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Euro-MEDA IVS organisations'

Recommendations for future cooperation

These recommendations were made by International Voluntary Service (IVS) organisations which participated in the Campaign “Contact Making to Youth Participation; the Strengthening of a Culture of Peace Focusing on Active Participation and Social Inclusion among Young People in the EU and the Southern Mediterranean” launched by CCIVS in 2014-2015 and co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme. It aimed to create new cooperation within organisations in the Europe and Southern Mediterranean region on projects about social inclusion and active participation amongst the young people.

The first stage of the project focused on networking and partnership building allowing the partner organisations to get to know each other and to share their challenges and best practices during a seminar held in south of France in December 2014.

The second stage of the project included staff exchanges which allowed thirteen partner organisations to visit one partner organisation in a different country during five days from March to August of 2015. The aim was to create a better understanding of new methodologies in youth work in order to adapt them and implement these practices within the local context.

The third and last stage of the project was an evaluation meeting in Jordan in June 2015. It was during this last phase that recommendations for future cooperation were created by the partner organisations, they concern three different themes:

- **The context:** how does the context influences the cooperation? Recommendations regarding the context.
- **The themes:** specifically the theme of social inclusion. In the future, when cooperating for social inclusion project in the Euro Med what would be the recommendations? Before the cooperation, during and after the cooperation.
- **The organisational level:** When cooperating in the future, what would be the recommendations as organisation?

A. RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE CONTEXT

Needs: in the future, to cooperate with other organisations, I need...

- Ongoing building capacity on the diversity, intercultural learning, geopolitics learning.
- Mapping of funding opportunities and how to approach them.
- To work on skills, knowledge, attitude with our partner organisation regarding gender.
- Share methods / approaches regarding sensitive topics (ex: gender, homosexuality, Middle East, UE, etc.).
- Creation of map on mobility regulations (dynamic).
- Capacity building about advocacy, lobbying and mobilizing for our specific needs.
- Having a concrete action plan for LT strategy lobbying / advocacy among partner organisations.
- Revise guidelines about sustainability and adopt them to the different situations.
- Plan activities for the NGOs to investigate additional / new areas of cooperation.
- Activities, networking for partners, present development (partners invite their existing partners, introduction to new organisations, ex: Lebanon, Turkey, Algeria, etc.).

Recommendations: when we cooperate in the future, we recommend “good practices”...

SUSTAINABILITY	CULTURAL
<p>We should adopt eco-friendly approach when we implement a project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Taking into consideration the sensitivity of cultural and religious identity issues during design and implementation (ex: Ramadan, gender mix). - Get to know to working culture of different partner organisations.
SOCIAL-ECONOMIC	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support social inclusion of participants through redistribution of resources among partner organisations (sharing the “burden” according to capacity). ex: participation fees / reimbursement amount depends on the organisation capacity. - Sensitivity towards currency exchanging and fluctuation. - Mutually look for co-funding (organisations and individuals). - Clustering with private / governmental sector when possible / Mutual values. 	
POLITICAL	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We should be well informed about who is in the partnership to ensure harmony on values and principles. 2. Have specific thematic projects about emerging geopolitical situation in different countries (ex: Yemen, Palestine, religion issues in European context etc.). 3. Take into consideration the diversity of the Arab world / European context (how to we see each other? - the vocabulary we hear in the media and that we use afterward without thinking). 4. Bureaucracy: The Euro-Meda partners should be more sensitive towards better co-tackling of bureaucratic issues (feedback to funders about what is feasible or realistic (ex: possible to get an invoice?). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Visa: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We should map regulations / mobility possibilities within Euro-Meda (North-South – South-North – South-South); - Lobbying; - Advocacy campaigns; - Take into consideration the visa issue/restriction at the planning phase (ex: think of a neutral country where it is easier to get the visa); - Better support the initial selection rather than to look for alternative participants who “can move” more easily. 6. Highlight / revive current topics / specific theme projects (ex: Syria crisis, Gaza, Yemen, Egypt instability, Yarmouk camp, mobility limitation: why & how & where).

B. RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING SOCIAL INCLUSION

Needs: in the future, to cooperate with other organisations, I need...

- A good tool to share full information: to define more adapted communication tools for the project to make sure all the information is included (how, how much, who, contact persons, etc.).
- Template ID form and ID questionnaire (specific questions to get more details).
- Documentation (adapted info-kit, info about the context of the country, etc.).
- Platform database for partners, for potential donors/funders, etc.
- Structured dialogue with local institutions, with youth and local community.
- Local hub connecting local organisation.
- Knowledge about the methodologies used by organisations.
- To be able to analyse social inclusion / exclusion.

Recommendations: when we cooperate in the future, we recommend “good practices”...

