

ASSOCIATIONS AND RESOURCES FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT SKILLS (ARCA) PARTNERSHIP

EXTERNAL EVALUATOR'S REPORT

Executive Summary

The *Association and Resources for Conflict Management Skills* (ARCA) has been a collaborative project undertaken by thirteen partners representing NGOs and universities from eleven EU countries. It was funded by a grant of the Socrates programme of the European Commission and implemented over two years (2005 – 07). ARCA project was coordinated by PATRIR from Romania. The evaluation report is prepared by Dr. Anna Matveeva of the London School of Economics.

ARCA partnership has been aimed at enhancing peace education in Europe. The original design did not specify whether the project was to target peace educators to work on contentious issues within the EU countries, or whether it was aimed at training civilians for deployment in peace missions abroad. In practice, the partnership evolved more towards the latter direction. It has been structured in seven interrelated components which formed the outputs of the project. In addition, rigorous networking among members has been a distinct feature of the project and contributed towards formation of a common European identity of peace educators. The project produced significant impacts upon the participating organisations, fostering relationships between individuals and institutions, which are likely to last, and provided impetus to common initiatives. Direct impacts have been also produced upon over sixty training recipients in three sessions of events.

Working groups have been formed to take a lead on each output, while the rest of members contributed in their areas of expertise. ARCA partners had different capacities, and some organisations were more active than others. The following outputs were produced. A Survey of the current state and needs for training and education in Europe documents and assesses the development of peace education. The survey is based upon 184 answered questionnaires and provides a detailed picture of training providers and recipients, and of their methods, subjects and structure of trainings. It also undertakes an inquiry into the needs of training institutions which prepare adults for peacework. Eleven individual Country Reports have been prepared for each participating country.

Three 'sessions of events' have been held. Event 1 on 'Improving and Assessing Skills for Civilian Peace Missions' was organised by *Mouvement pour une Alternative Non-violente* (France), *Peaceworkers UK* and *Nonviolent Peaceforce* (Brussels) in July 2006. The event 2 on 'Conflict Resolution in Intercultural Communities' was organised by BSV and IFAK (Germany) and PDCS (Slovakia) and held in Bonn in May 2007. Event 3 on 'Training for Civil Peace Teams' was organised by *Nonviolent Peaceforce*, *Norwegian Peace Association* and PATRIR and was held in Romania in August 2007. It took four weeks and involved collaboration with Romanian Army.

Webportal of pan-European database of peace education resources was established and includes the training activities and events by the ARCA partner organisations, its

related networks and training materials elaborated by the partnership. It also disseminates the ARCA newsletter which advertises the events, publications and available courses. The main educational resource is the Guide to Peace Education which is a product of collaboration between PATRIR, NOVA, NPA, PDCS and University of Florence. It is a publication on the preparation of adults for international and intra-national interventions in peacebuilding and conflict transformation. It is primarily aimed at the community of practice and seeks to enhance the quality of peace training through research and self-reflection. It was originally written in English and has been translated and published in a number of European languages.

The network of peace educators was launched in September 2007, but in practice it has been already functioning via a wide dissemination of information, e.g. the ARCA newsletter, the calendar of events and the news on the webportal, interaction between ARCA members and organisation of events. The last event of the partnership was the seminar in Stadtschlaining in September 2007 hosted by ASPR. It discussed dissemination, evaluation, maintenance and follow-up to ARCA.

The design of the project although innovative, proved overambitious and challenging to keep to a rather steep implementation pace. Coordination and budgetary re-allocation of staff costs were a challenge at the initial phase, while severe pressure was experienced to finalise high-quality outputs in time before the end of the project. The project staff coped remarkably well given the odds, but this may be a lesson for future to expect less outputs to be produced when a variety of partners is involved, since collaboration across institutions and countries tends to take up time and effort.

Recommendations

In the next stage the Project should clarify the focus which way it wants to go - either in the direction of peace education for adults to work inside the EU countries on such issues as, for instance, un-integrated minorities, or further in the direction of preparing civilians to work in peace missions abroad. The ARCA partnership needs to be mindful that the field of training for deployment in Europe is well developed and that competition is stiff, and identify its own niche and strategic advantage.

There are good grounds established for the ARCA partnership to grow, however, its growth has to be manageable. Clarification of the future direction would allow to streamline the roles of partner organisations. It is suggested to have a two-tier system with a core group and affiliated partners with different level of responsibilities.

A decision on strategic direction would determine which additional partnerships have to be established both on the governmental and civil society side. If ARCA were to make a transition to an open community, it has to work out how the webportal and the newsletter can serve an enhanced publicity purpose.

The recommendation is to proceed with dissemination of information and strengthen the links with the existing outlets, but abstain from further formalisation of the network of peace educators. The webportal can provide an opportunity for trainers to advertise their services and learn about opportunities that come up.

It is suggested to develop a more realistic timetable for implementation given the diversity of the partnership.

Introduction

The *Association and Resources for Conflict Management Skills* (ARCA) project was funded by the Socrates Programme of the European Commission for a period of two years. The Project has started in October 2005. The Report is written by Dr. Anna Matveeva, an external Evaluator (Evaluator), in October – November 2007. It is based upon the written sources made available by the Coordinator¹, information contained at the webportal and email communication with the Coordinator and selected Project partners. Since October 2006, when the Evaluator was invited to join the Project, feedback was provided as requested by ARCA coordinators and partners, which gave insights into how the Project functioned in practice. The Evaluator participated in the 2nd partnership meeting held in Florence, Italy, in November 2006, where she had a chance to meet the ARCA partner organisations. Unfortunately, presence at the International Seminar in September 2007 in Austria was not possible due to the late arrival of the invitation.

