



EUROPEAN ANTI POVERTY NETWORK

## Draft Theory of Change

14 September 2018

### 1. Background

The Strategic Thinking meeting of 7 July 2018 gave a strong mandate to the Director to “lead the development of a Theory of Change for EAPN, with inputs from the Staff Team and engagement opportunities for the membership and for people experiencing poverty”.

The Bureau meeting of 3-4 September considered a preliminary draft of EAPN’s Theory of Change, proposed by the Director, and based on the following:

- a. PESTLE analysis
- b. Report from Stage 1 of the Strategic Thinking Process
- c. Early analysis of the 2018 Membership Survey
- d. Understanding and analysis developed over the last 18 months with EAPN

This document represents the second version of EAPN’s Theory of Change, following detailed discussions at the Bureau. It forms the basis for discussions at the Strategic Thinking workshop on 28 September in Vienna.

#### What do we mean by a Theory of Change?

Theory of Change is a methodology for planning that is commonly used among NGOs. At its simplest a Theory of Change defines **the overall change we want** and then identifies the **major changes** which are needed to achieve this **overall change**. Once these **major changes** are identified, organisational **strategies** to bring about those **major changes** can be agreed, and evaluated.

The methodology is participatory in nature, and the draft emerging from the Bureau meeting will be presented for discussion by all members at the Strategic Thinking workshop in Vienna. People experiencing poverty are also being asked for input through the preparation process for the PeP meetings, being invited to consider a few key questions.

A Theory of Change allows us to be clear and explicit about the changes we believe are necessary to eradicate poverty and social exclusion.



### What is our process at the Strategic Thinking meeting in Vienna?

- The draft Theory of Change will be presented, along with a summary of the PESTLE analysis that was undertaken
- We will examine the ‘major changes’ and ensure that we have captured everything
- We will examine the proposed EAPN strategies, offering members an opportunity to critique/ add/ amend
- The resulting agreed Theory of Change will provide a touchstone for decisions on strategic direction and work prioritisation. In addition to forming part of our strategic thinking documentation, it will become a living document against which we will test the efficacy of our work over time.

## 2. Draft Theory of Change

### Summary

**Our premise is that to deliver on our Vision, a strong public movement against poverty is essential, and that EAPN can be that movement. We do not need to fundamentally change who we are, but we do need to rebalance the focus of our activities.**

### The overall change EAPN wants to see is:

“A **sustainable** Europe free of poverty and social exclusion, **with high levels of equality**, where political, economic, social and cultural rights are respected”

Note - this is essentially the current vision of EAPN. The additions (red / bold) are proposals to strengthen, taken from the Membership Survey.

## 8 Major Changes needed to achieve this overall change

### A. **Strong, grass-roots anti-poverty movement across Europe (and beyond)**

This means strong members, streamlined governance, more engagement and participation in work spaces, campaigns and political advocacy across our network and beyond. It means a grass-roots anti-poverty movement which really belongs to people experiencing poverty. It means a well-resourced movement, with organisations being able to access EU funds, national funds, philanthropic funds, CSR funds, public donations. This anti-poverty movement has to bring meaningful pressure on governments and corporations at key moments. Structured and meaningful links with anti-poverty movements across the world would help strengthen the European movement. EAPN is exceptionally well placed to support the development of this movement.

### ***B. Strong public support for poverty eradication and social inclusion***

While we have some political commitment to poverty eradication, public attitudes to poverty (and excluded groups) are still problematic. When Europeans understand poverty eradication and social inclusion as public goods, as matters of social justice and human rights, then we will be better placed to see real changes.

### ***C. People experiencing poverty having space to participate in society, in process around decisions which impact their lives***

Participatory democracy is a key way to make progress on poverty, as people closest to the problems have a strong sense of the potential solutions.

### ***D. A translation of political commitment into results***

Member States have committed to tackling poverty and social exclusion at a high level, via the SDGs and the Social Pillar. We need to ensure that this commitment is translated into action and results, with meaningful strategies, backed up by funding, to 'land' these frameworks at the national and local level.

### ***E. An end to austerity politics***

While the high-level political commitments are in place, we are coming out of a decade of austerity following the financial crisis of 2008. To meaningfully tackle poverty and social exclusion in the long term, austerity politics need to end, social spending needs to be prioritized, and resources need to be more fairly distributed throughout society - this means that richest members of our societies, including multinationals, need to pay more tax to ensure that public finances are healthier, and governments are better able to fund social policies.

### ***F. Strong social protection systems and appropriate minimum / living wages across Europe***

Vital to protect the poorest members of our society. EMIN2 has shown us that MI schemes vary greatly across European countries and even within countries, and many are too bureaucratic to achieve high levels of take up. The rise of the gig economy provides a real challenge to minimum / living wages, which need to be protected and promoted.

### ***G. Reduced inequalities***

The impacts of inequalities on poverty and social exclusion have been recognised in key global and European frameworks. Specific support is needed for the bottom percentile of income earners, and the highest earners need to be paying their fair share in taxes.

