

EAPN LEARNING FORUM

REPORT

LAULASMAA, ESTONIA
21-25 MAY 2013



EAPN LEARNING FORUM 2013 REPORT

A SPACE FOR MEMBER-LED LEARNING, EXCHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT

GET ORGANISED: STRENGTHENING OUR BASE AND THE IMPACT OF OUR ACTION

Laulasmaa, Estonia, 21-25 May 2013

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Learning Forum in a few numbers

Participants	80
Countries represented	35
EAPN Estonia members	11
EAPN National Networks	24
EAPN European Organisation members	5
Workshops run by members	18
Community visits	5
Social and networking activities	4
Social media use	Facebook pages, Twitter messages

The first EAPN Learning Forum was organised together with Dignity International (a global partnership of rights-based community groups, in which EAPN is the European partner network). It was hosted in Laulasmaa, by EAPN Estonia.

The Learning Forum aimed at creating a space for bottom-up discussions, beginning with what anti-poverty NGOs do on the ground, and building towards the reasons for being part of European and international networks, such as EAPN and Dignity International.

About 1/5 of the participants have been active in EAPN for longer than 5 years, another 1/5 have been active for at least 2 years, and the remaining participants were new to the European level network activities. There was a good representation of activists with direct experience of poverty who have, with the support of their Networks, begun to engage more with the European work of EAPN.



The main method of working during the event was non-formal, popular education methodology, which contributed to a lively, interactive meeting. With the involvement of Dignity International, there was quite a lot of space to allow for EAPN members to learn more about the work of anti-poverty and rights-based groups in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. EAPN participants found it inspiring to learn about the work of Dignity International: about building capacity for the promotion of the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and how discriminated or disadvantaged groups use mobilizing and campaigning to attain their rights. There was also an introduction to Social Analysis and the strength of networking as part of EAPN, Dignity International or other civil society organisations working to influence policies at supra-national and international levels.

Overall the programme of the event was very intense and some activities should be reduced in the future, to give more free time for networking and informal communication. At the same time, there were 20 workshop proposers and some were grouped to give enough space for practice sharing in the member-led sessions.

Participants left very inspired and happy with the event, with the exchanges they had and with the knowledge they gained for their work back in their own organisations.

Strengths: much enthusiasm and active engagement, even with a heavy programme; very active new members, including strong engagement from activists with direct experience of poverty; induction to campaigning on the ratification of the Economic, Cultural and Social Rights Covenant; inspiration from activists in Africa, Latin America and Asia; event planned and run by members; high use of social media; interactive working methods with theatre, pantomime, visual exercises; very positive atmosphere and very motivated participants.

Things to improve for the next time: too much information for new participants and not enough time to build on the European and international networking. Being inspired by the 10-day *Get Organised for Human Rights* study sessions of Dignity International, at times the emphasis was too much on the method of work that these study sessions take. In future co-organising situations, more emphasis should be put on building cooperation between the different organisational approaches and initiatives.

Rationale, Goal and Objectives

Under the current Strategic Plan 2012-2014, and the Work Programme 2013, the EAPN has organized the first Learning Forum - an open member-led meeting addressing core issues for EAPN's development as a strong anti-poverty network. It was not intended as a space to develop new EU proposals, but an event to value the work of the members and to get inspiration from each other's initiatives and the daily actions that members take, informing the EAPN policy-making and lobby work from this reality. The Learning Forum was also a moment to strengthen the involvement of activists with direct experience of poverty and to take inspiration in each other's work related to advocacy, campaigning, policy-making and network development.

Goal

To strengthen the base, build on the understanding and trust among members, and develop a better collective vision and work as EAPN.

Objectives

- To strengthen the membership base of EAPN by involving new activists and learning from practices that have a direct impact on fighting poverty and social exclusion;
- To contribute to a bottom-up member-led agenda in EAPN and to give more visibility to the variety of actions and approaches that members carry out in their national realities, and connecting them better to the EU level work;
- To give value to the participation of activists with direct experience of poverty in EAPN's work and policy-making and take forward the implementation of Goal 3 of EAPN's Strategic Plan;
- To strengthen the trust and cooperation between EAPN members including between National Networks and European Organisations.

A partnership between EAPN, Dignity International and EAPN Estonia

There was space throughout the event to introduce and make connections to what people do as part of the three networks. A big part of the meeting was dedicated to learning the Estonian reality. Dignity International and EAPN were briefly introduced on the first day of the Forum and a lot of emphasis was made on the time and energy people put into being part of these networks and what it brings them.

EAPN is a network of groups and organisations involved in the fight against poverty, inequalities and social exclusion which was created 23 years ago and which since then has evolved to be an active network at the EU and national levels, focusing on anti-poverty policies and processes as part of key EU strategies. On the ground, NGOs that are part of EAPN carry out very practical work, doing advocacy, community organising, services for and by people experiencing poverty and social exclusion. Together, the members of EAPN focus on advocating for better policies, for adequate minimum income, for cooperation with civil society and representatives of people experiencing poverty, for decent employment, for good quality services, for direct participation of people experiencing poverty in the policy-making process and for a more democratic European Union.

“Working in EAPN is very addictive, once you start, it is very difficult to stop. We don’t always agree with each other, we have many members and it is challenging, but we keep up the work and try to find ways to move on.”

Letizia Cesarini Sforza – Vice-President of EAPN

Dignity International – an organisation focusing on poverty and development, with a specific target group of people with direct experience of poverty, with partners in different parts of the world. The main thing that Dignity International does is capacity building in a participatory way, without using experts, but just learning from each other. The second component of Dignity’s work is standing up, speaking out, activism, campaigning, awareness-raising, motivating people. The third component is sharing information, communicating knowledge as well as the results of the advocacy, campaigning and capacity building. The campaign on land rights with Ekta Parishad, a partner of Dignity International, is an example that builds global solidarity among all Dignity International partners in Latin America, Asia, Africa and in Europe.

“No struggle can be fought alone, we believe in solidarity and in doing things together. Dignity is different because of our approach; we managed to reach the most excluded and poorest people of society and teach them how to get organised to claim their rights and gain access to resources.”

Adrian Pereira, Interim Director of Dignity International

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GETTING TO KNOW THE ESTONIAN REALITY

EAPN is as strong, active and diverse as its members are. Every time a meeting is hosted by a member organisation, the programme makes space for getting to know the reality of that member organisation. Participants in the Learning Forum had an opportunity to learn about the Estonian reality in 3 ways:

1. **Meet EAPN Estonia!** (an evening of presentations and discussion of what different members of EAPN Estonia do and what the challenges of fighting poverty and social exclusion in the country are)
2. **An exchange session with Margus Tsahkna, Member of the Estonian Parliament, Employment and Social Affairs Committee**
3. **Visiting 5 communities and learning about the reality of poverty in Estonia** (including meetings with the local authorities and with NGOs or social service departments/centres in those communities)

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Meet EAPN Estonia!

As Estonia is a small country, NGOs are mostly active nationally and some focus their work in particular disadvantaged communities (such as North of Tallinn – a part of town economically and socially disadvantaged, or Eastern Estonia, particularly populated by Russian-speaking minorities...). EAPN Estonia members talked about their work on advocating child rights, carer rights, combating child and family poverty, supporting Russian minority communities which face discrimination and barriers to attaining full citizenship rights in Estonia.

As a Network, EAPN Estonia chooses one theme per year and in 2013 the theme has been around carers, as Estonian legislation is often discriminative against people who make the decision to stay home and take care of ill relatives or children. There is a lot of work to do, to recognise their efforts and improve their situation. Members of EAPN Estonia shared their initiatives and the work they do in their communities.

“When Estonia became free, people began travelling, working abroad and trying to bring Estonia into the European Union. Estonians were ready to eat the peels of potatoes just to be included in the European Union and they have been making enormous compromises on the way.”

Kärt Mere, Chair of EAPN Estonia

Meeting Margus Tsahkna, Member of the Estonian Parliament, Employment and Social Affairs Committee

Mr. Tsahkna focused on the impact of the welfare reform in Estonia and highlighted child poverty as the priority in this period. As Estonia is a small country with an open economy, it is easily vulnerable and is quickly impacted by external changes. So an economic high in the countries it exports to is good for Estonia and, equally, an economic crisis in those countries hits back very quickly. The social system is being reformed in Estonia, particularly to the changing family structure and support policies.

In response to questions from the floor, Mr. Tsahkna spoke of the ease of communication in Estonia (being an e-state facilitates much of the communication), of the strength of civil society, starting from the grassroots level (being a small country makes it easy to know those who are active), of the funding support from the government to NGOs and of the use of EU funds to develop the civil society sector (this argument was countered by EAPN Estonia which has not managed to get any state support so far).

