**EXCO DOC 10**

Final draft/19th of June 2014

Draft Questions for the World Café Discussion

During the Meeting of the Executive Committee

26th-27th of June 2014

1. **Proposed questions for the first round of discussion of the world café**:

This round of discussion should explore changes made during the current Strategic Planning period for different reasons. The exercise aims to give members of the Executive the time to look at its working methods, see the pros and cons of the changes or proposals made and reach an agreement as to how to proceed. The Bureau will meet after the discussions and propose the decisions to adopt.

1. **On enabling the coordination and communication role that the Executive members have as liaisons between EAPN Europe and EAPN National Network/European Organisation they represent.**

As the European policy-making agenda has become more complex with the Europe 2020 strategy and EAPN has grown to a larger and more complex network, the Executive Committee members are appointed differently by each Member Organisation/Network and they take up a very heavy responsibility to act in the best interest of EAPN (when sitting on the Executive), to disseminate the information gained both ways, to coordinate Network/Organisation actions related to decisions taken in the European networks. When sitting on the Executive, the members have strategic responsibility, management (development, communication, finances, project, fundraising) responsibilities, as well as leading on Objective 1.3 – contributing to a sustainable development model. How are members doing this work? What support systems do they have in place nationally? Are there other working methods that could be implemented to facilitate this work?

**2. On fulfilling the mandate of the EXCO regarding work on a more sustainable development model:**

In trying to improve the work of the current Executive, it was decided that working in three subgroups on the Objective 1.3 – sustainable development model (alternative economic models; fundamental rights; democracy and participation) was taking EAPN too many different ways. There were discussions in the Executive and the Bureau considered it best to bring back the work to the plenary of the Executive. Since the changes in funding structures has changed the agenda of the last couple of meetings, this objective is back on the table. *How could the EXCO work better on this Objective? Can some people lead on developing a coherent EAPN approach to a more sustainable development model integrating the three pillars identified? How should this link with the mainstream policy work in the EUISG? Would reconstituting subgroups be efficient considering they each took their own pace/content/life? Are there other ways we could work on this objective better?*

**3. On Delivering on core work and projects/national capacity**

*EAPN decided to develop a more proactive approach to projects and to apply for leading on projects that would benefit all members. These projects contribute to EAPN’s objectives – sometimes to very specific issues. In this sense, EAPN was successful in winning the bid on EMIN to take forward the minimum income debate across the EU. The European Meetings of People Experiencing Poverty is also a yearly project with some funding made available to networks to carry out preparation, participate and do follow-up work. In addition, EAPN is now leading a European Semester Alliance, which is also providing some support to maintain staff levels. Projects like these allow for hiring someone, even if part-time, or on a consultancy basis to do this work. While project work is based on financial incentives it also requires more capacity of project management. For example, in 2013 project work gives Networks a good amount of money. However, if projects, like EMIN, are implemented by the majority of EAPN networks, is there enough additional capacity left by networks to engage in additional work? Are we able to build on the outcomes in our policy/advocacy work or does it stay as a parallel activity?*

*At the same time, the core of EAPN’s policy agenda remains to engage as a reliable and critical partner to decision-makers on Europe 2020 and all the related instruments. This requires a lot of DEDICATED VOLUNTEERING and EAPN members, particularly National Networks have to find the resources to lead on EAPN’s core objectives (engaging with the European Semester, contributing to EAPN’s CSR and NRP work etc).*

*What should be the articulation between EAPN core and project work? How can Networks ensure they cope well with this new reality? What models and practices should EAPN support to empower and build the capacity of the Networks to engage well with the core and its project work?*

**4. On improving the cooperation between EUISG and Exco: European and national level:**

The Executive has mandated the EUISG to follow Objectives 1.1 and 1.2 of the current Strategic Plan, leading on all the EAPN engagement with EU policy-making under Europe 2020. Once a year, the EUISG steering group reports to the Executive and has a discussion about the way the implementation of the work programme is progressing, what are the achievements, the challenges, how can Exco facilitate the work of EUISG. While the work programme is complex and heavy, some members feel they don’t get enough support from Exco. *How can the cooperation between EUISG and Exco be strengthened in the National Networks and inside EAPN Europe? What internal communication could work better between these two structures so that Networks are effective national anti-poverty platforms?*

**5. On improving capacity building and training at national level:**

*How could a member development group under the EXCO ensure that this area of EAPN’s work is led by members and contributes to stronger, more resilient EAPN national networks? (see proposal from the Bureau under item 5 of the Exco)*

**6. On proposing an enlarged Bureau**:

*What tasks could an enlarged Bureau take on in order to balance the workload of the EXCO?* (see proposal from the Bureau)

1. **Proposed question for the second round of discussion of the world café**:

This round aims to take the evaluation process as its starting point, looking at issues that require answers in the first phase of the process developing the next Strategic Plan 2016-2018. The questions are based on the results of the external evaluation carried out by Jose Manuel Fresno – the independent evaluator.

**1) How can EAPN use its DIVERSITY to empower the Network rather than lead to contradictions or discrepancies?**

EAPN members are very different in terms of priorities, structure, working methods and engagement with EU policy-making. This diversity mirrors the richness of the network and, at the same time, poses great challenges. How can all members keep being involved in the core work of EAPN? What is a good way of building on member strengths? Should there be other ways of working to give more value to diversity so it strengthens the power of EAPN rather than leading to discrepancies?

**2) How can internal communication and working methods between the European and national levels of EAPN be improved?**

In every evaluation round, members highlight the challenges they face with what they consider to be too many demands from Brussels for input, lobby, capacity-building, mobilization, coordination, etc. and with their lack of understanding of priorities, lack of/too limited resources to carry well their national and European work, particularly on policy-making. How can the cooperation/communication be improved? Are there working methods that could work for all members? Should it be expected that everybody inputs on everything or that members specify their priorities and engage with certain areas more than with other ones?