The Report is structured in the following way: it introduces the Project and discusses its strategy, design and impact (General Findings), proceeds to outline the Project components and assesses its relative merits (Detailed Findings), and comments upon process matters, such as budgetary issues and communication. The concluding section deals with the final reflections on achievements of the ARCA partnership and its weaknesses, and provides strategic recommendations on future development. Concrete suggestions of technical nature in relation to outputs are placed in the main body of the report (Detailed Findings) for the conclusion to concentrate on bigger issues.

I GENERAL FINDINGS

Strategy and Design

The ARCA Project is designed to advance theory and practice of peace education. According to its stated intentions, ARCA sought to improve quality, content and methodology of peace education and training in conflict transformation across Europe. It intended to do so by gathering best practices, exchange of methods/curricula, development of resources and guides, and establishment of a European-wide database of educators and educational resources. It also aimed to improve sharing of experiences, tools and methodologies through European-wide cooperation.

More concrete objectives were as follows:

- Bring together many of Europe's leading networks, associations and centres to gather best practices and lessons learned;
- Promote sharing of experiences, tools and methodologies in the fields of peace education and training in conflict management and transformation, both formal and non-formal;
- Collect and collate existing resources and materials on peace education and develop effective guides to peace education for institutions, centres of adult learning, and formal and non-formal educational bodies;
- Establish a database of peace educators, institutions and organisations in

¹ for the full list please refer to the appendix.

Europe and worldwide, and resources and materials available for training and education development.

ARCA's target group was defined in fairly broad terms and included institutions, centres of adult learning, formal and non-formal educational bodies, project partners, teachers and professors, ministries of education, national parliaments, EU parliament, and organisations/institutions working with formal and non-formal peace education. The original proposal did not specify whether the Project targeted peace educators to work on issues of social tension and promote peaceful co-existence between groups within the EU countries, or whether it was aimed at training civilians for deployment in peace missions in conflict-affected countries abroad. The participating organisations represented both sides of peace education in Europe, and the Project could have developed in either of those directions. Throughout its two-years' lifespan, the initiative evolved more in the direction of preparation for foreign deployment.

ARCA partnership brought together 13 organisations from 11 EU countries. The Project was run by two coordinators based in PATRIR, Romania, who were responsible for a smooth operation of the partnership. Working Groups were established to take responsibility for each output, which featured collaborative effort of two or more partners. Regular internal evaluations were carried out by a designated ARCA partner organisation (UNIFI), and questionnaires were distributed by the organisers and analysed after most events. This internal monitoring mechanism greatly advanced stronger ties within the partnership.

The design of the Project is very interesting, but comes across as overambitious in terms of how many activities were supposed to take place in a relatively short period and how many organisations were to be involved. It seems that the challenge of coordination between many institutions - for most of whom ARCA was not a single most important priority, - was underestimated. The coordinators coped with the task remarkably well, but at a high price of being overstretched and working hard to meet tight deadlines.

Efficiency

The ARCA project has been highly efficient in utilisation of human and material resources, and in its ability to implement the outputs as much as it could. Very many activities have been accomplished in a short period of time and with a relatively small budget. Deadlines were largely met, despite a slow start during the inception phase, which is only to be expected in a situation when a whole variety of new partners are expected to work together.

Impact

The impacts of the Project on conflict transformation are likely to be long-term and cannot be assessed within the timeframe of the Project. However, the Project produced significant impacts upon the participating organisations themselves and upon creation of a common identity of peace educators in Europe.

Impact upon ARCA partners was noted through both internal evaluations and reflections at the partnership meetings, and at the quality of the outputs which were

steadily improving throughout the Project's operations. Most importantly, the ARCA partnership contributed greatly to fostering relationships between individuals and institutions, which are likely to survive the timespan of the Project, and provided impetus to common initiatives, with a high degree of ownership.

Impact upon formation of common identity and integration of peace education in Europe has been significant, as it brought together a whole variety of groups and organisations from different parts of Europe and gave them practical tasks to do rather than a mere opportunity to share experiences. Through networking, collective decision-making, creative conflict and pulling forces together to produce the Project's outputs, they had a chance to appreciate different approaches, national styles and educational cultures, and forge acceptable compromises on this basis.

Direct impact has been produced upon over sixty training recipients in three sessions of events (Output 2) who benefited from capacity-building and debates held during the events. Those trained in the session 3 (Romania, August 2007) also benefited from their qualifications formally assessed and certified by NP, one of the participating organisations.

Linkages have been established with other networks and organisations working in the field of peace training either through the website or by the ARCA members through their own networks. However, some important networks have not been sufficiently included, e.g. the Global Partnership for Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) based in The Netherlands. There were also weak links with the major donor governments involved in the field and the training providers they use, some of whom were not included into the wider ARCA network.

Composition of Partnership

The ARCA partnership brought together a mix of diverse organisations from the 'old Europe' and from the new EU member states. It is noteworthy that the coordinating institution was from Romania – the EU newest member. It was apparent that the ARCA partners had different capacities. Some are leaders in the field, such as ASPR with a sound funding base and long history of engagement in training of civilian experts in conflict management and peacebuilding. Others are small, with one person working full-time and relying on part-time, temporary or volunteer staff. A few organisations work mainly in the international arena, while others concentrate more on a domestic agenda. Staff of participating partner organisations² were of different age groups, with a prevalence of younger professionals of the average age of twenty nine. The partnership appears appropriately gender balanced.