Finally, Mr. Tsahkna spoke about his experience as a member of the Finance Committee in the previous Estonian Parliament. The so-called “crocodile committee” had to cut a lot of spending, including social spending, to ensure Estonia survives the crisis. They tried not to touch education or pensions. Although unemployment has, since then, fallen, people’s quality of life has not improved much because life got more expensive.

“Our new programme is focused on family work. The social system is separated from the education system, but I think that education is the key; it is the way out. Single parents have a difficult situation in Estonia. We are quite liberal and right now, half of our children live in broken families. Not all are without the fathers’ support, but the families are not together and this poses significant difficulties for single mothers. We are trying to help these mothers to go back to work and provide better and more childcare. We are working with local governments on this. At the state level, we have good ideas, but we have 226 local municipalities, which are very different and implementation is not always even.”

Margus Tsahkna



Community Visits and learning about the Estonian Reality (Paldiski Saue linn, Keila, Märjamaa and North Tallinn)

When planning the community visits, it was challenging to set up visits that would show participants the reality of living in Estonia, or of poverty and the way the country deals with it. Laulasmaa is on the West coast of the country and the visits were organised to five communities that were not too far from there.

Representatives of public authorities in Saue, Keila, Paldiski and Märjamaa (in some communities it was the mayor, in others someone from the town hall) met the participants and spoke of the best facilities they had invested in. During their presentations they also spoke about the groups that receive social assistance. Local NGOs are involved in supporting different groups. In the North of Tallinn, the visit focused more on NGO initiatives and a representative of the social services also met the participants.

Paldiski (about 4000 population) is a former Soviet military port town, with a predominantly Russian-speaking population, which was closed to Estonians during the Soviet Union period. After the break-up of the Soviet Union, Paldiski and other mostly Eastern areas of Estonia faced increased unemployment and worsening of living conditions of the Russian-speaking minorities. These integration challenges are still current in the country. The city spends 60% of its budget on social protection and social services, some of which goes through subcontracted NGOs for services they offer primarily to children, persons with disabilities or on unemployment and low income. The City Council kept social spending, even when central government imposed austerity cuts.

NGO *Sunbeam* offers support to Estonian and Russian-speaking children from large families, unemployed or low-income households, children, and persons with disability. It offers food, clothing and living support, social protection and access to services; it runs a day-care centre and cultural activities, and training opportunities for people with disability. Participants also visited a soup kitchen and ate there; they felt uncomfortable towards the dignity of the people using the kitchen's services.



Saue linn (population of about 5000) is among the richest towns in Estonia, due to its vicinity to Tallinn, providing additional services to residents that local or national authorities in Estonia generally offer. Participants visited the town hall, an elderly day care centre and the youth centre which also supports young parents. Saue is proud to have built a new skate park for its young residents. However, there are examples that the city is sometimes paternalistic to its inhabitants on certain levels, and some issues are swept under the carpet rather than openly addressed.

“The unemployed in Saue don’t want to work, so there’s nothing we can do about activating them.”

Vice-mayor of Saue



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Keila (about 10000 inhabitants) has invested in a recent sports complex, health tracks, youth centre, social/NGO centre and a new, impressive school building. Overall, participants in this visit felt that the city preferred to talk about new, state of the art facilities rather than challenges faced by people on low or no income. One participant commented after the visit:

“What strikes me most is the disconnect between what we heard yesterday from the EAPN Estonia members – all the problems of poverty and social exclusion here in Estonia - and what we were shown today – all the impressive facilities and efforts that local authorities are doing.”





Märjamaa (population of about 3000) is a local community trying to connect to young people and their issues, such as living on minimum income. Unemployment is one of the core issues in the area.

There have been 43 families depending on people's support. The local authorities didn't say much about how to get people work.

The project initiative of Märjamaa farm, where children get guidance and support of volunteers to build artistic and life skills was very impressive.

It is a project for children who are very disadvantaged and their involvement between 10 days and 1 month in the summer in renovating the farm helps them in their personal development to manage better at school.

Children come back and do peer support to other children. Participants were very impressed with this good practice project and brought back messages of commitment and love.

North of Tallinn (population 56,500) is an area of beautiful but dilapidated and poor quality housing. There are several NGOs, mostly church based, working with different groups.

The participants visited the Food Bank, a church cooperating with the Food Bank that takes care of street children and a care centre for young mothers, as well as the Salvation Army rehabilitation centre for people with drug and alcohol abuse problems.



It was impressive how clean all the places visited were, that stood out a lot. The group also met someone from the local authorities during the visit. Overall a lot of support relied on the NGOs as the local authorities did not have funding. The government seems to be very right-leaning, focusing on keeping low taxes and a market system.

Despite living in poor public housing, residents did not seem to consider organising themselves to claim better rights. Relations with social services seemed rather more formal. Participants visiting the area saw the root of the problem in the past Soviet system and in the current, much liberalized market economy policies of the government.

Some conclusions drawn from the visits and linking into social analysis...

When looking at different structures (cultural, social, political), we learned that cultural aspects are a big factor when doing social analysis of the world we're discovering.

Linking to the root of the poverty tree, it seems the economic system is causing many of these problems in Estonia. Therefore, it is important to continue to ask questions about it. Study visits have limitations because they show the micro level, while big changes happen often at macro level. Answers might not appear naturally out of a study visit. For example, the people living in poor housing in the North of Tallinn could begin to organise themselves around housing issues and learn from slum-dwellers or other communities that have managed to gain more rights and better living conditions.

The visits led to questioning the role of advocacy and the concept of the state. There's a very big shift in Europe in the last few years in understanding welfare. For the first time, more than 50% of people think their children will have a worse quality of life than they've had. Sometimes one is in a depth of poverty regardless of where they are. There are communities that even anti-poverty NGOs don't reach and live almost enslaved to their conditions across the EU, particularly in big cities. The reality is that Europeans expect their lives to get worse and that brings about fear, which becomes the driver of the agenda.

In Estonia, numbers of people experiencing poverty are not big, but a big part of the population is working poor and not conscious of it. People are often forced to do 2-3 jobs without many rights. It seems that poverty is often hidden in Estonia and people don't want to talk about it openly. The inheritance of the system of shutting people down is still very strong and the commonly accepted social norms often blame the people who are in poverty for their own situations. The state does not take much responsibility in improving their situation. As a small country, however, things became visible since the crisis hit and there is a little more openness to talk about poverty though there is still much work to do.

Linking these visits to social analysis, we questioned the values that drive society, the context in which people live; what the economic, political, social and cultural structures that drive/keep people into poverty are and what the hidden power is: community activism; advocacy, capacity building etc. and how this analysis can lead to action – if we do better analysis – our actions will be more effective.

SOCIAL ANALYSIS AND NETWORKING FOR CHANGE

The programme of the Learning Forum was structured around two aspects:

1. Using social analysis to link EAPN and Dignity International's work, and
2. Highlighting the use of networking for change, bilaterally, as part of EAPN and as part of Dignity International.

12 The first day of the programme was used to bridge the approaches of the two types of organisations (one fighting against poverty and social exclusion and the other one claiming Economic, Social and Cultural rights for different excluded groups across continents). Participants used mime, theatre and situational exercises to discuss power-relations, to build images of poverty and analyse them and to learn about the values and the commitment that all the people in the Learning Forum have personally and through their organisations to the fight against poverty and social exclusion.



A session was spent on introducing **Social Analysis as a tool to plan effective actions.**

Using *Asni's story* – a situational analysis exercise of one family's poverty and discrimination reality - participants applied the elements of social analysis to come up with some solutions.

This session was an introduction to social analysis and aimed at giving a framework to assimilating and applying analysis to combating poverty and social exclusion, or fighting for dignity and the rights of discriminated groups.

It was also a framework tool for carrying out and analysing the community visits and learning about the reality of living in Estonia and the way poverty is perceived there.

There was lively discussion around the presentations and the proposals of different groups on how to apply social analysis to finding solutions for Asni's situation.