**3) What should be the balance between lobby work and capacity building?**

Some members of EAPN think EAPN should focus more on an ambitious lobbying while others feel that EAPN should adapt more to the pace and reality of the members and focus on building their capacity rather than carrying out direct lobbying. While EAPN must pursue both, more balance needs to be brought between lobby and capacity building work, having impact on the policy agenda with strong and engaged members. What do you consider the right balance to be? How can EAPN continue to empower members and remain a reliable active partner on EU policies affecting poverty?

**4) What should be the way forward to fund EAPN; its core work and its project work?**

With the implementation of EMIN, Drivers for Health Equity and other projects, there is a notable difference between how members input on project commitments and on the core work of EAPN. Given that projects are often a source of financial support and require paid staff to implement all the commitments, while the contributions to core work (for example on NRP report or submitting network Annual Reports) are voluntary, the latter are deferred among the priorities for lack of time, money, persons etc. Despite this, EAPN as a European network with all its bodies and meetings receives funding based on a work programme that requires active member input. If we don’t do the core work (and yes, this is the Commission agenda) – we risk losing core funding. If we work only on project basis, we risk having a much less sustainable network long-term. Until more sustainable and diverse funding base is achieved, EAPN has to continue to seek EU funding and to engage actively with the EU policy-making agenda. How can this be done better? What are the real commitments members can assume to continue forward with the core work, while building, in parallel on project opportunities?

**5) Do the statutory bodies function sufficiently well?**

The evaluation highlights confusion particularly between the role and purpose of the GA and the Exco. There have been some discussions of how to strengthen the Bureau and make the implementation of the Strategic Plan and annual Work Programmes more manageable between the three statutory bodies. While the main purpose of these bodies is clear, members still have different understanding of them in practice: which should be the decision-making body, which should be implementing the strategic plan, which should be guiding the work, etc. There’s additional questions about the relation between the Exco and EUISG (a separate question was formulated on this relation). Do the statutory bodies function sufficiently well? Are the purpose and practical responsibilities of each of these bodies clear and agreed? Are there changes to be made?

**6) Should the policy focus remain broader than poverty?**

With the recent changes, some areas have not been addressed properly in the Exco. The current Strategic Plan has parallel objectives – working with the institutions and developing alternative strategy. It has proven difficult to coherently work on both, particularly when divided between two different bodies – ie EUISG and EXCO. Ensuring that EAPN follows a progressive agenda, engaging with alternative models of organizing society that are more inclusive and sustainable is a key area that EAPN has to engage with, but it’s important to be clear about how we will also engage with the EU institutions to whom we are still seeking our core funding. In addition, in follow-up to 2010, EAPN has decided to deepen its arguments to bring poverty on the higher political level agenda and to engage with the bigger picture (democracy, respect for human rights, good governance, inequalities, macroeconomic issues and austerity driven Europe 2020 agenda). The evaluation shows that members are struggling to understand the current EU agenda, to grasp how big picture impacts at the national level and to effectively engage with it nationally. Many members feel that we’ve moved away from a consensus about the policy priorities and how these should be achieved, and there is insufficient time to build this. Some members don’t see the relevance of Europe 2020 at their national level, while it is also members that have decided in EAPN to take that approach, and a strong pre-condition for continued DG Employment funding. Should the policy focus remain broader than poverty in the next strategic plan period? What should be our strategic approach and priorities for a common EU agenda? How can EAPN engage better with alternative development models? Where in EAPN should this goal be addressed? How can it complement the core work on Europe 2020?

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| Structure | Old | New | Mandate | Strategic Objectives – 2012-2014 |
| Size of Bureau | 5 members | 7 members or more with a bigger management/implementation portfolio | Carrying some management tasks from Executive, leading on specific portfolios (for example: engaging with specific alliances contributing to Objective 1.3, etc); political representation, other responsibilities as described in Standing Orders, financial overview – reporting to Exco; ensuring EAPN effectively implements its Strategic Plan  -to-day management  - Strategic overview of the implementation of the mission and main objectives of Strategic Plan | Objective 1.2 Support to members  Objective 1.3 – Alternative Economic models  Objective 2.1 – Engage Expertise of Members  Objective 2.2. – Mutual Learning  Objective : 2.3 – Capacity Building for Members  Goal 3: - direct participation of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion  Overview of whole Strategic Plan Objectives |
| EXCO | 6 subgroups :   * development groups * communication group * Finances and projects * Alternative Economic Models * Fundamental Rights * Participation and Democracy   3 Task Forces (1 in communication and 2 on development) | * Exco: Internal Working method to be defined * Bureau leading on some aspects * 1 Member Development Group leading on capacity-building, enlargement and implementation | * Strategic overview of the implementation of the mission and main objectives of Strategic Plan   Management , Administration, and Strategy, Communication,  Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty  Project Work  Finances  Fundraising | Objective 1.2 Support to members  Objective 1.3 – Alternative Economic models  Objective 2.1 – Engage Expertise of Members  Objective 2.2. – Mutual Learning  Objective : 2.3 – Capacity Building for Members |
| EUISG | EUISG Steering Group  3 subgroups decided internally and  3 Task Forces | Internal organisation to be decided by EUISG  EUISG Steering Group  + 2 taskforces as proposed by EUISG and approved by Exco | Mandated by EXCO to lead on the implementation of EAPN’s lobby and advocacy work with the EU institutional agenda around Europe 2020, Social OMC, Employment Strategy and Cohesion Policy. | Objective 1.1 – Europe 2020  Objective 2.1 – Engage Expertise of Members |
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Comparative Table : Old and new/proposed working arrangements June 12th, 2014/BH1