ARCA also had a transatlantic connection through organisations from the new EU members states (Slovakia and Romania) where US involvement into development capacities for peace work has been pronounced. This also concerns Nonviolent Peaceforce which is international in scope than a purely European organisation.

II DETAILED FINDINGS – PROJECT COMPONENTS

² This is to distinguish from the term 'participants' which is applied by ARCA to the direct beneficiaries of training programmes and other events held by the partnership.

The ARCA partnership was structured in seven components, or outputs. Work to produce concrete outputs was supplemented by various forms of networking between participating organisations, such as physical meetings, skype conferences, webportal and email communication.

Output 1: Current State and Needs for Training and Education

This Project component has been led by the Institute for Applied Cultural Research (IFAK) from Germany. A Working Group for this output consisted of IFAK, PATRIR, BOCS (Hungary), but it appears that the Hungarian partner was largely dormant. While IFAK took an overall responsibility over developing the questionnaire, distributing it among partners, collating and analysing the responses, the work entailed collaboration of all ARCA partner organisations who coordinated research in their own countries or advised on the questionnaire. They compiled Country Reports which present the needs and state of training in their countries.³ Eleven English-language surveys on individual countries are placed on ARCA's website. Outi Arajärvi is the author of the final report which summarises findings from the country surveys and speaks about Europe as a whole. Results of the ARCA study on 'Adult Training and Education for International and Intra-National Interventions for Peacebuilding, Conflict Transformation, Mediation and Crisis Management in Europe' have been published and are available on the webportal.

The study is an impressive undertaking broad in its scope and comprehensive in the remit of how many diverse constituencies in peace educators in Europe have been surveyed. It was obviously a very labour-intensive effort which required a great deal of discussions on unification of categories across countries, processing the questionnaires and elaborating concise summaries out of the breadth of the material.

The aim of the study was to document and evaluate the state of the art in peace education in Europe. It seeks to obtain a detailed picture of training providers (and, to an extent, recipients of training) in their methods, subjects and structure of trainings. It also undertakes an inquiry into the needs of training institutions who prepare adults for peacework. The survey focuses on seven subjects:

1. profile of participating institutions and methods they use for training
2. profile of training programmes
3. human resources available in training institutions
4. training materials used
5. value of training in practice
6. cooperation with other organisations
7. evaluation

The target group for the survey were institutions in eleven ARCA countries and in additional nine European countries which provide or receive training in peace education and conflict transformation. Most questions required multiple choice answers, and there were five open questions. Some overlap between categories of answers has been traced, but since the exercise was not strict science, this does not undermine the overall results of the survey. At all stages the respondents were

³ Reports are available on-line at the ARCA webportal.

encouraged to provide additional information and opinions. Out of 660 questionnaires, 184 have been answered, which makes it a 27% response rate.

The following conclusions have been reached

- Organisations working in peace training have rather low budgets at their disposal. 2/3 of all budgets were under 100,000 EUR, which means that most organisations are rather small.
- Training for deployment to do peace work in conflict areas represent only 10% of all trainings offered.
- The highest priority was given to the following subjects: conflict analysis, mediation and facilitation, intercultural communication, team cooperation and training for trainers in conflict management and peacebuilding issues.
- There is a lack of standard European curriculum in peace training.
- Largely, people are satisfied with training they get. 56% rated trainings that they received as ‘good’ or ‘excellent’, 32% as satisfactory and 12% as poor. The highest rate of satisfaction is in trainings for deployment abroad, local level interventions and multipliers.
- Middle-sized organisations are among the most satisfied with training, while large organisations with a budget between 500.000 to 1 million euros are the most discontented.
- Half of the respondents (51%) agreed that there is need for more practice in training, but stressed that how to meet this need is a challenge.
- Majority of respondents want to cooperate with others and are already active in national and international networks. However, small organisations are not satisfied with their networks.

The findings of the survey can be utilised in two ways: to feed data into the Guide on Peace Education (Output 4) and to collate and present quantitative information which for researchers and practitioners in the field of peace education and pre-deployment training independently of ARCA as a stand-alone product. The Guide capitalises on the data and conclusions provided by the survey, and in this sense there is good continuity and integration between the Project components. The results of the survey are presented in the chapter 2 of the Guide and referred to throughout the publication. However, the survey would have been an even greater value for future researchers were it to include some other important questions to assess the state of peace education. These include, for example;

Quantity of training. The survey inquires into views on quality of training, but not into its frequency and amount

- How much training people receive? How often are they trained? Do people want to get more or less training?

Composition of training recipients

- Who is being trained – young, old, middle-career, are they trained together or in separate groups? Are they already involved in some aspect of peace work, or are novices? How trainees are being chosen – do they go through a selection process, are nominated or volunteer for training?

Use of Skills

- Do people use the skills they acquired as a result of training? Where do they use them: are they deployed in the field after training or are they already in positions where they can directly apply those skills?

Needs Assessment

- How training providers know that they are training people in the right set of skills? How do they know/ find out what are the requirements in the field? Do they carry out any specific needs' assessment?

Curriculum development - The survey asks an open question about which resources training providers use and lists those most frequently mentioned. At times, it is slightly confusing as to which particular resource the reference is made, e.g. 'John Paul Lederach' – is it a particular work by the American scholar or do organisations use J. P. Lederach as a trainer? However, it would have been useful to probe the issue a bit further, i.e. by giving the respondents an opportunity to choose from a list of the main sources frequently cited and see whether they are actually used by the practitioners.

