

OECD/CERI

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME (YEPP)

FINAL REPORT ON THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION AND FOUNDATION PARTNERSHIP

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF OECD EXTERNAL EVALUATION

What is YEPP?

The Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme (YEPP) is a multi-layered international project working in six European countries in disadvantaged areas called CHIs (Centres of High Intensity). YEPP promotes community and youth empowerment through capacity building and training at the local level which involves all local stakeholders in a process of systematic planning for long-term change. To be successful these plans must be holistic and therefore cross-sectoral and they must be dynamic; *i.e.* innovative and able to respond flexibly to the developing needs of the community. To be fully effective, this model explicitly requires the public, private and independent sectors to work together in partnership and with the community to find ways to identify and achieve commonly agreed goals.

Creating such change in communities requires knowledge and its effective management. The YEPP process is aimed at acquiring knowledge about the community and its needs, as identified by local stakeholders, and managing and using that knowledge for the benefit of the community. This is achieved through a cyclical process of needs assessment – goal setting – evaluation and feedback leading to new goal identification, etc. This process is strengthened through trans-national co-operation.

Structurally YEPP has several layers. At the local level, there is a local support group (LSG), which is the local motor of change. The membership of the LSG includes representatives of the local, public, private and independent sectors, the foundation supporting the project, youth and is supported by the local co-ordinator and researcher.

The LSGs are supported both by the programme team (PT) for the whole international YEPP, based in Berlin and the other YEPP sites through the transnational component of the work. The PT plays a pivotal role in the YEPP since it is the management hub of YEPP. It reports to a Steering Committee comprising the funding foundations, NEF, the OECD and the YEPP director.

A particular feature of YEPP is its evaluation programme. As noted above, evaluation is used as part of the knowledge management process to steer decision-making. This aspect, among others, is captured by the internal evaluation (IE) which is carried out by the local researcher and the PT through regular data gathering over the course of the project. An external evaluation (EE) is carried out by the OECD via visits to each YEPP site each year over two years. Although presented separately there is planned complementarity between the IE and the EE.

The Foundation partnership

The YEPP was created by a group of committed foundations, both big and small, within the framework of the European Foundation Centre (EFC). OECD was invited to join at an early stage before the creation of the YEPP steering committee and before the administrative responsibility for the project was assumed by AICE/NEF.

In these early days, aspects of the implementation and management of YEPP certainly tested the resolve, coherence and collective responsibility of this “consortium”. Certainly some of the

implementation issues which arose came from individual foundation decisions that did not take fully into account the collective implications. In general terms, however, the co-operation fared well.

Thus in creating such a co-operation, the individual members must be prepared to share power and make decisions in the light of the group's interests and not solely their own. It may be helpful in the future to have formal contracts to clarify roles, responsibilities and expectations with sunset clauses.

What are the costs?

There are four types of cost for foundations in supporting YEPP. One is to the overall programme budget, the second is for the individual YEPP sites, the third for the trans-national component and the fourth for other costs.

The overall programme budget

Although there is no fixed scale of contribution, the current minimum annual fee is EUR 10 000 with a EUR 5 000 supplement for the external evaluation costs.¹ This fee is paid to NEF. Given the low cost of YEPP, the regular and reliable payment of these subscriptions is important to avoid cash flow problems for programme management. This was not always the case and should be rectified in the future. Alternatively, there needs to be some kind of buffer arrangement (perhaps at NEF) so that the programme management can access funds in a timely manner.

The individual YEPP sites

The investment made in each YEPP site depends on the foundation(s) involved. On average it was approximately EUR 40 000 per annum over the period of YEPP, 2002-2005. This paid for the local co-ordinator and a local researcher (both part-time). In addition, foundations invested between EUR 20 000 and EUR 100 000 per annum for other site initiatives such as local projects and events. This sum is certainly modest by contrast to other programmes with similar goals and its adequacy should be given serious attention.

The trans-national component

This part of YEPP was perceived as very important by the youth and the local site workers, and the costs for international meetings are born by the foundations where possible. Some funds for travel for youth for example are carried by the programme management via specific grants from foundations, particularly interested in this aspect of the work, and the European Union.

Other costs

This category includes costs for attending meetings of the steering committee and the amounts are dependent on individual circumstances.

¹. From Jan. 1, 2007 these costs will be consolidated into a single figure of EUR 15 000 for the core budget.

Does YEPP work?

The main ingredients

The YEPP model

The external evaluation shows that the international centrally-managed project, YEPP, was successful in bringing together and developing partnerships with stakeholders from different sectors in all of the sites. Some took longer than others, but this is in the nature of such work. Some sites implemented the YEPP model more fully than others and those that did were more successful than those that did not. The trans-national component was especially appreciated, and in addition there are many examples of sustainable youth and community empowerment programmes that were initiated. ***This implies that a systematic holistic approach to youth development work of this type, using feedback from researchers on the ground to guide future decision-making, is to be strongly recommended.***

The selection of sites

YEPP works in sites which have been called Centres of High Intensity. These are areas where there is a concentration of severe problems impacting on youth involvement and where there are already a variety of services functioning on the ground. The sites involved in YEPP were those where foundations were already working. This was clearly a pragmatic solution when the programme began but is hardly the best selection method for a strong evaluation since it imposes limits on the generalisability of the data. In addition, there is a question mark over whether the sites were all deprived. Some, *e.g.* Tuzla, clearly were; others, *e.g.* Turin (Parella), clearly were not. ***If the goal of YEPP is to meet the needs of disadvantaged youths and the communities in which they live more attention should be given to the criteria of site selection.***

The youth involved

YEPP works with youth at risk. It is clear that the youth were more at risk in some areas than others and it is also true, not surprisingly, that most sites had difficulty in reaching the most marginalised groups, although the numbers of youth involved increased over time. In future, more work needs to be done to include these groups in the activities. This may present the biggest challenge for the trans-national programme which requires competence in spoken English, and for those not having such competence will necessitate the involvement of interpreters – an additional cost factor for foundations? ***Thus a strategy is needed to involve youth who are hard to reach.***

The local support group as the motor of change

The local support group proved to be of central importance as the change agent for the sites. Where this worked well, YEPP made most progress with some sites learning to use the feedback available from the local researcher very effectively for future planning. ***A rational local decision-making model of knowledge management will help to empower both communities and youth.***

The trans-national element

The trans-national element of YEPP consisted of youth exchanges, thematic capacity building workshops and two YEPP-community conferences. This feature was singled out as a very successful programme by all stakeholders, even though perhaps inevitably some felt that the exchanges could have been better organised with broader participation. The Community TV and EmpowerMediaNetwork was an especially effective outcome which brought together youth from the various sites to learn about this media via practical projects such as making documentaries. Projects such as this provide a real dynamic for

further collaboration going well beyond one-off exchange programmes. There were also transnational training sessions and meetings for the co-ordinators and researchers which were widely appreciated. ***The success of YEPP is clearly strongly linked to the significant role played by the trans-national element. In the global village, this experience gives authenticity to projects and creates new experience and ideas for youth to work with.***

Evaluation

This component of YEPP was a very important element in the original design. There are two aspects the so-called internal evaluation (IE) and the external evaluation (EE). The IE was designed as a formative evaluation and was carried out regularly during the course of the work, gathering data by various means, while the EE was conducted by the OECD during two visits to each site on an annual basis. Here the data gathered were mainly by interview.

Internal evaluation

There can be no question that the IE process was perceived as heavy by the sites and the local researchers found it difficult to provide all of the required reports. The sites also thought that it attracted funds that could have been spent on site projects. Ultimately the balance was decided by individual foundations. So, for example, if the research budget was cut idiosyncratically it threatened the viability of the local and trans-national dimensions of the evaluation— and this at times led to considerable stress for the PT. This element of the decision-making process needs to be addressed in new work. Nevertheless, a great deal of data were gathered from each site which has allowed for detailed understanding of the development of the programme. For instance, the IE process was useful for defining the local strategic action plans and assisted in the process of collective reflection as the programme developed. The PT should be praised for the way they stuck to their guns through this process. ***While none of the sites started out with a strong evaluation culture it is noteworthy that some have come to appreciate the importance of data in making good decisions and understanding and monitoring progress. This will become a very important selling feature for future developments and fundraising and empowerment.***

External evaluation

This component had fewer problems, although it proved difficult to find people on the site to support the visits. The EE was also criticised for not providing feedback to the sites after the first visit. The issue here is how far should this component of the evaluation be considered as formative, or should it be truly independent not impacting on the sites themselves? This question needs to be resolved in future applications of designs of this sort and made clear to all actors at the outset.

Capacity building and training

YEPP afforded the opportunity for much capacity building and training through the working of the LSGs and the projects that emerged from their planning cycles. The trans-national workshops and meetings also provided the context for much and varied learning experiences. ***These encounters were widely appreciated, especially by the youth and clearly impacted on progress and projects in the YEPP individual sites.***

Programme team

For most of the time, there were four members of the programme team: a project director (full-time), one part-time project officer, one part-time research assistant and a secretary (part-time). They provided the central management structure for the YEPP. The PT has the role of inspiring the sites, supporting the developments at local and trans-national levels and evaluating the process and outcomes and organising

trans-national capacity building meetings and the YEPP-community conferences. It also carries the responsibility for marketing YEPP, e.g. via the newspaper and website, fund-raising etc. In addition, it is responsible to the steering committee and serves as its secretariat. Members of the PT spent much of their time visiting and talking with site representatives, keeping them on track and helping them to overcome obstacles, develop new initiatives etc. In carrying out these tasks they were criticised for a lack of flexibility by some sites. This is inevitable, but the very fact that the sites are still continuing suggests that this was not a serious problem – furthermore the project director remains held in high esteem by the participating foundations. ***In an international programme a central management team is essential and it must be properly staffed. A question has to be raised as to whether the team has adequate funding and staffing levels to deal efficiently with all of these tasks in the medium to long term future.***

The OECD

Apart from carrying out the EE, the OECD in close collaboration with the PT, has played a major role in conceptualising YEPP and designing the evaluation. It has been represented on the Steering Committee and the executive committee of YEPP and has attended most meetings as well as the YEPP-community conferences. It has also made presentations at a number of EFC annual assemblies.

The OECD has brought YEPP to the attention of all of its member countries and has broadened the project through, e.g. country policy reviews on partnership as part of its own work on partnerships for inclusion. ***The involvement of the OECD has helped to link sites with national governments in some countries. This probably would not have happened without the support of the foundations and we hope to be able to continue our involvement in the future.***

Youth and community empowerment

Youth empowerment

All sites developed youth empowerment strategies from involving young people in local decision-making processes to youth consultations around various aspects of life. Mannheim was especially proud of its cultural activity « Neckarstadt-West Side Story ». Youth centres were established to encourage youth to mix with each other e.g. Kristinestad's 'Culture Cafe' ; citizenship was promoted in Antwerp through the UN rights of the child workshop. Economic empowerment appeared in Tuzla's youth bank. ***It must be concluded that the YEPP programme has been successful in creating a large number of enduring youth empowerment projects.***

Community empowerment

In YEPP the central mechanism for creating community empowerment is the LSG, which comprises stakeholders ideally from the public, private and independent sectors and youth, supported by a local co-ordinator and researcher and a representative of the funding foundation. Although a local support group with this particular structure was not established in all YEPP sites, nevertheless, projects aimed at empowering communities were established in all YEPP sites. They covered a wide range and had different goals; for instance, the Incubator project in Turin (Mirafiori) to guide community members in setting up small businesses and a Community foundation in Tuzla. Citizen building and education projects were also established as were those covering social, environmental and health issues. Projects covering cultural issues in the arts, music and TV media were also strongly developed. ***Thus YEPP was clearly successful in promoting community empowerment.***

Partnerships

The public sector

Co-operation with the public sector was seen as difficult. Nevertheless, all sites developed some degree of partnership and many had public sector representatives on their LSGs. In Kristinestad, for example, the municipal council became part of the LSG and provided financial support for the continuation of the work. In this case the council stepped in to support a project which it valued after the foundation had removed its funding – an example of the value of a sunset clause? In any event it also attests to the success of the YEPP in Kristinestad.

On a broader basis, as perceived through the eyes of the OECD, a key obstacle was that the public sector was not involved in the original site selection. This needs to be rectified in the future. Apart from this, the usual problems of different understanding of goals and objectives, working styles etc. emerged as barriers. *Nevertheless, there were good examples of the impact of YEPP on public policy at the local level and recognition of significant issues by policy-makers at the national level. However, more attention should be given to this partnership.*

The private sector

Engagement with the private sector was generally weak partly because of a lack of tradition in some European countries for this type of partnership and partly because of the perceived lack of motivation for the private sector. Hence there was little private sector involvement in LSGs. Timberland enjoyed a successful link with a school in Antwerp but this is rather a special case since this company has a policy to engage with the community. However, towards the end of the evaluation period there were signs of progress especially via the media companies and through the community foundation and youth bank initiatives. There is clearly scope for further policy development here to create incentives for private sector involvement, e.g. through tax reform and broader public sector interest. *Despite these difficulties the fact that progress was clearly made again supports the YEPP ideals and method. But again this partnership arrangement needs to become the focus of a more comprehensive strategy developed at a high level. One way forward would be to plan a seminar to develop an appropriate course of action.*

Foundations

Foundations joined YEPP for different reasons. The CS Mott foundation for instance wished to support co-operative practice between foundations in a context in which it has much expertise to share, while others joined mainly to learn to learn and benefit from co-operative venture. Others wished to extend an earlier co-operation with the OECD on a project on the integration of services for children at risk. There appears to have been a mixed impact on foundation practices. In the case of the Compagnia di San Paulo and Evens the effects have been profound, since the former has set up new YEPP projects in other sites in Italy, and the latter is planning a new site in Poland. Some have been more cautious and the benefits have mainly been the opportunity to work with other foundations and share experiences but one is known to be looking to expand the work with other local foundations. It is worth mentioning at this point the link with a project in Brazil, where originally strong links have weakened partly due to a lack of resources to develop them. The lessons learned from this experience should be followed up in the planning of YEPP II.

Network of European Foundations for innovative co-operation (NEF)

For the individual foundations involved YEPP was seen as a ground-breaking step which has paved the way to help NEF develop similarly structured foundation co-operations.

Sustainability

Sustainability is obviously a key issue for any project such as YEPP and is a good indicator of success. In the case of YEPP there are many examples of how YEPP sites have developed sustainability strategies. These have been through exploring the possibilities of obtaining external grants, *e.g.* from the European Union, obtaining funding from the public sector and the development of community foundations – first advanced in Tuzla but taken up in Turin (Mirafiori) and Antwerp. Again this attests to the success of the YEPP transnational programme since this sharing is unlikely to have taken place without it.

Future strategies

New partners

Over the course of the YEPP programme it has not proved easy to get new foundations on board and if YEPP is to grow in increase its impact there is an urgent need for a coherent strategy to tackle this issue.

Marketing

Bringing new partners on board is certainly linked to marketing issues. It will be fundamental to increase substantially investments in the production of materials which can explain YEPP and advertise its considerable achievements. Perhaps some thought should be given to the proposed new title “YEPP II” which may not signal clearly enough the breadth of innovative possibilities which are envisaged under this banner.

REPORT ON THE YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME: CROSS-NATIONAL SITE COMPARISON

REPORT OF THE OECD/CERI EXTERNAL EVALUATION*

JANUARY 2007

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Aims and purpose

This report was commissioned by the Steering Committee of the Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme (YEPP) with the following purposes:

- To have a systematic, independent account of the development, perceived quality, and impact across the YEPP sites, including policy impact on local, regional and national levels.
- To indicate lessons learned in the form of recommendations for future phases of YEPP in order to improve and extend the YEPP experience.

The report aims to contribute to a stock-taking of YEPP as it moves from its first phase to its second. It is hoped that the results will be used both internally, for discussion within the YEPP Teams and members of the Steering Committee, and externally for dissemination to possible new YEPP sites.

The report, which is the last instalment in a series consisting of case studies for each of the participating YEPP sites, provides a comparative overview of the reports prepared on the seven sites. The end goal of this work is to provide a thorough yet concise look at the development, functioning, and outcomes of YEPP from 2002-2005.

Brief overview of the YEPP model

The YEPP is a multi-layered international project working in six European countries in disadvantaged areas called CHIs (Centres of High Intensity).² YEPP promotes community and youth empowerment through capacity building and training at the local level which involves all local stakeholders in a process of systematic planning for long-term change. To be successful in the context of YEPP, these plans must be holistic and therefore cross-sectoral and they must be dynamic; i.e. innovative and able to respond flexibly to the developing needs of the community. To be fully effective, this model explicitly requires the public, private and independent sectors to work together in partnership and with the community to find ways to identify and achieve commonly agreed goals.

Creating such change in communities requires knowledge and its effective management. The YEPP process is aimed at acquiring knowledge about the community and its needs, as identified by local stakeholders, and managing and using that knowledge for the benefit of the community. This is achieved through a cyclical process of - *needs assessment and resource mapping – goal setting – evaluation and feedback leading to new goal setting* - etc. This process is strengthened through trans-national co-operation.

Structurally YEPP has several layers. At the local level, there is a local support group (LSG), which is the local motor of change. The membership of the LSG includes representatives of the local, public, private and independent sectors, the foundation supporting the project and youth and is supported by the local co-ordinator and researcher.

The LSGs are supported both by the programme team for the whole international YEPP, based in Berlin and the other YEPP sites through the transnational component of the work. The programme team

2. Centres of High Intensity (CHIs) are defined rural and urban geographical areas which are affected by a complex set of challenges. In spite of existing approaches and initiatives towards youth empowerment and community development, these sites are in need of a more coherent strategy and coordinated efforts to respond to these challenges.

(PT) plays a pivotal role in the YEPP since it is the management hub of the YEPP. It reports to a Steering Committee comprising the funding foundations, NEF, the OECD and the YEPP director.

A particular feature of YEPP is its evaluation programme. In the original concept paper (Evans and Krueger, 2000; see Annex 1) two complementary evaluations were designed. As noted above, evaluation is used as part of the knowledge management process to steer decision-making and the internal evaluation (IE) was intended to be able to capture this process and contextualise it within other developments in the sites over the duration of the project. The IE is carried out by the local researcher and the programme team (PT). The external evaluation (EE) was planned to broaden the evaluation to include policy level inputs and confirm the IE and would be carried out by OECD. A detailed plan for the EE was presented to the steering committee and is attached as Annex 2. This formed the basis for the interviews carried out during the EE. It is important to note that the whole evaluation plan was developed in collaboration with the PT and the local researchers during a series of meetings at the beginning of the project.

The structure of YEPP

The Steering Committee whose members are the contributing foundations, NEF, the OECD and the YEPP Director, is the decision-making board of YEPP. Foundations wishing to become involved pass their payments for the core budget through NEF which holds the administrative responsibility for YEPP. There is a Chairperson and Deputy (Vice) Chairperson who are foundation representatives. The Steering committee has a small executive committee of the Chairman and Vice Chair of the Steering Committee, NEF, the OECD and the YEPP Director. The PT act as secretariat for this committee. These committees meet as frequently as is necessary.

The PT has the responsibility of the overall management of all other aspects of the implementation of YEPP including the IE and the OECD holds the responsibility for the EE.

Individual foundations support the sites independently and make payments directly to these sites. A member of the foundation is part of the LSG.

The financing of YEPP

There are four types of cost for foundations in supporting YEPP. One is to the overall programme budget, the second is for the individual YEPP sites, the third for the trans-national component and the fourth for other costs.

The overall programme budget – although there is no fixed scale of contribution, the current minimum annual fee is EUR 10 000 with a EUR 5 000 supplement for the external evaluation costs. This fee is paid to NEF. Given the low cost of YEPP, the regular and reliable payment of these subscriptions is important to avoid cash flow problems for programme management. This was not always the case and should be rectified in the future. Alternatively, there needs to be some kind of buffer arrangement (perhaps at NEF) so that the programme management can access funds in a timely manner.

The individual YEPP sites – the investment made in each YEPP site depends on the foundation(s) involved. On average it was approximately EUR 40 000. This paid for the local co-ordinator (part-time) and a local researcher. In addition, foundations invested between EUR 20 000 and about EUR 100 000 per annum for other site initiatives such as local projects and events. This sum is certainly modest by contrast to other programmes with similar goals and its adequacy should be given serious attention.

The trans-national component – this part of YEPP was perceived as very important by the youth and the local site workers, and the costs for international meetings are born by the foundations where possible.

Some funds for travel for youth for example are carried by the programme management via specific grants from foundations, particularly interested in this aspect of the work, and the EU.

Other costs – this category includes costs for attending meetings of the steering committee and the amounts are dependent on individual circumstances. It can be noted that for the poorer foundations, on occasions, participation in steering committee meetings was prevented for financial reasons.

Methodology

The report is based on a comparative quantitative report on levels of deprivation at each of the seven YEPP sites³ and the site visits of the OECD/CERI external evaluation team, who conducted semi-structured interviews using the outline noted above with:

- The YEPP site teams:
 - Representatives of the funding foundations.
 - YEPP local Co-ordinators.
 - YEPP local Researchers.
 - Members of the YEPP local support Groups.
- Youth participants in YEPP.
- Community members involved in or with experience of YEPP, including local decision-makers.
- Regional and national stakeholders working in related areas (*i.e.* social inclusion, education, youth, partnerships).
- Discussion with representatives of the YEPP Programme Team.
- Discussions with the YEPP director on the foundation Partnership.
- Observations of the OECD/CERI external evaluation review team.⁴

In total, more than 330 individuals representing local, regional and national levels as well as public, private, and independent sectors were interviewed during two site visits (the first in 2004 and the second in 2005; see Annex 3 for a complete list of individuals interviewed). Interviews followed a semi-structured format that probed experiences of Context, Input, Process, and Product on the topics of youth empowerment, community development, and partnerships. The experiences and the interviews were divided along sectors (public/private/independent) and levels (mandating, strategic, operational, and field). The interviews were conducted individually unless the interviewee expressed a great preference for another partner (this was sometimes the case for the youth, for example). Interviewees were offered the choice of conducting the interview in English, French or their native language. Interviews were then transcribed and

3 See OECD (2006)

4. For the site visits this team was composed of an OECD/CERI researcher and a local Inland Researcher, who commented on relevant national policy and local context and aided in organising the visit.

coded using the qualitative coding software N7. Annex 2 contains a more detailed description of the interview process, the methodology used, and data collection and analysis.

Reporting

This report reflects the findings of the external evaluation regarding the development, process, and outcomes of the sites of the YEPP also informed by observations at the strategic level by officers in foundations and public administrations as well as representatives of the private sector. It is organized by main themes, looking at partnership building, youth empowerment, community development, and transnational co-operation.

As one of the goals of this evaluation was to reflect on the processes of change, central interviewees were interviewed on both site visits, during the second of which they were explicitly prompted to reflect on changes since the previous year and future plans. Sustainability issues and lessons learned are also reflected.

It is important to emphasise that the bulk of the observations of this evaluation come from the local stakeholders, including youth, themselves, and are not opinions imposed from the outside. Some contributions are quoted verbatim when they seem particularly insightful or when a comment sums up the majority view on a particular topic.

Context

As a project designed to provide approaches to address issues of social exclusion and the lack of empowerment for communities and youth, it is important to frame the investigation in measurable terms. As such we focus on the concept of *deprivation*, which can be defined as the inadequate integration of a community or neighbourhood with the ongoing development of the rest of the area. A complex combination of economic, demographic, political, cultural, environmental and architectural determinants lies behind this problem. Moreover, it is not an instantaneous condition, but an evolving process that can quickly enter a severe cycle of decline or extend to other localities. For a variety of factors, the population of a deprived neighbourhood does not have the same opportunities as people living elsewhere; this may involve the labour market, education, health, security, leisure activities and/or other aspects. Similarly, small businesses based in these areas are disadvantaged or experience limited resources compared to those established elsewhere.

As defined above, deprivation lies in the middle ground between the individually-based concept of social exclusion and the geographical concept of distressed zones (generally but not exclusively urban). The economic, human and geographic dimensions become all essential components when analysing this problem. One of the key challenges to evaluating YEPP is the nature of the variables under study and the diversity of the different sites and contexts. Of the seven sites, five are in urban areas (Antwerp, Dublin, Mannheim, Mirafiori, and Parella), one semi-urban (Tuzla), and one rural (Kristinestad). Within the urban areas three can be considered distressed social areas compared to a benchmark of the mean of the city⁵

5. Using Antwerp as an illustrative reference, Antwerp North has a considerably higher population density, a younger population, and a high incidence of unstable family structures as compared to Antwerp City as a whole. In addition, the housing stock is in worse condition, levels of pollution seem to be elevated, income is considerably lower, more people receive financial assistance and not as many persons own vehicles or fixed telephone connections. In terms of the labour market, unemployment is higher (especially among the male, less educated and, to some extent, the young population); there are lower levels of self-employment and less business establishments per capita; the foreign population is particularly hit, with unemployment rates approaching 50%. (see OECD, 2006)

(Antwerp North, Dublin North-East Inner City and Neckarstadt-West, Mannheim), one is only partially deprived (Mirafiori⁶), and one does not meet any of the criteria for deprivation (Parella⁷).

The other two sites show many symptoms of social exclusion, but of a different nature: Kristinestad has a rapidly aging population and a lack of social and economic opportunity for youth; while Tuzla is transitioning through its post-war context and thus faces a number of challenges that are incommensurate to those of the other sites. Comparison across the sites and projects is thus difficult. Although quantitatively impossible (data are not available for Tuzla, for example, and the breadth and date of data available from the other sites is not comparable), there are a number of ways in which qualitative comparisons can be usefully made and general lessons can be extrapolated from the various experiences of the sites. The following sections look at the key themes of YEPP based mainly on the qualitative data obtained during the country visits.

Implementation of the YEPP local process⁸

All YEPP sites were designed to have a LSG composed of local stakeholders as well as a representative from the funding foundation. Across the sites and the duration of the project there were many variations on this structure, with some sites making an explicit effort to fulfil the requirements (Turin, Tuzla, Kristinestad) while others chose only those aspects that suited them (Antwerp up to 2004, Mannheim). Part of this was due to expectations upon entering the project (note that this became more refined as the process advanced such that later sites were more likely to implement the full model). Part of this was also due to changes in personnel, with new staff choosing to do less/more as a function of their interests. Although this latter aspect is generally beyond control, the first point regarding expectations is a central recommendation for the successful implementation of this feature of the YEPP Model (see all case studies for further information). Note that the sites that were the most faithful in implementing this element were often the most successful, and there is good evidence that this structure provides a sound basis for implementing change if properly implemented and supported. Furthermore, if a well functioning LSG is not established, as in Antwerp and Mannheim, an opportunity for promoting youth and community is missed. Choosing partners with shared goals and formally agreeing to remain true to the model, then, will not only aid in fulfilling the requirements of the model but also facilitate the effective functioning of the sites themselves.

-
6. Although the proportion of young people remain high, the neighbourhood has rapidly aged and this effect on the dependency ratio is a cause for concern; depopulation has also increased. The price of property is lower than in other areas, but not drastically so; also, residential accommodation is mostly owner-occupied and they are larger in size than the city average. In terms of general demographics and housing variables, Mirafiori does not appear to suffer major difficulties compared to the rest of Turin. Some red warning signs are detectable, however, on the labour market: unemployment is high by city standards; there is a low level of self-employment; educational attainment lies somewhat below the city average; and, a good portion of the jobs are in the operational and intermediate level. If the transition currently underway towards a deindustrialisation of the zone continues, the consequences on the population could be very negative.
 7. Parella's demographic indicators are normal; its household characteristics are comparable to the rest of Turin; its labour market is healthier than the rest of the urban area; its population is better educated and occupies jobs in higher categories. In other words, Parella can be described as a dynamic middle-class urban sector inside the city of Turin; even though Parella is undoubtedly experiencing difficulties, they are common to the entire city, thus Parella cannot be described as a distressed urban area.
 8. Given the design of the evaluation and the limited extent of the visits to the sites, the EE cannot comment on the details of the process. This is the work of the internal evaluation.

Of special note are the regular coordinator and researcher meetings that brought together the site representatives. These meetings were useful, appreciated, and built a greater sense of community in the team members:

“It’s nice when there was this meeting here last year with all the coordinators, and the steering community, because on that level they have the possibility to touch, really to touch, to speak, to hear people, really it was so nice.” - Member of YEPP Tuzla.

The individual case studies give more detail on the strengths and weaknesses of the various coordinators, support groups, and foundation representatives. In this next section we will focus on the single most difficult implementation aspect of the model: the research.

Research

The research component of the YEPP design was only realised fully in some of the sites and then towards the end of the duration of the programme, although this was not due to a lack of skill on the part of the researchers. In most YEPP sites there was an inherent difficulty in bringing research into a community development project that was unaccustomed to research, and the initial (and often long-standing) impression of the local stakeholders was that the research requirement was imposed from the outside, and represented an external drain on the local project. This was true in every site except one: YEPP Dublin fully understood the importance of the needs analysis of the research design, however they adapted it to the local conditions while still following the general aims of the YEPP evaluation procedure. One of the major tasks of the researcher was to map the services provided in the community against the needs that they were serving, a project very much appreciated by the local stakeholders:

“There’s so much going on, and you know we all know each other, or pretty much, so you feel like you know what’s out there. But then [researcher] did this mapping and it was really usefully to really take the time and set it down, get that information down there. And now we can see the gaps, we can see the overlaps, and we can see what we need to do better.” - Member of independent sector (Dublin).

Of course, in doing so this particular researcher had less time and funding to do the work that needed to be done for the YEPP team, which in turn generated its own tension. In fact, all YEPP researchers struggled with how best to be the “critical friend”⁹ required by the YEPP model and how best to incorporate research in a community project so that it would be appreciated. Working with the site and impressing on them the importance of the research was initially difficult, especially in a climate where evaluation was not a standard practice of community development projects:

“I don’t know if my role or way of working has changed or the awareness about evaluation has changed – in the beginning it was difficult for the groups to understand what this model of evaluation is. Now things are changing and people are becoming more aware that evaluation is a tool, and that they can use it.” - Researcher (Turin).

One continuing difficulty was that the language of research is not generally immediately accessible to a diverse audience, and the requirements of the YEPP model were not easily digestible by the community:

“Things are changing, but I would say something I complained of from the beginning, is that there is too much paper, and no-one reads them [the reports]. We should invest more in creating consumable things, graphics, only three pages, multimedia maybe, which is more entertaining and easier to read. I doubt anyone ever reads the fifty page description of things in formal Italian, maybe only the circle of YEPP.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

9. Part of the work of the local researcher was to function as a critical friend, *i.e.* providing “objective” feedback to the LSG on progress with the implementation of the action plans in order to help the LSG respond to obstacles and keep the programme on track.

The Programme Team

The Programme Team (PT) served as the central coordinating unit for YEPP. In this role they communicated with both foundations and the sites, and oversaw the internal evaluation of YEPP as well as providing on-going guidance and capacity building (e.g. in grant application co-ordination). There was a very positive perception of the Director as a driving force and “glue” for the project, particularly in her commitment to consultation and encouraging equal partnership.

“I think it’s been helpful that we’ve had sustainability with Angelika. She’s always been there and we have at times needed that push. There’s a sense that you know what you’re buying into.” – Foundation representative.

This commitment to the project and goals of YEPP, and a willingness to invest the time and energy needed to guide the project, was essential to the continued functioning of the project. However there were two main criticisms of the functioning and role of the PT in general. The first and most commonly cited was the amount of reporting:

“I understand that you need someone to coordinate it, but it was sometimes very heavy, all the reports you need... obviously you need reports, but something concise and short.” - Foundation representative.

Despite the PT’s best efforts to engage with the sites, through visits and discussions and trans-national meetings, there remained a perceived lack of flexibility and willingness to engage in open dialogue with the sites especially, and not surprisingly, where the difference between the local working model and the YEPP concept of change were most visible. But it must be recognised that a trans-national research project of this type is bound to suffer this sort of difficulty when formal international comparisons are attempting to be made.

OECD

One note on the external evaluation conducted by OECD/CERI: From the sites’ perspective the main critique of the external evaluation was the lack of interim reporting and feedback to the sites. Although the decision to restrict the full feedback to the final overall reports was made for methodological reasons, there was disappointment on the site level regarding this decision and indeed in many cases the full feedback of the case studies will arrive too late to be of local use. If there is an external evaluation component in future versions of YEPP, this issue should be readdressed.

Assessing the local implementation of the YEPP

Most of the sites made serious attempts to try and engage and fulfil the local requirements of YEPP (e.g. having a co-ordinator, a researcher, a local support group, and a foundation representative). However there was variation in how well this was accomplished and some sites (such as Antwerp up to 2004, and Mannheim) deliberately did NOT set out to fulfil certain aspects of the local implementation of YEPP (e.g. having a local support group). In addition the sites began at different times (e.g. Dublin started two years later than most). Such variability makes assessing the implementation of the YEPP model across sites difficult. It should be noted that in Antwerp the situation changed considerably when the Steering Committee insisted that for Antwerp to remain in the project there would need to be a clearer commitment to the YEPP model.

Key Themes of YEPP

In evaluating YEPP, it is important to remember that YEPP is, as much a process as a concretised project with a range of different outputs. The main variables under scrutiny, cross-sectoral partnerships, youth empowerment, community empowerment, and trans-national cooperation, are difficult to evaluate

and this section looks at each of these variables in turn, focussing on the process, the products (in terms of key changes and challenges), and lessons learned for the future. Where appropriate, the context of national and regional policy and comments of national/regional stake-holders are integrated into the analysis.

Development of Cross-Sectoral Partnerships

The process of building partnerships is time consuming and multi-faceted. This section will examine this process by focussing on selected elements, including the:

- Quality of co-operation (among partners).
- Communication and networking.
- Co-operation between sectors.
- Triangulation (*i.e.* the effective combination of public, private, and independent sectors).

Assessing cross-sectoral partnership building

In developing partnerships of any kind, the most important prerequisites are shared goals and complementary skills that can be combined. Strong communication is also an essential component of an effective partnership.

The sites all made concerted efforts to engage in partnerships, both within and across sectors. It goes without saying that the process of fostering effective partnerships must be evaluated against the setting of political, social and cultural contexts, which invariably exert an influence on the extent to which degrees of success can be achieved.

The sites fall into three general categories: both Kristinestad and Mirafiori made very strong progress, with high involvement of the various sectors and increasing participation of the private sector, strong communications and quality of the relationships, and examples of triangulation among the three sectors. These two sites are closely followed by Antwerp, Mannheim, and Tuzla, which have high quality partnerships (and involvement of the private sector, even if limited in the case of Mannheim), and good communication among the partners. The third group is composed of Dublin and Parella, the two sites that had been unsuccessful at the time of the second site visit at involving the private sector and, in the case of Parella, were in danger of losing some of their support group members. (Again, it should be noted that Dublin had only one year of formal operation at the time of the second site visit and so had less time to develop relative to the other sites.)

Key Changes

Many sites managed to enhance their profile effectively in the public sector, either on the local public administration level or beyond. This often led to a diversification of local actors, almost invariably considered an asset in facilitating effective partnership with the public sector. Key changes in partnerships through the inclusion of relevant administration representatives were observed in all the sites. In Dublin, for example, an explicit goal at the time of the first site visit was to foster connections at the statutory level, especially the with the Probation, Police, and Education areas. By the time of the second visit they had achieved success with both Probation and Police, and were making progress with Education.

Another goal achieved to varying extents across the sites was the strengthening of links within the community. The importance of a deepened connection to the community must not be underestimated, as

YEPP sites, in their most basic form, depend largely on the community and exist in order to facilitate positive change where they are located. Many sites were particularly successful in building trust with the stakeholders and endowing them with a feeling of ownership, such as Mirafiori and Tuzla.

In addition, youth involvement, as a rule, effectively increased between most site visits and throughout the history of each site. This is significant given youth's potential role both in benefiting from YEPP and in disseminating the values of YEPP. Individual accomplishments will be discussed in the section on Youth Empowerment.

Several, but not all, sites managed to co-operate with the private sector but one, Kristinestad eventually developed a partnership with a Norwegian media company, lyk-z videoproduksjon. But it was a particularly difficult task and none of the other sites was fully successful at bringing the private sector into the support groups as a fully involved member. The ability to approach the private sector was often dependent on the national and local contexts, including existing traditions of public-private partnership, or a lack thereof, and a perceived lack of incentives for the private sector to engage in such partnerships.

Interestingly, the concept of cross-sectoral partnerships served to raise awareness of the need for capacity building in this domain in order to make further progress. The sites did not necessarily feel that they had the required background, tools, and support essential for partnership-building. Capacity building within support groups on a variety of issues, including the notion of cultivating further partnerships, was frequently seen as essential. Mannheim, for example, was able to establish limited involvement of the private sector but wanted to do much more:

"We wanted to get contact with the private sector, but we don't have the resources at the moment, we don't have the time. And we don't have the know-how." - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

In addition some sites perceived their region/country as generally lacking a tradition of cross-sectoral partnerships, especially in comparison to other national contexts. This raises the question of whether programmes like YEPP might have the ability to contribute to a change in mentality which could override such traditions or lack thereof.

"Every time I read the words public/private partnerships, I come outside of my country, they always understand it in a very different way. When we compare it with British and American models, we always see that the private partnerships there are viewed as a very strong support, for instance by commercial organizations, companies. This is something that doesn't exist here, kind of a charity tradition that does not exist in our country. There is always a struggle... when we try to involve these kinds of companies into these kinds of projects at the same level they do in England and America." - Member of local administration (Antwerp).

Challenges for YEPP

The standard challenge in building cross-sectoral partnerships is how to create bridges between the different working strategies of the sectors involved. Communication is evidently an important means of facilitating this, but, as we have seen, the method of communication itself often varied substantially across sectors. Some of the challenges involved in establishing strong partnerships were related to imperfect communication and different interpretations of the same terms:

"I think that sometimes you need the help of... somebody who translates the needs of the people participating in the project ... to put it into local government words. ... That's a very difficult job because they have to be able to speak both languages, so it's not easy." - Local administration representative (Antwerp).

Even within the public sector itself different timelines and administrative obligations can either facilitate or create barriers to co-operation:

“That’s the curious thing about the district, for technical and practical projects, we have one advertisement in the city, but we don’t have one in the district because they had a two month decision-making process for that so I didn’t think it worth the bother for YEPP.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

Another problem was the prevalent perception that the bureaucracy was simply lethargic and therefore a hindrance to effective cross-sectoral partnerships. Those interviewees who were used to working with the public sector had often developed strategies to circumvent the bureaucratic delay (for approval of certain projects, for example). Although not recommended as a long-term strategy for partnership building, it seemed effective for those who were required to work within the school system, infamous for resistance to change:

“My slogan, my motto – is ‘it’s easier to get forgiveness than to get permission’ I’ll just go ahead and see what happens.” - School representative (Antwerp).

As previously discussed a common challenge across the sites was how to increase the participation of the private sector, and how to capitalise on the progress already made in this area. Many YEPP sites had difficulty interesting the private sector in the project and in maintaining the interest of those private sector representatives they were able to attract. In addition to the capacity and know-how required, there were often concrete barriers to encouraging the participation of the private sector (see challenges from the policy world below).

A daunting challenge for all YEPP sites was the need to be able to explain YEPP as a project in concrete and easily understandable terms in order to facilitate partnerships and the involvement of prospective members:

“I think I understand, but some people are in YEPP and they don’t understand what it means. It is important for marketing YEPP to promote YEPP, because people should know what it means, where it is, in Europe in the whole world. And what does it mean? Is it for young people, is it for everybody? I think they should promote much more YEPP and the projects and the whole program.” - Youth (Tuzla).

There were some suggested improvements, such as moving away from traditional, lengthy, written reports and towards a more accessible method to market the project:

“The main values of YEPP should have been set in a more visualisable way, instead of writing five pages – it should be clear that you have empowerment, you have gender, etc so that this is a common ground that everyone shares visually.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

Challenges from the Policy World¹⁰

In all the YEPP countries co-operation within the public sector itself was often perceived as quite difficult, particularly between administrative departments without a tradition of co-ordinating services or working cross-departmentally. This was found even in an environment where “horizontal cooperation” between Ministries and departments is explicitly encouraged as part of formally adopted policies (e.g. the Finnish Youth Act [passed by parliament in January 2006]). Part of this difficulty lay in the different communication styles of the various departments:

10 OECD has conducted extensive work in the area of co-ordinated or integrated services. See, e.g. Successful services for our children and families at risk (OECD, 1998).

“[The challenge is] to understand, truly and deeply. Because already in the same country, for example in Finland if you are working together with school, with youth work, also administration and things like that, the words mean always different things.” - National policy-maker (Finland).

Furthermore, complicated governance structures often provided a difficult framework in which to function. The most complex were those that involved multi-level government issues. This was found to be the case especially in the federated countries (such as Belgium, Germany, Italy, and Bosnia and Herzegovina) with multiple vertical levels across which partnership and co-operation would be required:

“One [has] the state, the regions, the metropolitan cities, the communities, the provinces ... and to enforce this dynamic is very complicated. There are too many levels ... there needs to be consultation with the Communes in order to bring together the areas and industrial structures, but there’s a whole load of territorial organisms and their priorities are all different. It’s difficult.” - Member of local administration (Turin).

A common criticism was that co-operation was too often based more on political goals and gains than working together, and the ability to co-operate across Ministries when funding or power is at stake proved to be very difficult. This type of behaviour is not restricted to Ministries, but generally makes working in co-operation difficult. In the worst-case situation, for example, the complexity of the governance structure was perceived as a deliberate way to avoid both partnership and responsibility:

“It’s a system of intentional chaos. So you can’t figure out at all how certain things work but it’s actually perfect for the power structure to operate in this because, it’s really sovereign and they can decide this and you have no idea why they decided to do such a splendid thing and then they decide something else and you can’t figure it out, there is no transparency to the process behind. So you’re completely left in the dark. You do not know what to expect from them.” – National level stakeholder (Bosnia and Herzegovina).

It should be noted that the role of the EU was highlighted in facilitating international co-operation on these issues, particularly in countries (such as Italy) where there has not been a long tradition of cooperation between different levels (both vertically and horizontally). The co-operation required for funding and grant applications, as well as joint evaluations if stipulated, was mentioned by national policy makers as playing a key role in starting the various departments and ministries (and regional levels) in working together, although of course the effectiveness of such initiatives remains to be seen.

Another common thread across many sites was that the public sector often provided little or no incentives or tax breaks for private sector involvement, which was seen as a serious impediment to partnership. This situation varied from country to country, but was a concern for almost all sites:

“The local community project still pays VAT, which is insane, you know? The government can give you a big amount of money and you pay quite a big amount of money back on VAT.” - Member of YEPP Dublin.

“It’s a tax question ... The tax system makes it difficult for them to co-operate or to give any funds because they are actually taxed on donations rather than donations can be taken off taxes as it is in other cases, so it is impossible.” - Member of independent sector (Tuzla).

Lessons Learned

A number of common lessons learned were gathered from the work of YEPP across the seven sites, albeit to varying extents, including the importance of:

- Involving all sectors early in the process to instil a sense of ownership and active participation.

- Communicating what YEPP is and packaging and marketing YEPP in a concrete way to prospective partners in all sectors (and youth).
- Establishing shared terms and definitions to facilitate clear communication.
- Respecting the working styles of the different sectors and willingness to be open to all prospective partners.
- Understanding barriers to co-operation within a sector (e.g. public administration) and getting a commitment to action from leaders who can support the process of change.

The bottom line is always the willingness to see the benefits of partnership and cooperation, and the ability to stay on target:

“Because we’re working in a context of quite desperate social need, and because the projects are specifically targeting young people at risk, there is an immediacy and urgency always in the type of issue people are bring forward. So we get lost in that. So holding the agenda of collaboration is a value that needs attending to, instead of getting sucked into some individual little patch.” - Member of independent sector (Dublin).

“When they were on their own they sometimes lost courage, but with these partnerships people could encourage each other. YEPP can use other channels, other networks and other ways of approaching people ... [for example] city schools are dependent on city government and they can’t go against their government and YEPP can do that for them.” - School representative (Antwerp).

Youth Empowerment¹¹

As the following comments from youth involved in YEPP reveal, for them youth empowerment is:

- “...having the freedom to dream.”
- “... opening doors and opportunities that I wouldn’t otherwise have.”
- “...giving people flexibility, giving them the backup and resources, and making people accountable.”
- “...having choices and seeing the choices.”
- “...developing self-esteem, confidence, and knowing that they have a contribution to make.”

Youth empowerment can be thought of as being comprised of several facets, including:

- Identity (which here we broaden to include social/environmental/and health identity).
- Citizenship (in political/legal terms).
- Economics and education (school-work).
- Cultural (music, arts, etc.).

11. The headings used to evaluate empowerment in the EE are a simplified version of the YEPP empowerment matrix.

Assessing Youth Empowerment

All of the sites made serious attempts to try to engage youth in their projects and in YEPP, with a variety of different outcomes. Youth empowerment *by the time of the last site visit* can thus be broadly assessed using the criteria of the quantity and quality of the participation of youth, the presence (or absence) of youth in the Support Group and their participation in trans-national workshops, and the breadth of the projects along the dimensions outlined above (identity, citizenship, education/economics, and culture).

The sites fall into three general categories: both Kristinestad and Tuzla made excellent progress, with high involvement of youth, the inclusion of youth on the support group, and a breadth of projects that spans the four dimensions listed above. These two sites are followed by Parella and Mirafiori, which both have very high quality youth participation (with Parella having youth central to its support group), and a fairly broad distribution of projects. The third group is made up of Antwerp, and Mannheim, the two sites with the least involvement of youth (it should be noted that for historical reasons both Antwerp and Mannheim did not initially target youth deliberately unlike the other sites. Dublin is a special case and had only one year of formal operation at the time of the second site visit but were progressing towards involving more youth - see case studies for more information). Later in the progress of the work, Dublin developed a youth forum and regular consultations.

Key changes

Across the time of the site visits the single biggest change common to all sites was an increase (often substantial) in the number of youth participants. This change was a reflection of a greater awareness of the projects and the programme, as well as a coordinated effort on the part of the sites to reach out to the youth of the community.

Returning to the dimensions outlined above, YEPP sites had notable successes in all of the four dimensions. Across all sites the **cultural dimension** was the strongest, given both the prevalence of art and culture projects as well as the cross-national Community TV project (see Trans-national Cooperation section for further discussion). In particular, the success in Mannheim of the musical Neckerstadt-West Side Story was an example of how a relatively small project could have a large impact on the youth and their community. A new play is currently under development by the same artistic director and the overall sentiment is one of deep pride:

“Neckerstadt-West Side Story ... was a great success, that two young people from Neckerstadt-West will work with professionals from the National Theatre. It's very empowering. So they see it's a good project and there's a movie around that project!” - Member of independent sector (Mannheim).

As stated above all the sites had a variety of projects that focussed on empowerment through culture (including intercultural knowledge and skills). The theatre, music and art projects in Parella and the video projects in Antwerp are just two other examples of a very rich selection of initiatives.

The other dimensions of youth empowerment were also present in some, if not all, sites. The empowerment of **identity**, that is, building confidence and enhancing social skills as well as increasing knowledge about health and environment, is central to the work of empowerment projects. All the sites worked on this dimension, with projects aimed at bringing the youth together (the Culture Café, Kristinestad) and providing them with a space of their own (the Community Youth Centre, Mirafiori; the YEPP Centre, Parella). One of the most effective projects was the leadership training project (Tuzla), which was aimed at empowering young people to let themselves be heard. This project is currently moving into a new phase in the primary schools, using graduates of the programme as trainers for the new

participants. This project has been very much appreciated by the youth, and considered necessary as well, as this comment about one youth's experience before the programme illustrates:

"I learned how to get people to listen to me, you know, [because before] I could be on a council and just sit there and if I try to say something nobody listens to me. Or well the youth voices are listening to me, but the adults [look like] they listen to me, but when I finish, they just continue like I didn't say anything." - youth (Tuzla)

The dimension of **citizenship** (in political and legal terms, including active youth participation and knowledge of citizenship and legal issues) was honed through projects such as the youth parliament (Kristinestad), a workshop on the UN agreement on the Rights of the Child (Antwerp), and the youth forum (Dublin). Kristinestad in particular, focussing as it did very strongly on youth work, saw concrete changes as a result of YEPP, for the youth:

"Yes, maybe I think I become more interested from the youth council about politics so I want to learn more about politics, I want to learn more how things work in Kristinestad." – Youth representative (Kristinestad).

And for the local municipal administration:

"You can see it in the document paper. You can ask [name] to pull up the strategy for the annual work plan of the municipality, and you see in 2002 it doesn't say youth work, but in 2003 it does." - Member of YEPP Kristinestad.

The dimension of **economics and education** includes entrepreneurship, employability, motivation, skills and knowledge of working life as well as formal educational training. As such there were again a number of projects across the sites that focussed on this dimension, including job training (Antwerp), entrepreneurial training (Kristinestad), and the youth bank (Tuzla). The youth bank in particular was such a success that it was enlarged to include greater Tuzla (from initially focussing on the community of Simin Han). Run on a very small budget, it is designed to provide funding for youth projects and also build capacity to plan and manage projects (through proposal writing, evaluating the grant applications, and monitoring the projects, all of which are done by the youth).

"The youth bank is something I'm very pleased with. I like their method of work, because it's very empowering as the youth do it all themselves. It's not someone browbeating them. They are actually doing it all themselves with a little bit of advice along the way." - Independent sector representative (Tuzla).

Challenges

The single largest challenge faced by all the sites was how best to reach the youth, particularly the youth most at risk. As mentioned above the sites made great progress in including and encouraging youth participation, but they were also self-critical in that the youth that participated in the projects were not the most at-risk:

"In some ways it was also a failure because the youth involved were not from the target group [they were not disadvantaged]. It was difficult to find them because they tended not to be interested in the project." - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

The question of how to motivate the youth such that they would be able to take part in the projects was a central concern for all the sites. In this sense the development of the youth and their education came under criticism:

"A lot of these kids have trouble reading and writing and some of them have been through special skills [training] or whatever... They're bright kids and that but they just need the skills, the writing skills. It's not that they're daft or they can't work or they have something wrong with them, it's just their actual skills. ... And they just couldn't get their heads around that, they've

never been given that responsibility or trust or respect for that sort of thing.” - Member of independent sector (Dublin).

In addition the cultural and linguistic diversity of the youth population, both in terms of a rising number of immigrants and the existence of long-standing separate communities (e.g. Finnish-speakers, in the case of Kristinestad) added an additional nuance. Bridging the divide between a heterogeneous mixture of youth was considered important not only in terms of empowering the individual youth to be actors in their communities, but also in terms of the ability to address possible prejudices and negative stereotypes:

“I see the YEPP thing as being very positive on the foreign national thing, and [it’s] one of the most urgent areas, because if we don’t [do something now] then we’ll mirror the Paris riots. I think there still is a window for us to get it right but only if people put in a lot of effort. It mirrors exactly the drug thing - the heroin problem in Ireland was as big as parts of the ghettos in North America, and we waited until it became a massive crime and health problem before we responded. Now we have aspirational policies at the national level. We have very little on the ground in terms of dealing with practical ways. I see this as a very good initiative that needs to be energetically pursued, and that’s why I think the link with YEPP is very important and to be able to use evidence from other countries to say, look, unless we do this then we’ll be facing this...” - Member of public sector (Dublin).

Part of the challenge lay in motivating the youth themselves, and working on expectations such that they could remain motivated despite setbacks. Some of the youth spoke of an early excitement about the possibility of participating and giving input into projects, which then waned as they felt that none of their suggestions was taken seriously:

“We are asked “what do you want to improve?” And then we go to the meeting where we write a small report about it, and in the end mostly the suggestions are rejected so...” - Youth representative (Antwerp).

However part of the challenge was with the community itself, and addressing stereotypes of youth as second-class citizens. In many of the sites it was difficult to encourage the community to accept the youth as equal partners:

“We have keep contact with the director of the school - they [the youths] can’t be made responsible for this contact. Because the director can’t recognize these youths and give them the authority, he needs to be in relation with an adult, the co-ordinator ... he wants the continuity, which is important, but in time we hope that the link goes directly between the director and the youth.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

Challenges from the policy world

The major challenge as perceived by all policymakers, regardless of the country, was how to provide integrated services of quality across ministries. Youth work, cutting as it does across education, employment, health, justice, welfare, housing, and various other ministerial departments, poses a particular challenge for coordinated policy-making. The policy-makers that we spoke to expressed concern about the lack of a tradition in their country to co-ordinate and identified four problems in service delivery (these examples are from Brussels but can be extended to all other policy contexts):

- The various services do not always co-operate well.
- Neither the services nor the clients have knowledge of all the system’s possibilities.
- There is a shortage of services, resulting in long waiting lists.

- People are not always connected to the proper services for their needs and are often sent from one office to another.

In addition, across all the countries national policy-makers were worried that long-standing prejudices would interfere with the new initiatives and cause community projects focussed on youth to be given low priority in many places.

“When you work on a youth project, especially if the co-ordinator is a former youth worker, he could encounter some biases from other partners. They know him from the community as a youth worker and so they are perceived as less professional, less senior, and still treated that way by the other partners.” - National representative (Finland).

This perception of low prestige also has direct implications in terms of poor or disrupted funding for projects and officers:

“Institutes that have been constructed regionally for youth should all consult together or they will arrive at nothing and see nothing. In my experience of these things I’ve never seen a service really work or have the right support ... in the province the youth office only has one person, this in itself is a disaster.” - Member of local administration (Italy).

This feeling that youth work was less prestigious, or less important, than other kinds of work was reflected in a number of the interviews with national policy-makers, and was mentioned as a clear barrier to promoting the goals outlined in the various youth initiatives proposed across the various YEPP countries. This comment was also made by local YEPP stakeholders, including the youth themselves, and remains a clear barrier to innovative projects such as YEPP. On a positive note, however, the work of the EU in promoting youth and youth civic engagement, both through international exchanges and through grants to member countries, was signalled out as a welcome initiative and a possible way to further pressure national governments to devote more attention and resources to youth issues.

Yet the pace of change is slow, and in all countries there is a disconnect between words and actions, even on the local and regional levels (where responsibility for much of the youth work often lies):

“In fact in every town it is obvious and everybody accepts that it is necessary to have something like a youth policy. They realize that young people have special problems and they accept that they have to be addressed in some way but from that step onwards the co-operation is very different. Like for example in Tuzla, according to what mood they are in, they sometimes co-operate and they sometimes don't.” - National organization representative (Bosnia and Herzegovina).

Lessons Learned

A number of lessons learned can be gleaned from the work of YEPP in youth empowerment, including the importance of:

- Involvement of youth in the very earliest stages of project development, especially those most disadvantaged.
- Getting the local administration to acknowledge the voices of youth in designing and delivering youth-related projects.
- Recognising the difficulty in translating words to action on local and national levels (and acknowledging that they may be long-standing prejudices regarding youth and youth work that will have an impact on how fully innovative policies are embraced).

Community Empowerment

Similar to youth empowerment, community empowerment can be thought of as comprising several facets, including:

- Identity (which here we broaden to include social/environmental/and health identity).
- Citizenship (in political/legal terms).
- Economics of/and education (school-work).
- Cultural (music, arts, etc.).

Although community empowerment by definition also includes youth empowerment, for the purposes of this report we have (somewhat artificially) separated them into two – this section will focus only on those empowerment initiatives that did not have a youth component. Within the YEPP+ model the LSG is clearly an empowering structure, which if not fully established as in Antwerp and Mannheim misses an opportunity for promoting youth and community empowerment which was successful in other sites. Nevertheless, this section describes community empowerment developments without including the LSG since the role of this structure in this process is noted above in the section on “Implementation of the YEPP local process”.

As already mentioned, community empowerment and active community participation were key goals for YEPP and remained so throughout the project. YEPP, for instance through the work of the LSGs, aims to motivate community members to participate voluntarily in activities whose focus was the common ground shared by the inhabitants of a particular neighbourhood. Voluntary participation is a prime indicator of a feeling of inclusion and a sense of ownership, both of which translate to the ability of a group of individuals to improve their socio-economic situation. Thus, the projects planned by the various YEPP sites took as a starting point the very particular needs of each community (*e.g.* language acquisition, immigrant integration, drug/alcohol abuse programmes, support for low-income families, etc.) and aimed to create opportunities that would allow members to overcome these challenges.

Assessing Community Empowerment

Each of the seven YEPP sites operated in very particular circumstances with different populations and bases of wealth and resources. The success of each site, at least comparatively, in empowering the community at large depended in part on its stated goals and its approach. Community empowerment *by the time of the last site visit* can thus be broadly assessed using the criteria of the breadth of the projects along the dimensions outlined above (identity, citizenship, education/economics, and culture).

The sites fall into three general categories: Mannheim, Mirafiori, and Tuzla made excellent progress, with high involvement of diverse members of the community and a breadth of projects across three of the four dimensions listed above. These three sites are followed by Parella and Antwerp, which have broad but not necessarily sustained community participation and a distribution of projects that covers two of the four dimensions. Although Dublin and Kristinestad revealed the least breadth of projects, they are different from the others. As noted above Kristinestad set out to target community empowerment through their work with youth and the LSG and as a result did not have non-youth community projects, while Dublin had only one year of formal operation at the time of the second site visit- see case studies for more information).

Key changes

YEPP projects cut across all the four dimensions of community empowerment as listed above. However, two YEPP sites, Mirafiori and Tuzla, made great strides towards the goal of holistic community development through their community centres and specific projects. Two projects stand out as meriting particular mention: the Community Foundation in Tuzla, which matches external funds to community donations and provides grants for local initiatives (and which will also soon begin in Mirafiori and possibly Antwerp); and the Incubator project of YEPP Mirafiori, which provided guidance and skills to community members wishing to start small businesses and entrepreneurial projects.

Empowerment within a democracy by definition requires active participation and **citizenship**; community empowerment thus translates to knowledge and protection of civic and political rights. YEPP Turin and Antwerp deliberately set out to build capacity within the community through citizenship-building projects such as the Can-Do workshop. The Can-Do initiative, which uses a “Toolkit for Active Citizenship,” to build a community development training approach, is an internationally distributed programme developed by the Scarman Trust¹².

A number of community projects linked **economics and education** through vocational programs and entrepreneurial training. For example, the Rucksack programme in Mannheim aimed to introduce immigrant mothers to the German language and the German school environment. Some sites (such as YEPP Mannheim, Mirafiori and Tuzla) encouraged other entrepreneurial programmes (e.g. the Incubator project in Mirafiori, the community foundation in Tuzla [which, as mentioned above, will also begin in Mirafiori and possibly Antwerp]).

“Last year I was in a meeting with IRC about is it possible to establish a community foundation in Bosnia-Herzegovina at all? So the general opinion was that we are not sure that we are rich enough to have a community foundation. This time it’s not about richness, it’s more about willingness or how do you split money or whatever. So I think that it’s a moment that we are building something in that way, something completely new.” - Member of YEPP Tuzla

The various YEPP sites have also been engaged in a number of other activities related to the dimension of **identity** (which here we broaden to include social/environmental/and health identity). Common space, whether in the form of structured community centres or open, green spaces, was uniformly identified as integral to the establishment of a healthy community identity. To this end, many projects focussed on the creation of such a space, such as the community centres in both Turin sites and Tuzla:

“One very important step was the opening of this youth centre. I think being able to meet in a physical space and identify with a physical space is terribly important.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

The **cultural** dimension involved the arts, music and video, and often focussed on popular youth media. For example, both YEPP Dublin and Turin had activities involving deejaying and community art (in Dublin, this involved constructive graffiti). Video, as well, featured prominently in many projects across the sites, and even served as the primary focus of one of the most successful trans-national projects, the EmpowermentMediaProject (see Trans-national section for more details).

Challenges for YEPP

The main challenge for YEPP in terms of community empowerment is how to continue to build on accomplishments and how best to reach out to those most at-risk. In essence, this boils down to the sustainability of an independent community project that receives funding and support from various sectors.

12. <http://www.thescarmantrust.org/hq/cando.htm>

Yet the question of sustainability is also, in part, a question of approach: many sites organized parties and street fairs to attract attention and create festive occasions, and some organized day long activities (e.g. Antwerp's Serv-a-palooza). While these were generally successful endeavours, one-time events do not have a deep impact on *sustainable* community development and empowerment. At the same time, all of the sites found on-going projects far more difficult to organize and fund.

It might be worthwhile to experiment with combinations of the two approaches; given the heterogeneity of the sites, the creation of regular, themed events could potentially create the kind of commonality that would lead more easily to a sense of community. In other words, the two approaches are not mutually exclusive, but rather require one another to be effective:

"In the past we paid for a big festival of young people in Mirafiori, a sort of party in Parella in the street. We were not convinced this was the final goal we were going to reach, but we thought they were good actions to be promoted to facilitate the cohesion within the support group. They allowed the community to know the project in a sense." - Member of YEPP Turin.

Another challenge for YEPP is to work on establishing its identity and profile in the community. As with national or cultural identities, community identities benefit from having a clear definition and delimitation of boundaries. And as with any identity-building project, visibility, both figurative (as in recognising the name "YEPP") and literal (having a YEPP "logo," for example) gives strength to a project by making it more concrete. For YEPP to establish itself visually is to give it legitimacy as a community actor and advertise it to community members. This would perhaps also help with the marketing and publicising of YEPP, which was a general concern across the sites.

Certain challenges facing community development, however, are multi-layered, and with this in mind it is perhaps fruitful to discuss certain problems not as a specific function of YEPP but as generalised challenges. For example, many sites found that the delegation of responsibility for key tasks was not always clear and that it was not always easy to demand accountability. As community empowerment is a process that by definition belongs to many sectors, it therefore does not have the advantage of having a clear structure of its own. If YEPP or similar projects are to be successful and sustainable, there need to be clear and firm methods of accountability on the trans-national and local levels in order to provide structure and support for the work being done. This involves finding a balance between a democratic, horizontal structure of administration and a hierarchical, vertical structure on all levels.

In addition, nearly all of the sites expressed frustration with the role of schools in the community development process. There was the general feeling that schools can and should be community institutions rather than politically-controlled institutions that single out youth as their only target. In many communities, access to schools is restricted in order to protect the children. However, this makes effective co-operation with educational institutions complex. In addition community actors often perceived resistance on the part of teachers and schools to be open to new initiatives:

"The schools are not very good at it, they are still teaching memorising ... you don't analyse 'what does this mean, what happens if you do it like this... It's slowly changing, with new curricula, but sometimes even if you get them, the school tends to go on as it did before." - School representative (Finland).

Challenges from the policy world

The policy world also poses specific challenges that are not easily overcome by individual community empowerment projects. For example, the rise of the extreme right in some European countries can impede the integration of minorities and immigrants; especially in heterogeneous areas such as the YEPP sites, the extreme right has found an open ear:

“I know if I ran tomorrow on the right-wing, anti-immigrant from this area, I’d get elected, absolutely no doubt about it.” - Member of public sector (Dublin).

The integration of immigrant populations is another serious challenge for all of the policy-makers. It must be approached with strategies that bear in mind the rather abstract psychology of immigration as well as the very practical concerns of the policy world; this complexity can be exacerbated by disjointed or uncoordinated policy making. The federal Immigration and Integration Unit in Germany, for example, works with minorities and cultural diversity as a separate unit that is required to work with each of the Ministries rather than an integral part of the Ministries themselves. This requires a delicate balance between co-operation on a policy level (which is theoretically required) and the German political reality (the Commissioner of the Unit is traditionally a member of the minority of the government coalition).

“It depends [on] not only what is happening in the government but also ... what is happening within the coalition, as the commissioner is also a member of parliament. So on the one hand we are dealing with the administration and on the other hand we are dealing with the colleagues in the government, so it’s a political job. So whether you are successful or not it’s quite hard.” - Member of federal administration (Germany).

Moreover, even when certain needs are clearly identified, the feasibility of implementing effective programmes often exceeds the financial capacity of a community. It is difficult to secure funding for programmes whose demand is unknown (for example, the number of potential students in a language acquisition programme). Policy structures are often rigid, whereas communities—especially immigrant communities or those in transition—are in constant flux. Thus, community development projects face the challenge of heeding inflexible rules while addressing rapidly changing needs and social dynamics.