### ***H. Mitigation of technological and environmental changes to protect people experiencing poverty against future shocks***

Policies will be needed to protect poor people against extreme weather events (recent heat wave across Europe) and technological advances (retraining workers in sectors which may be lost in the transition to the non-carbon economy)

## **Where could EAPN have the most impact?**

EAPN does not need to focus everywhere – this would be neither strategic nor feasible, given our resources. We need to analyse where we are best placed to contribute to the change we want to see, recognising our history, our strengths and successes, our weaknesses and failures. This early analysis suggests EAPN should have a **5 'core strategies', and 4 'complementary strategies'**.

### **Core strategies**

1. Support and develop strong, grassroots anti-poverty movements in all countries across Europe, and links with anti-poverty movements across the world. This will include work on funding, movement building, leadership, communications and participation. *With anti-poverty networks existing in (almost) all European countries, this is a natural focus for EAPN.*

- *Impact on Major Change A*
- 2. Strengthen links with people experiencing poverty and ensure that they are meaningfully involved in, and leading, grassroots anti-poverty movements and campaigns around poverty, inequality, precarious work, digitalisation, social protection, minimum / living wages, at national and European levels. Amplify their voices wherever and whenever possible. *This is built into the DNA of EAPN and should be a natural strategy for our whole network.*
  - *Impact on Major Change A, C*
- 3. Building public support and pressure for the eradication of poverty and an end to neoliberalism austerity politics by developing challenging frames and narratives, and alternative social and economic political options. *With our wide network at the national level we are uniquely placed to influence the debate.*
  - *Impact on Major Change B, E*
- 4. Advocate and campaign for social protection systems and minimum / living wages throughout Europe, directly towards governments but with an increased focus on the public as well. *These are historical key areas for EAPN and written into our DNA.*
  - *Impact on Major Change B, F*
- 5. Push for civil society space in national and national and European political processes with the most potential impact on the eradication of poverty and social exclusion.
  - *Impact on Major Change A,C, D*

### Complementary strategies

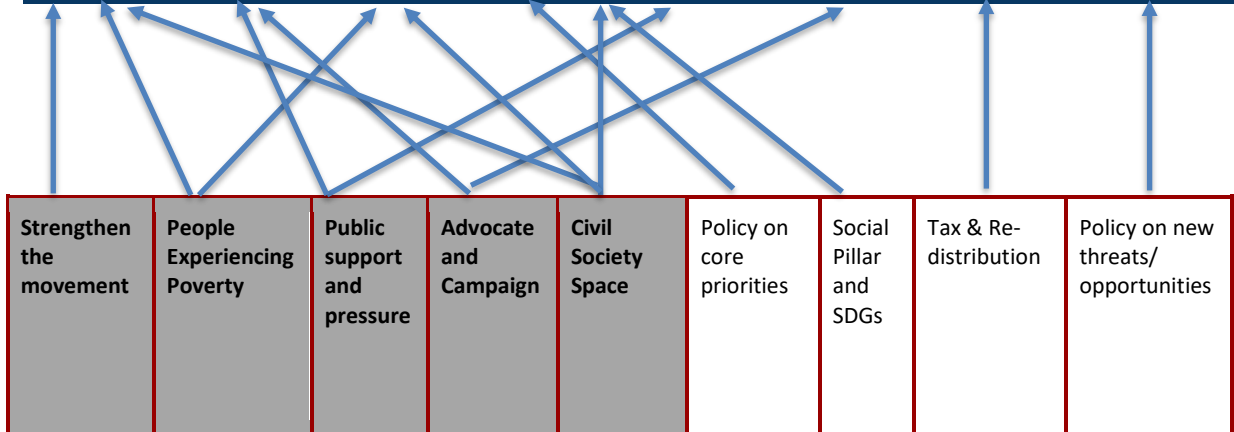
1. Making policy recommendations to governments and the European Union, focusing on poverty eradication, social exclusion, respect of human rights, social protection, minimum / living wages, through the European Semester and SDG processes.
  - *Impact on Major Change D*
2. Push for implementation of Social Pillar, SDGs via policy work at the national and European level. *(We recognise that these frameworks are unlikely to motivate people experiencing poverty directly, so this work will be largely policy based).*
  - *Impact on Major Change D*
3. Develop policy expertise and leadership on the impacts of precarious work and digitalisation, and the impact of technological and environmental changes on poverty.
  - *Impact on Major Change H*
4. Tax and redistribution (work through alliances for increased impact, recognising this is not our primary area of expertise)
  - *Impact on Major Change E*

## Overall Change

“A sustainable Europe free of poverty and social exclusion, with high levels of equality, where political, economic, social and cultural rights are respected”

## Major Changes needed

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<i>Strong, grass-roots anti-poverty movement across Europe (and beyond)</i>	<i>Strong public support for poverty eradication and social inclusion</i>	<i>People experiencing poverty having space to participate in society, in process around decisions which impact their lives</i>	<i>A translation of political commitment into results</i>	<i>An end to austerity politics</i>	<i>Strong social protection systems and appropriate minimum / living wages across Europe</i>	<i>Reduced inequalities</i>	<i>Mitigation of technological and environmental changes to protect people experiencing poverty against future shocks</i>



## EAPN Core and Complimentary Strategies

<b>Strengthen the movement</b>	<b>People Experiencing Poverty</b>	<b>Public support and pressure</b>	<b>Advocate and Campaign</b>	<b>Civil Society Space</b>	Policy on core priorities	Social Pillar and SDGs	Tax & Re-distribution	Policy on new threats/opportunities
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