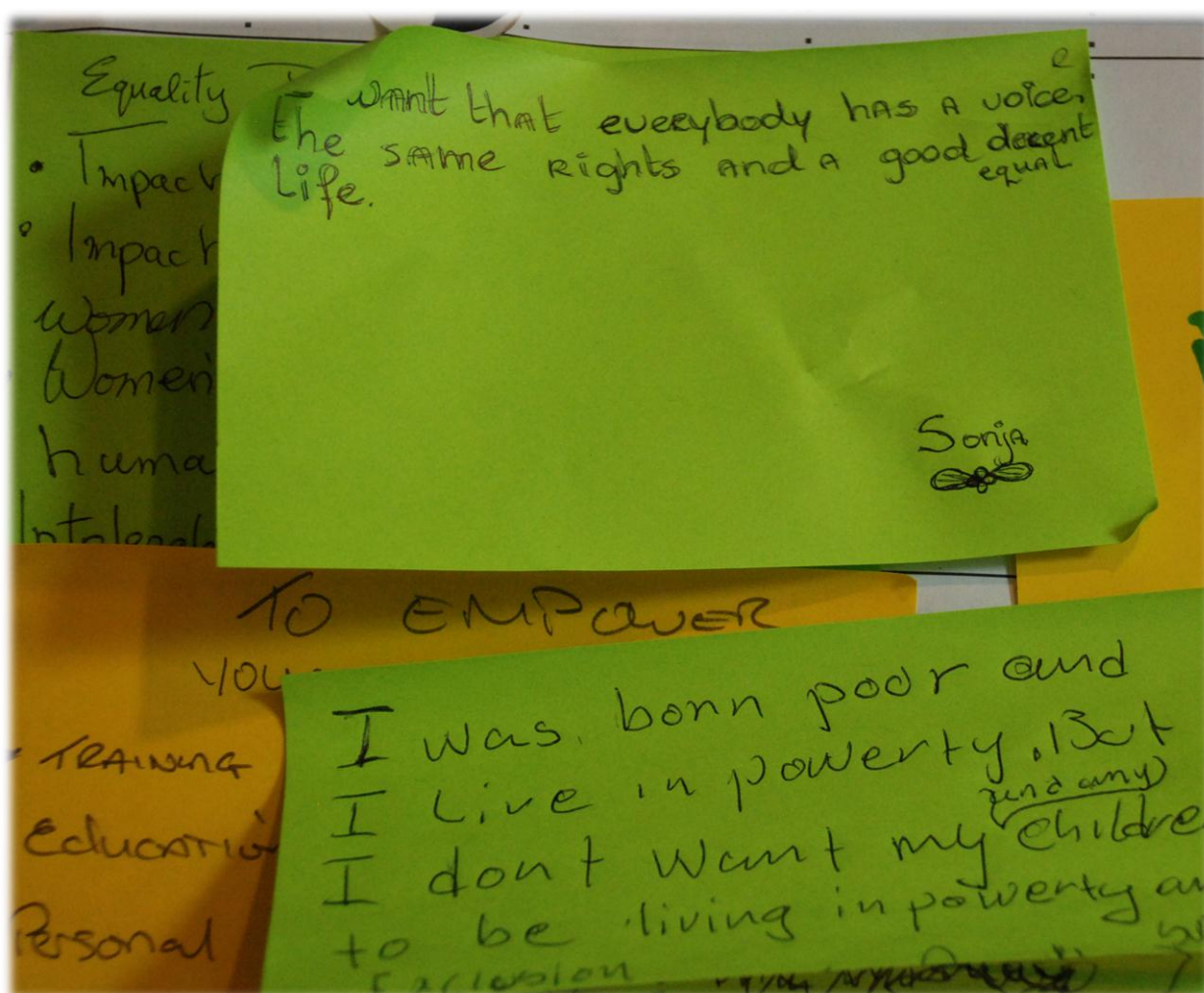
This was linked to the broader picture of fighting against poverty and social exclusion.



The last morning of the Learning Forum was dedicated to looking at **strengths of networking** and using Social Analysis and other tools to making European and International actions effective. The discussions focused on understanding how local action can build to European and international ones through platforms such as EAPN and Dignity International, and how anti-poverty and rights-based NGOs can advocate and try to influence policies towards real change.

We build networks because they make us stronger, to speak with one voice. But also, because it is a way to fight xenophobia, meeting people from other countries and working together shows us that our prejudices were wrong. In the 18th century, trade unions came together and, with industrialization, we tried to fight for a better world – we lost that along the way, and we need to get it back. Think global - act local. All different - all equal. In a network we build capacity, we learn from each other, we share. Being in a network is inspiring and empowering – it gives us hope, courage, and strength to move on and carry on with what can sometimes be very frustrating work.

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MEMBER-LED SESSIONS – SHARING ACTIONS – INSPIRING OTHERS TO GET ORGANISED

This was a long, rich and dynamic day. There were four rounds of workshops on very diverse topics that participants wanted to share about. Discussions ranged from using the Council of Europe co-management system in the field of youth to tackle youth unemployment in Eastern Estonia, to networking as part of EAPN or setting up complementary minimum income schemes in Iceland. Participants could attend one workshop per session and there were four different sessions planned.

Workshop organisers prepared materials for the day and all of these are now made available to the participants and anyone interested. Although initially these sessions were intended to be sharing practices and initiatives that work, some focused more on analysing the realities NGOs are facing and how they deal with these realities. All the presentations and background documents, as well as hand-outs that were prepared for the workshops are on [the EAPN page dedicated to the Learning Forum](#).

14 An overarching message from the workshops was to keep it simple, so that we can reach everybody. Always surprising is how many different contexts there are in Europe. You don't only need money to achieve things – other resources, such as commitment, are very important.

Letizia Cesarini Sforza (EAPN Bureau Member/EAPN Italy): Linking up to European anti-poverty work from the national perspective

The workshop brought participants working at grassroots levels on transversal issues impacting poverty with different groups experiencing poverty and social exclusion together. They explored the strengths of working in a European network and what anti-poverty organisations and activists can do to make them link up better. Among the strengths, participants mentioned knowledge of EU policies, ideas and cooperation with other countries, visibility and validation by national and local politicians, learning and understanding tools that can help people do the local and national work better.

Key messages from the workshop focused on learning to better use EU tools and the documents EAPN Europe develops (ex. Country-specific recommendations, Social Investment Package response, reports on Europe 2020) and responding to the needs that members express in the Learning Forum and in other meetings. Part of the discussion also focused on the next European elections:

“We should work hard for the 2014 European elections, making alliances and building a common platform so as to be heard. We must do our most to convince people experiencing poverty and social exclusion to vote.”

Meri Terzieva & Sashko Iovanov (Macedonian EAPN): Organising campaigns/citizen initiatives without any resources

It was the first time in the country that so many people joined a citizens' initiative *AMAN – campaign and protests against the constant increase of prices*. This raised the visibility of the National Anti-Poverty Network in the country greatly and new initiatives ask for its support all the time.

The workshop organizers explained how they initiated the campaign, how they built a coalition around it and how the regular public events resonated with the wider population and made the campaign more effective.

“For every protest organised by people, the Government would organise the next day an anti-protest. But with 200.000 unemployed people in a 2 million population and 200.000 pensioners all living precariously the people have had enough. Because of this initiative, we have also received some threats but we are not giving up, we will continue and will initiate meetings in regions about minimum income. That is our next idea for a citizen initiative.”

Meri Terzieva, Macedonian EAPN

- ⇒ [Presentation](#)
- ⇒ [Video of demonstration](#)

Stuart Duffin (One Family, member of Eurochild and EAPN Ireland): Voice and Advocacy: developing an effective advocacy strategy

Stuart presented the approach of his organisation, working for lone parents in Ireland. In the context of severe budget cuts, the organisation has developed a very concrete, solution-based strategy. They use inter-personal lobbying, try to be continuously very present, responding to all government initiatives based on their 10 messages.

Participants in the workshop discussed how far a compromise-based strategy works and in what situations and how the members and other organisations feel in relation to the compromises that the lone parents organisation make to keep working with the same strategic approach.

“It is true that our type of advocacy inevitably means compromises, but we do deliver results, so in the end our members are happy.”

Stuart Duffin

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The strategy was inspiring to some participants:

“You have done your power-lobbying very well and it is a lesson to all of us, about offering concrete solutions”

Júlio Paiva, EAPN Portugal

- ⇒ [Presentation](#)
- ⇒ [10 solutions for smarter future - pre-budget submission 2014](#)

Isabel Allende (EAPN Spain): Building a national civil society platform and structured dialogue with the Government - the case of EAPN Spain

The presentation shows the process of establishing EAPN Spain, transforming local organisations in different parts of Spain into regional networks and building a National Network together with other big national social organizations. At the same time, EAPN Spain is involved in a process of establishing a large third-sector platform, gathering all the major civil society platforms in the country together with 3 other major platforms. As there was a big choice of workshops, participants in this one joined another workshop and the information was shared with the participants after the event.

- ⇒ [Presentation](#)

Ludo Horemans (President of Dignity International): The Global Financial and Economic System failure – A Critical Look

Methodology – working in small groups according to continent or region, participants responded to two questions: what are the effects of the crisis? And how are people responding to it? The idea was not to have an academic analysis of the crisis, but talk about experiences, about how people and communities are impacted at their level.