BEFORE	DURING	AFTER	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop an “ID Form” and a questionnaire for each organisation (including social, cultural, political, environmental, approach of social inclusion target, etc.). - Make evaluation of previous experiences - Organise field visits and specific meetings with beneficiaries. - Prepare an info-kit for the volunteers. - Clear information about volunteers for the hosting organisation (profile), it’s important to have a good matching between volunteers and projects. - Have partnership with local institutions working with youngsters with fewer opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consultation of local people to define their needs. - To have a quality charter about standards of cooperation (communication, rights and responsibilities, etc.). - Good preparation of volunteers (workshop, trainings, etc.) depending on volunteer, environment, where (s)he will be sent, project, etc. It can be personal meeting or a group training, to share experience of previous volunteers. - To be able to adapt the project according to the situation, the volunteers, etc. - Identify all the beneficiaries of the projects (open to any kind of projects – inter-generational, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The communication should be very clear and regular through the right communication tool (reports, meetings by Skype, etc...) - regularity depends on the project type. - Inform as soon as possible the partner when a problem happens. - Regular contacts with the partner organisation and with the volunteers (and local community). - On-arrival training (tackling cultural/political context, project (aims, activities, etc.). - Define a mentor to decide clearly the roles and tasks of every person involved in the project. - Regular evaluations during the project (timing depending on the duration of the project) in order to evaluate the project, to see if it is going in the right direction, to follow the learning process and competencies. - We should keep flexibility in the project and be able to re-adapt it according to the situation and the volunteer. - Keep promoting and give visibility to the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Final evaluation of the project with the sending organisation, the hosting organisation, the local partner, the volunteers, the local community etc. - Promotion of the project (press release, share experience on different communication tools, media). - Dissemination of the projects. - Involve volunteers in the promotion of future projects, help to motivate future volunteers and prepare them. - Support volunteers for the follow-up (future projects, how to take benefit from their experience, etc.).



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C. RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL

Needs: in the future, to cooperate with other organisations, I need...

BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diversify the options in terms of partners. - Have common project: desire to cooperate, have common objectives and complementarity. - Know our mutual needs and networking: share the information and do not be in competition. - Have time, people, money, commitments. - Be humble and realistic. - Be open-minded. - Vocabulary: use easy terminologies. - Partnership-building thanks to a contact making meeting. - Creativity: changing realities. - Have a selection criteria for participants. - Have collective decisions and equality. - Have recommendations about the culture of the context - Frame the funding opportunities and expertise, the knowledge and the capacities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have feedbacks and communication, see the recommendations, have updates to make sure the organisations still agree. - Be flexible and have the ability to adapt and change. - Human resources (committed people, participants/trainers/ partners) + time. - Have concrete progression and result. - Bring concrete inputs/ technical experience. - Have the ability to work with pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invoices. - Have the evaluation made by professionals in order to manage and to be objective, honest and transparent. - Have meetings. - Think about the use of outcomes for the future projects. - Detox! Meditation and sleep. - Spread into the network, analyse the impact and increase it. - Think about the next steps and opportunities. - Capacity of learning/ self-improvement. - Feedbacks, have good reports to be able to apply for another grant. - Make conclusions with centralized information such as a tool to be shared.



Recommendations: when we cooperate in the future, we recommend “good practices” ...

BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding of the commitments related to a project. - Know about our expectations. - Know the history of the organisation. - Have trust in the organisation and its transparency by having visits, face to face meetings. - Share the same values and ethics. - Have a balance in knowledge by opening the project to experiences and new partners. - Select the relevant partner: have a quality control. - Put everything on the table to be clear (money issues for example) and have cooperation from the beginning by writing the budget of the project with the partners. - Have reciprocity: equal participation by having geographically balanced activities and participants. - Share detailed proposals. - Have video conferences, skype, meetings, working groups constituted by volunteers and committed persons + identify one central person/responsible. - Ask for feedbacks in order not to impose. - Good timing: taking into account the deadlines of each other. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stick to the time frame and respect the commitments. - Have a clear contact person responsible for external and internal com. Sharing with other org. all things such as holidays. - Share the updates and have regular evaluations/reports. Diversification of communication tools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share immediately the information then have clear conclusions. - Have a platform such as a Facebook group to know how the others feel and to have information about the context. - Should think about an IVS application for smartphones. - Have google docs because it is easy, fast. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation of all the steps of the project, comparing the reality with the objectives. <p>Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1st step: internal evaluation from all partners. With a collective evaluation including colleagues, participants and beneficiaries. - 2nd step: Communicate thanks to emails, meetings, video and talks. - 3rd step: Follow up by thinking about it again and learn from the experiences. - At least one meeting per year for all partners, but has to be different than an evaluation, this meeting just be just for contacts, meeting persons, create relations. <p>Reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is better to divide in different small reports rather than to have to do at the end, last minute one full report. <p>Financial creativity: think out of the box and about different resources and of different responsible persons for the next steps (think about taking turns).</p>