It would have been easier for an external audience to comprehend the assumptions behind the study and the relevance of the questions asked, were they formulated more explicitly. Otherwise, the rationale for some questions in section 6 ('Value of Training in Practice') is not apparent, especially since there are no linkages between satisfaction of the respondents with training and their actual use of the skills. Certain findings appear far too obvious: 'generally, the international organisations have a more equal[ly] mix of objectives, whereas welfare organisations have more specified aims' (p. 16).

The larger question is to what extent it is possible to rely solely on data provided by questionnaires, or would it have been more useful to formulate more developed assumptions from the start, then test them through the survey to confirm/ deny the assumptions and bring out new issues, and then discuss the results and how they feed into a conceptual debate presented in the Guide. Thus, the logic of the study would have been more explicit if some initial ideas were developed by the team working on the Guide together with IFAK, and these ideas would have laid foundations for the survey.

Output 2: 5 Sessions of Events on Best Practices in Peace Education and Lessons Learned

Working Group consisted of nine organisations, namely MAN, NP, PWUK, IFAK, BSV, ASPR, PATRIR, CSDC, PDCS. According to the Project Document, the following sessions were intended to be held:

- (1) Civil Peace Intervention;
- (2) Community Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention and Resolution and Inter-Religious Dialogue;
- (3) Current Formal and Nonformal Education in Europe on Nonviolence and Mediation;

(4) Peace Education in Schools and Communities: Methods and Approaches to Peace Education in European Countries, formal and non-formal, academic and training-based;

(5) Peacebuilding, Conflict Transformation, and Post-Violence Reconciliation and Healing: Methods, Tools and Pedagogy.

A change was made to the original proposal to convert three out of five sessions of events (1 week each) into a four weeks'-long training programme. Thus, three events instead of five originally planned were held, as follows:

Event 1 was organised by Mouvement pour une Alternative Non-violente (MAN), Peaceworkers UK (PWUK) and Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) in Marly le Roy, France, on 2-6 July 2006. The subject was 'Improving and Assessing Skills for Civilian Peace Missions'. The seminar was co-financed by the European Commission's Socrates Programme through the ARCA project budget (70%), MAN (21%), participants' fees (5,5%), PWUK and IRNC support (3,5%). 18 people participated in this event. Participants were asked for a fee of 75 euro for individuals and 100 euro for organisations.

The event focused on the link between training, assessment and recruitment of civilians for peace support operations abroad. It was designed to come up with a common understanding of the qualities and competencies of a peaceworker which can be enhanced through training, assessed and be used as a basis for selection procedure.

The seminar did not quite come up with concrete proposals on how to implement training and assessment, but rather discussed the compatibility of the methods different organisations use and their understandings of training, assessment and recruitment processes. The participants focused on exchange of experience and methods, analysis of the general training process and identification of possible sectors of cooperation.

The discussions can be summarised as follows. The participants felt that the question of which basic skills can be enhanced through training is still debateable. The conclusions of the seminar stress that training has to be reviewed regularly to be adapted to the changing situations and needs on the ground. However, a common method of collecting views from the ground is still a long way ahead, as different types of organisations have their own ideas on how this should be done. The participants considered that assessment of peaceworkers is needed, as it provides a quality control that the competencies have been acquired during the training. They agreed on the importance of the practice-oriented emphasis in assessment methods. Assessment is critical to training and recruitment process. However, there are differences in understandings of what can and what cannot be assessed. The participants also discovered that much of the misunderstanding in their common appreciation of assessment was due to different interpretations of terminology.

A powerpoint 'Map of the Processes of Training and Recruitment' in Europe was produced as one of the tangible outputs. The seminar has fostered potential for cooperation between the organisations involved. However, they realised that the focus of the seminar was too broad. More clarity and focus would have allowed to come up

with more concrete points for discussion, rather than incorporate a wide variety of training-related issues.

Event 2: Workshop on 'Conflict Resolution in Intercultural Communities' was held in Bonn in May 2007. The event was organised by BSV and IFAK (Germany) and PDCS (Slovakia). It was focussed upon peace work in domestic context and concerned relationships between minority/ recent immigrant groups and the majority communities. Three organisations presented their work and described the techniques used: Cultural Interpreter (IFAK), *Thérapie Sociale* (BSV), and Roma Social Integration (Trainings Centre of 'Partners for Democratic Change Slovakia' funded by USAID). IFAK introduced the qualification course for the cultural interpreters it uses and took the participants through training exercises. Application of personal soft skills and dimension of culture in conflict resolution have been discussed.

'Integration of Roma in Slovakia' was introduced by the Slovak partner who works with Roma living in Eastern Slovakia, one of the poorest areas of the country. Two main concepts are used: Cooperative Planning of local development and Conciliation Commissions between Roma and non-Roma residents of an area. This methodology is similar to the one used by USAID and UNDP elsewhere. A case study of Roma integration programme was conducted with the participants.

Thérapie Sociale is a method of conflict resolution developed in the French suburbs, in the Banlieues. The aim of *Thérapie Sociale* is to help people with different values, norms and cultural backgrounds to live or work together in a better way. In the view of its creators, the concept of *Thérapie Sociale* is appropriate to a city environment and to municipalities, where there are many 'way of life' conflicts and where violence between different groups of population has taken place. In this method, individuals work together in the project groups, meeting and engaging with the kind of people they normally do not interact much. Initially, there is typically a lot of tension, as the participants have their fears and prejudices. However, as the process of interaction unfolds, real problems come out and the group achieves common ideas and proposals how to improve the situation in the city.