Lessons Learned

A number of lessons learned can be gleaned from the work of YEPP in community development and empowerment, including the importance of:

- Encouraging traditionally less-active members of the community to participate.
- Encouraging the participation of youth in community planning discussions.
- Bringing together all sectors in an honest appraisal of what works and what does not work, and the best strategy to move forward.
- Having clear agreement on responsibilities for community development initiatives and expectations for action.
- Devising realistic community development plans that are holistic in nature and include long-term strategies (*i.e.* beyond the length of the current policy mandate) for community renewal.

The last point also implies having the political courage to wait for longer-term solutions and avoid the temptation of the “quick-fix” (and the corresponding willingness on the part of the community to wait for longer-term results).

YEPP is not a lobbying group, nor does it carry direct political clout. However, the question of whether it might be able to use its successes (and failures) to influence policy change remains open. On the local level this has already come about (in Kristinestad, for example, where the municipality formally agreed to consult with youth on youth-related issues; see Kristinestad Case Study for further information). In other sites various programmes (*e.g.* Rucksack in Mannheim) have been adopted by the municipality and

region and could therefore be on the way to influencing policy planning. More directly, specific projects related to pressing policy issues and discussions with national policy makers (e.g. work with foreign nationals in Dublin; see Dublin Case Study for more information) have shown signs of bearing fruit. Experiences of programmes like YEPP can thus be presented to policy makers to invest in various projects and inform policy decisions, especially as the research component of YEPP assures that evidence can be presented regarding the effectiveness of the particular intervention. In a policy world where “evidence-based policy” making is fast becoming the norm, programmes such as YEPP can play an increasingly powerful role.

Trans-national Cooperation

Since YEPP emerged from the cooperation of multiple foundations from various countries, it was by definition a trans-national endeavour. However, the international character of the project’s conception is separate from the actual trans-national participation of the various stakeholders even though the trans-national component is an inherent element of the YEPP overall model: the foundations, the YEPP teams, the youth, and other partners. An evaluation of the cooperation between foundations is treated in a separate report; the following discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of inter-site youth participation is divided in two major parts: the youth exchanges and the Community TV/EmpowerMediaNetwork project. See the earlier section on “Implementation of the YEPP local process” for comments on the coordinator/researcher meetings that were ongoing throughout the lifespan of the project. Finally, two YEPP community conferences took place that included youth, representatives from the various sites and foundations and evaluators.

Youth exchanges

There were a number of youth exchanges that took place between July 2003 and 2006, along with a number of other conferences and thematic workshops. These workshops were uniformly perceived as a very important and positive aspect of YEPP by the youth. Youths were excited to have the opportunity to travel and get to meet participants from other sites and cultures:

“I went to Finland, and it was nice to meet these new people. They are different than us but not so different too.” – Youth (Tuzla).

It was also considered a learning experience, in that they had an opportunity to perhaps learn about new ways of being, or innovative projects, or different approaches than they would have had at home. Most importantly, they learned that other countries have problems too:

“We think, well, we are Bosnian, so of course we have problems. But then we see that these other places, these Finnish, the Italians, they have problems too.” – Youth (Tuzla).

Youth were excited to have the opportunity to travel and get to meet participants from other sites and cultures:

“The international part yes, I think it’s quite positive, and that we have had the chance to travel and now the youngsters can go to Antwerp and Turin. I think it’s great. And I have also in the contact which we have had between Bosnia, not only on the trips but afterwards also.” – Member of YEPP Kristinestad.

Being exposed to other cultures and countries was also seen as being important in building an identity:

“And then, you know, when people from Kristinestad, come and say ‘this is nice’ then you get more self-confident, and that’s the idea of the YEPP actually.” - Member of YEPP Tuzla.

In fact, the trans-national events led many participants to realize that there are different layers of community identity:

“[For] the older or youngsters they have been given a great opportunity to see other places in Europe and create new networks and become Europeans and not just Finns.” - Youth (Kristinestad).

Challenges

Although international cooperation was perceived to be a good idea in general, the coordinators expressed frustration about its extent and nature, and wished to determine where such cooperation makes sense and where it was a burden or hindrance. The language barriers between young people made international cooperation between youth difficult with translators required to facilitate the meetings.

“I think there’s a fundamental problem with a thing like the Turin thing that depended on English because, the really disadvantaged young people aren’t going to be really fluent English speakers.” - Member of independent sector (Turin).

YEPP members felt that the trans-national element would have been more useful and effective if more information about other sites reached the local participants. Many expressed a desire to send more cooperation partners to visit different sites and develop the idea of exchange, not only between coordinators, but also between people working at the practical and local level:

“It is always important to know how YEPP works in other countries, not to have a narrow-minded view and to know the questions that are being asked.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

Different criteria in picking the participants (*i.e.* different ages and learning abilities, a variety of background in the task at hand, and different expectations from the exchanges) also led to quite a diverse group of youth. In some ways this was seen as a positive and strong opportunity, in that the youth had a chance to experience not only different languages and cultures, but also different values, ages, and goals. For others, the group was not uniform enough to really establish equality among all participants, and they suggested that more care be put into the combination of participants:

“Don’t say: oh well this can be a part of this project, we can include it here’, it should be more straightforward, like if it’s a youth project it should be for kids from 15-20 and not for kids of 7.” - Youth representative (Kristinestad).

In addition, there was a question about how best to share the new experiences and knowledge of the youth such that those who could not take part in the workshops could also benefit:

“A program such as YEPP with an international background is obviously a good thing, [...] however it focuses [only] on Simin Han. About 95% of the children in Simin Han have been on some sort of exchange and have benefited from this. However when they return they have nowhere really to share their knowledge or share what they’ve acquired... it’s still somewhat of a closed milieu and these people don’t necessarily interact with other people enough. [In] the rest of the municipality there is a much greater number of people [who] don’t really benefit from the experience of these few because they [the international participants] don’t share the wealth of ideas and the wealth of what they’ve learned.” - School representative (Tuzla).

Some of the challenges expressed had to do with preparation across the sites, and making sure that the communication of the workshop goals was shared so that everyone would choose participants using the same criteria. In many of the workshops this was not the case, as in this example from the Music and Citizenship workshop:

“I think all the countries had different ideas of what it would be and the people that were sent here were very different too. Like the people from Bosnia, they were top students, many of them, and I think they were chosen because of that. [But] I think the other countries, at least Belgium...

it was young people that needed to come away or needed something to lift them up in some way. And then the kids from Norway, they were from a school for dropouts I think. They were into a lot of drama and music and things like that so they knew quite much about playing and music and things like that, but they were dropouts, many of them I think.” – Independent sector representative (Kristinestad).

Overall, the youth workshops were perceived as having had a very positive effect on the youth. Many of the challenges and complications were due in part to organizational set-backs that are typical of first-time events. While the difficulty of choosing which youth to include will always be present, the overall advantage of offering such an experience to even a few youth might well be worth the inherent challenges. In other words, the experience of a few youths might serve not only to make a powerful mark on them as individuals, but also serve to motivate others to participate more actively in their own communities as a way of accessing these trans-national opportunities.

Community TV and the EmpowerMediaNetwork

The transnational element of YEPP holds great potential for positive change. In addition to a series of small projects in which local youth had the opportunity to travel to other sites to engage in various initiatives, in 2005 YEPP launched a project on community television, which has now evolved into the EmpowerMediaNetwork (EMP). This initiative endeavoured to bring together youth in the various sites in a series of film projects, including documentaries, which the youth learned about and compiled together using what they had learned. This initiative was seen as unanimously positive, as the ongoing nature and educational aspects encourage sustainable youth and community empowerment, as well as social and cultural exchange.

For the youth, learning about the technical aspects of film making was in itself educational and empowering, in the sense that they would not necessarily have otherwise had the opportunity to learn about such a trade. The content of the film projects began with a focus on the workplace, with which all participants could identify. This was quickly expanded to the theme of “living as a minority in a foreign country”, which served to unite several of the existing themes, and eventually to create a broader network operating through this initiative:

“In this way we were able to extend the discourse about the way of living and to make it one of the instruments on which to work at network level, thus creating a European network which operates through community television. Also there was the local discourse for using this instrument, with the CHIs, so we saw how to make the workshop function and a way of expanding that experience through the YEPP network, so that everyone could do this in their own cities, in their communities, using these instruments.” Member of independent sector (Turin).

In learning about the project, the youth were exposed to a line of work with which they were not particularly familiar. However, the benefits went even further. In addition to having very tangible results, this project was seen as something of a social instrument, encouraging participation, intercultural dialogue and communication and opening new horizons for the youth:

“And it’s literally made an impact, because there is going to be work in the area where kids will be able to say, well, ‘He did that,’ or ‘I did that,’ and the other kids will say, ‘Well, if they’re doing that again, I want to be part of it.’” – Member of YEPP Dublin.

Although many of YEPP’s outcomes are quite difficult to measure and must be given adequate time in which to evolve, the community television activity was already a real success.

“But it was the intercultural experience which has been going on for decades now, that’s what was brilliant from the point of view of the young fellows. Young fellows from a deprived area in Dublin, having to engage with other fellows for a week to go out have to go out and socialize

with them, to play sports with them, to engage in these kind of tasks to do with the video making, that was fantastic. And that will always stay with them and if every young person could see how other young people live and see how they're different and how they're the same, that's... That was fantastic." – Member of independent sector (Dublin).

The real strength of this and the EMN project is that they create an on-going, evolving partnership among the members and the sites, and give the participants something concrete to work on together. This then moves beyond the trans-national exchanges, which were generally once-in-a-lifetime experiences for many of the youth participants. The dynamic partnership developing through EMN is different:

"What I think is the weakness [or what we need], is more joint projects between the youth in different centres, because that is essential. Not just the institutional echelons or the coordinators, researchers, etc, meet to discuss in different places, etc, but how actually the youth, in terms of concrete projects can work together. So the community media to me was a great initiative." - Member of YEPP Tuzla.

Conclusions

Given the summaries of the main themes presented above, there are three main questions left for this report:

- How did the sites compare across the themes?
- What sustainability measures have been taken to prepare for the future?
- Based on this evaluation, what recommendations can usefully be proposed for future phases of YEPP?

The following sections discuss each of these in turn.

Sustainability

At the end of the first phase of YEPP we turn to future planning:

"Of course the question of YEPP is this sustainability question. For change to be effective, if you create change, how do you protect change? One of the things I say to organizations is: you want to develop this plan [but] how are you going to ensure that it's carried out? And maybe the big question is around funding. I think it's sustainability, which group they want to target and who they want to do it with. It's also a process thing, and how do you create the processes of bringing change?" - Member of independent sector (Dublin).

Of all the sites, YEPP Mirafiori, Tuzla and Kristinestad, all with well functioning LSGs, have made the most progress in specific strategizing for sustainability. Albeit in different ways. The first two sites have exploited considerable expertise in grant applications and project planning and management and have actively sought funding from outside sources (e.g. local administration, region, and EU for Mirafiori; other foundations and the EU for Tuzla). Many of the other sites were also planning various sustainability measures but had not yet arrived at that stage. In Kristinestad, the LSG has financial and personnel support from the municipality to assist in sustaining the work there.

In addition, the spreading of concrete initiatives like the community foundation (first brought to YEPP by Tuzla and now developing in Mirafiori and possibly Antwerp) provide solid evidence that the network has developed to the point where it now has a dynamic cross-fertilization of its own. Within the sites

various projects are also being adopted by nearby communities (e.g. the community foundation in Tuzla, the Rucksack programme in Mannheim, entrepreneur training in Finland, new YEPP sites in Genoa, Italy).

Whether or not YEPP continues *per se* (by this we mean the name YEPP, not the individual projects), there was a good feeling about the work that has been done and the momentum generated across the lifespan of the project:

“We see that some other organizations are starting up now in the neighbourhood, it’s good to ... hand over all our knowledge and to exchange and to support them in their own projects, not really interfering or taking over, but just support them and make it easier ... because afterwards, others will come” - Member of YEPP Antwerp.

Recommendations for YEPP II

For future versions of YEPP, the lessons learned as highlighted in each section above should serve as useful guides for future action. In addition, however, there are some specific recommendations offered as guides to help with the development of future phases of YEPP:

- Working on a long-term project raises important implications for partnership agreements, including continuity, shared goals, and expected outcomes. The various partners may find it difficult to continue supporting YEPP if expected outcomes are not delivered, and YEPP itself may have difficulties delivering if they do not agree with the original model or are unable to maintain continuity in staff and projects.
 - Establishing explicit agreements on goals and expected outcomes before entering into the partnership are recommended to address this.
 - The sites and the PT require an adequate and guaranteed funding base for effective progress to be made in these very complex situations.
- The sites need a clear understanding of the roles of the local co-ordinators and researchers, what kind of skills new sites would have to look for to cover those roles properly, and how best to train the new participants for their roles.
 - *“It would have been nice to know a little bit more about what was required from YEPP –, everyone else had already started and been working for quite some time, and in a way I think they forgot that maybe we didn’t know the best way forward or what they were asking of us. Some specific guidelines would have been good.”* - Member of YEPP Dublin.
- One specific suggestion for the future might be partnering sites such that each new site has a mentor who could take it through the beginning phases and help with hands-on questions and issues. This could also be extended to individual players and roles, and the knowledge gained could be imparted directly from site to site.
 - *“At the beginning I was not sure. Now it’s a lot clearer to me, so I would give my contribution to this, to find out what kind of person would be needed.”* - Member of YEPP Turin.
- This kind of on-going capacity building would apply both to the members of the YEPP team and to the youth entering the project, as it could be daunting for youth entering into a network that has already been running for some time.

- In almost every site the continuing troubled perception of why the research is done and who it benefits was not resolved satisfactorily. As research has been proposed as a component to future variations of the YEPP project, this is something that should be addressed *before* the next phase begins.
 - One concrete recommendation would be to try and balance the needs of the site (*e.g.* a needs assessment, a source of information gathering, or a link to the research community) with those of the international YEPP requirements.
 - NOTE: Although YEPP II already seems well developed, we would hope that it could be modified to reflect the final findings of the internal and external evaluations.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

FOUNDATIONS PARTNERSHIP REPORT

**REPORT OF THE OECD/CERI EXTERNAL EVALUATION TO THE
NETWORK FOR EUROPEAN FOUNDATIONS**

FEBRUARY 2007

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Aims, purpose and method

This report was commissioned by the Steering Committee of the Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme (YEPP) with the following purposes:

- To have a systematic, independent account of the perceived quality and impact of the partnership between foundations involved in YEPP in order to determine the strengths and weaknesses of such a partnership.
- To indicate lessons learned in the form of recommendations for future phases of foundation partnership in YEPP in order to improve and extend existing partnership agreements. The aim is that this report will contribute to a stock-taking of the Foundation Partnerships and it is hoped that the results will be used both internally, for discussion within the YEPP Steering Committee, and externally for discussion with prospective foundation partners.

The report is based on semi-structured interviews with:

- Foundation members of the YEPP Steering Committee.
- External but related foundations.
- Representatives of the Berlin Programme Team.
- Observations of the OECD/CERI external evaluation review team.

In total, interviews were held with 17 individuals between 2004 and 2007 for this report while others commented on the first draft (some interviewees were interviewed in both 2004 and 2005; see Annex 3 for a list of persons and foundations interviewed) The aim was to provide a critical analysis of the development, maintenance, and future steps of the Partnership of YEPP Foundations through the voices of the interviews. Some contributions are quoted verbatim when they seem particularly insightful or when a comment sums up the majority view on a particular topic.

The YEPP project has involved two main areas of operation for the participating foundations: the partnership between foundations, which is the focus of this report, and the work on the individual sites themselves. An evaluation of the foundation role in the YEPP project and the individual sites will not be covered here as it will be included in the case studies of each site. A full account of the YEPP project will be the focus of future reports.

History of the partnership between foundations

In 1999 members of the Education and Youth interest group at the European Foundation Centre (EFC) came together to work together in partnership to develop a joint project that would allow them to pool their expertise and operate on a larger scale and with greater impact than they had previously done individually.

Inspired in part by the work of the Annie E. Casey Foundation in the USA, the Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme (YEPP) was designed and developed in consultation with a number of European and American foundations. The OECD became involved in the detailed design of the project in 2000 at the express request of the Mott Foundation President, to help guide and develop the overall project. This led to the creation of the overall evaluation design in collaboration with the International Academy (Berlin).

The YEPP partnership began with a preparatory phase agreed on at the EFC annual general assembly in May 2001, and swiftly moved into an implementation phase in September 2001. At this stage the Association for Innovation and Co-operation in Europe (AICE) (later to become the Network of European Foundations (NEF)) agreed to formally host YEPP, Angelika Krüger of the International Academy (Berlin) was named project director, and a European Commission (EC) grant application was submitted. Each of the ten participating foundations was represented on the Steering Committee of YEPP and required to commit EUR 10 000 (later increased by agreement by EUR 5 000 to pay for the external evaluation) to a general programme budget. Given the lack of a tradition of partnership between donors in the European context, YEPP represented an innovative and exciting opportunity. The initial amount required was set deliberately low to allow the participation of small foundations that had little or no experience or means of working together. Based on this and other funding from the participating foundations and the EC grant, the project began in six sites: Antwerp, Mannheim, Lille, Tuzla, Kristinestad, and Turin.

The initial list of foundations involved in 2001 was (in alphabetical order):

- Charles Stewart Mott Foundation (United States)
- European Cultural Foundation (the Netherlands)
- Evens Foundation (Belgium)
- Fondation Bernheim (Belgium)
- Foundation for Swedish Culture (Finland)
- Freudenberg Stiftung (Germany)
- Herti Foundation (Germany)
- Irish Youth Foundation (Ireland)
- King's Fund (United Kingdom)
- Robert Bosch Stiftung (Germany)

Over time this list would change, with the notable addition of the Compagnia di San Paolo (Italy) and the Ford Foundation (USA), and the departure of the Herti Foundation (Germany), The King's Fund, the Robert Bosch Stiftung, the European Cultural Foundation, and the Foundation for Swedish Culture. Since 2001, these European and American foundations have worked together in partnership to oversee the functioning of YEPP. YEPP itself has also developed in that time, reaching the end of its first phase in 2006 with sites in Antwerp, Dublin, Kristinestad, Mannheim, Turin (Mirafiori and Parella), and Tuzla. Later the King Baudouin Foundation (Belgium) provided additional funds for the external evaluation only, but did not join the steering committee.

The budget

Although this low level of budget allowed small foundations to join the partnership, the financing of both the partnership itself and the YEPP programme was a major concern throughout the duration of YEPP. It was widely agreed that YEPP was run on a shoestring and this chronic shortage of funding threatened the partnership itself and contributed to the perceived changes in YEPP goals. Apart from the shortage of funds for the general budget, even though these contributions were consistently paid, some

foundations responded independently of the partnership by changing the priorities given to the funding of local sites thus undermining the concept of the partnership itself and the implementation of YEPP (see the section on Development of the Partnership for more details). It must be added that the core budget of YEPP and the local funding of the sites were always kept separate thus allowing the freedom of action of individual foundations described above. This led to substantial variation in the funding levels given to local YEPP sites, which turned out to be a major cause of friction between central and local levels of the YEPP structure, and should be avoided in the future.

The partnership between foundations: what were the original goals and expectations?

Foundations joined YEPP for three main reasons:

- To pool their expertise and means as a way of engaging in larger projects and to increase impact.
- To create a synergy of knowledge and resources.
- To be involved in an internationally shared venture with high-profile foundations and organisations (OECD).

These shared goals served as an important starting point for the partnership and continued to bring together the members of the Steering Committee. These three goals were not only mentioned by all foundations, they were cited systematically across both interview years (2004 and 2005). Those foundations whose main (and perhaps only) goals were aligned with these shared goals reported greater satisfaction with the partnership than those who had additional goals (see below for further discussion of the satisfaction with the outcome of the partnership).

In addition to these shared goals, there were subsets of expectations that were shared by some, but not all, of the foundations:

- To work on an international youth empowerment project.
- To have a broad impact on policy on local, national, and European level.
- To have an opportunity of working in partnership with larger foundations (for smaller foundations).
- To seek creative and innovative concrete results (to obtain, for example, a toolbox of projects or methodologies) (one foundation).
- To promote partnerships between foundations in Europe (one foundation).

These diverse goals were not shared by all foundations and were mentioned differentially across interview years (*e.g.* policy impact was mentioned more often and more explicitly in 2005 interviews than in 2004 interviews, and seemed to reflect a changing priority for some, but not all, foundation representatives). Although these goals are not incompatible with the shared goals, the level of commitment to achieving them and the profile they were given varied quite dramatically across foundation representatives. This gave rise to difficulties for foundations that had, for example, prioritised one of these goals, as they did not always feel that it was being developed appropriately or given the profile it merited (again, see below for further discussion of the satisfaction with the outcome of the partnership). This was also the most common reason for foundations to leave the partnership.

The functioning of the partnership process

The partnership of foundations has grown and changed since its conception in 1999. In that time, there have been changes in foundations, stated goals, representing members, and some of the structures that were created to guide the development of the partnership. This section looks at each process in turn.

Development of the partnership

Working in partnership requires shared goals, the development of trust among partners, and the ability to communicate and work together. This takes time and the amount of work required may be surprising to those not used to working in partnership.

“Joint projects are just more complicated because you have to take into consideration the others and negotiate, so actually it’s a hassle. The key is to make it richer with reflection, especially if you have somebody to guide and coach you.”

“It needs to be said explicitly that you need to work to be in a partnership – it doesn’t just happen by itself. I think people do need to understand that it takes time and effort, and the more that you give, the more you get out.”

Given the novelty of European foundations working in partnership at the time YEPP was started, the fact that the partnership has endured with relatively stable membership is a positive outcome in and of itself. However, the development of the partnership was not without complications. In the early days the Steering Committee had difficulties making decisions – being torn between research, science and politics. Although this was to some extent worked out over time, there were on-going difficulties.

“Foundations ignored the partnership at times and made idiosyncratic decisions that threatened the project and made life difficult. I think that some members of the Steering Committee although usually present were not really fully committed - certainly theoretical commitment waxed and waned.”

Equality between foundations

One of the stated goals of the partnership (and of course part of the definition of partnership) is equality among partners. This partnership, bringing together as it did a diverse set of foundations from two continents and seven countries with radically different profiles, budgets, and experience, set itself a difficult task in aiming for equality among members.

Yet by all accounts it succeeded extremely well:

“Even the foundations that have more expertise, that gave more money, well, that’s the good thing – there was never any tension, and everyone always listened to everyone.”

“I think YEPP is an example where everybody’s on equal footing but I think [large foundation] contributes ten times as much as we [small foundation name] do. I haven’t experienced an imbalance there.”

One of the key factors contributing to this was the nomination of Christine Castille (Evens Foundation) as Vice-Chair of the Steering Committee. This allowed for greater equality within the partnership, although, as one of the bigger funders put it:

“Equality is hard. The sides aren’t equal and the mighty juggernauts get their way sometimes.”

The equality among foundations was perceived as a positive and genuine sign of partnership, and was accomplished despite the diversity of the foundations present. One aspect that was not successfully addressed was the impact the diversity in funding had on the individual sites themselves and the behaviour of some foundations in regards to decision-making for their sites, made for local reasons without considering the needs of the overall partnership see also the trans-national evaluation report).

Individual members

One of the challenges of any on-going project is the ability to work together, which requires both an understanding of teamwork, the willingness to engage in partnership, and the personality to work with others. Some of the issues experienced by the partnership are due to differences in personality and styles of partnership. In addition, the departure and entrance of new players was sometimes a challenge for the existing partners. In this partnership of foundations, individuals could and did have a powerful effect on the functioning of the Steering Committee and the YEPP project itself.

On a positive note, most of the representatives of the foundations remained constant throughout the time-period (Liam O'Dwyer, Ray Murphy, Micheline Mardulin, Antonella Ricci, Christian Petry). This constancy (including also Angelika Krüger and Peter Evans) allowed for greater commitment and shared understanding, and helped the partnership transition through some of the changes in members.

On a negative note, there were some fairly substantive and disruptive changes. The changes in representation in the Swedish Cultural Foundation, for example, meant that no one person remained on the Steering Committee for more than a year at a time. These transitions, especially if the foundation ends up leaving the project, can be very disruptive:

“It’s not only money but also energy when someone leaves – it can create a big void.”

Even if a foundation remains in the project, changing individual members with different priorities from the predecessors (or, indeed, with different goals from those established at the beginning of the project) can have very dramatic impacts. Although there is not much that can be done in addressing the issue of difficult personalities, the different priorities and expectations brought in by new members have also had significant (and at times, negative) impacts on the functioning of the foundation partnership. This is something that interviewees felt can and should be addressed in future (for an example, see Challenges section below. For future planning, see lessons learned/recommendations section below).

The structure of the partnership

In addition to the foundations, there were two other main partners in the design of the partnership: the International Academy (IA) and the OECD. The International Academy was charged with coordinating the project and its internal evaluation, while the OECD oversaw the external evaluation, as well as brought YEPP into its international cross-sectoral partnership programme. The host organisation of YEPP, the Network of European Foundations, was also considered a partner. In its original design, these three organisations were equal partners with the foundations and each other.

The partners (representatives of the foundations, the International Academy, the OECD, and NEF) formed the YEPP Steering Committee. With several meetings a year, it was designed to guide the YEPP process and allow the foundations to exchange ideas and build their partnership. A small subset of these members made up the Executive Committee. There was also an Evaluation Group, which was composed of interested members of the Steering Committee, evaluation specialists from partner and other foundations (for example the King Baudouin Foundation), and the OECD and the IA team.

The Steering and Executive committees met on an on-going basis throughout the duration of the project, while the Evaluation Group was started in late 2003. Despite the importance of evaluation to YEPP and the continuing difficulties in balancing the research versus the project component of the programme, this Group met only three times before ending in 2004 and was unable to produce clear goals and an agreement on outcomes among its members.

The following section highlights issues that were raised by interviewees for each of the partner organisations of YEPP and the relationships between them. One overall theme that emerges is that there

were very different perceptions of how and whether all/any of these bodies were partners with the foundations, regardless of their presence on the Steering Committee. The different perceptions also resulted in different expectations of the role and relative hierarchies among NEF, Berlin, OECD, and the foundations.

NEF

The Network of European Foundations (NEF)¹³ provides the legal structure for managing the funding of YEPP and other initiatives. Using such an organisation in this way is seen as positive in that it distributes responsibility among the foundations (as no one foundation is also the host) and allows for greater ease of funding distribution for non-European foundations or those European foundations that have geographical limits on their grant-making.

Furthermore, recent additional interest at NEF on impacting policy on a European level (which has grown considerably with increased collaboration with European agencies such as Eurocities and the Council of Europe) has created a strain on the partnership by changing the dynamics of the relationship between the steering committee and NEF, particularly given that the future of NEF in YEPP was only recently clarified at the May 2006 annual general meeting of the EFC.¹⁴

Although interviewees felt that a critical approach could be beneficial “We do need to ask ourselves hard questions about some of our basic assumptions and see what we’ve delivered”, imposing new priorities was not as favourably received:

“If we’ve been going along trying to reach Goal A, and then someone comes and tell us that we haven’t achieved B, how fair is it to be judged against criteria you didn’t set out to reach?”

This last comment is also relevant to the perceived equality of the partners and the hierarchy between the foundations and organisational bodies, and will be touched on again in the Quality of the Partnership section (below).

The Programme Team

The Programme Team (PT), located at the International Academy of the Freie Universität Berlin, has served as the central coordinating unit for YEPP. In this role they communicate with both foundations and

¹³. NEF’S mission: to demonstrate its added value, NEF will seek to play the following roles in a practical and flexible way:

- * To give a European perspective to local/regional initiatives, through transnational partnerships, so as to explore new ideas and build new patterns of cooperation which also contribute to the development of systemic social change;
- * To act as a catalyst in promoting innovative joint-ventures and plays a creative role as a broker in giving added-leverage to initiatives where appropriate, assisting in reframing projects for greater spin-off;
- * To enable smaller foundations to join forces with larger foundations in mounting joint-ventures;
- * To demonstrate to the EU and other international organisations that European foundations can play an effective, complementary role to supra-governmental initiatives in a flexible way, thus enhancing the overall impact and outreach of the action;
- * To take up ideas and suggestions emanating from EFC interest groups, by serving, where appropriate, as a platform to convert areas ripe for cooperation into operational form; and
- * To act as a vehicle to improve transatlantic relations by mounting cooperative joint projects with interested US foundations.

¹⁴. NEF has changed the way it works over the past few years. When YEPP began the arrangements between NEF and YEPP were rather informal. Any new agreement between NEF and YEPP II is likely to be much more formal. It is probably fair to say that the experience of YEPP has influenced the development of NEF.

the sites themselves, and oversee the internal evaluation of YEPP as well as much of the grant application coordination.

In terms of the partnership of the foundations, the role of the PT overall was relatively limited. There was a very positive perception of the Director as a driving force and “glue” for the project, particularly in her commitment to consultation and encouraging equal partnership.

“I think it’s been helpful that we’ve had sustainability with Angelika. She’s always been there and we have at times needed that push. There’s a sense that you know what you’re buying into.”

This commitment to the project and goals of YEPP, and a willingness to invest the time and energy needed to guide the project, was perceived as essential to the continued functioning of the project. The only criticism of the functioning of the PT on the Steering Committee was the amount of reporting:

“I understand that you need someone to coordinate it, but it was sometimes very heavy, all the reports you need... obviously you need reports, but something concise and short.”

OECD

As noted above the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has been closely involved in the development of YEPP from the beginning and has attended almost all of the meetings of the steering and executive committees. At the outset it was agreed that the evaluation of the YEPP sites would be a joint responsibility of the PT and the OECD with the latter focussing on the senior actors involved in the private, public and independent sectors providing data for the external evaluation. The OECD has also brought YEPP into its international cross-sectoral partnership programme and will utilise its data for designs of methodologies of complex evaluations. The OECD was instrumental in the design phase of YEPP and still sits on the Steering Committee and Executive Committee.

Comments from interviewees gave a lot of emphasis on the role of the OECD in boosting the profile of the project and providing a certain prestige:

“The fact that there was an international network and the OECD gave it a certain label, so that people who would normally not work together did come around the table and take time to look closer at it.”

These positive comments included the ability and success of the OECD to gain access and promote YEPP to audiences of high level policy makers, such as members of national administrations and representatives of international governments.

There were two general kinds of criticism of the role of the OECD in the YEPP partnership. The first stems from misunderstandings of the structure of the project but is nevertheless reported here, and is related to a conflict in roles (*i.e.* being both a member of the Steering and Executive Committees and conducting the external evaluation) resulting in a lack of objectivity in the project.

“Having had OECD has been great for us –but it’s come in for some criticism as you know, to do with objectivity. The presence of the external evaluation on the advisory board has come under some criticism.”

It is worth reminding the reader of this report that the design of the evaluation never carried the intention of completing an independent evaluation – the budget would not have permitted this – and the eventually agreed upon evaluation design, which linked what is happening on the ground (the so-called internal evaluation) to broader policy considerations in public, private and independent sectors (through the so-called external evaluation) was a compromise between scientific and financial rigour. However, it seems clear from these comments and feedback that this intention was not fully understood and in future

would need to be communicated in a different way. In retrospect, the descriptors “internal” and “external” were probably not the best choice of terms.

The second criticism concerned the frequency of reporting, which was changed during the process on methodological grounds. While most partners accepted the reasoning behind this change, residual confusion or disagreement still arose in the interviews, suggesting that in future changes of this nature might better be made with greater discussion or explanation. The extent to which this view is consistent with independence would need to be explored further especially in repeated measures designs such as used in YEPP.

Outcomes and assessment of the foundation partnership

Quality of partnership

The main arena for face-to-face interaction of the foundations was in the Steering Committee and (for a small subset) Executive Committee and Evaluation Group meetings. The yearly YEPP-Community meetings (in 2005 and 2006) and various other YEPP activities also brought together foundation representatives, and of course there was continuing email/telephone communication throughout the year.

These series of meetings and events over the course of 2001-2006 created a network of European and American foundations working together on YEPP. As some of the central members also had long-standing previous relationships, this was a network that had a good amount of time and opportunity to develop. In the sections that follow reflections on the strengths, weaknesses, and unexpected outcomes that arose from the overall partnership are elaborated.

Successes

The value-added for foundations participating in this project was clear: it gave them an opportunity to work with other foundations on a high-profile project that brought together European and American foundations, the OECD, NEF, and the International Academy of the Freie Universität Berlin.

There was widespread agreement that the foundations had managed to come together and build a durable partnership to oversee an active project, all on relatively small means. From an initial phase when partnership among European foundations was very limited to the present, when it has become much more common, this partnership has endured “*We’ve kept going, and with such scarce resources really*”. Although they do not attribute the rise of European partnerships to the YEPP example, it was still seen as an important example, and a ground-breaking step, particularly because it was so high-profile at EFC meetings and given the number and strength of the individual partners. Despite this, it remains true that more experience is needed in understanding foundation partnerships and their added value.

YEPP was perceived as a valuable project in its own right, both for the work it has done, the changes that have resulted and for the creation of a new methodology:

“I think that YEPP is one of the most worthwhile projects we undertook, because it’s transversal and on the one hand it focuses geographically on a really small part of the town, but that part with a lot of problems, ... [and then] putting around the table all the stakeholders at the different levels, that is something really innovative in my viewpoint.”

For foundations that were not used to partnering with other foundations, it was a rewarding experience and a new one:

“The contact between the different countries has been very fruitful, they brought reflection and helped evolve the projects, we find much more connections”.

For foundations that were more used to this experience it was still positive:

“We needed to learn to work together and have established cooperation, and now we’re seeing spin-offs of the project, which is good.”

Also perceived as successful was the combination of small and large foundations, and European and American foundations on equal footing. It was set out as a deliberate goal of the partnership and was very positively perceived by all foundations interviewed (see section on Equality between foundations, above, for more detail).

The process or partnership through YEPP has also impacted on some foundations whose programmes have been strongly influenced. It is too soon to say what the lasting effect using evaluation will be.

Many of the successes mentioned were related to actual YEPP project outcomes, and so will be discussed in the case studies and trans-national report.

Current plans to develop a Phase II of YEPP are underway and this is when, according to the interviews, the real test will come. Who will choose to continue?¹⁵

Challenges

Equality between partners

One of the key goals of the YEPP partnership was to ensure equality between participating foundations and other partnership members such as the IA team, the OECD, and NEF. As detailed above, interviewees felt that equality between the foundations themselves was successfully obtained and maintained. However, equality (and thus working as true partners) between the foundations and the other bodies was not as successful. It was felt that an implicit hierarchy was established in which some could delegate work and expectations, and others (notably the IA team) were expected to do the work and fulfil those expectations. This situation became especially poignant during the discussion over YEPP II and still remains an issue to be resolved.

“The mood has changed. We’re being treated as contractees.”

Communication and reporting

Although the perception of the foundation partnership was generally positive, there were some criticisms of the process, both from current foundation partners and from foundations that had left the partnership. Current foundation partners most commonly expressed frustration with the amount of reporting they were required to read and digest, and also the fact that not all the foundation representatives took the time to read the reports and prepare for meetings. Those that did expressed frustration with their partners who did not:

“OK indeed many times I felt as if I was nourishing the process. I have to say there were loads of papers and I would say half of the Steering Committee would not read them and the other half would, and then you have always the same people who start debates and without reading it’s not very accurate.”

At the same time, there was some dissatisfaction expressed with the level of understanding of what a partnership is and the willingness of partner members to work together. The idea of partnerships among equals was called into question in cases when various representatives did not take time to reply to requests

¹⁵. By February 2007, the continuation of YEPP as YEPP II had been agreed with most of the participating foundations committing themselves to continue to fund the expansion of the work.

for aid, or take responsibility for building the project and engaging actively but instead expected others to be responsible.

“Sometimes there is also a kind of a feeling that they don’t want to be that much involved. There’s a double-bind – they want to have a say and be the partners and make a decision, but then there is this delegation process, not real partners. And that’s a problem.”

A continuing theme, which all members were aware of and were actively attempting to address, was the difficulty in expressing what YEPP actually is, and communicating the project, goals, and outcomes to prospective partners. The need to develop tools to communicate the project to interested outsiders, whether they be policy makers, other foundations, or local stakeholders was seen as a pressing need for the future of the project and partnership:

“To really advance we need other tools of communication... we need a communications professional. I already have enough trouble as it is trying to explain this to my administrators. They still look at me after five years and say ‘What exactly is it you do?’ So it’s not easy.”

Agreement on specific goals

Another source of frustration and confusion was the lack of specific agreed goals, which led to disappointment (for foundations that had entered the partnership with different expectations) and was one reason some foundations became less active in the partnership (e.g. the lack of development of a methodological toolbox, which was a primary goal for one foundation and was not pursued by the remaining partners – the goal being eventually abandoned).

For those foundations that remained active partners changing priorities led to confusion and concern, as well as an inability for some to meet these expectations. One such example is the rise of importance of demonstrating policy impact in 2005, which was neither well specified nor presented in a concrete manner for those members that were unsure of what that would entail.

“We’ve been focussing on local projects and now it feels like there is this added expectation of policy impact, but what that is and how to achieve it are too vague.”

This emphasis on policy might well have been aimed at future phases of YEPP (YEPP II), but this was neither made clear nor clearly understood by the partners. In addition, there was not complete agreement that this was the appropriate balance even for YEPP II:

“... it’s not all about policy – it’s also about the quality of life for young people. We have to be careful that it doesn’t become the buzz word and we forget the rest.”

Why foundations chose to leave

The most common reason for leaving the partnership was a change in personnel, with the new representative unwilling to continue. For foundations that chose to leave the partnership or play a much more reduced role in the partnership unrelated to changing personnel, the most common rationales given were: a feeling that they were nourishing the process and putting more into the partnership than they were getting out, a decision that the partnership had priorities and goals that differed from their own or was not dynamic enough, and a frustration about changing priorities, timescales, and the commitment required.

“It’s perhaps unfair to say this but the foundation also expected to have a learning experience and a sharing of ideas and how to do things, I mean how to do things well. Perhaps it became more top-down than horizontal from my point of view.”

“The hopes were quite high in the beginning actually... but one of my personal critiques is that somewhere along the line the information stopped flowing. Because what I expected out of this sharing was some creativity in this network. And somewhere along the line somebody put a wet

blanket over this creativity, at least from my point of view sitting in the foundation. On a local level in [place] I think we've been quite creative actually."

"For the foundation it became a liability in the long-run, when it was first agreed to be 3 years, then it was 4 years, then they were asking for 5 and 6 and then it became a liability."

Unexpected outcomes

One unexpected outcome for many of the foundations was that the project had managed to continue for so long on relatively limited funding. Another was the amount of time and energy required to really be in a partnership with other foundations:

"I think when we entered in we had no clue of how much time and effort this was going to take. If we'd known, I won't lie to you, I'm not sure we'd have done it. But to be honest it's been really rewarding, and I've learned that you really need to build partnerships for them to work – you can't just sit back and expect things to take care of themselves."

Another unexpected outcome, at least for many of the foundation members (representing both small and large foundations) was the ability of the partnership to give equal time to representatives regardless of the size of their financial contribution or the profile of their foundation:

"One unexpected outcome was maybe that there wasn't a domination of the large foundations – if anything they served to protect the project rather than anything else. The smaller foundations flexed their muscles quite a bit!"

Were the goals of the foundations met?

To return to the original goals as stated in the beginning of this report, it seems clear that at least two of the original shared goals (to pool their expertise and means as a way of engaging in larger projects and to be involved in an internationally shared venture with high-profile foundations and organisations [such as the OECD]) were met. Not all the foundation partners were satisfied with the dynamism or creativity of the partnership, and so the third goal (creating a synergy of knowledge and resources) cannot be said to have been fully achieved although of course as a goal it is inherently underspecified. Addressing this and specifying more fully what is expected would be an important adjustment for future cooperation.

In terms of the subset of goals, some have been clearly achieved (to work on an international youth empowerment project, and an opportunity for small foundations to work in partnership with larger foundations). The other goals are difficult to assess as, since they were not goals for all of the partners, there have been varying degrees of effort expended to reach them. Certainly one (to have a broad impact on policy on local, national, and European level) has been met on local level by many sites, and on national level in some countries (although this is again hard to measure), but not so far at European level. The other (to seek for creative and innovative concrete results [to obtain, for example, a toolbox of projects or methodologies]) has also not been met, although the OECD is planning on holding a workshop and publication on the evaluation of complex methodologies and presumably this is something that could arise out of that. The work has been reported to OECD committees and thus all OECD countries are aware of YEPP and its structure. The method of the external evaluation has also led to increased awareness in governments in participating countries.

However, it must be reiterated that these subgoals were not shared by all foundations, and as a result were both undefined and underspecified. Future partnerships should seek to avoid this vagueness (see Recommendations section).

Again, changing goals over time and different goals among the partners complicate matters, and if it is not made explicit it can become unclear what the proposed process is:

“It’s easy to point the finger and say ‘yeah, I think this should have been done by X, we didn’t get what we wanted’, but then you have to ask yourself: what am I doing to help us achieve this goal? Maybe I didn’t take enough responsibility to make it happen myself.”

Lessons Learned/recommendations

Given the relatively low cost of the YEPP project, there is a clear sense that it has succeeded in establishing a good working relationship, if not a full partnership, across diverse organisations and foundations. For future planning, the following recommendations have been developed based on the findings of this evaluation.

- Given the importance of the individual in such groups, the ability and understanding of how to work in partnership cannot be underestimated. The ebbs and flows of membership and changing representation cannot be fully controlled for, but it is recommended that in future a formal agreement be developed at the onset in cooperation with all partners. This agreement would contain, *inter alia*:
 - Established ground rules such that all partners have an understanding of the goals, processes, and expected outcomes of the partnership.

Goals need to be agreed on and remain constant; they need to be explicit; they need to define terms involved.

If changes are to be made to the goals over time they need to receive the approval of all partners, with new goals explicitly defined as previously.

Processes need to be clear but also allow for flexibility and individual adjustments dependent on context; these adjustments could be shared with partners with the aim of creating synergy and sharing of good practice.

Expected outcomes need to be clear, and concrete targets by which to measure the achievement of outcomes should be specified.

Some capacity building on the part of the partners might be required to aid members in accomplishing these goals, and should be explicitly provided for in budgeting.

Determination of a process for leaving the partnership

Agreement on a method for expansion within YEPP II, e.g. including new sites, criteria for sire selection, etc.

Clarity about the budget and its structure and foundation commitment to it.
- Explicit discussion and agreement of the time and effort required to establish a partnership. This also requires the setting of realistic expectations with clear timelines and the development of marketing strategies.
- Conducting regular stock-taking to aid in achieving goals and timetables. Partners would need to actively participate throughout the process, and open and clear communication between partners and their associated organisations would need to be streamlined.

- Communication materials need to be developed for the various audiences and purposes required, including prospective foundation partners, policy-makers, and local stakeholders.
- Report writing needs to be stream-lined but the research component of YEPP should not be lost.
- For YEPP II both the budget structure and its adequacy need to be given careful thought.
 - There are three main budgetary components for a project of this sort. They cover the funding of the project work at both central and local levels, fund-raising and marketing. These three elements should not become confused.
 - It was generally agreed that the overall budget was too small, and that much more clarity is needed in determining the balance between the central and local budgets and their administration.

List of interviewees and foundations

Name	Foundation
Maud Aguirre	Evens Foundation
Mats Brandt	Foundation for Swedish Culture in Finland
Christine Castille	Evens Foundation
Aida Cengic	Soros*
Piero Gastaldo	Compagnia di San Paolo
Raymond Georis	NEF (comments solicited on this report)
Pia Gerber	Freudenberg Stiftung
Angelika Krüger	International Academy
Micheline Mardulyn	Fondation Bernheim
Luigi Morella	Compagnia di San Paolo
Ray Murphy	C.S. Mott Foundation
Liam O'Dwyer	Irish Youth Foundation
Christian Petry	Freudenberg Stiftung
Guy Redig	King Baudouin Foundation
Antonella Ricci	Compagnia di San Paolo
Sonia Schellino	Compagnia di San Paolo
Hywel Jones	NEF

Comments on the text were also received from Raymond Georis (Madariaga foundation and ex Managing Director of NEF, and Luc Tayart de Borms (current Chaiman of NEF).

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YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

EXTERNAL EVALUATION CASE STUDY

ANTWERP, BELGIUM*

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Aims and purpose

This report was commissioned by the Steering Committee of the Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme (YEPP) with the following purposes:

- To have a systematic, independent account of the development, perceived quality, and impact of the YEPP site in Antwerp, Belgium, including policy impact on local and national levels.
- To indicate lessons learned in the form of recommendations for future phases of YEPP in order to improve and extend the YEPP experience.

The aim is that this report, in conjunction with the Case Study of the Internal Evaluation, will contribute to a stock-taking of YEPP Antwerp. It is hoped that the results will be used both internally, for discussion within the YEPP Antwerp Team and Support Group, and externally for discussion by other YEPP sites.

This is the second in a series of case studies. The series will consist of separate case studies for each of the seven participating YEPP sites and an overarching trans-national report. Ultimately, each of these reports of the external evaluation will be teamed with a matching report of the internal evaluation, with the end goal of providing a thorough yet concise look at the development, functioning, and outcomes of YEPP from 2002-2006.

Methodology

The report is based on semi-structured interviews with:

- The YEPP Antwerp team:
 - Representatives of the funding foundations (Evens Foundation; Fondation Bernheim).
 - YEPP Antwerp Co-ordinator.
 - YEPP Antwerp Researcher (both).
 - Members of the original co-ordinating team.
- Members of the YEPP Support Group.
- Youth participants in YEPP.
- Community members involved in or with experience of YEPP, including local decision-makers.
- National Flemish policy makers working in related areas (*i.e.* social inclusion, youth, community development, partnerships).
- Discussions with representatives of the YEPP Programme Team.

- Observations of the OECD/CERI external evaluation review team.¹⁶

In total, more than 53 individuals representing local and national levels as well as public, private, and independent sectors were interviewed during two site visits (the first in 2004 and the second in 2005; see Annex 3 for a complete list of individuals interviewed). Interviews followed a semi-structured format that probed experiences of Context, Input, Process, and Product on the topics of youth empowerment, community development, and partnerships. The experiences and the interviews were divided along sectors (public/private/independent) and levels (mandating, strategic, operational, and field). The interviews were conducted individually unless the interviewee expressed a great preference for another partner (this was sometimes the case for the youth, for example). Interviewees were given the choice of conducting the interview in English, French, or their native language. Interviews were then transcribed and coded using the qualitative coding software N7. Annex 2 contains a more detailed description of the interview process, the methodology used, and data collection and analysis.

Reporting

This report reflects the findings of the external evaluation regarding the development, process, and outcomes of YEPP Antwerp. It is organised by main themes, looking at partnership building, youth empowerment, and community development in turn. The experience of trans-national co-operation will also be touched on, but briefly, as the final cross-cutting report in this series of case studies will focus more thoroughly on the trans-national co-operation of YEPP.

As one of the goals of this evaluation was to reflect on the processes of change, central interviewees were interviewed on both site visits, during the second of which they were explicitly prompted to reflect on changes since the previous year and plans for the future. Sustainability issues and lessons learned are also reflected.

It is important to emphasise that the bulk of the observations of this evaluation come from the local stakeholders, including youth, themselves, and are not opinions imposed from the outside. Some contributions are quoted verbatim when they seem particularly insightful or when a comment sums up the majority view on a particular topic.

Context

As with all YEPP sites, the local support group (LSG) of YEPP Antwerp was designed to consist of local stakeholders, youth as well as representatives from the funding foundations. It is supported by a local coordinator and researcher. YEPP Antwerp was unique among the sites in that most of these individuals changed over the time-course of the project and no formal LSG was formed. The original Co-ordinating Team (composed of five members of Straaten-Generale¹⁷) was replaced by a single co-ordinator in late 2004. This new co-ordinator had previously been the (second) Local Researcher (the first having left early in the process), and the replacement (*i.e.* third) Local Researcher was previously the Inland Researcher for the OECD/CERI external evaluation of YEPP Antwerp. In addition, the foundation representative for the Evens Foundation changed twice during the course of the project. These personnel changes affected the project in greater and lesser ways as a function of working style and goals, some of which will be outlined

¹⁶. For the site visits this team was composed of an OECD/CERI researcher (Tracey Burns) and a local Inland Researcher, who commented on relevant national policy and local context, aided in organising the visit, and provided translation as necessary. Inland Researcher 2004: Marijke Cornelis; 2005: Jeroen Franssens. Peter Evans of the OECD Secretariat, although not present at site visits, was also a member of the team.

17. Straaten-Generale is a citizen's movement of mainly middle-class people with much commitment but a difficult choice for co-ordinating and implementing YEPP.

below- on the whole, however, these changes made steady and continuous development of the project difficult. In fact, in addition to extremely limited funding, the personnel changes could be perceived as the input with the most negative impact on the function of YEPP Antwerp.

Local implementation of YEPP

As previously outlined YEPP Antwerp is an example of a site that experienced dramatic personnel changes over the period of the project. Lacking a single co-ordinator and a support group for the first half of its existence, it did not fulfil the goals of a YEPP site – but it must be emphasised that it did not originally SEEK to do so.

The coordinating group that first led YEPP Antwerp intentionally deviated from the standard YEPP model in three main ways: first, in its choice to remain a voluntary coordinating *group* rather than nominate or pay a single co-ordinator; second, in a choice not to establish a formal unified Support Group; and third, in its decision to focus primarily on community rather than youth empowerment (this third point will be discussed in more detail later). These choices, coupled with the change in personnel previously described, make it virtually impossible to evaluate the effectiveness of YEPP Antwerp in its early stages as it could be argued- and indeed in our opinion should be argued- that by not fulfilling the fundamental conditions of a YEPP site it was not, in fact, a YEPP site and should not be evaluated as such.

These choices point to a basic element of partnership that was lacking in YEPP Antwerp in its original form: shared goals. This is not a criticism of YEPP Antwerp, as they were candid about their process and goals.

“In a sense, they have been very honest about this from the beginning. They said this is our agenda, this is why we are entering YEPP and the YEPP concept should adapt itself to that concept. I think the question they should have asked themselves and maybe the Berlin team before entering the project, can these two agendas possibly match?” - Member of YEPP Antwerp.¹⁸

It does raise the question of how and why sites were chosen for participation in YEPP and the process of setting up YEPP sites as it was conducted in 2001-2002. In retrospect, it seems that the hurry to find a site in a given area created a situation in which there was not enough time to find the best fit. In fact the Evens foundation joined at a later date:

“...Because of practical considerations [you decide] we need a partner there, you start choosing second best and making compromises on what the project concept is. Maybe you can do that a little bit, but if you do that too much you are just sabotaging the project.” - Member of YEPP Antwerp.

It is easy to speak in hindsight, of course. But the fact remains that these early choices had long-term impacts on the functioning of YEPP Antwerp and its ability to succeed:

“I think if they wanted a CHI in Antwerp they could have looked for other partners, maybe more suitable partners... But they didn't find those partners, so they somehow settled for second best and I think that's just a wrong start for a project that is so complex. I don't see how you can mend that in the course of a three year project.” - Member of YEPP Antwerp (speaking in 2004).

¹⁸. Attributions are provided if it is not clear from the context which group is speaking. Attributions are intended to be both specific enough to guide the reader and general enough to preserve the identity of the individual speaker. In this case “member of YEPP Antwerp” refers to the core group comprised of the (eventual) Local Coordinator, Local Researcher, and foundation representatives.

In addition to choices made in setting up the site, there was a long-standing disappointment of the amount of funding required to support an international research project and the amount of funding available for the site and its projects. The analogy of a champagne flute – wide at the top and narrowing to almost nothing at the bottom – was often cited, with the perception being that all the funding available was generally taken off at the top (at the level of the Programme Team, the foundations, and the OECD), leaving very little to trickle down to community and project level. This was not the only site with this complaint, but it was the site where the attitude was most marked.

“So we have money for the university people following up the process, which is very good when someone who is very educated can follow-up what is happening. But then you see those people are paid, you’re paid, ... everything is paid, but the project is about how you develop projects in the neighbourhoods, and if you ask what is paid over there it is nothing...” - Member of original coordinating team.

Whatever the views held by those working in Antwerp, it must be pointed out that the lack of funds at the level of the site was not due to them being creamed off at the top, as believed in Antwerp, since this is not the YEPP funding model. It reflects instead, a lack of direct investment by the foundations concerned into the site.

Part of the discontent regarding funding was dismay at the level of organisation required for the research (to be discussed more fully in that section below), and part of it was the very real shortage of funds experienced by YEPP Antwerp. It received relatively little funding among the YEPP sites, and the original coordinating team chose to work in a voluntary basis:

“We don’t have a budget. We don’t have money, so we don’t have a budget. There is just the money for [local researcher] and there was a very small amount in the beginning that came from somewhere in the European network and it was spent on the organisation of the first roundtable.”

The voluntary coordinating team was eventually replaced with a paid coordinator, but the level of funding available for projects did not substantially increase.

This variation in funding available to the sites cannot be overlooked, not only because the funding available (or lack thereof) had a direct impact on the types of projects that could be undertaken, but also because in the YEPP network the sites were encouraged to compare and share experiences. This is of course a positive process but one that can also give rise to a feeling of “have-not” for sites that are receiving substantially less funding than others.¹⁹ This was a concern for members of Antwerp and also members of the other sites who perceived the limited budget available to Antwerp. This too is an issue that needs further attention in future versions of YEPP.

Despite this issue, the work of YEPP was perceived as something special:

“Now looking back I have to say I still think that YEPP is one of the most worthwhile projects we undertook, because it’s transversal, because on the one hand it focuses geographically ... on a small part of the town, the part with a lot of problems ... and putting around the table all the stakeholders at the different levels, that is really something very innovative in my viewpoint. ... I still feel warm thinking of YEPP – on the other hand, I see that ... the field never received a lot of funding, that was really the weakness of the project.” - Member of YEPP Antwerp

¹⁹. Each YEPP site had a different budget allocation determined by their local foundation and as a result the budgets for the individual sites varied.

Co-ordinator, support group, and foundation

The decision to remain a co-ordinating group was a conscious reflection of the working processes of the co-ordinating group. Again, it must be remembered that the original coordinating team was not trying to fulfil the requirements of the YEPP model, and so purposely did not create a formal support group:

“It costs an incredible amount of energy for us to fit in, but we don’t want to fit in.”

Instead of a formal support group that met at regular intervals and worked on YEPP as a whole, the choice was made to have infrequent meetings of a broad support group and then work specifically with smaller groups on particular projects, thus missing the opportunity to establish an LSG with local ownership.

This decision, however, met with some criticism. A highly complex project like YEPP is difficult to understand and communicate to those not involved, and the feeling was that choosing to keep the overall functioning away from the community inadvertently affected the profile and identity of the project:

“In a sense they didn’t establish themselves as an entity... so people have connections to partners of YEPP, yet YEPP does not have its own identity.” - Member of YEPP Antwerp.

This separation was also perceived as an unwillingness to seek outside partners:

“I think that Straaten-Generale (consciously or un-consciously) is not functioning in a way that is stimulating this kind of group identity. And with group identity, I also mean a team spirit between the partners because they are positioning themselves as a group amongst themselves, but they don’t have a partnership attitude toward the other partners.” - Member of YEPP Antwerp.

As previously explained, the coordinating group was replaced by a single Local Coordinator in late 2004. Having up to that time been the Local Researcher, he knew the project and participants well and was able to be of immediate benefit. Having a single coordinator also allowed for more direct planning and a closer adherence to the YEPP model.

“I think it’s an improvement because we have someone who is now really focused on YEPP. And he has been doing this job very well. It’s also better for the cooperation with the foundation, he’s working at the office of the foundation so that makes things a bit easier... I think it’s a big improvement for the YEPP project in Antwerp.” - Member of original coordinating team.

Moving from a voluntary to a paid position housed in the foundation offices also had the benefit of adding resources to the YEPP funding. In addition the budget available for projects was also increased substantially, which allowed the new Coordinator to fund several new initiatives. These changes were quite substantial for a project previously run on little funding and coordinated by a group of volunteers, almost all of whom had challenging paid work and little free time, and to whom everyday office expenditures required by YEPP constituted more spending for an unpaid position. The original coordinating group themselves also acknowledged that their role had been served:

“for [us] the mushroom became too big, we planted the seeds and different mushrooms popped up out of the ground... So we were very happy that someone came to do all the follow-up to everything that we started.”

YEPP Antwerp was unique among the YEPP sites in that it had two funding foundations during the project. Although small foundations and not able to provide the level of financial support of some of the other YEPP foundations, they were fundamental in shaping the project as a whole (one representative was vice-chair of the YEPP Steering Committee from 2002-2004), and providing continuity (the other was the only person to remain in her position throughout the duration of the project). Yet here too the fluctuation in personnel left its mark: a decision to divide up the Evens Foundation representative into two positions (one in charge of local level and one the international level) created difficulties:

“We don’t have very much feedback of what is happening in that steering committee which makes things difficult for us... we have to write out this plan of action for what’s happening in 2006 but we don’t actually know what is going on.” - Member of YEPP Antwerp.

Research

The research was a very strong component in YEPP Antwerp, despite the changes in personnel. Strong individual skills and good communication between out-going and in-coming researchers provided the basis for a continuous and meticulous work. Yet as with many of the other YEPP sites, the research component of the YEPP design was not fully realised in YEPP Antwerp mainly because they did not want to implement YEPP and then criticised the research design which was planned to evaluate YEPP and not some other project. This conflict led to much discussion between YEPP Antwerp and the PT who were required because of the structure of YEPP to try to re-focus the evaluation and persuade them to implement YEPP. This problem was never really fully resolved.

The design of the project was of course developed over time, with adjustments made by the PT based on feedback received, and these changes eventually alleviated many of the complaints. Still, the process of making those changes was perceived as too long and too inflexible, which incited much criticism, particularly at the outset:

“I have a conflict with YEPP [Berlin] because they are not open to talking... All those papers to fill in are prepared [in] the way that we can’t fill them in.”

YEPP Antwerp, focusing as it did on community development more than youth empowerment, was looking for more flexibility in research design and reporting requirements than the PT was willing to offer, at least initially.

YEPP Antwerp struggled with how best to be the “critical friend” required by the YEPP model. Working with the site and answering to their needs as well as balancing the requirements of the Programme Team was the single most difficult process for the researchers of YEPP Antwerp.

“I think the internal evaluation should still be there, but not with its double focus. I really think that the whole research aspect of it should be bottom up instead of top down, that as local researcher you are focusing just on the local projects, and trying to give support there.”

The question of the balance of funding for perceived local interests (project funding) versus perceived external interests (the majority of the work of the local researcher) was a very real concern for those interviewed, particularly within the YEPP team. It of course is related to the overall functioning of the programme (see champagne glass analogy above), and played out also in relation to the research component:

“...If you see how much money goes to the YEPP program on the level of investigation and if you see how much money really goes to the streets, there is an incredible difference. That I knew already from the beginning and I don’t feel well working in that way.” - Member of original coordinating team.

This continuing troubled perception of why the research was done and who it benefited, and indeed the distribution of funding, was not resolved satisfactorily and should be addressed in future variations of the YEPP project.

Summary of Local implementation of YEPP

- Strengths.
 - (Eventual) strong local coordinator and continuation of local partnerships.

- (Eventual) strong and continuing activities despite very limited funding.
- Weaknesses.
 - Formal support group never adequately established.
 - Strong research component; more flexibility required of research design.

Lessons Learned

A number of lessons can be gleaned from the process of creating and running YEPP Antwerp, including the importance of:

- Beginning a YEPP site with shared understanding and formal agreement on objectives, the YEPP model, and goals.
- Ensuring equal or relatively equal funding across YEPP sites in order to avoid the creation of “have” and “have not” sites.
- Searching for ways to resolve or reduce the tension in international community development projects between the funding available for local-level projects versus international-level organisation.

Key Themes of YEPP

In terms of evaluating YEPP Antwerp it is important to remember that YEPP has a strong process component as well as different types of outcomes. The process cycle cannot be fully captured in the EE, but is described in detail in the IE. This section therefore, focuses on the main outcomes of cross-sectoral partnerships, youth empowerment, and community empowerment. In addition, the lack of shared goals at the outset gives rise not only to clear lessons for the future: they also serve to remind us, along with the changes in personnel that disrupted the progression of the project, that YEPP Antwerp is a unique “non-site” which needs to be evaluated in the context of its goals and intentions in addition to conventional YEPP goals.

“The YEPP concept – it’s a complete concept, but the complete package has not been implemented, so as far as I’m concerned... In Antwerp we have had a youth project, and there are results, there are nice results, but it’s not a YEPP project.” - Member of YEPP Antwerp.

This section looks at cross-sectoral partnerships, youth empowerment, and community empowerment in turn, focussing on the process, the products (in terms of key changes and challenges), and lessons learned for the future. Where appropriate, the context of national policy and comments of national policy-makers are integrated into the analysis.

Development of Cross-Sectoral Partnerships

YEPP Antwerp, despite the lack of a formal support group, was one of the few YEPP sites that had early and continuous partnerships with all three sectors: that is, the public, independent, and private sectors. This section will look at the process of building partnerships by focussing on selected elements of partnerships, including:

- Quality of co-operation (among partners).

- Communication and networking.
- Co-operation between sectors.
- Triangulation (*i.e.* the effective combination of public, private, and independent sectors).

The Process

Bringing together partners from different sectors to work together can be a difficult process. In the case of YEPP Antwerp, partnership was initially facilitated by the sheer number of projects and groups working in Antwerp, as well as existing networks between the groups. The initial “support group” included members of the public sector, including representatives of the local administration and teachers, the school CDO Noord, and members of the independent sector. The private sector was brought in on the initiative of one of the foundations committed to the site. In 2003 Timberland BENELUX began collaborating via its Serv-a-Palooza Day, a corporate social responsibility initiative in which Timberland partnered with CDO Noord and YEPP Antwerp as part of their community building strategy, which requires Benelux Timberland staff to participate in the Serv-a-Palooza day at the school.

Quality of co-operation

In developing partnerships of any kind, the most important requirement is shared goals and complementary skills that can be combined:

“You have the same objective, then you can pull the same rope. Then you make great advances.”
- Teacher.

The private sector, often difficult to involve in community projects, was quick to point out that financial support will only get you so far:

“You need the money of companies like us but in the meantime communication with the people backstage and people in the street is so important, even more important than the money I think, if you really want to change things.”

The second most important component named by the interviewees was the willingness to work together and an understanding of the time and effort required:

“The challenging thing in partnerships is to learn to know each other, and it always takes more time than you think. To really know each other and then to make good agreements on what we’ll work together on, and what not, and to get this very clear takes some time... then you get things like them asking ‘what are they doing, this is not in the interests of our partnership – it’s something completely else’... so it’s always very difficult in partnerships. You need to really want to work together.” – Independent sector representative.

The co-operation among the partners refers to both local stakeholders and the co-operation with the YEPP Programme Team. The co-operation with the latter, as previously discussed, proved challenging. This appears to be primarily because neither YEPP Antwerp nor the PT perceived the other as flexible or willing to listen, as described by a member of the original coordinating group:

“Berlin has always tried to put us on rails and didn’t listen to us. We wanted to do it in our own way.” [note of course that “wanting to do it our own way” is also not particularly cooperative].

The views expressed in the last paragraphs, given other issues in Antwerp concerning general internal communication difficulties between the partners reflects a misunderstanding of the YEPP programme. It is not fair to say that YEPP has a strong hierarchical structure. The PT made substantial efforts to work with the YEPP sites to develop jointly agreed initiatives via, for example, trans-national meetings. It is certainly

true to say that to become a YEPP site it was necessary to develop a certain structure and mode of operation as agreed by the steering committee. If the site resisted, clearly there would be a tendency to feel the effects of top down pressure and the lack of funding may well have increased this feeling and frustrated many of the actors. This refers back to the degree to which foundations in joint projects must be careful to seek equity in funding arrangements across sites. This requires foundations to give up some autonomy. But it must be emphasised that YEPP itself is not a top down process.

Communication and networking

Strong communication was considered to be another fundamental element of an effective partnership. Some of the challenges involved in establishing strong partnerships were related to imperfect communication and different interpretation of the same terms:

“I think that sometimes you need the help of a translator, even if we all speak Flemish. Somebody who translates the needs of the people participating in the project ... to put it into local government words. ... That’s a very difficult job because they have to be able to speak both languages, so it’s not easy.” - Local administration representative.