Africa: Mother Africa is crying. A whole list of issues is faced by a woman in Africa, having very little resources to split between so many conflicting needs - choice between eating, medical care, a roof, clothes, other expenses.

South America: Brazil is the 6th economy in the world, we have wealth, but there are massive inequalities, the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. The public education system is lousy, and people were asking for

investment in that, but the Government said “we can’t, there is a crisis.” But when they speak about the economy, they say “our economy is strong, the crisis does not affect us.”

“90 million people do not have access to running water in Brazil.”

Spain, Greece and Ireland: Unemployment in Spain, Greece and Ireland is a big issue. High taxes, low labour rights. Services are being privatized. Xenophobia is rising. The gap between the rich and the poor is deepening. This leads to instability and no hope. Five or six or seven people end up living on one pension of one of the grandparents. Homelessness is on the rise. Brain drain.

Eastern Europe: People don’t relate so much to the global crisis, but we have our own crises, where we blame our own Governments. Anti-European sentiments are rising, as well as immigration. Lack of jobs – one job per 50 people in Slovakia, and wages are being cut without any real reason – governing by threatening. People are blaming the poor for being slackers and draining common resources.

“Romania is taking IMF bail-out money and imposing austerity to pay it back, but absorption of Structural Funds is as low as 10%.”

North-Western Europe: Retirement age is rising, unemployment is rising while wages are going down and precarious jobs are more widespread; services are more expensive, drug and alcohol consumption has gone up.

“There is a “blame culture” – people fear people, it’s like “you’re different, then you’re scary”; our Governments are protecting banks and they are not protecting people.”

Overall messages:

- ⇒ No solidarity, blame, fear, fight for survival;
- ⇒ Crisis used as an excuse to announce and implement cuts;

Douhomir Minev (EAPN Bulgaria): Participatory research as a tool to democratize policies.

The workshop discussed the current state of social research and analysed the challenges of using good participatory methodology to involve the grassroots in the development of ideas. One message was that *“We always expect social policies to provide solutions to economic policies; participatory research could help us stop doing that.”* Participants agreed that Participatory Action Research has its strength in allowing for direct involvement of the people affected by the research, offering a moment of reflection in the process, which often lacks in other methodologies. There was also a sharing of experience about work between academics and anti-poverty networks.

Other messages from the workshop called for anti-poverty NGOs to promote this inclusive research method, to link up to environmental movements who managed to connect scientists and activists together; argue for more funding for participatory action research and promote other ways of looking at budgets (for example, outcome budgets).

- ⇒ [Presentation](#)
- ⇒ [Handout](#)
- ⇒ Some useful websites: [Popular Economics](#) - [Radical Statistics](#)

Johanna Engen & Laila Wolles (EAPN Norway): Setting up self-organized groups of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion

Johanna and Laila shared examples of 3 self-organised grassroots organizations which are among some 90% of the members of EAPN Norway. They shared the examples of the Oslo Poor House, the National Charitable Association for Justice for “Losers” and Bibi Amka. The workshop then evolved into a discussion. Kärt Mere (EAPN Estonia) presented the summer soup project – this was open to ensure a hot meal for children experiencing poverty, during the summer, when they can’t access school-provided meals.

“The local Government asked – How can you guarantee that every child who comes to eat soup is poor? Because if you have a good meal at home, you won’t go out to have soup at a charity kitchen. Another argument she heard – if the Government provides food for the children, it takes away the responsibility of the parents to provide for their own children.”

Then followed a discussion about children being removed from families because of poverty. This is never the quoted reason, but the reasons – alcohol or drug abuse, lack of proper living conditions, etc. often have poverty as an underlying cause, but that extra step is never taken to see and understand and address this underlying cause.

“It is blaming the parents, instead, for the fault of the system, which blocks their access to resources, rights, services and opportunities.”

⇒ [Hand-out on the Norwegian self-organized groups](#)

Hjördís Kristinsdóttir (EAPN Iceland): Working with young adults with few opportunities

Hjördís spoke of the initiative in the Keflavík area to develop a complementary welfare scheme for people on minimum income who need additional support to find their way back into work and reconnect with community. Keflavik has been an economically disadvantaged area since a US naval base was evacuated and many people lost jobs. Then came the crisis of 2008 which worsened the situation. Several groups, including faith-based groups, churches, NGOs and businesses contributed to the Suðurnes Welfare Fund – gathering all sources under one hat. The church and social services observed that a big proportion of those seeking support were young people. A community initiative began around restoring an old building into a youth house – the Old Grey Goose. As the house was restored, many more seminars, non-formal skills building initiatives, courses and exchanges were developed.

“We were volunteers in children/parent days, and then our confidence increased since we got responsible for the event.”

The workshop discussed the strengths and drawbacks of initiating complementary support schemes where the state should support people. Participants found the idea and to be working at a small scale very interesting.

⇒ [Presentation](#)

⇒ [Draft poverty report, Iceland](#)

Richard Finch & Tracy Nuthall (EAPN UK): Collaboration and consortia in project delivery

Richard and Tracy prepared a session on setting up and running consortia for delivering projects with detailed hand-outs. As there was a big choice of workshops, few participants signed up for this one and we are sharing the information in the report and on the website.

⇒ [Presentation](#)

⇒ [Forward Together-3 year plan](#)

⇒ [Forward Together- Membership Prospectus](#)

Ramesh Chandra (Dignity International Asia): Jan Satyagraha – Building International Solidarity: A case study on the Indian Land Reform Campaign by Ekta Parishad

The workshop began with an exercise of learning what land means to different people. It became clear that land is more than an economic question and historic contexts often determine the cultural attachment to land and understanding of its use.

Ekta Parishad initiated the march of the landless. The strategy and learning points so far have been:

- ⇒ It is more than land; we want to challenge the undemocratic process;
- ⇒ Bottom-up leadership of the grassroots;
- ⇒ Continuous campaigning is crucial;
- ⇒ Building people's resources and avoiding dependency on external funding.

Key issues in this campaign:

- ⇒ Cost of silence: 100.000 Indian farmers have committed suicide because they can't pay their loans and the climate is deteriorating (growing green greed, led by transnational institutions is responsible for many evictions)
- ⇒ The roots of violence: more and more activists are put in jail for anti-state activity, including asking for rights or questioning state actions.

"We need to react strongly and non-violently against structural violence."

- ⇒ Growing insurgency: more land is controlled by Maoists, who people support as a form of anti-state protest. This causes more violence however.

Results of the campaign:

Agra Accord – the National and Guarantee Act (Homestead and Agriculture). The Prime Minister negotiated with 50.000 people after 12 days walking down the national highway. The next step is to reclaim re-institutionalization and women's land rights (80% of land is processed by women, but their right to land is not recognised).

"It's not a change. It's a transformation! We want to change hearts and minds. The sacrifice of 50.000 people on the streets is what brings about the change, not just political compulsion, or the media, it has spiritual and psychological effect."

Similar initiatives of indigenous populations claiming their land rights are happening in Malaysia, Cambodia, Kenya. EAPN supported the Jan Satyagraha march as the European partner of Dignity International.

- ⇒ [Organisation diagram of Jan Satyagraha](#)

Anatole Kontsybovsky & Elke Vandermeersch (EAPN Belgium): Social Changes Through Art

Anatole and Elke presented **Vagabonde**, an NGO that works for the development through culture. The main activities are training: 1) courses in reading and writing; 2) working with people who are far from the labour market to help them become more self-confident. Artistic methodologies are used, especially for the second group (photography, theatre, writing and other methods). New associations have been created as a result of these activities, for example one NGO does social interpretation (i.e. translation for migrants); an NGO offering psychological support now exists; another one on theatre. Professionals work with groups to shape their common ideas, which they then put into exhibitions.

"We never know which story will come out – it depends on the group, sometimes the stories are very heavy."

Anatole is a writer and actor and he does one-man shows inspired by the lives of people living in poverty.

The workshop organisers shared an example of how they got a hearing with the Prime Minister by sending him a video on poverty. Participants then shared their ideas of what political action they could shape through art (from getting better dental coverage to women's health etc.)

Creative methods are important both to involve people experiencing poverty more directly and to have political impact – changing expectations and influencing the general public. EAPN could do more exchanges on creative methods: art, writing, theatre, dance, video, building on members' expertise.