The workshop was comprised of many icebreakers, exercises and small group work, which appears very exciting. Common principles and differences between the three approaches have been identified and discussed. The workshop produced a report of good quality which has relevance beyond the participating group.

The evaluation by the participants done at the end of the seminar showed that their impressions have been highly positive. The participants, for example, noted that the connection of conflict resolution with intercultural approaches was new and important. They felt that it was good to have time and space to be able to compare different concepts, as it allowed a better understanding of notions of peace training in the European context.

Event 3: Training for Civil Peace Teams was held in Romania (Cluj and Sovata) on 2 - 30 August, 2007. The event brought together three organisations (NP, NPA and PATRIR) in a collaborative effort. This was an intensive training and assessment programme for civilian experts and staff of civil society organisations to form a roster for deployment in NP and possibly other international missions. Out of 22 participants

a half came from Europe, with the rest being from North America, Latin America and Africa.

The event's first module consisted of assessment of the participants and was based on the criteria elaborated during the workshop on 'Improving and Assessing Skills for Civilian Peace Missions' (event 1, Marly le Roy). The event also featured a simulation exercise conducted in partnership with the 81st Brigade of the Romanian Army. This was the first example of training collaboration between the army and in civilian peace teams in Romania.

The NP had previously elaborated core training programmes for field peace teams and was interested in piloting them in Europe (their previous training events took place closer to the field context). NP offered to contribute the curriculum they had prepared and the trainers they have used on previous occasions, e.g. from Sri Lanka. The ARCA partnership considered the NP proposal and concluded that it could add value to the Project, since it would produce a roster of trained civilian cadre for deployment and provide an opportunity to use tools and methods developed within the partnership, e.g. Guide to Peace Education and report on assessment of skills for civilian peace missions (event 1). Moreover, the training will acquire a stamp of approval of the Nonviolent Peaceforce as implemented according to their standards. It was also considered that a four-weeks training would be more effective. ARCA partnership took the decision to go along with NP's proposal.

Overall, the partnership provided an opportunity to apply best practices of the partner organisations to the Sessions of Events output. The partners explored, debated and piloted guidelines for assessing civilians for training for peace field teams (from Session 1 into Session 3). Thus, the Project went beyond the exploratory phase, and took consensus decisions on what successful practices are and tried them on. At the same time, theme (4) 'Peace education in schools and communities: methods and approaches to peace education in European countries, formal and non-formal, academic and training-based' appear to have been lost sight of, confirming the evolving orientation of the ARCA partnership towards training for deployment outside of the EU and away from the issues internal to the EU countries.

Output 3: Webportal of Pan-European Database of Peace Education Resources

Working Group consisted of NOVA, CSDC and PW UK (IA). The Project Document states that an internet webportal with training resources will be created to serve as a platform for a European virtual community and links to other sites. The portal was meant to include a database of all current and proposed future activities on peace education and teaching materials in European languages, as well as a database of institutions, trainers and individuals working on peace education in Europe. The portal was to include and make available an on-line directory of the European institutions and organisations offering peace education programmes or working in the field of peace education, and an on-line directory of peace educators.

The webportal includes the training activities and events primarily undertaken by the ARCA partner organisations, its related networks, e.g. European Group of Training (EGT) and training resources materials elaborated by ARCA. There is some

information on the European institutions involved in peace education and trainers/resource persons engaged in the field (see below, output 5), but it is far from a comprehensive on-line directory. Since 23 July 2007 there have been 160,000 hits on the website in total, but it is technically not possible to distinguish between the use by the partners and external users.

The design of the portal is very good in its simplicity which makes it user-friendly. It is to its credit that the site is not overloaded with photo images, latest techniques etc. which can make it difficult to download for users with slow Internet capacity and be too confusing. In its current shape, it is easy to navigate through. The newsletter mostly consists of advertising the events, publications and available courses, and information about participating organisations and similar groups in peace education.

The suggestion is to put into open access only those documents which have sufficient quality and therefore would be interesting/ relevant for a wider audience unrelated to the ARCA partnership. The documents which are relevant for the ARCA members, but do not speak to others, are best left for restricted access. One example are the reports of the two events – while the report of the Bonn workshop ‘Conflict Resolution in Intercultural Communities’ is interesting for a wider readership, the report on ‘Improving and Assessing Skills for Civilian Peace Missions’ (Marly-le-Roy, July 2006) speaks mostly to the internal ARCA audience and helps to develop the partnership’s own thinking on how to move forward on the agenda it has taken on.

The partnership debated at its September 2007 seminar in Austria how it can make the best use of the webportal rather than duplicating existing websites and tools. The target audience for the webportal appears to be the ARCA partnership and people associated with its members and their networks; thus it is quite narrow and speaks to a particular community of practice. The question is what is the purpose of the newsletter and the webportal – should it service the ARCA partnership and associated networks, or does it have a broader public purpose? In the words of one participant in the Stadtschlaining seminar, ‘I am afraid of the “NGO peace industry”’. With an abundance of information available on the Web, the portal has to compete against other web resources and has to be appealing to the general public beyond professional ‘peace constituency’. A concern was expressed about information overload and an overlap with other organisations and networks, some of which are run by the ARCA members, e.g. Peaceworkers UK project of International Alert.

In case the ARCA partnership would seek to make a transition to a more open community, it has to work out what is the role of the webportal and the newsletter, and how it can serve an enhanced publicity purpose.