On the whole, the communication and networking among the YEPP Antwerp partners was difficult, “Support Group” meetings were not held regularly. In addition, there was a hidden dynamic in working in this particular area of the city, a poor area that accommodates long-term “Belgian” (*i.e.* white) residents and a broad diversity of new immigrants. Given the resistance to immigration from supporters of the extreme right (who were numerous in this area) there was a clear tension in the neighbourhood which surfaced at meetings.

“In the end you speak with the neighbours and you have the people who really hijack the whole meetings for their own purposes.” - Independent sector representative.

The power dynamic was also skewed with the arrival of new residents and gentrification; new residents who were middle class and better educated and more used to speaking (and being heard) than both the poor long-term residents and the new immigrants (who were less likely to make their voices heard, both because of limited skill in Dutch and because many of them came from countries without a tradition of open community dialogue). This was acknowledged as a difficulty by members of all sectors, including this interviewee from the local administration:

“On the other hand, specifically in the domain of social affairs, we were looking for ways to... make sure that everybody gets the opportunity to become a partner in developing the city and living in Antwerp. So that not only the middle-class, male, between 40-50, well educated - those people are very important, but where are the young people? Where are the older people? Is there room for people who don’t speak Flemish? Can we reach them and also try to involve them in realising the policy of the city?”

Cooperation between sectors

Despite a general pre-disposition to partnership, the process can be complicated by different working styles and expectations among the sectors. The public sector was especially aware that the governmental process is slow and can be frustrating:

“[it] makes it complicated because people who want to take initiative want to do it now and they aren’t interested in the fact that... we have to work on all the legal steps and we’ll let you know in a year if its worked or not. By then those people have sometimes changed focus and said, ‘I’ve become active in my local school or the sports club so, it was very nice meeting you, but I want to do something now’” - Public sector representative.

Those interviewees who were used to working with the public sector had often developed strategies to circumvent the bureaucratic delay (for approval of certain projects, for example). Although not recommended as a long-term strategy for partnership building, it seemed effective for those who were required to work within the school system, notorious for resisting change:

“My slogan, my motto – is ‘it’s easier to get forgiveness than to get permission’ I’ll just go ahead and see what happens.”

In addition, the short-term nature of politics was frustrating for those in other sectors looking for longer-term partnerships:

“You build certain networks or contacts with people in the city, then there is a crisis at city level and all your contacts disappear and you have to start over again.” - Independent sector representative.

However actively seeking for partners such as YEPP was high on the agenda of the public sector, and helped encourage working in partnership:

“We don’t want to do everything ourselves anymore and it isn’t the city/city council/local administration who are responsible for everything. The minds were changing in a way that the city administration is the director of the policy, but were looking for partners that would help us realise those policies. I think there is a fine example in finding the same goals between YEPP and our local policy.” - Local administration representative.

Bringing the private sector into the equation was perceived as very difficult, not least because Flanders was lacking the tradition:

“Every time I read the words public/private partnerships, I come outside of my country, they always understand it in a very different way. When we compare it with British and American models, we always see that the private partnership there are viewed as a very strong support, for instance by commercial organisations, companies. This is something that doesn’t exist here, kind of a charity tradition that does not exist in our country. There is always a struggle... when we try to involve these kinds of companies into these kinds of projects at the same level they do in England and America.” - Member of local administration.

Triangulation

In terms of triangulation (and the effective partnering of public, private, and independent sectors), this analysis can provide no effective descriptions of either the process or the outcomes of such a partnership, as “partnership” in an ongoing form was not present. There was a good deal of co-operation among all three sectors, however, which will be discussed below.

Key changes

YEPP Antwerp survived its personnel changes and emerged as a functioning YEPP project with strong Local Coordinator, Local Researcher, and foundation representatives. The connections to the community that were maintained across the project were being used more formally as a support group by the time of the second site visit (November 2005). This in itself is a positive result, and was recognised as such by local partners:

“Continuity I think is important. [You need] someone who takes care of the timing and the continuity because people and organisations can be partners, but people change. What did we agree to last time? If it takes a year or more to organise, then you need to have continuity, someone who keeps it on the agenda with the local government, with the volunteers, otherwise all is lost.” - Local administration representative.

Key changes in partnerships across the time were seen in a continuation of the link to the private sector, continuing and deepening the connection to the independent sector, particularly as related to youth work, and a growing awareness and recognition of YEPP in the public sector, both on local and Flemish levels. In addition, the increased inclusion of youth, especially in regards to the video project, was a marked change between the two site visits. These can all rightly be regarded as successes, particularly given the changing nature of the YEPP team as discussed above.

Challenges for YEPP Antwerp

There were several challenges that emerged from the interviews conducted for the external evaluation. The most consistent one was that even after four years YEPP was not entirely successful at establishing its identity and profile in the community. This was partially a result of the sheer number of actors, and also a result of the fact that YEPP as a project is enormously complex and is very difficult to explain and package. This was not aided by the piecemeal process initially used by the co-ordination team in bringing partners to the table, as it prevented them from getting a sense of the entire picture:

“The first time I met YEPP, for me it was, what is YEPP, so many people involved... and after one hour I understand, it’s European, but that’s it really. [And] all the people in the street and even students of the school they ... really didn’t understand the meaning of it.” - Private sector representative.

Of course, it was also very difficult for the YEPP Antwerp team to explain YEPP without materials suitable for wide audiences, a hindrance in the beginning. In the end the production of the materials was less helpful than having something concrete at a local level to demonstrate:

“It’s going much better now that there is a project. When you have something, you can show them and go to them and discuss about a very concrete project. That opens doors.” – Member of original coordinating team.

Even so, however, many interviewees felt that there was still some way to go before YEPP could be considered a success:

“YEPP has been a great facilitator for us ... [but] I still think that we are not there yet. We are not a solid partnership with other local organisations.” – Public sector representative.

Another challenge was how to continue to capitalise on the progress that has been made in terms of the participation of the private sector. This is discussed in more detail below.

Building Cross-Sectoral Partnerships

As outlined above, YEPP Antwerp was successful in bringing all sectors to the table very early in the process, and maintaining these cross-sectoral partnerships throughout the duration of the project. The standard challenge in cross-sectoral partnership building, though, is how to bridge the different working strategies of the sectors. From the perspective of overcoming these obstacles, the members of YEPP Antwerp show that they are clearly committed to:

- Approaching and welcoming representatives of the various sectors into the project.
- Raising awareness about different goals and expectations for timelines across the different stakeholders.
- Engaging in a dialogue about what might and might not be needed to improve the quality of the partnership.

Still a challenge, at least as reflected in the interviews of November 2005, was:

- Keeping reports and documents short and direct, especially given the research reporting requirements.
- Structuring initiatives so that there is a more immediate sense of a YEPP identity and a feeling of teamwork across all partners.

These action points would be welcomed by many members of the project, and not just those representing the private sector.

Challenges from the policy world

YEPP Antwerp was actively supported by members of the municipal and Flemish level administration. On the Flemish level, there were a number of projects on similar topics (see introduction for more details). Interviews with national policy makers in education, labour, and the social services revealed the complexity of working partnerships and many of the comments made were similar to those from the local level.

Partnerships between sectors, especially with the private sector, were very uncommon, except in the case of the Ministry of Labour and employment training programmes. Indeed it seemed that co-operation within the public sector itself could be trying enough, particularly between administrative departments that do not have a tradition of co-ordinating services or working cross-departmentally. This was the main factor underlying the (re)combination of the Ministries of Education and Labour, which were joined with the explicit goal of increasing coordination and cooperation. This seemed to be working, at least in the early stages (November 2005):

“From this year onwards we are working together as a main priority so that the correspondence between education and work is stronger, we are doing it together.”

Despite this restructuring, there was concern within the administration that the lack of willingness to partner across all the ministries involved in youth and community work (Education and Labour, but also Health, Justice, Social Affairs) was negatively affecting the integration of services, particularly for those most vulnerable. They reported that parents or youth looking for specific services find it difficult to navigate the system even when they speak Dutch perfectly – those who are less familiar with bureaucratic affairs or have less facility in the language will obviously find it that much more daunting.

This was perceived clearly on the local level:

“[For cooperation on a local level] there’s not really that much frustration. The frustration starts when we go further - you know that is my main criticism towards our policy-makers in Belgium - that there is absolutely no tradition and no willingness or readiness to actually work between different departments. You’ve got education, you’ve got work, although they belong to the same ministry now, you’ve got health and safety, you’ve got social things and so on – but the picture doesn’t come together, and policy-makers should be doing that.”- Antwerp teacher.

Lessons Learned

A number of lessons learned can be gathered from the work of YEPP Antwerp in cross-sectoral partnership building, including the importance of:

- Involving all sectors early in the process to instil a sense of ownership and active participation.

- Communicating what YEPP is in a concrete way to prospective partners in all sectors (and youth).
- Establishing shared terms and definitions so that clear communication can take place.
- Respecting the working styles of the different sectors and willingness to be open to all prospective partners.
- Understanding barriers to co-operation within a sector (e.g. public administration) and getting a commitment to action from leaders who can support the process of change.

The bottom line is always the willingness to see the benefits of partnership:

“When they were on their own they sometimes lost courage, but with these partnerships people could encourage each other. YEPP can use other channels, other networks and other ways of approaching people ... [for example] city schools are dependent on city government and they can’t go against their government and YEPP can do that for them.” – Teacher.

Community Empowerment

Community empowerment can be thought of as being comprised of several facets, including:

- Identity (which here we broaden to include social/environmental/and health identity).
- Citizenship (in political/legal terms).
- Economics of/and education (school-work).
- Cultural (music, arts, etc.).

Empowerment on any or all of these dimensions is both difficult to measure and, when measured, of uncertain causality. It should be stressed that many of the projects (such as Serv-a Palooza and the work of the CDO Noord) were not created by YEPP *per se*, but they were both supported and nourished by the partnership with YEPP and brought to CDO via active involvement of the foundations. This fact also makes evaluating the impact of YEPP on community empowerment difficult, as it increases the uncertainty regarding what can be directly attributed to YEPP versus the larger community-based programme context. Still, it is possible to identify projects which were aimed at promoting empowerment along the dimensions laid out above, and which were identified as successful by the community and project leaders, and were partnered with YEPP. Before we turn to a discussion on outcomes, however, it is useful to think about the process over time.

The Process

As already mentioned community empowerment and active community participation was a key goal for YEPP Antwerp and remained so throughout the lifespan of the project. Community projects in Antwerp operate in a particularly complex community dynamic: on the one hand there is an enormous amount of energy and large number of organisations working on community development and empowerment of traditionally less active groups (the poor, new immigrants to Belgium), and on the other the rise of the extreme right (and the active participation of the Vlams Belang in Antwerp city council) has led to open resistance to the presence of immigrants and projects aimed at aiding their integration.

In addition, community-building is a dynamic process with sometimes unintended results. The development of the park in the area has been portrayed as very positive for the locals, but what is not as clearly identified is that the resulting gentrification might very likely force out those who cannot afford to pay rising rents, a process that is already taking place:

“The people who rent these houses will have problems, for sure. It’s what you have to do, you can leave an area like this or you can develop it... There is a big risk of [driving the poorest long-term residents out], but then again I am an economist and involve myself with the practical problems and never really with the social evolution of this area.” - Private sector representative.

Key changes

The kinds of projects the YEPP Antwerp is currently working on cut across all the four dimensions of community empowerment as listed above, and the strongest change observed across the site visits was the strength of the community involvement and community partnerships. It should be stressed that these partners (including the school and Timberland) perceive themselves to be contributing to YEPP but are not themselves a YEPP project; that is, they existed before YEPP and will continue to exist after YEPP is gone. That being said, they believe that the work that they have done with YEPP helped them develop and they are pleased to have been involved.

On the dimension of identity (which here we broaden to include social/environmental/and health identity) there have been numerous initiatives aimed at establishing a neighbourhood identity and working to bring people together through common action and community initiatives. Examples include the Serv-a-Palooza day, festivals, parades, planting of flowers and flower boxes, public art, organising street cleaning. These take place through the school and are all ongoing, and have been a big change:

“One of the neighbours across the street of the festivity, he said I’ve been living here for thirty-two years and that is the first time that something happened here.” - Teacher

The citizenship dimension (in political/legal terms) was the weakest dimension of the work of YEPP Antwerp. Although Antwerp has a number of district youth councils, the youth council for this district has not been operational and so obviously not involved with YEPP. The school was involved in teaching and raising awareness of human rights and the UN Charter on the Rights of the Child. This played out in a variety of ways – for example, many of the students at the school are illegal residents who do not have papers to be in Belgium, yet they know (and have been taught) that they cannot be apprehended while engaged in school activities because of the fundamental right to education enshrined in that Charter.

The dimension of economics and education evolved over time, with the school seeking innovative ways to train students at risk of dropping out in conjunction with a number of other community partners. The Open School policy pursued by the school (*i.e.* bringing the community into the school) has also been very successful and includes a number of initiatives, including one for adult education. In 2005 a community job training and guidance programme was expanded to include youth (see also Youth Empowerment section for details).

The cultural dimension was also strong with a number of projects focussed on music, the arts, and especially video. YEPP Antwerp participated in the trans-national Community TV project, along with representatives of most of the other YEPP sites. The five youth members of the YEPP Antwerp team created a short film that was screened at the 2006 YEPP-Community conference:

“It was incredible because none of us had done documentaries before, so for us that kind of information about how do you work with subjects that are not actors basically, that was very interesting. It gave us a lot of energy.” – Youth.

Also since the time of the site visit YEPP Antwerp has launched videAntz, a film project in partnership with the city (among others). The project was officially launched in September 2006 to very positive press coverage and reactions from the youth and community.

Challenges for YEPP Antwerp

The main challenge for YEPP Antwerp is how to continue to build on what's been accomplished and how best to reach out to those most at-risk:

“Here you have the white, male, educated, these are the ones that come to the meetings. The other people just don't come to the meetings, we just don't seem to reach them at all. [The challenge is] to stop some people who try to manipulate the whole process, who do not represent the whole area.” - Independent sector representative.

Given the delicate political and local balance and the presence of support for the extreme right co-existing with diverse cultural and linguistic communities in the same small neighbourhood, bringing everyone together and trying to find commonalities becomes very difficult. If the will on the part of the community is not there, there is not much leeway:

“But in the end it's easy to communicate with people who want to communicate back and it's impossible to communicate with people who don't want to. At least half these people don't want to communicate.” - Private sector representative.

This balancing act is further complicated by the complicated governance structure for Antwerp communities:

“Belgium is a rather complicated country in legislation. In Antwerp also, we make it more complicated - the city of Antwerp is a fusion between different other cities, it was nine of them which came together. But a few responsibilities stay in the old elements, so they [the districts] have an elected government also... So the streets for example, that's their responsibility, not to clean them but to maintain them, when something is broken, to repair it, that's a responsibility of the district. Then you have the city administration, so the administration for housing, we are responsible for housing. But the legislation in which we work is made by the Flemish government and a lot of money received to do that is from the Belgian government, so we have to work out programmes in a city in the legislation of the Flemish government, and in the legislation of the Belgian government, because they're paying it, so it's very good to have the responsible persons of those governments...” - Member of city administration

Given these complexities and given the amount of community work being done in the area, there is a long tradition of competition for relatively scarce resources – a tradition that is at times difficult to overcome. Still, there has been considerable progress and there seems to be a greater willingness to work together. Indeed, one challenge will be how to harness the amount of activity, good will, and programmes that are taking place, and how best to move forward from planning to action:

“What I thought as a minus, [the round-table] gave people the opportunity to be creative with ideas and opinion, but I am not sure that for the next step in implementing these ideas the tools were available to them. To not only have their ideas or good intentions, but that they were given the tools or they could reach out for the tools to make it work in practice.” – Independent sector representative.

Challenges from the policy world

Interviews with national (Flemish) policy makers in education, labour, and social affairs revealed that the concerns and challenges faced by the community of Antwerp were the same concerns across Flanders: to wit, how best to contain the rise in the extreme right, work to integrate minorities and immigrants, and

build a stronger model of peaceful communities. These topics, and all of the YEPP work, received more attention in the second year of interviews, possibly as a response to changing policy priorities and certainly as a reaction to the October 2005 riots in Paris.

In that context Flemish policy makers spoke of programmes for teaching Dutch as a second language to newly arrived immigrants and the “Reception Classes” organised by the Ministry of Employment and Education for all new immigrants attending Primary and Secondary schools. Of particular note is a small but vibrant programme run through the Ministry for Employment and Education that provides small grants to employers working on diversity projects and/or employing minorities in their businesses. As part of the project they have a designated number of “capacity builders” who engage each grant holder and provide ongoing support throughout the time-span of the grant (usually two years). This is a relatively new project but one that has increased in size dramatically in the last two years, and is an example of a recent and effective policy initiative that will be scaled-up in the years to come.

In addition, the best way to coordinate vertically across the various levels of Belgian governance structures was of concern, with the policy-makers being aware of the difficulty in coordination both in terms of the quality of the service delivered to the community, and the difficulty of monitoring and evaluating initiatives to ensure maximum effectiveness.

Lessons Learned

A number of lessons learned can be gleaned from the work of YEPP Antwerp in community development and empowerment, including the importance of:

- Encouraging traditionally less-active members of the community (in this case the poorest long-standing residents and recent immigrants) to participate.
- Encouraging the participation of youth in community planning discussions.
- Bringing together all sectors in an honest appraisal of what works and what does not work, and the best strategy to move forward.
- Having clear agreement on responsibilities for community development initiatives and expectations for action.
- Devising realistic community development plans that are holistic in nature and include long-term strategies (*i.e.* beyond the length of the current policy mandate) for community renewal.

The last point also implies having the political courage to wait for longer-term solutions and avoid the temptation of the “quick-fix” (and the corresponding willingness on the part of the community to wait for longer-term results).

And lastly, a final lesson learned from the community empowerment work of YEPP Antwerp is:

- The process of change is often as significant as the outputs of projects themselves.

Youth Empowerment

The central worry for Antwerp was the difficulty of bringing the youth into projects and programmes and reaching those most at-risk, especially in such a diverse environment (the school alone had 36 nationalities attending). The diversity of languages, of cultures, of expectations and hopes made it

difficult to reach out to the youth of Antwerp North, and existing tensions between new immigrants and “Belgians” created difficulties in joint projects or initiatives.

Despite this, there is a long history of youth work in the area and a number of organisations and partners willing to work together, as well as existing networks of professionals that come together to work on the topic. Yet as with most youth work, despite the good will expressed in interviews with local administration, there have been cuts to funding for even basic services:

“So there was less and less money. A lot of people had to be fired, so now you have a lot of people that are doing just the same work with less people.” - Public sector representative.

The Process

Community empowerment and youth empowerment are of course inextricably linked such that any programme focussed on youth will invariably have an impact on the broader community in which they reside. Insofar as it is possible to make the distinction, however, YEPP Antwerp deliberately chose to focus on community empowerment rather than youth empowerment during 2002-2004. They also, as a fundamental working style, did not set out to take ownership of projects:

“The school has the contact with youngsters and we have the contact with the school. Why should we put ourselves in place of educated people, who are professionally working with kids ... why should we put those teachers away and have direct contact with the kids? It’s a network system, but you can’t network if you can’t trust other people in the system. You have to respect all those partners.” - Member of original coordinating team.

As a result, during the 2004 site visit there was a low level of youth participation in YEPP projects, although there were a number of youth projects at the school, notably Serv-a-Palooza. Youth participation increased in 2005 with the new coordinator, who initiated and sustained several innovative projects. At the time of the last interviews the youth involvement in YEPP Antwerp was limited but growing.

“It’s always based on respect. We have a very good example, one of the directors [of a] school enters and one of our students opened the door for him and let him pass, he passes and then the director said he’d never met a student that opened the door for him in the twenty five years he’d been a director. And I said, “Do you know why? It’s because we open the door for him also.” - Teacher

Key changes

YEPP Antwerp has had a number of concrete outcomes from their work including a video project (see transnational cooperation section for more details), opportunities to work semi-voluntarily with the social welfare services of Antwerp, and a project where students work in mixed teams with professionals under the guidance of a coach to renovate dilapidated houses. These are paid positions and as the students are part of the group that is considered most at risk and difficult to access (see discussion above), this is a very positive step forward.

In addition YEPP works with RIZO, a neighbourhood coordinating group, on a project to support (financially and logistically) the initiatives of the citizens of Antwerp North. This has been quite successful:

“They opened a kids’ centre... and other projects... I really believe in these micro-injections of an area to redistribute social capital, and encourage people that take their own initiative to make their own living environment better.” - Member of YEPP Antwerp.

Another key change has been a perceived change in attitude as a result of these kinds of programmes and initiatives. By bringing the youth into the community and creating bridges for them, they have been able to be open to new ideas and connections:

“We have to facilitate the contact between the outside world. As soon as they start to feel appreciated, then miracles start to happen. The local police come here twice a month, in the beginning they would freak out, but now it’s ‘Hi, Philip’.” – Teacher.

In addition a key change was in the number of youth who had participated in a formal international YEPP project. Youth from Antwerp participated in all YEPP transnational workshops and the YEPP-ALL conferences. In October 2004 YEPP Antwerp also hosted the transnational workshop “pARTicipation in the picture” which focused on participation opportunities for young people by using various artistic ways of expression (see below for fuller discussion).

Challenges for YEPP Antwerp

The greatest challenge facing YEPP Antwerp in terms of youth empowerment was to continue to increase the participation of the youth, specifically the most at-risk youth. As discussed above, the cultural and linguistic diversity of the area makes it very difficult to bring everyone together, even though most of the youth speak Dutch. In addition, the participation of girls has been more difficult to achieve than boys, in part because of community expectations and cultural traditions (overnight trips and international exchanges for girls might not be acceptable in certain communities, for example).

As with many cross-sectoral partnerships, there was frustration with timing and the slow process of working with the public sector, particularly for youth that are unused to the pace:

“It’s quite simple for youth organisations but it’s a lot of paperwork, a lot of time goes by before you see the money and I think that is one of the biggest obstacles.” - Public sector representative.

Another challenge is how to balance expectations with practical solutions. Some of the youth spoke of an early excitement about the possibility of participating and giving input into projects, but then their excitement waned as they felt that none of their suggestions was taken seriously:

“We are asked ‘what do you want to improve?’ And then we go to the meeting where we write a small report about it, and in the end mostly the suggestions are rejected so...” - Youth representative.

Challenges from the policy world

The prime challenge as perceived by Flemish policy makers dealing with youth policy was how best to provide integrated services across ministries. Youth work, cutting as it does across education, employment, health, justice, welfare, housing, and various other ministerial departments, poses a particular challenge for coordinated policy-making. The policy-makers that we spoke to expressed concern about the lack of tradition in Flanders to coordinate and identified four problems in service delivery:

- The various services do not always cooperate well.
- Neither the services nor the clients have knowledge of all the system’s possibilities.
- There’s a shortage of services, resulting in long waiting lists.
- People are not always connected to the proper services for their needs and are often sent from one office to another.

Yet the pace of change is slow: in 2000 a plan was set up in order to improve youth services, with the title of Integrated Youth Assistance.

“This plan [was meant to be] implemented in 2003, but they say here well, well they will start implementing this plan in 2004, but then they say its going to take 8-10 years to implement it completely... and, well, it’s still not ready.” – Flemish policy representative.

An additional concern, as already explained in the community development section, was the best way to coordinate vertically across the various levels of Belgian governance structures. The complexity of the federated system with de-centralised power and budgeting going to the regions and cities results in an extra level of required coordination, and policy-makers were aware of this difficulty.

Lessons Learned

A number of lessons learned can be gleaned from the work of YEPP Antwerp in youth empowerment, including the importance of:

- Involvement of youth in the very earliest stages of project development to encourage ownership.
- Encouraging less active youth to bring their voice to the table and let themselves be heard.
- Getting the local administration to acknowledge the voice of youth in designing and delivering youth-related projects.

Trans-national Cooperation

As explained in the section on Reporting, in this report trans-national co-operation will be touched on only briefly, as the final cross-cutting report in this series of case studies will focus more thoroughly on the trans-national co-operation of YEPP.

YEPP Antwerp took part in the first trans-national workshop in 2003 in Finland as well as most of the subsequent workshops. They also hosted the 2004 “pARTicipation in the picture” which had as its main theme participation through art. By using various artistic forms of expression such as theatre art, graffiti art and music, all of which were chosen as activities on which youth can work together without needing a common language, the goal was to bring together the youth of the various sites to build ideas and experiences of youth participation.

Successes

For the youth

The transnational co-operation was uniformly perceived as a very important and positive aspect of YEPP by the youth. Youths were excited to have the opportunity to travel and get to meet participants from other sites and cultures:

“You have a lot of fun. If we wanted to have something, we could just ask, so ... if you wanted to see the old part of Turin, or drink a cup of tea there, we went to the film museum, it’s the most beautiful film museum I’ve ever been in!”

It was also considered a learning experience, in that they had an opportunity to perhaps learn about new ways of being, or innovative projects, or different approaches than they would have had at home. Yet there were criticisms of how well the learning goals were met (see Challenges section below).

For the community

The opportunity to meet the participants from the other sites and listen to their experiences and ideas was also appreciated by the broader community, many of whom were surprised that they gained something from the experience as well:

“The older people, they thought: we are hosting them, it’s going to be fine and they are going to learn, we are going to empower them, but at the same time they were changed by meeting these young people too. That was great – they never realised how young people are from abroad.” - Member of YEPP Antwerp.

For YEPP

It also helped the work of YEPP within the community, in terms of concretising the image of the project and exposing the community to it:

“We have to bring that project here, because we are a small project, but the whole project is not only Belgian, it’s European. Then people say its not only an idea of the coordinator or someone, it’s global, and they see [understand] it.” – Teacher.

Challenges

Some of the challenges expressed had to do with preparation across the sites, and making sure that the communication of the workshop goals was shared so that everyone would choose participants using the same criteria. Different criteria in picking the participants led to quite a diverse group of youth. In some ways this was seen as a positive and strong opportunity, in that the youth had a chance to experience not only different languages and cultures, but also different values, ages, and goals. For others, the group was not uniform enough to really establish equality among all participants, and they suggested that more care be put into the combination of participants, as this participant of the Turin workshop states:

“I had a lot of fun going there, but I didn’t really know what to expect ... [we thought it would be a] documentary-oriented programme but when we got there actually what we noticed was that a lot of CHIs had a lot less experience than we did and so we did not progress as much.”

Another challenge was related to outreach and inclusion and how best to reach the most vulnerable. In the beginning, when contact with the youth was limited, there was not a systematic way to access the youth and give them all an equal opportunity to participate, and this was perceived as a challenge to overcome. Even as the project progressed and contact with the youth was more frequent, the process of selecting participants for these international programmes was still difficult, particularly when trying to contact and obtain parental consent from non-Dutch speaking families. This of course is not a challenge restricted to YEPP Antwerp, but one faced by almost all YEPP sites.

In addition, there was resistance related to the balance of funding and the number of youth that could be included in international projects versus local ones. International projects are much more expensive to fund and as a result there can be less participants, a condition that was difficult to for those who felt the money would be better (and more equitably) spent on the local level. This is again an almost inevitable tension in international projects such as YEPP.

Sustainability

One of the key concerns of YEPP as a whole is the sustainability of the programme and the projects it supported. The youth exchanges, for example, were seen as very valuable in and of themselves, but could be even more valuable if the international connections could be maintained outside of the exchange process. In addition, there was a very positive sign in that the funding for the co-ordinator was renewed until 2008, thus allowing for the continuation of the project side of YEPP (the research aspect was to be phased out).

One concrete focus has been how best to broaden the work that they've already done, in terms of linking into other networks and other projects to inject new connections and ideas into the projects:

“What can we do? We can produce one, two or three documentaries and then I think it will dry out. I think certainly regarding this project our ambitions should be higher. I think if we want to continue with things then we need many antennas looking for new opportunities, new networks with professionals.” – Member of YEPP Antwerp.

In addition, a future plan is the creation of a Community Foundation for the area, modelled after the one operating in YEPP Tuzla. The goal for this would be to enable local citizens and youth to fund initiatives and proposals for youth empowerment and community development, as well as building capacity for writing and evaluating grant proposals. Although not yet begun, this prospective scheme would be the first example of cross-site initiative sharing and would allow YEPP Antwerp to become much more sustainable over time.

Whether or not YEPP continues per se, there was a good feeling about the work that has been done and the momentum generated across the lifespan of the project:

“We see that some other organisations are starting up now in the neighbourhood, it's good to ... hand over all our knowledge and to exchange and to support them in their own projects, not really interfering or taking over, but just support them and make it easier ... because afterwards, others will come.” - Member of YEPP Antwerp.

Recommendations for YEPP II

For future versions of YEPP, the lessons learned as highlighted in each section above should serve as useful guides for future action. In addition, however, three unresolved challenges stand out as requiring particular attention:

- Working on a long-term project raises important implications for partnership agreements, including continuity, shared goals, and expected outcomes. The various partners may find it difficult to continue supporting YEPP if expected outcomes are not delivered, and YEPP itself may have difficulties delivering if they are unable to maintain continuity in staff and projects. This could have long-term repercussions for the project site and participants.
- The continuing troubled perception of why the research is done and who it benefits was not resolved satisfactorily and is something that should be addressed in future variations of the YEPP project if the research component remains essential to the model.

Conclusions

Any evaluation of YEPP Antwerp is complicated by several factors. YEPP is a research and development programme concerned with process and outcomes but which are not pre-determined. With such an approach, evaluating the processes developed to stimulate youth and community empowerment and cross-sectoral partnerships is necessarily complex.

In addition, its insertion into a vibrant community means that YEPP Antwerp, as all YEPP sites, did not start with a blank slate, but rather entered into ongoing networks, relationships, and projects. Projects that were already started were continued under YEPP, projects that were invented elsewhere were adapted for local purposes, and groups allied themselves with the programme without considering themselves to be an output of YEPP. There is thus a series of non-causal relationships between products and projects which makes it that much more difficult to measure change.

Many key measurements were outlined above. In addition, one indicator of success is what is expected out of a project, and whether those expectations continue to increase over time. In this regard YEPP Antwerp was well perceived, and the extension of the funding for the coordinator and projects until 2008 is concrete evidence of this.

YEPP Antwerp is an example of a YEPP site that has had a difficult evolution and serves as a clear lesson in the importance of taking the time to choose initial partners with shared goals when setting up a YEPP site. Despite a relatively rocky start, YEPP Antwerp did in the end succeed in forming a YEPP project and has accomplished a number of important things in a small space of time. In particular, it has been strong in establishing partnerships and working within the community, all on an extremely limited budget.

Whether YEPP Antwerp continues in its current form or evolves into something entirely new, the overall goals and aims of the project will not be lost. We give the last word on the topic to a local partner:

“What was very refreshing to me and what gave me lots of energy was that you meet the diamonds, the people who are standing out in the city, the people who want to as a volunteer take on extra responsibility, who want in a very engaged way who want to participate in building this city. It wasn’t a room filled with only professionals, there were people who had the right to be there just because they live in Antwerp and they want to put energy into the community. That was refreshing, they could speak, they had the tools to create this platform.” - Local administration representative.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

EXTERNAL EVALUATION CASE STUDY

DUBLIN, IRELAND*

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Aims and purpose

This report was commissioned by the Steering Committee of the Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme (YEPP) with the following purposes:

- To have a systematic, independent account of the development, perceived quality, and impact of the YEPP site in Dublin, Ireland, including policy impact on local, regional and national levels.
- To indicate lessons learned in the form of recommendations for future phases of YEPP in order to improve and extend the YEPP experience.

The aim is that this report, in conjunction with the Case Study of the Internal Evaluation, will contribute to a stock-taking of YEPP Dublin. Ultimately, it is hoped that the results will be used both internally, for discussion within the YEPP Dublin Team and local support group (LSG), and externally for discussion by other YEPP sites.

This is the sixth in a series of case studies. The series will consist of case studies for each of the participating YEPP sites and an overarching trans-national report. Each of these reports of the external evaluation will be teamed with a matching report of the internal evaluation, with the end goal of providing a thorough yet concise look at the development, functioning, and outcomes of YEPP from 2002-2005.

Methodology

The report is based on semi-structured interviews with:

- The YEPP Dublin team:
 - Representative of the funding foundation (Irish Youth Foundation).
 - YEPP Dublin Co-ordinator.
 - YEPP Dublin Researcher.
 - Members of the YEPP LSG.
- Youth participants in YEPP.
- Community members involved in or with experience of YEPP, including local decision-makers.
- Regional and national stakeholders working in related areas (*i.e.* social inclusion, education, youth, partnerships).
- Discussion with representatives of the YEPP Programme Team (PT).
- Observations of the OECD/CERI external evaluation review team.²⁰

²⁰. For the site visits this team was composed of an OECD/CERI researcher (Tracey Burns) and a local Inland Researcher, who commented on relevant national policy and local context and aided in organising the visit. Inland Researcher 2004: Tracey O'Brien; 2005: Andrew Magurran. Peter Evans of the OECD Secretariat, although not present at site visits, was also a member of the team.

In total, more than 51 individuals representing local, regional and national levels as well as public, private, and independent sectors were interviewed during two site visits (the first in January 2005 and the second in January 2006; see Annex 3 for a complete list of individuals interviewed). Interviews followed a semi-structured format that probed experiences of Context, Input, Process, and Product on the topics of youth empowerment, community development, and partnerships. The experiences and the interviews were divided along sectors (public/private/independent) and levels (mandating, strategic, operational, and field). The interviews were conducted individually unless the interviewee expressed a great preference for another partner (this was sometimes the case for the youth, for example). Interviews were then transcribed and coded using the qualitative coding software N7. Annex 2 contains a more detailed description of the interview process, the methodology used, and data collection and analysis.

Reporting

This report reflects the findings of the external evaluation regarding the development, process, and outcomes of YEPP Dublin. It is organised by main themes, looking at partnership building, youth empowerment, and community development in turn. The experience of trans-national co-operation will also be touched on, but briefly, as the final cross-cutting report in this series of case studies will focus more thoroughly on the trans-national co-operation of YEPP.

As one of the goals of this evaluation was to reflect on the processes of change, central interviewees were interviewed on both site visits, during the second of which they were explicitly prompted to reflect on changes since the previous year and plans for the future. Sustainability issues and lessons learned are also reflected.

It is important to emphasise that the bulk of the observations of this evaluation come from the local stakeholders, including youth, themselves, and are not opinions imposed from the outside. Some contributions are quoted verbatim when they seem particularly insightful or when a comment sums up the majority view on a particular topic.

Context

As with all YEPP sites, YEPP Dublin was designed to have a local co-ordinator, a local researcher, and a LSG composed of local stakeholders as well as a representative from the funding foundation. YEPP Dublin was the last YEPP site to begin functioning and in fact started quite a bit later than the others: the YEPP Dublin Coordinator was only hired in November 2004. This in a sense gave the evaluation an opportunity to use YEPP Dublin as a baseline site in that at the time of the first site visit the project had only recently started, and thus an opportunity to observe the process and progress of early development between the first and second site visits. For the period of the project there was a steady team of one Coordinator and one foundation representative, as well as a large formal LSG, although there were some difficulties with the Local Researcher (to be discussed below). On the whole, however, YEPP Dublin experienced stable personnel and membership which helped encourage steady and continuous development.

Local implementation of YEPP

Coordinator, LSG, and foundation

YEPP Dublin was fortunate in having a coordinator with very close links to the area (who had worked for the local Health Services Board for 27 years previous) across the duration of the project. This knowledge of the key players as well as familiarity with the needs of the community was extremely useful for the development of the site and for the credibility of the project. It was not without challenges,

however, as coordinating such a diverse group of high profile stakeholders was to some extent made more difficult by the previous knowledge of roles and seniority.

As just mentioned, the formal LSG that was created was extremely strong, with high profile members from a variety of public and independent sector organisations. YEPP Dublin was unique among the sites in that its LSG was, from the very beginning, extremely interested and knowledgeable about policy making and the importance of having an impact on the policy process, and this guided their activities and planning. YEPP Dublin also benefited from a long planning stage before the official hire of the Local Coordinator and Local Researcher, and this was evident in the strength of the first operational plan.

Again, however, the very strength of the LSG was a mixed blessing, as it made them both more difficult to manage and coordinate and made it less clear where the lines of responsibility lay. This issue, identified during the first site visit, was to create difficulties for the YEPP Model and funding for the researcher by the time of the second site visit (see Research section below for discussion).

There was a steady foundation presence across the duration of the project, which allowed for continuing financial support and transparency in the process of hiring the local Coordinator and Researcher. It also allowed for the position of the researcher to be filled before that of the coordinator, a condition that allowed for a greater profile of the research in YEPP Dublin than in many of the other YEPP sites.

Research

As with many of the other YEPP sites, the research component of the YEPP design was not fully realised in YEPP Dublin. This was not a reflection on the researcher, but rather a reflection of funding decisions based on local needs and budgeting confusion. As the researcher was hired on a consultant basis rather than as staff, the expenditure was both more costly and less predictable than it could have been, and at one point his contract was terminated abruptly due to a lack of funds. As mentioned above, the lack of clear responsibilities for overseeing the funding was a contributing factor to this situation. Although he was eventually reinstated, this was done only after the intervention of the PT, and was an example of how, even with clearly established protocols for the project, unilateral local decisions could compromise the implementation of the YEPP Model.

As mentioned in the other case studies, in most YEPP sites there was an inherent difficulty in bringing research into a community development project that was unaccustomed to research, and the initial (and often long-standing) impression of the local stakeholders was that the research requirement was imposed from the outside, and represented an external drain on the local project. YEPP Dublin was the only YEPP site where this was not an issue, however, due to the clear decision to prioritise local needs over the international research requirements of the YEPP model. As a result one of the major tasks of the researcher was to map the services provided in the community against the needs that they were serving, a project very much appreciated by the local stakeholders:

“There’s so much going on, and you know we all know each other, or pretty much, so you feel like you know what’s out there. But then [researcher] did this mapping and it was really usefully to really take the time and set it down, get that information down there. And now we can see the gaps, we can see the overlaps, and we can see what we need to do better.” - Member of independent sector.

All researchers struggled with how best to be the “critical friend” required by the YEPP model. Working with the site and answering to their needs as well as balancing the requirements of the research part of YEPP, mainly co-ordinated by the Programme Team was a difficult process for the researcher, in this as in all other sites. Part of the difficulty seemed to lie in Dublin being the last to enter the project and

as such the members of YEPP Dublin did not necessarily receive the same initiation provided for the other sites, despite the best intentions and active involvement of the PT. One possible suggestion for dealing with this in future might be partnering sites such that each new site has a mentor that can take them through the beginning phases and help with hands-on questions and issues.

Summary of local implementation of YEPP

YEPP Dublin is distinct from the other YEPP sites in that it was the last site to begin and thus operated under a shorter time span than the other sites. As with YEPP Antwerp and Mannheim, there were deliberate deviations from the standard YEPP Model (such as hiring the Local Researcher on a consultant basis to complete tasks requested by the LSG rather than prioritising the research requirements of the YEPP Programme Team). On the whole, however, YEPP Dublin was an example of a site with a clear local coordinator, a strong LSG, and constant foundation support. More specifically, YEPP Dublin was marked by:

- Strengths.
 - Strong LSG.
 - Increasing development of local partnerships, including broad representation from the administration.
- Weaknesses.
 - Research component not realised per YEPP design; irregular presence of researcher.
 - Lack of clear lines for decision making which led to oversights.

Lessons Learned

A number of lessons can be gleaned from the process of creating and running YEPP Dublin, including the importance of:

- Beginning a YEPP site with shared understanding and formal agreement, including funding commitments, on objectives, the YEPP model, and goals.
- Searching for ways to balance the need for strong stakeholder involvement with clear central coordination and planning.

Key Themes of YEPP

In evaluating YEPP Dublin, it is important to remember that YEPP has a strong process element as well as different types of outcomes. The process cycle cannot be fully captured by an EE, but is described in detail in the IE. This section therefore, focuses on the main outcomes pertaining to cross-sectoral partnerships, youth empowerment, and community empowerment.

This section looks at each of these variables in turn, focussing on the process, the products (in terms of key changes and challenges), and lessons learned for the future. Where appropriate, the context of national and regional policy and comments of national/regional stake-holders are integrated into the analysis.

Development of Cross-Sectoral Partnerships

YEPP Dublin operates in a small area of North-East Inner City Dublin, an area with high levels of poverty, unemployment, substance abuse issues, and low education levels. Similar to the Antwerp and Mannheim sites in the types of difficulties facing its population, it is distinct in that the area has only recently been experiencing increased diversity due to immigrants arriving in Ireland (mostly in the last five years). The Irish are thus still in the process of developing responses and integration strategies.

This section will look at the process of building partnerships by focussing on selected elements of partnerships, including:

- Quality of co-operation (among partners).
- Communication and networking.
- Co-operation between sectors.
- Triangulation (*i.e.* the effective combination of public, private, and independent sectors).

The Process

Bringing together partners from different sectors to work together can be difficult, particularly if they do not have a tradition of working together or have competing interests. In the case of YEPP Dublin, partnership was facilitated by the strengths of the members of the LSG in networking and the long history that many of them had in working together:

“You know, these guys have all been around for ages now, some over 40 years. They know the area, they know each other, they know how the system works. And that helped us to hit the ground running, in a way.” - Member of YEPP Dublin.²¹

The initial LSG included members of the public sector, including representatives of the local administration from a variety of departments such as Health, Youth Services, and the Drugs Taskforce. There was also very strong representation from the independent, or voluntary, sector. The private sector was difficult to involve in YEPP Dublin.

Quality of co-operation

In developing partnerships of any kind, the most important requirement was shared goals and complementary skills that can be combined, and a clear understanding of what those goals were:

“I think having a clarity as to why we would collaborate is challenging. It seems so basic to be presumed but it essentially the thing that will make the collaboration last. ... I think sometimes the purpose of that collaboration and that fundamental aim needs to be reinstated occasionally by the group because other dynamics sometimes take off and take over. So I’d see that as the first challenge.” - Member of independent sector.

Yet willingness to work together was not enough- for partnership to work with the public sector they needed realistic expectations and an understanding of what each partner could offer:

²¹. Attributions are provided if it is not clear from the context which group is speaking. Attributions are intended to be both specific enough to guide the reader and general enough to preserve the identity of the individual speaker. In this case “member of YEPP Dublin” refers to the core group comprised of the Local Coordinator, Local Researcher, and foundation representative.

“You don’t demand something from a public official which is going to make them look stupid to their superiors. You have to know what he has to bring back to his boss, or she as the case may be. You have to know what their boss expects of them and to know what’s possible and what’s not possible to do. And the object of the exercise is a win-win situation where both sides have met and say well we gave a little on this, but we gained on that.” - Member of public sector.

But even this was not enough for day to day cooperation, as an understanding of the time and effort required was crucial and the person in charge of the partnership needed to be able to devote the necessary time to make it work:

“People really need to appoint a person, like ‘you are the community liaison and this is your role and this is part of your work...’. And the organisation has to give time for the person to go and [work with the partners]. But I think what happens is that ... the person's totally confused and they're not designated. It's the ability to tell people clearly, this is your job, and this is what you should be doing and that's what we're paying you for. I think it's a lack of designated people within the organisations.” - Member of independent sector.

Communication and networking

Strong communication was considered to be another fundamental element of an effective partnership, and in an area with a large number of actors in close proximity to the centralised administrative structures, open communication was not always as straightforward as it might be:

“Sometimes it’s very hard to actually get to the heart of the matter of why can’t very specific things happen. Because you’re into other issues to do with turf wars between departments and budgets, something that you have absolutely no control about, and no one will speak openly.” - Member of YEPP Dublin.

And of course in the end you have to move beyond communication to action, and this was where the particular expertise of this group came in:

“How to ... create partners? I think that this part of the city has a lot of experience in that even if they don’t see it all the time. But we have a lot of experience in that. The drug task was born here and it was then created in a model for Ireland but they were born here, in this part of the city.” - Member of independent sector.

Co-operation between sectors

Despite a general pre-disposition to partnership, the process can be complicated by different working styles and expectations among the sectors. The public sector was generally perceived as slow and less able to adapt to change than the other sectors:

“And it would appear that the voluntary sector while it generally has less resources [than the public sector], seems to have much greater freedom around actually getting something done. And being flexible in your approach and adapting what needs to be done, and what needs to happen. Somehow you have authority in your own hands more quickly and more easily to actually adapt. There seems to be a greater burden to paperwork attached to workers in the public service which seems a pity and seems to be frustrating for them. And it seems to hinder their responding to ground needs.” - Member of independent sector.

Those interviewees who were used to working with the public sector had often developed strategies to circumvent the bureaucratic delay (for approval of certain projects, for example). Although not recommended as a long-term strategy for partnership building, it seemed effective for those who were required to work within the administrative system, notorious for resisting change.

“We don’t have enough space, although hopefully we’ll soon be in the civic centre, but it doesn’t exist at the moment. The time it takes that we get all the rooms it will take us three or four years. And it’s critical to have the resources to do that. But at the moment it’s just make do with what you have so we just have to do what we can to get by ...” - Member of independent sector.

Bringing the private sector into the equation was difficult, and many interviewees spoke of the lack of tradition in Ireland of bringing private sector into community partnerships, and the lack of incentives for the private sector to do this. In fact, it was difficult to even make a charitable organisation run with some of the restrictive policies:

“Even just local companies, because I’m in the process of trying to get charitable status for tax purposes for one of the groups I’m working with, and even that isn’t highly developed. It’s not clearly defined what a charity is. It is in Britain but not in Ireland. ... The local community project still pays VAT, which is insane, you know? The government can give you a big amount of money and you pay quite a big amount of money back on VAT.” - Member of YEPP Dublin.

Triangulation

In terms of triangulation (and the effective partnering of public, private, and independent sectors), this analysis can provide no effective descriptions of either the process or the outcomes of such a partnership due to the lack of involvement of the private sector, as discussed above.

Key changes

Key changes in the partnerships across time continued and deepened the connection to the community, particularly through the greater involvement of the local administration. An explicit goal of YEPP Dublin at the time of the first site visit was to connect to the statutory level, particularly Probation, Police, and Education areas, and by the time of the second site visit they had been successful with both Probation and Police, and were making inroads with Education.

In addition, YEPP Dublin also created new thematic working groups (for example, one on foreign nationals) to replace the age-based working groups which initially structured the operation. YEPP collaboration with ICON (Inner City Organisation Network) was also seen as a step towards positive change, as it meets bi-yearly with the various groups working on youth empowerment and has a history of impacting national policy. By the time of the second site visit YEPP was also partnered with YPAR (Young People at Risk Initiative), which yielded great excitement and the hope that the combination would be able to have substantially more clout than either of the two programmes acting alone. However this also raised fears that individuals would not be able to differentiate between them and that the identity of YEPP would be diluted as a result.

Across the two site visits YEPP Dublin was also successful in involving more diverse members of the community as well as a growing number of youth. A growing awareness and recognition of YEPP in the local public administration was also observed. These can all rightly be regarded as successes.

Despite certain accomplishments, capacity building within the steering group on a variety of issues, including how to further cultivate partnerships, was seen as in order.

“I think that what we’re trying to do here could offer a very good model for other places. And you could even map out how you bring together the statutory, the voluntary, the community. [But} we haven’t really got the businesses involved.” - Member of independent sector.

Challenges for YEPP Dublin

There were several challenges that emerged from the interviews conducted for the external evaluation. The most commonly named challenge was how to continue to bring all members of the relevant public sector department to the table (although Health and Justice were involved, for example, Education was still an issue). There was a high level of compartmentalisation among governmental departments that had overlapping and related concerns, which made some of the services provided ineffective:

“There’s still a certain amount of chaos in terms of service delivery on the ground, in terms of planning and funding. Probably one of the most central challenges of the Dublin YEPP is to do that, it’s to do with young people participating in the process and empowering young people to be fully part of things. The challenge for us has also been making sure that all the appropriate statutory players are also involved. So, at a steering committee level, we’ve still been struggling with that.” - Member of independent sector.

Another challenge was continuing to encourage the participation of youth, not just in terms of involving them in activities but also in terms of really bringing them into the partnership:

“Talking about young people being empowered, we took a young person to Berlin, but as of yet nobody came on the steering committee and I was a bit concerned about that. I feel it’s important... But then I think, the steering committee was pretty established and it might be hard for the young people... So I think there’s a way to build their capacity first... we can do more.” - Member of independent sector.

Another challenge was how to continue progress in terms of the participation of the private sector. YEPP Dublin had not been able to involve the private sector in a substantial way at the time of the second site visit, and like many of the other YEPP sites was finding it difficult to partner with the private sector. This is discussed in more detail below.

Building Cross-Sectoral Partnerships

As outlined above, YEPP Dublin was successful in bringing public and independent sectors to the table very early in the process, and maintaining these cross-sectoral partnerships throughout the duration of the project. The standard challenge in cross-sectoral partnership building, though, is how to bridge the different working strategies of the sectors, and in this case how to include the private sector. From the perspective of overcoming these obstacles, the members of YEPP Dublin show that they are clearly committed to:

- Approaching and welcoming representatives of the various sectors into the project.
- Engaging in a dialogue about what might and might not be needed to improve the quality of the partnership.

Still a challenge, at least as reflected in the interviews of January 2006, was:

- Incorporating the private sector in on-going partnerships.

Measures that might build capacity and aid in approaching and cultivating connections to the private sector would be welcomed by many members of the project.

Challenges from the policy world

Although a concerted effort has been made by policymakers to incorporate partnership into local development schemes, respondents reported that it was not working as well as it could (please see introduction for more details). In some cases, actors went through the motions of engaging in partnership, without taking the necessary steps to ensure effective co-operation.

“So we can have somebody on the Dublin Inner City Partnership board representing the department for social welfare for instance, but there’s no way that person can get any extra money for biscuits never mind pumping money into the projects. So the downside of it is that the organisations which come, don’t take it seriously enough and don’t send representatives at a high enough level in the organisation to be able to influence the policy of that organisation.” – Member of independent sector.

Another finding is that despite partnership promotion on the policy level, the public sector’s interest often only went so far:

“But in an awful lot of cases there are people sitting on partnership processes whose only function there is to make sure that no decision is made that costs their department. And that’s deeply deeply frustrating. I think particularly you find that with the department for education. Their only function is to make sure that no commitments are made which will cost their department a penny.” – Member of independent sector.

In short, the lack of follow-through from the public sector was not reassuring to the local stakeholders, and distrust was setting in:

“I haven’t seen a great deal of evidence though. During the integrated services process at one stage the Taoiseach [Prime Minister in Irish] called the general secretaries of all the government departments to a meeting in Dublin Castle, told them how important this is and how he wanted it cooperated and he wanted it done, and we were very reassured by this. Didn’t happen.” - Member of independent sector.

Lessons Learned

A number of lessons learned can be gathered from the work of YEPP Dublin in cross-sectoral partnership building, including the importance of:

- Involving all sectors early in the process to instil a sense of ownership and active participation.
- Communicating what YEPP is in a concrete way to prospective partners in all sectors (and youth).
- Establishing shared terms and definitions so that clear communication can take place.
- Respecting the working styles of the different sectors and willingness to be open to all prospective partners.
- Understanding barriers to co-operation within a sector (e.g. public administration) and getting a commitment to action from leaders who can support the process of change.

The bottom line is always the willingness to see the benefits of partnership and cooperation, and the ability to stay on target:

“Because we’re working in a context of quite desperate social need, and because the projects are specifically targeting young people at risk, there is an immediacy and urgency always in the type

of issue people are bring forward. So we get lost in that. So holding the agenda of collaboration is a value that needs attending to, instead of getting sucked into some individual little patch.” - Member of independent sector.

Community Empowerment

Community empowerment can be thought of as being comprised of several facets, including:

- Identity (which here we broaden to include social/environmental/and health identity).
- Citizenship (in political/legal terms).
- Economics and education (school-work).
- Cultural (music, arts, etc.).

The Process

In evaluating YEPP, it is important to remember that YEPP is a research and development programme with different types of outcomes. In part because it had a late start relative to other YEPP sites, much of YEPP Dublin’s progress was seen in its planning and strategic organisation.

As previously mentioned, community empowerment and active community participation was a key goal for YEPP Dublin and remained so throughout the lifespan of the project. Community projects in Dublin operate in a complex community dynamic, in which longstanding poverty and high levels of unemployment and substance abuse problems more recently collide with dramatic demographic changes over the last decade. In this time a wave of refugees, asylum seekers and labour migrants from a wide range of countries have settled in the area. The combination of Northeast Inner City Dublin’s long-standing social and economic problems and the new problems that accompany a sudden demographic shift has posed profound challenges in developing effective community-building strategies.

Key changes

The kinds of projects that YEPP Dublin is currently working on cut across all the four dimensions of community empowerment as listed above. The strongest change observed across the site visits was the successful development of a comprehensive strategic plan that took into consideration the conclusions of well-researched resource mapping project. The community resources mapping project aimed to create a working database of all relevant community organisations in order to identify which organisations overlapped in services and what gaps remained, and thus informed the structure of the strategic plan.

It should be stressed that many of the partners and initiatives associated with YEPP (such as YPAR) perceive themselves to be contributing to YEPP but are not themselves a YEPP project; that is, they existed before YEPP and will continue to exist after YEPP (by this we mean the formal structure with a coordinator, researcher, and LSG) is gone. That being said, they believe that the work that they have done with YEPP helped them develop and are pleased to have been involved.

On the dimension of identity (which here we broaden to include social/environmental/and health identity) there have been numerous initiatives aimed at establishing a neighbourhood identity and working to bring people together through common action and community initiatives. After the reorganisation of the subgroup network (which served to establish working groups to tackle specific community needs), the

group working on youth participation began to focus on the creation of a youth forum, which will allow youth to be active participants in the process of planning:

“For example last year with the young people they understood that it was important that they be involved ... and they came up with the notion of the young persons union. But for that to happen there had to be a lot of work by the staff, a lot of input from the young people and as I said the spin off ... even in other projects young people got a bit of a boost in the involvement. And here we’ve always involved young people and young people volunteers but it gave it an extra sort of push, an extra sort of energy. It sort of revived the workers commitment to the whole notion. So that would be the biggest area where there has been progress.” - Member of public sector.

The citizenship dimension (in political/legal terms) was an active element of YEPP Dublin. Across the site visits, the Dublin team was able to involve a number of statutory players, notably in education, that had been absent before. In addition, there was a youth meeting with the President of Ireland, attended by some of the local youth. At this meeting youths had a chance to exchange opinions with other youths from across the country and feed their input to senior policy makers (present at each group table, in addition to the President). However there was some criticism of this as it was felt that the youth selected from across the country were not representative and in particular did not include many youth at risk. There was also some disenchantment with the process on the part of the youth in that the senior policy-makers were not perceived to be as invested as they could have been:

“[Senior policy-maker] was scratching his head and picking his nails, and I says, “sorry, are we bothering you?” And he turns around and says “not at all, not at all”. And I says, “yeah, I’m sure”. I wasn’t that impressed, to be honest with you, because he didn’t look like he wanted to be there. He just looked like he wanted to be somewhere else.” – Youth.

On the political level, their primary goal was to increase participation by statutory players and to do so in a way that allowed for effective cooperation. YEPP encouraged in particular the inclusion of young people in the political process:

“It’s also stimulated consultation with young people and a real look by professionals and voluntary statutory sectors working in this community to actually stop and say, ‘Okay, how can we hear the voices of the young people in this community?’” - Member of independent sector.

The dimension of economics and education was primarily enhanced by the research mapping exercise, which brought to light a number of specific gaps in the services catering to young mothers, early childhood intervention and reintegration into the working community. A concomitant problem, the lack of free or affordable childcare, was also identified as a priority for working groups and lobbying. Many government and independent initiatives already in place, such as the School Completion Program, were identified as necessitating further exploitation and incorporated into more cohesive plans for community development.

The cultural dimension was also strong, with a number of community arts and sports projects, including a Street Arts event (with graffiti) and an anti-racist football event. YEPP Dublin also participated in the EmpowerMediaNetwork programme of YEPP, which was designed to develop Community TV initiatives and give youth opportunities to work on video art projects. Dublin participated in the transnational Community TV project, along with representatives of most of the other YEPP sites. The youth members of the YEPP Dublin team created a short film (a portrait of a community member) that was screened at the 2006 YEPP-ALL conference.

“And it’s literally made an impact, because there is going to be work in the area where kids will be able to say, well, ‘He did that,’ or ‘I did that,’ and the other kids will say, ‘Well, if they’re doing that again, I want to be part of it.’” – Member of YEPP Dublin.

Challenges for YEPP Dublin

The main challenge for YEPP Dublin is how to continue to build on what's been accomplished and to implement the plans laid out by the strategic plan, moving from a planning phase to an action phase:

"I think the priorities for the next while are firstly, to establish this integrated plan and to give clear direction to the working groups, so that we now have, instead of the age subgroups, we now have six thematic working groups ... I suppose where we need to focus the research now is on actual models of integration." - Member of independent sector.

One challenge in particular (though not necessarily specific to YEPP Dublin) is to combat the inertia of a negative community identity and low community expectations. Often, youths who succeed in overcoming difficulties find themselves in certain ways alienated from the community:

"There's an increasing number of young people who are able to go onto third level [schooling]. That's causing a problem for them in some ways because they're no longer seen as part of this community, and they're never really part of another ... If you leave the structures that people know, then you have to leave the area and that's a huge loss to the area." - Member of public sector.

A final challenge is contextual: as a result of the recent influx of immigrants the social issues in Northeast Inner City Dublin (and in Dublin in general) have become multi-layered, and the official policies and community development strategies will need to adapt to these complex changes:

"In Ireland the problem is [that] we have many social issues. We have had the drug issues for the past ten years. Now with the migration, asylum seeking, illegal immigrants, etc, a multiplicity of agencies have set up nationally and regionally to deal with the issue. But there was a lack of coherence in how it was funded ... The young people themselves were saying you really have to address the issue of foreign nationals separately." - Member of public sector.

One interesting point to note is that unlike every other site Dublin did not suffer from a lack of funds, according to interviewees. Too often in community development work the main barrier to progress is lack of funding, but in the case of YEPP Dublin this was not the issue:

"I think there are a lot of projects here and there's a lot of projects coming into the area, and a lot of money coming into the area, tons of government money coming into the area... We need better coordination of what there is, better tracking of what the needs are, not more minibuses or something. We have enough money." - Member of independent sector.

Challenges from the policy world

Community actors have been included in various partnership structures but the increase in such structures and the reliance of the community of a limited number of actors appears to have led to a degree of disenchantment at the grass-roots level. The introduction of the notion of community participation has also presented potential for change in the way that urban regeneration has traditionally been handled in Ireland. However, interviews have demonstrated that the extent to which community actors possess the resources to become an equal partner remains debatable.

Despite the existence of a Community Development Programme to assist projects, in place since 1990, interviews with various stakeholders revealed frustration over lack of resources and support for community development initiatives, and the subsequent inability to go as far as planned.

"And in community development, you know this, that over the last, the government, the minister we have now is actually very much cutting back, trying to cut back on community development. But generally it's been almost like a glass ceiling, and the community projects, the people from the community kind of get so far and then no further." - Member of YEPP Dublin.

Disillusionment with processes and conditions of unaccountability in the milieu of community development was also a common factor.

“But effectively, this is a project by committee and very much imbued with community development type process. And one of the disadvantages or negatives of some community development processes is that nobody takes responsibility for anything. It’s all done by committee and procedure and stuff.” - Member of YEPP Dublin.

Another challenge for the policy world and the community in general is the recent influx of immigrants into Ireland (and especially into North-East Inner City Dublin). The sheer size of the change is catching the policy-makers off guard, and they have yet to develop comprehensive strategies for integration and accommodation of these new citizens. Although difficult, this is also perceived of as an opportunity to do it right by learning from the mistakes of other countries with longer, more troubled, immigration histories. But the time to do that is now:

“I think there’s a huge potential for the foreign nationals to be a very positive development if it’s handled right. So far all political parties have held the line, at least they wouldn’t admit publicly that they’re racist, there’s no equivalent of Le Pen. But there are parties who are out and out racist although they won’t admit that they are. I know if I ran tomorrow on the right wing, anti-immigrant from this area, I’d get elected, absolutely no doubt about it. Up to now there’ve been no cultural exchanges except for the stuff that we’re doing. We’re trying to do something where for the first time it’s confronting people with real people, instead of “[racist insults]” or whatever the stereotype. It’s harder to keep your biases and your prejudices if you have to meet someone and you might like them.” - Member of the public sector.

Lessons Learned

A number of lessons can be learned from the work of YEPP Dublin in community development and empowerment, including the importance of:

- Encouraging the participation of youth in community planning discussions.
- Moving beyond planning stages to implement concrete actions.
- Bringing all sectors together in an honest appraisal of what works and what does not work, and the best strategy to move forward.
- Having clear agreement on responsibilities for community development initiatives and expectations for action.
- Devising realistic community development plans that are holistic in nature and include long-term strategies for community renewal.

The last point also implies having the political courage to wait for longer-term solutions and avoid the temptation of the “quick-fix” (and the corresponding willingness on the part of the community to wait for longer-term results).

Youth Empowerment

A central concern for Dublin was the difficulty of bringing the youth into projects and programmes and reaching those most at-risk. The long history of poverty and unemployment (often multiple generations of unemployed in the same families) in the area combined with the predominance of drugs and alcohol as a way to make ‘easy money’ created a background of uncertain hopes and dreams:

“I mean we already have a situation where the role models for a lot of the kids are criminals. People driving big cars, dripping with jewellery, they’re loads of the apartments in the centres where people have never worked in their life and they’re role models for our kids, that’s what they see every day. And they’re not even kind of bank robbers, what I euphemistically describe here as ordinary decent criminals, they’re drug pushers, murderers in our view. They can be well nice with the kids in some situations, but people tell me that their kid was offered... hmm it’s a number of years ago now... £500 and a gun to set themselves up in business. And that kind of stuff goes on in the background you know.” - Member of public sector.

In addition, the new waves of immigrants were bringing in a diversity of cultures and languages which the area and the youth had very little experience with:

“I would say here ten years [ago] in the second biggest high school, if you had four different nationalities, English, Welsh, Scottish, maybe one Nigerian, maybe. Maybe 2% of O’Connell School will be non-Irish and [even the non-Irish were] all English speaking. Now ten years on ... the O’Connell School has something like 25 different nationalities and 40% are foreign national. And 40% in Irish terms, that’s a huge change.” - Member of public sector.

The Process

YEPP Dublin challenged itself to involve youth and reach out to those most at risk, but the process was a slow one. As a result, during the 2004 site visit, there was only a small number of active youth in the project. By the time of the second site visit that had changed considerably, and youth were not only much more active, they also had a much higher profile in the YEPP group as well.

Community empowerment and youth empowerment are of course inextricably linked such that any programme focussed on youth will invariably have an impact on the broader community in which they reside. However it is possible to identify a number of key changes in youth empowerment across the timing of the two site visits.

Key changes

YEPP Dublin has had a number of concrete outcomes from their work, particularly the success of the youth forum and the partnership with YPAR. These venues for young people to express themselves, work together in groups, and communicate their priorities and desires for the neighbourhood have been effective and appreciated by the youth participants, particularly for the direct approach and transparency of the process:

“If we want something, we’ll discuss it there and then. [Name] would be straight with you and say, well, why not bring it back to the meeting and let the other young people decide and if they agree then we’ll do it. [Name]’d prefer the young people, the other young people to agree or not to agree... to see if it’s a group idea” – Youth.

Another key change has been a slow understanding on the part of the partners and the youth themselves of some of the expectations built into the process, and how the system works:

“Young people around here obviously don’t speak with very complicated vocabularies, and because of that, the young people are at a horrible disadvantage, because there’s an element of them being minded through the process. They’re creating a buzz now though, and there is a real imperative commitment to that, so hopefully we will a core of young people. And the partners to take them seriously.” - Member of YEPP Dublin.

There have been concrete tangible changes in that certain activities were run by the project such as the youth arts events and anti-racist football events (see also Community Empowerment section). These were very positively perceived:

“So over the year, I think we’ve seen, using those two examples, the youth art event, which was graffiti, street stuff, which that kids are getting from MTV, but brought to the local level, and the football event - the kids can focus on how that might be more relevant to their lives.” - Member of YEPP Dublin.

