**External Evaluator summary Report of EAPN Evaluation Work 2010.**

**January 2011.**

Since 2009 EAPN has been engaged in an internal evaluation process supported by an external evaluator. It was envisaged that for 2 years, 2009 and 2010 EAPN would gather reflections, feedback and learning from various stakeholders so as to develop its next strategic plan informed by the experiences of EAPN.

This report presents an overview of the data from 2010. This report is based on a number of previous documents and reflects the external evaluator’s analysis of the data gathered. Documents are: 2009 external evaluation; report from Case Studies 2010; the Performance Monitoring Information submitted to European Commission for 2009 and 2010; the external stakeholders survey 2010; the report on the impact of the European Meetings of People Experiencing Poverty; the report on the EY 2010 and internal evaluations of all conferences and seminars which took place in 2010.

2010 Evaluation Outputs.

1. Case Studies Report
2. External Stakeholders Survey
3. European Organisations as Members
4. Performance Monitoring Report Submitted to EC
5. Impact of European Meetings of People Experiencing Poverty
6. Linking evaluation with Strategic Planning
7. Continued embedding of learning from the feedback received (3rd level learning) as identified in the 2009 evaluation by the Secretariat and Bureau and ExCo.
8. **Case Studies of 5 NN and the experience of engagement with EAPN Europe.**

The Case Studies method was identified as a key element of verifying the data from the 2009 evaluation through an in-depth exploration with a range of NN’s identified as having different resources, membership and engagement with EAPN Europe – the secretariat and Bureau or ExCo. The findings are documented in detail in 2 reports submitted October and November 2010.

The exploration was on the 3 identified areas , but in particular on the third.

1. mission and values of EAPN
2. Ownership, decision-making and governance of EAPN
3. Synergy between NN and EAPN Europe work.

Reflections and findings of the external evaluator on the data are:

1. The data supports the contention that the 3 identified questions are real issues for EAPN Europe in the working experience of the 5 NN.
2. The NN vary considerably in terms of resources, but some common needs were identified/suggestions for improvements made. These include strengthening NN’s organizationally, including as lobbying organisations; strengthening the processes of EAPN Europe; re-statement of vision and purpose of EAPN Europe to clarify the balance between the various needs; thinking afresh about the work of the Secretariat.
3. The solutions proposed are not necessarily mutually exclusive, and many involve a focus on communication and enhancements of current practices.
4. **External Stakeholders Survey**

Some additional quantitative analysis remains to be completed on this as of January 31st 2011. In summary, the survey didn’t produce statistically significant data due to the low response rate. A total of 12 respondents returned the questionnaires. This included :

3 academic/research institutions

1 co ordinated response from the Social inclusion Unit of EC

3 representatives of the EESC

2 representatives of National Governments/SPC

2 representatives of European organisations not members of EAPN

1 response of enlargement contacts from south east Europe

Nevertheless the respondents rated the work of EAPN on average between 4 and 5 on a 5 point scale of quality/impact.

The respondents were able to identify campaigns and the impact of EAPN on the EU agenda positively, and identified the privileged interlocutor role of EAPN as a key feature of its added value to them as stakeholders. The information circulated from EAPN was mostly rated highly.

A number of ideas were proposed for improvements which correspond with some mentioned in the Case Studies data.

Of particular interest is the listing of key priorities the stakeholders see for EAPN into the future. It is crucial for EAPN to reflect on these, to work with its own understanding of the priorities for anti-poverty and social inclusion work and plan accordingly. This included:

Participation of people experiencing poverty

Social inclusion

Quality employment

Financial perspectives

Mainstreaming social inclusion

Social security system reform and how it can be financed

Internal market reform

Going beyond GDP as a measure

Minimum income

Forms of poverty – health/food, homelessness, child poverty etc and linking with other DG’s on the issues

Migration

SSGI

Lobbying national and EU parliaments

Co-operation with thematic NGO’s

Fostering bottom up approaches

Promoting best practice

**3. European Organisations as Members**

3 of the European Organisation Members responded and gave useful feedback about a low level of engagement with them and a desire to work together with higher levels of synergy. At the EO meeting of 25th January 2011 this feedback was reflected on and decisions taken for improvements – such that it has been agreed that a Steering Group will be created which will drive the agenda of EO’s – define the goals better and enhancing the engagement. This feedback is already being acted upon by the Secretariat in terms of engagement with the EO’s.

**4. Performance Monitoring**

Quantitative performance monitoring information was collected by the Secretariat and submitted to European Commission in January 2011. The data shows that overall EAPN participated to a very high degree at European and National level events – either organized by other stakeholders or itself. EAPN organised more events than it had planned and responded according to criteria to invitation of others. There was a slight difference between the number of planned reports and the actual number produced.