⇒ **Handout** (here in [English](#) – ici en [Français](#))

Laufey Ólafsdóttir (EAPN Iceland): Single parents and housing issues

Laufey presented the Single Parents' Association of which she is a voluntary board member. She spoke of the evolution of the housing situation in Iceland, with the introduction of benefits in 1999 in a more competitive and market based country. There are many bureaucratic obstacles to assuring housing, and particularly single parents suffer for various reasons (competitive rent market; high rent prices; high deposit requirements (6 months' rent in advance); insecure rent agreements; frequent moves; unsuitable/poor quality housing; long waiting lists for social housing (1-3 years); impossibility to get a mortgage on one person's wage). Participants from other, small population countries, expressed similar challenges of having reduced tax pools. Tess Murphy (EAPN Ireland) spoke about child and housing benefits in Ireland being completely unfriendly to single parents. The main messages from the workshop were that areas of life are matched against the wrong numbers.

"If the crisis problem was to do with the banks, why not give people money instead of inflexible benefits that must exactly go through the banks?"

Participants were generally surprised to find out that Iceland has such a system and competitive market problems.

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⇒ [Presentation](#)

⇒ [Context](#)

Attila Mester & Danka Orobej (EAPN Hungary): Community organizing in anti-poverty work

Attila and Danka split the participants in two and gave each group a chance to chart the way they would plan their town. After that, the "mayors" changed the plans according to other rules and then there was an open discussion about community organizing. They shared the example of how EAPN Hungary is working with community organizers to help people on "workfare" put their demands forward to the authorities. In the context of Hungary, it seems that organizing groups around the specific issues they can get solved is more effective at the moment.

⇒ [4 approaches for tackling social problems](#)

⇒ [10 rules of community organizing](#)

⇒ [Prezi: A new approach: Community Organising](#)

Fábio Gama, and Samuel Njoroge and Charles Ocheró (Dignity International Latin America, and Africa): Campaign on the Optional Protocol of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR)

The workshop was run using flexible methodology, since the training is often given to illiterate groups. It started with a Swahili energizer. This was followed by a game of charades, where two groups had to mimic for each other terms like "United Nations", "International declaration of human rights" etc.

Then a brief introduction was given - 42 countries signed the Optional Protocol, 10 ratified. There is a need for all of us to campaign in our countries to sign and ratify, otherwise one can't go to the respective UN Committee and complain. The workshop ended with a role-playing game, where four groups were a community organization, the US Government, and International NGO etc, and had to devise responses according to scenarios that have been given to them related to campaigning. The workshop discussed different campaigning strategies.

⇒ [Optional Protocol](#)

⇒ [Call for support - Sample letter for ratification](#)

⇒ Toolkit: Parts [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#)

Ian Johnston (IFSW): Social Workers perspectives

Inequalities within nations and between them give rise to poverty and social exclusion and most of the problems associated with this. We often say that education and schools are the way out, but often schools are where competition, discrimination, bullying and inequality starts. It can be on your first day of school that you realize what you did not know before, that you are poor, that you are different, that you are powerless.

We need to always be cautious about myths and what is hiding behind them. As a social worker, you need to always be prepared to do the impossible. And actually, nearly everything is possible.

“Social work is about making sense of the impossible things, inspiring individuals to explore all possible options and achieve more with less resources, maximizing your creativity. Social work is not about social control, but about support. It is not about imposing a specific “good life” model for everybody, but about building individual life plans with each person.”

Misinformation about poverty is one of the root causes we have to address. 20% of people think that people are poor because they misuse their benefits. None of us want to know about the bad things in life and look them in the eye. But we need to. It is our duty. Besides, the bad things don't just affect those to whom they occur – they affect all of us and our societies. Resources are being cut precisely when the demand is increasing. Compartmentalisation of social workers does not help people, as most issues don't fit neatly in a pre-defined box. Social workers should work for the people who approach them with an issue, not for their employer - the State.

⇒ [Presentation](#)

Vassili Golikov (EAPN Estonia): Strategies to fight poverty with young people with fewer opportunities

Vassili, coming from the Sillamäe Society for Child Welfare, an NGO active near the Russian border, presented the NGO and the work they do to empower children and young people through leadership development, human rights and environmental sustainability. They advocate in schools, universities and towards public authorities in the region to get engaged. The NGO runs a volunteer club, a day centre, and cooperates with pensioner clubs and services to support families. It carries out national and international projects for children and young people.

Co-management (a Council of Europe methodology) was presented as a methodology to work with young people at risk of poverty, being a form of participation setting youth on an equal footing with older people and decision-makers to achieve a common goal. The NGO shared three good practice examples of setting up City Youth Councils, involving young people in local policies. There was a discussion about the strengths of co-management and its relevance to involving young people living in poverty or being unemployed. A key message was that participative approaches are crucial to welcoming young people as actors and contributors to society.

“We are facing a big failure of creating a place for every young person. In Estonia and Poland young people are ‘over-educated’. The challenge for the coming years is to re-invent a way of functioning which says to young people – you are welcome in our world.”

⇒ [Presentation](#)

⇒ [Booklet – Co-management](#)

Júlio Paiva (EAPN Portugal): Building a strong national anti-poverty network: the case of EAPN Portugal

Júlio presented the Portuguese network's vision, mission and its areas of activity since its establishment. He spoke about the European and national projects that the Network has been running and what have been the strengths and weaknesses for the network of doing all this work. He also spoke about Local and National Advisory Councils of people living or having experienced poverty and social exclusion.

“The National Network believes that by participating, people experiencing poverty can make a difference, sharing, and include them in this struggle. They are the living voice!”

⇒ [Presentation](#)

Michael Tiampati, Ton Waarts and Irving Larios (Dignity International Africa, Europe, Latin America): Using International and Regional Human Rights Mechanisms for ESCR

Michael Tiampati shared the case of indigenous community organising in Kenya against the violation of their rights and how the lack of effective regional systems of protection of human rights affects the struggle of local communities.

Ton Waarts spoke about the importance of establishing and having UN Mechanisms for the protection of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. When a UN document gets ratified by member states, it becomes a powerful mechanism of soft influence on policy change. Ton gave the examples of working on a shadow report in Sri Lanka and giving the NGO community there real power through the specialised UN Committee.

Irving Larios spoke about the existing human rights protection mechanisms in Latin America and how more and more country leaders in the region are attacking these mechanisms and the impact of those attacks on the power of civil society.

Human rights are the result of long fights. This social construction is not yet finished and everyone has the responsibility to promote and protect them. Participants spoke about how the crisis has affected the advancement of human rights protection.

“You, activists from other continents, have the energy. Learn from us not to make the same mistakes. And we must learn back from you and get inspired to continue our work in Europe.”

Letizia Cesarini Sforza

The message is that we all must work to protect and promote the human rights system to make it more effective and campaign within our organisations and our countries.

NETWORKING IN A DIFFERENT WAY - INFORMAL AND EVENING ACTIVITIES

For all the activities with so many participants coming from such different backgrounds, EAPN and Dignity International contracted Aye Aye Win, who knows both organisations, to facilitate the event. Aye Aye used non-formal/popular education methods for team building. All the evenings included a programme. This helped create a warm and interactive atmosphere for the breaks and for all the informal spaces during the event. The **first non-formal gathering** was at the welcoming dinner, when all those who had freshly arrived followed Aye Aye and Samuel Njoroge (a community organizer from the Nairobi Slum Dwellers Organisation) to warm up the atmosphere and prepare for the four days of common work.



Marketplace – members of the two co-organizing networks (EAPN and Dignity International) brought audio-visual materials and publications of their organisations to share with each other what they do in their organisations.

International Evening of Story-Telling - several partner organisations of Dignity talked about the campaigns, creative protests and organizing work they do with disenfranchised communities. Michael Tiampati and Samuel Njoroge shared their story of organizing Kenyan pastoral and slum-dwelling communities using a mix of new technologies and traditional forms of communication. Michael also shared the story of an effective civil society protest in Kenya, against a decision of the Parliament

“The MPIGS protest. Civil society brought a herd of pigs in front of the Kenyan Parliament, when the Members of Parliament increased their salaries and benefits, instead of focusing on easing the lives of communities living in poverty. As a result of this action, the media put pressure and the President forced the Parliament to revoke the law, which they did.”

Ramesh Chandra introduced the workshop on the march of the landless and what self-organized landless communities were fighting for in India. This topic was explored in detail in a workshop.

Finally, Fábio Gama and Carlos Revilla talked about one person's initiative in Bolivia to offer her land for the establishment of a collective living community, where all public space is shared and where people cannot buy or sell their houses, but as long as they live there, they can use all the public utilities. They spoke of the legal and practical challenges the community is facing to keep going.



International Solidarity Picnic – on the last evening together, participants shared food, drinks, music, stories and dances from their countries. It was a good moment to relax, after a very busy event, and to further strengthen the contacts and networking initiatives that were born on previous days. Sonja Leemkuil from the Netherlands and Samuel Njoroge from Kenya were masters of ceremony and made sure everyone shared a song or a dance from their culture.