In addition a key change was in the number of youth who had participated in a formal international YEPP project, such as the Community TV project (see Community Empowerment section). This number increased over the course of the site visits but increasing youth participation was still a priority for the coordinators (see challenges section below).

Challenges for YEPP Dublin

The greatest challenge facing YEPP Dublin in terms of youth empowerment was to continue to increase the participation of the youth, especially to continue to reach the most at-risk youth. This was considered important not only in terms of empowering them to be actors in their communities, but also in terms of being able to get in and directly deal with possible prejudices and negative stereotypes of immigrants before they had a chance to really take hold:

“I see the YEPP thing as being very positive on the foreign national thing, and [it’s] one of the most urgent areas, because if we don’t [do something now] then we’ll mirror the Paris riots. I think there still is a window for us to get it right but only if people put in a lot of effort. It mirrors exactly the drug thing - the heroin problem in Ireland was as big as parts of the ghettos in North America, and we waited until it became a massive crime and health problem before we responded. Now we have aspirational policies at the national level. We have very little on the ground in terms of dealing with practical ways. I see this as a very good initiative that needs to be energetically pursued, and that’s why I think the link with YEPP is very important and to be able to use evidence from other countries to say, look, unless we do this then we’ll be facing this...” - Member of public sector.

For others, however, the goal was much more basic: how to motivate the youth such that they are able to take part in the projects. In this sense the development of the youth in the area and their education came under heavy criticism:

“A lot of these kids have trouble reading and writing and some of them have been through special skills or whatever... They’re bright kids and that but they just need the skills, the writing skills. It’s not that they’re daft or they can’t work or they have something wrong with them, it’s just their actual skills. We ran a project for the youth bank and we had terrible trouble getting our youngsters involved. ... We’ve established ourselves now, but [initially] the kids just couldn’t grasp the fact that I had the power to organise grants to disperse grants... And they just couldn’t get their heads around that, they’ve never been given that responsibility or trust or respect for that sort of thing.” - Member of independent sector.

These challenges are not for YEPP Dublin to fix, obviously, but rather stem from the broader contextual situation and lead to questions: what is the policy world doing to address these issues? Why are so many young people from this area falling through the cracks of the education system?

Challenges from the policy world

The major challenge as perceived by Irish policymakers and other stakeholders dealing with youth policy was how to provide integrated services of quality across ministries. There is a newly established

Junior Minister of Children, located across three government departments: Justice, Health and Children, and Education and Science, which poses a particular challenge for coordinated policy-making. The Youth Affairs Section of the Department of Education & Science is designated as the main government entity responsible for funding and supporting youth work. Although the *Youth Work Act, of 2001* set out a framework for the provision of youth programmes and services by the Ministry and the vocational education committees, implementation and progress has been slow.

As the various components of the Youth Work Act are being realised, mass confusion as to the responsibilities of various agencies has ensued, which further slows local youth efforts.

"...I just got an email back from probation welfare services...I've been sending that email for about a year, but I finally got a reply saying we're not dealing with that section and there's a new section for the juvenile system. It would have been nice to get that a year ago....The communication is slow and I think the way the government set up themselves is that they're now reorganising, and decentralisation is taking place in the government departments so I can imagine the mayhem in there with the change taking place." - Member of independent sector.

More time will be needed for the components of the new system to fall into place, as it does not yet appear to be functioning in an ideal manner.

"...not a single penny of taxpayers' money went into this. We met the probation service, the health board, and the department of education—the School Completion Programme...meant to be the main state partners in the process. The health board, to be fair to them, are anticipating in the sense that they're sending their people along. We asked them for resources, they wouldn't give us an office. They told us they might be able to manage a second hand computer. This is an organisation with a budget of 600/700 million a year? They were fully committed to what we were doing and they couldn't give us any more than a broken, second hand computer." - Member of independent sector.

The actual structure of the Department of Education itself was also raised as an issue.

"The policy area is very diffuse; it's spread around a number of different sections in the department. It really needs to be focused." – Ministry of Education representative.

A positive accomplishment has been the establishment of the Ombudsman for Children and Youth, the result of the recognition that there should be an independent organisation monitoring children's services, akin to an independent complaints body which could be used to effectuate policy change. This was established in late 2003, and although it may be too early to expect direct policy change, complaints are reported to be taken seriously:

"There are some things already that have been highlighted to us and I suppose one of the things we do is developing relationships with people who are the influencers, the people who can change policy and we do things like meet with senior civil servants and people from ministries ... education and health particularly are the two main ones that are coming up quite a bit." – Representative of the Ombudsman.

Lessons Learned

A number of lessons learned can be gleaned from the work of YEPP Dublin in youth empowerment, including the importance of:

- Involvement of youth in the very earliest stages of project development, especially those most disadvantaged.
- Encouraging less active youth to bring their voice to the table and let themselves be heard.

- Getting the local administration to acknowledge the voice of youth in designing and delivering youth-related projects.

Trans-national Cooperation

As explained in the section on Reporting, trans-national co-operation will be touched on only briefly here, as the final cross-cutting report in this series of case studies will focus more thoroughly on the trans-national co-operation of YEPP. YEPP Dublin commenced later than other YEPP sites and therefore did not participate in the earliest transnational events. However, it did participate in the September 2004 workshop in Turin, “Moving images, local realities”, as well as all subsequent events.

Successes

For the youth

Youth in YEPP Dublin were very excited about the possibility of international exchange. Those who were able to travel abroad shared their enthusiasm with other youth upon their return:

“The young people themselves actually got a lot out of [the transnational experiences]. And then there were other young people in the project who inherited that as well. So again it’s creating this kind of [...] buzz.” - Member of YEPP Dublin.

The language barrier, though initially frustrating, eventually led to a process of learning. The Irish youth discovered that they needed to adapt their own language in order to communicate with youth from the other sites:

“It was great because the Irish people started to slow down and be considerate to people whose English were a second language. It was brilliant. You know everybody there was speaking English as a second language and it was amazing that they could speak so much. But the thing that was good about it for my young fellows was the intercultural experience.” - Member independent sector.

Although the youth learned to appreciate the cultural differences between the participants, they also learned to bond by participating in common activities, and in doing so, to broaden their horizons:

“It was the intercultural experience [...] that was brilliant from the point of view of the young fellows. Young fellows from a deprived area in Dublin, having to engage with other fellows for a week to go out have to go out and socialise with them, to play sports with them, to engage in these kind of tasks to do with the video making, that was fantastic. And that will always stay with them and if every young person could see how other young people live and see how they’re different and how they’re the same, that’s fantastic.” – Member of independent sector.

For the community

The international aspect helped those involved with YEPP address the challenge of integrating foreign nationals into the community and overcoming prejudice:

“Up to now there’s been no cultural exchanges except for the stuff that we’re doing. We’re trying to do something where for the first time it’s confronting people with real people, instead of [...] the stereotype. It’s harder to keep your biases and your prejudices if you have to meet someone and you might like them.” - Member of public sector.

The YEPP model, despite certain stumbling blocks, served as a positive example to the wider community for tackling problems stemming from immigration:

“A great thing about YEPP is the involvement with young people, and now other groups are beginning to engage with foreign nationals. And the whole international perspective in YEPP of course was helpful to be able to talk to the various other players about some of these issues. I think we’re dealing with it in a very disorganised way, and we’re trying to make it more organised, and make it more participatory and again I think YEPP can be helpful in terms of learning from the approaches of some of the other partners.” - Member of public sector.

For YEPP

For a number of YEPP participants, the international aspect encouraged a higher level of responsibility:

“[The transnational element] is important because it will bring standards up and it means that you’re more accountable.” – Member of independent sector.

In addition, the transnational element led the various sites to compare with and learn from the successful strategies of other sites:

“I think that comes from some of the particular sites that it’s been quite good in terms of models of good practice and say maybe Bosnia, some of the stuff they’ve done has been really positive, in terms of varied grassroots community development stuff. So it’s been very valuable.” – member of YEPP Dublin.

Challenges

As in most sites, the participants in YEPP Dublin found the language barrier during transnational events to be an impediment to fruitful communication, which was interesting as they were the only native English speakers of the group:

“I think there’s a fundamental problem with a thing like the Turin thing that depended on English because, the really disadvantaged young people [from the other sites] aren’t going to be really fluent English speakers.” - Member of independent sector.

In addition, travelling and the nature of the transnational events did not always seem appropriate for the youth involved in YEPP Dublin:

“Sometimes when you’re working with kids that are very much at risk, like drugs, it’s not always easy to do [transnational exchanges].” - Member of YEPP Dublin.

Some members believed that the international aspect was not fully exploited, and that there was more potential to learn from the practices and experiences of other sites for specific topics (in this case, teenage parents):

“I do think I would have liked for it to be explored on more a European kind of context, how other teen parents are experiencing the gaps in resources and the resources and that sort of thing [...] I would have liked for us somewhere along the line to look at other countries and see how they meet the needs of those younger parents.” – Member of independent sector.

Sharing information and strategies from other sites was also named as a challenge, as it was felt that there was not always enough time to explain the other sites and their activities properly:

“Often there isn’t that space in the agenda to share the information from other sites with the people here.” – Member of YEPP Dublin.

Sustainability

One of the key concerns of YEPP as a whole is the on-going sustainability of the programme and the projects it supported. The youth exchanges, for example, were seen as very valuable in and of themselves,

but could be even more valuable if the international connections could be maintained outside of the exchange process, and the idea of YEPP could be extended more broadly into the community.

“Of course the question of YEPP is this sustainability question. For change to be effective, if you create change, how do you protect change? One of the things I say to organisations is: you want to develop this plan [but] how are you going to ensure that it’s carried out? And maybe the big question is around funding. I think it’s sustainability, which group they want to target and who they want to do it with. It’s also a process thing, and how do you create the processes of bringing change?” - Member of independent sector.

YEPP Dublin, having in a sense just completed one full year of operation at the time of the second site visit, had not yet moved on to thinking of sustainability issues. However the strength of the LSG and the commitment of the funding foundation, as well as the amount of funding available for youth-related projects in Ireland, suggest that there is a good possibility that they will be able to continue their work in future.

Recommendations for YEPP II

For future versions of YEPP, the lessons learned as highlighted in each section above should serve as useful guides for future action. In addition, however, YEPP Dublin was in a particular position as the last of the YEPP sites to start functioning and as such had already benefited from some of the earliest lessons. Here are some specific recommendations offered by the YEPP Dublin team regarding which preconditions would help in starting a YEPP site on the right track:

- A clear understanding of the roles of the local coordinators and researchers, what kind of skills new sites would have to look for to cover those roles properly, and how best to train the new participants for their roles:
“It would have been nice to know a little bit more about what was required from YEPP –, everyone else had already started and been working for quite some time, and in a way I think they forgot that maybe we didn’t know the best way forward or what they were asking of us. Some specific guidelines would have been good”.
- This kind of on-going capacity building would apply both to the members of the YEPP team and to the youth entering the project, as it could be daunting for youth entering into a network that has already been running for some time.
- One specific suggestion: future might be partnering sites such that each new site has a mentor that can take them through the beginning phases and help with hands-on questions and issues. This could also be extended to individual players and roles.
- As with almost every other site, the continuing troubled perception of why the research is done and who it benefits was not resolved satisfactorily in YEPP Dublin and is something that should be addressed in future variations of the YEPP project if the research component is to remain essential to the model.

Conclusions

Any evaluation of YEPP Dublin is complicated by several factors. YEPP is a research and development programme with different products to stimulate youth and community empowerment and partnership according to the local conditions. As such it is difficult to evaluate, especially given the complexity of the variables under scrutiny.

In addition, its insertion into a vibrant community means that YEPP Dublin did not start with a blank slate, but rather entered into ongoing networks, relationships, and projects. Projects that were already started were continued under YEPP, projects that were invented elsewhere were adapted for local purposes, and groups allied themselves with the programme and operated in parallel without considering themselves to be an output of YEPP. There is thus a series of non-causal relationships between products and projects which makes it harder to measure change.

Despite this, YEPP Dublin has developed a very strong network of partners on the local level within the community, and has been very successful at including members of administration (particularly those with policy-making relevance) in the partnership. This strategic approach to working locally and impacting policy nationally is unique to YEPP Dublin and one of their particular strengths. The changes observed across the site visits in terms of greater youth participation and the launching of concrete projects are positive indications that this, the youngest of the YEPP sites, is on its way to being a productive member of the international partnership.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

EXTERNAL EVALUATION CASE STUDY

KRISTINESTAD, FINLAND*

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Aims and purpose

This report was commissioned by the Steering Committee of the Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme (YEPP) with the following purposes:

- To have a systematic, independent account of the development, perceived quality, and impact of the YEPP site in Kristinestad, Finland, including policy impact on local and national levels.
- To indicate lessons learned in the form of recommendations for future phases of YEPP in order to improve and extend the YEPP experience.

The aim is that this report, in conjunction with the Case Study of the Internal Evaluation, will contribute to a stock-taking of YEPP Kristinestad. It is hoped that the results will be used both internally, for discussion within the YEPP Kristinestad Team and Support Group, and externally for discussion by other YEPP sites.

This is the first in a series of case studies. The series will consist of separate case studies for each of the seven participating YEPP sites and an overarching trans-national report. Ultimately, each of these reports of the external evaluation will be teamed with a matching report of the internal evaluation, with the end goal of providing a thorough yet concise look at the development, functioning, and outcomes of YEPP from 2002-2005.

Methodology

The report is based on semi-structured interviews with:

- The YEPP Kristinestad team:
 - Representative of the funding foundation (Foundation for Swedish Culture).
 - YEPP Kristinestad Co-ordinator.
 - YEPP Kristinestad Researcher (both).
- Members of the YEPP Support Group.
- Youth participants in YEPP and members of the community Youth Council.
- Community members involved in or with experience of YEPP, including local decision-makers.
- National policy makers working in related areas (*i.e.* social inclusion, youth, community development, partnerships).
- Discussions and representatives of the YEPP Berlin Programme Team.
- Observations of the OECD/CERI external evaluation review team.²²

²². For the site visits this team was composed of an OECD/CERI researcher (Tracey Burns) and a local Inland Researcher, who commented on relevant national policy and local context, aided in organising the visit,

In total, more than 42 individuals representing local and national levels as well as public, private, and independent sectors were interviewed during two site visits (the first in 2004 and the second in 2005; see Annex 3 for a complete list of individuals interviewed). Interviews followed a semi-structured format that probed experiences of Context, Input, Process, and Product on the topics of youth empowerment, community development, and partnerships. The experiences and the interviews were divided along sectors (public/private/independent) and levels (mandating, strategic, operational, and field). The interviews were conducted individually unless the interviewee expressed a great preference for another partner (this was sometimes the case for the youth, for example). Interviewees were given the choice of conducting the interview in English, French, or their native language. Interviews were then transcribed and coded using the qualitative coding software N7. Annex 2 contains a more detailed description of the interview process, the methodology used, and data collection and analysis.

Reporting

This report reflects the findings of the external evaluation regarding the development, process, and outcomes of YEPP Kristinestad. It is organized by main themes, looking at partnership building, youth empowerment, and community development in turn. The experience of trans-national co-operation will also be touched on, but briefly, as the final cross-cutting report in this series of case studies will focus more thoroughly on the trans-national co-operation of YEPP.

As one of the goals of this evaluation was to reflect on the processes of change, central interviewees were interviewed on both site visits, during the second of which they were explicitly prompted to reflect on changes since the previous year and plans for the future. Sustainability issues and lessons learned are also reflected.

It is important to emphasise that the bulk of the observations of this evaluation come from the local stakeholders, including youth, themselves, and are not opinions imposed from the outside. Some contributions are quoted verbatim when they seem particularly insightful or when a comment sums up the majority view on a particular topic.

Context

As with all YEPP sites, the local support group (LSG) in Kristinestad was designed to consist of local stakeholders, youth and a representative of the funding foundation supported by a local coordinator and researcher. For the period of the project there was a single Coordinator and a very steady presence of the members of the Support Group, which permitted a stable progression of the project. There was one change of researcher: the first local researcher left the project and was replaced in 2003, with the new researcher continuing to the end of the project. The foundation representation showed the most fluctuation, with a number of different representatives (on both project level as well as management level) across the time period of the project. These personnel changes affected the project in greater and lesser ways as a function of working style and goals, some of which will be outlined below- on the whole, however, YEPP Kristinestad experienced stable personnel and support membership which helped encourage steady and continuous development.

and provided translation as necessary. Inland Researcher 2004: Christian Lindehal; 2005: Asa Dahlvik. Peter Evans of the OECD Secretariat, although not present at site visits, was also a member of the team.

Local implementation of YEPP

Coordinator, support group, and foundation

YEPP Kristinestad is an example of a site that, over the period of the project, developed a strong support group with the help of a central coordinator. This process was aided by continuity as both the coordinator and the core members of the support group remained the same throughout the duration of the project. In this sense it successfully fulfilled the goals of a YEPP site.

“We had this discussion... could it have been done without the support group, and I am convinced that this could not have been so, because the support group is put together by various people coming from various sectors of life ... representing whatever they are most burning for, and this, that we are outside the municipality, but still with very good channels into the municipality, has made us able to do something that would have taken at least five or ten years within the municipality.” - Member of YEPP Kristinestad.²³

The strong support group was also marked by an early and proactive youth presence, which is one of the most marked strengths of YEPP Kristinestad. Representatives from the local youth council were involved early and continuously in YEPP, and were welcomed as an important part of the local support group. This openness to youth participation on the part of the support group as well as a strong and active youth council combined to create a successful and vibrant collaboration across the duration of the project, and was perceived positively by both the “oldsters” and the “youngsters” involved.

The process was not without challenges, however. There was some initial dissatisfaction with the openness of the support group and how willing they were to include new partners in the venture – and share the funds available- although this was eventually overcome. One of the main barriers was uncertainty of the funding of the coordinator- at various times during the process his funding was slated to be discontinued and was reinstated only at a later point. This of course was difficult for the coordinator himself (who in the end took a pay cut in order to be able to continue working for the last year) as well as for the support group. These funding decisions were made despite the fact that within the support group it was widely acknowledged that the coordinator was essential to the process:

“... It fell into place and has been working well and I think a lot of that is because of the coordinator. He is like a spider in the centre of a web, and he keeps all the threads together.” – Member of YEPP Kristinestad

The decisions on funding were made by the foundation, and reflected dissatisfaction with some of the requirements of the YEPP model. Specifically, there was continuing financial support for the research aspect of the project but some reluctance to fund the co-ordination side of things as would be required by YEPP. The foundation representative himself was very active in the project and support group, and very much in favour of the goals of the project, but did not in the end agree with some of the suggested structures or means to achieve those goals. Unilateral decisions regarding funding were made that would have changed the nature of the project and the Programme Team was obliged to intervene to preserve the original YEPP structure. This raises questions about how the nature of partnership is perceived in projects such as these as well as how one sustains agreement on the running of projects over the long-term, which will be discussed more fully in other sections.

²³. Attributions are provided if it is not clear from the context which group is speaking. Attributions are intended to be both specific enough to guide the reader and general enough to preserve the identity of the individual speaker. In this case “member of YEPP Kristinestad” refers to the core group comprised of the Local Coordinator, Local Researcher, Foundation Representative, and Chair of the Support Group.

Research

As with many of the other YEPP sites, the research component of the YEPP design was not fully realised in YEPP Kristinestad. This was not a reflection on the researcher(s), but rather a reflection on the difficulty of incorporating research as a central part of a community project. One of the barriers to the full integration of the research component was a lack of funding and frustration on the part of the funding foundation with the way the research was being designed and utilised:

“I also think that we can’t make enough use out of the local research to get the feedback loop to work properly. The local research is a bit too cumbersome and it’s certainly not accessible to young people. I would have imagined a... lighter evaluation process where it would have been more focused on the learning experience and I think the instruments we have today aren’t really fashioned for that.”

This struggle with how best to incorporate the research was shared by most of the participants, including the researchers (past and present). One key area that was felt lacking was preparation:

“From the beginning it was quite unclear... if the YEPP from the beginning had been more clear...if there had been one year of preparation with people employed to do the preparation then it would have been easier to start. But on the other hand, we know that you very very seldom get funding for doing planning and preparation. That’s something that the whole project world is suffering from I think.”

The design of the project was of course developed over time, with adjustments made by the Programme Team based on feedback received, and these changes alleviated many of the complaints. Still, there was a continuing difficulty with the research component. Some aspects of the researcher’s role were very much appreciated, for example, the help in the creation of the operational plan. But others were much less welcome, and there were doubts about whether some of the evaluation measures were useful for the site itself:

“...after the first year we had YEPP Kristinestad who had gone from confusion to security and pride in developing a clear and concrete operational plan for 2003, and then gradually the report that the researcher starts producing grows bigger and bigger so when we came to March 2003 ... we had one gigantic meeting with the researcher in which we ran through some CIPP report or something - it just went on and on and on and dragged through the pages, and people started nearly falling off the benches, it was too much and she said so as well.” - Member of YEPP Kristinestad.

Given the perceived under-utilization of the research, funding also became important:

“Then you also have to be pragmatic, if people don’t avail themselves to this tool then maybe you should also ask why should we put all this money into this because it’s research for pages that no one is going to read.” - Member of YEPP Kristinestad.

The question of the balance of funding for perceived local interests (the coordinator, project funding) versus external interests (the majority of the work of the local researcher) was one that came up across both years of the interviews, and was not satisfactorily settled for the majority of individuals who raised it as a concern. This also had an impact on how well the researchers were able to do their work, and how supported they felt:

“But, I don’t know... it’s a money thing, they think ‘oh she doesn’t need that much money she’s only writing the reports and nothing else.’”

This continuing troubled perception of why the research was done and who it benefited was not resolved satisfactorily and is something that should be addressed in future variations of the YEPP project.

Summary of local implementation of YEPP

- Strengths:
 - Successful creation and continuation of local support group (including strong and active youth participation)
 - Strong local coordinator
- Weaknesses:
 - Longer-term funding questions regarding willingness to support project model as required by YEPP
 - Continuing difficulties with research component; research component not fully realised

Key Themes of YEPP

In terms of evaluating YEPP Kristinestad it is important to remember that YEPP has a strong process component as well as different types of outcomes. The process side cannot be fully captured by an EE, but is fully described in the IE. This section therefore, focuses on the main outcomes relating to cross-sectoral partnerships, youth empowerment, and community empowerment.

“The end result is a process in a sense. We already had a lot of the pieces of the puzzle in place in Kristinestad. You had the youth council, you had a strategy for the youth council and stuff like that but you just needed to piece them together and you needed a network that would support it, to bring it to another level. The strength of the network was that it could stay in the background and let the young people do the stuff.” – Member of YEPP Kristinestad.

This section looks at cross-sectoral partnerships, youth empowerment, and community empowerment in turn, focussing on the process, the products (in terms of key changes and challenges), and lessons learned for the future. Where appropriate, the context of national policy and comments of national policy-makers are integrated into the analysis.

Development of Cross-Sectoral Partnerships

YEPP Kristinestad, in developing a strong support group, was successful in bringing together representatives from various sectors to work together, especially the public and independent sectors. As with almost all the YEPP sites, the involvement of the private sector was more difficult and took more time. This section will look at the process of building partnerships by focussing on selected elements of partnerships, including:

- Communication and networking.
- Quality of co-operation (among partners).
- Co-operation between sectors.
- Triangulation (*i.e.* the effective combination of public, private, and independent sectors).

Before going into more detail, it is important to remind ourselves that partnership, in its truest form, is actually very simple. It consists of people working together on a common goal. In order for this to be accomplished, the willingness to work together is a necessary (but not sufficient) precondition:

“It’s important that everyone can see almost at once the good things they can get. If I can see that that’s important for me in my work and it helps me to do it in partnership, then maybe it’s easier to co-operate. But if I cannot see anything good waiting for me then I don’t start any co-operation.” - Private sector representative.

The Process

Bringing together partners from different sectors to work together can be a difficult process. In the case of YEPP Kristinestad, it was initially rather easy, as the support group capitalised on the existing relationships and networks in their small town. This included members of the public sector, including representatives of the local administration and teachers, as well as members of the independent sector. The private sector was initially formally involved but the representative did not attend the meetings, so it was only later that the private sector began actively participating in YEPP Kristinestad.

Despite a general pre-disposition to partnership, the process can be complicated by different working styles and expectations among the sectors. Comments from the youth on the process of working with the public sector were not surprising, and revealed that they (in addition to the private sector and the independent sector) sometimes found the bureaucratic process to be slow:

“They have been supportive in some issues but sometimes I think they forget us but then I just realize it takes so long for them to like, go through with things.”

These comments were supported by similar comments from private and independent representatives (see Challenges section below for comments the different styles of the private sector).

On the whole, the communication and networking among the YEPP Kristinestad partners was considered good, except for the requirements of the research process. YEPP is at heart a research and development project, and as such required clear feedback, evaluation, and commentary from the partners. This was perhaps the most difficult process for the stakeholders involved, as they were unused to spending time formally evaluating their initiatives. The research was also felt at times to be overly cumbersome and imposed by an outside force rather than being generated by local need, which as noted earlier, reflects an incomplete understanding of the research component of YEPP. (See the Research section for further discussion).

In developing partnerships of any kind, the most important requirement was that there be shared goals and complimentary skills that can be combined:

“You need to have a common focus from the start and you need to pool resources because usually, if it’s a really worthy cause then ... we won’t have the resources to pull it off by ourselves, it’s better if we have some other party with us which contributes funds or competences.” – Member of YEPP Kristinestad.

Once this has been accomplished, strong communication was considered to be the second most important element of an effective partnership. Some of the challenges involved in establishing strong partnerships were related to imperfect communication:

“The difficulty, and challenge, but also richness, is that you come from different organizations, education and background [and you must] find a common language to talk about issues.” – Independent sector representative.

Underpinning this point is that Kristinestad is a municipality with two official languages and two cultural communities, which adds to the complexity. The division between the Finnish-speakers and the

Swedish-speakers was a common theme in the interviews and was also a concern for partnerships and communication:

“The problem for people here is maybe that the Finns are more shy, and it’s harder to – they work as hard, but they don’t talk so much and they don’t make contacts so easily.” – Public sector representative.

The quality of cooperation and the cooperation between sectors was generally good, particularly for the public-independent sectors. There was a long tradition of working in public-independent partnerships in Finland and participants felt very comfortable with their roles in such a partnership. The private sector was more of a challenge, however (see Challenges section below for more details). In fact for triangulation (and the effective partnering of public, private, and independent), the site visits did not reveal effective descriptions of either the process or the outcomes of such a partnership. However since the site visits several concrete examples of triangulation have matured: partnership with a professional Norwegian media producer and the municipality have created the Ungdomskanalenm/Youth Channel (November 2005), and the workshop on Media, Identity and Citizenship (held in Norway) in 2006.

Key changes

YEPP Kristinestad forged a solid and diverse support group in the period between 2002 and 2006. From an initial group of a few committed individuals, a broader community-based network of public, independent, and (eventually) private sector was formed. This in itself was a positive result.

The youth were heavily involved in the partnerships of YEPP Kristinestad, and used their networks and influences in increasingly sophisticated fashion across the course of the two site visits. One idea often expressed by the adults (but, it must be said, not by the youths) was that the youth were more open to cross-sectoral partnerships because they were not yet “indoctrinated” within a particular sector. Whether or not that is the case, the Youth Council has established a series of extremely successful partnerships with local administration, schools, independent bodies, and local businesses.

Inclusion of the private sector

YEPP Kristinestad was a site where clear progress was made over time in terms of private sector involvement. During the first site visit one of the stated goals from the 2004 site visit was strengthening of the involvement of the private sector. In 2005 there were indeed new initiatives, including the development of a young entrepreneur project that had a large number of participants and had been picked up by other areas in the region.

The problem was not that the private sector did not care or was not interested in the work, but rather that they either were not aware of it or were unsure of how they might become involved. In addition the businesses are generally quite small and so do not have the funds, time, or workforce in order to participate. Ideally, YEPP needs to be explained and marketed in terms of concrete outcomes and not processes.

“It isn’t something that we are used to establishing so the contacts are very hard at the beginning. If you want to go to a private sector, you have to offer them something very concrete, [and] a lot of YEPP is of course not that concrete... But if you are able to do that, I think that you will find that many entrepreneurs are very willing to participate because they are very concerned about the conditions in our city.” – Independent sector representative.

Challenges for YEPP Kristinestad

There were several challenges that emerged from the interviews conducted for the external evaluation. Despite the fact that several YEPP projects, such as the Little Parliament, were located in schools, it

remained difficult to increase further the participation of schools and teachers in the project, especially teachers from Finnish-speaking schools. The relatively low level of participation of schools was a frustration for some of the project members and the youth themselves, who spoke about the resistance of the school directors. Much was made of the traditional Finnish way of running a school, which, it was explained, came down from the Tsars and was a model that was fundamentally opposed to active youth empowerment and participation and was not moving with the times:

“The schools are not very good at it, they are still teaching memorising ... you don’t analyse ‘what does this mean, what happens if you do it like this... It’s slowly changing, with new curricula, but sometimes even if you get them, the school tends to go on as it did before.” – Teacher.

In addition to the resistance from school directors, it was felt that the teachers were also not as open to participating as they could be (with the exception of the few teachers who were very much involved). This was due partly to a lack of time for very busy teachers, but also partly to resistance to change:

“The youth themselves have tried to make the teachers cooperate, and have some lectures together like gymnastics but they said it didn’t work out that well because the Finnish people were in one team and the Swedish in another. It didn’t make quite use of the situation.” – Teacher.

Another challenge was how to continue to increase the participation of the private sector, and how to capitalise on the progress that had already been made in this area. As with many YEPP sites, YEPP Kristinestad had difficulty interesting the private sector in the project and in maintaining the interest of those private sector representatives they were able to attract. Certainly the members of the support group were aware that different working styles might be a difficulty for the private sector representatives:

“A disappointment has been that even though the entrepreneurs association participated in the project they didn’t find it necessary to participate in the support group meetings. I don’t know why that is ... [maybe] it’s not easy for the entrepreneurs themselves to act in this formal public/private partnership. It’s so novel for them that they are not used how to do this.” – Member of YEPP Kristinestad.

This was also directly supported by the private sector representatives themselves:

“For instance, in this project there’s a guy from Kristinestad who’s hired to I suppose be a link between the private and the public, and he was not taken into this project so as to avoid slow decision making.”

An additional clear challenge, then, was how to bridge the different working strategies of the sectors. This is of course the standard challenge in cross-sectoral partnership building. From the perspective of overcoming these obstacles, the members of YEPP Kristinestad show that they are clearly committed to:

- Approaching and welcoming representatives of the various sectors into the support group.
- Raising awareness about different working/communication styles and expectations for timelines across the different sectors.
- Engaging in a dialogue about what might and might not be needed to improve the quality of the partnership with the private sector.

Still a challenge, at least as reflected in the interviews of June 2005, was putting the understanding into action and:

- Keeping reports and documents short and direct.

- Keeping meetings on-task and on-time.
- Structuring initiatives so that there is a more immediate sense of accomplishment, and a way to measure and communicate those accomplishments.

These action points would be welcomed by many members of the project, and not just those representing the private sector.

Challenges from the policy world

As a result of a deliberate intention to involve the public sector from the very beginning on the part of YEPP Kristinestad, this site has been actively supported by members of the municipal administration and more recently branched out to regional partners. On the national level, there were a number of projects similar to YEPP, including the Youth Participation Project, which is a longitudinal project operating in 38 communities across Finland and focussing on partnership and youth participation. Interviews with national policy makers in education, labour, and the social services were very positive and many of the comments made were similar to those from the local level.

One of the problems in establishing cooperation and partnerships on the national level was building trust and clear communication. In this domain shared language was again named as an important component of partnerships, not in the sense of different communities (Finnish and Swedish) but rather in terms of shared definitions and terms:

“To understand, truly and deeply. Because already in the same country, for example in Finland if you are working together with school, with youth work, also administration and things like that, the words mean always different things.”

Partnerships between sectors, especially with the private sector, were very uncommon, except in the case of the Ministry of Labour and employment training programmes. Cooperation with the independent sector was more common but still not regular, and was not perceived to be a priority.

However it seemed that cooperation within the public sector itself could be trying enough, particularly between administrative departments that do not have a tradition of coordinating services or working cross-departmentally. This is true even in an environment where “horizontal cooperation” between Ministries and departments is explicitly encouraged as part of the formally adopted Youth Act (passed by parliament in January 2006). The following exchange between the OECD researcher (TB) and the national level public sector interviewee (I) illustrates one difficulty of multi-disciplinary partnership within the public sector:

T.B: Right so you still have health and labour and education in each municipality so that's a lot of co-ordination.

I: And people they really are not speaking the same language.

In addition to varying definitions of terms, the ability to cooperate across Ministries when funding or power is at stake can be very difficult. Interviewees spoke of the importance of profile, such that it was their Ministry that wanted/needed to have the last word on a topic, even when they in fact agreed with something another Ministry had proposed. This kind of posturing is of course not restricted to Ministries but does tend to make working in cooperation difficult.

Lessons Learned

A number of lessons learned can be gleaned from the work of YEPP Kristinestad in cross-sectoral partnership building, including the importance of:

- Involving all sectors early in the process to instil a sense of ownership.
- Communicating what YEPP is in a concrete way to prospective partners in all sectors (and youth).
- Establishing shared terms and definitions so that clear communication can take place.
- Respecting the working styles of the different sectors and being willing to be open to all prospective partners.
- Understanding barriers to cooperation within a sector (e.g. public administration) and getting buy-in from leaders who can support the process of change.

The bottom line is always the people involved and the willingness to work together:

“The chemistry between people is the most important thing and if you can’t get that to work than the sector differences don’t matter.” - Private sector representative.

Youth Empowerment

YEPP Kristinestad was very successful at including youth and encouraging active youth participation in the community. During the 2004 site visit there was already a very high level of youth participation and it increased in 2005. The strongest change observed across time was the type of activities undertaken by the youth, which in 2004 were primarily social but in 2005 also included political and community development. At the time of the last interviews they were very directed and strong: the youth council had a series of new projects and an operational plan to take them through 2007.

Youth empowerment can be thought of as being comprised of several facets, including:

- Identity (which here we broaden to include social/environmental/and health identity).
- Citizenship (in political/legal terms).
- Economics of/and education (school-work).
- Cultural (music, arts, etc.).

Empowerment on any or all of these dimensions is both difficult to measure and, when measured, of uncertain causality. It should be stressed that many of the projects (such as the Little Parliament and the Cultural Café) were not inventions of YEPP or the Youth Council: rather, they were taken from other initiatives and adapted successfully to the Kristinestad environment. This fact also makes evaluating youth empowerment difficult, as it increases the uncertainty regarding what can be directly attributed to YEPP versus the larger community-based programme context. Still, it is possible to identify a number of projects which were aimed at promoting empowerment along the dimensions laid out above, and which were identified as successful by the youth and project leaders. Before we turn to a discussion on outcomes, however, it is useful to think about the process over time.

The Process

As already mentioned, youth empowerment and active youth participation was a key goal for YEPP Kristinestad from the very beginning of the project, and remained so throughout the project’s lifespan. This continuity gave stakeholders a chance to observe how the youth were evolving and maturing over time:

“For what I see from the youth council and participation at our meetings, I would say I find it very interesting to see how some of them have grown and are able to take initiatives and do newspapers. I was very pleased by this last newspaper that they did because I was very interested and keen on reading the whole paper. So in that sense it’s been a great journey...” – Member of YEPP Kristinestad.

Still, the process was not always smooth, and the slow pace of change was not always easily borne by participants (especially the youth):

“I think that everybody should be involved, the children and the young people in school and the teachers, and it should go a lot faster ... so that people like me, like my age, that aren’t interested in the youth council and politics, they think it takes too long and they don’t understand why it can’t go faster. They like it to be fast and they like to see the results.” – Youth representative.²⁴

On the whole, however, the presence in the community of a high-profile international project that lasted well beyond the typical three year project life-span had a significant impact on the hopes, dreams, and projects undertaken by and for the youth of Kristinestad.

Key changes

YEPP Kristinestad has had a number of concrete outcomes from their work:

“Two very concrete and visible things are the little parliament [and] also the idea wall that has been set up in schools where people can come up with ideas for improving things. Also the Culture Café, which visits all the villages and has become very popular here and will live on.” – Independent sector representative.

The kinds of projects the Youth Council is currently working on cut across all the four dimensions of youth empowerment, and as stated in the beginning of this section the strongest change observed across the site visits was the type of activities undertaken by the youth, which in 2004 were primarily social but in 2005 also included political and community development. It should be stressed that the members of the Youth Council perceive themselves to be contributing to YEPP but are not themselves a YEPP project; that is, they existed before YEPP and will continue to exist after YEPP is gone. That being said, they believe that the funding and guidance they received from YEPP helped them develop their work more quickly, and they are pleased to have been involved.

On the identity dimension, the Cultural Café has been very active and continuously run over several years. There are also a number of other projects aimed at empowering youngsters’ health and lifestyle, social identity, and encouraging mixing between the Finnish-speaking and Swedish-speaking youth of the area.

On the citizenship dimension, the youth council has been very active and continued to evolve across the site visits. For this evaluation the empowerment of the political/legal dimension has been marked in the participants of YEPP Kristinestad:

“Yes, maybe I think I become more interested from the youth council about politics so I want to learn more about politics, I want to learn more how things work in Kristinestad.” – Youth representative.

On a political/legal perspective YEPP Kristinestad has also been successful at influencing the local municipal administration, and this is perceived as a direct result of YEPP:

²⁴. It should be noted that “youth representatives” were also often members of other groups, such as the Support Group.

“You can see it in the document paper. You can ask [name] to pull up the strategy for the annual work plan of the municipality, and you see in 2002 it doesn’t say youth work, but in 2003 it does.” - Member of YEPP Kristinestad.

The dimension of economics and education was less pronounced but did evolve over time. The creation of the young entrepreneur project was a successful attempt to empowerment of youth along economic lines, and was a marked change from the first to the second site visit. Educational empowerment is addressed by the project, but there has been some resistance to it on the part of the schools (see Partnerships section for more details).

Lastly, the cultural dimension was on-going throughout the project and is closely linked to the identity dimension, in that most products concerned with culture also focused on the relation between culture and identity (e.g. the Cultural Café and bringing Finnish and Swedish speakers together as well as the music and citizenship international youth workshop (see Transnational section below for more details). These projects were considered quite successful by the youth and adult members of the support group, although of course a direct measure of how they influenced youth empowerment is impossible to obtain.

Challenges for YEPP Kristinestad

One clearly identified challenge was the inclusion of Finnish-speakers on the Youth Council. In 2005, they had succeeded in increasing the number of representatives from two (in 2004) to five (out of a total of 20), and were planning on continuing to encourage the participation of Finnish-speaking youth in activities.

“I’d like to try and activate the young people more that they’re being activated right now, still try to reach those that haven’t been reached. I’d try to ... improve that by being more active in the schools, especially the Finnish schools.” - Independent sector representative.

Another challenge was to increase the participation of teachers and schools in the project, from both the Swedish and Finnish-speaking communities. The initial reluctance of the schools to participate more fully (see Partnership section above for more details) was not entirely overcome and this was a concern for most of the support group, including the teachers’ representatives.

A final challenge was the challenge of all projects once the initial period of rapid growth and excitement wears off: how does one sustain interest across time? Given that YEPP Kristinestad has lost its funding from the Swedish Cultural Foundation, there is a distinct possibility that the project will be radically changed in the future, with the first change being the loss of the international exchanges. Some worry that this will seriously reduce youth participation:

“I’m a bit afraid that when we lose this international gloss then we might also lose some of the enthusiasm.” – Member of YEPP Kristinestad.

Challenges from the policy world

Despite the public support given to the youth council, there is still an acknowledgement from within the local administration that the challenge is ongoing:

“Being located in the public sector and municipality for a year I wouldn’t say that they talk a lot about youth and that sector. It’s just when it comes to elections you say a few words!”

This statement was echoed at national level, and reflects a common thread across the interviews regarding how one goes beyond just talking to effect meaningful change on a policy level.

In many ways this is a very good time in Finland to do youth work: The new Youth Act that was implemented in January 2006 calls for increased co-operation among ministries and divisions (“horizontal co-operation”), and the President herself, newly re-elected, has spoken about the importance of youth

work. Indeed it is the Prime Minister's Office that funds the Youth Participation Project, which involves 38 communities and focuses on youth empowerment, partnership, and community building and is scheduled to run until 2007.

However the national policy-makers we spoke to were cautious with their excitement: there was concern that the Youth Act, although well-intentioned, was not enforceable. They were also worried that this new concern with youth was just a fashionable moment, and that there was no clear commitment to making changes in the way policy makers worked and cooperated with each other, and no real acceptance of the importance of youth work.

On a practical level, one clear barrier to horizontal co-operation has been different definitions of the target group: according to our interviewees, the definition of youth differs across all ministries and so it is not always possible to get an agreement on what, in fact, is meant by "youth work" (the parliament was supposed to agree on an age range to label 'youth' in early 2006).

In addition, national policy-makers were worried that long-standing prejudices would interfere with the new initiatives and cause community projects focussed on youth to be given low priority in many places.

"When you work on a youth project, especially if the coordinator is a former youth worker, he could encounter some biases from other partners. They know him from the community as a youth worker and so they are perceived as less professional, less senior, and still treated that way by the other partners."

This feeling that youth work was somehow less prestigious, or less important, than other kinds of work was reflected in a number of the interviews with national policy-makers, and was mentioned as a clear barrier to promoting the goals outlined in the Youth Act. This comment was also made by local YEPP stakeholders, including the youth themselves, and remains a clear barrier to innovative projects such as YEPP.

Lessons Learned

A number of lessons learned can be gleaned from the work of YEPP Kristinestad in youth empowerment, including the importance of:

- Involvement of youth in the very earliest stages of project development.
- Getting the local administration to acknowledge the voice of youth in designing and delivering youth-related projects.
- Conducting an honest assessment of ongoing challenges and goals (*e.g.* increasing the participation of Finnish-speaking youth and bringing the schools more fully into the partnership).
- Acknowledging the context from which projects spring; including the hidden community/regional partners that first imagined a particular project initiative.
- Acknowledging the difficulty of translating words into action on local and national levels, even in a very favourable environment for youth empowerment (and acknowledging that there may be long-standing prejudices regarding youth work that will have an impact on how innovation is embraced).

And lastly, a final lesson learned from the youth empowerment work of YEPP Kristinestad is:

- The process of change is as significant as the outputs of projects themselves.

Community Empowerment

Despite having a long history of community work, there was a general consensus that community empowerment was something new, and something different:

“It's not typical in Finland to be active. We are ... we are very careful to say our opinions and we are waiting always that someone else is coming and doing it. But our work life now is different and we are worried about our country.” – National level policy-maker.

A central worry for Kristinestad and other similar rural communities was the decline of its population due to the migration of youth to the cities in search of (first) schooling and (then) career opportunities. The community was very much aware that they needed to develop a strategy to keep the youth connected to their home town and create enough career options so that those youth that wanted to stay in the area would be able to find work. Broader career opportunities would also encourage those citizens who had already left the area to return, and would in turn revitalise the economy and the community.

The Process

In YEPP Kristinestad the process of community empowerment is inherently linked to youth empowerment, not only because the two concepts are linked but also because the LSG, as a community empowerment device, made a conscious choice to create a focus on youth as a way to empower the community. Given the decline of the population etc outlined above, the most obvious and positive strategy to slow the decline of the population was to focus on youth and youth issues, particularly on education, social, and economic opportunities.

Key changes

YEPP Kristinestad did not focus on community empowerment projects *per se* and thus did not have flagship projects that did not involve youth. It is thus very difficult to list any key changes that have not already been discussed (for example, the success of the entrepreneur project, the success of the youth work).

One key change that was described as a direct result of YEPP was the creation of two new enterprises. In addition, the transnational youth workshop (see transnational section, below) on Music and Citizenship, which was held on the outskirts of Kristinestad, attracted over 500 participants from all over the area. This had the effect of raising the profile of YEPP as well as focussing the community on the larger world, and thinking about how they can draw lessons from international experiences. Although a one-time event, it was mentioned by several people as having a large impact on the community members, who were pleased to see themselves as part of a larger (European) whole. Youth participants were billeted in community homes for the week of their stay and so the community had first-hand experience of the participants and projects.

Challenges for YEPP Kristinestad

There was serious discontent with the efforts that were being made to address the situation on a local level. Many respondents believed that it was the responsibility of the municipality to turn the situation around:

“Yeah they are the ones that have more power and they should do something about it because you can't live, stay here in Kristinestad if you don't have a job.” - Youth representative.

Certainly it was the top priority expressed by the new mayor during our interview.

Challenges from the policy world

One of the biggest concerns reflected in our interviews about community development was the urban/rural divide, soon to be the old/young divide, as the youth continue to leave the smaller towns to work in the cities. This was not a situation limited to Kristinestad or indeed even the Swedish-speaking area of Finland, but rather was a situation facing the entire country.

In the opinion of our national interviewees, the biggest obstacle to addressing the situation with realistic and sustainable measures was the lack of long-term planning in policy circles:

“Because of the political nature of the process, people are planning for what is needed now, in the current mandate. But that leaves the process open to holes and does not allow for a holistic approach to dealing with the issues.”

This of course brings us back to many of the issues that were raised in discussing partnerships and the difficulties of working across departmental boundaries.

In order to address the situation in a long-term and meaningful manner, our interviewees felt that there would need to be a serious restructuring of payments and allotments systems for their funding. Currently, regions are paid X amount per X people, which favours the urban areas. Rural areas are then given an allowance to make up for this difference. However, this gives rise to resentment in the urban areas for having to cover for the rural areas (which consume a disproportionate amount of services and funds due to the aging population). This situation has been going on steadily for some time now, and longer term solutions are required in order to address the discontent that is growing as the shift in age/urban dwelling continues.

Lessons Learned

A number of lessons learned can be gleaned from the work of YEPP Kristinestad in community development and empowerment, including the importance of:

- Encouraging traditionally less-active members of the community (in this case Finnish-speaking Finns) to participate and bring their voice to the table.
- Encouraging the participation of youth in community planning discussions.
- Bringing together all sectors in an honest appraisal of what works and what does not work, and the best strategy to move forward.
- Having clear agreement on responsibilities for community development initiatives and expectations for action.
- Devising realistic community development plans that are holistic in nature and include long-term strategies (*i.e.* beyond the length of the current policy mandate) for community renewal.

The last point also implies having the political courage to wait for longer-term solutions and avoid the temptation of the “quick-fix” (and the corresponding willingness on the part of the community to wait for longer-term results). This of course is an issue not restricted to Kristinestad or indeed Finland, but rather represents a fundamental tension in policy-making and longer-term community/national development.

Trans-national Cooperation

As explained in the section on Reporting, in this report trans-national co-operation will be touched on only briefly, as the final cross-cutting report in this series of case studies will focus more thoroughly on the trans-national co-operation of YEPP. This report will thus focus primarily on the experience of YEPP Kristinestad in hosting one of the first of the international youth workshops, "Music and Citizenship" in July 2003.

YEPP Kristinestad was the first of the YEPP sites to host a trans-national workshop, and as such can be considered a good baseline for the experience. The local youth were joined by youth participants from four of the YEPP sites (Turin Parella and Turin Mirafiori, Antwerp, and Tuzla), as well as a group from Norway. In the course of one week these youth were given lessons in music and had ample opportunities for cultural and group exchanges, including being hosted by neighbourhood families.

Successes

For the youth

The transnational co-operation was almost uniformly perceived as a very important and positive aspect of YEPP. Youth were excited to have the opportunity to travel and get to meet participants from other sites and cultures:

"The international part yes, I think it's quite positive, and that we have had the chance to travel and now the youngsters can go to Antwerp and Turin. I think it's great. And I have also in the contact which we have had between Bosnia, not only on the trips but afterwards also."

Being exposed to other cultures and countries was also seen as being important in building an identity:

"... to introduce something new, a new way of thinking, and to the older or to youngsters they have being given a great opportunity to see other places in Europe and create new networks and become Europeans and not just Finns."

It was also considered a learning experience, in that they had an opportunity to perhaps learn about new ways of being, or innovative projects, or different approaches than they would have had at home:

"I've been traveling for YEPP sometimes but for me it's very rewarding to see especially the younger members when they have been traveling to workshops and with some other CHIs to hear them talk about the visit or what they've been doing at the workshop, because you see how they learn something from it and get some experience that they didn't get here."

For the community

The opportunity to meet the participants from the other sites and listen to their experiences and ideas was also appreciated by the broader community. Although the sites represented were relatively diverse in a number of ways (urban/rural, size of community, diversity of participants, selection criteria for participation), there was an appreciation for bridging and learning across sites:

"You can always find similarities and differences, but the key question is what can we learn from each other and I think that is how you have to tackle this dilemma, not search for similarities that are hard to find, but see what practices we can borrow or modify for our purposes." – Independent sector representative.

For YEPP

It also helped the work of YEPP within the community, in terms of concretizing the image of the project and exposing the community to it:

“One thing that I think was very important was the first meeting between the participants. We had the European funding for visiting other CHIs. And in Kristinestad it was very important, or it was sort of something that showed the municipalities and the participants and the world that it is connected to other areas, and in this case we had Tuzla visiting.” – Member of YEPP Kristinestad.

Challenges

Some of the challenges expressed had to do with preparation across the sites, and making sure that the communication of the workshop goals was shared so that everyone would choose participants using the same criteria. In the Music and Citizenship workshop this was not the case:

“I think all the countries had different ideas of what it would be and the people that were sent here were very different too. Like the people from Bosnia, they were top students, many of them, and I think they were chosen because of that. [But] I think the other countries, at least Belgium... it was young people that needed to come away or needed something to lift them up in some way. And then the kids from Norway, they were from a school for dropouts I think. They were into a lot of drama and music and things like that so they knew quite much about playing and music and things like that, but they were dropouts, many of them I think.” – Independent sector representative.

Different criteria in picking the participants also led to quite a diverse group of youth. In some ways this was seen as a positive and strong opportunity, in that the youth had a chance to experience not only different languages and cultures, but also different values, ages, and goals. For others, the group was not uniform enough to really establish equality among all participants, and they suggested that more care be put into the combination of participants:

“Don’t say: oh well this can be a part of this project, we can include it here’, it should be more straightforward, like if it’s a youth project it should be for kids from 15-20 and not for kids of 7.” – Youth representative.

Another communication was related to outreach. Even in a small town such as Kristinestad it was impossible to reach all the youth, and there was a worry about exclusion, particularly of the Finnish-speaking youth:

“I think one thing that is a bit negative with YEPP is how they choose those who are in the YEPP group and how they choose those that can go abroad, because most of the people here don’t know what YEPP is, they may have heard but ... ‘oh why did she get to go to Torino, she has already been in Antwerp or whatever’, and the group could be more mixed. [Also] we have some that work in school or with children or young people but not a lot of teachers, and not a lot of Finnish-speaking people.” – Youth representative.

There was also a minority opinion that the international component of the project was not as important as the important work needed locally. Some of the resistance had to do with time management and prioritizing:

“I feel for myself, I am interested about international co-operation but I must make a decision about what I’m going to do and I haven’t got enough time to develop the international work because I must concentrate on what I’m just now doing.” – Independent sector representative.

In addition, some of the resistance was related to the balance of funding and the number of youth that could be included in international projects versus local ones. This, however, was a tiny minority and most

of the people were very supportive of the international aspect. In fact a key worry was that with the disappearance of YEPP funds post-2006, the international aspect of the project would be lost.

Sustainability

One of the key concerns of YEPP as a whole is the on-going sustainability of the programme and the projects it supported. The youth exchanges, for example, were seen as very valuable in and of themselves, but could be even more valuable if the international connections could be maintained outside of the exchange process:

“There’s a lot of talk about participation, and it’s a lot of fun when you have visits to Italy and you have visitors from there, but the question is how to get it to continue, and in what form, whether it’s going to be over internet, or how.” – Support group representative.

As with any project, keeping the initial momentum going is a challenge:

“To find new ideas is always a good challenge... It’s easy to do a project for maybe one year and you succeed... After one year maybe two, people may get tired. Then it’s a challenge to find new people. Many times I think it’s easy to get people, but then they fade away.” – Teacher.

This is true of all projects and programmes, and particularly true given the planned end of foundation funding to the site. Without the funding of the foundation, many interviewees feared that the project would die, or at least some parts of the project:

“In some way it will continue even after 2005 because they already have international contacts, and they have learned a lot, but if you want to get it better or get it going well then it needs some kind of co-ordination or coordinator.” – Support group member.

Without funding for the coordinator, and without the formal presence of the Programme Team, many people did not believe YEPP would continue in its current form although, for instance, it could retain the LSG and the cyclical planning elements but lose the trans-national and evaluation components. In reality, these would be local decisions taken on the basis of usefulness for the youth and community and the availability of resources.

Recommendations for YEPP II

For future versions of YEPP, the lessons learned as highlighted in each section above should serve as useful guides for future action. In addition, however, two unresolved challenges stand out as requiring particular attention:

- Working on a long-term project raises important implications for partnership agreements. Foundations, long used to making unilateral decisions regarding funding priorities, may find it difficult to continue supporting the model if it is not progressing as they would like. This could have long-term repercussions for the project site and participants.
- The continuing troubled perception of why the research is done and who it benefits was not resolved satisfactorily and is something that should be addressed in future variations of the YEPP project.

Conclusions

Any evaluation of YEPP Kristinestad is complicated by several factors. YEPP itself has a strong process component as well as different types of outcomes. As such, evaluating the effectiveness of the processes developed to stimulate youth and community empowerment and cross-sectoral partnerships is

complex. Nevertheless, enough evidence has been accumulated during the course of the EE to support the conclusion that there have been actions on the ground which have empowered both youth and the community and led to partnerships. The IE will provide the details.

In addition, its insertion into a vibrant community means that YEPP Kristinestad did not start with a blank slate, but rather entered into ongoing networks, relationships, and projects. Projects that were already started were continued and flourished under YEPP, projects that were invented elsewhere were successfully adapted for local purposes, and groups allied themselves with the programme without considering themselves to be an output of YEPP (but were, it must be emphasised, very much helped by the partnerships and were pleased to be involved). There is thus a series of non-causal relationships between products and projects which makes it just that much harder to measure change.

Many key measurements were outlined above. In addition, one indicator of success is what is expected out of a project, and whether those expectations continue to increase over time. In this regard YEPP Kristinestad is uniformly well perceived:

“Well the network has matured now and you can see from the... evaluations that we received that the expectation level rises all the time.” – Member of YEPP Kristinestad.

This was true of the members of the support group, the youth, the broader community, and those members of regional administration that were aware of the project. This also includes national policy-makers in Finland and elsewhere that were updated on the project and the progress of the site.

YEPP Kristinestad is an example of a YEPP site that has done extremely well with the resources at its disposal, and the members of the project can be justifiably proud of what they have accomplished. Whether YEPP Kristinestad continues in its current form or evolves into something entirely new, the overall goals and aims of the project will not be lost. We give the last word on the topic to the site itself:

“... People in the support group have said it over and over again; yes we will continue because Kristinestad needs a group like YEPP”.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

EXTERNAL EVALUATION CASE STUDY

MANNHEIM, GERMANY*

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Aims and purpose

This report was commissioned by the Steering Committee of the Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme (YEPP) with the following purposes:

- To have a systematic, independent account of the development, perceived quality, and impact of the YEPP site in Neckarstadt-West, Mannheim, Germany, including policy impact on local, regional and national levels.
- To indicate lessons learned in the form of recommendations for future phases of YEPP in order to improve and extend the YEPP experience.

The aim is that this report, in conjunction with the Case Study of the Internal Evaluation, will contribute to a stock-taking of YEPP Mannheim. Ultimately, it is hoped that the results will be used both internally, for discussion within the YEPP Mannheim Team and Support Group, and externally for discussion by other YEPP sites.

This is the fourth in a series of case studies. The series will consist of separate case studies for each of the seven participating YEPP sites and an overarching trans-national report. Each of these reports of the external evaluation will be teamed with a matching report of the internal evaluation, with the end goal of providing a thorough yet concise look at the development, functioning, and outcomes of YEPP from 2002-2005.

Methodology

The report is based on semi-structured interviews with:

- The YEPP Mannheim team:
 - Representatives of the funding foundation (Freudenberg Stiftung).
 - YEPP Mannheim Co-ordinators.
 - YEPP Mannheim Researcher.
 - Members of the YEPP Support Group.
- Youth participants in YEPP.
- Community members involved in or with experience of YEPP, including local decision-makers.
- Regional and national stakeholders working in related areas (*i.e.* social inclusion, education, youth, partnerships).
- Discussion with representatives of the YEPP Berlin Programme Team.

- Observations of the OECD/CERI external evaluation review team.²⁵

In total, more than 53 individuals representing local, regional and national levels as well as public, private, and independent sectors were interviewed during two site visits (the first in 2004 and the second in 2005; see Annex 3 for a complete list of individuals interviewed). Interviews followed a semi-structured format that probed experiences of Context, Input, Process, and Product on the topics of youth empowerment, community development, and partnerships. The experiences and the interviews were divided along sectors (public/private/independent) and levels (mandating, strategic, operational, and field). The interviews were conducted individually unless the interviewee expressed a great preference for another partner (this was sometimes the case for the youth, for example). Interviewees were given the choice of conducting the interview in English, French, or their native language. Interviews were then transcribed and coded using the qualitative coding software N7. Annex 2 contains a more detailed description of the interview process, the methodology used, and data collection and analysis.

Reporting

This report reflects the findings of the external evaluation regarding the development, process, and outcomes of YEPP Mannheim. It is organised by main themes, looking at partnership building, youth empowerment, and community development in turn. The experience of trans-national co-operation will also be touched on, but briefly, as the final cross-cutting report in this series of case studies will focus more thoroughly on the trans-national co-operation of YEPP.

As one of the goals of this evaluation was to reflect on the processes of change, central interviewees were interviewed on both site visits, during the second of which they were explicitly prompted to reflect on changes since the previous year and plans for the future. Sustainability issues and lessons learned are also reflected.

It is important to emphasise that the bulk of the observations of this evaluation come from the local stakeholders, including youth, themselves, and are not opinions imposed from the outside. Some contributions are quoted verbatim when they seem particularly insightful or when a comment sums up the majority view on a particular topic.

Context

As with all YEPP sites, YEPP Mannheim was designed to have a local support group (LSG) comprising local stakeholders, youth and a representative from the funding foundation, supported by a local coordinator and researcher. For the period of the project there was a steady team of two Co-ordinators, one researcher, and two foundation representatives, which permitted a stable progression of the project. There was not a formal LSG, at least in the sense envisioned by the YEPP model, but on the whole, YEPP Mannheim experienced stable personnel and membership which helped encourage steady and continuous development.

Local implementation of YEPP

A team of two co-ordinators remained steady across the period of the project. Their roles evolved over time so that one was in charge of education activities and projects while the other was more concentrated

²⁵. For the site visits this team was composed of an OECD/CERI researcher (Tracey Burns) and a local Inland Researcher, who commented on relevant national policy and local context, aided in organising the visit, and provided translation as necessary. Inland Researcher 2004: Julia Plessing; 2005: Daniel Bannasch. Peter Evans of the OECD Secretariat, although not present at site visits, was also a member of the team.

on culture and youth. Working consistently in these areas they provided guidance and support for a number of successful projects, and created a strong network of partners. Rather than be directly employed by YEPP or the foundation, however, they were under the employment of IKUBIZ, an organisation also funded in part by the foundation. IKUBIZ also hosted the YEPP offices, and the YEPP design of the foundation guiding YEPP was not enacted in Mannheim; rather IKUBIZ guided YEPP.

A formal LSG was originally created but was replaced by small subgroups that concentrated on a particular area of work (e.g. education or culture). Given the number of actors in the community this allowed for more focused and concrete planning, and was deliberate:

“At the beginning we had this support group consisting of 22 people from the higher levels. In the course of time, new support groups came into being. It was more project oriented. Of course this [formal] support group exists still, but I don’t think it’s necessary to bring them to a round table again. Maybe in one year or half a year when we think it to be meaningful or important. But at the moment, we inform them with our newsletters or I think they also get information from the media.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

However the subgroups also meant that YEPP did not receive guidance with overall planning from the local stakeholders. The small splinter groups also resulted in members feeling disconnected from the greater goals of the project and did not empower the community members to work on a variety of different project areas:

“The support group only really existed right at the beginning, and once the project actually started to become operative it dissipated, I don’t really know why. Maybe [because of] limitations in time resources because of course it takes time to organise these meetings and run them, etc. And personally I miss...the meetings of all the project partners. On an operational level we don’t have contact so actually these meetings were very positive.” - Member of local administration.

There was a steady foundation presence across the duration of the project, which allowed for continuing financial support and considerable added expertise. The foundation is very active with strong connections in the community and to local administration and also supports a number of projects that interweave with YEPP. Examples of such projects are the creation of the position of Quartier Manager, which the foundation facilitated in collaboration with the municipal administration. The Quartier Manager is an individual charged with developing the neighbourhood of Neckarstadt-West by bringing together working groups on various themes (for example, Education and Youth). The working groups are designed to include representatives from public, private, and independent sectors as well as all interested community members, and have been extremely successful in a very short period of time (the Quartier Manager began his work in 2004).

Another example of a related project funded in part through the foundation (in conjunction with the European Union) is the work of ProFi, an organisation dedicated to promoting entrepreneurship in the community. This programme runs a project called ProFi Junior, begun in 2004 in Neckarstadt-West, which is a competition for funding entrepreneurial projects proposed by neighbourhood youth. This too has been an extremely successful project with increasing numbers of applicants each year. In addition, as already stated, the foundation is one of the funders of IKUBIZ, which hosts and manages YEPP Mannheim. Although this management structure proved problematic in some areas (see Research section for details), YEPP staff also benefited from this connection to its directors and the employees in terms of experience and resources.

With these and other community initiatives, the foundation provided both direct and indirect support that has been instrumental at helping YEPP Mannheim achieve its goals. However the foundation at times made unilateral decisions which were not in accordance with the YEPP model and this had repercussions,

particularly on the funding available for the local researcher. This will be discussed more fully in the section below.

Research

As with many of the other YEPP sites, the research component of the YEPP design was not fully realised in YEPP Mannheim. This was not a reflection on the researcher, but rather a reflection of funding decisions based on local needs. Strong individual skill provided the basis for continuous and meticulous work but the researcher's hours were not increased as the project grew (from an almost equal amount of time as the coordinator in the beginning to 1/5 of the time by 2005) and there was simply not enough time or funding to allow for the completion of her duties. In the last year of the site visits the choice was made to focus on the evaluation of just one particular project rather than the overall YEPP programme, but this too was difficult and violated the expectations of the YEPP model, while placing the researcher in a difficult position.

In addition a troubling constraint was that the researcher did not report directly to the foundations but rather to IKUBIZ, who, as mentioned above was also responsible for overseeing the running of the YEPP project. This led to editing and screening of research reports before they were permitted to be sent to either the funding foundation or the Programme Team (PT):

"For example, they [IKUBIZ] give me feedback ... And after that, when I have spoken and made the changes I can't send it to the foundation, they [Ikubiz] send it. And then when I spoke to [foundation] and asked 'do you have the report' they say, 'no, have you done a report?' Then I asked [Ikubiz] and then she says we have to read it again, and after a week they say you have to change this and this and this and I look at it again and I phone and I say I don't agree, I don't want to write it like that. It was difficult." - Member of YEPP Mannheim.²⁶

As noted the research component of the YEPP design was not fully realised in YEPP Mannheim. This was in part a reflection of the initial choice to focus on community empowerment and not youth empowerment, leading to the result that several requirements of the research process (e.g. case studies of youngsters) could not be met. It was also a reflection of the difficulty of the local researcher role ("the critical friend") as conceived by the YEPP model:

"The projects want to have formative evaluation. The Berlin office needs help with the summative evaluation. And there we are. Because they [Berlin] don't see the local researchers as researchers, but as part of their team who should help with this and that. It's a difficult role." - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

All researchers struggled with how best to be the "critical friend" required by the YEPP model. There was an inherent difficulty in bringing research into a community development project that was unaccustomed to research, and the initial (and often long-standing) impression of the local stakeholders was that the research requirement was imposed from the outside, and represented an external drain on the local project. Working with the site and answering to their needs as well as balancing the requirements of the Programme Team was a difficult process for the researcher and indeed all members of YEPP Mannheim:

"I can see how the research could work ideally. If you had research for all topics... if you had a sort of mobile research team that comes on the local level when it's needed and the group that said we need this and we need information for this, but they define their questions [themselves]."

