive feedback on it from the people involved in Stralsund. I will try to spread out this idea in Germany. » UBN, Germany.

In Portugal, the organization methodology has been modified : *« IEBA changed the strategy by converting the forum into workshops, exhibitions and visits, because according to the initial model we were not able to engage audiences (teachers, businessmen or politicians).»*

In France, the methodology has been modified too. Instead of organize **3 local meetings** with plenary and thematic working groups sessions, AREHN and IUFM decided to organize **3 thematic forums**. This decision have been taken because stakeholders (many were teachers) were interested in all the subjects.

3.2 Using « facilitators »

In order to organize forum the best way possible and with the maximum efficiency for the creation of an effective action plan, it is preferable to have external facilitators. In fact, the expertise is - sometimes - missing within the schools and/or local partners but also because external facilitators usually have a general approach because they do not directly represent any of the stakeholders organisations or the schools.

Concerning France, there were no school in the EGS project. AREHN and IUFM were only facilitators. It was a good opportunity for stakeholders involvement, but it was an obstacle for forum organization because it was harder to manage the technical staff and lead the project as we need.

3.3 Motivations...

Motivation of EGS partners and their stakeholders was the key of success to achieve EGS forums.

« As soon as we showed the opportunities, the motivation raised and the participants were willing to meet again en find opportunities for cooperation. That is a positive thing. The partners will now share information and start to cooperate. » ROC Nijmegen, Netherlands.

« The first forum had a very high participation rate, which shows the motivation and need for information on this subject in our schools. However, when the need arises to develop practical action in schools involving extra time of their teachers and employees and investment cost materials, begins to show some resistance and withdrawal. Moreover, the project has been very

well received by business energies, which aim to advertise their products and simultaneously sensitise and train the younger classes to the theme of energy and energy efficiency. » **IEBA, Portugal.**

«All participated stakeholders were very motivated and found forums very important. We get very important stakeholders to participate in forums like whole KEUDA's maintenance manager, service sectors big companies representative (Kokkikartano ltd, Metos Ltd), important public stakeholders Energy agency of Motiva ltd, Environmental School of Finland and OKKA-foundation (SD-certification body).

Contact were good and stakeholders know better Collages situation and many development ideas, which need co-operation whit stakeholders were noticed. Even some procedures to solve problems start automatic going on. » **ECO-One, Finland.**

«After the first discussion during the first forum, we were surprised by the willingness of the students to work on energy issues. We were supported by the great part of participants in our idea to continue working on the field of energy awareness and saving. » **FPMG, Bulgaria.**

3.4 Find opportunities

Finding the good moment or the good way to reach people is complicated. Here is some examples showing factors contributing to the success of EGS forum.

« The recent work on the Climate Protection Strategy of the city of Stralsund opens a window of opportunity to organize EGS local forum. » **UBN, Germany.**

« A general meeting about sustainability will not be attended in the netherlands. We really need to find an attractive thing for the target group. Saving money on spending less energy is interesting for our first target group » **ROC Nijmegen, Netherlands.**

« At the Lycée Les Fontenelles, we knew that they wanted to create a new diploma based on sustainable energy. Since many years, this school want to be famous for its energy curricula. The organization of the EGS project, and especially a forum was really a great opportunity and the school welcomed the project.» **AREHN, France.**

4. Proposal for EU policy makers

Even if the EGS forum organisation was complicated to put in place, motivation of the EGS partners and their stakeholders did a great job to make the project successful.

With this experience, it is possible to imagine ways to improvements.

4.1 General conditions to make forums successful

4.1.1 Reinforce the European policy on energy

Many partners talk about a lack of awareness about energy, that was a major problem to get stakeholders and activate school forum. Europe must continue and reinforce its leading policy for saving energy and renewable energy. And the more people is informed about energy, the more they will act for it.

4.1.2 Modify the school programs in Europe

We suggest to reinforce the courses about energy at the european scale. Energy is one of the main challenge in Europe for the next years. It will be a good thing to harmonise the school courses to give a strong basis on this topic.

4.1.3 Organise a new governance at school

Forum is a place and a moment to share ideas with different kind of stakeholders. But concerning energy at school, the decisions are, most of the time, taken by the headmaster or the building holder. So, it is necessary to create a new governance, in the whole european country, to give forum a real power to initiate the change... with every people concerned.

4.2 Specific conditions to facilitate forums

4.2.1. Integrate participative forums at school

A difficulty to organize forum is to find a place, a date, a location, etc. because it can be an unusual project. If energy forums would be integrate in the schools process, it will be easier to organize. The methodology D4.1 is an excellent tool to make this suggestion possible.

4.2.2 Find facilitators to organize forum

Sometimes, schools have not the expertise to organize forum. External facilitators (environnement agency, local administration, etc.) can be a key of success for this mission.

4.2.3 Change the school management

The technical organization of forum require time from school administration, teachers, and pupils. In the « traditionnal » organization, the extra time needed for this activity is impossible to find. So, it is necessary for forum to be legally include in the schedule. And why not make the forum obligatory ?

4.2.4 Use a general or external event

An other key of success to activate schools and stakeholders is to use an external event. By example, a public event or a celebration about energy. Forum can use this synergy to reach new public or stakeholders.

Conclusion

EGS forum is a very interesting opportunity to build new relationships between school and its stakeholders.

For some partners, forum was complicated to organize, because, most of the time, it was an unusual way to work. To help them, a common methodology was created and each partners welcomed it. After the first forum session, the motivation raised and all the partners are satisfied with the project.

The collection of action plans prove that a lot of ideas emerged, so forum makes possible the ability to plan and project with a new king of governance.

Of course, it is possible to improve forum about energy by creating favourable conditions.

By example, by reinforcing the european policy on energy to make european people aware about energy saving.

Forum is an instrument that helped the mutual concern and the formula should continue because it seems to be a good way to reach people.