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| **Key information from the Performance Management Report**   * EAPN took into account 485 invitations from the invitations they received from third parties and responded positively to 319 of them, including 78 conferences/seminars where EAPN representatives were asked to speak. * EAPN prepared 57 reports (including 28 information and promotional materials) and printed 56920 copies of these reports. * 906 people took part in the 35 events EAPN organized (not counting the 3000 + or - who took part in the Human ring) and the average satisfaction score received for EAPN events was 4 out of 5. * 60844 people visited the EAPN website |

It is not clear what the view on the level of activity is internally and it would be useful for the secretariat and ExCo to review the outputs and the level of activity. This ‘third level learning’ has proven challenging to schedule for the Secretariat, and is recommended to complete the reflection cycle.

This data on outputs is being collected, and alongside it evaluation forms which consistently give high ratings to the events both in terms of content and logistics. The system of data collection has improved from 2009 and demonstrates again the embedding of the evaluation work in the systems of EAPN.

There is a strong element of on-going second level learning happening within EAPN about its activities – events, publications etc. The challenge continues to be the prioritization of time to reflect on what this feedback is telling EAPN about its work. But in 2010 there was an improvement on this from 2009, so again the direction is in the positive for a learning organisation. (Recall from 2009 Evaluation Report the distinction between 1st, 2nd and 3rd level learning)

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| First Level Learning | Taking feedback from participants | Modified forms giving good data. |
| Second Level Learning | Reflecting, modifying to incorporate suggestions. Practice modified mostly | Data informs planning of next events – logistics, content, language etc |
| Third Level Learning | Step of feeding into policy, strategies used, objectives to be pursued or even strategic goals identified | Could embed this work more systematically. This learning for the organisation from what it ‘knows’ missing somewhat. |

**5.Impact of Meetings of People Experiencing Poverty.**

EAPN has undertaken a 2-year reflection process on building a more participative network. It will be important that the Executive Committee and the General Assembly responds to the conclusions of this reflection and that the results are integrated in the next strategic plan.

In 2010, EAPN has involved people experiencing poverty and social exclusion in the key events for the year as well as in its key conferences.

During 2010 a study was undertaken by OASes, of the University of Antwerp on the impact of the European Meetings of People Experiencing Poverty.  The findings are being reflected on and the learning/implications from the findings brought forward into the planning process of the future EU meetings as well as of the EAPN Strategic Plan 2012-2015.  (There was no link between the research team and the external evaluator – and the reflection will rest internally with Secretariat and ExCo)

**6. Linking Evaluation with Strategic Planning**

Throughout 2010 there has been a link made between the work on evaluation of EAPN and planning of developing the next strategic plan. This is a strongly embedded process of taking the evaluation data, ensuring it is reflected upon and utilized to develop the organisation so that it meets the identified priorities of the members. EAPN has committed itself actively to the action cycle of evaluation, reflection and planning and designing evaluation into the next plan. The final outcomes of the process will be seen in the early months of 2011 with the final 2012-2015 Strategic Plan adopted at GA 2011.

Already, in 2010 we can see intermediate outcomes for this process whereby the vision and mission of EAPN were the focus of an ExCo meeting and the outcomes from the 2009 evaluation work were the focus of 2 ExCo meetings early in 2010.

**7. Embedding of learning from 2009.**

EAPN continued to embed the learning about evaluation and reflection throughout the work of 2010. During 2010 there was an additional call on the resources of the staff of the Secretariat due to EY 2010 and the development of EU 2020. Nevertheless there is evidence of working on taking time to reflect on the feedback/evaluation data so as to generate effective responses and organisational positions.

In addition it will be useful to read the evaluation of the EY 2010 activity of EAPN at national and European level – and in particular to note correspondence between the data from that action and the other data gathered in the 2010 EAPN evaluation work .

EAPN has continued well to gather feedback, to respond to feedback and to learn from it so as to plan effective actions and strategies. While there is always room for more reflection on data – the balance between actions and reflecting and planning is improved and improving.

Throughout 2010 there has been ample evidence of EAPN taking on board the data emerging from the evaluation work – both the 2009 and the 2010 work. Because the data from the Case Studies in 2010 went through 3 cycles the Secretariat and ExCo has been able to make use of the data in developing the indicators and goals for EAPN’s next Strategic Plan and the Work Programme 2012. Working with an initial list of 15 indicators there is now developed a clustering of 4 indicators for the work of EAPN; there is a re-drafting of the vision and mission and goals all of which reflect the evaluation data from members and external stakeholders.

Finally the process of developing the next Strategic Plan and Work Programme 2012 is strongly structured to allow for input from members, time for reflection and time to plan the impacts of any changes agreed. This is a positive indication of the inclusion of evaluation data in the in the development of EAPN.

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