²⁶. Attributions are provided if it is not clear from the context which group is speaking. Attributions are intended to be both specific enough to guide the reader and general enough to preserve the identity of the individual speaker. In this case "member of YEPP Mannheim" refers to the core group comprised of the Local Coordinators, Local Researcher, and foundation representatives.

But we don't have this structure. We don't have this flexible modality.” – Member of YEPP Mannheim.

This continuing troubled perception of why the research was done and who it benefited, and indeed the distribution of funding, was not resolved satisfactorily and should be addressed in future variations of the YEPP project.²⁷

The design of the project was of course developed over time, with adjustments made by the PT based on feedback received, and these changes alleviated some of the complaints. Still, the process of making those changes was perceived as too long and too inflexible, which incited criticism:

“When we began they were developing the evaluation model...and we said that it's not realistic because we don't have the time and resources. For example for me it's enough to say that one CIPP report a year is enough. Then they [Berlin] would say “okay, one CIPP report and then one empowerment report twice a year”. And for me it's not less work, it's more. [Name] was saying this in the research workshop and the reaction of Berlin was very strong and very defensive. It's a pity because it's a very interesting job but very frustrating.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

As a trans-national program with individual projects sites unified by a central team in Berlin, YEPP was, conceptually, a multi-layered endeavour. However, some local members found the relationship between the layers—specifically the role of the central PT and the hierarchy between the local and international needs of the programme - unclear:

“Berlin doesn't see itself as a service point for the CHIs but more as an advisory role, if needed.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

Summary of local implementation

YEPP Mannheim is distinct from the other YEPP sites in that it was both one of the original four sites (the others being Kristinestad, Finland; Lille, France [no longer a site]; and Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina) and that it has a commitment from the Freudenberg foundation to continue funding until 2007. It thus operated under a longer time span than the other sites and with different priorities and schedules.

As with YEPP Antwerp, there were several deliberate deviations from the standard YEPP Model (such as inserting another layer of management between the foundation and the YEPP team and the creation of thematic community working groups rather than a formal Support Group, see above for more details). As these choices imply that YEPP Mannheim did not intend to fulfil the YEPP model, the question is raised regarding the suitability of evaluating the site against this standard. In any case, it certainly suggests that, as with Antwerp, existing disagreements on the goals and role of the YEPP project can at times be traced back to differences in the original description of the project and inclusion of the foundations in YEPP.

- Strengths:
 - Local coordination and continuation of local partnerships.

²⁷. This is another example of the misunderstanding of the funding model of YEPP. All local expenses were covered by foundations independently of funds paying for the programme team and the evaluation and so there was not an issue around the distribution of funding. It is legitimate for the Mannheim site to complain that they were under-funded in comparison to other sites.

- (Eventual) strong and continuing activities.
- Weaknesses
 - LSG not sustained.
 - Insertion of an additional layer of management (under the foundation) that also vetted the evaluation process.
 - Under-funded and under-supported research component.

Lessons Learned

A number of lessons can be gleaned from the process of creating and running YEPP Mannheim, including the importance of:

- Beginning a YEPP site with shared understanding and formal agreement, including funding commitments, on objectives, the YEPP model, and goals.
- Searching for ways to resolve or reduce the tension of the role of the local researcher such that research activities are perceived to benefit the local process as well as the international process.

Key Themes of YEPP

In evaluating YEPP Mannheim, it is important to remember that YEPP has a strong process element as well as different types of outcomes. The process cycle cannot be fully captured by an EE, but is described in detail in the IE. This section therefore, focuses on the main outcomes pertaining to cross-sectoral partnerships, youth empowerment, and community empowerment.

This section looks at each of these variables in turn, focussing on the process, the products (in terms of key changes and challenges), and lessons learned for the future. Where appropriate, the context of national and regional policy and comments of national/regional stake-holders are integrated into the analysis.

Development of Cross-Sectoral Partnerships

YEPP Mannheim operates in a district of Mannheim called Neckarstadt-West which is an area high in minority population and unemployment and low in income and education levels. Similar to the Antwerp CHI in the types of difficulties facing its population, it is also comparable in the complexity of the relationships both among and between the administration and YEPP stakeholders. Dwindling public resources and changing bureaucratic structures make competition fiercer for scarce resources, and raise the stakes for both cooperation and competition. The German immigration law and training that is provided for new immigrants creates difficulties in integration and does not help break down barriers that have been built up between the communities of “newcomers” and “Germans” that inhabit Neckarstadt-West.

This section will look at the process of building partnerships by focussing on selected elements of partnerships, including:

- Quality of co-operation (among partners).
- Communication and networking.

- Co-operation between sectors.
- Triangulation (*i.e.* the effective combination of public, private, and independent sectors).

The Process

Bringing together partners from different sectors to work together can be difficult, particularly if they do not have a tradition of working together or have competing interests. In the case of YEPP Mannheim, partnership was facilitated by their strengths in networking and in bringing groups together, as well as the presence of the Quartier Manager working in parallel on the same themes and with a similar approach:

“I think things go in the same direction and they do very well in bringing people together and networking. They deal with a couple of schools, they deal with the kindergartens, they work with enterprises here in the quartier and by bringing these people together, when all the actors in the city come together, they have small working groups so that everyone in this district has to take responsibility for what is happening here and how we develop. So it’s not only the administration... I think YEPP is very helpful in that, in changing the minds of the people and doing very good projects.” - Member of local administration.

The initial support group included members of the public sector, including representatives of the local administration and teachers, the kindergarten and primary school, and members of the independent sector. The private sector began participating later and provided funding for certain YEPP projects (such as the musical Neckarstadt-West Side Story), but was difficult to involve in YEPP Mannheim.

Quality of co-operation

In developing partnerships of any kind, the most important requirement was shared goals and complementary skills that can be combined:

“What is important is to get in touch with the actors who work with the kids, with the parents and to share their experiences and to develop a concept together. I think it’s the amount of perspectives on a theme which makes it worthwhile. On a structural basis it gives the feeling that things are connected.” - Representative of local administration.

Yet given the highly structured bureaucracy of German administration, willingness to work together was not enough - for partnership to work with the public sector they needed buy-in from senior administrators:

“I think the blessing from the top would be very helpful. It would produce acknowledgement and recognition for the people down, down. And in the end if it’s him [the lower level] alone as a person it will fail. It has to become a structure, one that only can be developed from the top.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

But even this support was not enough for day to day cooperation, as an understanding of the time and effort required was crucial:

“They showed their willingness to cooperate with us on this high level. But if you go lower, then everything gets more problematic because there are a lot of hindrances and people are lacking this willingness to cooperate, or they’re lacking resources, time or financial resources. And it depends on each project, or on the individual corporation partner, and the quality is sometimes good and sometimes not so good.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

Communication and networking

Strong communication was considered to be another fundamental element of an effective partnership. YEPP Mannheim improved considerably across the site visits in terms of the cohesiveness and strength of the working groups. However one of the key challenges for the neighbourhood was bringing the various ethnicities together to communicate openly:

“It’s really important to have more communication with, what would you call it, ‘born Germans’ and the ones with an immigrant background. There’s very little communication so that’s really an important need...” - Independent sector representative.

Communication between the different public sector departments was difficult, and given the structure of the German bureaucracy, almost all work required the involvement of these different departments, which made things difficult:

“In Germany you have a city administration with different departments, [for example there is] the department for kindergartens, but if the kindergarten children go to school, it’s another department. And these departments are led by different parties, so it’s really complicated. At the beginning of the project I started meetings with both departments, and it was so difficult because they hate each other. It was really difficult for me.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

And of course in the end you have to move beyond communication to action, and again this was difficult when dealing with bureaucracy:

“It’s a difficult discussion with the city administration. Every time they said to us, ‘yes, we will think about it,’ we have three or four meetings a year but without any results.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

Cooperation between sectors

Despite a general pre-disposition to partnership, the process can be complicated by different working styles and expectations among the sectors. The public sector was generally perceived as slow in comparison to both the private and independent sectors, which gave rise to some frustration:

“The NGOs or the third sector, they have the focus and they want to change things. The administration, they have their daily business and if you come with an additional theme then it’s extra work. So inside the administration it’s very hard to make new things become part of the old structure, and it is much more difficult to set up actions.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

In addition, the willingness to partner was not always enough, and in a time of budgetary cutbacks on the administrative level, partnership was hindered due to lack of resources:

“In the last two or three years the budgetary situation of the city of Mannheim is getting worse and worse and this is the background of our work. We have still these problems in our cooperation and everybody would like to cooperate, but we have no resources for cooperation. I think that is our biggest problem.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

Those interviewees who were used to working with the public sector had often developed strategies to circumvent the bureaucratic delay (for approval of certain projects, for example). Although not recommended as a long-term strategy for partnership building, it seemed effective for those who were required to work within the school system, notorious for resisting change:

“It can all be very complicated, but often the trick is to just go ahead and do it. If you can show that it’s a success, it’s much easier to convince them [the administration] that it’s a good idea.” – School representative.

In addition, the short term nature of politics (*i.e.* decisions are taken for the length of a mandate, but not beyond) was frustrating for those in other sectors looking for longer-term, more strategic partnerships:

“In the past we were very much problem oriented so if there’s a deficiency in something then we do a project or something but it’s not for long term. There’s no strategy of where we want to go in Mannheim.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

Bringing the private sector into the equation was difficult, even though Germany has a long tradition of including the private sector into community partnerships (for example, with vocational programmes). On this level capacity building for the community would be appreciated:

“We wanted to get contact with the private sector, but we don’t have the resources at the moment, we don’t have the time. And we don’t have the know-how.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

For the private sector, of course, the bottom-line was that they profited from their partnerships with public and independent sectors:

“We don’t want to take control of the project, but of course we want to be identified with it so that people remark that we, in this case [company name], is supporting the project.” - Private sector representative.

The absence of the private sector in this and other community development initiatives is puzzling, especially giving the government incentives for private sector involvement. The companies are aware of the opportunities, as the following exchange between the External Evaluator (TB) and a private sector representative indicates:

TB: Is there any support from Germany or the local or regional government that encourages private business to reach out to the community? Is there a tax incentive or some kind of encouragement for that process?

I: Yes we get a tax reduction for funding ... But it is definitely the case that there is an impact on that and there are a lot of programs that are run by the state and the federal government which encourage programs like this and often it is that we are supporting a project and money comes from a local administration or state government or whatever.

Triangulation

In terms of triangulation (and the effective partnering of public, private, and independent sectors), this analysis can provide no effective descriptions of either the process or the outcomes of such a partnership, as “partnership” in an ongoing form was not present. There was a good deal of co-operation among all three sectors, however, which will be discussed below.

Key changes

Key changes in the partnerships across time continued and deepened the connection to the community, particularly through the involvement with the Quartier Manager and Community Working Groups. Across the site visits YEPP Mannheim was also successful in involving more diverse members of the community and a greater number of local citizens, as well as a growing number of youth. A growing awareness and recognition of YEPP in the local public administration was also observed. These can all rightly be regarded as successes, particularly given the complexities of the neighbourhood environment and the bureaucratic system as discussed above.

Challenges for YEPP Mannheim

There were several challenges that emerged from the interviews conducted for the external evaluation. The most consistent of which was that even after four years YEPP was not entirely successful at establishing its identity and profile in the community:

“I think YEPP is identified with small projects in the same area but it’s not identified with a strategy. So people see what happened with the musical. ... and it was a great success, it’s very empowering. So they see it’s a good project [but] it’s just small projects. The profile of YEPP as a strategy I would say is not very clear.” – Member of YEPP Mannheim.

As discussed above, YEPP was contained within IKUBIZ and the projects and subgroups were more widely profiled than the overall concept of YEPP itself. Indeed, in the first year of the site visits the youth we interviewed (who were not participants in YEPP but spent time in the centre that housed YEPP and its projects) had not heard of YEPP at all. There was some concern that this added level of hierarchy was counter-productive to YEPP:

“My recommendation would be to not to take an organisation who has an image to keep up [like IKUBIZ]...if it is a project of the foundation, you need to build the internal structure because one of the obstacles to the YEPP profile is the organisation in itself.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

One concrete reason for this is that YEPP as a project is complex and very difficult to explain and package, and several interviewees mentioned the need to improve the marketing of the programme:

“We need to really match the interests of the public, people are very engaged in the area and focused on developing things there but they really need to give a message to the broader public ... That is I think what we need to sharpen in the discussion. We need to find ways to go to the public and to speak about it [YEPP].” - Private sector representative.

Another challenge was how to continue to build partnerships and find external support in an economically difficult climate:

“This is a problem in Germany and in Western European countries. We work in a social and cultural area, and a lot of social institutions get financial cuts and [have] financial problems. They even cannot hold staff; they have to dismiss employees. It is sometimes difficult to convince them about our YEPP philosophy, the empowerment of young people, because they say, ‘we have our own problems, we cannot care about young people and empowerment’. Not always, but this is sometimes the problem. Not only the city administration and the city departments but also welfare organisations in general, they face these problems as well.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

Another challenge was how to continue progress in terms of the participation of the private sector. This is discussed in more detail below.

Building Cross-Sectoral Partnerships

As outlined above, YEPP Mannheim was successful in bringing public and independent sectors to the table very early in the process, and maintaining these cross-sectoral partnerships throughout the duration of the project. The standard challenge in cross-sectoral partnership building, though, is how to bridge the different working strategies of the sectors, and in this case how to include the private sector. From the perspective of overcoming these obstacles, the members of YEPP Mannheim show that they are clearly committed to:

- Approaching and welcoming representatives of the various sectors into the project.

- Engaging in a dialogue about what might and might not be needed to improve the quality of the partnership.

Still a challenge, at least as reflected in the interviews of November 2005, was:

- Incorporating the private sector in on-going partnerships.
- Structuring initiatives so that there is a more immediate sense of a YEPP identity and a feeling of teamwork across all partners.

These action points would be welcomed by many members of the project, and not just those representing the private sector.

Challenges from the policy world

Members of the municipal administration actively supported YEPP Mannheim. On the Land and federal level, there were a number of projects on similar topics (see National Policy Context in introduction for more details). Interviews with federal and Land policy makers in education, labour, immigration and integration, and the social services revealed the complexity of working partnerships and many of the comments made were similar to those from the local level.

On the policy front, partnerships between sectors, especially with the private sector, were uncommon, except in the case of the Ministry of Labour and employment training programmes. Indeed it seemed that co-operation within the public sector itself could be trying enough, particularly between administrative departments that do not have a tradition of co-ordinating services or working cross-departmentally. In Germany this is further complicated as vertical cooperation between the municipalities, the Land and the federal Ministries can be fraught. A common criticism was that the cooperation was based more on political goals and gains than working together:

“You hear often ‘this is my program and you shall not, another person or another ministry or another community, shall not get influence to my program. This is my domain’. Especially with schools and social work, they have completely different philosophies of education and of care. This is a challenge, as they are not used to working together and they have different philosophies [and]... different targets, and this is quite a difficult problem. Because we have no tradition. Other countries have long traditions of co-operation between these two sectors and we have really no tradition because we always separated the kindergarten and school...” - Representative of government.

In addition, looking simply at horizontal co-operation (*i.e.* within the federal level or Land), the complexity of the administrative structure has not facilitated partnership (for example, kindergartens are in a different Ministry than schools, youth policy is different from education, while immigrants and integration are yet another department, etc.). Even the same ministries can be geographically divided, making meetings and scheduling difficult, as the following exchange in Berlin between the External Evaluator (TB) and the Interviewee (I) demonstrates:

TB: *I thought that (name of person) would be here as well.*

I: *Yes, but she's not available because she's in Bonn. Our ministry is divided so some of us are in Berlin and the rest are in Bonn. And I think she had another meeting somewhere else. But she asked me if you have a card or something to give her.*

The interviews revealed a real concern within the administration that the lack of willingness to partner across all the levels and ministries involved in youth and community work (Education and Labour, but also Health, Justice, Social Affairs) was negatively affecting the delivery of services, particularly for those most vulnerable. One particular example is the Federal Immigration and Integration Unit, which works with minorities and cultural diversity, but is a separate unit that is required to work with each of the Ministries rather than an integral part of the Ministries themselves. In this situation there is a delicate balancing act between co-operation on a policy level (which is theoretically required) and the German political reality (the Commissioner of the Unit is traditionally a member of the minority of the government coalition [at the time of the interview, the Green Party]).

“It depends [on] not only what is happening in the government but also ... what is happening within the coalition, as the commissioner is also a member of parliament. So on the one hand we are dealing with the administration and on the other hand we are dealing with the colleagues in the government, so it's a political job. So whether you are successful or not it's quite hard.” - Member of federal administration.

Lessons Learned

A number of lessons learned can be gathered from the work of YEPP Mannheim in cross-sectoral partnership building, including the importance of:

- Involving all sectors early in the process to instil a sense of ownership and active participation.
- Communicating what YEPP is in a concrete way to prospective partners in all sectors (and youth).
- Establishing shared terms and definitions so that clear communication can take place.
- Respecting the working styles of the different sectors and willingness to be open to all prospective partners.
- Understanding barriers to co-operation within a sector (*e.g.* public administration) and getting a commitment to action from leaders who can support the process of change.

The bottom line is always the willingness to see the benefits of partnership and cooperation:

“I think co-operations are necessary, just to make it clear how things work and that they work together and that there's a red line from childhood to the elderly. We need this continuity. It makes it more efficient and transparent.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

Community Empowerment

Community empowerment can be thought of as being comprised of several facets, including:

- Identity (which here we broaden to include social/environmental/and health identity).
- Citizenship (in political/legal terms).
- Economics of/and education (school-work).
- Cultural (music, arts, etc.).

The Process

As already mentioned, community empowerment and active community participation were key goals for YEPP Mannheim and remained so throughout the lifespan of the project. Community projects in Neckarstadt-West operate in a complex community dynamic, as the neighbourhood is a working class district with high unemployment and a large percentage of immigrants (twice as high as the city average: in 2005 the “foreign population” for Mannheim was 20%, while for Neckarstadt-West it was 41%). As most of the immigrants in Neckarstadt-West come from predominantly Muslim countries (*e.g.* Turkey), issues of religion and integration as well as second language learning all figure on the community and political landscape.

Key changes

The kinds of projects the YEPP Mannheim is currently working on cut across all the four dimensions of community empowerment as listed above, and the strongest change observed across the site visits was the development of community participation and the evolution of certain projects, such as the Leseladen, a library and drop-in centre for Turkish mothers and their children. It is extremely successful and has greatly expanded operations and almost outgrown its physical space. The city has offered limited funding for the project and is becoming more involved, a solid choice given the rave reviews it receives:

“[I am enjoying it] very, very much. I learned many things, I learned especially to be with my children, and to play with them, to read with them. And before I felt I didn't have time, and now I realise that I have time after all. And also especially to be with people and to respect people, and I respect myself.” - Independent sector representative.

Other community projects which are related to economics and education include the Rucksack programme, aimed at children and immigrant mothers. The project provides materials and support to help the children and mothers learn to speak German, help the mothers become more familiar with the school environment, and teach mothers to spend time reading books and playing with their children one on one, something previously lacking in many of their relationships. At the time of the site visits the programme was operating in four kindergartens of the area and has since entered two elementary schools. Other areas of the city and region had also expressed interest in this highly useful programme:

“With support, information, and feedback from kindergartens and the schools, the mothers show up more often there to ask questions and participate more and integrate themselves. It's important that Turkish mothers see the variety of Turkish cultures [conservative and liberal]” - Independent sector representative.

The community has also been engaged in a number of other activities related to the dimension of identity (which here we broaden to include social/environmental/and health identity), mostly through the auspices of the Quartier Manager. The community working groups (*e.g.* Education, which is very strong and organised by the YEPP coordinator) that operate under this banner have, to some extent, become the support groups for various aspects of the YEPP project. These groups include representatives from both public and independent sectors and have been an important and much appreciated source of connection and communication between and amongst members:

“There is an identity. The identification is growing and you are very impressed with what happens everywhere. It's great. The musical was wonderful and I like the idea to give the persons their speech and their chances to express.” - School representative.

The cultural dimension was also strong with a number of projects focussed on music, the arts, and especially video (see the Youth Empowerment section for more discussion). A Community Theatre project started in June 2006 and YEPP Mannheim participated in the trans-national Community TV project, along with representatives of most of the other YEPP sites. The youth members of the YEPP Mannheim team

created a portrait of an artist that was screened at the 2006 YEPP-ALL conference, to very positive reviews.

Challenges for YEPP Mannheim

The main challenge for YEPP Mannheim is how to continue to build on what's been accomplished and how best to reach out to those most at-risk, such as immigrant mothers and their children:

“My hope is now for the future, that Rucksack will continue and become bigger and be widened also to other minorities, like the Spanish and the Italian because so far it's only the Turkish children and mothers that are involved. And that's something that also the others have a need for.” - Community member.

The number of successful projects already implemented and the support demonstrated by the municipality for those projects highlights the need for such initiatives. At the same time, however, the municipal department responsible for Immigration and Integration has been significantly reduced, something that will surely make the role of YEPP and similar community organisations that much more important:

“We were once a team of 8-9 persons, and now I'm alone finally with a secretary and a guy for the administrative stuff so I can't deal with all the fields we dealt with before.” - Member of local administration.

Another challenge for YEPP Mannheim is to work on establishing its identity and profile in the community. Particular projects, such as Leseladen and Rucksak, are well-known, but YEPP itself less so. Part of this is the role of its host IKUBIZ, which is quite well known in the area, and part of this is the difficulty in explaining the YEPP concept (see Partnerships section for further discussion).

Given these complexities and given the amount of community work being done in the area, there is a long tradition of competition for relatively scarce resources – a tradition that is at times difficult to overcome, especially in times of budget cuts and financial shortfalls. Still, there has been considerable progress and there seems to be a greater willingness to work together. Indeed, one challenge will be how to harness the amount of activity, good will, and programmes that are taking place, and how best to move forward in a coordinated manner:

“We need to have coordination between the actors who are working for the community in order to avoid repetition and parallel projects. And for that we need constant communication.” – Member of independent sector.

Challenges from the policy world

Interviews with national policy makers in education, labour, and social affairs revealed that one of the biggest concerns was how best to integrate new and longstanding immigrant populations in Germany into the community. One immediate dilemma was the role of the Federal Immigration and Integration Unit, a unit concerned with the legal processes and laws related to foreigners and immigrants in Germany. They are charged with improving integration policy but do not deal with programs and lack funds to start programs in the field of integration policy. As previously discussed (see Partnerships section) they are neither a central Ministry nor contained within a particular Ministry, and so have very little power to enforce their positions. This would seem to reinforce the structural fragmentation:

“Our role is more to advise to give ideas and sometimes to struggle with other ministries or institutions about what is the right way... There is a co-operation with those institutions but they are not part of our structure so we can't order them to do anything. We are a nuisance to them [the Ministries]”

In addition to this general concern, there was a fear that those measures that were being taken were not particularly realistic. In order to aid integration, for example, starting in 2005 all immigrants were required to take 600 hours of German language courses and 30 hours of orientation in German society, at the end of which they would have to pass an exam demonstrating a certain proficiency in German in order to receive their residency papers. Yet the programme was radically under-funded for the numbers it was expected to serve (the 250 000 newcomers each year as well as a large number of longer-term residents who had never had access to these courses). This was in stark contrast to the amount of funded provided for language training for “German” immigrants (e.g. ethnic Germans who emigrated to Russia several generations ago and are now in the process of returning- they have German citizenship but many do not speak German at all).

As a country that traditionally did not see itself as a country of immigration (with immigrants who would come to live, and to stay), Germany has faced a series of challenges to their assumptions of their country and their nationality, and there is more change to come:

“I think that slowly there is an understanding that immigration changes the face of the society. There is more diversity, there is more pluralism. If you look in the future you have to answer this question, ‘not only how can I integrate a foreigner, an immigrant into Germany, but how much will German society [and react] to more diversity to more pluralism?’ These are not only debates in those institutions, the government integration policy makers, but [also in] the main stream.”

In addition, as already discussed in the Partnerships section, policy makers were concerned with the best way to coordinate vertically across the various levels of governance structures, with the policy-makers being aware of the difficulty in coordination both in terms of the quality of the service delivered to the community and the difficulty of monitoring and evaluating initiatives to ensure maximum effectiveness.

Lessons Learned

A number of lessons learned can be gleaned from the work of YEPP Mannheim in community development and empowerment, including the importance of:

- Encouraging traditionally less-active members of the community to participate.
- Encouraging the participation of youth in community planning discussions.
- Bringing together all sectors in an honest appraisal of what works and what does not work, and the best strategy to move forward.
- Having clear agreement on responsibilities for community development initiatives and expectations for action.
- Devising realistic community development plans that are holistic in nature and include long-term strategies (i.e. beyond the length of the current policy mandate) for community renewal.

The last point also implies having the political courage to wait for longer-term solutions and avoid the temptation of the “quick-fix” (and the corresponding willingness on the part of the community to wait for longer-term results).

Youth Empowerment

A central concern for Mannheim was the difficulty of bringing the youth into projects and programmes and reaching those most at-risk, especially in the diverse environment of Neckarstadt-West.

The diversity of languages, of cultures, of expectations and hopes made it difficult to reach out to the youth of the neighbourhood, and there were still clear divides between communities of “immigrants” (many of whom were born there) and “Germans” which underscored the politics, projects, and planning.

Despite this, there is a long history of youth work in the area and a number of organisations and partners willing to work together. Yet as with most youth work, despite the good will expressed in interviews with local administration, there have been cuts to funding for even basic services, further pressing the independent and private sectors:

“I would like to mention that in the last two or three years, the budgetary situation of the city of Mannheim is getting worse and worse and this is the background of our work. ... everybody would like to co-operate, but we have little resources for co-operation.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

The Process

YEPP Mannheim challenged itself to involve youth and reach out to those most at risk, but the process was a slow one. As a result, during the 2004 site visit, the youth we spoke to had not heard about YEPP (see Challenges for YEPP section in Cross-sectoral Partnerships). Youth participation increased in 2005 as the various projects really came together and had a higher profile in the community (see below for examples of successful projects).

Community empowerment and youth empowerment are of course inextricably linked such that any programme focussed on youth will invariably have an impact on the broader community in which they reside. However it is possible to identify a number of key changes in youth empowerment across the timing of the two site visits.

Key changes

YEPP Mannheim has had a number of concrete outcomes from their work, particularly the success of the musical Neckarstadt-West Side Story, which was performed at the community theatre and received rave reviews. A new play is currently under development by the same artistic director and the overall sentiment is one of deep pride:

“Neckarstadt-West Side Story ... was a great success, that two young people from Neckarstadt west will work with professionals from the national theatre. It’s very empowering. So they see it’s a good project and there’s a movie around that project!” - Member of independent sector.

Another key change has been a perceived change in attitude as a result of these kinds of programmes and initiatives. By bringing the youth into the community and creating bridges for them, they have been able to be open to new ideas and try new things:

“Projects which are more long-term, for instance, the films project [Community TV], then you feel, you sense this empowerment by this long-term observation, how the youth behave. They take a camera and they go to the street and they talk to people. For this process, before the project, they wouldn’t have done it, they felt shy. But professional filmmakers work with them and they make them feel empowered.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

The changes were not only for the youth, as community members working with the youth expressed their enjoyment of participating in the youth projects:

“I’ve never worked with youth before and ... the relationships that have developed in the course of the project [were interesting] because usually when you work with professionals it’s a professional relationship and not a personal relationship, but ... for the youth the personal

relationship is important. And for her way of working it was very exciting, very ... instructive.” – Member of independent sector.

In addition a key change was in the number of youth who had participated in a formal international YEPP project. This number increased over the course of the site visits but increasing youth participation was still a priority for the coordinators (see challenges section below).

Challenges for YEPP Mannheim

The greatest challenge facing YEPP Mannheim in terms of youth empowerment was to continue to increase the participation of the youth, especially to continue to reach the most at-risk youth. As discussed above, the cultural and linguistic diversity of the area makes it much more difficult to bring everyone together. The site made great progress in including and encouraging youth participation, but they also wanted to do more. They were self-critical in that the youth that participated in the projects, such as the musical, were not the most at-risk:

“In some ways it was also a failure because the youth involved were not from the target group [they were not disadvantaged]. It was difficult to find them because they tended not to be interested in the project.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

Another challenge was the challenge of all projects once the initial period of excitement wears off: how does one sustain interest across time? What is the best way to motivate and sustain these kinds of projects, and what is the best way to keep the youth involved? To this end YEPP Mannheim had a number of plans to deepen and broaden youth participation, for example by creating a sports programme and by developing the existing Youth Working Group (working out of the Quartier Manager’s project). Yet, as with all initiatives, the chief difficulty was not coming up with the ideas, but having the time to realise them:

“We want to create a sports programme and fundraise for sports instructors. But we do not have time to plan.” - member of YEPP Mannheim.

Challenges from the policy world

The prime challenge as perceived by national policy makers dealing with youth policy was how best to provide integrated services across ministries. Youth work, cutting as it does across education, employment, health, justice, welfare, housing, and various other ministerial departments, poses a particular challenge for co-ordinated policy-making. The policy-makers that we spoke to expressed concern about the lack of co-ordination, and in particular focussed on the closed role of traditional school:

“You can see it like this, and what values are in the society and how to be social and what does it mean, and the traditional understanding of schools is that there are teachers and they are qualified and educated to teach education stuff, wisdom, knowledge. But I think the schools of tomorrow have to be more open for raising our kids. But there is deep resistance.” - Member of Land administration.

However, the rigidity of certain traditions in schooling was reported to be slowly changing to reflect the times:

“...but finally what we need to change is the structure...the schools get more responsibility for what they can offer as services to foster their profile and this is something new. There are enough people who think that there’s going to be a development ... and that schools will be fully responsible for what they are teaching in the future and I think that this could be an interesting perspective. And it also shows me in the Land administration that there are new ways of thinking and of questioning how we’ve done it decades before so there’s a process, but it’s slow.” - Member of local administration.

As previously mentioned, key ministries were not reported to feature effective working relationships, seen as detrimental to the cause of youth empowerment:

“And because I’m alone, I thought education is something, the education sector but as far as I can see the co-operation between the education sector and the youth welfare in the administration does not work too well. I don’t know if there is any co-operation so I think there should be a position which fosters this, which organises this. I think it’s not enough what we have so far.” - Member of local administration.

In addition, there was a real concern with how best to integrate the immigrant youth into the German context. One prime concern for children was to ensure that they learn to speak German well, and early. As the school system is currently set up so that children can begin attending school in Grade One (as late as age 7), there was a major initiative to encourage immigrant mothers and parents to enrol their children in kindergarten so that they might start learning German as early as possible:

“We have many people in our kindergartens, but not the children of immigrants. Those children tend to come to school only later, in first grade when they have to, not at 3 or 4. But this is when they most need it.” - Member of Land administration.

An additional concern, as already explained in the community development and cross-sectoral partnerships sections, was the best way to co-ordinate vertically across the various levels of governance structures. One of the most notable examples was that of the Integration and Immigration Units, functioning independently of the Ministries and void of sufficient funding. The complexity of the federated system with de-centralised power and budgeting going to the regions and cities results in several extra layers of required coordination, which policy-makers were aware of this although they were not sure of the best way to address it:

“With all the other departments [except Education] ... it’s much easier to work together because there isn’t this competition between the schools and the kindergartens. We’ve had very, very difficult time... basically it was impossible to bring the two together, schools and kindergarten. For example, the training for educational staff in kindergartens is also within the department of youth and all that is also in the Land level so it’s very difficult.” – Member of municipal administration.

Lessons Learned

A number of lessons learned can be gleaned from the work of YEPP Mannheim in youth empowerment, including the importance of:

- Involvement of youth in the very earliest stages of project development, especially those most disadvantaged.
- Encouraging less active youth to bring their voice to the table and let themselves be heard.
- Getting the local administration to acknowledge the voice of youth in designing and delivering youth-related projects.

Trans-national Cooperation

As explained in the section on Reporting, in this report trans-national co-operation will be touched on only briefly, as the final cross-cutting report in this series of case studies will focus more thoroughly on the trans-national co-operation of YEPP.

YEPP Mannheim was initially involved in international YEPP activities but chose to pull out of transnational cooperation for part of 2003. Youth from YEPP Mannheim participated in the trans-national workshops, “Moving images, local realities” in Turin (September 2004), and “pARTicipation in the picture” in Antwerp (October 2004), as well as subsequent workshops. YEPP Mannheim did not host any YEPP youth workshops, but did host a capacity building workshop for local researchers in November 2005, “Evaluation and Organisational Learning in the Context of YEPP’s Future Development.”, as well as attending both YEPP-ALL conferences.

Successes

For the youth

The youth who participated in trans-national YEPP workshops found the experience to be enriching and motivating:

“It did help with motivation of the people themselves, that there were others who had difficulties of other kinds, but tried the same or something similar. That was attractive for the young people to go out.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

One local co-ordinator commented on the experience of Mannheim youth in the “Moving images, local realities” workshop in Turin after interviewing participants from Mannheim:

“[It was] a great event and a big success for YEPP and the youngsters.”

In addition, the Mannheim short film focussing on a particular neighbourhood artist that was screened at the YEPP-ALL conference in 2006 was highly successful and YEPP Mannheim is very active in the international Community TV project (see Community Development section).

For the community

The information about other YEPP sites gave the Mannheim community a comparative perspective on its own problems:

“In Finland they have no problem with activities for the youth. They said if there are ten people who say, ‘we want to dance’, then there’s someone who organises that they have a teacher, and if they say, ‘we want to skate’, then there is somebody who makes it possible. But they have other problems. In Dublin, there aren’t any activities.” – Member of YEPP Mannheim.

For YEPP

The trans-national aspect of YEPP also engendered a new kind of thinking and co-operation among the coordinators and the foundations:

“The other thing that comes out on the international level is that it’s alright to look at the nations on the national level but it has to be the international idea to create models which meet the needs of the locals. The whole idea of think globally act locally, it’s just right. And something which could come out [of it] would be to make an instrument out of it but how to do that, which means we have to think globally because we have to do it. Particularly with foundations we have to do it. We are seeing the same experiences in other places so it’s a strong point.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

Challenges

Although international co-operation was perceived to be a good idea in general, the co-ordinators expressed frustration about its extent and nature, particularly in the beginning, and wished to determine where such co-operation makes sense and where it was a burden or hindrance:

“I had just started and the first major activity for me was to organise the visit of the steering committee, and two days later the local coordinators from the other cities came to Mannheim, and two months later [OECD evaluation pilot study] came to Mannheim. ... but you need something to evaluate before the evaluator comes to Mannheim. So then we decided that we have to concentrate on the local activities.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

However, they might also have wondered about whether they had understood it!

Another challenge was related to outreach and inclusion and how best to reach the most vulnerable. In the beginning, when contact with the youth was limited, there was not a systematic way to access the youth and give them all an equal opportunity to participate. Even later, when there was more contact with youth, these were not the most disadvantaged youth, which was perceived by the YEPP team as a challenge to overcome. One observation was that international meetings, requiring as they do some facility in English, systematically select the youth with most access to English or English TV, which are often not the most disadvantaged.

On an administrative level, the trans-national aspect of YEPP was difficult to communicate to national or local governments:

“We should have presented ourselves as group of international foundations. So going to the mayors and saying we all together want to do that not just the German foundation from the German city. We all would have been taken more seriously if we had presented ourselves with a clear model.” – Member of YEPP Mannheim.

One of the main challenges for YEPP Mannheim was increasing the positive trans-national elements of the program. In the early stages of the program, the local co-ordinators focused on local projects rather than on developing international relationships. Later, however, YEPP members wished that more extensive international communication and experience had been available and had been emphasised:

“I’m not convinced that you learn much when you are in a city for one day.... I think learning as capacity building was a little bit neglected.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

In addition, YEPP members felt that the trans-national element would have been more useful and effective if more information about other sites reached the local participants as well as the local YEPP administration. Members expressed a desire to send more co-operation partners to visit different sites and develop the idea of exchange, not only between coordinators, but also between people working at the practical and local level:

“It is always important to know how YEPP works in other countries, not to have a narrow-minded view and to know the questions that are being asked.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

This complexity afforded YEPP participants with the opportunity to gain perspective on their experiences at the local level and to exchange ideas with other sites. However, its novelty made the overall YEPP endeavour both inspiring and confusing:

“Nobody has dreamt that this kind of project could have an impact on an international level – conceptualising ideas. We all have tried to justify this project by arguing that everything is very practical, that it made a difference on the ground. [But] there was no clear policy orientation.” – Independent sector representative.

Sustainability

One of the key concerns of YEPP as a whole is the on-going sustainability of the programme and the projects it supported. The youth exchanges, for example, were seen as very valuable in and of themselves, but could be even more valuable if the international connections could be maintained outside of the exchange process:

“We want YEPP to strengthen the youth participation but this is still not done because they reached a lot of young people through the projects but the projects were only periodic with a beginning and end. There was a high participation and I think it brought a lot for the young people, but it’s not sustainable.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

One strategy to sustain the initiative and keep the process going is proposed by the foundation for 2007. In 2007 Mannheim will have a Jubilee celebration and YEPP will be showcased as an innovative and dynamic community initiative, which is hoped to both raise the profile of the project and possibly generate other sources of funding:

“At least until the end of 2007. So that we reach the point when there will be the occasion to sell it to the public saying if it’s part of the jubilee and will be taken proudly then I think we have a new base of how to develop it further.” - Member of YEPP Mannheim.

Recommendations for YEPP II

For future versions of YEPP, the lessons learned as highlighted in each section above should serve as useful guides for future action. In addition, however, two unresolved challenges stand out as requiring particular attention:

- Working on a long-term project raises important implications for partnership agreements, including continuity, shared goals, and expected outcomes. The various partners may find it difficult to continue supporting YEPP if expected outcomes are not delivered, and YEPP itself may have difficulties delivering if they do not agree with the original model or are unable to maintain continuity in staff and projects. This could have long-term repercussions for the project site and participants.
- As with almost every other site, the continuing troubled perception of why the research is done and who it benefits was not resolved satisfactorily in YEPP Mannheim and is something that should be addressed in future variations of the YEPP project if the research component is to remain essential to the model.

Conclusions

Any evaluation of YEPP Mannheim is complicated by several factors. YEPP is a research and development programme with different products to stimulate youth and community empowerment and partnership according to the local conditions. As such it is difficult to evaluate, especially given the complexity of the variables under scrutiny.

In addition, its insertion into a vibrant community means that YEPP Mannheim did not start with a blank slate, but rather entered into ongoing networks, relationships, and projects. Projects that were already started were continued under YEPP, projects that were invented elsewhere were adapted for local purposes, and groups allied themselves with the programme and operated in parallel without considering themselves to be an output of YEPP. There is thus a series of non-causal relationships between products and projects which makes it harder to measure change.

Despite this, YEPP Mannheim has, in conjunction with its partner the Quartier Manager, developed a series of interesting and vibrant initiatives that are changing the face of the community. Concrete initiatives such as bringing immigrant mothers into the schools and kindergartens (Rucksak) and creating a space for mothers and children to read and interact (Leseladen) have to some extent broken down the barriers that existed in the neighbourhood, especially between immigrants and “Germans”. There is still some way to

go, but it is clear that there have been concrete successes that have made a difference in the lives of the people.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

EXTERNAL EVALUATION CASE STUDY*

MIRAFIORI, TURIN, ITALY

PARELLA, TURIN, ITALY

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Aims and purpose

This report was commissioned by the Steering Committee of the Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme (YEPP) with the following purposes:

- To have a systematic, independent account of the development, perceived quality, and impact of the YEPP site in Turin, Italy, including policy impact on local and national levels.
- To indicate lessons learned in the form of recommendations for future phases of YEPP in order to improve and extend the YEPP experience.

The aim is that this report, in conjunction with the Case Study of the Internal Evaluation, will contribute to a stock-taking of YEPP Turin. Ultimately, it is hoped that the results will be used both internally, for discussion within the YEPP Turin Team and Support Groups, and externally for discussion by other YEPP sites.

This is the fifth in a series of case studies. The series will consist of separate case studies for each of the participating YEPP sites and an overarching trans-national report. This particular case study is distinct from the others in the series in that it combines the reports of two separate but related YEPP sites: Mirafiori, Turin and Parella, Turin. This report of the external evaluation will be teamed with a matching report of the internal evaluation, with the end goal of providing a thorough yet concise look at the development, functioning, and outcomes of YEPP from 2002-2005.

Methodology

This report is based on semi-structured interviews with:

- The YEPP Turin team.²⁸
 - Representatives of the funding foundation (Compagnia di San Paolo).
 - YEPP Mirafiori Co-ordinator (both).
 - YEPP Parella Co-ordinator.
 - YEPP Turin Researcher.
- Members of the YEPP Support Groups.
- Youth participants in YEPP.
- Community members involved in or with experience of YEPP, including local decision-makers.
- National and regional stakeholders working in related areas (*i.e.* social inclusion, youth, community development, partnerships).
- Discussion with representatives of the YEPP Berlin Programme Team.

²⁸. The label YEPP Turin encompasses both Mirafiori and Parella; for specific references the labels YEPP Mirafiori and YEPP Parella will be used.

- Observations of the OECD/CERI external evaluation review team.²⁹

In total, more than 79 individuals representing local, regional, and national levels as well as public, private, and independent sectors were interviewed during two site visits (of both Mirafiori and Parella, with the first in 2004 and the second in 2005; see Annex 3 for a complete list of individuals interviewed). Interviews followed a semi-structured format that probed experiences of Context, Input, Process, and Product on the topics of youth empowerment, community development, and partnerships. The experiences and the interviews were divided along sectors (public/private/independent) and levels (mandating, strategic, operational, and field). The interviews were conducted individually unless the interviewee expressed a great preference for another partner (this was sometimes the case for the youth, for example). Interviewees were given the choice of conducting the interview in English, French, or their native language. Interviews were then transcribed and coded using the qualitative coding software N7. Annex 2 contains a more detailed description of the interview process, the methodology used, and data collection and analysis.

Reporting

This report reflects the findings of the external evaluation regarding the development, process, and outcomes of YEPP Turin. It is organised by main themes, looking at partnership building, youth empowerment, and community development in turn. The experience of trans-national co-operation will also be touched on, but briefly, as the final cross-cutting report in this series of case studies will focus more thoroughly on the trans-national co-operation of YEPP.

As one of the goals of this evaluation was to reflect on the processes of change, central interviewees were interviewed on both site visits, during the second of which they were explicitly prompted to reflect on changes since the previous year and plans for the future. Sustainability issues and lessons learned are also reflected.

It is important to emphasise that the bulk of the observations of this evaluation come from the local stakeholders, including youth, themselves, and are not opinions imposed from the outside. Some contributions are quoted verbatim when they seem particularly insightful or when a comment sums up the majority view on a particular topic.

Context

As with all YEPP sites, YEPP Turin³⁰ was designed to have a local support group (LSG) comprising local stakeholders, youth and a representative from the funding foundation, supported by a local coordinator and researcher. YEPP Turin is unique among the YEPP sites in that it is composed of two YEPP sites: Mirafiori and Parella, which shared the same foundation representative and researcher.

YEPP Mirafiori had a stable and steady presence of project members, with the same foundation representative, researcher, and many of the same members of the LSG throughout the duration of the project. There was one small change of personnel: the initial coordinator was replaced in 2003, with the new coordinator remaining until the end of the project. This personnel change affected the project

²⁹. For the site visits this team was composed of an OECD/CERI researcher (Tracey Burns) and a local Inland Researcher, who commented on relevant national policy and local context, aided in organising the visit, and provided translation as necessary. Inland Researcher 2004: Marcella Deluca; 2005: Giovanni Di Dio. Peter Evans of the OECD Secretariat, although not present at site visits, was also a member of the team.

³⁰ Yepp Turin began later in the project after presentations at the EFC AGAs. The two sites were selected by the foundation together with the City Youth Policy Department.

somewhat as a function of working style and goals, which will be outlined below- on the whole, however, YEPP Mirafiori experienced stable personnel and support group membership which helped encourage steady and continuous development.

YEPP Parella had a stable and steady presence of project members, with the same foundation representative, coordinator, researcher, and many of the same members of the LSG Group throughout the duration of the project. This was the only YEPP site that experienced little or no change in core YEPP personnel. Despite this continuity however, the development of the site was discontinuous in many respects, including various gaps in planning and action and with a slow attrition of LSG members (see below for more detail).

Local implementation of YEPP

Co-ordinators and support groups

Mirafiori

YEPP Mirafiori had two coordinators: the initial one was only present for the very beginning of the project (2002-2003), while the subsequent one remained for the duration (2003-2005). This report will concentrate almost exclusively on the work of the second coordinator, as he was the prime force and very influential in the development and growth of the site. Through his strong work (supported by other members of the YEPP team, the local stakeholders and the foundation) YEPP Mirafiori was very active on the project level and developed a core support group that remained strong over time.

The process was not without challenges, however. The members of the LSG were experts in their domains and brought a great deal of added skills to the table, which eventually developed into a strong and cohesive support group. However the initial process was interesting in that it took time to develop the trust and ties of the network, and time to learn to work together. The first site visit revealed a number of misgivings about the process:

“We have meetings all the time, it seems like every day, and I do not have this time. I think we should have less meetings so that everyone can come each time. Because otherwise we repeat ourselves and we don’t move on anything.” - Member of support group (independent sector).

Yet by the time of the second site visit the LSG of YEPP Mirafiori had transformed into a strong unit. Part of the reason for this was the added history and gentle development of the group identity, and part of it was a result of explicit group building procedures.

“There was a problem with there being many small meetings a week, it used to be like that, so we decided to make a full day where we locked ourselves up together for the day and decided what the priorities were, which was really useful for improving the quality of the network, because people are more relaxed.” - Member of YEPP-Turin.³¹

The LSG of Mirafiori was, by the time of the second site visit, a strong unified force that had not only produced a strong operational plan but was moving forward strategically to further enhance their work through essential connections, grant applications, and the like. In this sense the work of the coordinator in guiding the group and the work of the group itself was exemplary among YEPP sites.

³¹. Attributions are provided if it is not clear from the context which group is speaking. Attributions are intended to be both specific enough to guide the reader and general enough to preserve the identity of the individual speaker. In this case “member of YEPP Turin” refers to the core group comprised of the Local Coordinator(s) of both Mirafiori and Parella, the Foundation representative, and Local Researcher.

Parella

YEPP Parella was a site that was fortunate in having a coordinator with very close links to the city administration (he worked part-time for the City Youth Policy) across the duration of the project. This expertise in youth issues as well as the connection and knowledge of the political process was extremely useful for the development of the site.

However, keeping interest sustained over time and keeping the large support group involved in the process was difficult, especially as the various support group members were a heterogeneous group:

“In the Parella group, we have a big problem in that the majority of the group in Parella are not stakeholders, because for example there are some who live there and some who only work there, and it is a problem, because there is no sense of community of the place.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

There was also a fair amount of change over time, from a broad and engaged group at the time of the first site visit to a smaller, more focused group at the second site visit. During the second site visit the youth had become more active and more central in the running of the LSG as well:

“That is the first thing that changed in the group. They found people inside the group who wanted to take on responsibilities, and they did it themselves.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

The evolving nature of the LSG was met with mixed reactions. Some of its members felt more distant from the process and felt that they no longer had a voice. Others were worried about the short-term nature of the planning and the lack of long range strategic vision or skills:

“We have many projects, and I think they are strong projects, projects that will make a difference. But we do not have a plan for next year, or the year after. And we do not have anyone who wants to sit down and think about getting other sources of money to support ourselves.” – Independent sector representative.

Foundation

In terms of foundation support, both YEPP Turin sites had the exceptional good luck to have both serious financial support and strong personal support from the dedicated and positive foundation representative. In addition to hands-on cooperation and a good deal of energy given to the project, the foundation also took the initiative to sponsor other events to bring the team together and build their capacity, such as the Can-Do workshop held in early 2005 (which brought together members of both YEPP sites to work with a “Toolkit for Active Citizenship,” a community development training approach developed by the Scarman Trust³²), a gender awareness workshop for the two sites, and an early series of training meetings on the community development approach in general. These initiatives were welcomed by the team and extremely positively perceived:

“I found very useful something we did afterwards which is not in the obligatory part of the YEPP, which was the training we did altogether here with the team in Torino, I thought that was very useful, because we had the opportunity to talk the same language among us.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

Research

The particularly strong skills of the researcher, combined with her length of tenure, allowed for a greater integration of research in this site compared to almost all other YEPP sites. As the only researcher across the span of the project, she was able to capitalise on the stability of the support groups and the

³². <http://www.thescarmantrust.org/hq/cando.htm>

support of the foundation representative to successfully complete the requirements of the YEPP model. This was also aided by having sufficient funding to take the time to do the tasks required and produce all the reports. In this sense YEPP Turin was the most successful of YEPP sites at integrating the research component of YEPP.

Similarly to the other YEPP sites however, the researcher struggled with how best to be the “critical friend” required by the YEPP model and how best to incorporate research in a community project so that it would be appreciated. Working with the site and impressing on them the importance of the research was initially difficult, especially in a climate where evaluation was not a standard practice of community development projects:

“I don’t know if my role or way of working has changed or the awareness about evaluation has changed – in the beginning it was difficult for the groups to understand what this model of evaluation is. Now things are changing and people are becoming more aware that evaluation is a tool, and that they can use it.”

One continuing difficulty was that the language of research is not generally immediately accessible to a diverse audience, and the requirements of the YEPP model were not easily digestible by the community:

“Things are changing, but I would say something I complained of from the beginning, is that there is too much paper, and no-one reads them [the reports]. We should invest more in creating consumable things, graphics, only three pages, multimedia maybe, which is more entertaining and easier to read. I doubt anyone ever reads the fifty page description of things in formal Italian, maybe only the circle of YEPP.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

Summary of the local implementation of YEPP

YEPP Turin (Mirafiori and Parella) are in many senses the most accurately realised versions of the YEPP model across all sites. This appears to be in large part due to the happy combination of a strong partnership in the YEPP team (foundation, coordinators, and researcher), excellent individual capacities of each of these members, and sufficient financial support that permitted the development of both the research and project components of the model. Stability in personnel (only one change very early on across the entire team) was also a benefit to the process. Unlike some of the earliest sites, there was a deliberate attempt in YEPP Turin to implement the YEPP model faithfully:

“...We try to implement the model of the project locally. In Turin we tended to follow all the rules and what we understood was very important in the project, and we were prepared to pay to find the local coordinators, the local researcher and for the local actions, for all the crew, for the project to go on and develop in the right direction, whereas I know in other cities this is more difficult.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

Specifically, YEPP Turin was marked by:

- Strengths:
 - Strong local coordinators.
 - Successful creation of local support groups (with active youth participation).
 - Strong research component.
 - Active participation of foundation.
- Weaknesses:

- Difficulties in involving youth in the initial stages.
- Difficulties in involving the private sector.

In addition, the sites had particular strengths:

- YEPP Mirafiori: Strong development and evolution of support group, including measures for sustainability.
- YEPP Parella: very active youth participation; however they had difficulties in sustaining the involvement of the entire support group over time.

Key Themes of YEPP

In evaluating YEPP Turin, it is important to remember that YEPP has a strong process element as well as different types of outcomes. The process cycle cannot be fully captured by an EE, but is described in detail in the IE. This section therefore, focuses on the main outcomes pertaining to cross-sectoral partnerships, youth empowerment, and community empowerment.

This section looks at each of these variables in turn, focussing on the process, the products (in terms of key changes and challenges), and lessons learned for the future. Where appropriate, the context of national policy and comments of national stake-holders are integrated into the analysis.

Development of Cross-Sectoral Partnerships

The Process

The initial support group of YEPP Mirafiori included members of the public sector, including representatives of the local district, teachers, the local library, and members of the independent sector. In YEPP Parella, the initial support group comprised members of the public sector, including representatives of the local administration, the social services and members of the independent sector. The private sector was difficult to involve in both sites for a number of reasons, some practical:

“They [shopkeepers] couldn’t come when ... we had the usual meeting because their shops were open, we tried to agree with the group to make it later but, the people who were working in the office did not want to stay till nine at night.” – Member of YEPP Turin.

One of the most difficult aspects in bringing people together is demonstrating the benefits of joining the partnership and becoming involved. In this sense the project gains momentum as it goes along, as it acquires tangible results and concrete outcomes that can then be used to explain the project to prospective partners.

This section will look at the process of building partnerships by focussing on selected elements of partnerships, including:

- Quality of co-operation (among partners).
- Communication and networking.
- Co-operation between sectors.
- Triangulation (*i.e.* the effective combination of public, private, and independent sectors).

Quality of co-operation

Bringing together partners from different sectors to work together can be a difficult process. In order to develop partnerships of any kind, trust is required, and this was slowly being built. For example, after a difficult start in YEPP Mirafiori with the local District administration (primarily due to one reluctant personality), the situation improved by the time of the second site visit:

“We don’t have a bad relationship, still [name] is not a friend, but we manage to work together. And the other people are very supportive.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

In addition to trust, partnerships require shared goals and complementary skills that can be combined; furthermore, there needs to be an understanding that by pooling resources you can achieve more than working alone. But in order to successfully work together, there needs to be a willingness to partner, and old habits were at times difficult to break. For example, YEPP Parella, working as it did very closely with the school, initially reported challenges in that schools in Italy were traditionally considered their own little kingdoms, in a sense. (Interestingly, this observation was also mentioned in every other YEPP site, irrespective of country):

“There are a lot of complications and difficulties because it’s not easy in Italy to work with the schools, for a long time schools were not open to extra-curricular activity – they didn’t deal with the outside. They are very closed, they are a reference for themselves only. That is the Italian situation, so with the youth we are putting together the school, the teachers, the students, and ... that is a big change.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

The third, most important component named by the interviewees was realistic expectations and an understanding of the time and effort required to bring a partnership and a project together:

“You know, we meet every week, and I still am not sure we are coming together. It is getting better, and we know each other more, but it takes time. It really takes time.” - Member of public sector.

Yet in some cases, willingness alone was not enough—a criticism was that even though (for example) the local administration was very supportive, the level of expertise was not strong enough to contribute fruitfully to the project:

“There is not the skills in the districts, the people there coordinating are not used to doing that job, ... maybe they have strong political ideas or vision, but very often it’s naïve in a way. There are other politicians in the district who have this strength of ideas, because they are just people who are willing to help. But they hardly understand what the Incubator [a YEPP project] is.” – Member of YEPP Turin.

Communication and networking

Strong communication was considered to be a fundamental element of an effective partnership. Some of the challenges involved in establishing strong partnerships were related to imperfect communication and different interpretations of the same terms, even when everyone was speaking the same language. Different expectations of the process of partnership, if not understood by all members of the group, led to frustration and dissatisfaction with the process:

“I think we can do more. We meet, but then some people are not there, and sometimes they are there but they cannot stay, and in the end we have to go back and start from the beginning so that everyone can understand.” - Member of independent sector.

YEPP Mirafiori was unique in that its support group members were very open and clear about their strengths and weakness as communicators. Interestingly, these perceptions changed across the two site visits, allowing for a closer look at the development of networks. In the first year the partnerships were

quite young, and as a result there were many comments regarding the creation of the group and concerns of how they would all manage to work together with such diverse backgrounds and opinions. By the second site visit, these concerns had disappeared and were replaced by a very solid and coherent group that was proud of its communication and dynamic. This process was aided by the retreat taken by the Support Group (see YEPP Model section for discussion).

On the whole, the communication and networking among the YEPP Parella partners changed across the two site visits. As explained in the YEPP model section, the initial interviews revealed a broad group that was still in the process of defining itself but was fairly consistent regarding goals and expectations, and very committed to communicating within the group. By the time of the second site visit, however, this group had fractured somewhat and a central core group was very active and committed to particular projects (e.g. the meeting centre at the school) while other members were left feeling somewhat distant from the process and worried that the previous operational plan was not being effectively implemented.

In both sites, the nature of the process produced learning experiences (good and bad) along the way:

“In my opinion the festival was not that good for building real networks... there were many, many misunderstandings and problems and after the festival was finished they didn’t even say hello on the street, I mean it was very destructive in that way. So it was a good moment for showing off for, for, letting people know that YEPP was there, but not for building the network. After the festival we have been working very well on the networking, and we are doing much better.” – Independent sector representative.

The creation of a healthy network was perceived as essential for the success of the various projects:

“The bigger the network is over the territory, the more chance there is of putting in place the experiences, which gives much better access to partners who are more interested. So it’s about working on the potential of the network.” - Independent sector representative.

Co-operation between sectors

Despite a general pre-disposition to partnership, the process can be complicated by different working styles and expectations among the sectors. The two sites had similar experiences in working with the various sectors. For example, working with the public sector was often perceived as involving serious delays due to bureaucratic requirements and formalities, while working with the private sector seemed almost impossible due to the lack of interested parties.

Even within the public sector different timelines and administrative obligations can either facilitate, or create barriers, to cooperation:

“That’s the curious thing about the district, for technical and practical projects, we have one advertisement in the city, but we don’t have one in the district because they had a two month decision-making process for that so I didn’t think it worth the bother for YEPP.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

The public sector and the independent sector seemed well able to work together in Parella, and unlike Mirafiori the personal relationship with the district representative was uncomplicated and purely supportive (although unfortunately this representative was only there for the first year):

“She comes to our meetings and you know she is not paid for that, that is outside of her working time, this is something she wants to do for herself. But she also has support from higher up and that is good.” - Member of independent sector.

The private sector in Turin, as in most other YEPP sites, was difficult to involve. As previously explained part of the reason for this was practical and related to time: simply put, small shopkeepers and

members of the business community often do not live near the CHI, and do not find it convenient to attend night time meetings.

In addition, a number of interviewees expressed the opinion that there was not a culture of private sector involvement in community development in Italy, and thus it was difficult to even begin a discussion on why small business people might choose to become involved in YEPP.

“It depends how you define it - the cooperatives, the organisations, that work in the private sector, these are involved definitely, but not for example Fiat or for-profit businesses; ... an idea that came up in the meeting, that we would ask them to be sort of tutors or come for presentations, we are thinking about this link with them, but it’s still only an idea. There is not such a strong connection with the enterprises, also because of the little crisis we have here in Torino, that enterprises are closing every day, downsizing.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

Triangulation

In terms of triangulation (and the effective partnering of public, private, and independent sectors), the factors outlined above made it almost impossible to find examples of effective ongoing triangulation. In YEPP Mirafiori, the Incubator project, focusing on entrepreneurship, might be a means to successfully bring together the three sectors in the future.

Key changes

Mirafiori

YEPP Mirafiori succeeded in establishing a functional LSG and a strong network of partners across sectors. This in itself was very positive and appreciated:

“Generally speaking real partnerships are very rare of course, there are reciprocal knowledge exchanges and so on, but real coordination and real partnership on the territory is very, very rare.” - Member of independent sector.

Additional key changes in partnerships across time were seen in the deepening of the connection to the independent sector, and the empowerment of the support group such that it was initiating planning and organisation without prodding:

“We are preparing an application for another grant ... for sustainability of 2006. And the [suggestion] came from the group which is even more interesting. The group itself said: why don’t you participate in that? I’m keeping contact with the office here, etc, I’m doing the networking in that sense, but they are doing most of the application, and [they have the] understanding who is doing what. It’s real growth.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

In addition youth participation grew between successive site visits and throughout the history of the site (individual accomplishments will be discussed in the section on Youth Empowerment), and there was a growing awareness and recognition of YEPP in the public sector, both on local and municipal levels. As mentioned above, despite initial difficulties in the relationship with the district, by the time of the second site visit YEPP Mirafiori had managed to partially move beyond that and, while still critical of the relationship, the situation had improved somewhat.

Parella

The key change in partnerships across time in Parella was the growth of youth participation between successive site visits and throughout the history of the site (individual accomplishments will be discussed in the section on Youth Empowerment). In addition, deepening ties to the independent sector, and a continuation of the ties to local and district administration were also successes.

There was a growing awareness and recognition of YEPP in the public sector, both on local and municipal levels. This last point in particular has meant that YEPP Turin (both Parella and Mirafiori) also receive some financial support for specific purposes from the Municipality of Turin, which is a concrete indicator of the progression of the programme and the esteem with which the projects are viewed.

Challenges for YEPP Turin

There were several challenges to partnerships that emerged from the interviews conducted for the external evaluation. YEPP Turin set for itself the goal of increasing the connection and participation of the private sector as well as continuing to involve youth in their partnership.

One of the big challenges was how to make sure that everyone was on the same page, even in a context of good communication and strong group work:

“I can probably say that the main challenge is to share a common vision with a common language. We realised during the last meeting that this was not clear enough. It was quite surprising for all of us because we were all convinced we had the right vision of the project, but it was not true. And this of course depends on different cultural backgrounds, different experiences we had, and of course different contexts we work with.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

Another challenge for all YEPP sites was the need to be able to explain YEPP as a project in concrete and easy to understand terms in order to facilitate partnerships and the involvement of prospective members:

“At the beginning I would explain what YEPP was about – I think for six months people didn’t understand what YEPP was about. [For] things that could be improved, one is the complexity in the project, it’s really hard to understand – so even when I began to work there was a lot of jargon and technical things that you have to know.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

In a project as complex as YEPP, this is not as easy as it might be:

“I would like to change the way to communicate, too, but I can’t find another way myself! On one hand I think it’s a bit too complex. We never found a time to design effective communication tools for the project, there was not enough time to do it. This is a pity.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

There were some suggested improvements, such as moving away from traditional lengthy written reports and towards a more accessible method to market the project:

“The main values of YEPP should have been set in a more visualisable way, instead of writing five pages – it should be clear that you have empowerment, you have gender, etc so that this is a common ground that everyone shares visually.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

Another challenge was how to continue to capitalise on the progress that has been made in terms of the participation of the various sectors, and, as mentioned above, how to increase the participation of the private sector. This is discussed in more detail below.

Building Cross-Sectoral Partnerships

As outlined above, neither YEPP Mirafiori nor YEPP Parella managed to bring all sectors to the table and maintain these cross-sectoral partnerships throughout the duration of the project. Although they had very strong representation and partnership between the public and independent sectors, they were still struggling with the inclusion of the private sector at the time of the last site visit. The standard challenge in cross-sectoral partnership building is how to bridge the different working strategies of the sectors, although in the case of YEPP Turin a more pressing challenge was finding willing sector representatives with whom to partner. From the perspective of overcoming these obstacles, the members of YEPP Turin show that they are clearly committed to:

- Approaching and welcoming representatives of the various sectors into the project.
- Raising awareness about different goals and expectations across the different stakeholders and across the international/local presence.
- Engaging in a dialogue about what might and might not be needed to improve the quality of the partnership.

Still a challenge, at least as reflected in the interviews of May 2005, was:

- Finding willing members of the private sector.
- Keeping all members actively involved and contributing to the group dynamic.

Challenges from the policy world

YEPP Turin was actively supported by members of the municipal and regional level administration. On the national level, there were a number of projects on similar topics (see Introduction for examples), including for example the project entitled “New forms of youth associations,” which is aimed at encouraging young people to play active and positive roles in their communities.

Partnerships between sectors, especially with the private sector, were very uncommon. Indeed, it seemed that co-operation within the public sector itself could be trying enough, particularly between administrative departments that do not have a tradition of co-ordinating services or working cross-departmentally. In a federalised country such as Italy, there are also multiple vertical levels across which there must be cooperation as well, as Italy is highly decentralised and is continuing this trend in deliberately allowing regions (on a provincial level) to guide and implement policy:

“One [has] the state, the regions, the metropolitan cities, the communities, the provinces ... and to enforce this dynamic is very complicated. There are too many levels ... there needs to be consultation with the Communes in order to bring together the areas and industrial structures, but there’s a whole load of territorial organisms and their priorities are all different. It’s difficult.” - Member of local administration.

The office that works on institutional systems and relations between the national government and regional/city governments spoke particularly eloquently of the difficulties, especially in a country where regions and local levels have a high degree of autonomy and independent funding. However they also highlighted the role of the EU in encouraging international cooperation on these issues, particularly in countries (such as Italy) where there has not been a long tradition of cooperation between different levels (both vertical and horizontal). The cooperation required for EU funding and grant applications, as well as joint evaluations if stipulated, played a key role in starting the various departments and ministries (and regional levels) in working together.