Output 4: Guide to Peace Education

Working Group: PATRIR, NOVA, NPA, PDCS, University of Florence, NP. The Guide’s title has been altered to better describe its focus. The original intention (as per Project Document) was to produce a Guide to Peace Education in Schools and Communities. However, it was considered that a book for schools and communities would not be sufficiently centred on adults as beneficiaries. Hence, the Guide has become a publication on the preparation and training of adults for international and intra-national interventions in peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

The Guide is a high quality publication and makes a valuable contribution to the professionalisation of the field of peace education. It is a product of collaboration of four authors: Giovanni Scotto, Robert Rivers, Frode Restad and Jan Mihalik. Glossary was compiled by Mariana Gavis. All chapters are written by two authors at least. This is quite remarkable, since writing collaboratively is always a challenge and typically authors concentrate on their own chapters leaving others aside. By contrast, the Guide presents an outcome of a genuine partnership. Fostering positive collaboration was helped by opportunities for the authors to meet and brainstorm together in Florence in autumn 2006 and in Berlin in spring 2007. The published Guide is a massive improvement upon the earlier manuscript upon which the Evaluator commented before.

The Guide is not a practical how-to-do resource pack. Its objectives are more complex:

- a) to enhance the quality of peace training through research and self-reflection
- b) to bring greater legitimacy to peace training and demonstrate its value for related fields
- c) to deepen understanding of peace training to expand training capacities and improve networks of training organisations.

The Guide's target audience is a community of practice which includes individuals, NGOs and governmental organisations involved in development of training practices. Those actors include ARCA's project partners, institutions which provide training, trainers in conflict transformation/ peacework, individuals preparing to work in the field and policy makers, especially in donor countries. It also has practical implications for formal education institutions and universities with programmes in peace studies.

The Guide covers the following themes: definitions and concepts behind peace education and history of the evolution of the field. At the beginning chapter 1 frames the issues for discussions in the next chapters. The Guide proceeds to introduce ARCA's propositions for peace training which reflect generalisations from the survey (Output 1). It then outlines five examples of best practice based upon work of the ARCA-participating institutions, discusses challenges and explores how the challenges identified can be addressed, and how training can be made a more fulfilling experience for both a trainee and a trainer. It concludes on a high note of commending the art of peace training and emphasising its internal beauty.

The Guide does not rest on a false premise that the field of peacework is perfect and does not try to gloss over its difficulties. It contains an interesting chapter 4 on challenges encountered which reflects some real dilemmas practitioners in the field would identify with. However, it does not mention a disparity between training and the use of acquired skills, and a weak link between training and deployment in the European context which is a key issue that needs to be addressed both by the training providers and by the end-users. The Guide brings about the voices of several distinguished peace educators which are put in boxes to separate from the main text (sometimes quite long), but it would have benefited from offering more practical examples to illustrate the narrative.

Dissemination has been done through various channels including sending printed copies to a list of recipients and downloads from the webportal. Discussions were held at the Stadt Schlaining seminar about a possibility to sell the Guide to cover the printing costs of future print-runs. The Evaluator would advice caution: prospects for sales needs to be matched against the effort which would go into servicing and administration (in plain words, staff time). This can be justified only if the volume of sales is sufficiently high.

Output 5: European Network of Peace Educators

Working Group PATRIR, BOCS, NP, CSDC, PW UK (IA)

The network of peace educators was officially launched at the end of the project in September 2007. There are two lists of trainers available which contain some information on their previous experience and areas of expertise. As of early November, 33 ‘trainers’ (or registered users) could be found on the website, 9 of them under alias with no further information provided. Many more prospective trainers/resource persons were invited to join, but since the network was launched not so long ago, results are yet to be expected. The users are provided with the technical capacity to send private messages to each other and to the whole group, publicise new events, comments and posts on the forum, but since there are few users, exchanges are still deficient. The plans are to link the Peacetraining Network of Peace Educators to that included in the Peaceworkers UK Register. Decisions about this would need to be taken in the near future.

That said, the network of peace educators is held together, perhaps more successfully not so much by the means of trainers’ interaction, but by a wide dissemination of information, such as through the ARCA Newsletter, the calendar of events and the news on the home page. Issues of the Newsletter have been sent directly to about hundred users who normally forward them to their national contacts.

Output 6: International Seminar on Evaluating Impact and Ways Forward

The international seminar was hosted and coordinated by ASPR and held in Stadtschlaining in September 2007. It was attended by 18 ARCA participants. This was the final major event of the ARCA Project. Its stated goals, as per agenda, were:

- Discuss dissemination, evaluation, maintenance and follow-up to ARCA
- Present financial report to the partnership
- Celebrate achievements and experience of working together

The seminar discussed the Project’s outputs and the outstanding project activities. Two guest speakers from Forum ZFD, Germany, and Miramida Centar-Regional Peacebuilding Exchange, Croatia, were invited to present experience of their organisations in peace training. The main content discussions concentrated around the following issues:

- (1) The purpose of the European Network of Peace Trainers
Web-portal and the database of peace educators
Evaluation of both outputs as tools for communication and networking

- (2) A European-wide peace education sector in Europe: what we miss, what can we do? Evaluation of the outputs of ARCA: Impact and Lessons Learned
- (3) Ways Forward: exploration of future projects and their possible focus. It was stressed that it is important to consider the evolution of the ARCA partnership. Do the participants want to continue with it? Is it desirable to integrate new partners or whether it is possible to enlarge ARCA beyond the current remit?

