

Minutes of the coordination group meeting

Date: January 11, 2024

Recording:

https://wildeganzen.zoom.us/rec/share/wyeDnCta9aFnuF0ReyuuCDNLxYRbhtmS0YwGQAcdsKYs207Cu1-SNKqGA77BkWFs.L9x7OIuF_EqMRKmv

Passcode: ?CEtXU8N

Participants: Dominika Zareba - Fundusz Partnerstwa (PL), Ian Clark- EUCanAid (B), Jan Bazyl - Grupa Zagranica (PL), Andrea Micconi - COP (IT), Erik Boerrigter - Partin (NL), Isabelle Torallas i Boucharlat, Lafede.cat (CAT) , Martin Fielko - CLI (DE), Jacques Mevis -11.11.11 (BE), Marjan Huc - Sloga (SL), Sylvia Ortega, Dirk Arts, ErnstJan Stroes - Wilde Ganzen (NL)

Agenda

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Notes

1. Minutes of the last meeting

No questions, approved

2. New members

Jan introduced Grupa Zagranica (GZ) is a Polish platform representing 59 civil society organizations. GZ focusses on supporting NGOs that work on development cooperation, humanitarian work, and global education. GZ has existed for over 20 years. The platform is part of Concord Europe the umbrella organization for national platforms in development cooperation, humanitarian work and global education in Europe. GZ aims to strengthen civil society and supports its members through training and partner finding.

Marjan introduced Sloga, a national Slovenian platform consisting of 39 member organizations, which are active in development cooperation, humanitarian aid, and global education. Marjan highlighted

the importance of advocating for their member organizations and emphasized the plan to form a national coalition of civil society organizations in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, focusing on global education.

3. Working groups

ErnstJan underlined the importance of the working groups of the network. In these working groups knowledge and experience sharing takes place. Together we strive to improve the quality and relevance of our services for CIGS. There are currently 3 working groups:

- the capacity building working group aiming at sharing experience on methods for capacity building of CIGS.
- the funding working group aims at sharing knowledge on funding the activities of CIGS and their partners in ODA countries.
- the research working group aims at studying the impact and relevance of CIGS in different countries (both ODA and EU).

3.1. Capacity building working group

Martin reported on the semi-annual meeting of the capacity building working group in which the until now unsuccessful application for Erasmus+ funding was discussed. This project that aims at debating and formulating ways for quality assurance in CIGS training. The proposal will be improved and reapplied for in March at the Erasmus+ agency in Germany. The proposal will enable more intensive cooperation within the capacity building group. [A short report on the meeting was published on the internal newspage](#). The next meeting of this working group has been planned for the 7th of March 2024 from 11:00 till 12:30 CET.

3.2. Funding working group

ErnstJan discussed the last meeting of the funding working group. They shared that the funding working group had another meeting about funding informal groups. [A short report of this meeting was also published on the internal newspage](#). The next meeting of this working group has been planned for the 6th of July 2024 from 11:00 till 12:30 CET. This meeting will be about the impact of focussing funding efforts on regions or subjects.

3.3. Research working group

The research working group had an open meeting for everyone interested in research on the 11th of December 2023. During this meeting as well organizations from Bulgaria and Portugal participated that are not yet members of the network. The Portuguese organization is possibly interested in joining the network and has been invited to do so by the secretariat. Organisations interested in joining the research (which is very much a two speed effort) are invited to [register here](#). All published research can be found on the [research page](#) of the website of the network.

4. Plans for 2024

Looking ahead, ErnstJan outlined plans for 2024. And informed that at the next meeting a short report on the activities of the network in 2023 will be presented.

4.1. Constitution of a revision committee

The first plan is to revise the original founding statement of the European Network for Citizen Initiatives in Global Solidarity and prepare a more substantive statute in order to possibly formalize the network structure at a future conference. The secretary calls for volunteers to join the revision committee to prepare such a committee. One of the important items to debate is the difference between Concord and the European Network for CIGS and the specific place and role of the network.

For that purpose a clear definition of CIGS would be of great value it appears that in each country there are very different conditions for small CSOs resulting in the existence or non-existence of CIGS. For instance in Belgium there is a clear distinction as NGOs are eligible for government funding and CIGS not but in Denmark from CIGS to NGOs there is no clear distinction.