Lessons Learned

A number of lessons learned can be gathered from the work of YEPP Turin in cross-sectoral partnership building, including the importance of:

- Involving all sectors as early in the process as possible to instil a sense of ownership and active participation.

- Packaging and marketing YEPP in a concrete way to prospective partners in all sectors (and youth).
- Actively building the support network through day or half-day events, including social activities.
- Setting initial goals modestly so that there are tangible results early in the process to provide positive feedback as well as have something to show prospective partners.
- Understanding barriers to co-operation within a sector (e.g. public administration) and getting a commitment to action from leaders who can support the process of change.

Community Empowerment

Community empowerment can be thought of as being comprised of several facets, including:

- Identity (which here we broaden to include social/environmental/and health identity).
- Citizenship (in political/legal terms).
- Economics and education (school-work).
- Cultural (music, arts, etc.).

The Process

Mirafiori

As already mentioned community empowerment and active community participation was a key goal for YEPP Turin and remained so throughout the lifespan of the project. Community projects in Mirafiori operate in the particular context of the area: Mirafiori, as the home of Fiat, has traditionally been an area of working-class factory workers. This continues to be the case but with the reduction of employment at the Fiat factory, there are rising levels of unemployment and a limited number of retraining options. Although Mirafiori has a fair amount of green spaces, the spaces have been poorly maintained and at present tend to attract an unsavoury and somewhat dangerous crowd. As the largest park is located in the centre of the area and was avoided by locals, at the time of the site visits it served as a barrier between the two halves of the district, preventing community interaction and development. This situation has since been rectified.

Yet Mirafiori has a strong community identity and tradition:

“The pre-conditions are very good in Mirafiori, you have to consider also in that place there is a sense of community that people feel they are from there and know it, and although there are many different senses of belonging according to the place where you are [and] the neighbourhood is very big; they feel they are from Mirafiori, this helps to do things.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

Parella

Parella has historically been an area of middle-class business, and still maintains a higher percentage of middle class workers than other areas of Turin such as Mirafiori. Not surprisingly, this correlates with higher levels of income and education, and lower levels of immigration in the area. Although there are pockets of real social disadvantage and a growing presence of immigrants which pose particular challenges

for education and integration, the clearest problem facing Parella is a lack of a sense of community and separation between different social and cultural groups and between different age groups.

“Parella is this kind of anonymous place where people have not many economic problems and they don’t feel they belong to the neighbourhood. It’s a sort of dormitory place ... so the NGOs that are a part of the project don’t really feel part of the project. When they work there, they are interested in developing a good project together, but they don’t feel that Parella is their place in a sense.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

This posed a particular challenge for community development and empowerment:

“In Parella it’s not easy because to work in terms of community, you need to have a community. You can change things, or reach a process of personal empowerment as far as young persons are concerned, but what is more difficult is to have a process of community empowerment and to change things in the community and have structural changes there.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

Key changes

Mirafiori

Mirafiori has developed very well and is a concrete example of committed community partnership working together via the LSG to change the community from within, thus showing how the LSG is of itself a community empowering agent. The partners (most of whom were the same across the two site visits) are strong and committed, and the group has a feasible operational plan for the coming year as well as strategic objectives to obtain funding for the post-2005 period. In particular, the youth working with the project are organised and have set realistic goals for their projects and plans.

The strongest change observed across the site visits was the evolution and development of certain entrepreneurial projects, such as the development of the Incubator. Funded partially by Sportello MicroImprese (an initiative developed by the region of Piemonte), the goal of the Incubator is to provide guidance and skills to community members wishing to start small businesses and entrepreneurial projects.

YEPP also deliberately set out to build capacity within the community through citizenship-building projects such as the Can-Do workshop. This workshop was held in early 2005 and was attended by various members of the YEPP team as well as a number of support group members. The Can-Do initiative, which is an internationally distributed programme developed by the Scarman Trust³³, is aimed at providing the tools for the community to empower itself (see also YEPP Model section).

In addition, there were a number of projects focused on music, film, and video, for example the EmpowerMediaNetwork, a trans-national YEPP project that brings together the YEPP sites to learn, work, and share experiences in video and community television. YEPP Mirafiori’s version is called Mirafuori TV and has been very active in creating a number of short films and reports on the community, and has generated a great deal of interest among the youth. This project is ongoing and has received funding to continue well past the end of the formal YEPP funding period, a mark of its success and the positive regard with which it is perceived by the community (and funding foundation).

“I want it to work because it corresponds to a real requirement or need - the necessity of public access to media, to give a voice to those who don’t have one, this to me is a fundamental necessity of empowerment - it’s democratic and part of the community.” - Member of independent sector.

³³. <http://www.thescarmantrust.org/hq/cando.htm>

Along with representatives of the other YEPP sites, YEPP Mirafiori participated in the screening of portraits produced by the YEPP sites at the 2006 YEPP-ALL conference.

It should be noted that these projects are packaged independently and so while the individual projects (e.g. the Incubator) are well known the name of YEPP is less well known (see Partnerships section for discussion).

Parella

The kinds of projects YEPP Parella is currently working on cut across all four dimensions of community empowerment as listed above. The largest initiative was the goal of building a sense of community within Parella and bring people out into the streets to get to know their neighbours and spend time in their neighbourhood, and as a result community identity projects such as (which here we broaden to include social/environmental/and health identity) include: newsletter, street parties, juggling and deejaying courses. The overall goal (of creating a sense of community) was not fully achieved at the time of writing.

There were also a number of projects related to education and the schools (both primary and secondary, see Youth Empowerment section for more details). As already mentioned in the Partnership section, one of the motivating forces behind involving the schools was to try and embrace the open schools concept so that the community can be brought into the school to use the space and co-operate with school initiatives. Although the YEPP team has managed to increase contact with the school as an external partner and at the time of the second site visit was building a centre for activities, these initiatives have not yet been successful in engaging the schools in the project and encouraging the process of opening to the broader community.

Challenges for YEPP Turin

Mirafiori

At the time of the second site visit the biggest challenge for YEPP Mirafiori was to begin to see concrete results from their extensive planning phase:

“They have very clear goals, on different levels, political, social, economic, so they cover the range of the community empowerment areas. Now they need to do it.” – Member of YEPP Turin.

The second challenge was how best to reach out to the most marginalised members of the community, those most in need of empowerment. The members of YEPP Mirafiori were glad to have begun the process effectively through their connection to the street educators, who have very good contact and credibility with at risk youth, and they would like the process to continue throughout the broader community:

“There are some places you go, some people, they don’t speak Italian. How do you reach them? And how do we bring them to meetings and make sure they are included if we have this communication and language barrier?” - Member of public sector.

Effective work and progress is further complicated by the complicated governance structure for Italian communities, and the need to negotiate between regional, municipal, and district governments. YEPP so far has been quite successful at doing this, and YEPP Mirafiori has the explicit support of both the President of the District as well as the municipality of Turin, so the hesitation of some district members should continue to decrease, especially now that there are concrete outcomes of the partnership between the district and YEPP (e.g. the youth centre).

Given these complexities and given the amount of community work being done in the area, there is a long tradition of competition for relatively scarce resources – a tradition that is at times difficult to overcome. Still, there has been considerable progress and there seems to be a greater willingness to work

together. Indeed, one challenge will be how to harness the amount of activity, good will, and cohesiveness of the support group to sustain the projects and initiatives.

“We have so many ideas, and so many plans. We also have [name, member of support group] who is good at strategising, at having a vision. I only hope we can do most of what we want!” - Member of local administration.

Parella

The biggest challenge for YEPP Parella was how to create a sense of community in Parella and how best to continue the work that it had already started. The numerous projects, including the successful completion of the street parties and the community newsletter, were a very good start to achieving this. Yet YEPP Parella was still looking for more:

“There are people in the street and they still don’t talk to each other, they still go to work here and then leave and go home to their real neighbourhood. And the people that are here are listening, but they do not always hear us.” – Member of public sector.

In addition, there was a need for more local residents in the LSG from a broader range of backgrounds in order to bring diverse aspects of the community together:

“The problem is there aren’t many active citizens, because there are many social workers in the group, but there are no active citizens, which is a limitation. [We need] to work more on the aims and motivational aspects of each of them, because there are many differences in the group and these differences have created problems, so I’d pay more attention to this and find a way to work on it.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

This broader range also includes members of the immigrant population (in Parella this was often Romanians) and how best to include them in the community and how best to bring them to the table.

Challenges from the policy world

On a national level there were a number of challenges in community development work, which, it must be said, were fairly divorced from the reality of local level projects such as YEPP. As Italy has a highly de-centralised system with relatively high autonomy at regional and local levels, projects such as YEPP Torino had no real connections (or need of connections) to the national level.

As already discussed in the section on Partnerships, the most difficult challenge for community development projects was bringing together the various partners to work together across Ministerial and departmental boundaries. The complexity of the federated system with de-centralised power and budgeting going to the regions and cities requires extra coordination, and policy-makers were aware of this difficulty, particularly in terms of naming and implementing national strategies across the diverse regional contexts. Whether or not being aware of the difficulty is enough to overcome the barriers remains an open question.

The Ministry of Education, often critiqued for being closed to cooperation with other Ministries, has initiated a number of reforms to promote the opening of schools to the broader community in order to bring communities together. One example of this was the “grandparents’ programme”, which brings retired people into the classroom to act as monitors and to help teachers and interact with the children (from the Ministry perspective quite a success with the children, the teachers, and the grandparents, although again the perception is not as positive within the communities).

In addition, the Ministry of Education has applied for a grant from the EC for a programme quite similar to YEPP (with 20 centres in Italy),³⁴ which they hope to be starting in the near future. The programme will be focused on fighting all forms of disadvantage for youth, including drug dependency and dropping out of school. The 20 centres are widely distributed across Italy to include all geographic/social/cultural regions, and both an internal and external evaluations are planned. These and other initiatives have been planned to address some of the perceived difficulties in the system, and it remains to be seen how effective they will be.

Lessons Learned

A number of lessons can be learned from the work of YEPP Turin in community development and empowerment, including the importance of:

- Encouraging the participation of youth in local support group planning discussions and listening to the voice of the youth.
- Bringing together all sectors in an honest appraisal of what works and what does not work, and the best strategy to move forward.
- Having clear agreement on responsibilities for community development initiatives and expectations for action within the local support group, as well as definitions of shared terms.
- Devising realistic community development plans that are holistic in nature and include long-term strategies for community renewal.

The last point also implies having the courage and patience to keep working for change despite the inertia in the system and the difficulties in navigating a governance system in transition. The most effective changes that were observed are holistic in nature and are shaping the very way the community is working, as this comment on Mirafiori illustrates:

“There is absolute continuity, YEPP is becoming more and more part of their work, it’s a development of their work, and now the actions which are starting are going to give new opportunities to the local community.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

Youth Empowerment

A central concern for YEPP Turin was the difficulty of bringing the youth into projects and programmes and reaching those most at-risk. For Mirafiori, the lack of employment prospects, low income and rising unemployment, and the absence of physical meeting spaces made it difficult to reach out to the youth of the area. The most at-risk youth of the area are characterised by a lack of initiative and a reluctance to take part in new projects. Although the current state of the neighbourhood was an improvement on the situation before, when the neighbourhood was physically volatile and dangerous, the passivity and lack of hope was troubling:

“Fifteen years ago, when I was a child I remember that there, under my house there used to be riots with people crushing the houses with the cars and it was frightening. Now I would say that problem is just this low, low participation in education level and the sort of ‘yeah, we are here but nothing can change’, you know, little trust in what’s going on.” – Member of YEPP Turin.

For Parella the youth needed somewhere to meet and something to do in the afternoons and evenings, to allow them to remain in their community for these activities:

³⁴. See (in Italian): http://www.istruzione.it/bandi_gara/allegati/capitolato.pdf

“There’s no structure, nor many buildings for the activities of young people. It’s a part of Turin that is isolated. For the young people to meet people it’s not easy, because there are no pubs or discotheques. In the afternoon, we don’t know what goes on. There are many parks and gardens, but it’s not very good for the meeting, and it’s the same with the young and older people, because the communication is not easy. We want the young and older people to meet, the commercial people in the shops and the guys outside because the rapport is difficult.” – Youth.

The Process

The youth of Mirafiori were initially difficult to reach and involve in the YEPP programme. As a result, during the 2004 site visit there was little youth participation, and a clear goal of the YEPP Mirafiori team to continue encouraging youth participation. By the time of the 2005 site visit, youth participation had increased and was centred on the creation of the community centre (see below for more details).

The youth of Parella were involved relatively early in the YEPP programme, through their work with music groups or street theatre. As a result, during the 2004 site visit there was a core group of involved youth and a clear goal of the YEPP Turin team to continue encouraging youth participation. By the time of the second site visit, youth participation had increased and was very strong, particularly in terms of the representation in the support group and the leadership these youth had taken in project development.

The work of the YEPP team was facilitated by the strong presence of youth work in the local municipal administration, and the history of importance given to youth in Turin:

“In the field of youth policies in the last 25 years, Torino has been one of the living cities in this field so it’s very clear in the common culture what a good youth project is or could be, but how youth empowerment and youth development can be embedded in youth community development is not that clear, community projects are not widespread in Italy, generally speaking.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

It was also something new for many of the organisations to have access to funding through non-governmental sources (*i.e.* the foundation), and this gave rise to new opportunities:

“Getting contact with Compagnia is already a sort of empowerment for some of the youth organisations because sometimes they don’t know they can apply for a grant at a foundation, they don’t know about foundations, their perspective is completely different. ... But on the other hand, they have to learn we are here now, but we won’t be here forever.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

Community empowerment and youth empowerment are of course inextricably linked such that any programme focussed on youth will invariably have an impact on the broader community in which they reside. However it is possible to identify a number of key changes in youth empowerment across the timing of the two site visits.

Key changes

YEPP Mirafiori has had a number of concrete outcomes from their work including a partnership with the local district and two NGOs to run the community youth centre. This community centre, constructed and developed over the period of the site visits, was opened in early 2005 and provided physical space for the youth of the area to spend time, engage in a variety of projects (for example art and cultural projects, deejaying, video work, parties and evening activities).

There were a number of other projects in Mirafiori, such as a film festival, a street festival, the creation of a documentary, working on websites and technology, and work with music. These were all designed to attract youth and market the YEPP project:

“They will make a lot of photos with the guys and use these photos on the advertisements, photos here and leaflets and stuff so they feel themselves in the project and they will prepare t-shirts to give out so that YEPP becomes a logo...”

Although some of the projects did not work out as planned, this early surge of activity laid the groundwork for the more concentrated projects described above.

YEPP Parella has also seen positive changes resulting from their work, including the inclusion of a core group of local youth into the Support Group. This had an impact not only on the ability to reach other local youth, but also on the inclusion within the community as previously many of the Support Group members were not Parella residents:

“That was the principal difficulty of Parella - the stakeholders are not in the place itself - there is no-one who is really representative of the local community. Now it has changed, because there are three youngsters in the group, who are 20, 19 and 22 years old, and they actually live there – they have a lot of interest in doing work in the quarter, and they are ex-students of the school where a part of the project is now active.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

The involvement of the youth was a catalyst for a number of youth projects, such as the creation of a centre for the youth to spend time in, organise social events, hold workshops, and house the YEPP offices. The Community newsletter was written by elementary and secondary school students and was a way to involve them in their community, as were all of the other projects listed in the Community Empowerment section.

Another successful project was the work with the EmpowermentMediaNetwork to create a community TV project, Mirafuori TV (see also Community Development section). This project has been highly productive and a number of videos have been created by youth and community partners.

In addition a key change was in the number of youth who had participated in a formal international YEPP project. Youth from Turin participated in all YEPP transnational workshops and the YEPP-ALL conferences, as well as several exchanges with partners outside of YEPP (see transnational section for more details).

Challenges for YEPP Turin

The greatest challenge facing YEPP Mirafiori in terms of youth empowerment was to continue to increase the participation of the youth:

“The big challenge was from the very beginning was to involve difficult young people. And this is not easy at all, and has not been done completely. It’s going quite well because we have this ... Cooperativa Mirafiori in Mirafiori who are in fact in charge of what we call educativa de strada, try to involve young people who normally live in the streets and try to spend their time with them and involve them in the projects.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

In Parella, especially, it was difficult to encourage the community to accept the youth as equal partners:

“We have keep contact with the director of the school - they [the youths] can’t be made responsible for this contact. Because the director can’t recognise these youths and give them the authority, he needs to be in relation with an adult, the coordinator ... he wants the continuity, which is important, but in time we hope that the link goes directly between the director and the youth.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

Although they had managed to increase youth participation overall, YEPP Turin was specifically concerned with increasing the involvement of girls, and in fact had held a gender-awareness training for the support groups and community actors in order to address this:

“Generally speaking the girls have less opportunity to go around, and the centre is in a part in front of a garden, there is not much movement, so it’s not that safe ... I mean I think it’s safe but it doesn’t look safe, and this is one of the reasons. [But there are things that can be done]: for instance the place in itself is very big with big spaces, while girls usually prefer to have smaller spaces, it’s not easy [for them] to move in a big space. They come but they are very few compared with boys, so now they are working on this.” - member of YEPP Turin.

Another challenge for YEPP Turin, one that is often present in youth work, is moving beyond rhetoric and accomplishing concrete actions and establishing the will to make a difference. In working with youth, all too often stakeholders do not take the issues as seriously as they could as the youth have little political or economic power (yet):

“They appreciate what we are doing – be they private enterprises or the city - they know that the youth policy is not a Cinderella policy because unfortunately it’s very scanty – but they [the youth] don’t move ‘capitali’ and adults don’t have the intention of leaving space to the youth and handing over the decision-making, so it’s a bit complicated.” - Member of local administration.

Challenges from the policy world

Youth work, cutting as it does across education, employment, health, justice, welfare, housing, and various other ministerial departments, poses a particular challenge for coordinated policy-making. In Italy, the process of working with all levels of government and attempting to make changes on a policy level becomes particularly problematic (see Partnership and Community Empowerment sections).

There is an additional complication: the priority and perception of youth work. Administrators in youth policy and international cooperation spoke of the low priority youth work had in the traditional Italian context (in comparison to, e.g. the Nordic countries), and the struggles to include youth as independent voices who could have a proactive role in policy making.

“We are trying but is Italy ready? I do not know.”

This low priority often translated into low funding or disrupted funding for projects and officers:

“Institutes that have been constructed regionally for youth should all consult together or they will arrive at nothing and see nothing. In my experience of these things I’ve never seen a service really work or have the right support ... But in the province the youth office only has one person, this in itself is a disaster.” - Member of local Turin administration.

Yet interviews with policy makers demonstrated that, at the very least, there is an awareness that new solutions are needed. The department of Vocational Training and Education, for example, is deeply concerned by the high number of drop-outs in the 15-17 year old cohort (over 70 000) and is looking at preventative as well as curative measures to combat the problem. In collaboration with the Department of Education, they have created a series of policies aimed at evaluating the causes of the high drop-out rates as well as implementing new practices and avenues for the youngsters who have dropped out. The evaluation is guided by both Ministries in cooperation and they are also supporting a mapping of best practices from across regions and aim to bring together national and international stakeholders for further discussion. As already highlighted in the Partnerships section, the role of the EU in encouraging international cooperation on these issues, particularly in countries such as Italy where there has not been a long tradition of cooperation between different levels (both vertically across regional areas within a country and horizontally across countries), is perceived as crucial.

The Ministry of Education was very concerned with developing policy related to schooling choices (e.g. the difficulties with drop-outs). Of particular interest was a discussion of their decision to try to identify causes underlying disenchantment with school on the level of the individual. So, for example, they are initiating a series of tests and measures which will probe psychometric characteristics of students who are at risk of dropping out, as well as family and friend characteristics. This initiative mirrors those in other countries (e.g. Canada), where there is a good deal of research on this topic available, including longitudinal data from the youths themselves. The rationale for pursuing this kind of research is to allow for the development of better methods and strategies that respond to what the youth themselves identify as the problems within the system, and eventually to keep youth at risk in school. Examples of possible strategies mentioned were non-traditional training, short term internships, and work experience programmes.

Lessons Learned

Both YEPP Turin sites have done very well at bringing youth into the programme and empowering them to become active and vibrant members of the project and the community. A number of lessons can be gleaned from the work of YEPP Turin in youth empowerment, including the importance of:

- Involvement of youth in the very earliest stages of project development to encourage a sense of ownership.
- Encouraging less active youth to bring their voice to the table and let themselves be heard.
- Getting the local administration to acknowledge the voice of youth in designing and delivering youth-related projects.

Through YEPP and various community initiatives differences in youth behaviour are being observed: *“To see groups of youth that start to take the initiative [and] to ask something directly of the association - these are indicators, these are the behaviours that we see bringing changes ... there are positive signs. They are seizing little by little the wheel, [for example] with projects that have to be commercialised, from selling to promotion. It’s increasing creativity in the territory - which any city has the vocation to do.”* - Member of local administration.

Trans-national Cooperation

As explained in the section on Reporting, in this report trans-national co-operation will be touched on only briefly, as the final cross-cutting report in this series of case studies will focus more thoroughly on the trans-national co-operation of YEPP.

YEPP Turin was very active in the trans-national YEPP arena. In addition to hosting a study visit from YEPP Mannheim, YEPP Turin hosted a number of small workshops, including a local researchers’ workshop in June 2003, a local coordinators’ workshop in May 2004, an EmpowerMediaNetwork training course in July 2005, and Steering Committee meetings in May 2004 and June 2005. Two large trans-national youth workshops also took place in Turin. In “Moving images, local realities,” in September 2004, young people from all sites participated in a film production workshop and produced their own TV talk show. In March 2006, the YEPP Community Conference and Youth Meeting, “Influencing Policies through and for Youth Empowerment and Partnership,” took place with nearly 80 participants from nine countries. The conference had a youth component and another for coordinators that worked both separately and in tandem. The key themes of the youth meeting were community, inclusion, and participation.

Successes

For the youth

The transnational co-operation was uniformly perceived as a very important and positive aspect of YEPP by the youth. The youth who participated in the “Moving images, local realities” workshop were able to share foods, favourite television programmes and work together through the medium of film in order to communicate.

“A great event and a big success for YEPP and the youngsters.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

Youths were excited to have the opportunity to travel and get to meet participants from other sites and cultures:

“The most important thing of the international exchange is to know other participants. It’s good. I think it’s the moment when you are really empowered because you have to confront other people directly. And not at the same age, different ages.” – Youth.

The youth also recognised the educational value of international participation:

“For us it was a good idea because it’s not only in Italy, but it’s international, and it’s good to open the minds and the possibilities for everyone.” – Youth.

Finally, the youth saw that despite many cultural differences, there were also many similarities between the youth from all sites:

“It was strange, but good because I have known many of the same things in my life.” – Youth.

For the community

The international aspect allowed participants to feel as though their work was not done in a vacuum. Most members also believed that learning in an international context was very important and that this element of YEPP allowed participants to see different cultures and to see their way of working and acting. In addition, the lack of vested interests or ulterior motives was appreciated:

“[The success of YEPP] is not political. I think it’s more group. It’s not left, right, or centre [...] because every partnership with the associations in Europe, it’s not the lesser things, but the YEPP proposal to the others in a friendly way. It’s a friendly way. And it’s open to all people.” - Youth

For YEPP

The international aspect of YEPP allowed the builders of the project to share ideas with other sites. In addition, it encouraged the local actors to think broadly about the programme and on which levels it could expand, particularly in terms of political and financial support:

“I’m trying to organise a youth exchange, a workshop for the summer, and now we are starting to apply to the EU to get the funds, especially for the travel costs, for the people who are coming from abroad. I had the feeling that I probably could have insisted with my bosses to get the money to pay for everything, but it’s not this dimension we want to be involved in. It’s probably better the international organisation like the EU or someone else, for this kind of project, they should take over all these international costs.” – Independent sector representative.

The workshops also allowed for cross-fertilisation of ideas, as the sites shared initiatives and innovations with each other:

“It’s always a very good opportunity to learn from each other. Then I think the group of foundations is working very well together, when we find something that is not clear enough, this helps a lot. Also from the point of view of the foundation, being involved in this kind of project,

which is not just the research group or interest group, or EFC (European Foundation Centre) group, which are very useful but never really compare a concrete way of operating. In this case, we really apply the same model to different contexts, and being able to compare the results is very interesting for us. It's a way of seeing how the other foundations work. Of being in strong relationships.” – Member of YEPP Turin.

Challenges

The language barrier posed problems for nearly all the participants in YEPP Turin:

“When we organise international events, like the exchanges and so on, those people don't speak English at all, so they tend to be excluded naturally because there are real problems in involving them. There's still a bit missing [...] Sometimes it's quite difficult because we are enthusiastic and sometimes young people are not enthusiastic. The difficulty with the language is very strong and it depends on their language skills.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

Local actors often knew very general information about the other sites, but rarely were they familiar with the specific measures taken by other sites to build support groups and the strategies used to bring people together and set up effective communication.

Another difficulty that stemmed from the international element of YEPP was the added workload, which included large quantities of notices and emails, additional research, and more communication with other sites. One YEPP member suggested that in order to learn from other sites, it was important to know their respective contexts and individual projects very well; however, participants rarely had the time to do this. Interaction between sites requires a certain kind of knowledge and cooperation that needs time in which to develop:

“We need to develop new skills to get different countries involved, but it's very important to keep this transnational element involved.” – Member of YEPP Turin.

International participation also required funding that was not always readily available:

“On the international level, I think the project is really suffering because of a lack of funding. I think the international exchange both on the level of the people and the foundations working in the CHIs is really a very strong and very interesting part of the project, but it's always very hard to find the money to create more occasions for these exchanges.” - Independent sector representative.

Overall, however, the trans-national work was perceived very positively and as an essential part of the programme:

“I think the international exchange both on the level of the people and the foundations working in the CHIs is really a very strong and very interesting part of the project.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

Sustainability

One of the key concerns of YEPP as a whole is the on-going sustainability of the programme and the projects it supported. In this vein YEPP Turin is in a very good position, with continuing support from the foundation. Indeed, the foundation and YEPP Turin will move beyond Turin and challenge themselves to working in partnership with a site in Genoa as part of the expansion of YEPP II. Other possible sites (e.g. Savona, Italy) are also being pursued.

YEPP Mirafiori specifically has been very successful at working in partnership with various local actors. They also have exploited the considerable expertise in grant applications and project planning and management from within their support group and have actively sought funding from outside (e.g. local

administration, region, and EU) sources. With this commitment and expertise, YEPP Mirafiori is in a very good position to continue its work for many years to come.

The steps taken by YEPP Parella towards sustainability were not as strong as those taken by Mirafiori, and in fact at the time of the second site visit YEPP Parella was not actively seeking alternate sources of funding. In this sense it was less strategic than YEPP Mirafiori, although why this was so (e.g. different priorities, different skill sets within the LSGs) is not clear.

“We are inventing the precept for sustainability, for example, we can say that we today in the districts and individual Communes of the Province of Turin, we can get funds a bit from the district, a bit from the Commune, and a bit from everywhere – to finance this kind of project we can get ten different sources of funding. ... we could even get a private sponsor for example, or get someone interested, so it’s a discourse about the invention of a system that is very creative. We are creating this over a period of time and things can change.” - Member of independent sector.

One unknown is whether the local YEPP implementation arrangements will continue, even in such a positive climate. As with many of the other YEPP sites it was the projects themselves that received funding and were being marketed to the community rather than the idea or concept of YEPP. Of course, this begs the question: is it negative if YEPP as a name does not continue, if the ideas and the process that it represents do? Given the nature of the YEPP project and its goal of empowering communities and youth, would it not by definition be a positive sign if at some point there was no need for the YEPP structure? When a community is empowered, it is empowered to move on in its own terms and in its own way:

“[In the future] YEPP will be less visible formally, maybe the idea of YEPP would stay more for the opportunity. The incubator will be there, the media activity is well grounded, although it’s no longer called YEPP, it’s called community TV... The youth centre is there, so even if it isn’t YEPP, there is already a network of people working, the links are established.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

Recommendations for YEPP II

For future versions of YEPP, the lessons learned as highlighted in each section above should serve as useful guides for future action. In addition, however, some specific recommendations were offered by the YEPP Turin team regarding which preconditions would help in starting a YEPP site on the right track:

- A clear understanding what the roles of the local coordinators and researchers are, and what kind of skills new sites would have to look for to cover those roles properly. Part of this should be using the experience of previous YEPP participants to guide new ones:
“At the beginning I was not sure. Now it’s a lot clearer to me, so I would give my contribution to this, to find out what kind of person would be needed.”
- Inviting the right people to participate in the initial support group, including defining the meaning of this stakeholder (i.e. who specifically they should be, and how to get them involved).
- Focusing on capacity building of the team across time, including the possibility of group workshops (i.e. a mix of researchers and coordinators) such that all levels (coordinators, researchers, local and international) could have easier and smoother communication.

Conclusions

Any evaluation of the two YEPP Turin sites is complicated by several factors. YEPP is a research and development programme with different products to stimulate youth and community empowerment and

partnership according to the local conditions. As such it is difficult to evaluate, especially given the complexity of the variables under scrutiny.

In addition, its insertion into a vibrant community means that neither site of YEPP Turin started with a blank slate, but rather entered into ongoing networks, relationships, and projects. Projects that were already started were continued and nourished under YEPP, projects that were invented elsewhere were adapted for local purposes, and groups allied themselves with the programme without considering themselves to be an output of YEPP. There is thus a series of non-causal relationships between products and projects which makes it that much harder to measure change.

Despite this, there were clear successes in YEPP Turin. Many key changes were outlined above, including very successful concrete projects and more intangible changes to attitudes and expectations. One of the biggest contributions was providing the extra energy or incentive for change:

“In Mirafiori, I really have this feeling that they own the project and the approach now. I’m quite happy about that. Thinking about actions, we did a lot of things with both groups and of course one very important step was the opening of this youth centre [...] It happened because YEPP was there, otherwise the district probably wouldn’t have had the strength or the view to do it.” - Member of YEPP Turin.

The accomplishments of YEPP Parella, particularly those related to youth involvement and youth activities, are an example of the power of a well-functioning YEPP site. Similarly YEPP Mirafiori is an example of a very successful YEPP site and a case study on how best to implement the YEPP model, both in terms of its team (and the working relationship between foundation, researcher, and coordinator) and in terms of its strength in bringing the community together in the Support Group. This last aspect, as discussed in this report, was the most distinctive feature of YEPP Mirafiori in comparison to the other YEPP sites, and while some particulars are irreproducible (*e.g.* the actual individuals and their strengths), the emphasis placed on the team dynamic and the attention paid to building the connections and building the capacity to work as a group are generalisable and recommended for introduction to other sites and networks.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

EXTERNAL EVALUATION CASE STUDY

TUZLA, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA*

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Aims and purpose

This report was commissioned by the Steering Committee of the Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme (YEPP) with the following purposes:

- To have a systematic, independent account of the development, perceived quality, and impact of the YEPP site in Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina, including policy impact on local and national levels.
- To indicate lessons learned in the form of recommendations for future phases of YEPP in order to improve and extend the YEPP experience.

The aim is that this report, in conjunction with the Case Study of the Internal Evaluation, will contribute to a stock-taking of YEPP Tuzla. Ultimately, it is hoped that the results will be used both internally, for discussion within the YEPP Tuzla Team and Support Group, and externally for discussion by other YEPP sites.

This is the third in a series of case studies. The series will consist of separate case studies for each of the seven participating YEPP sites and an overarching trans-national report. Each of these reports of the external evaluation will be teamed with a matching report of the internal evaluation, with the end goal of providing a thorough yet concise look at the development, functioning, and outcomes of YEPP from 2002-2006.

Methodology

The report is based on semi-structured interviews with:

- The YEPP Tuzla team:
 - Representatives of the funding foundations (Freudenberg Stiftung, Soros, Charles Stewart Mott).
 - YEPP Tuzla Co-ordinator (both).
 - YEPP Tuzla Researcher (two).
- Members of the YEPP Support Group.
- Youth participants in YEPP.
- Community members involved in or with experience of YEPP, including local decision-makers.
- National stakeholders working in related areas (*i.e.* social inclusion, youth, community development, partnerships).
- Discussion with representatives of the YEPP Berlin Programme Team.

- Observations of the OECD/CERI external evaluation review team.³⁵

In total, more than 48 individuals representing local and national levels as well as public, private, and independent sectors were interviewed during two site visits (the first in 2004 and the second in 2005; see Annex 3 for a complete list of individuals interviewed). Interviews followed a semi-structured format that probed experiences of Context, Input, Process, and Product on the topics of youth empowerment, community development, and partnerships. The experiences and the interviews were divided along sectors (public/private/independent) and levels (mandating, strategic, operational, and field). The interviews were conducted individually unless the interviewee expressed a great preference for another partner (this was sometimes the case for the youth, for example). Interviewees were given the choice of conducting the interview in English, French, or their native language. Interviews were then transcribed and coding using the qualitative coding software N7. Annex 2 contains a more detailed description of the interview process, the methodology used, and data collection and analysis.

Reporting

This report reflects the findings of the external evaluation regarding the development, process, and outcomes of YEPP Tuzla. It is organised by main themes, looking at partnership building, youth empowerment, and community development in turn. The experience of trans-national co-operation will also be touched on, but briefly, as the final cross-cutting report in this series of case studies will focus more thoroughly on the trans-national co-operation of YEPP.

As one of the goals of this evaluation was to reflect on the processes of change, central interviewees were interviewed on both site visits, during the second of which they were explicitly prompted to reflect on changes since the previous year and plans for the future. Sustainability issues and lessons learned are also reflected.

It is important to emphasise that the bulk of the observations of this evaluation come from the local stakeholders, including youth, themselves, and are not opinions imposed from the outside. Some contributions are quoted verbatim when they seem particularly insightful or when a comment sums up the majority view on a particular topic.

Context

YEPP Tuzla activities took place primarily in Simin Han, a small semi-urban suburb (pop. ~8 000) of the city of Tuzla. The activities of YEPP Tuzla need to be understood in the context of Simin Han and the situation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in general, as it alone of all the YEPP sites is a post-war country with a weak and partly destroyed economy and changing and evolving governance structures. Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country that is still very dependent on the support of the international community and is very much undergoing a process of transition and recovery, both literally, with the return of displaced people from abroad and other areas of the country, and metaphorically, as the country moves towards an uncertain and unpredictable future.

As with all YEPP sites, YEPP Tuzla was designed to have a local support group (LSG) comprising local stakeholders, youth and a representative from the funding foundation, supported by a local

³⁵ For the site visits this team was composed of an OECD/CERI researcher (Tracey Burns) and a local Inland Researcher, who commented on relevant national policy and local context, aided in organising the visit, and provided translation as necessary. Inland Researcher 2004: Gabriele Herbert; 2005: Savka Gajic. Peter Evans of the OECD Secretariat, although not present at site visits, was also a member of the team.

coordinator³⁶ and researcher. For the first half of the project there was a central Coordinator and a very steady presence of the members of the Support Group, which permitted a stable progression of the project. This coordinator was replaced in October 2004, with the new coordinator remaining until the end of the project. The researcher also changed across time: the first local researcher left the project in 2003 and was replaced by the second local researcher, who was then replaced by the third and last researcher in mid-2004. The main foundation representation remained the same across the period of the project, although not physically present at LSG meetings (all funding foundations were international).

These personnel changes affected the project in greater and lesser ways as a function of working style and goals, some of which will be outlined below- on the whole, however, YEPP Tuzla experienced stable personnel and support membership which helped encourage steady and continuous development.

Local implementation of YEPP

Co-ordinator, support group, and foundation

YEPP Tuzla is a site that was marked by two successive and very strong coordinators, who were very active on the project level and developed a core LSG that remained strong over time. Although the departure of the first coordinator, who was highly regarded, was initially a cause of some concern, this was quickly overcome:

“Everyone was panicking, ‘Monika’s leaving, how will we manage?’, and Monika, although it was teamwork, she really held all the strings in her hand. So surprisingly, despite this top heavy in charge of everything, somehow, everyone managed to clearly define their areas of responsibility, and where their expertise lies, and she says she’s particularly pleased with Jasna’s transition.” - Independent sector representative.

In the end the transition between the two coordinators was very smooth and the second coordinator was also very strong. This smooth transition allowed the YEPP project to continue to grow and develop with minimal interruption, and core members of the support group to remain the same throughout the duration of the project. Although there was some difficulty involving youth early on, they became more and more involved as the project progressed. In this sense it successfully fulfilled the goals of a YEPP site.

The process was not without challenges, however. Keeping interest sustained over time and keeping the large support group involved in the process was difficult, especially as the various support group members were all very busy and so did not necessarily have the time to read the documentation or fully prepare for the meetings. Regular attendance at the meetings was low:

“Only five people out of 18 on the list show up, you know, regularly, and they don’t meet enough. I think they need to be much more active.” - Member of YEPP Tuzla.³⁷

In fact by the time of the second interview there was some thought that it might be more efficient to work with a smaller group who had the time to come and prepare for each meeting (essentially, a core group of maximum eight individuals), and just meet with the broader support group twice or three times yearly:

36 . In Tuzla the local co-ordinator was a staff member of the Freudenberg foundation and Director of the Field office there.

37 Attributions are provided if it is not clear from the context which group is speaking. Attributions are intended to be both specific enough to guide the reader and general enough to preserve the identity of the individual speaker. In this case “member of YEPP Tuzla” refers to the core group comprised of the Local Coordinator(s) and Local Researcher(s).

“Everyone is busy, I understand that. But when we take the time to prepare and photocopy all the reports and then it turns out that not everyone has read them, and so we have to go back over and explain... well, it’s not very rewarding.” - Member of YEPP Tuzla.

In terms of foundation support, YEPP Tuzla was unique among the YEPP sites in that it was not physically located in the same area as the foundation (the main funding foundation for YEPP Tuzla was the Freudenberg Foundation, in Germany). This of course meant that the foundation representatives were not members of the Support Group, resulting in a less “hands-on” approach to partnership, and also opened the possibility of partnership with other foundations (at the time of the last site visit, YEPP Tuzla had received continuing funding from three other international foundations: Charles Stewart Mott, Freudenberg, and Soros).

Research

As mentioned earlier, there were three local researchers across the duration of the project. The research component of YEPP Tuzla thus varied as a function of the individual skills of the researchers, and experienced some fluctuation and growing pains. The particularly strong skills of the third researcher, especially in the use of focus groups, allowed for a much greater presence of research in the last phase of the project. Yet as with many of the other YEPP sites, the research component of the YEPP design was not fully realised in YEPP Tuzla, particularly in the beginning. This was partly a reflection of the difficulty in contacting the youth and creating the required relationship of trust, a task particularly difficult in a context where the youth were suspicious of “outsiders”:

“It was a challenge to get in touch with young people, especially in Simin Han, and there is a very big difference... [between] making a formal interview and when we sit and we speak really about everything. I am happy when I don’t have to say ‘tell me’.” - YEPP researcher

Difficulty involving the youth was also a consequence of the practical limitations of working with a community that was still in transition:

“The people in Tuzla and in Simin Han, they don’t permanently live there. They don’t know what it’s going to be tomorrow. Maybe they will get an eviction and they will have to move. It’s the problem with youngsters. Last year when I had this focus group,³⁸ I had five young people, two boys and three girls, and now there is just one boy and girl, the others moved.” - YEPP researcher.

In addition, the researchers struggled with how best to be the “critical friend” required by the YEPP model and how best to incorporate research in a community project so that it would be appreciated. Working with the site and impressing on them the importance of the research while balancing the requirements of YEPP was a difficult process for the researchers, and one that was not successfully solved, as the following exchange between the External evaluator (TB) and the researcher (I) demonstrates:

TB: What of the research component? Do you think that there’s value, that it’s understood?

I: No, it’s not valued at all. I think I have an excellent rapport with [the YEPP Tuzla team] but this whole thing about how to actually try to streamline the evaluation in the everyday so [they could]... figure out which model would be best...and we could use it for ourselves. Not just internationally, but here. We still haven’t done that.

³⁸ Focus groups were one of the evaluation methodologies used by the internal evaluation; see Internal Evaluation Methodology for further information.

Summary of local implementation of YEPP

As discussed above, YEPP Tuzla is an example of a YEPP site that was able to realise the broad structure and goals of the YEPP model, and was marked by:

- Strengths:
 - Strong local coordinator.
 - Successful creation of a local support group (including active youth participation).
 - Strong research component, particularly in the last phase.
- Weaknesses:
 - Difficulties in sustaining a functioning and involved support group over time.
 - Challenges in integrating the research and adapting it to local needs.

Key Themes of YEPP

In evaluating YEPP Tuzla, it is important to remember that YEPP has a strong process element as well as different types of outcomes. The process cycle cannot be fully captured by an EE, but is described in detail in the IE. This section therefore, focuses on the main outcomes pertaining to cross-sectoral partnerships, youth empowerment, and community empowerment.

This section looks at each of these variables in turn, focussing on the process, the products (in terms of key changes and challenges), and lessons learned for the future. Where appropriate, the context of national policy and comments of national stake-holders are integrated into the analysis.

Development of Cross-Sectoral Partnerships

The Process

The initial support group included members of the public sector, including representatives of the local administration and teachers, the primary school of Simin Han, and members of the independent sector. The private sector was difficult to involve for a number of reasons, chiefly that the private sector in Simin Han is quite limited and really did not have the means to participate when the project first started in 2001.

One of the most difficult aspects in bringing people together is demonstrating the benefits of joining the partnership and becoming involved. In this sense the project gains momentum as it goes along, as it acquires tangible results that can then be used to explain the project to prospective partners.

As described above, YEPP Tuzla is unique among the YEPP sites as a post-war country, a context that cannot be forgotten when interpreting and evaluating activities. This section will look at the process of building partnerships by focussing on selected elements of partnerships, including:

- Quality of co-operation (among partners).
- Communication and networking.

- Co-operation between sectors.
- Triangulation (*i.e.* the effective combination of public, private, and independent sectors).

Quality of co-operation

Bringing together partners from different sectors to work together can be a difficult process. In the case of YEPP Tuzla, partnership itself was made difficult by the context and the history of the area. In order to develop partnerships of any kind, trust is required, and in a society that has recently experienced war, it is not something that can be taken for granted:

“It is very important that this trust has come back to people and that is something that partnerships require ... it has been completely destroyed by the war because you could not trust anybody and now the fact that you start a project and somebody is reliable somebody will stick to his word ... the government, whoever, ... [if they] stick to promises and obligations this kind of trust is really built and is one of the most important points of partnership” - Member of government.

In addition to trust, partnerships require shared goals and complementary skills that can be combined; furthermore, there needs to be an understanding that by pooling resources you can achieve more than working alone. This is something that was understood on a conceptual level in Tuzla, but there was also frustration with a perceived passivity present in the system and in prospective partners:

“We are too long in a babysitting position. ... it’s a bit true - because if you have a system where if you are in the Turkish Empire, Hungarian Empire, that you were not in a central role in Yugoslavia and now there is an international community, I think that generations and generations are born and living in a way that there is somebody else who is deciding, then that also creates a mentality of passivity where people don’t care and think somebody else will decide, somebody else will take care of it. [But we have to] take care of it ourselves.” - Independent sector representative.

The third, most important component named by the interviewees was the willingness to work together and an understanding of the time and effort required to bring a partnership and a project together:

“I believe that really it’s fundamental to find the right people... or really to invest time in such a process, somewhere between five or seven years, but really to give time for such a project to live to work.” - Foundation representative.

Communication and networking

Strong communication was considered to be a fundamental element of an effective partnership. Some of the challenges involved in establishing strong partnerships were related to imperfect communication and different interpretations of the same terms, even when everyone was speaking the same language. Different expectations of the process of partnership, if not understood by all members of the group, led to frustration and dissatisfaction with the process.

On the whole, the communication and networking among the YEPP Tuzla partners was challenged by irregular attendance at Support Group meetings and difficulties in finding a time to schedule these meetings. One of the main self-criticisms expressed by the YEPP Tuzla team was that the LSG needed to be reorganised or encouraged to communicate and operate more effectively. This might mean, for example, that it be pruned to a smaller number of more active people, or that it be organised thematically.

On the other hand, YEPP Tuzla excelled at networking with foundations, and with the support of the YEPP Steering Committee was very successful in finding and sustaining funding from a variety of

international foundations (Freudenberg, Soros, Charles Stewart Mott). They were also very good at networking within the community and publicising their activities, although it should be noted that it was generally the individual activity that was profiled, not the overall YEPP programme. Such networking was time-consuming, but was a conscious strategic decision considered essential to the process:

“We did much for fundraising this whole summer, let’s say. We are now doing a marketing plan to see how to go out into the public. We would have a suggestion from the people who are experts in marketing, and from there we can go to the public.” - Member of YEPP Tuzla.

Co-operation between sectors

Despite a general pre-disposition to partnership, the process can be complicated by different working styles and expectations among the sectors.

“... working in a public sector, especially education, is different because they have ... to take care about their programs and for them it's not so easy to change. They are not as flexible as the NGO sector for sure. Not only in plans but with the budget too. With NGOs they are more stressful in a way that you are constantly changing plans. They are constantly changing the budget. You sometimes get the funds, but [then] they don't come, or they come in six months or something like that. It happens all the time in the NGO sector and people in public sector are not used to that because they pretty much plan one year in advance.” – Member of YEPP Tuzla.

In addition, there was a concern that the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina was not yet changed enough from communist times, when co-operation between sectors was unthinkable. The public sector, in particular, came under criticism for not being open to change:

“The problem with the public sector is there’s no real public sector. They are in this space of transition, you know. I don't know, in ten years, maybe the situation will be different especially if they want to enter into Europe. But until now there is just the old political class, they just changed their name. In general there's the same people. And they are not interested in change.” - Member of YEPP Tuzla.

Even the independent sector, which seemed quite active (albeit generally funded through international aid) was not perceived by everyone as prepared to partner:

“We used to have something like NGOs before the war, but they have been completely dissolved... but there is still the memory of that and by having restarted partnership with the NGOs I think that every year there is a sort of different and better relationship between the partners.” - Member of government.

The most common comment regarding the private sector was that it was extremely limited and almost non-existent:

“There is no private sector in Simin Han so it’s always partnerships or co-operation between public sector and these other organisations, NGOs and independent sector.” - Member of YEPP Tuzla.

This of course is an exaggeration, but the fact remains that the very small private sector that is present in Tuzla and Simin Han is fledgling and does not receive any particular benefit from partnering with the other sectors. Bosnia and Herzegovina lacks the tradition of public-private partnerships and has concrete barriers to private sector involvement, as we heard a number of times:

“The directors of companies are completely uninterested in any co-operation with youth. It’s a tax question ... The tax system makes it difficult for them to co-operate or to give any funds because they are actually taxed on donations rather than donations can be taken off taxes as it is in other cases, so it is impossible.” - Member of independent sector.

This last point is crucial and had an impact on virtually all attempts at public-private partnerships that were taking place, including the attempt to create a co-operative for selling mushrooms at the Chemical School, and the community co-operative:

“The co-operative didn’t manage to get off the ground because of the legal problems they had. That’s been, I would say, a failure. They invested so much time and energy to have people from AGORA, and the public institutions and private sector to organise this cooperative, and the idea was perfect. And they tried to register and they encountered these serious legal problems which they still haven’t managed to resolve. It’s there just on the paper.” - Member of YEPP Tuzla.

Triangulation

In terms of triangulation (and the effective partnering of public, private, and independent sectors), the factors outlined above made it almost impossible to find examples of effective ongoing triangulation. One exception was the vocational training programme of the primary school, in which a public institution used public and independent funding sources to support job shadowing in various local enterprises. This was a very successful project that experienced high participation rates on the part of the children and the community, as well as a growing participation of private sector enterprises willing to open their businesses for job shadowing, and is now a formal part of the school’s curriculum. Their goal is now to lobby for the nation-wide implementation of the project, and are pleased not only that the project is working for the children and the community, but for themselves as well:

“We’ve seen that this works, and generally speaking from all that we’ve done, we’ve grown and developed as a school, we haven’t just executed programs but we’ve organically expanded and developed. We got something out of this, there is a definite profit in this.” – Teacher.

Key changes

In an environment where trust and partnership was not the norm, YEPP Tuzla succeeded in establishing a functional support group and partnerships across sectors. This in itself was very positive and led to increased knowledge-sharing:

“It’s nice, for the first time they sit and say to each other, ‘I’m doing that, what do you think? Can you help me?’” - Member of YEPP Tuzla.

YEPP Tuzla also succeed in building trust and a feeling of ownership within the community, rather than being perceived as a project imposed by internationals who would eventually leave without taking the needs of the community into account:

“The municipality which started off with the YEPP project has been always open to the project and they have been able to connect to other partners by being able to explain the project to others. [The YEPP team] were able to create a lot of trust within the YEPP project so that people would go on being partners and forget about their skepticism, which is very understandable as a lot of NGOs just take from the town to do their project and do not give anything back.” - Member of local administration.

Additional key changes in partnerships across time were seen in continuing the link to the private sector and deepening the connection to the independent sector. In addition youth participation grew between successive site visits and throughout the history of the site (individual accomplishments will be discussed in the section on Youth Empowerment), and there was a growing awareness and recognition of YEPP in the public sector, both on local and cantonal levels. This last point in particular has meant that YEPP Tuzla now receives funding from the Municipality of Tuzla, which is a concrete indicator of the progression of the programme and the esteem with which the projects are viewed. These are all successes, particularly given the local and national context and the lack of openness to partnership discussed above.

An additional interesting initiative is YEPP Tuzla's involvement with TALDI. TALDI is a European Union funded initiative that provides training and consultation in project management for NGOs that is specifically tailored to the individual NGO – in the case of the Community Foundation of YEPP Tuzla, for example, they conducted a case study assessment of the programme's strengths and weaknesses in late 2005 before conducting capacity building and training courses in project management in 2006. Competition is fierce for this service (only three projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina are chosen a year), and being chosen as one of the TALDI projects is also another indicator of the community foundation's success and standing in the region.

Challenges for YEPP Tuzla

There were several challenges to partnerships that emerged from the interviews conducted for the external evaluation. YEPP Tuzla set for itself the goal of increasing the connection and participation of the private sector, although as discussed above there are serious limitations (the lack of a private sector, the lack of tax rewards for business co-operating with non-profits or public sector) that will constrain this process.

A persistent comment was that even after four years YEPP was not entirely successful at establishing its identity and profile in the community. YEPP as a project is complex and is very difficult to explain and package, which is something the YEPP Tuzla team would like to work on rectifying:

“Although we are rather connected with other CHIs abroad we don't have much dissemination in the country, not even country, in the region. I think that would be one step forward, to disseminate.”

This was echoed by the youth:

“I think I understand, but some people are in YEPP and they don't understand what it means. It is important for marketing YEPP to promote YEPP, because people should know what it means, where it is, in Europe in the whole world. And what does it mean? Is it for young people, is it for everybody? I think they should promote much more YEPP and the projects and the whole program.” – Youth.

Another major challenge (not limited to YEPP Tuzla) was related to the fact that most of the funding for new initiatives is still coming from the international community and funding decisions are taken far away from Tuzla. As a result the organisations may not be in the best position to know what is needed (or what has already been done). This of course is partly a matter of poor logistics and planning, and partly a result of the requirement of such organisations to demonstrate that they are doing something new and initiating change. For accountability reasons they are not permitted, for example, simply to provide funding to an already existing project that is successful. Rather, they are encouraged to fund new initiatives and innovations, regardless of whether they are genuinely needed:

“The biggest problem with the international organisations is they often simply come in with a certain project and start that project and they don't try and see what is there. ...They just go and do it and it often happens that they cover the same ground and it's not productive.” – Member of independent sector (and international NGO).

Another challenge was how to continue to capitalise on the progress that has been made in terms of the participation of the various sectors. This is discussed in more detail below.

Building Cross-Sectoral Partnerships

As outlined above, YEPP Tuzla did manage to bring all sectors to the table and maintain these cross-sectoral partnerships throughout the duration of the project. The standard challenge in cross-sectoral

partnership building is how to bridge the different working strategies of the sectors, although in the case of YEPP Tuzla a more pressing challenge was finding willing sector representatives with whom to partner. From the perspective of overcoming these obstacles, the members of YEPP Tuzla show that they are clearly committed to:

- Approaching and welcoming representatives of the various sectors into the project.
- Raising awareness about different goals and expectations across the different stakeholders and across the international/local presence.
- Engaging in a dialogue about what might and might not be needed to improve the quality of the partnership.

Still a challenge, at least as reflected in the interviews of September 2005, was:

- Keeping all members actively involved and contributing to the group dynamic.
- Structuring initiatives so that there is a more immediate sense of a YEPP identity.

Challenges from the policy world

YEPP Tuzla was actively supported by members of the municipal, cantonal, and federal level administration. On the national level, there were a number of projects on similar topics, especially those conducted by various international agencies and foundations, such as the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Interviews with international analysts in education and youth directorates revealed the complexity of work in partnerships with the government of BiH:

“It’s a system of intentional chaos. So you can’t figure out at all how certain things work but it’s actually perfect for the power structure to operate in this because, it’s really sovereign and they can decide this and you have no idea why they decided to do such a splendid thing and then they decide something else and you can’t figure it out, there is no transparency to the process behind. So you’re completely left in the dark. You do not know what to expect from them.”

As the quote above expresses, the highly complex nature of the bureaucracy coupled with at times deliberate obstructionism has created a situation where lines of responsibility are unclear and concrete change unexpected. This lack of accountability was exacerbated by the complicated governance structures of Bosnia and Herzegovina, comprising four levels of government (national, federal, cantonal, and municipal), all of which have different elements of responsibilities and different Ministries. Youth, always a notoriously difficult department, is particularly difficult to grasp. Youth issues are not represented in the national government, for example, and on the federal level are part of the Ministry of Education in the Serb Republic yet are linked to the Ministry of Education and Science as well as the Ministry of Culture and Sport in Bosnia. These features make it inherently difficult to develop cohesive youth policies, especially when combined with a resistance to change and limited resources (see National Policy Context in Introduction for further analysis on challenges in addressing the needs of community and youth).

Partnerships between sectors, especially with the private sector, were very uncommon. Indeed, it seemed that co-operation within the public sector itself could be trying enough, particularly between administrative departments that do not have a tradition of co-ordinating services or working cross-departmentally. Indeed, there seemed to be a particular unwillingness to engage actively:

“They always accept the ideas, you know, in that first contact. The problems always start later. They will always find some reason why they can’t go on co-operating, either they say they don’t

have the money but on the other hand they never ask for money. ...We often have to listen to things like 'they haven't got the time' or 'that is impossible' and all kinds of things. 'There are many more important problems' is one of the most common responses." - Member of international NGO.

Underlying all of this was the perception of corruption, which was mentioned frequently in interviews.

"It's just impossible here in Bosnia, there's just corruption, there is corruption everywhere. If you want to go to university you have to pay, if you want to pass an exam you have to pay, if you want to enroll your children in the first class in the first school you have to pay. If you want to go to the doctor you have to pay. Corruption is...systematic. I come from Italy, I have a good experience in that. But here it's more than in Italy, it's really incredible." - Member of YEPP Tuzla.

As previously mentioned, the private sector did not receive incentives or tax breaks for charitable donations or contributing to internships/voluntary programmes, which was also a serious impediment to partnership. It was also in a particularly precarious position:

"Well the situation of enterprises, of small private enterprises, is so difficult and legally so insecure as well. For example, the only legal body the private enterprise has is the chamber of commerce, and the chamber of commerce is actually an NGO, it's not even a state institution. So they are insecure and very skeptical of any requests that come from the municipality or government. There are private people and they might be interested at one point, but at the moment their own situation is too insecure." - Member of federal government.

Given this complexity and background, there was not much hope for making change on a national or federal level. Rather, the hope lay in deepening the ties to municipal and cantonal governments (where education and youth policy is primarily directed).

Lessons Learned

A number of lessons learned can be gathered from the work of YEPP Tuzla in cross-sectoral partnership building, including the importance of:

- Involving all sectors as early in the process as possible to instil a sense of ownership and active participation.
- Packaging and marketing YEPP in a concrete way to prospective partners in all sectors (and youth).
- Setting initial goals modestly so that there are tangible results early in the process to provide positive feedback as well as have something to show prospective partners.
- Understanding barriers to co-operation within a sector (e.g. public administration) and getting a commitment to action from leaders who can support the process of change.

The bottom line is always the willingness to see the benefits of partnership:

"Sometimes it's difficult if somebody is not doing the thing he should do but you rely on that and then you have to wait again. But in any case you have to work together, especially in such a small community, you have to. So it's not the question: will we or won't we? We just have to find better systems." - Independent sector representative.

Community Empowerment

Community empowerment can be thought of as being comprised of several facets, including:

- Identity (which here we broaden to include social/environmental/and health identity).
- Citizenship (in political/legal terms).
- Economics of/and education (school-work).
- Cultural (music, arts, etc.).

The Process

As already mentioned community empowerment and active community participation was a key goal for YEPP Tuzla and remained so throughout the lifespan of the project. Community projects in Tuzla operate in a particularly complex community dynamic. The community of Simin Han has an ethnically diverse population that contends with the unresolved social and political tensions characteristic of a community in post-conflict transition. It is marked by a high turn-over of residents (refugees from other parts of Bosnia returning to their homes; refugees returning to Tuzla), extremely high unemployment (estimated at over 60% in 2005), problems with drug and alcohol abuse as well as the psychological impact of the war. This lack of stability increases the difficulties in creating a sense of community, and decreases a willingness to invest in long-term goals. The lack of infrastructure, employment, and continuing trauma from the war all combine to create an atmosphere of insecurity and tenuousness. The task for the YEPP programme in this CHI is thus exponentially larger than the others.

Key changes

The kinds of projects the YEPP Tuzla is currently working on cut across all four dimensions of community empowerment as listed above. The strongest change observed across the site visits was the evolution and development of certain projects, such as the community foundation.

The Community Foundation Tuzla was an initiative that has become so successful that it is expanding to the city of Tuzla (from initially concentrating on Simin Han) and has received funding and support from the municipal government (in addition to its earliest, international funding). This community-based foundation which matches external funds to community donations and provides grants for local initiatives, it is something distinctively new for the area:

“Last year I was in a meeting with IRC about is it possible to establish a community foundation in Bosnia-Herzegovina at all? So the general opinion was that we are not sure that we are rich enough to have a community foundation. This time it’s not about richness, it’s more about willingness or how do you split money or whatever. So I think that it’s a moment that we are building something in that way, something completely new.” - Member of YEPP Tuzla.

Other community projects which are related to community identity (which here we broaden to include social/environmental/and health identity) include an ecology project, a workshop on violence in the community, and the establishment of the AGORA, a community centre designed to house various projects, meeting rooms, and the YEPP offices. The creation of a physical space from which to work and in which to house projects made a concrete difference:

“You could really see the centre pumping up with new ideas and with life by just pulling all this energy and ideas of young people so this was quite interesting.” - Member of YEPP Tuzla.

There were also a number of projects related to economics and education, such as business and entrepreneur training, various training programmes for the youth, and support for the open schools concept so that the community can be brought into the school to use the space and co-operate with school initiatives (e.g. vocational training in the primary school, developing the co-operative in the chemical school).

“We’ve really gone in the path of the community school in the true sense of the word where we take the best of the community but everybody benefits from it and you get the best back... this has really proven that with great efforts in the community everything is advancing and everybody profits from it.” – Teacher.

The cultural dimension was also strong with a number of projects focused on music, the arts, a radio show, and video with the Community Media project. YEPP Tuzla participated in the trans-national Community TV project, along with representatives of most of the other YEPP sites. The youth members of the YEPP Tuzla team created a short film (*Black Pearl*, a portrait of a high achieving Roma girl that is set against the often negative stereotypes of the Roma people in Bosnia and Herzegovina) that was screened at the 2006 YEPP-ALL conference. This film also won a Council of Europe prize (Migration and Roma Department) in November 2006.

It should be noted that these projects are packaged independently and so while the individual projects (e.g. the Community Foundation) are well known the name of YEPP is less well known (see Partnerships section for discussion).

Contextual Challenges for YEPP Tuzla

The biggest challenge for YEPP Tuzla was that all projects operated within the framework of the complicated and abstruse governance structure, which led to difficulties and delays, which in turn could create lost momentum and disappointment:

“We have so many levels, canton, federal and republic and that’s the first complication, you have three governments and three levels of everything and then there is a difference between two entities and their laws so I don’t know, it is still slow.” - Member of YEPP Tuzla.³⁹

A concrete example of how this complicates matters is the story of the community traffic light (to be erected along the highway to allow safer crossing). The traffic light itself was a donation and was received and stored at the community centre. The municipality is in charge of streets and so are required to approve and erect it, but as it involves the highway permission also had to be obtained from the Federal Ministry of Transport and Communication. Although permission was received from the federal level after a considerable delay, the traffic light was still stored in its box months afterwards:

“We got the donation from Germany, it’s ready to plant but we need the input cables and everything and that means from Tuzla [municipality]... and every time I asked them, when, when, what day should it be planted, but they say soon, soon, but they don’t want to work at it so we stay hard on that” - Youth.

Another pressing challenge for Tuzla is the need to rebuild infrastructure and the private sector and spirit of entrepreneurship in this country in transition:

“Now they have to re-invent the whole industry of the Tuzla region. And they are aware of that problem and they are working on it. I think that is the biggest gap and the biggest issue now for them to find the way how to keep this spirit of income generating activities and in the same time to adapt that to new/ old circumstances.” – Foundation representative.

³⁹In this response, the municipal level has been omitted. There are actually four levels of government, as described in the National Policy Context.

Lastly, another consideration is the fact that most funding for community projects comes from international sources, which have their own priorities and plans (see also Partnership section):

“The problem is that NGOs have a very specific status in BIH, so they are financed by private foreign money and they have their own individual focus groups and their own strategic planning and they come here already planned. So there’s very little room for the locals to guide them in what they would want to see most.” – Teacher.

These are all things that the YEPP Tuzla team has no control over, of course. Still, by persevering and having the patience and determination to succeed, a number of changes have been made. Local level actions can and do make a difference, as demonstrated in the following statement, in which one sees the importance of fostering a community identity, essential for community empowerment:

“In primary school they start to educate the young people and students to accept their culture. So, for example, they like more and more our culture and not for example the British culture, and want to be like the British. So they know they are from Bosnia, Herzegovina and that their culture is good and they start to like it and be better people and start to work for their community and make their life better.” – Youth.

Challenges from the policy world

As already discussed in the section on Partnerships, the most difficult challenge for community development projects was the sheer intricacy of the governance structures in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Incompatible and contradictory policies at different levels of the system (regarding Youth Policy, for example, or the support for entrepreneurs as explained in the Partnerships section), coupled with a perceived passivity and unwillingness to effect change on the part of the policy makers effectively stymied innovative community development policies and initiatives. The entrepreneurs we spoke to were in many cases pursuing initiatives without waiting for formal approval, as the process can take years:

“The problem is that since the government makes it so complicated for people, most people wash their hands and give up. We’re almost there, we’re at the 95 percentile so we’re not giving up and there’s no chance of us abandoning ship - but many people don’t make it that far.”

It is worth noting here that since late 2002 the Bulldozer Initiative has been addressing this challenge. Run by various actors of the international community and bilateral embassies, it aims at economic reform and business climate improvement from the bottom up by engaging fundamental segments of the population as active constituents for reform and stability. It is designed to identify specific business roadblocks that are exclusively focused on the entrepreneur’s experience. The intent is to amend a few articles in a law, rather than to overhaul the law completely, which helps to minimise political opposition by leaving the overall equilibrium of the system in place. By publicising the successes broadly, the initiative creates a dynamic that is now facilitating the implementation of structural reforms.⁴⁰

The presence of international organisations and funds, although a necessary and an integral part of the rebuilding process, also contributed to this complexity in that all national policies and policy-making came under international scrutiny or required international funding to implement. This led to concerns about autonomy, as well as a perception of widespread corruption (see Partnerships and Youth Empowerment sections for further discussion).

There were also surprising gaps in this over-regulated system: the governance for small private enterprises, for example, was controlled by an NGO and not a state institution (see Partnerships section).