Internal evaluation has been carried out and yielded the following results:

- Overall, the seminar was rated by 60% ‘excellent’ and by 40% ‘good’.
- Content and structure were rated by 27% as ‘excellent’, 53% as ‘good’, 13% as ‘average’ and 7% as ‘poor’.
- Methodology was rated by 13% as ‘excellent’, 60% as ‘good’, 20% as ‘average’ and 7% as ‘poor’.
- 53% felt that most of the seminar was a value for them, while 47% thought that about half of it was of value for them.
- 60% felt that most of the seminar was relevant for them, while for 40% the relevancy was ‘about half’.
- 13% responded that they will use most of what they heard at the seminar, while a large majority of 87% responded that they will use ‘about half’.
- 54% felt that it was little new for them at the seminar, 33% - ‘about half’ and it was mostly new for 13% of respondents.

Output 7: Lessons Learned Report: Paths to Peace Education in Europe

Not seen by the Evaluator.

III PROCESS MATTERS

Networking, Internal Communication and Management

On the whole, the participants have been satisfied with management and decision-making. Communication within ARCA appears to have worked rather well, given the enormous challenge of coordination with new staff coming on board while others leaving or becoming dormant. Nevertheless, a number of issues deserve scrutiny to learn lessons for future projects in cross-European networking.

Budgetary Issues

The phase I of the Project has been marred by the discussions on how to divide the money available for participating organisations. The main difficulty experienced after the initial Rome meeting was connected to the budget, and particularly to the allocation for staff costs. The coordinator’s view is as follows:

The difficulties encountered in dividing the staff costs came as a result of the budget cuts by the EC (196.968 EUR versus 287.400 requested). Thus, a redistribution of the work load was required. However, the coordinators had a clear idea of distributions of roles and responsibilities, and a table presenting financial divisions since the application was made. Understandably, the partnership was disappointed with the budget cuts, but the choice was either not to go ahead with the Project, or try to

undertake work on a reduced budget. The decision was made to handle the Project on a reduced budget and to re-draft all related documents accordingly.

As a result, partners that put more work in, had their staff costs supplemented (IFAK, NPA, PATRIR), whereas partners who did not contribute as much as expected or were late in delivering their outputs, had their staff costs reduced. In the Coordinator's words, 'all of these recalculations happened in a climate of dialogue and not one partner left feeling unjustly treated or underpaid if the budget allowed it.'

The internal evaluation report⁴ suggests that this view was not uniform. The budget procedure was criticised by several participants: "The activity-based model the coordination team came up with (after Rome) seemed fairer to us, but the calculating system was time consuming" and thus not appealing to the partner organisations." "The coordinators suggested a very complicated method for a fair way of sharing the money. The method of estimating the work load for every partner was so difficult and unrealistic to deal with that nearly no one did it. I tried and had immediately the problem of very different estimation to the coordinators." During the ensuing discussion, one partner organisation put a veto upon the original proposal brought forward by PATRIR. This strong decision catalysed a new phase in the discussion. In the end, the resource allocation has been accepted, although – as some noted – not very enthusiastically: "The solution after the 'veto' was mostly 'solving by confusing'. I assume things got sorted out then, because everybody was just tired about the budget discussion and people needed to know where they could take commitments and where not".

Some partners pointed at specific problems: "The special problem was that in the original application our workload and budget part was relatively high. The general situation was changed because of the severe cuts in the budget, because some partners wanted now to be more involved and to get more money. The first idea was that we cut our part with the percentage budget cuts from EU and we [were] happy with that. During the very complicated phase of counting and negotiations we were more and more frustrated with the process. Every new proposal for budget brought new cuts for us. The compromise was that we shorten our workload and set an absolute limit, that we don't accept any further cuts. This was accepted by the coordinators although I had the feeling they see us as wanting too much."

Other difficulties were experienced in distribution of working time: "When deadlines are set in the ARCA project, there is no consideration made to the actual allotment of work time of the partner organizations". Some partners experiences problems with adhering to the deadlines, progressing too slowly as compared to the timeline of the project in the initial stage.

Three observations are made by the Evaluator in this respect:

- At the design stage of the project it can be more feasible to cost each activity in working days/ hours, and seek guidance from more experienced partners to come up with realistic estimates. In this case, it would be easier to re-allocate costs if need be.

⁴ 'Evaluation of the ARCA project – process and relationship aspects', Time frame: Phase 1 (October 2005 – December 2005), Phase 2 (January 2006 – March 2006). Names of organisations and individual respondents omitted by the Evaluator.

- Partners involved in drafting an application have to agree in advance on a mechanism of how money would be re-allocated if some partners do not pull their weight. Contingency planning needs to be undertaken at an early stage, together with risk identification.
- It appears that the costs and the amount of time partners had to put in to ensure that deliverables of high quality are produced, have been underestimated.

Financial side, in the view of the coordinator, worked well. Two instalments were obtained, salaries and travel money were paid on time. However, some organisations had to wait for the second instalment. Still, the coordinators were not faced with serious difficulties in this respect.

Not everybody agreed. Instalments presented a problem especially for small organisations. “It was a problem for us to wait so long for the first instalment. We are a small institution and it is not so easy to finance the salaries for six months before getting money”.