In the past there different definitions were used:

From the 'Accidental aid worker' (2014): 'small-scale initiatives or projects, set up by private persons in the North, aimed at the improvement of living standards of people in the global South, and not sorting under the official development cooperation or cooperation 18 through established NGDOs, corporations, or societal institutions'

From the founding statement of the European Network for Citizen Initiatives in Global Solidarity (2021): Citizen Initiatives in Global Solidarity : This can be by a volunteer based local community organisation or a small non-governmental organisation (NGOs), that is connected in global solidarity with a local community organisation in the Global South and supports citizens in realizing their sustainable development ambitions and in safeguarding their most fundamental human rights

From 'Different rules, different policies, different identities' (2022) : (1) a group of people, (2) who give support in a direct way (3) to one or more developing countries. They are (4) small in scale and are (5) voluntary in nature. 'Small in scale' was interpreted in two ways: having fewer than 20 regular staff members, or an annual budget of less than €1 million. The voluntary nature was defined as being based on an upper limit of 20% of paid members in charge of the organisation (Kinsbergen, 2014, p. 57)

From 'The rise of small-scale development organisations' (2023): Citizen Aid Actors (red. new name) differ from other development actors based on two key features: their overly voluntary nature and small-scale nature in terms of budget and (voluntary) staff

ErnstJan, Andrea, Marjan, Sylvia, and others discussed the purpose and evolution of their meetings, which aim to foster citizen action in global development. They highlighted the importance of individual initiatives and the need to clarify the role of their network in supporting personal involvement in global solidarity. Andrea proposed that the network should focus on promoting personal involvement and clarifying its role in supporting these initiatives. They agreed that this year's focus should be on clarifying these points, with the possibility of formalizing the network and presenting its objectives at next year's event. The meeting also revolved around the definitions and distinctions between Citizen Initiatives and NGOs, with a focus on their roles in promoting sustainable development. There was a suggestion that their approach to working with organizations might need to be adjusted.

4.2. Working meeting

There was a discussion about the possibility of meeting in Brussels through the Erasmus project earlier. But this is not yet feasible as the proposal was declined. Now Jacques is suggesting Brussels as a central location, 11.11.11 could host the meeting and provide accommodation. Alternatively we could meet in the period when the 4e pijler - Wilde Ganzen week is taking place when there are events the [Wilde Ganzendag at the Eenhoorn in Amersfoort](#) (9th March NL) and the [4de Pijlerdag in the Flemish Parliament in Brussels](#) (16th of March). Some online sessions during these days and the week between them will be in English to accommodate international partners. It was agreed to reach out with an invitation to all members and explore the possibility of having a working meeting during this period.

4.3. 3rd European Conference

ErnstJan confirmed that the third conference would not take place in 2024, but 2025 was a possibility with proper preparation. They emphasized the need for individual contacts and exchanges among team members to ensure smooth preparation for the conference.

5. DEAR Multi-Stakeholdergroup (report)

The 29th of November 2023 a meeting was held of the DEAR Multi-Stakeholdergroup in which current developments in the European Commission regarding international development assistance and world citizenship education were discussed. Furthermore the results of the most recent DEAR call were shared. A full report will be made available when this is shared by the DEAR team.

6. Other issues to be discussed

6.1. [Website](#)

6.2. [Internal](#)

Input for the website both internal and external are most welcome. Please as well check the information about your organisation on the member page and provide alternative text where needed. On the Internal part of the website information is shared that is relevant for members.

Sylvia informed about the Contest: Young people at the wheel for which Southern-partners of all members of ENfCIGS members can apply. [For more information please visit the post on our website.](#)

Next steps

- Martin will reapply for Erasmus Plus funding for capacity building in March.
- ErnstJan will send out an open invitation for volunteers to join the revision committee.
- Jacques and ErnstJan will reach out with an invitation for the 4de Pijler - Wilde Ganzen week

7. Next meeting

The next meeting of the coordination group will be held on [Friday the 12th of April 2014 from 11:00 till 12:30 CET.](#)