⁴⁰<http://www->

wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2004/09/09/000012009_20040909150058/Rended/PDF/WPS3390.pdf

This lapse made it difficult for community entrepreneurs to operate in a system that effectively did not have a place, or regulations, for them. As we have seen, this had a direct negative impact on the ability and willingness of such entrepreneurs (and indeed the entire private sector) to participate in internship or community capacity-building projects. Far from receiving tax incentives for philanthropic actions, they were actually taxed on donations to charitable community organisations and events.

Lessons Learned

A number of lessons learned can be collected from the work of YEPP Tuzla in community development and empowerment, including the importance of:

- Encouraging the participation of youth in community planning discussions, and listening to the voice of the youth.
- Bringing together all sectors in an honest appraisal of what works and what does not work, and the best strategy to move forward.
- Having clear agreement on responsibilities for community development initiatives and expectations for action.
- Devising realistic community development plans that are holistic in nature and include long-term strategies for community renewal.

The last point also implies having the courage and patience to keep working for change despite the inertia in the system and the difficulties in navigating a governance system in transition.

Youth Empowerment

Youth in Tuzla (and BiH) belong generally to one of three categories: 1) “locals” from Tuzla who remained there during and after the war; 2) “refugees”, who are from another area of BiH but came to Tuzla as refugees during the war; and 3) “returnees” who are from BiH (any area), left the country during the war to go to Germany or another neutral territory, and have now returned with their families.

The Process

Given their personal and community history, the youth of Tuzla and Simin Han were initially difficult to reach and involve in the YEPP programme. As a result, during the 2004 site visit there was a core group of very involved youth (who were coincidentally away on a YEPP youth exchange at the same time), and a clear goal of the YEPP Tuzla team to continue encouraging youth participation. By the time of the second site visit, youth participation had increased and was quite strong within Simin Han:

“We do as much as we can and the young people they are really coming more and more, just want to know what they can do in Simin Han for themselves and for the good of the others.” – Youth.

Community empowerment and youth empowerment are of course inextricably linked such that any programme focussed on youth will invariably have an impact on the broader community in which they reside. However it is possible to identify a number of key changes in youth empowerment across the timing of the two site visits.

Key changes

YEPP Tuzla has had a number of concrete outcomes from their work including the project on leadership training, which was aimed at empowering young people to let themselves be heard. This project is currently moving into a new phase in the primary schools, using graduates of the programme as trainers for the new participants. This project has been very much appreciated by the youth, and considered necessary as well:

“I learn how to get people to listen to me, you know, I can be on a council and just sit there and if I try to say something nobody listens to me. Or well the youth voices are listening to me, but the adults [look like] they listen to me, but when I finish, they just continue like I didn't say anything.” – Youth.

Another successful project was Youth Bank Tuzla, which originated in Simin Han and was enlarged to include Tuzla at the initiative of the youth participants. Run on a very small budget, it is designed to provide funding for youth projects and also build capacity to plan and manage projects (through proposal writing, evaluating the grant applications, and monitoring the projects, all of which are done by the youth).

“The youth bank is something I'm very pleased with. I like their method of work, because it's very empowering as the youth do it all themselves. It's not someone browbeating them. They are actually doing it all themselves with a little bit of advice along the way.” - Independent sector representative.

In addition, a key change was seen in the attitude of the youth. The earliest interviews spoke of the bleak future awaiting the youth:

“The young people here they need something in which to believe. Because sometimes you speak with them and they have no hope. In the beginning they just want to leave Simin Han. The majority of them and especially the young people who are 18 years old and older, really they have no perspective here, no job. They finish high school, they don't have anything they can do. They just sit there and no one really cares about them.” - Member of YEPP Tuzla.

The youth that had participated in YEPP, however, although they were aware of their employment prospects, also spoke of the ability to make a difference and to control their own fate:

“I would like after highschool, to study, maybe in Tuzla. I would like to go somewhere with a better university ... I would like to study and I think that I will do that. And also I would like to stay in Tuzla, to find a good job and to live here and to help here. I don't know if it will possible, but I would like to try.”

In addition a key change was in the number of youth who had participated in a formal international YEPP project. Youth from Tuzla participated in all YEPP transnational workshops and the YEPP-ALL conferences, as well as several exchanges with partners outside of YEPP (e.g. projects from countries of South Eastern Europe).

All in all, the youth projects of YEPP Tuzla were very successful and the YEPP Tuzla team was justifiably proud of what they had accomplished:

“You know the youth programs are quite established now. They were just starting then, the youth bank. The finished the leadership training and the youth bank and they were starting the real work with the community so now all of this is well underway. And I would say it's a big step from this small model.”

Challenges for YEPP Tuzla

The greatest challenge facing YEPP Tuzla in terms of youth empowerment was to continue to increase the participation of the youth, especially to continue to reach the most at-risk youth. This was an explicit goal of the YEPP Tuzla team and the youth partners.

Another challenge is how to balance expectations with the corruption of the system in Bosnia and Herzegovina, of which the youth were only too aware, as the following exchange between the external evaluator (TB) and two youth (I, I2) demonstrates:

I: Kids my age want to finish school and they want to study but, I don't know, in Bosnia there is a lot of corruption and they think if they have money they actually don't have to finish everything. That's the problem with somebody who wants to finish, who has very good grades, he can't, that's the problem.

I2: Or for somebody who knows they can get the diploma. He's got a problem with the professor and the professor won't let him have the exam. You don't have to pass the exam. You know what you are doing, and you are rich and you have the diploma. You get a diploma, you get a job, and then you don't know what to do.

I: And in the competition for some subjects unfortunately, and you go and you study hard and you see that somebody else gets the diploma. And he's first but he isn't actually.

TB: Do you see that a lot?

I: Yes, unfortunately. We just can't do anything. You see but you can't do anything.

Challenges from the policy world

Youth work, cutting as it does across education, employment, health, justice, welfare, housing, and various other ministerial departments, poses a particular challenge for coordinated policy-making. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the process of working with all four levels of government and attempting to make changes on a policy level becomes particularly problematic (see Partnership and Community Empowerment sections).

"There are thousands of meetings and that is the reason why it is frustrating - how to lobby when you have 14 governments, 16 parliaments, 142 municipalities, it's an amazing number of institutions, with the additional comment that these institutions are also not always capable of understanding these issues so it's even more difficult." - National youth representative.

In addition the political process remains highly reactionary. One national representative spoke of his frustration at watching debates on the adoption of the Bologna Process for harmonising standards of higher education (which in itself was uncontroversial) get derailed due to tactical considerations:

"You have one political party that mostly represents Croat people, and they notice if that law is going to be implemented, there'll not be one pure clear Croatian university in Mostar, which is not such a big problem, but it is a problem because it is the key and the strongest point of that political party ... Then you come to the Republica Serbska, [where] political parties are a priori against anything that is at a central level, with the same reason because then they are losing the power to control all their ... and that is not only Serbs, there are also Bosnian Croats, the international community or even non partisan institutions, so that private interest, they're also stopping the law..."

National stakeholders spoke of two essential problems in the process: 1) getting the youth themselves motivated and able to act, moving away from the passive role that many have adopted as a response to the war and the immense inertia in the bureaucracy; and 2) getting the policy makers to support youth empowerment and activism, moving them away from the passive role they have also adopted in their approach to their work. The National Youth Organisation, for example, is based in Sarajevo but at the moment has stronger ties on the policy level (and more positive feedback) to contacts outside BiH than within its own country.

Yet the pace of change was slow, and there is a disconnect between words and actions, even on the local level (where much of the youth work becomes located):

“In fact in every town it is obvious and everybody accepts that it is necessary to have something like a youth policy. They realise that young people have special problems and they accept that they have to be addressed in some way but from that step onwards the co-operation is very different. Like for example in Tuzla, according to what mood they are in, they sometimes co-operate and they sometimes don't.” - National organisation representative.

International organisations like the OSCE have youth, democracy, and education departments that are also actively working for change. The Democracy department is running a youth entrepreneur programme (YES) that has had limited success. The Education department spoke of the difficulty in implementing change in a heavily intertwined system that relies too heavily on a number of different government levels, particularly in terms of education and curriculum development. Yet they too are constrained in what they can do by the system of governance and tactical manoeuvring.

Lessons Learned

YEPP Tuzla has done very well at bringing youth into the programme and empowering them to become active and vibrant members of the project and the community. A number of lessons can be gleaned from the work of YEPP Tuzla in youth empowerment, including the importance of:

- Involvement of youth in the very earliest stages of project development to encourage a sense of ownership.
- Encouraging less active youth to bring their voice to the table and let themselves be heard.
- Getting the local administration to acknowledge the voice of youth in designing and delivering youth-related projects.

Trans-national Cooperation

As explained in the section on Reporting, in this report trans-national co-operation will be touched on only briefly, as the final cross-cutting report in this series of case studies will focus more thoroughly on the trans-national co-operation of YEPP.

YEPP Tuzla took part in the first trans-national workshop in 2003 in Finland, as well as the subsequent workshops in the other YEPP sites and in Berlin. At the YEPP-ALL conference in January 2005 the opening address was provided by a youth from Tuzla. YEPP Tuzla did not host an official YEPP transnational workshop, but did host two transnational youth workshops in 2005 with other partners (a Leadership training workshop with a Swedish group and a Resource Centre for Community Centres with a number of participants from South Eastern Europe).

Successes

For the youth

The transnational co-operation was uniformly perceived as a very important and positive aspect of YEPP by the youth. Youths were excited to have the opportunity to travel and get to meet participants from other sites and cultures:

“I went to Finland, and it was nice to meet these new people. They are different than us but not so different, too.”

It was also considered a learning experience in that they had an opportunity to perhaps gain exposure and learn about new ways of being, or innovative projects, or different approaches than they would have had at home. Most importantly, they learned that other countries have problems too:

“We think, well, we are Bosnian, so of course we have problems. But then we see that these other places, these Finnish, the Italians, they have problems too.”

“And then, you know, when people from Kristinestad come and say ‘this is nice’ then you get more self-confident, and that's the idea of the YEPP actually.” - Member of YEPP Tuzla.

For the community

The opportunity to meet the participants from the other sites and listen to their experiences and ideas was also appreciated by the broader community, many of whom gained something from the experience as well:

“I very happy to meet the Finnish person, the person on the Finnish side who's doing this kind of work and to exchange experiences. I learned a lot from this exchange and I could see how they could work on similar things in spite of them being developed countries rather than Bosnia that's in transition, let's say to being developed. We felt very happy that somebody coming from Finland who was also involved in government would have similar experiences.” - Member of local administration.

For YEPP

It also helped the work of YEPP within the community, in terms of concretising the image of the project and exposing the community to it. In addition, the workshops and other international events were key for all participants, including the YEPP Tuzla team, in that they created a more concrete sense of partnership:

“It's nice when there was this meeting here last year with all the coordinators, and the steering community, because on that level they have the possibility to touch, really to touch, to speak, to hear people, really it was so nice.”

The workshops also allowed for cross-fertilisation of ideas, as the sites shared initiatives and innovations with each other:

“We have taken some examples from Kristinestad from their ‘culture café’, and they ... mentioned once, you should have your postcards, then it came to our minds like, ‘okay this is a good idea’ so we are somehow having all these things in our minds. We don't know if we will succeed but you know, it helps you to change your course if somebody frankly tells you, ‘okay, I don't see the purpose of this. Or, I see the great purpose of this’. So it helps. And I know how young people appreciate this.” – Member of YEPP Tuzla.

Challenges

A central challenge was related to outreach and inclusion and how best to reach the most vulnerable. In the beginning, when contact with the youth was limited, there was not a systematic way to access the youth and give them all an equal opportunity to participate, and this was perceived as a challenge to overcome. As more and more youth became involved with YEPP Tuzla, this challenge was reduced somewhat, but there was still concern about reaching the most vulnerable.

Different criteria in picking the participants also led to quite a diverse group of youth. In some ways this was seen as a positive and strong opportunity, in that the youth had a chance to experience not only different languages and cultures, but also different values, ages, and goals. For others, the group was not uniform enough to really establish equality among all participants, and they suggested that more care be put into the combination of participants:

“I met a lot of great guys and I would love to go there again ... but mostly the people that came there came to have fun and the concept of the visit was not to have fun it was to do something. Also I think that the age of the people was not appropriate.”

There was also the element of scale: how does one move beyond a week-long visit and really try to create a continuing partnership dynamic among the youth? This is the real challenge of these kinds of programmes:

“What I think is the weakness, is more joint projects between the youth in different centers, because that is essential. Not just the institutional echelons or the coordinators, researchers, etc, meet to discuss in different places, etc, but how actually the youth, in terms of concrete projects can work together. So the community media to me was a great initiative.” - Member of YEPP Tuzla.

In addition, there was a question about how best to share the new experiences and knowledge of the youth such that those who could not take part in the workshops could also benefit:

“A program such as YEPP with an international background is obviously a good thing, ... however it focuses [only] on Simin Han. About 95% of the children in Simin Han have been on some sort of exchange and have benefited from this. However when they return they have nowhere really to share their knowledge or share what they've acquired... it's still somewhat of a closed milieu and these people don't necessarily interact with other people enough. [In] the rest of the municipality there is a much greater number of people [who] don't really benefit from the experience of these few because they [the international participants] don't share the wealth of ideas and the wealth of what they've learned.” – Teacher.

Overall, however, the trans-national work was perceived very positively and as an essential part of the programme:

“The most important thing was to realise that we're not the only ones who have problems. The second is to realise that the way we deal with our problems can also help others, and the third is that the others are willing to help us as well.” - Member of local administration.

Sustainability:

One of the key concerns of YEPP as a whole is the on-going sustainability of the programme and the projects it supported. In this vein YEPP Tuzla were ready to move beyond Simin Han and challenge themselves to operate in the rest of Tuzla as well:

“I somehow see that we are isolated. I have to develop, or to show to other regions of the municipality of Tuzla, why they should support us and not others.” - Member of YEPP Tuzla.

This was supported by other members of the Tuzla community:

“YEPP has been a very positive influence... Simin Han is like a mirror of what Tuzla should eventually be. My personal opinion after having been involved and having attended the meetings is that this YEPP program should be expanded to the entire city of Tuzla.” – Teacher.

Another very positive result of YEPP Tuzla is that it evolved from being an international initiative (in funding and project coordination, research, etc) to a “Bosnian” project that has become adept at fundraising from a variety of sources. This is, in a way, symbolic of the project and the area coming into its own, and is a validation of a model of empowerment as well as a successful example of transitioning international initiatives to locally owned ones. The importance of achieving this balance between international inputs and local flexibility is something that has pre-occupied many of the stakeholders:

“It is good to envisage right from the beginning that if you have an international manager of the project in site, and really to start from the beginning to work with local people who will continue that work later on. Because if you have internationals and then they leave, it's a vacuum and it's not good. So in that sense I think the balance between the sensitivity to local context and bringing this international experience, I think is very good.” – Foundation representative.

YEPP Tuzla has received ongoing funding commitments from three foundations (Freudenberg, Charles Stewart Mott, and Soros) and looks set to continue its project work for the next few years, at the very least. Although the formal research component will not continue, the work of the coordinator and LSG will. Given their considerable success and the growing financial support from the municipal administration, as well as the considerable expertise in grant applications for foundations and the EU, YEPP Tuzla is in a very good position to continue its work for many years to come.

Recommendations for YEPP II

For future versions of YEPP, the lessons learned as highlighted in each section above should serve as useful guides for future action. In addition, however, one unresolved challenge stands out as requiring particular attention:

- Working on a long-term project raises important implications for partnership agreements, including continuity, shared goals, and expected outcomes. The various partners may find it difficult to continue supporting YEPP if expected outcomes are not delivered, and YEPP itself may have difficulties delivering if they are unable to maintain continuity in staff and projects. This could have long-term repercussions for the project site and participants.
 - Establishing explicit agreements on goals and expected outcomes before entering into the partnership are recommended to address this.

Conclusions

Any evaluation of YEPP Tuzla is complicated by several factors. YEPP is a research and development programme with different products to stimulate youth and community empowerment and partnership according to the local conditions. As such it is difficult to evaluate, especially given the complexity of the variables under scrutiny.

In addition, its insertion into a vibrant community means that YEPP Tuzla did not start with a blank slate, but rather entered into ongoing networks, relationships, and projects. Projects that were already started were continued and nourished under YEPP, projects that were invented elsewhere were adapted for local purposes, and groups allied themselves with the programme without considering themselves to be an

output of YEPP. There is thus a series of non-causal relationships between products and projects which makes it that much harder to measure change.

Despite this, YEPP Tuzla was clearly a great success. Many key changes were outlined above, including very successful concrete projects and more intangible changes to attitudes and expectations. Although they may not like the label, YEPP Tuzla was definitely a model of a successful YEPP site:

“You know, I heard so [that we were a model] but when you are a model, there’s a lot of pressure. I don’t like to be a model! I’m very satisfied now... now there are some new promising developments and the foundations [are] happy to support something like that because that is something that they helped to develop with their initiatives, so I think this is positive.”

ORGANISATION DE COOPÉRATION ET DE DÉVELOPPEMENT ÉCONOMIQUES



ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

THE NATURE OF THE NEF OECD/CERI COLLABORATION AND THE DESIGN OF THE EVALUATION

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1. The NEF/OECD/CERI collaboration

The Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme (YEPP) is designed as a collaborative venture between the Network of European Foundations for Innovative Co-operation (NEF) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI).

This collaboration provides the opportunity to develop a pro-active forum bringing together European and North American foundations and the public sector, in a long-term co-operation.

The purpose is to maximise investments in policy and practice aimed at developing sustainable strategies to address problems being experienced by children and youth in their communities that are liable to stultify their development and have the potential of leading to social exclusion. In addition, the collaboration will work with NGOs and the private sector, as well as other concerned parties, in promoting and implementing innovations.

This arrangement represents a unique opportunity to develop a co-ordinated approach across the sectors involved to attack the self-evident problems that exist in our societies for children and youth (elaborated fully in Krüger, Picht et al, 2001) and, at the same time, to understand the nature of the problems and some solutions more completely. The involvement of the various sectors provides for many perspectives to be incorporated in developing successful approaches and very importantly in establishing their sustainability.

Furthermore, this working relationship opens the way for a dissemination programme that can capitalise on the resources that exist within the various agencies involved and which can impact on different elements of the system and in different ways than would be the case if the parties involved were working alone. As with other aspects of the work, dissemination plans will be jointly developed and agreed by the co-ordinating team as the programme progresses. It is anticipated that both parties will be committed to this component of the work in terms of producing publications, developing internet sites, arranging conferences etc.

In concrete terms the collaboration has led to both organisations having commitments in this area as part of their agreed programmes of work in the coming years. These commitments go beyond the strategic level, where complementary but essentially independent programmes would be run, to an operational level covering planned co-ordination.

For instance, this arrangement has already led to representatives of the two organisations attending each other's planning meetings and to the joint preparation of the operational proposals. This co-operation has occurred not only in the development of the evaluation plan but also in the construction of the dimensions of the overall project intended to meet the research needs of both partners. In this way a balance between policy and practical matters and responsibilities has been established leading to the following programme description.

2. The three main elements of the NEF/OECD/CERI collaboration

The main thrust of the programme is to identify public-private partnerships that are providing effective provision to support disadvantaged children and young people and their communities and then to describe, evaluate and disseminate information about the partnerships themselves and the nature of the innovations. The programme falls naturally into three elements that will run in parallel. Furthermore, the schemata, around which the work identified in 1, 2 and 3 below will be determined and described, will be

developed by the NEF/OECD/CERI team, in concert with representatives of participating countries and independent experts and other interested parties.

2.1. Element 1: Centres of High Intensity

Public-private partnerships will be operating in what have become known by the YEPP development team as Centres of High Intensity (CHIs).

“CHIs are sites in urban or rural areas, which have a crucial need to re-establish social cohesion for the benefit of young people and the communities. In these sites aspects of youth and community development are already being addressed with a variety of intervention strategies by the public, private and independent sectors but at the same time the need for a more complex strategy can be identified.” (Kruger et al⁴¹, (2001).

The five initial sites selected by YEPP, include: Antwerp (Belgium), Kristinestad (Finland), Lille (France), Mannheim (Germany) and Tuzla (Bosnia Herzegovina). Further contacts are being made in Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom and the United States. Based on an assessment of the key challenges and needs as well as on a mapping of the resources and assets of the particular site a local/regional operational plan is developed in cooperation with the YEPP team to initiate joint action and to provide the best support based on a holistic view and multi-sectoral approach aiming at sustainable youth and community development. The operational plans of the initial CHIs focus on contributing towards empowerment of young people and their communities through:

- Supporting education and training, strengthening employability, self-initiative and entrepreneurship.
- Promoting the economic, social and cultural development.
- Supporting social cohesion.
- Active citizenship and community action.

The operational definition of the target group of YEPP addresses all children and youth aged 0 – 26 within their communities in the Centres of High Intensity, although it is not expected that each CHI will necessarily cover the whole age range. The Programme’s strategies aim at holistic and preventive interventions in systems and recognise the individual as interlinked with the community at all levels. The youth and community empowerment approach leads to learning and living democracy only when all children and youth, their families and communities are included and receive the support they need taking into account prevailing predictive risk factors, *e.g.* in Tuzla, youth are representative on the local support group.

Besides the local support, YEPP stimulates and provides trans-national dialogue, exchanges and interactive networks of CHIs at all levels.

Initial descriptions of some CHIs and the development of initial operational plans are given elsewhere (Kruger et al, 2001).

⁴¹ Krüger, A., Picht, R., et al (2001) Youth empowerment and social cohesion: Learning for active citizenship - A European and Trans-Atlantic Co-operation Programme. Monograph.

Under the aegis of NEF, a number of European and North American foundations, are providing support for the development and evaluation of the CHIs over a period of 3 - 5 years. One section of YEPP receives funding from the European Commission, DG Employment and Social Affairs, focussing on the issue of “Overcoming Fragmentation: New Forms of Partnership in Combating and Preventing Social Exclusion”.

The evaluation of the CHIs will be conducted under the NEF/OECD/CERI accord. Methods proposed are elaborated in later sections.

2.2. *Element 2: The general nature of existing public-private partnerships*

Under the aegis of OECD /CERI a general overview of existing public-private partnerships, focused on disadvantaged children and youth living in particularly disadvantaged areas in OECD and collaborating countries will be carried out. This study will aim to identify and describe types of partnerships that have evolved and their impact on children and youth in various social policy areas such as education, employment and health.

2.3. *Element 3: Case studies and policy reviews*

Under the aegis of OECD/CERI further case studies, paralleling the CHIs, will be completed possibly in the context of more general policy reviews related to at risk or disadvantaged children and youth in countries showing especial interest.

3. The description and evaluation of YEPP

3.1. *Evaluation challenges*

There are a number of challenges that a programme of this sort presents particularly in regard to meeting different requirements of the public and private sectors. For instance, public sector interest would emphasise policy formation while the private sector may be more concerned with the direct impact on the individual and how their interventions and particular investments are working. Although these two aims are not incompatible, the different sectors require that different data demands be met, and this implies the use of a range of evaluation methods which in this paper we classify under two headings of external and internal evaluation and which is a concept developed jointly by the NEF/OECD/CERI team.

External evaluations will be a mixture of quantitative and qualitative measurements carried out by independent experts thus providing more objective data.

Internal evaluations will focus on the processes involved in the development of each CHI and will be carried out by local researchers closely linked with the programme implementation.

In the narrative reports of the work these two forms of evaluation will be brought together.

In the next sections evaluation plans are elaborated in the context of the three main elements of the study identified above.

3.2. *Element 1: Centres of High Intensity (CHIs)*

3.2.1. *Describing and evaluating CHIs*

It is important to recognise that a complex project of this type will make new demands on evaluation methods and what follows elaborates on successful strategies already adopted by OECD/CERI in its work on services integration (e.g. OECD⁴², 1996).

This work developed a comparative strategy to collect data in four areas: the context of the project, or the background in which the innovations were being implemented; the inputs into the project which could relate to resources, personnel etc.; the process of the project development or how the ideas were implemented; and the products or outcomes or the initiative. This plan was derived from the CIPP model (context, input, process, product) of Stufflebeam⁴³, 1988).

Information on these four domains were gleaned from actors at various levels of the system. These covered those involved in the legal framework of policy-making (the mandating level), those involved in turning laws into applicable policies (strategic level), those involved with determining how these policies should be applied on the ground (operational level) and those actually implementing them (field level) which covered both professionals and the families and youth who were involved in the programmes. In this way the perspectives of the people involved in the CHI can be sampled. Methods used to gather data included, questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, document analysis, direct observation etc.

This basic evaluation model allows for a full consideration of the views of all those involved in the development of the programme including the young people who are the users whose experiences and views must provide feedback to the programme funders and be given full consideration in further investment strategies. This evaluation model will be used flexibly to guide data collection in the CHIs in providing information pertinent to the data areas identified and has been used in pilot work completed so far.

The description of the CHIs and their evaluation are closely intertwined with the two evaluation components that in this paper are called external and internal. They will use the CIPP structure as applied to the areas identified below. The external evaluation will be undertaken by researchers who are 'external' to the development of the system, while the internal evaluation will be carried out by those who are more closely involved with the day to day implementation of the country project.

There are three aspects of the external evaluation. These are:

- A full description of the project
- The completion of a locally derived needs assessment and resource/asset mapping
- Continuing visits by the external team over the course of the programme.

These three aspects are described more fully below.

The internal evaluation will be carried out by an internal evaluator and will focus on personal and structural change as perceived from those working within the system. This aspect of the evaluation is described more fully below.

⁴² OECD (1996) Successful services for our children and families at risk. Paris, OECD.

⁴³ Stufflebeam, D. (1988) The CIPP model for programme evaluation. In G. Madaus, M. Scriven and D. Stufflebeam (eds.), Evaluation models. Kluwer-Nijhoff, Boston.

3.2.2. *Basic description and external evaluation*

Basic description

First phase

The first requirement is to provide an historical context leading to a full description of the CHIs. It is proposed that these descriptions are compiled from a number of dimensions based on considerations of:

- The exact boundaries of the location covered determined by geography and the political/administrative considerations.
- Their economies.
- Basic data on the situation of this particular site (e.g. employment, education, lifelong learning opportunities) and descriptions of the clients the programmes want to impact on.

In addition the identification of resource flows within each CHI will be determined. Information will be sought from:

- The public sector, covering local, central, Federal EU and other sources.
- Foundations.
- NGOs, (associations, youth groups, etc.).
- Business.
- Churches and other religious groups.

Second phase

The second phase will be to carry out a locally derived needs' assessment. This will be determined through discussions with the local community at all levels - from policy-makers through field-workers to those in need of support on the ground. The main purpose of this is to identify basic goals that the community wishes to achieve and which will form the basis of operational plans considered in the context of support already provided by the sectors involved and leading to new initiatives. Questions to be asked will include:

- What are the problems/challenges faced and from whose perspective?
- What are the available resources (financial, human support, in kind, etc)?
- What has been done in the areas YEPP is concerned with? Who is involved?
- What plans exist already?
- What outcomes is it hoped will be achieved?

The description of the CHIs is to be understood as a continuous process and will be up-dated and enhanced by the insider view of the local researcher.

External evaluation

It is proposed that there will be visits twice a year from the team of external evaluators. There will be two people in each team one of whom will be a native language speaker the other, for purposes of continuity, will be the full-time researcher based at CERI. This evaluation will be co-ordinated by OECD/CERI in close collaboration with the NEF/Programme Implementation team.

Both quantitative and qualitative data will be gathered from those involved at various levels of the system (mandating, strategic, operational and field). Areas focused on will include:

- The nature and development of the public/private partnerships and the extent to which objectives have been met.
- The general functioning of the programme.
- Demographic profiles.
- The role of information and communication technologies.
- Youth development, emphasising youth empowerment (personal and structural, *e.g.* self-efficacy, trust, identity, choice).
- The economic situation, *e.g.* employment.
- Education, *e.g.* school retention, attainment.
- Culture.
- Community development including leadership issues.
- Community engagement (varieties of social capital).
- Justice.
- Levels of violence and racism.
- Other threats to democracy, etc.

Please note, more detailed criteria identifying successful outcomes will be formulated on the basis of operational plans for each CHI and will be described in the manual for local researchers.

3.2.3. Internal evaluation/Participatory action research

Based on the operational plans within each CHI, arising from the first and second phases of the work described above, YEPP-related actions concerning educational, cultural, economic and social aspects will be taking place. The purpose of this part of the study is to evaluate personal and structural changes from the inside by using an action research approach to understand more fully the on-going process of change and the impact of the interventions.

In its strictest form, participatory action research involves using the participants (one or more) in the innovative change process to record their experiences and those of others as the process of change unfolds.

In this way a view, albeit subjective, of change as perceived by a participant in the system is made available and which provides a very different orientation to those working from a more objective external perspective. In the proposal here it is planned to use an internal evaluator who will be part of the general work, who can move fluidly about the system, sometimes acting as a 'friendly critic' but not so fully involved with the implementation of the change process that they lose all objectivity, although they will be more subjective than the visiting team of the external evaluation. In this way, the internal evaluation will focus on two main areas:

- The background, the main changes and developments and the process of the change.
- The type of innovations and their impact.

The method to be used will be continuous monitoring through structured diaries, discussions, interviews, field notes and observations. The internal evaluation will give constant feedback to those involved in the CHI work in order to promote and further develop the change process and the quality of outcomes.

The details of this part of the evaluation will also be developed via meetings of experts and discussion with sites. It is important to emphasise that the same method will be applied in all sites as far as that is realistically possible. They will be carried out by a native language speaker.

The internal evaluation will be under the responsibility of and co-ordinated by the NEF/Programme Implementation Team in close co-operation with OECD/CERI.

3.3. *Element 2: The general nature of existing public-private partnerships*

This element of the work will be developed under the aegis of OECD/CERI. The purpose is to gain a more general understanding of the type of public-private partnerships that are emerging to respond effectively to the needs of disadvantaged students and communities. The first step, in collaboration with participating countries, would be to carry out a mapping and classification of the approaches being taken. Member countries of OECD will provide information on public-private partnership innovation based on an agreed framework. The framework will be determined at a meeting of participating countries also attended by the NEF/OECD/CERI team, experts and other interested parties. The reports produced by the countries will be synthesised by OECD/CERI. This work would develop hand in hand with literature reviews. It is anticipated that this part of the study would continue throughout 2002 and 2003. One result will be the identification of other possible CHIs as well as other sites that the countries themselves will be asked to describe. This component makes up the third element of the study.

3.4. *Element 3: Case studies and policy reviews*

This part of the whole programme is likely to commence in 2003/2004 and will be carried out under the aegis of OECD/CERI. As for element 2 the exact details of how this will work will be discussed with participating OECD countries. The design of the case studies will be developed in collaboration and will reflect the work underway in the CHIs. Thus the evaluative frameworks developed in the CHIs will be used in the case studies. Most emphasis will be on the external evaluation since these studies will not have a longitudinal development component as in the CHIs. The outcomes of these studies will be synthesised by CERI.

An additional feature of this element is the possibility of conducting policy reviews. It may be argued that this is a separate element but could be an important component of developing relevant policy

frameworks for at risk children and youth which would draw on the partnership approach on the ground and as developed in the NEF/OECD/CERI collaboration.

The exact details of how this will work, will be developed in discussion with participating countries and the programme team and other interested parties and the organisation and reporting will be the responsibility of the CERI secretariat.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

OUTLINE OF OCED/CERI/NEF COLLABORATION AND YEPP EVALUATION PLAN: 2003-2005(DRAFT: 02-01-03)

Project:

Promoting Partnerships for Inclusion: Developing and Evaluating Cross-Sectoral Partnerships and Community-based Approaches for Students at Risk (or YEPP)

Sponsors:

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) and the
Network of European Foundations for Innovative Co-operation (NEF)

January 2, 2003

Background

The OECD/CERI and NEF have undertaken a major project to develop and evaluate collaboration/partnership models designed to strengthen the development of human and social capital with particular attention to economically depressed communities. In both the research and public policy literature, the development of cross-sectoral partnerships is frequently recommended as a primary vehicle for building communities, promoting equitable education and working life outcomes for all youth, responding to expanded diversity and maintaining quality. Strengthening links between community and educational institutions is a key element in the process of promoting social values, citizenship and strengthening social cohesion.

Launched by OECD in 2001, the “Promoting Partnerships for Inclusion” Project has 4 main objectives:

- To develop a knowledge base of current community-based innovative partnerships. This will include in particular international reviews of the literature, gathering of information and analysis on how innovations have been evaluated and linked to student outcomes.
- To determine in what ways new forms of partnership, within and between the public and private sectors, are emerging and their impacts on disadvantaged students. Once the components and practices of effective partnerships are identified, a strategy will be developed for benchmarking, transferring, and evaluating innovative partnership practices in cross-cultural settings.
- To analyse the information for policy development.
- To disseminate the results, including examples of best practice.

The Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme (YEPP), which is the centrepiece of the Partnerships for Inclusion Project, is designed as a collaborative venture between the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) and the Network of European Foundations for Innovative Co-operation (NEF). This collaboration provides the opportunity to develop a pro-active forum bringing together European and North American foundations and the public sector, in a long-term co-operation.

The purpose is to maximise investments in policy and practice aimed at developing sustainable strategies to address problems being experienced by children and youth in their communities that are liable to stultify their development and have the potential of leading to social exclusion. In addition, the collaboration will work with NGOs and the private sector, as well as other concerned parties, in promoting and implementing innovations.

This arrangement represents a unique opportunity to develop a co-ordinated approach across the sectors involved to attack the self-evident problems that exist in our societies for children and youth (elaborated fully in Krüger, Picht *et al*, 2001) and, at the same time, to understand the nature of the problems and some solutions more completely. The involvement of the various sectors provides for many perspectives to be incorporated in developing successful approaches and very importantly in establishing their sustainability.

In the US, Canada, and other developed nations, the complex challenges associated with providing improved educational opportunities for at-risk children and youth are well documented in the research literature (Wang, Reynolds, & Walberg, 1988). Recently, long-term longitudinal studies in urban centres

have revealed that preschool participants, when compared to non-participants and following adjustments for covarying factors, had higher rates of high school completion, more years of education, and lower juvenile arrest and violent crime arrest rates (Reynolds and others, 2001). Other longitudinal studies of school achievement (Lee and Smith, 2001) have revealed that in middle and high schools where parents are active volunteers and a collective responsibility for student learning exists, achievement is significantly higher for students, and substantially higher for at-risk youth. Several recent educational reform policy initiatives (e.g., the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 and 21st Century Community Learning Center Program) launched by the U.S. Department of Education contain many of the elements of cross-sectoral partnerships (i.e., early education intervention, extensive partnerships with parents, community-based afterschool programs, etc) featured in the YEPP/CHI programmes described above. While many of the YEPP partnerships are designed with research-based practices in mind that bring together public, private, and independent sector partners, there is limited program evaluation evidence available describing the extent to which these highly integrated programs are effective in the short term or long run. Thus, the YEPP partnership programme provides a rich opportunity to examine “what works” in a community context, and to generate valuable lessons for policy and community leadership aimed at improving the economic and cultural life of economically disadvantaged youth.

Careful and systematic evaluation of the YEPP programmes can and must reflect a scientifically based approach to building knowledge about effective community development practices and policies. To date, much of the literature on promising practices in cross-sectoral programmes serving at-risk children and youth contains, at best, some descriptive information. Generally, these descriptions convey the local need for particular programs (e.g., youth centres, tutoring programmes, or entrepreneurship training) and limited summaries of the facilities, services and/or staff provided. To strengthen program implementation and accountability to the funders, systematic evaluation of the YEPP programmes must: (a) engage the local partners in assessing and reflecting on the programs, (b) examine changes that occur over time to the participants and among and within the partner organizations, and (c) provide evidence-based insights about the connections between program components, policies, and outcomes. The core standards for scientific research in education (Shavelson and Towne, 2002) notwithstanding, systematic evaluation of community development initiatives can add to the theoretical understanding about the sociology and politics of change in communal context. Additionally, a number of comprehensive community development initiatives in the U.S. have begun to posit and provisionally test program theories that offer and elaborate explanations about the relationships among outcomes, policies, and program components (Reynolds, 1998; Weiss, 1995).

The current knowledge base regarding community development initiatives is grounded largely in the U.S. experience. Since 1992, the Roundtable on Comprehensive Community Initiatives for Children and Families has served as a forum and clearinghouse for documenting and supporting the emerging systemic efforts to revitalize urban and other economically distressed communities. In 1995 the Steering Committee on Evaluation was formed to assist local implementers and policymakers in understanding the challenges confronted and lessons learned from such ambitious programs as Model Cities and Community Action Programs. Two book-length volumes of research and evaluation studies have published, however to date only U.S. community initiatives have been studied.

Further, the close working arrangement between OECD/CERI and NEF opens the way for a dissemination programme that can capitalise on the resources that exist within the various agencies involved and which can impact on different elements of the system and in different ways than would be the case if the parties involved were working alone. As with other aspects of the work, dissemination plans will be jointly developed and agreed by the co-ordinating team as the programme progresses. It is anticipated that both parties will be committed to this component of the work in terms of producing publications, developing internet sites, arranging conferences, *etc.*

This close working arrangement has already led to representatives of the two organisations attending each other's planning meetings and to the joint preparation of the operational proposals. This co-operation has occurred not only in the development of the evaluation plan but also in the construction of the dimensions of the overall project intended to meet the research needs of both partners. In this way, a balance between policy and practical matters and responsibilities has been established leading to the following programme description.

Public-Private-Independent Sector Partnerships Programme: The Three Components

The main thrust of the programme is to identify public-private-independent sector partnerships that are providing effective provision to support disadvantaged children and young people and their communities. Once identified, a major goal of the study is to describe, evaluate and disseminate information about the partnerships themselves and the nature of the innovations. The programme falls naturally into three elements that will run in parallel. Furthermore, the schemata, around which the work identified in 1, 2 and 3 below will be determined and described, will be developed by the OECD/CERI/NEF team, in concert with representatives of participating countries and independent experts and other interested parties.

Element 1: Centres of High Intensity

Partnerships will be operating in what have become known by the YEPP development team as Centres of High Intensity (CHIs).

“CHIs are sites in urban or rural areas, which have a crucial need to re-establish social cohesion for the benefit of young people and the communities. In these sites aspects of youth and community development are already being addressed with a variety of intervention strategies by the public, private and independent sectors but at the same time the need for a more complex strategy can be identified.”⁴⁴

The five initial sites selected by YEPP include: Antwerp (Belgium), Kristinestad (Finland), Lille (France), Mannheim (Germany) and Tuzla (Bosnia Herzegovina). Further contacts are being made by the foundations involved in consultation with CERI in Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom and the United States. Based on an assessment of the key challenges and needs as well as on a mapping of the resources and assets of the particular site a local/regional operational plan is developed in co-operation with the YEPP team to initiate joint action and to provide the best support based on a holistic view and multi-sectoral approach aiming at sustainable youth and community development. The operational plans of the initial CHIs focus on contributing towards empowerment of young people and their communities through:

- Supporting education and training, strengthening employability, self-initiative and entrepreneurship.
- Promoting the economic, social and cultural development, including sport.
- Supporting social cohesion.
- Active citizenship and community action.

⁴⁴ Krüger, A., Picht, R., *et al* (2001) Youth empowerment and social cohesion: Learning for active citizenship - A European and Trans-Atlantic Co-operation Programme. Monograph.

The operational definition of the target group of YEPP addresses all children and youth within their communities in the Centres of High Intensity, aged 0–26, although it is not expected that each CHI will necessarily cover the whole age range. The Programme’s strategies aim at holistic and preventive interventions in systems and recognise the individual as interlinked with the community at all levels. The youth and community empowerment approach leads to learning and living democracy only when all children and youth, their families and communities are included and receive the support they need taking into account prevailing predictive risk factors, *e.g.*, in Tuzla, youth are represented on the local support group.

Besides the local support, YEPP stimulates and provides trans-national dialogue, exchanges and interactive networks of CHIs at all levels.

Initial descriptions of some CHIs and the development of initial operational plans are given elsewhere (Kruger *et al*, 2001).

Under the aegis of NEF, a number of European and North American foundations, are providing support for the development and evaluation of the CHIs over a period of 3-5 years. One section of YEPP receives funding from the European Commission, DG Employment and Social Affairs, focussing on the issue of “Overcoming Fragmentation: New Forms of Partnership in Combating and Preventing Social Exclusion”.

The evaluation of the CHIs will be conducted under the OECD/CERI/NEF accord. Methods proposed are elaborated in later sections.

Element 2: The General Nature of Existing Partnerships

Under the aegis of OECD /CERI, a general overview of existing public-private-independent partnerships, focused on children and youth living in particularly disadvantaged areas in OECD and collaborating countries, will be carried out. This study will aim to identify and describe types of partnerships that have evolved and their impact on children and youth in various social policy areas such as education, employment and health. On September 23-24, 2002 a meeting was conducted at OECD /CERI in Paris in which representatives from 17 countries reviewed the project and planned a resource mapping activity focused on identifying and describing a small number of CHI-like partnerships or initiatives in their countries. This meeting of key OECD country representatives also served to introduce the YEPP partnership programme design and discuss its potential implementation in prospective countries seeking to develop new arrangements for serving at-risk children and youth.

Under the leadership of the OECD Project Leader, a team of international experts will undertake a comprehensive review and synthesis of the literature on cross sector partnerships. The goal of the review is to discover “what works” in practices, policies, and capacity building strategies from existing empirically-based studies and from rigorous program evaluations, such as those using random assignment (Gueron, 2002). Several fields and existing literatures inform the design of the YEPP partnerships, as well as the internal and external evaluation and accountability system. This review and synthesis, which will be compiled by an international team of experts, will draw heavily on studies in child and youth development, job training, economic development, teaching and learning, and early education from OECD countries in Europe, the Americas and Canada, Scandinavia, and the Far East.

Element 3: Case Studies and Policy Reviews

Under the aegis of OECD/CERI further case studies, complementing the CHIs, will be completed possibly in the context of more general policy reviews related to at risk or disadvantaged children and youth in countries showing especial interest.

Evaluation Design for the YEPP Programme

The elements and characteristics of the YEPP program are complex and, thus, add to the challenges that an evaluation plan must confront. In reviewing the features of comprehensive community initiatives and the associated evaluation difficulties, Kubisch and colleagues (1995) noted the following program design/feature-evaluation interaction issues:

- Horizontal complexity. They work across multiple sectors (social, economic, physical, political and others) simultaneously and aim for synergy among them.
- Vertical complexity. They aim for change at the individual, family, community, organizational, and systems levels.
- Community building. They aim for strengthened community capacity, enhanced social capital, an empowered neighborhood and similar outcomes.
- Contextual issues. They aim to incorporate external political, economic and other conditions into their framework even though they may have little power to affect them.
- Community responsiveness and flexibility over time. They are designed to be community-specific and to evolve in response to the dynamics of the neighborhood and the lessons being learned by the initiative.
- Community saturation. They aim to reach all members of a community, and therefore individual residents cannot be randomly assigned to treatment and control groups for the purposes of assessing the CCI's impact; finding equivalent comparison communities is also not feasible.

The YEPP program design extends the model of comprehensive community initiatives in two distinct ways. First, an internal evaluation/participatory action research component engages a local researcher and members of the local support group in compiling formative implementation and evaluation data. Acting as a “critical friend”, the local researcher’s input strengthens the community capacity for evaluation, informed data-based analysis, and reflection. The local action research guide provides procedures, resources and tools (such as surveys and analysis spreadsheets) that program implementers generally lack either the expertise or the time to develop and use. Second, the YEPP partnership programme operates in a global context, and provides for exchange visits among staff and partners in each CHI with a focus on documenting and benchmarking promising youth empowerment/community building practices. By examining the dramatic contrasts in policies, cultural and economic conditions across YEPP/CHI sites, the partners and staff from a particular site gain new perspectives on the possibilities for changes in policies and new sectoral collaborations that others have argued are beyond their ability to affect. Both the YEPP program framework and evaluation design offer some valuable opportunities to expand the knowledge base of effective community development practices.

Before launching into a discussion of the YEPP evaluation design, it is important to ask: why is good evaluation important in the development of cross-sectoral partnerships focused on community and youth development? Three reasons are readily apparent—to guide implementation, to assure accountability and sustain investment, and to build a solid understanding of how these partnerships work -- the lessons learned for policymakers and other interested parties.

All program leaders need and use information on implementation, outcomes, and various issues or challenges that arise during the course of a new program. Since most of these programs are spawned from new efforts and involve staff and agencies from different backgrounds (education, social welfare,

employment and labour), it is important to obtain data that can lead to mid-course corrections, the addition of needed services, and to aide in making management and budgetary or fiscal decisions. Since each community is highly idiosyncratic, the development and systematic use of formative evaluation measures is crucial to effective management and leadership.

Since many of these programs operate with a substantial investment by the public sector, they are committed to using open and democratic processes, such as competitive funding proposals and progress reports to funders and the public, as well as obtaining meaningful results. As public funding for education and domestic social programs has declined in most developed nations recently, the commitment to accountability for funds has risen. The nature and extent of the results obtained from public investments—on the implementation and increasingly on the outcomes front—are especially critical. Demonstrating results is increasingly important for private sector partners and foundations as well.

Finally, good evaluations can contribute to the storehouse of information describing how and why programs are effective. Carefully designed evaluations can assist in determining whether or not certain program components (such early language literacy programs for children and mothers) are associated with positive short-term changes (such as family participation in parent-teacher conferences or parents reading to children at home) or long-run outcomes (such as changes in school attendance and educational attainment rates). On a broader scale and conducted over a longitudinal time frame, quality evaluation data make it possible to determine the role of YEPP and other comprehensive community initiatives in building social capital, strengthening intercultural relations, reducing poverty, enhancing economic development, and generating other infra-structural changes.

There are a number of challenges that a programme of this sort presents particularly in regard to meeting different requirements of the public and private sectors. For instance, public sector interest would emphasise policy formation while the private sector may be more concerned with the direct impact on the individual and how their interventions and particular investments are working. Although these two aims are not incompatible, the different sectors require that different data demands be met, and this implies the use of a range of evaluation methods, which in this paper we classify under two headings of external and internal evaluation and which is a concept developed jointly by the OECD/CERI/NEF team.

YEPP: A Theory of Change Focused Evaluation

As suggested earlier, the YEPP is a cross-sectoral, community-based partnership initiative⁴⁵ designed to strengthen links between the public, independent, and private agencies and organizations to promote social values and citizenship and strengthen social cohesion. With resources provided by private foundations and substantial matching commitments from public and private sector partners, the central focus of YEPP is improving the outcomes and enlarging capacities for action in economically distressed communities. The main target group is “youth between ages 0–26 who are at-risk of being socially excluded. The elements of YEPP embrace a theory of social change and community integration that requires active participation by and resources from agencies and organizations in three sectors—public, private, and independent.

In structuring the evaluation design, the YEPP program change theory is linked directly to Stufflebeam’s theory of program evaluation, which focuses on examining the contexts, inputs, processes, and products for making informed judgements about the program.

⁴⁵. The common and specific features of YEPP are described in the YEPP Local Researchers’ Manual.

Figure 1. YEPP Theory of Change

<u>Component</u>	<u>Definition or Assumption</u>
Contexts	Change in communities with deep economic and culture challenges occurs when concentrated resources are coordinated strategically to create positive interventions that empower youth. Communities in which this occurs are known as Centres of high intensity
Inputs	Substantial resource commitments made previously by partners from multiple sectors.
	Sharing cross-national perspectives and experiences can inform and initiate meaningful changes in practice and policy.
	In each CHI, some community partners have collaborated previously and a level of common interest and mutual trust has been established.
Processes	Extensive partnerships and new ways of delivering services and programs are required to affect meaningful change.
	Local support groups representing the partners are instrumental to developing local program goals and managing operational plans.
	A semi-autonomous local evaluator can compile and disseminate useful progress and implementation data and act a “critical friend”.
	An external evaluation process enhances the objectivity of and accountability for results, and provides a cross-site comparative perspective.
	A common evaluation design is applied in all sites.
Products	The personal, economic, social, and cultural empowerment of children and youth (ages 0-25) in economically disadvantaged communities is the primary outcome measure.
	The empowerment of communities as reflected in the use of cross-sectoral partnerships to address other pressing social and cultural issues is a second major desirable outcome.

In the program theory evaluation literature, three criteria are important for judging the quality of a theory of change (Connell and Kubisch, 1998). When program change or innovation theories are used in evaluations they must be: plausible, doable, and testable. The YEPP theory of change is plausible based on studies showing that comprehensive programs treating the “whole person or family” are more effective than social or educational interventions aimed solely at income transfers, reading improvement, child care services, transportation, or job skills. The evidence that YEPP is “doable” resides in the high level of interest shown by several communities, as well as the enthusiasm in these communities for extending previous efforts that focused on collaboration only within a sector or between two sectors. Third, YEPP is a testable by the elaboration of dependent, independent, and intervening variables at various levels.

While YEPP is committed to measuring the implementation and testing the impact of the intervention, we are mindful of the major limitations that Weiss (1995) has pointed out:

Problems of Measurement

Once consensual theories of change are in place, evaluators have to develop techniques for measuring the extent to which each step has taken place. Have agencies adapted their procedures in ways that enable them to function in a multi-agency system? Have practitioners reinterpreted their roles to be advocates for clients rather than enforcers of agency rules? Some of the mini-steps in the theories of change will be easy to measure, but some--like these--are complicated and pose measurement problems. Whether they will all lend themselves to quantitative measurement is not clear. My hunch is that some will and some will not.

Whether exclusively quantitative measurement is desirable is also not clear. To the extent that theory-based evaluation represents a search "for precise and decomposable causal structures" (Rockman 1994, 148) through quantitative measurement and statistical analysis, it may be taking too positivistic a stance. The logic of qualitative analysis may be more compelling, since it allows not only for rich narrative but also for the modification of causal assumptions as things happen in the field. But since sponsors often find quantitative data more credible than narrative accounts, efforts should probably be made to construct measures of key items.

Problems of Testing Theories

Under the best conditions of theory, design, and measurement, will it be possible to *test* (that is, to support or disconfirm) theoretical assumptions? It is possible that statements of theories of change will be too general and loosely constructed to allow for clear-cut testing. Data collected may be susceptible to alternative interpretations. Unless statements about the theoretical assumptions of the CCI expressly articulate what is *not* meant, what is *not* assumed, as well as what is, it may be difficult to formulate decision rules about the conditions under which a phase of theory is supported or rejected.

Problems of Interpretation

Even if we should find theories that tend to explain the success of particular initiatives in particular places, it is uncertain how generalizable they will be. Will interventions in another community follow the same logic and bring about the same outcomes? On one level, this is a question of how sufficient the theories are. It is possible that even when available data seem to support a theory, unmeasured conditions and attributes in each local case actually were in part responsible for the success observed. Unless other CCIs reproduce the same (unmeasured and unknown) conditions, they will be unable to reproduce the success. Only with time will enough knowledge accrue to identify all the operative conditions.

On a deeper level, the question involves the generalizability of any theory in the social sciences. Postmodern critics have voiced disquieting doubts on this score. But this subject gets us into deeper waters than we can navigate here.

Conclusion

For all its potential problems, theory-based evaluation offers hope for greater knowledge than past evaluations have generally produced. I believe that the current comprehensive community initiatives should try out its possibilities. If we are to make progress in aiding children and families, the nation needs to know and understand the effects of major interventions. These initiatives represent a potent opportunity not only to *do* good but, perhaps more important, to *understand* how, when, and why the good is being done. Only with greater understanding of the processes of change will it be possible to build on successes in demonstration communities, to "go to scale" and bring benefits to children and families all over the country.

Evaluation Questions

Figure 2 describes the common and special evaluation questions addressed in the internal and external evaluation components of YEPP. Also, the topics and variables explored in each phase of the evaluation are described.

Figure 2. **Core Evaluation Questions and Foci**

	Internal Formative Evaluation	External Evaluation
Core Questions	Description of how local implementation works	Cross-site collaboration and partnership analysis
	Understanding the process of change	Policy influences on cross-sectoral partnerships
	Identification of outcomes	Cross-site empowerment outcome documentation and analysis
Critical Variables		
Contexts	Core empowerment indicators	Core empowerment indicators
	CHI-specific indicators	National/local policies
	Context descriptions	CHI context profile
Inputs	History	Verification interviews & documentation
	YEPP local infrastructure	Budget analysis
	Activities and projects	
	Donors/resource inputs	
	University involvement	
Processes	Role/impact of local and non-local actors	Extent & quality of collaboration
	Decision-making processes	Quality/impact of processes
	Participation	
	Co-operation and partnership development	
	Project planning/implementation	
	Trans-national exchanges	Quality/impact of changes made
Products	Project outcomes/sustainability	
	Partnership outcomes/sustainability	Cross-CHI analysis of part .outcomes
	Empowerment outcomes	Changes in empowerment indicators
	Promising practices documentation	Promising practices documentation

External evaluations will be a mixture of quantitative and qualitative measurements carried out by independent experts thus providing more objective data.

Internal evaluations will focus on the processes involved in the development of each CHI and will be carried out by local researchers closely linked with the programme implementation.

In the YEPP status and annual evaluation reports (described below), these two forms of evaluation will be brought together.

External Evaluation

The purpose of the external evaluation of the YEPP is to complement the internal evaluation and to provide an independent review of the YEPP developments in the CHIs and their effectiveness. In particular, the evaluation will focus on the broader policy context in which YEPP is working and on the evolution of the partnerships between public, private, and independent sectors. An external evaluation is required so as to provide the most convincing evidence of the effectiveness of the YEPP work and to assist in developing guidelines for replication in other CHIs.

The major evaluation questions addressed by the external evaluation include:

What is the nature and extent of policy influences on establishing and implementing local cross-sectoral partnerships?

To what extent and in what ways are changes in empowerment indicators associated with the YEPP initiatives within and across the CHIs?

Which local partnership practices are considering promising and worthy of replication and further research?

The areas of focus for the external evaluation are described in Figure 2.

Annually, a team of two external evaluators will visit each CHI. One team member will be a native language speaker while the other, for purposes of continuity, will be a full-time researcher based at CERI. This evaluation will be co-ordinated by OECD/CERI in close collaboration with the NEF/Programme Implementation team.

The on-site CHI visits will last approximately 3-4 days. The Local Coordinator will confer with the External Evaluation team to develop an appropriate schedule of interviews, focus group meetings, and program observations. In-depth interviews will be conducted with a cross section of key stakeholders representing five levels: mandating level (funders, legislators, policymakers, CEOs), strategic level (foundation, business, and state/federal governmental agency leaders), operational level (YEPP Program Support Group, YEPP Program Coordinator), field level (instructors, counselors, youth mentors, project leaders, etc.) and participants (a small, representative sample of participating youth). The External Evaluation Design (see Appendix A) describes the questions and data to be addressed with each stakeholder group. Following each on-site visit, a CHI progress/status report will be drafted and shared with the OECD/CERI and NEF Programme team as well as the local partners.

For each CHI, more detailed criteria identifying successful outcomes will be formulated on the basis of local context description and operational plans developed for each CHI by the local researchers. The core status and empowerment indicators for the YEPP projects (described below) will be developed in consultation with the local support group, as well as the local coordinator and researcher.

Internal Evaluation/Participatory Action Research

Based on the operational plans within each CHI, arising from the first and second phases of the work described above, YEPP-related actions concerning educational, cultural, economic and social aspects will be taking place. The purpose of internal evaluation is to document and describe the personal and structural changes from the inside by using an action research approach to understand more fully the on-going process of change and the impact of the interventions.

In its strictest form, participatory action research involves using the participants (one or more) in the innovative change process to record their experiences and those of others as the process of change unfolds. In this way a view, albeit subjective, of change as perceived by a participant in the system is made available and which provides a very different orientation to those working from a more objective external perspective. The plan is to use an internal evaluator who will be part of the general work, who can move fluidly about the system, sometimes acting as a 'friendly critic' but not so fully involved with the implementation of the change process that they lose all objectivity, although they will be more subjective than the visiting team of the external evaluation. In this way, the internal evaluation will focus on two main areas:

- The background, the main changes and developments and the process of the change.
- The type of innovations and their impact.

The method to be used will be continuous monitoring through structured diaries, discussions, interviews, field notes and observations. The internal evaluation will give constant feedback to those involved in the CHI work in order to promote and further develop the change process and the quality of outcomes.

A detailed Local Researcher's Manual has been prepared to insure that common questions and procedures are used to guide the data collection and analysis efforts at each site. The part-time Local Researchers have completed a detailed Context Description that characterizes the local constituents and setting from an economic, political, cultural, social affairs, and educational perspective. Each quarter the local researchers provide the OECD/NEF Partners with a status/progress report on the local implementation efforts and the challenges confronting each CHI.

The details of this part of the evaluation will also be developed via meetings of experts and discussion with sites. It is important to emphasise that the same method will be applied in all sites as far as that is realistically possible. They will be carried out by a native language speaker.

The internal evaluation will be under the responsibility of and co-ordinated by the NEF/Programme Implementation Team in close co-operation with OECD/CERI.

The internal and external evaluations are aligned by the elements being examined in each component. While using different framing questions and unique perspectives (i.e., inside and outside the CHI), the internal and external evaluation reports will both examine the contexts, inputs, processes, and products as they relate to the CHIs.

From the early work of the YEPP Programme and CHIs, it is clear that each is beginning to develop or to extend creative and locally powerful innovations, such as the school-centered learning community in Simin Han. In many cases, the CHIs are becoming incubators for new social and cross-sectoral innovations. Both the internal and external evaluation process can assist and extend this knowledge development and diffusion process in important ways. Beginning in Year 2, the external and internal

evaluation processes will identify and document the features and effectiveness of selected “promising practices.” As the local CHI experience and database grows for particular education, youth empowerment, and mentoring innovations, the process and product/impact evaluation activities will document carefully the implementation indicators and impact measures associated with each promising innovation. During the latter stage of Year 2 and the early part of Year 3, the project will train and support YEPP teams from three CHIs interested in examining, documenting, and transferring a particular innovation from another CHI. Developing and pilot testing this “innovation benchmarking and adoption process” will produce several benefits. First, we will learn more about the challenges of moving YEPP innovations across communities and different cultural contexts. Second, each of the three innovation benchmarking and adoption processes will be designed with different goals, processes, and outcomes, thus they will be examined as knowledge transfer case studies. The cross case analysis will provide useful insights on “how” promising partnership practices are effectively operationalized in new settings. Finally, and to the extent we can secure long-term funding for the evaluation, we can determine the extent to which innovations, such as community-centered schools or mentor training programs can be replicated with comparable results in different settings and different groups of youth.

Core CHI Status and Empowerment Indicators

The field test of the YEPP external evaluation revealed a need for a set of core indicators to describe the status of youth employment within and across the CHIs. As Weiss (1995) suggests, sponsors and implementers often look for periodic soundings on how the local program is faring and how much it is accomplishing. Quantitative reports describing the progress toward objectives are often quite useful for documenting and measuring changes, and as reminders for all parties of the primary outcome expectations. Weiss contends that theory-based program evaluations are very compatible with measuring interim markers and long-term outcomes, such as changes in graduation, employment, and voting rates. She cautions that indicators must be carefully and strategically selected with a focus on ensuring that the program intervention relates either directly, or at least indirectly, to the indicator. Weiss suggests that, “Indicators can cover a gamut of community conditions before, during, and after the interventions. Evaluators can collect information on:

- School attendance rates, drop-out rates, graduation rates, scores on standardized tests.
- Infant mortality and low birth-weight rates.
- Unmarried childbearing rates.
- Overall crime rates, auto theft rates, arrests of minors, and other crime statistics.
- Numbers of families receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC); numbers of families moving off welfare in a twelve-month period.
- Unemployment rates for teenagers and adults.
- Numbers of clubs and associations active in the community and average attendance at meetings and events.
- Attendance at religious services.
- Registration and voting rates.
- Numbers of books borrowed from local libraries.

- Usage of hospital emergency rooms; and so on.”

The field test of the external evaluation process suggested that two groups of indicators were important to the local stakeholders. First, local status indicators will provide an overview of the local economic, social, and cultural context to ensure that the unique aspects of each CHI are described and monitored over the project period. The context descriptions prepared by the local researchers, the field test interviews, and an analysis of several OECD indicators studies suggest the following CHI status indicators are considered important measures of the situation in each CHI before, during, and following the YEPP implementation. Additional status indicators believed to be important in certain CHIs (e.g., percentage of migrant or guest workers, percentage of non-native language speakers) could also be developed and used.

- Status Indicators
 1. Per capita income or average net annual salary
 2. Gross domestic product
 3. GDP per capita
 4. Registered unemployment rate
- Percentage of youth (14-24) in population
- Rate of citizen participation in elections
- Number of NGOs in city/region

Second, a set of empowerment indicators are needed to inform and assess local progress toward the primary outcome(s) established for the YEPP. Specific data for these indicators would be compiled from reliable sources for data and statistics over time to illustrate the 5-8 year trends that span the period of YEPP implementation. To provide an additional comparative framework, data for these indicators might be compiled for the canton/region and city as well as for the CHI neighborhood or area.

- Empowerment Indicators
 5. Percentage of youth completing primary education
 6. Percentage of youth completing secondary education
 7. Percentage of youth participating in elections
 8. Percentage of youth working and pursuing education
 9. Percentage of youth reporting to be alcohol and drug-free
 10. Percentage of youth participating in NGOs

These data represent gross measures of trends and outcomes in the CHI and perhaps the surrounding areas. They do not reflect specific changes to or the behaviors of YEPP participants. To illustrate and inform the potential association between the empowerment outcomes and the YEPP programs, two evaluation activities should be undertaken. The local researcher, in collaboration with members of the local support group, should design an annual “status and engagement indicators survey” to be given to all YEPP

participants and their families. Alternatively, this instrument could be used in a series of focus group interviews with small groups of participants and their parents. Conducting case studies of a small but representative sample of 8-12 YEPP participants could also provide useful insights on the YEPP experience and its impact on youth empowerment. Case study participants and their families would be interviewed annually for three years using key questions about their socio-economic status, participation in YEPP projects, and the influence of this participation on employment and education goals, civic and community engagement, and other empowerment outcomes.

The incorporation of participant voices in the local researchers' activities adds several important benefits to the evaluation. First, it provides a rich human, and personal perspective to the data, which will enhance the quality and integrity of the findings. Second, it illustrates for the participants the important role and value of reflection in democratic processes and societies. And third, for the purpose of continuous program improvement, data from participants represents the voice of the primary customer.

Products and Related Components

Annual Evaluation Reports

At the conclusion of each project year, the data compiled from internal and external evaluations will be presented and summarized in an annual report. The annual reports will update the implementation status of each CHI/YEPP program, including an analysis of the challenges confronting each partnership with particular attention to the national and local policy context.

Since the YEPP/CHI programme is in the early stages of implementation at the 5 initial sites, the 2003 report will focus on findings related to the context and input variables for the YEPP programmes. The 2004 and 2005 reports will address issues and findings related to the processes used in and products (or outcomes) derived from the YEPP programmes, respectively. In each report, the major, emerging policy implications related to cross-sectoral partnership development will be addressed.

The annual evaluation reports will be drafted during a 2-day working meeting held each November, which will include the local researchers, the external evaluation teams, a panel of selected experts, and the YEPP partnership management team. Prior to the meeting, the participants will review the quarterly local research reports from each local CHI, along with external evaluation reports prepared following each on-site visit and the annual CHI operational plans.

The major findings and recommendations from each annual evaluation report will be presented in an Executive Summary. The full reports and executive summaries will be shared with the funders and other sponsors. Additionally, the reports will provide the basis for a series of short "research or policy briefs" distributed via the OECD/CERI/NEF websites and newsletters. The Briefs will summarize the major policy-relevant findings and recommendations for countries interested in developing cross-sectoral partnership initiatives.

Promising Cross-sectoral Partnership Practices: A Synthesis

The comprehensive literature review undertaken in Year 1 will produce a major compendium of evidence-based value adding practices. This document will summarize and highlight carefully designed intervention studies, as well as evaluations of programs and special initiatives serving disadvantaged children and youth in the fields of education and child development, social affairs, community and economic development, and transition to adult life. Since the synthesis will profile practices and policies that produce relevant gains and significant outcomes for youth and their communities in several countries, the document will be of interest to policymakers and practitioners worldwide. OECD will publish and market the document following an appropriate review.