COMMUNICATING DIFFERENTLY ON THE LEARNING

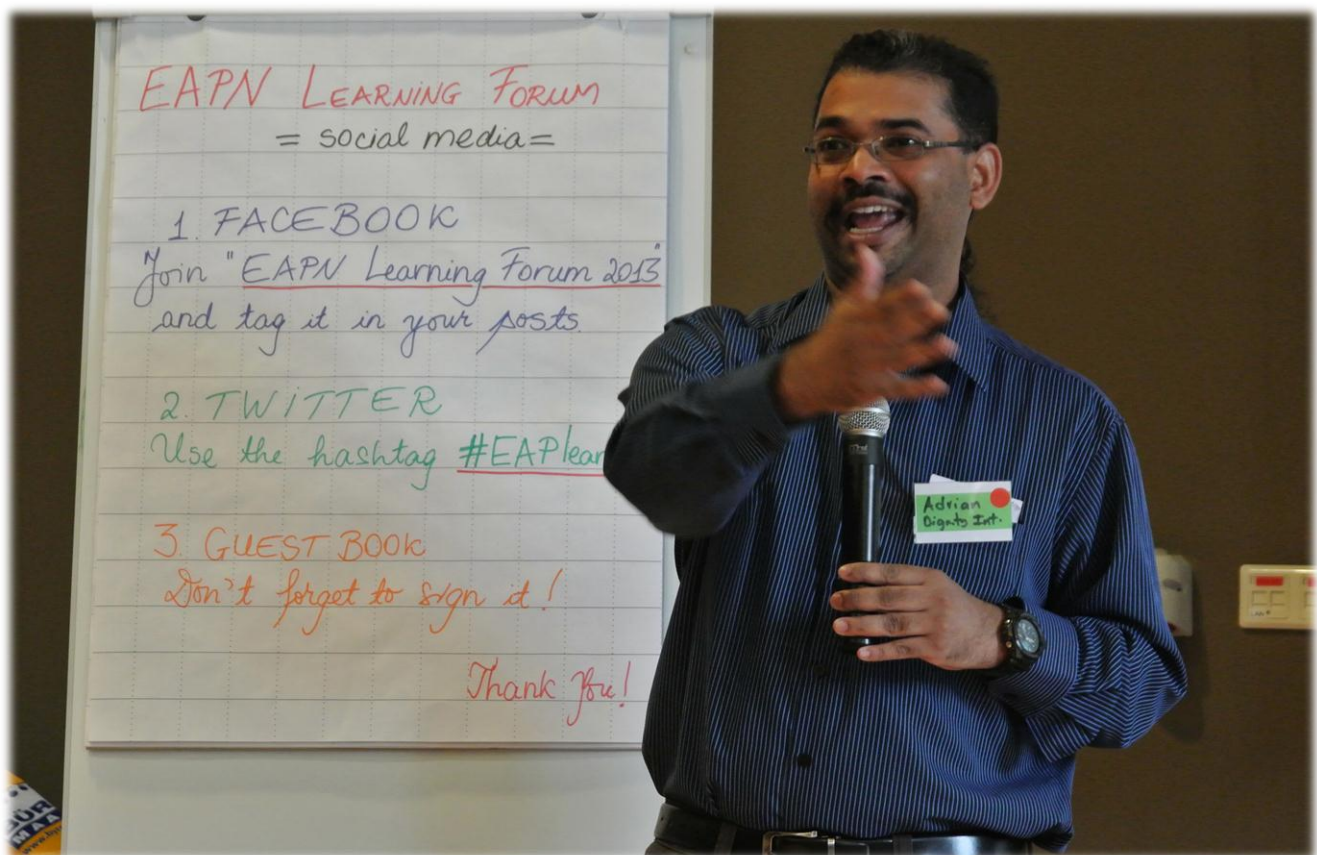
In preparation for the event, the organisers thought of using social media to pass on the atmosphere with those who could not attend and to record the event with photos and videos. In addition to the EAPN page dedicated to the learning forum, several ways were used to communicate during and after the event actively involving the participants.

EAPN created and kept active a twitter account for the event, [#EAPNlearning](#), constantly updating it. Some National Networks and members retweeted messages, passing on the spirit of the event to activists back home.

EAPN also invited the participants and all its Facebook members to its [EAPN's Facebook page](#) with photos and messages coming from the meeting. Finally participants eagerly took the role of media reporters, video-recording some of the sessions and taking photos from the visits and from the different sessions. This report includes some of the photos that participants made during the event. Following the event, enthusiastic participants initiated other Facebook pages to continue networking.

24 Members have asked for a less technical and more dynamic reporting with visuals and this report is an attempt of bringing together all the materials developed for the event from the [EAPN web page dedicated to the Learning Forum](#), as well as from [all the photos from the event](#). Finally, some sessions were recorded and short video interviews were made and those will be processed and shared with the members.

All these efforts were made to give the event a less formal format than other meetings of EAPN, encouraging sharing, exchange, learning and inspiration.



CONCLUSIONS: THE LEARNING WE TAKE HOME

Overall, the first Learning Forum was a call to EAPN to diversify its learning and capacity building spaces and to open up the floor for building on the work from the grassroots. On the premise that all the other meetings of EAPN focus on developing common messages and lobbying for a Europe free of poverty and social exclusion, the Learning Forum aimed at being the space where members share their priorities; the work they do in their countries which otherwise might not reach others. This ground-work is where the EAPN lobbying messages come from, and a better understanding of this and the analysis which informs it can only strengthen the common lobbying messages.

VISION OF ANOTHER WORLD ... THE POVERTY TREE



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The closing of the Learning Forum, with every participant being given the opportunity to share their vision of the world they would like to contribute to, and the first steps they would take towards that, was a moment of connecting the learning with the actions that anti-poverty activists do.

The image of the completed Poverty Tree reflects best the conclusion and all the different learning that has happened. Participants shared messages of hope, of mobilisation, and of commitment to building a more inclusive world, where everyone lives in dignity, and their rights are respected.

The first EAPN Learning Forum was a very bottom-up adventure, with space for members to share the practices they have developed in their organisations, to explore together the link between the ground-work that anti-poverty organisations do and the systemic changes that EAPN and Dignity International are aiming to achieve together.

Furthermore, participants in the Learning Forum brought back a lot of motivation to their networks, as shared in the Executive Committee of EAPN and some participants have already engaged more actively with subsequent EAPN meetings. The evaluations received highlight positive feedback from participants on the event.

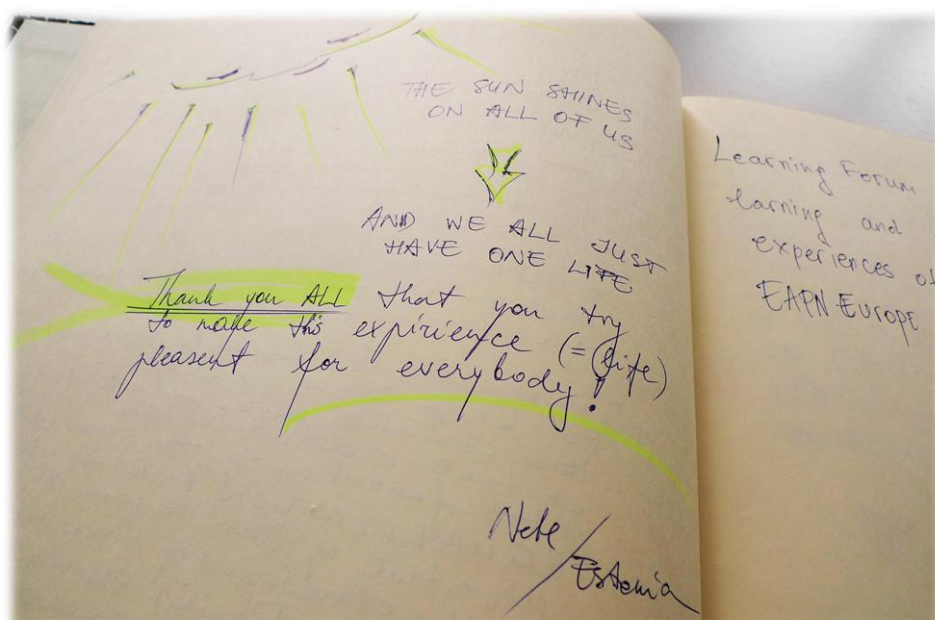
People were invited to share what learning they bring back to their organisations and the first step they are going to take, putting the knowledge they've gained into action in their own Networks and organisations. Written evaluation forms were also disseminated and 18 participants completed and returned them. They evaluated the objectives of the learning forum positively and made concrete suggestions for the future. The EAPN staff team involved in organizing the event also carried out an evaluation which was brought to the Executive Committee.