The Inclusive Partnership Innovation Benchmarking Guide.

This Guide will describe the processes used by three CHI teams to transfer promising YEPP practices and interventions across communities. The Guide will capture the benchmarking and innovation transfer procedures used to replicate the most promising YEPP practices in different cultures. Several evaluation tools (e.g. focus group surveys) and data displays from the local and external evaluation processes will be incorporated. OECD will publish and market the document following an appropriate review.

Cross Sectoral Partnerships – principal dimensions

To gain a general understanding of the type of partnerships that are emerging to respond effectively to the needs of disadvantaged students and communities, some further analyses will build upon the knowledge acquired from the internal and external evaluations. The first step, in collaboration with participating countries, will be to carry out a mapping and classification of the partnership approaches being taken. Member countries of OECD will provide information on public-private partnership innovation based on an agreed upon framework. The framework will be determined at a meeting of participating countries also attended by the OECD/CERI/NEF team, experts and other interested parties. The reports produced by the countries will be synthesised by OECD/CERI. This work would develop hand in hand with literature reviews. It is anticipated that this part of the study would continue throughout 2002 and 2003. One result will be the identification of other possible CHIs as well as other sites that the countries themselves will be asked to describe. This component makes up the third element of the study.

Case Studies and Policy Reviews

This part of the programme will commence in 2003/2004 under the aegis of OECD/CERI. The exact details of how this will work will be discussed with participating OECD countries. The design of the case studies will be developed in collaboration and will reflect the work underway in the CHIs. Thus the evaluative frameworks developed in the CHIs will be used in the case studies. Most emphasis will be on the external evaluation since these studies will not have a longitudinal development component as in the CHIs. The outcomes of these studies will be synthesised by CERI.

An additional feature of this element is the possibility of conducting policy reviews. It may be argued that this is a separate element but could be an important component of developing relevant policy frameworks for at risk children and youth which would draw on the partnership approach on the ground and as developed in the OECD/CERI/NEF collaboration.

The exact details of how this will work, will be developed in discussion with participating countries and the programme team and other interested parties and the organisation and reporting will be the responsibility of the CERI secretariat.

Year by Year Plan of Evaluation Work:

Year 2 (01/09/02—31/08/03)

- Complete the field test of the External Evaluation Design (done)
- Compile reports from two pilot external evaluation on-site visits (see feedback memos to the Local Coordinators)
- Make revisions to the External Evaluation Design (see Appendix A)

- Complete week-long, on-site external evaluation visits to 2 CHIs
- Compile external evaluation report for 2 CHIs
- Hire full External Evaluation Director/Consultant at OECD
- Employ and train Local Researchers for XX CHIs
- Assist Local Researchers in compiling Context and Input Analyses for XX CHIs
- Support Local Researchers in compiling quarterly reports
- Plan Annual Evaluation Review Conference (each November, 2003-05)
- Compile and disseminate all Year 2 evaluation reports
- Conduct Annual Evaluation Review Conference/prepare initial Annual Evaluation Report, emphasizing findings on CHI context and input considerations
- Prepare and publish 1-2 Research or Policy Briefs based on the 2003 annual report findings
- Employ and train team of international experts for the Literature Review
- Launch intervention literature and evaluation review and synthesis activities

Year 3 (01/09/03—31/08/04)

- Complete week-long, on-site external evaluation visits to 6-8 CHIs
- Compile external evaluation report for 6-8 CHIs
- Orient and update train Local Researchers for XX CHIs
- Assist Local Researchers in compiling Process Analyses for XX CHIs
- Support Local Researchers in compiling quarterly reports
- Plan Annual Evaluation Review Conference
- Compile and disseminate all Year 3 evaluation reports
- Conduct Annual Evaluation Review Conference/prepare initial Annual Evaluation Report, emphasizing findings on CHI process considerations
- Design and conduct a 2-day pre-conference workshop for evaluators on the documentation of promising or innovative practices at CHI sites. This workshop will examine the intervention evidence and program evaluation processes and data presented in the draft Synthesis report.
- Completion of first draft of synthesis report by team of experts
- Complete OECD review of synthesis report; Make revisions and publish

- Prepare and publish 1-2 Research or Policy Briefs based on the 2004 annual report findings

Year 4 (01/09/04—31/08/05)

- Complete week-long, on-site external evaluation visits to 6-8 CHIs
- Compile external evaluation report for 6-8 CHIs
- Orient and update train Local Researchers for XX CHIs
- Assist Local Researchers in compiling Process Analyses for XX CHIs
- Support Local Researchers in compiling quarterly reports and documenting innovative practices
- Invite teams from 3 CHIs to participate in an innovation benchmarking and adoption process
- Assist local researchers and local coordinators as they lead local CHIs teams through the innovation adoption process
- Provide guidance for the local evaluators to document the challenges and impacts of the benchmarking and adoption process
- Compile the Innovation Benchmarking Guide based on the experiences and local evaluators' data describing the year long experiences of the three CHI teams.
- Submit the Guide for OECD editorial review. Invite authors to make needed revisions and publish the Guide.
- Plan Annual Evaluation Review Conference
- Compile and disseminate all Year 4 evaluation reports
- Conduct Annual Evaluation Review Conference/prepare initial Annual Evaluation Report, emphasizing findings on CHI product/outcome considerations
- Prepare and publish 1-2 Research or Policy Briefs based on the 2005 annual report findings.

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APPENDIX A: UPDATED YEPP EVALUATION FRAMEWORK AND DESIGN⁴⁶

Overall, the evaluation framework is based on Stufflebeam's (1977) informed decision-making approach to rendering judgments about programs or practices to be evaluated. Used widely in the education and social science fields, the Stufflebeam approach emphasizes the collection and analysis of information to describe the program context, inputs, processes, and products. Generally, evaluation information is compiled sequentially about various aspects of the program components in relations to the context, inputs, and processed used. Subsequently, information about the status, quality, and impact of the program's products (e.g., participants' skills or knowledge) is used be make judgments about and improvements in the contexts, inputs, and processes associated with the program.

The YEPP is a comprehensive and systemic community improvement initiative designed to strengthen the social cohesion for and the economic status of youth ages 0-26. The theory of community improvement or empowerment envisioned by YEPP encompasses several considerations of the contexts, inputs, processes, and products or outcomes expected. The YEPP Theory of Change Focused Evaluation plan is described in the primary document (see Figure 1).

The YEPP initiative covers five levels of program operation. Evaluative and operational input is gathered from key informants and stakeholders regarding program evaluation and management at the following levels: mandating, strategic, operational, field, and participant levels.

In addition to a comprehensive theory of program change for community development and youth empowerment informed by multiple levels of stakeholder information, the evaluation design includes features of internality and externality. The internal evaluation process is led by a Local Reseracher whose activities are guided by the YEPP Local Researchers' Manual (Bleckmann, Domling, Evans, Kruger & Picht, 2002 September). The Local Researcher's role is to "evaluate personal and structural changes from the inside by using an action research approach to understand more fully the on-going process of change and the impact of the interventions.. . . The plan is to use an internal evaluator who will be part of the general work, who can move fluidly about the system, sometimes acting as a 'friendly critic' but not so fully involved with the implementation of the change process that they lose all objectivity, . . . the internal evaluation will focus two main areas: (1) the background the main changes and developments and the process of changes, and (20 the type on innovations and their impact (Local Researchers' Guide, p. 13).

The purpose of the external evaluation of the YEPP is to complement the internal evaluation and to provide an independent review of the YEPP developments in the CHIs and their effectiveness. In particular, the evaluation will focus on the broader policy context in which YEPP is working and on the evolution of the partnerships between public, private, and independent sectors. An external evaluation is required so as to provide the most convincing evidence of the effectiveness of the YEPP work and to assist in developing guidelines for replication in other CHIs.

The major evaluation questions addressed by the external evaluation include:

What is the nature and extent of policy influences on establishing and implementing local cross-sectoral partnerships?

⁴⁶. During December, 2002 the initial External Evaluation Design was piloted tested during week-long visits by the OECD evaluation team to two sites—Tuzla/Simin Han and Mannheim/Nickarstadt West. The extensive interviews with key stakeholders and local researchers revealed the need for several changes and refinements in both the internal and external YEPP evaluation plans, which are reflected in this document.

To what extent and in what ways are changes in empowerment indicators associated with the YEPP initiatives within and across the CHIs?

Which local partnership practices are considering promising and worthy of replication and further research?

External evaluations will be a mixture of quantitative and qualitative measurements carried out by independent experts thus providing more objective data.

Internal evaluations will focus on the processes involved in the development of each CHI and will be carried out by local researchers closely linked with the programme implementation.

Core Evaluation Questions

The integration and alignment of the Internal and External Evaluation components is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Core Evaluation Questions and Foci

	Internal Formative Evaluation	External Evaluation
Core Questions	Description of how local implementation works	Cross-site collaboration and partnership analysis
	Understanding the process of change	Policy influences on cross-sectoral partnerships
	Identification of outcomes and empowerment indicators	Cross-site empowerment outcome documentation and analysis
Critical Variables		
Contexts	Core empowerment indicators	Core empowerment indicators
	CHI-specific indicators	National/local policies
	Context descriptions	CHI context profile
Inputs	History	Verification interviews & documentation
	YEPP local infrastructure	Budget analysis
	Activities and projects	
	Donors/resource inputs	
	University involvement, Other partners??	
Processes	Role/impact of local and non-local actors	Extent & quality of collaboration
	Decision-making processes	Quality/impact of processes
	Participation	
	Co-operation and partnership development	
	Project planning/implementation	
	Trans-national exchanges	Quality/impact of changes made
Products	Project outcomes/sustainability	
	Partnership outcomes/sustainability	Cross-CHI analysis of part .outcomes
	Empowerment outcomes	Changes in empowerment indicators
	Promising practices documentation	Promising practices documentation

Data and Indicators

The field test of the YEPP external evaluation revealed a need for a set of core indicators to describe the status of youth employment within and across the CHIs. As Weiss (1995) suggests, sponsors and implementers often look for periodic soundings on how the local program is faring and how much it is accomplishing. Quantitative reports describing the progress toward objectives are often quite useful for documenting and measuring changes, and as reminders for all parties of the primary outcome expectations.

According to the Local Researchers' Manual (p. 9), the YEPP is designed to (a) empower youth with several outcomes, and (b) strengthen community development in the CHIs. In each of the seven outcome and empowerment areas, several indicators or measures were suggested for use in the evaluation design. Figure 2 below summarizes the personal and community impacts envisioned following the full implementation of the YEPP.

Figure 2. YEPP Impact and Outcome Matrix

Area	Personal Aspects/Outcomes	Community Aspects/Outcomes
Social	Personal and social skills, values; Feeling of belonging	Social services; Family relations; Leisure time facilities/ sports
Political	Skills and knowledge about political participation; democratic orientation	Youth participation opportunities
Economic	Employability; entrepreneurship	Job opportunities; job creation; training opportunities
Cultural	Cultural self-confidence; ethical orientation, respect toward other cultural groups	Integration of cultural groups; role of religious communities; cultural/artistic activities
Education and Training	Motivation; capability; formal education and training successes	Accessibility of education and training careers; quality of schools (general and vocational education)
Legal	Knowledge about individual rights	Civil rights
Health and environment	Consciousness of own body; knowledge about healthy and safe life; Respect toward nature	Healthy and unpolluted environment; public health services; health enlightenment programmes

The field test of the external evaluation process suggested that two groups of indicators were important to the local stakeholders. First, local status indicators will provide an overview of the local economic, social, and cultural context to ensure that the unique aspects of each CHI are described and monitored over the project period. The context descriptions prepared by the local researchers, the field test interviews, and an analysis of several OECD indicators studies suggest the following CHI status indicators are considered important measures of the situation in each CHI before, during, and following the YEPP implementation. Additional status indicators believed to be important in certain CHIs (e.g., percentage of migrant or guest workers, percentage of non-native language speakers) could also be developed and used.

- Status Indicators (This is a tentative, preliminary list.)

11. Per capita income or average net annual salary
 12. Gross domestic product
 13. GDP per capita
 14. Registered unemployment rate
- Percentage of youth (14-24) in population
 - Rate of citizen participation in elections
 - Number of NGOs in city/region

Second, a set of empowerment indicators are needed to inform and assess local progress toward the primary outcome(s) established for the YEPP. Specific data for these indicators would be compiled from reliable sources for data and statistics over time to illustrate the 5-8 year trends that span the period of YEPP implementation. To provide an additional comparative framework, data for these indicators might be compiled for the canton/region and city as well as for the CHI neighborhood or area.

- Empowerment Indicators (This is a tentative, preliminary list.)
15. Percentage of youth completing primary education
 16. Percentage of youth completing secondary education
 17. Percentage of youth participating in elections
 18. Percentage of youth working and pursuing education
 19. Percentage of youth reporting to be alcohol and drug-free
 20. Percentage of youth participating in NGOs

Over the past decade, the OECD has been collecting and reporting indicator data on education, employment, earnings, and social conditions in several developed countries, including several countries with CHIs. These data sets will be valuable as multiple year, national profiles. More importantly, the definitions for these data elements have been systemically developed and represent reliable data and information sources. Still, it will be a challenge for the local researchers and OECD researchers to locate the comparable data at the regional/canton level for each CHI. The OECD's data collection experience with several ministries and in-country experts should be useful in locating the appropriate status and empowerment data for each CHI for the period of 2000-2005.

These data represent gross measures of trends and outcomes in the CHI and perhaps the surrounding areas. It is important to note that they do not reflect specific changes to or the behaviors of YEPP participants. Because the YEPP programmes do not randomly assign participants to specific programs or treatments, it is impossible to determine the exact impact of the program on the individuals or the overall influence of the YEPP program on the status of the community.

However, to illustrate and inform the potential association between the empowerment outcomes and the YEPP programs, two evaluation activities should be undertaken. The local researcher, in collaboration with members of the local support group, should design an annual "status and engagement indicators

survey” to be given to all YEPP participants and their families. Alternatively, this instrument could be used in a series of focus group interviews with small groups of participants and their parents. Conducting case studies of a small but representative sample of 8-12 YEPP participants could also provide useful insights on the YEPP experience and its impact on youth empowerment. Case study participants and their families would be interviewed annually for three years using key questions about their socio-economic status, participation in YEPP projects, and the influence of this participation on employment and education goals, civic and community engagement, and other empowerment outcomes.

The incorporation of participant voices in the local researchers’ activities adds several important benefits to the evaluation. First, it provides a rich human, and personal perspective to the data, which will enhance the quality and integrity of the findings. Second, it illustrates for the participants the important role and value of reflection in democratic processes and societies. And third, for the purpose of continuous program improvement, data from participants represents the voice of the primary customer.

Procedures—Internal Evaluation

The Local Researchers’ Manual (2002) provides substantial details and procedures for conducting the local evaluation activities. The emphasis in this process is placed on working closely with the Local Coordinator, the Local Support Group, and other local agencies or resource persons capable of providing data and information to describe how the YEPP partnership is being implemented, how effectively it is working, and the outcomes being achieved. The manual for local researchers includes sections describing: (a) the guidelines for the evaluation questions, (b) various data collection methods (e.g., interviews, focus groups, participant observation, structured diary, etc.), (c) guidelines for interpretation of the data, and (d) report preparation details.

Procedures—External Evaluation

Annually, a team of two external evaluators will visit each CHI. One team member will be a native language speaker while the other, for purposes of continuity, will be a full-time researcher based at OECD/CERI. This evaluation will be co-ordinated by OECD/CERI in close collaboration with the NEF/Programme Implementation team.

During 2003, 2004, and 2005 each on-site CHI visits will last approximately 3-4 days. The Local Coordinator will confer with the External Evaluation team to develop an appropriate schedule of interviews, focus group meetings, and program observations. In-depth interviews will be conducted with a cross section of key stakeholders representing five levels: mandating level (funders, legislators, policymakers, CEOs), strategic level (foundation, business, and state/federal governmental agency leaders), operational level (YEPP Program Support Group, YEPP Program Coordinator), field level (instructors, counselors, youth mentors, project leaders, etc.) and participants (a small, representative sample of participating youth). The External Evaluation Design (see Appendix B) describes the questions and data to be addressed with each stakeholder group. Following each on-site visit, a CHI progress/status memorandum will be drafted and shared with the OECD/CERI and NEF Programme team as well as the local partners. Appendix C includes the memorandums developed for the Mannheim and Tuzla sites during the Fall 2002 external evaluation field test.

For each CHI, more detailed criteria identifying successful outcomes will be formulated on the basis of local context description and operational plans developed for each CHI by the local researcher. The core status and empowerment indicators for the YEPP projects will be developed in consultation with the local support group, as well as the local coordinator and researcher. Additional indicators that are particularly important for individual CHIs will also be considered and used if reliable and valid data can be found.

Products and Related Components

Annual Evaluation Reports

At the conclusion of each project year, the data compiled from internal and external evaluations will be presented and summarized in an annual report. The annual reports will update the implementation status of each CHI/YEPP program, including an analysis of the challenges confronting each partnership with particular attention to the national and local policy context.

Since the YEPP/CHI programme is in the early stages of implementation at the 5 initial sites, the 2003 report will focus on findings related to the context and input variables for the YEPP programmes. The 2004 and 2005 reports will address issues and findings related to the processes used in and products (or outcomes) derived from the YEPP programmes, respectively. In each report, the major, emerging policy implications related to cross-sectoral partnership development will be addressed.

The annual evaluation reports will be drafted during a 2-day working meeting held each November, which will include the local researchers, the external evaluation teams, a panel of selected experts, and the YEPP partnership management team. Prior to the meeting, the participants will review the quarterly local research reports from each local CHI, along with external evaluation reports prepared following each on-site visit and the annual CHI operational plans.

The major findings and recommendations from each annual evaluation report will be presented in an Executive Summary. The full reports and executive summaries will be shared with the funders and other sponsors. Additionally, the reports will provide the basis for a series of short “research or policy briefs” distributed via the OECD/CERI/NEF websites and newsletters. The Briefs will summarize the major policy-relevant findings and recommendations for countries interested in developing cross-sectoral partnership initiatives.

Promising Cross-sectoral Partnership Practices: A Synthesis

The comprehensive literature review undertaken in Year 1 will produce a major compendium of evidence-based value adding practices. This document will summarize and highlight carefully designed intervention studies, as well as evaluations of programs and special initiatives serving disadvantaged children and youth in the fields of education and child development, social affairs, community and economic development, and transition to adult life. Since the synthesis will profile practices and policies that produce relevant gains and significant outcomes for youth and their communities in several countries, the document will be of interest to policymakers and practitioners worldwide. OECD will publish and market the document following an appropriate review.

The Inclusive Partnership Innovation Benchmarking Guide.

This Guide will describe the processes used by three CHI teams to transfer promising YEPP practices and interventions across communities. The Guide will capture the benchmarking and innovation transfer procedures used to replicate the most promising YEPP practices in different cultures. Several evaluation tools (e.g. focus group surveys) and data displays from the local and external evaluation processes will be incorporated. OECD will publish and market the document following an appropriate review.

Cross Sectoral Partnerships – principal dimensions

To gain a general understanding of the type of partnerships that are emerging to respond effectively to the needs of disadvantaged students and communities, some further analyses will build upon the knowledge acquired from the internal and external evaluations. The first step, in collaboration with

participating countries, will be to carry out a mapping and classification of the partnership approaches being taken. Member countries of OECD will provide information on public-private partnership innovation based on an agreed upon framework. The framework will be determined at a meeting of participating countries also attended by the OECD/CERI/NEF team, experts and other interested parties. The reports produced by the countries will be synthesised by OECD/CERI. This work would develop hand in hand with literature reviews. It is anticipated that this part of the study would continue throughout 2002 and 2003. One result will be the identification of other possible CHIs as well as other sites that the countries themselves will be asked to describe. This component makes up the third element of the study.

Case Studies and Policy Reviews

This part of the programme will commence in 2003/2004 under the aegis of OECD/CERI. The exact details of how this will work will be discussed with participating OECD countries. The design of the case studies will be developed in collaboration and will reflect the work underway in the CHIs. Thus the evaluative frameworks developed in the CHIs will be used in the case studies. Most emphasis will be on the external evaluation since these studies will not have a longitudinal development component as in the CHIs. The outcomes of these studies will be synthesised by CERI.

An additional feature of this element is the possibility of conducting policy reviews. It may be argued that this is a separate element but could be an important component of developing relevant policy frameworks for at risk children and youth which would draw on the partnership approach on the ground and as developed in the OECD/CERI/NEF collaboration.

The exact details of how this will work, will be developed in discussion with participating countries and the programme team and other interested parties and the organisation and reporting will be the responsibility of the CERI secretariat.

Appendix B: External Evaluation Framework, Sample Interview Schedule And Guides, And Report Memos

For each stakeholder group and evaluation phase, the cells designate specific evaluation and interview questions from the list provided below.

STAKEHOLDERS		Context Indicators	INPUT INDICATORS (History, YEPP local infrastructure, Activities and projects, Donors)	Process Indicators (Role & impact of local and non-local actors, decision-making processes, participation, cooperation & partnership development)	Product Indicators (Youth empowerment, structures for cooperation & their sustain-ability, conclusions)
Mandating (Legislators, CEOs, Foundation Presidents/Board Members)	Public	1,2	3	4	5,6
	Private	1,2	3	4	5,6
	Independent	1,2	3	4	5,6
Strategic (Ministry representatives, business and civic organization leaders)	Public	1,7,8,11	12	18,19, 20	5,6,22,23,24,25
	Private	1,7,9,11	12	18,19, 20	5,6,22,23,24,25
	Independent	1,7,10,11	12	18,19, 20	5,6,22,23,24,25
Operational (Local Support Group, Res-researcher, others)	Public		12,13,14	15,16, 17,18,19,20, 21	5,6,22,23,24,25
	Private		12,13,14	15,16, 17,18,19,20, 21	5,6,22,23,24,25
	Independent		12,13,14	15,16, 17,18,19,20, 21	5,6,22,23,24,25
Field Level-Implementers (School directors and teachers; Youth centre staff, others)	Public		12	15,16,18, 19, 20	5,6,22,23,24,25
	Private		12	15,16,18,19, 20	5,6,22,23,24,25
	Independent		12	15,16,18,19, 20	5,6,22,23,24,25
Field Level-Consumers (1-2 hour focus group with five representative youth participants)					26, 27, 28

Interview Questions:

What are the most pressing contextual concerns regarding disadvantaged youth and their (a) social exclusion/inclusion, (b) empowerment, and (c) successful transition to adult working life?

How and to what extent are these concerns reflected in current national legislation and policies of governments (including EU), businesses, and foundations? Are these concerns adequately and clearly reflected in national policies?

Are the financial resources provided by the EU, national, and regional governments adequate to ensure implementation and results of programs?

What is the scope and extent of partnerships envisioned between the public, private, and independent sectors in the legislation and in its implementation? What are the major challenges in developing these partnerships?

What are the evaluation and accountability expectations of legislators, policy, and partnership organization leaders? What evidence is considered most compelling or most important for measuring the outcomes and impact of the YEPP program? (i.e., specific indicators for measuring human resource value added, social capital enhancement, youth empowerment/leadership, social cohesion, economic and cultural development)

In a trans-national comparison of YEPP initiatives, what information and evidence is most important for legislators and other leaders?

Overall, to what extent are the context descriptions prepared by the local researcher accurate and comprehensive? What additional contextual factors need to be considered for improving the development of at-risk children?

Specifically, is the context description for the public sector accurate and comprehensive?

Specifically, is the context description for the private sector accurate and comprehensive?

Specifically, is the context description for the independent sector accurate and comprehensive?

Please describe any areas of disagreement between and among the major partners regarding contextual factors affecting the YEPP program.

To what extent are the YEPP governing principles (universal coordination of services, youth empowerment, social cohesion, sustainable local partnerships) compatible with the policies of your organization? How would you describe the level of support for the YEPP within your organization?

Please describe how and when your organization became part of the YEPP support group.

To what extent are funding resources adequate and used cost-effectively in the implementation of the YEPP?

What role, if any, do local universities or other key partners play in the YEPP program?

Are each of the staff members employed by the local YEPP organization and partner organizations performing effectively in their positions? What additional training or orientation for staff is needed?

Has a comprehensive program for recruiting and training volunteers been developed and implemented?

Describe the role, strengths, and assets of the local support group, the coordinator, and the researcher.

Describe the major obstacles and facilitators to developing and maintaining partnerships.

What major challenges must be confronted and resolved by the local support group in the next six months?

What are the major YEPP activities and projects being undertaken? For each project or activity, please describe briefly: the goals, strategies, target audiences, funding, and participation by each of the public, private, and independent sector partners.

To what extent are representatives of the three sectors actively involved in the local support group/local YEPP partnership? Briefly describe the organizational structure and processes developed by the local partnership to ensure cooperation and joint activities.

How do the representatives in the local YEPP partnership assess the quality, stability, impact, and sustainability of the partnership to date?

What level of support and active participation have the partner organizations provided for the operational plan/action plan?

Describe the specific impact of the YEPP/CHI partnership to date on: the conditions for children and youth ages 0-26, public sector organizations (human services, schools, rehabilitation), private sector organizations (businesses and firms), independent sector organizations (foundations, volunteer organizations), and the interaction of the three sectors.

Please describe how the YEPP program has been beneficial to you. If the YEPP program were not available, would you be able to obtain these benefits from other organizations, such as schools or youth organizations?

Please describe the ways in which the YEPP program has benefited your community.

Based on your experience in the YEPP program, what will you be doing in the next few years that you would not otherwise be able to accomplish.

Proposed On-Site Interview Table

Day 1 (Monday)	
Orientation meeting	1 hour
Guided tour of YEPP programme Facilities and site including observation of activities (such as classes or worksite activities)	2 hours
Interview Local Coordinator	2 hours
Interview Local Researcher	2 hours
Day 2 (Tuesday)	
Interview members of the YEPP Support Group (collectively)	2 hours
Conduct focus groups with 5 YEPP participants	2 hours
Interview selected local YEPP programme staff members (e.g. teachers, counsellors, job developers, parent advocates.)	1½ hours
Interview local YEPP Programme administrators (Public, Private and Independent sectors)	3 hours
Day 3 (Wednesday)	
Interview selected community officials (mayor, school superintendent)	2-3 hours
Interview selected NGO officials (parent association, women's club, youth centre).	2-3 hours
Interview representatives of the local activist networks / coalitions	2-3 hours
Day 4 (Thursday)	
Interview key selected national and regional officials (e.g. Ministry officials, legislators, business leaders, heads of foundations, NGO leaders, International organisations).	1 hour each
Complete additional interviews of key stakeholders	
Conduct wrap-up meeting with Local coordinator	

Interview Guide for Mandating Level (Policymakers from Government, Businesses, NGOs, and Foundations)

Introduction:

This external evaluation process complements the internal evaluation being used in the Tuzla--Simin Han CHI. Since both members of the interview team are not associated directly with the local YEPP program, the evaluation information we compile provides an independent view of the YEPP programs and its effectiveness. Also, the external evaluation will enable us to keep track of the process used to form the public, private and independent sector partnerships and to understand the policy context in which such partnerships are effective in serving disadvantaged children and youth.

In the following questions, we will explore your assessment of and views on the cross-sectoral policies and priorities affecting the YEPP initiative.

Interviewee:
 Interviewer:
 Date:

Location:
Job Title:
Name of Institution/Organization/Programme:
Role in YEPP:
Contact Information:
 Telephone:
 FAX:
 Email:

Questions:

In XXX, what are the most pressing contextual concerns regarding disadvantaged youth and their:

Social exclusion/inclusion

Empowerment (probes: economic, civic, cultural, sport)

Successful transition to adult working life.

How and to what extent are these concerns reflected in current national legislation and policies of **governments (including EU), businesses, and foundations**? Are these concerns adequately and clearly reflected in national policies? (*probes: Are the education policies focused on serving at risk children? Which economic development and employment policies of businesses are focused on jobs for the low-skilled youth? Please identify, by name, the policies/policy statements that are most important to the success of the YEPP initiative.*)

Are the financial resources provided currently by the EU, national, and regional governments adequate to ensure implementation and results of the various YEPP programs? In your view, what mix of funding from EU, national, and regional governments is most appropriate for the successful implementation of the YEPP initiative? Are certain financial policies and assumptions essential for maintaining effective YEPP programmes? (*such as matching requirements, performance-based funding, meeting audit standards, etc.*)

What is the scope and extent of partnerships envisioned between the public, private, and independent sectors in the legislation and in its implementation? (*probes: Do partnerships among two sectors (or within a specific sector) appear to be particularly important next steps? How long have the existing partnerships been operating? What aspects of the existing partnerships make them successful?*)

What are the major challenges in developing these partnerships? (probes: political will, funding, developing trust among partners, etc.)

What are the evaluation and accountability expectations of legislators, policy, and partnership organization leaders? What evidence is considered most compelling or most important for measuring the outcomes and impact of the YEPP program? (i.e., specific indicators for measuring human resource value added, social capital enhancement, youth empowerment/leadership, social cohesion, economic and cultural development)

In a trans-national comparison of YEPP initiatives, what information and evidence is most important for legislators and other leaders in learning about the scope, quality and impact of cross-sectoral partnerships?

Interview Guide for Strategic Level (Program or Project Leaders: Government, Businesses, NGOs, and Foundations)

Introduction:

This external evaluation process complements the internal evaluation being used in the XXX CHI. Since both members of the interview team are not associated directly with the local YEPP program, the evaluation information we compile provides an independent view of the YEPP programs and its effectiveness. Also, the external evaluation will enable us to keep track of the process used to form the public, private and independent sector partnerships and to understand the policy context in which such partnerships are effective in serving disadvantaged children and youth.

In the following questions, we will explore your assessment of and views on the cross-sectoral policies and priorities affecting the YEPP initiative.

Interviewee:

Interviewer:

Date:

Location:

Job Title:

Name of Institution/Organization/Programme:

Role in YEPP:

Contact Information:

Telephone:

FAX:

Email:

Questions:

In XXX, what are the most pressing contextual concerns regarding disadvantaged youth and their:

Social exclusion/inclusion

Empowerment (probes: economic, civic, cultural, sport)

Successful transition to adult working life

Overall, to what extent are the context descriptions prepared by the local researcher accurate and comprehensive? What additional contextual factors need to be considered for improving the development of at-risk children?

(Probes: In each interview, discuss the accuracy and completeness of the context description for their sector—public, private or independent.)

Please describe any areas of disagreement between and among the major partners regarding contextual factors affecting the YEPP program.

To what extent are the YEPP governing principles (universal coordination of services, youth empowerment, social cohesion, sustainable local partnerships) compatible with the policies of your organization?

How would you describe the level of support for the YEPP within your organization?

Describe the role, strengths, and assets of the local support group, the coordinator, and the researcher.

Describe the major obstacles and facilitators to developing and maintaining partnerships.

What major challenges must be confronted and resolved by the local support group in the next six months?

What are the major YEPP activities and projects being undertaken?

(Probes: For each project or activity, discuss the goals, strategies, target audiences, funding, and participation by each of the public, private, and independent sector partners.)

To what extent are representatives of the three sectors actively involved in the local support group/local YEPP partnership?

(Probes: Briefly describe the organizational structure and processes developed by the local partnership to ensure cooperation and joint activities.)

How do the representatives in the local YEPP partnership assess the quality, stability, impact, and sustainability of the partnership to date?

What level of support and active participation have the partner organizations provided for the operational plan/action plan?

Describe the specific impact of the YEPP/CHI partnership to date on:

The conditions for children and youth ages 0-26.

Public sector organizations (human services, schools, rehabilitation).

Private sector organizations (businesses and firms).

Independent sector organizations (foundations, volunteer organizations).

The interaction of the three sectors.

From your perspective, what are the evaluation and accountability expectations for the YEPP initiative? What evidence is considered most compelling or most important for measuring the outcomes and impact of the YEPP program? (Probes: Ask about specific indicators for measuring human resource value added, social capital enhancement, youth empowerment/leadership, social cohesion, economic and cultural development)

In a trans-national comparison of YEPP initiatives, what information and evidence is most important for leaders in learning about the scope, quality and impact of cross-sectoral partnerships?

Interview Guide for Operational Level (Local Support Group, Researcher, Local Coordinator)

Introduction:

This external evaluation process complements the internal evaluation being used in the XXX CHI. Since both members of the interview team are not associated directly with the local YEPP program, the evaluation information we compile provides an independent view of the YEPP programs and its effectiveness. Also, the external evaluation will enable us to keep track of the process used to form the public, private and independent sector partnerships and to understand the policy context in which such partnerships are effective in serving disadvantaged children and youth.

In the following questions, we will explore your assessment of and views on the cross-sectoral policies and priorities affecting the YEPP initiative.

Interviewee:

Interviewer:

Date:

Location:

Job Title:

Name of Institution/Organization/Programme:

Role in YEPP:

Contact Information:

Telephone:

FAX:

Email:

Questions:

To what extent are the YEPP governing principles (universal coordination of services, youth empowerment, social cohesion, sustainable local partnerships) compatible with the policies of your organization? How would you describe the level of support for the YEPP within your organization?

Please describe how and when your organization became part of the YEPP support group.

To what extent are funding resources adequate and used cost-effectively in the implementation of the YEPP?

What role, if any, do local universities play in the YEPP program?

Are each of the staff members employed by the local YEPP organization and partner organizations performing effectively in their positions? What additional training or orientation for staff is needed?

Has a comprehensive program for recruiting and training volunteers been developed and implemented?

Describe the role, strengths, and assets of the:

local support group

the coordinator

the researcher.

Describe the major obstacles and facilitators to developing and maintaining partnerships.

What major challenges must be confronted and resolved by the local support group in the next six months?

What are the major YEPP activities and projects being undertaken? (Probe: For each project or activity, please describe briefly the goals, strategies, target audiences, funding, and participation by each of the public, private, and independent sector partners.)

To what extent are representatives of the three sectors actively involved in the local support group/local YEPP partnership? Briefly describe the organizational structure and processes developed by the local partnership to ensure cooperation and joint activities.

How do you and the other representatives in the local YEPP partnership assess the quality, stability, impact, and sustainability of the partnership to date?

What level of support and active participation have the partner organizations provided for the operational plan/action plan?

Describe the specific impact of the YEPP/CHI partnership to date on:

The conditions for children and youth ages 0-26

Public sector organizations (human services, schools, rehabilitation)

Private sector organizations (businesses and firms)

Independent sector organizations (foundations, volunteer organizations)

The interaction of the three sectors.

From your perspective, what are the evaluation and accountability expectations for the YEPP initiative? What evidence is considered most compelling or most important for measuring the outcomes and impact of the YEPP program? (Probes: Ask about specific indicators for measuring human resource value added, social capital enhancement, youth empowerment/leadership, social cohesion, economic and cultural development)

In a trans-national comparison of YEPP initiatives, what information and evidence is most important for leaders in learning about the scope, quality and impact of cross-sectoral partnerships?

Interview Guide for Field Level (YEPP Program Personnel—Counselors, Teachers, Program Coordinators)

Introduction:

This external evaluation process complements the internal evaluation being used in the XXX CHI. Since both members of the interview team are not associated directly with the local YEPP program, the evaluation information we compile provides an independent view of the YEPP programs and its effectiveness. Also, the external evaluation will enable us to keep track of the process used to form the public, private and independent sector partnerships and to understand the policy context in which such partnerships are effective in serving disadvantaged children and youth.

In the following questions, we will explore your assessment of and views on the cross-sectoral policies and priorities affecting the YEPP initiative.

Interviewee:

Interviewer:

Date:

Location:

Job Title:

Name of Institution/Organization/Programme:

Role in YEPP:
Contact Information:
Telephone:
FAX:
Email:

Questions:

Briefly describe the major YEPP programme or project in which you are involved. (Probe: What are the goals, strategies, target audiences, funding, and cooperation provided from the public, private, and independent sector partners?)

What role, if any, do local universities play in the YEPP program?

Has a program been developed and implemented for recruiting and training volunteers or program staff members?

Describe the major obstacles and facilitators to developing and maintaining this programme.

What major challenges must be confronted and resolved in the next few months to maintain, expand, or improve this programme.

Regarding the development of this YEPP programme, please describe the role, strengths, and assets of the local support group, the coordinator, and the researcher.

How would you assess the quality, stability, impact, and sustainability of this particular YEPP programme to date?

Please describe the specific impact of the YEPP programme to date on:

The conditions for children and youth ages 0-26

Public sector organizations (human services, schools, rehabilitation)

Private sector organizations (businesses and firms)

Independent sector organizations (foundations, volunteer organizations)

The interaction of the three sectors.

From your perspective, what are the evaluation and accountability expectations for the YEPP initiative? What evidence is considered most compelling or most important for measuring the outcomes and impact of the YEPP program?

(Probes: Ask about specific indicators for measuring human resource value added, social capital enhancement, youth empowerment/ leadership, social cohesion, economic and cultural development)

In a trans-national comparison of YEPP initiatives, what information and evidence is most important for leaders in learning about the scope, quality and impact of cross-sectoral partnerships?

Questions for the Focus Group of YEPP Programme Participants

Five to ten youth participating in a YEPP programme will be randomly selected by the Local Coordinator. Following a brief introduction to the purpose of the external evaluation, the participants will describe their involvement in the YEPP programme being reviewed. The interviewers will request permission to tape record the session, and assure the participants that their responses will be treated confidentially.

Name of Programme:

Names of Focus Group Participants:

Questions:

Please describe how the YEPP program has been beneficial to you.

If the YEPP program were not available, would you be able to obtain these benefits from other organizations, such as schools or youth centers?

Please describe the ways in which the YEPP program has benefited your community.

Based on your experience in the YEPP program, what will you be doing in the next few years that you would not otherwise be able to accomplish?

SAMPLE CHI FEEDBACK MEMO FROM EXTERNAL EVALUATORS

XX-1-03

TO: Monika Kleck

FROM: Allen Phelps and Peter Evans

RE: YEPP/Simin Han
External Evaluation Pilot Test, 16-20/12/02
Some Observations, Impressions, and Recommendations

The YEPP staff and Local Support Group (LSG) graciously agreed to participate in a pilot test of the OECD-led external evaluation process during the week of 16 December. We wish to thank the YEPP Project Team, members of the LSG and the community partners who participated in interviews to describe their participation in the YEPP initiative to date and their expectations for the evaluation. By examining documents and talking with the many partners in Simin Han and Tuzla, we gained a number of insights about the goals, processes, target audiences, service plans, and resources that are part of the exciting and innovative YEPP initiative. Most important, we were able to obtain a grounded perspective on the project, which is extremely useful for developing evaluation standards appropriate for informing all partners and the YEPP funders about the status and effects of YEPP. This perspective is also helpful in developing evaluation criteria for documenting promising community development practices. During the week we were able to discuss the evaluation procedures, criteria, and information that the partners consider to be important for assessing the short-term and long-run success of the YEPP. Finally, the interviews also allowed us to find several additional data sources that are available for both the internal and external evaluation components.

Over the five days we met with 21 representatives of partner organizations (including several school staff), conducted two focus groups attended by 7 students and 5 youth leaders from the community, and held in-depth interviews and discussions with four YEPP staff and two volunteers funded by the Robert Bosch Foundation.

The following is a list of general observations about the status and evaluation of YEPP. These comments are designed to inform and perhaps guide future program development and implementation.

1) The YEPP/SH project has integrated and advanced several recent, major investments in building a democratic society in Simin Han. Using resources from the Freudenberg Foundation, local authorities, and other donors, the YEPP local support group (LSG) has guided the planning and implementation of several new projects. The opening of a new cultural and community center (the AGORA) and development of a trading market for agricultural products (the Point) illustrate the importance and value of cross-sectoral partnerships in re-building this community's social and economic infrastructure following the war. YEPP has also enhanced and extended the existing innovations of several partners, including the Primary School's efforts to develop community connections through ecology education, the professional orientation program, the pupils' council and the parents' council. The recent discussion of a community foundation illustrates the rapid advances that have been made by the YEPP leaders and the LSG toward making youth and community development projects sustainable in Simin Han.

So far, the YEPP project has had a substantial impact by increasing the options for youth through the Professional Orientation program. This innovative program provides 8th grade students with an in-depth experience in a local enterprise and exposure to several realistic career opportunities associated with the enterprise. Based on these individual studies, students are able to make informed choices of appropriate secondary schools, including grammar schools and university options.

Since the creation of the YEPP initiative in Simin Han, the informal working relationships between several NGOs, the school, and the District and municipal authorities has been formalized through several projects such as the Ecology Project and the AGORA Center. Further, the initial planning to re-open the Point has established a relationship between the public and independent sectors, and the chamber of commerce.

2) Discussions with the Tuzla Canton Ministry for Education, Culture and Sport revealed a high level of respect for the innovations undertaken by the Simin Han Primary School. The Minister and Deputy Minister expressed enthusiastic support for initiatives such as the Pupils' and Parents' Councils, the Professional Orientation Program, and the school development/ leadership project being started with several schools from Croatia, Yugoslavia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. This latter project illustrates the important role that the school and YEPP can engage in improving schooling practices in BiH, the Baltic states, and beyond.

It is important to note that the Parents' and Students' Councils developed over the past several years at the Simin Han School have been incorporated in Canton education law and policy. As noted by the Minister, these policies were adopted from the successful councils developed at the Simin Han school. Also, articles 52 and 53 of the BiH law on Primary and Secondary Education also prescribe that these councils be established and used in operating schools throughout the Federation.

3) Conversations with the local evaluator, coordinator, and school staff indicate that surveys have been compiled for planning and starting several YEPP projects. In addition, teachers complete a home visit in the spring of each year to collect information on the children in each family, as well as economic and social data about the family. These data are used to plan programs and education offerings that address the specific educational needs of families and children. We encourage the coordinators of each project and the local evaluator to continue collecting data and information for all of the projects to clearly identify needs that can be addressed in project planning. Further, data and information should be compiled to assess the impact of the projects on students, youth, and families. These data could be obtained by doing school exit or follow-up surveys with graduates and parents, and possibly through case studies of a small but representative sample of students. According to the interviews conducted, the LSG and other partners identified several criteria by which YEPP should be assessed. The major criteria for judging the long-term evaluation and impact of YEPP include: (a) greater social and civic participation by youth during and following primary school enrollment, (b) increased rates of employment and secondary school graduation, (c) the sustained continuation of existing programs through local or donor funding, and (d) the development of new, mutually beneficial programs among the partnership organizations.

4) Using data obtained from the local evaluation efforts, along with other evaluation information and data, several project changes or expansions can be accomplished. Impact data could be useful in examining the following options for YEPP projects:

21. Focusing on the extent and quality of youth participation in each of the projects is an important indicator for judging project success. Youth participation data should be collected to examine changes in youth self efficacy or self concept, satisfaction with the education or engagement experiences provided to youth, and subsequent changes in behavior (for example, voting behavior, volunteer activities, healthy living habits, voluntary participation in public information campaigns, and so on).

22. Developing a professional orientation program for 6th and 7th grade students that include orientations to the grammar and gymnasium secondary school options in Tuzla, as well as the professional and technical secondary schools.

23. Focusing the professional orientation on professions and careers with good employment possibilities. Employment opportunity data should be used to focus the program on good job or career opportunities and to encourage the Ministry to close secondary school professional programs that no longer provide employment opportunities.

5) The YEPP Program should consider taking up a more active and central role in initial and inservice teacher training. The staff should invite faculty members from the University of Tuzla and leaders of the Pedagogic Institute to observe the various YEPP education and community development projects. The various projects would serve as excellent practica (praxis) sites for future social workers, business leaders, and teachers enrolled in university programs, as well as teachers seeking master's degrees through the universities and the Institute. By including universities and the institute in the YEPP partnership, they could provide valuable staff resources for sustaining many of the projects and programs.

6) Several interviews revealed that the CHI study visits with the Kristinestad, Finland site had a powerful effect on the visitors from Simin Han. These individuals have started new intercultural efforts that will be beneficial to the youth and professionals engaged in YEPP. Most importantly, these exchanges demonstrate new approaches to common problems (such as youth

unemployment and social alienation) in the centers of high intensity. In assessing the impact of YEPP, it will be important for the Local Researcher to document that follow-up activities that result from these study visits, and to report these results widely

7) One of the major challenges for Simin Han is rebuilding and developing a local economy that capitalizes on the natural resources, cultural traditions, and education of the resident and returning citizens and young people. The complexity and importance of this challenge was made visible in our discussions regarding the Point project, which is designed to develop a cooperative for producing and selling medical herbs and other agricultural products. Several of the existing and planned YEPP projects might contribute directly to the Point project by: (a) creating a website for the Point, (b) providing students with professional orientation experiences at the Point and in the companies or enterprises using the Point, and (c) focusing entrepreneurial training projects on the harvesting, production, and selling of medical herbs and other agricultural products grown in Simin Han.

**ANNEX 3:
LIST OF INTERVIEWEES**

Dublin 10-14/01/05	
YEPP	
John Weafer	Researcher
Liam O'Dwyer	Executive Director, Irish Youth Foundation
David Little	Co-ordinator and NAHB Community Worker
National	
Mary Cunningham	Director, National Youth Council of Ireland
Emily Fisher	Office of the Ombudsmen for Children
Seamus McLoughlin	Head, Social Inclusion Unit, Dept. of Education and Sciences
P.J. Breen	Youth Affairs, Dept. of Education and Sciences
Anne O'Donnel	Head of Communications, National Children's Office.
Owen Keenan	Chief Executive, Barnados
Local	
Seanie Lambe	ICON
John Lahert	15-20, NYP1 Youth Project
Fergus McCabe	12-18, NYP2 Youth Project & National Drug Strategy
Maeve O'Reilly	Social Worker, St. Vincent's Trust
Joe Lucey	12-18 Youth Project & Crinan Youth Project
Tony Rock	5-12 Youth Project & St. Vincent de Paul Resource Centre
Brian Melaugh	ICON Co-chair 7, Anna Liffey Children's Project
Louise Fitzpatrick	City of Dublin Youth Services Board
Olivier McEvoy	Project Co-ordinator, Dail na nOg
Louise McEvaddy	0-5 Youth Project & Curam
Catherine Sheerin	Team Leader, Curam Family Centre
Mel MacGiobuin	North Inner City Drugs Taskforce
Celine Keogh	0-5 Youth Project & Hill Street Family Resource Centre
Colman Duggan	NAHB Co-chair
John Hedges	Ballybough Youth Project
Imelda O'Keefe	Ballybough Youth Project
Bill Malone	Ballybough Youth Project
9-13/01/06	
YEPP	
Liam O'Dwyer	Executive Director, Irish Youth Foundation
David Little	YEPP Co-ordinator and NAHB Community Worker
National	
Seamus McLoughlin	Head, Social Inclusion Unit, Dept. of Education and Sciences
P.J. Breen	Youth Affairs, Dept. of Education and Sciences
Anne O'Donnell	Head of Communications, National Children's Office.
Local	
Seanie Lambe	ICON
Fergus McCabe	12-18, NYP2 Youth Project & National Drug Strategy
Joe Lucey	12-18 Youth Project & Crinan Youth Project
Tony Rock	5-12 Youth Project & St. Vincent de Paul Resource Centre
Brian Melaugh	
Margaret Hayes	City of Dublin Youth Services Board
Catherine Sheerin	Team Leader, Curam Family Centre
Celine Keogh	0-5 Youth Project & Hill Street Family Resource Centre

Colman Duggan	NAHB Co-chair
John Hedges	Ballybough Youth Project
Bill Malone	Ballybough Youth Project
Amy Trimble	Youth, health worker
Klaus	Youth
Charlie	Youth
Noel	Youth
Kelly	Youth
Pauline Kane	Wexford Centre
Leanne Hylan	Youth Participation
Shane Crossan	Youth Empowerment Network Leader

Kristinestad 7-11/06/04	
YEPP	
Pernilla Rauma	Local researcher
Mats Brandt	Chairman, Project Ombudsman, Foundation for Swedish Culture
Harriet Lindelöf-Sahl	The municipality's Youth Secretary / Chair of Support Group
National	
Elsa Hänninen	National Board of Education
Erkki Håkli	Youth Participation Project
Roope Lehto	Youth Participation Project
Local	
Lisbeth Saxberg Blomkvist	(until recently) Member of the board of the Foundation for Swedish Culture
Jessica Bårdsnes	Chairing Youth Council, Youth Office
Agneta Stenlund Grindgårds	Politician, member of the Municipality Board
Linn Bergkulla	Student, Kristinestad High School, Member of the Youth council
Anki Sundnäs	Researcher & writer
Mia Rosengård	Politician, member of the Municipality Board
Ida Haapamäki	Kristinestad High School, Member of the Youth council
Kaj Björni	City Administrator
Asa Tier	Headmaster of Härkmeri elementary school
Lina Tier	LUMA
Peder Sahl	Teacher
Anna-Lena Palomäki	Previous local researcher; Mayor of Malax
13-17/06/05	
YEPP	
Pernilla Rauma	Local researcher
Mats Brandt	Chairman, Project Ombudsman, Foundation for Swedish Culture
Inge Fagerbakk	YEPP Co-ordinator
National	
Elsa Hänninen	National Board of Education
Anneli Tallqvist	Senior advisor, Ministry of Labour, Development and Guidance of Labour
Jaana Hätälä	Senior advisor, Ministry of Education, Department for Cultural, Sport and Youth Policy, Youth Policy Department
Virpi Kölhi	Senior Officer, Legal Affairs, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health
Kari Ilmonen	Ministerial Adviser, Department of Family and Social Affairs, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health
Local	
Lisbeth Saxberg Blomkvist	(until recently) Member of the board of the Foundation for Swedish Culture
Helena Lundman-Evars	Psychologist, representing Folkhälsan
Marina Sved-Rhoddis	Teacher at the secondary school in Kristinestad and "Gymnaset", chairing the local Teachers' Union
Anna-Lena af Hällstrom	
Kjell Kankaanpää	Representing the "8th Youth Ring" - an umbrella youth organisation
Riitta El-Nemr	
Johan Klavus	Chairman, the local Entrepreneurs' Association
Anna-Kasja Blomquist	

Staffan Granfors	
Linn Bergkulla	Student, Kristinestad High School, Member of the Youth council
Anki Sundnäs	Researcher & writer
Ida Haapamäki	Kristinestad High School, Member of the Youth council
Asa Tier	Headmaster of Härkmeri elementary school
Petri Huhtanen	
Per-Elof Boström	

Tuzla 6-10/09/04	
YEPP	
Jasna Jasarevic	Co-ordinator
Gianna Cadore	Previous local researcher
Monika Kleck.	Previous co-ordinator
Vera	The Point
Jasmina	Local researcher
National	
Spomenka Mičić	Chairman of the advisory board/support group
Akmed Rifatbegovic	OSCE – Democracy and Governance Dept.
Žana Prutina	OSCE – Democracy and Governance Dept.
Nikola Yordanov	OSCE – Democracy and Governance Dept.
Maria Prsa	OSCE - EDU
Aida Cengic	Representative of the Soros Foundation
Blair Blackwell	OSCE - EDU
Local	
Edo Mujkic	Representative of the Tuzla local youth council
Aida Novalic	Chairperson of the district council
Hazim Halilovic	Deputy Minister for Education, Tuzla Canton
Ernesa Mešić	Head, Department for Social Affairs, municipality Tuzla
E Salihović	Youth council
Amdir	Youth
Tanja Junuzagic	GTZ
Peter Gartner	
Alija Salihović	Youth
Adnan Kurtović	Student, Chem. School
Auda Beriea	Teacher, Chem. School
Mujidin Tokic	Chemical school – school cooperative
Osman Hasic	Headmaster of the primary school, SH
Fahrudin Bulabasic	SH entrepreneur
Monchra	SH entrepreneur
Lahira Sejjija	Director, IPAC
D. Dragečević	Tuzla area representative for Sarajevo-based Youth Information Agency
4-9/09/05	
YEPP	
Jasna Jasarevic	Co-ordinator
Jasmina Husanovic	Local researcher
Vera Dezic-Agora	The Point
National	
Spomenka Mičić	Chairman of the advisory board/support group
Aida Cengic	Representative of the Soros Foundation
Tatjana Ostojic	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Maria Prsa	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Jan Kulenovic	Youth Information Agency
Local	
Ernesa Mešić	Head, Department for Social Affairs, municipality Tuzla
Tanja Junuzagic	GTZ

Admir Hasanovic	Youth
Alija Salihović	Youth
Selma Skopljakovic	Youth
Mujidin Tokic	Chemical school – school cooperative
Hasib Haradzic	
Edin Mukinovic	
Osman Hasic	Headmaster of the primary school, SH
Fahrudin Bulabasic	SH entrepreneur
Indira Prljaca	TALDI

Mannheim 25-29/10/04	
National	
Herr Möller	Entimon – Project of the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth
Dorothee Harenberg	BMBF – Ministry for Education and research, department of Education for a democratic culture.
Bernd Knopf; Dagmar Beer-Kern	Federal Integration and Immigration Unit
Local	
Elisabeth Müller-Neumann	Mayor of Mannheim's Office
Helmut Schmitt; Claus Preissler	Officer for Immigration and Integration a.D., City of Mannheim
Dr. Gerhard Mersmann	Leiter des Fachbereichs Bildung, City of Mannheim, Director Dept. for Education,
Christian Schreider	Representative of SAP company, Sponsor of Musical Project
Dr. Anne Sliwka	Freudenberg Stiftung – responsible for Service Learning Project
Beate Maas	Director of the IKUBIZ since January 2003 has been working for IKUBIZ since 1984
Dr. Petra Wagner	City of Mannheim – Dept. for Youth, Social Affairs and Health, Mannheim's coordinator for neighbourhood management, internal coordinator for the City-administration representatives in the formerly existing "Local Support Group"
Wolfgang Biller	City of Mannheim –Mannheim Office for Culture in the area of District Culture, Co-responsible for Culture in the Neckarstadt-West, Community Art, Friendly Monsters, Culture Shop, participated in the study-visit to Antwerp
Alexander Müller	Former Manager of the JUZ- Youth Centre in Self-Administration Neckarstadt „Friedrich Dürr“ until August 2004, participated at YEPP's Lille-conference, responsible for Robert-Bosch volunteers
Wilma Haass	Director of the „Children's House“ (=Kinderhaus Neckarstadt West in the Draisstraße), involved in „Rucksack Project“
Annette Weber	Director of Musical „Neckarstadt-West Side Story“
Brigitte Bauder-Zutavern	Director Neckar Elementary School, involved in several YEPP School projects: Service Learning, Inter-religious dialogue and School Yard Design
Youths: Heower, Deniz, Marc, Can	Involved in Play and participants of Turin workshop
Sonngül Yildrim	Mothers mentors, Rucksack Project
Albrecht Freese	Diakonie Projekt Rainwaidenstraße
Saliou Gueye	Neckarstadt-West Neighbourhood Manager
Maja, Marko	In-Service Learning Students
Margot Römmich	ProFi (entrapreneur's project)
Christina Sas	In-Service Learning Evaluation, University of Mannheim
YEPP	
Corinna Störzinger	IKUBIZ, Local Coordinator
Hüseyin Ertunc	IKUBIZ, Local Coordinator
Joana Tur Castello	IKUBIZ, Local Researcher
Christian Petry	Managing Director of the Freudenberg Foundation, Weinheim
Pia Gerber	Responsible for YEPP Mannheim Neckarstadt-West at the Freudenberg Foundation
12-16/12/05	

YEPP	
Corinna Störzinger	IKUBIZ, Local Coordinator
Hüseyin Ertunc	IKUBIZ, Local Coordinator
Joana Tur Castello	Local Researcher
Christian Petry	Managing Director of the Freudenberg Foundation, Weinheim
Pia Gerber	Responsible for YEPP Mannheim Neckarstadt-West at the Freudenberg Foundation
National	
Christina Engemann	Ministry of Culture, Youth, Sport
Frau Rathenhäuser	Social exclusion, vocational training, Ministry for Culture, Youth, and Sport
Herr Waldraff	Teacher training, Ministry for Culture, Youth, and Sport
Herr Pröchtel	Language and migration, Ministry for Culture, Youth, and Sport
Local	
Claus Preissler	Office for Immigration and Integration, Mannheim
Dr. Gerhard Mersmann	Leiter des Fachbereichs Bildung, City of Mannheim, Director Dept. for Education,
Beate Maas	Director of the IKUBIZ since January 2003 has been working for IKUBIZ since 1984
Wilma Haass	Director of the "Children's House" (Kinderhaus Neckarstadt West in the Draisstraße), involved in "Rucksack Project"
Brigitte Bauder-Zutavern	Director Neckar Elementary School, involved in several YEPP School projects: Service Learning, Inter-religious dialogue and School Yard Design
Youths	Involved in Play and participants of Turin workshop
Albrecht Freese	Diakonie Projekt Rainwaidenstraße
Claus Hasselbach	Diakonie Projekt Rainwaidenstraße
Saliou Gueye	Neckarstadt-West Neighbourhood Manager
Margot Römmich	ProFi (entrepreneur's project)
Paolo Silvestri	ProFi (entrepreneur's project)
Helga Reindel	Project Leseladen
Leyla Türer	Project Leseladen

Antwerp 1-5/03/04	
YEPP	
Christine Castille	Evens Foundation
Micheline Mardulyn	Bernheim Foundation
Tim Verbist	Local Researcher
Marijke Cornelis	Inland Researcher
Lin Ploegaert	Co-ordination team, Straten-Generaal
Geert Lambrechts	Co-ordination team, Straten-Generaal
Nicole de Coninck	Co-ordination team, Straten-Generaal
Dirk Lenaerts	Co-ordination team, Straten-Generaal
Noortje Wiesbauer	Co-ordination team, Straten-Generaal
National	
Theo Mardulier	Ministry of Education – Disadvantaged students
Wouter Janssens	Ministry of Education
Marleen van Ouytsel	Local Alderwoman and cabinet member of the Flemish Education Ministry
Bea Vandewiele	Ministry of Education – Integration of Services
Stijn Van Wolputte	Large City Policy
Local	
Chris Van Bouchout	Staff member of Youth Alderman Robert Voorhamme's cabinet
Joris De Bleser	Staff member of Youth Alderman Robert Voorhamme's cabinet
Marc Tulfer	Principal, CDO Noord
Mario Van Poppel	City Administrator, Safety Policy
Chris Ledegen	Teacher, CDO Noord
Hans Moens	Teacher, CDO Noord
Eddy van den Nieuwenhof	Teacher, CDO Noord
Tim van Gool	Youth Services

Glenn	Youth
Carla	Youth
Ibrahim	Youth
Turan	Youth
Dave	Youth
Claudia	Youth
Renato Braaf	Timberland Benelux Director
Inge Beels	Timberland PR representative
Chantal Pauwels	Local Antwerp city council
Jan Thuy	Previous Youth Services
Jan Reijnaers	Process Manager, Spoor Noord
Patricia Wildiers	PAM.VZW

11-14/11/05

YEPP

Micheline Mardulyn	Bernheim Foundation
Tim Verbist	Local Co-ordinator
Maud Aguirre	Evens Foundation
Marijke Cornelis	Local researcher

National

Michiel Van de Voorde	Co-ordinator (Equal Labour Market Participation & Diversity within Labour)
Reinhilde Pulinx	(Organisation of NT 2/ Dutch as a second language)
Theo Mardulier	Ministry of Education – Disadvantaged students
Frederik Roekens	Assistant to the Director, reception class for newly arrived immigrant children in secondary schools, Ministry of Education,
Chris Deloof	Assistant to the Director, reception class for newly arrived immigrant children in primary secondary schools, Ministry of Education

Local

Christine Castille	Ex-Evens Foundation
Annabel Decraene	Vitamin W
Lin Ploegaert	Straten-Generaal
Marc Tuffer	Principal, CDO Noord
Tom Verlent	Project co-ordinator, (CDO Noord)
Erwin Pairen	Court of Mayor and Alderm Alderman for Education (Cityhall)
Tim van Gool	Youth Services
Thomas Goorden	Old CDO student, member: Community TV project
Uwamungu Cornelis	Old CDO student, member: Community TV project
Mohammed	Old CDO student, member: Community TV project

Turin

22-26/04/04

YEPP

Antonella Ricci	Compagnia di San Paulo
Luigi Morello	Compagnia di San Paulo
Sonia Schellino	Compagnia di San Paulo
Piero Gastaldo	Compagnia di San Paulo
Gianni Limone	Co-ordinator, Parella
Angela Lostia	Local researcher
Paola Monaci	Previous co-ordinator, Mirafiori
Massimo Infunti	Co-ordinator, Mirafiori

National

Aviano Bulgarelli	Department of Vocational Training, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Germana Viglietta	Department of Vocational Training, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Raffaele Ciambrone	Department of Students and Studying, Ministry of Instruction, Universities and Research
Luciano Serra	Department of Students and Studying, Ministry of Instruction, Universities and Research

Turin

Giuseppe Nota	Youth Policy, City of Turin
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Marco Calgaro	Deputy Mayor
Turin- Mirafiori	
Amalia Modica	District X
Luciano Camarda	Youth Commission, District X
Luca Cassano	Environment Commission, District X; member of Associazione Adelante
Melina Bongioanni	Director, Local Public Library
Enrico Marenchino	APSA (youth group)
Ciro Giacò	Cooperativa Mirafiori
Laura Peradotto	Casa Conflitti
Marco Ciavarella	Parrochia
Andrea Murgia	Circolo Legambiente Ecopolis (environmental association)
Isabella De Vecchi	MenteLocale
Alessio	MenteLocale
Turin- Parella	
Anna Grieco	Youth Policy, District IV
Guido Alunno	President, District IV
Silvana Fantini	Social Service socio-educative coordinator
Francesca Pichierri	Local Social Service
Marta Beggi (e Sonia Floredan)	Associazione Sole e Luna
Fabio Bianco	Time Sport
Paolo Ladetto	Cooperativa Sociale Mondoerre (environmental education)
Prof. D'Alessandro	President Liceo Scientifico (high school)
Alessio Testa	Student Liceo Scientifico
Roberto Bagaini	Associazione culturale Rock e i suoi fratelli
Simone Campa	Associazione Paranza del Geco
8-13/05/05	
YEPP	
Antonella Ricci	Compagnia di San Paulo
Sonia Schellino	Compagnia di San Paulo
Gianni Limone	Co-ordinator, Parella
Massimo Arat	Zenit Arti Audiovisive
Angela Lostia	Local researcher
Massimo Infunti	Co-ordinator, Mirafiori
National	
Dott. Romolo de Camillis	Youth Policy, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Dott.ssa Patrizia De Felici	Monitoring and Evaluation, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Dott. Antonio D'Orazio	Ministry of Education
Dott.ssa AnnaMaria Leuzzi	Ministry of Education
Dott. Attilio Compagnoni	Ministry of Education
Dott.ssa Anna Maria Masteovito	Ministry of Education
Region - Piemonte	
Dr.ssa si Aichelburg	Youth Policy
Maria Teresa Revello	Youth Policy
Silvana	Youth Policy
Dott. Gaviglio	Sportello MicroImprese (small entrepreneurs)
Turin	
Giuseppe Nota	Youth Policy, City of Turin
Turin-Mirafiori	
Simona Mandirola	Associazione Arcobaleno
Luciano Camarda	Youth Commission, District X
Luca Cassano	Environment Commission, District X; member of Associazione Adelante
Melina Bongioanni	Director, Local Public Library
Isabella De Vecchi	MenteLocale
Vittorio Patrucco	Circolo Legambiente Ecopolis
Marco Boscaglia	Youth
Maurizio Trombotto	District X, President
Amalia Modica	District X, Youth Policy
Turin- Parella	
Marta Beggi	Associazione Sole e Luna

Paolo Ladetto	Cooperativa Sociale Mondoerre (environmental education)
Daniele Pollifrone	Assoc. Stranaidea
Alexandro La Placa	Youth; member of Support Group
Sara Ratto	Scouts
Enzo Lavolta	Parella District IV
Simone Campa	Associazione Paranza del Geco
Andrea Carapellucci	Youth; member of Support Group
Allessio Testa	Youth; member of Support Group
Sonia Floridan	Assoc. Sole Luna
Paulo De Santis	Cult. Assoc. Tecnologia Filosofica

Individual interviews covering particular issues were also conducted with Ray Murphy (Charles Stewart Mott Foundation) and the following members of the Berlin Programme Team: Angelika Krüger, Peter Bleckmann, and Martina Dömling.