Finally, the Executive Subgroup on Membership Development and Support shared the feedback their own representatives brought from the Learning Forum and discussed the evaluation of the organising team. The main conclusions in relation to the strengths and future organising of the Learning Forum have been included in the executive summary to this report.

26 Among the recommendations, participants suggested to spend more time building solidarity between members of EAPN from different countries, strengthening direct participation and allowing more time for new people to understand EAPN and its strategy and for strengthening the EAPN voice in different countries.

If a future Learning Forum is co-organised in collaboration with another organisation, more focus should be given to bridging expectations and building a collaborative project. The Executive Committee should also consider the profile of the participants as well as how to strengthen the engagement of those who attend the Learning Forum in other EAPN work.

EAPN Members are very active nationally, in their networks and organisations and in their daily commitment to combating poverty and social exclusion.



The Learning Forum has strengthened that activism and highlighted the diversity with which EAPN and Dignity International members engage in the fight against poverty and social exclusion. They strongly recommended to continue organising the Learning Forum, and the Executive is invited to consider how to take this positive experience in EAPN forward in the context of a new reality.

ANNEXES

Annex I. Background note

This document should serve as a basis for planning the EAPN Learning Forum 2013. The process will be led by the Executive Subgroup on Membership Development and Support with the Bureau taking the responsibility to ensure a cohesive final proposal with all parts of EAPN contributing.

Under the 2012-2014 Strategic Plan, EAPN has decided to organise a first EAPN Learning Forum in 2013. The Learning Forum will be an open member-led meeting addressing core issues for EAPN's development as a strong anti-poverty network. It is not intended as a space to develop new EU proposals, but an open space to value the work of the members and to get inspiration from each other's initiatives.

EAPN will co-organise the event with its global partner Dignity International, learning from the GET ORGANISED study sessions that they have been holding for a number of years. Dignity International is a global anti poverty organisation bringing together partners from different continents and areas of the world. EAPN is the European Partner in Dignity International. For more information about Dignity International, please visit www.dignityinternational.org.

To make this joint activity possible, the EAPN Learning Forum will be combined with an activity of Dignity International in Europe. EAPN will cover the participation costs of about 80 persons and Dignity International will bring between 20-30 participants from among its global partners. EAPN will coordinate with Dignity representatives as well as with EAPN Estonia, the network hosting this event, the format of the programme, including its goal and objectives.

Goal

Strengthen the base, build on the understanding and trust among members and develop a better collective vision and work as EAPN.

Objectives

- To strengthen the membership base of EAPN by involving new activists and learning from practices that have a direct impact on fighting poverty and social exclusion;
- To contribute to a bottom-up member-led agenda in EAPN and to give more visibility to the variety of actions and approaches that members carry out in their national realities, and connecting them better to the EU level work;
- To give value to the participation of activists with direct experience of poverty in EAPN's work and policy-making and take forward the implementation of Goal 3 of EAPN's Strategic Plan;
- To strengthen the trust and cooperation between EAPN members including between National Networks and European Organisations.

Participants

The Learning Forum will bring together about 80 participants, including delegations of 2 representatives per National Network and one representative per European Organisation. 21 Dignity International partners will also participate. The EAPN National delegations should include a person from the

leadership of the National Network and an activist/person with direct experience of poverty who has become active in the Network. The participants in the Learning Forum should be able to take home the learning and try to integrate some of it in the work of their National Network/European Organisation. The Learning Forum will be a key moment in advancing on Goal 3 of the EAPN Strategic plan, i.e. ensure developing the base of activists with direct experience of poverty in EAPN's work. Members wishing to send more representatives would have to support financially their additional participants, similar to the GA system.

Preparation

The EAPN Secretariat is working closely with Dignity International and EAPN Estonia teams as well as with participants who are running sessions to prepare the event. We have got a first list of skills-sharing session for day 3 of the event and we will be discussing with each proposer to finalise those sessions.

Methodology

The Learning Forum will encourage an action and solution oriented spirit. The Learning Forum will last 4 days and will be planned and run actively by the participants. The Forum will be organised using non-formal methods. It will be held in Laulasmaa, about 35 km from Tallinn. The event will be organised in English and participants will support each other with informal interpretation, as practiced in other meetings of EAPN, to ensure people who don't speak English also get a chance to contribute. EAPN Estonia members will join different parts of the Learning Forum to strengthen the solidarity and learning among participants. EAPN Estonia will organise project visits to learn about the local reality.

An international evening will be organised on Friday evening, and on Thursday evening the participants will share an informal moment of intercultural exchange. Participants are invited to bring food, drinks, music or other cultural representation from where they come and to bring along materials about their organisation's work.

Annex II. Details of the programme

This draft PROGRAMME outlines the type of activities that would help to meet the objectives of the Forum. The final programme will depend on the possibilities that are available in Estonia and the skills-sharing proposals that the participants will make.

Tuesday: 21 May 2013 – Participants arrive and have the evening together

Informal get to know evening and dinner. As many participants arrive late in the evening, there is no formal programme for the Tuesday evening. For those who arrive in time for dinner, you are welcome to stop by the registration table, pick up your folder and then meet the other participants.

Wednesday 22 May 2013: Day 1 of activities: Getting to know each other

The **Member of Estonian Parliament's Social Commission, Mr. Margus Tsahkna** will give a welcome speech in the morning. This is important for building recognition of our host – EAPN Estonia.

EAPN and Dignity International will also welcome the participants and **introduce the programme** and the methodology, as well as the expectations that the Learning Forum should contribute to.

The first half of the day will be spent on getting to know the participants, starting from personal stories to the communities they are part of and moving to the values of what makes people do the work they want to. What motivates me to get engaged in anti-poverty work? Why am I fighting poverty and social exclusion?

The world we live in:

The **afternoon** will be spent on understanding the realities of poverty in the countries that participants come from and how participants build activism/how they reach out to people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, how the National networks and International Organisation (Dignity Partner) organise themselves. People will be invited to share in workshops on the realities of poverty, the values our societies hold, that keep or drive people into poverty and approaches to fighting in different countries.

Introducing Social Analysis – Dignity Partner from India, Ramesh, together with Fintan from EAPN will introduce social analysis, the various tools and how it can be used by NGOs and community organisers in their work. This will set the context for the next days' work.

Evening: Meet EAPN Estonia! This will be a moment of meeting the activists and members of EAPN Estonia, hearing about their initiatives and the challenges they face in their actions. This evening session will set the context for the next day's study visits.

Thursday 23 May 2013: Communities in Action – project visits to public authorities and NGOs

Communities in Action: The morning will be spent on study visits. Participants will have signed up on the previous day to join a study visit. EAPN Estonia has discussed with public authorities and NGOs from 5 communities to organise the study visits in the following way:

- Meeting the local public authorities and learning about the social services they offer;
- Visiting a social service in the community (they will be focusing on services to different groups: elderly; youth; children...).
- Meeting an NGO active in the area and learning about their work.

Overall, this should give participants a picture of what poverty means in the host country Estonia and how the local authorities and anti-poverty NGOs are fighting it.

The visits will happen to the following 5 communities:

1. Märjamaa VV <http://marjamaa.kovtp.ee/et/uldinfo>, visiting the farm project
2. Saue LV <http://uus.saue.ee/index.php?page=2> Youth center, old people daycare, kindergarten
3. Keila LV <http://www.keila.ee/et/uldinfo>
4. Paldiski LV <http://www.paldiski.ee/> city hall, children's NGO, soup kitchen.
5. Põhja Tallinn <http://www.tallinn.ee/pohja/?mobiilivaade=0>, visiting also Food bank, soup kitchen and child home.

Each group will visit one community and will be accompanied by a reference person from EAPN Estonia. Participants are invited to use the travel and return to the hotel to carry out a group reflection about what they learn and to dialogue with the EAPN Estonia representative on remaining questions.

Afternoon: One feedback session will be planned from 16.00-18.00 as a space of drawing the lessons from local realities and exchanging on what we have learned from the visits.

Evening: International evening of story-telling and marketplace. This evening, some international participants (Dignity International partners) will share stories, films about their work. EAPN members willing to do it, can, of course, also share stories about their initiatives. A market-place will be set up so that participants can learn about and be inspired from each other's work. Please bring materials of your organisations. Dinner will also be provided.

Friday 24 May 2013: Day 3 of activities: Skills sharing and learning to be strong anti-poverty activists
Strengthening the activist-base: skills-building and empowerment workshops

Members will propose and run a variety of workshops that are action-oriented and contribute to participants learning and practicing new skills for effective anti-poverty work. This will be a space of learning, sharing and testing techniques which focus on development of activist base in EAPN.

There will be 4 parallel sessions of 5 workshops. Every participant can choose to attend one workshop from the 5 proposed every time. A separate workshop programme can be found on the website and in your packs.

Group photo at 18:00.

Evening: Solidarity BBQ Picnic and International Evening. You are invited to bring along food, drinks and other cultural representation of the country/community you are coming from to share during this evening.

Saturday 25 May 2013: Day 4 of activities and afternoon departure:
Linking National, European and International levels

Developing social analysis and strengthening the link between national, EU and International anti-poverty work. This session aims to build bridges between the stories and skills shared in the previous days and the current and future work of EAPN at European level and of Dignity International at the International level.

The learning we take home to share - Closing the Learning Forum.

	MORNING				AFTERNOON			EVENING	
	Session 1 9:30 – 11:00	break	Session 2 11:30-13:00	Lunch	Session 3 14:00-15:30	break	Session 4 16:00-17:30	Evening activity 19:00	Dinner 20:00-23:00
Tuesday ARRIVAL AND INTERNATIONAL EVENING	Arrival of participants							Informal getting to know each other for those who arrive for dinner	Dinner
Wednesday GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER AND THE WORLD WE LIVE IN – PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AND SOCIAL ANALYSIS	<p>Welcome speech by Margus Tsahkna - Member of Estonian Parliament (Social Commission)</p> <p>Welcome from EAPN and Dignity International</p> <p>Introduction to the programme (Tanya) and methodology (Aye Aye)</p> <p>GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER – learning about participants' motivations and values</p>		<p>(continued)</p> <p>GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER – what are the values that make you get involved in fighting poverty and social exclusion</p>		<p>THE WORLD WE LIVE IN – Understanding the realities of poverty and what values in our societies drive people into poverty</p>		<p>(continued)</p> <p>THE WORLD WE LIVE IN</p> <p>Introducing EAPN and Dignity International</p> <p>INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL ANALYSIS – Ramesh from Jan Satyagraha and Fintan from EAPN</p>	<p>MEET EAPN ESTONIA! (starting from 18.00)</p> <p>What is poverty in Estonia and what actions members and activists of EAPN Estonia are taking; what are the challenges they face in their activities?</p>	<p>Dinner together</p>

Thursday COMMUNITIES IN ACTION: PROJECT VISITS	COMMUNITIES IN ACTION: Participants will visit one of 5 communities in Estonia and will be meeting public authorities; Visiting services offered by the public authorities; and Visiting NGOs		(continued) COMMUNITIES IN ACTION		No planned session: Groups are encouraged to reflect together on the visits and talk with the reference persons from EAPN Estonia about what they learned		DRAWING THE LEARNING TOGETHER: plenary session on what we have learned from the project visits about the fight against poverty and human rights violation	INTERNATIONAL EVENING OF STORY-TELLING and MARKETPLACE: LEARNING FROM THE WORK OF DIGNITY INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS – bring materials from your Network/Organisati on to share with the others	Dinner together
Friday STRENGTHENING THE ACTIVIST BASE: WORKSHOPS ON SKILLS, TOOLS, PRACTICE AND ACTIONS	EAPN and Dignity International participants will run workshops throughout the day on skills, tools and policy frameworks for combating poverty and social exclusion at different levels in Europe and globally		EAPN and Dignity International participants will run workshops throughout the day on skills, tools and policy frameworks for combating poverty and social exclusion at different levels in Europe and globally		EAPN and Dignity International participants will run workshops throughout the day on skills, tools and policy frameworks for combating poverty and social exclusion at different levels in Europe and globally		EAPN and Dignity International participants will run workshops throughout the day on skills, tools and policy frameworks for combating poverty and social exclusion at different levels in Europe and globally	INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY PICNIC AND PARTY Group photo (18.cultural representations of your country to share (songs, dancing...))	
Saturday CONNECTING THE FIGHT FROM LOCAL TO EUROPEAN AND GLOBAL	Developing social analysis and STRENGTHENING THE LINKS between national, EU and International anti-poverty and human rights work		(continued) STRENGTHENING THE LINKS The learning we take home – evaluation and closing of the learning forum		EAPN Participants Depart and Dignity International continue their meeting				

Annex III. Table of member-led skills-sharing sessions

No	NETWORK / ORGANISATION	TOPIC	WHO LED IT	STAFF CONTACT PERSON PRESENT
1	BELGIUM Social Changes Through Art	BAPN (Belgian Anti Poverty Network) & Miroir Vagabond (Association member of BAPN) try to generate change through artistic practice. This can be on an individual level (empowerment), but also on collective scale. We also use artistic methods to reach our (political) objectives. In this workshop, we show some examples how we do this and stimulate the participants to think how to use this in their daily work and... give it a try!	Anatole Kontsybovsky & Elke Vandermeerschen	Sian Jones
2	PORTUGAL	Building a strong national anti poverty network: the case of EAPN Portugal (structure, financing, methods of work, members etc)	Júlio Paiva	Fintan Farrell
3	ESTONIA Strategies to fight youth poverty	Advocacy, inclusion, young people with fewer opportunities, human rights education, Estonian civil society, gender equality, volunteer work, intercultural citizenship education...	Vassili Golikov	Sian Jones
4	MACEDONIAN EAPN Organising citizen initiatives/campaigns without any resources	MPPS (Macedonian Anti Poverty Network) will present citizens initiative that reach up to the Macedonian Parliament with 13.169 signatures. NO MONEY was needed. We will motivate the participants to not be afraid to start initiative important for their everyday life.	Meri Terzieva & Sashko Iovanov	Tanya Basarab
5	ITALY	The work of EAPN Europe and European social policies, and participation of people experiencing poverty	Letizia Cesarini Sforza	Fintan Farrell
6	ICELAND	Pioneer center for young adults with fewer opportunities and lack of support. Working towards better self-awareness and better life skills through centers and non formal education	Hjördís Kristinsdóttir	Fintan Farrell
7	ICELAND	On single parents or housing issues	Laufey Ólafsdóttir	Rebecca Lee
8	NORWAY	Experience of setting up self-organized groups of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion.	Laila Wolles & Johanna Engen	Amana Ferro
9	UNITED KINGDOM	Collaboration & Consortia in project delivery	Richard Finch & Tracy Nuthall	

10	EUROCHILD Voice and Advocacy: building effective lobbying strategies	The workshop will look at communicating, monitoring and evaluating advocacy and policy change efforts presents unique challenges- players, dynamics, complexity and the need to be responsive excerpts its influence. The workshop will explore and critique the experiences and lessons learned of One Family's 10 Solutions for Smarter Futures campaign. The workshop will also explore the how to construct positive and engaging messages in times of austerity and challenges.	Stuart Duffin	Sian Jones
11	IFSW	The perspective of social workers on the impact of poverty on all citizens in particular young people and its effects on health, well-being and life expectancy.	Ian Johnston	Amana Ferro
12	SPAIN Building a national civil society platform and structured dialogue with the government, the case of EAPN Spain	EAPN Spain is a small network without much power on its own. It has, since 2004, grown and focused on building political alliances with other NGOs and civil society actors to arrive at working as part of a Big representative Platform of the whole third sector (civil society). This third sector platform has developed a regular engaged civil dialogue with the government. If we have done it, then we are sure that other Networks and Organisations can do it. We hope to inspire you with our example in Spain.	Isabel Allende	
13	BULGARIA	Participatory research as a tool to democratize policy-making and to build anti-poverty arguments	Douhomir Minev	Tanya Basarab
14	HUNGARY	Community Organizing in the fight against poverty and social exclusion	Attila Mester & Danka Orobej	Tanya Basarab
15	Dignity International / India	Jan Satyagraha – International Solidarity Building: A case study on the Indian Land Reform Campaign by Ekta Parishad and the International Solidarity built along that campaign	Ramesh Chandra	Sian Jones
16	Dignity International / Latin America & Africa	Dignity International's Campaign on the Optional Protocol-International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: Networking and Strategies to mainstream Economic Social Cultural Rights and seeking an effective complaints mechanism.	Fabio Gama, Samuel Njoroge, Charles Ocherro	Amana Ferro
17	Dignity International	The Global Financial and Economic System failure: A critical look at key learnings based on experiences of poor peoples. Did REAL reform really take place and what can we do next to ensure more human system at macro and micro levels.	Ludo Horemans	Amana Ferro
18	Dignity International / Africa / Europe / Latin America	Using International and Regional Human Rights Mechanisms for ESCR Rights- A workshop by activist on how to link local grassroots advocacy with the global mechanisms using Human Rights Based Approach.	Michael Tiampati, Ton Waarts, Irving Larios	Tanya Basarab



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The European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) is an independent network of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and groups involved in the fight against poverty and social exclusion in the Member States of the European Union, established in 1990.

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