In the view of some participating organisations, funds were not always sufficient for the work required. “The task was much bigger than expected and caused a lot of overtime work for us. The person we had hired could not finish the work on time and we had to find other solutions, voluntary working capacities, people working for other projects inside the organisation. For example, the work to create the webpage for the questionnaire was not possible within the ARCA partnership, so we had to find someone outside willing to do this work voluntary (approximately one week full-time for a professional computer expert).”⁵

There was also a situation when Peaceworkers UK found themselves in a difficult situation at the period of joining International Alert, and there was a lack of clarity between ARCA and PW UK on the latter’s ability to deliver upon outputs. The issue was subsequently resolved, but it pointed to a generic problem within the partnership as of what contingency capacity should be put in place if partners experience institutional problems and cannot contribute as much as they would have liked to.

Internal Communication

Internal communication has been a challenge in the phase I where there was a general lack of clarity of what the mutual expectations are. Participants noted that with hindsight it would have been better to hold an inception meeting straight at the onset of the Project to enable greater clarity from the start. ‘While the process of working together started with the conception of ARCA in Brussels in February 2005, knowledge about (and identification with) the project and its goals was uneven among the partners. A criticism voiced during the first months of work concerned the quality of the project presented, which was felt not to be very clear; several aspects like outputs, budget questions, etc. needed clarification. For this reason the discussion during the Rome meeting and in the following weeks were still at a very general level.

⁵ ‘Internal Evaluation of the ARCA project – process and relationship aspects’, Time phase: Phase 3: April 1st - July 31st 2006.

Some of the partners did not feel very involved in this phase and one perceived it as “lost months, [during which] cooperation was almost non-existent”. The need was felt that the pre-partnership meeting held in December should have happened earlier.’⁶

Soon, however, communication has massively improved, with a general timetable for the whole Project available and weekly reports/ updates on plans distributed by PATRIR. The coordinators also prepared and distributed Trimestrial Reports on a 3-monthly basis which outlined progress made during the reporting period and the immediate priorities. Internal evaluation reports have been prepared every six months.

The participants on the whole were satisfied with the amount of information distributed. A number of the partnership members noted that deadlines sometimes have been too short for them to be realistic, as each organisation has many other competing commitments. Some felt that a few participants regularly respond to the requests, provide feedback and comment on drafts, while others respond only when an issue directly concerns them. This is an unfortunate, but typical situation with electronic fora: members have different workloads, and for some networking is of greater value than for others.

Internal evaluation reports done by UNIFI proved a very successful way of standing back from the Project’s outcomes and deliverables and reflecting upon the *process* of interaction. Internal evaluations enabled the partnership to understand itself better in terms of its strengths and weaknesses in cooperation, decision-making and sharing of resources. This relates to the general principle that projects are not only about outputs, but also to a great extent about processes and relationship, i.e. about how people work together.

The reports have been based upon responses to questionnaires sent via email by UNIFI to all partner organisations. Again, it can be noted that some responded regularly, while others – not at all. Coordinators were given a chance to respond to comments made about their performance in the next report. Internal evaluation reports greatly contributed to transparency in ARCA’s operations and improved the climate of partnership.

Presentation

English is the common language of the partnership, while for the majority it is not a mother tongue. However, written outputs have been done in English. They would have benefited from a more thorough copy-editing and checking names and abbreviations, especially the Guide, which is a publication of high quality whose shelf life is expected to be reasonably long.⁷ Overall, there was less translation and publishing in other languages than originally envisaged, but this did not appear to undermine the quality of dissemination, since in a number of countries, e.g. Norway, English is universally understood in professional constituencies. The Guide has been translated and is currently being published in Romanian, German, Italian, French and Spanish.

⁶ ‘Evaluation of the ARCA project – process and relationship aspects’, Time frame: Phase 1 (October 2005 – December 2005), Phase 2 (January 2006 – March 2006).

⁷ For example, DFID stands for Department For International Development (the Guide, p. 54).

Report of the 1st Session of Events was produced in English and French and the 2nd – in English and German. The webportal was intended to be tri-lingual (English, French and German), but so far only functions in English.

IV CONCLUSIONS

The ARCA partnership made a valuable contribution to the field of peace education in Europe, raising its professional standards. The most successful components appear to be the training needs assessment which was a remarkably comprehensive pan-European exercise, session of events and the Guide to peace education. Weaknesses are most felt in the Network of Peace Educators and, by default, in operations of the webportal where it concerns the Network. The greatest achievement however was establishment and development of the partnership itself, and the connections between individuals and organisations made possible by the ARCA.

In the next stage the Project needs to find a clear focus which way it would develop: either in the direction of peace education for adults to work inside the EU countries on such issues as, for instance, un-integrated minorities, or it would move further in the direction of preparing civilians to work in peace missions abroad, e.g. new EU deployment in Kosovo to replace the UNMIK administration.

A decision on strategic direction would determine which additional partnerships have to be established both on the governmental and civil society side. So far, the partner organisations in ARCA have been NGOs and universities. However, links with the major donor governments involved in peace operations and their agencies (e.g. National Defence College in Sweden) and the training providers the donor governments use, - private companies, e.g. Ground Truth in the UK, - need to be made. Agencies within the UN system responsible for training (e.g. UN Staff College) should be involved, since trained individuals tend to move across sectors, while divisions between working for an intergovernmental organisation or for a international NGO in the field are blurred. The ARCA partnership needs to be mindful that the field of training for deployment in Europe is well developed and that competition is stiff, and identify its own niche and strategic advantage, if it decides to proceed in this direction.

Clarification of the future direction would allow to streamline the roles of partner organisations. It appears that there were too many organisations involved, while in practice some were more active than others. It is suggested to have a two-tier system which would involve a core group of partners to carry the bulk of responsibilities, play a key role in decision-making and be responsible for concrete areas. The other group may consist of associated members who would benefit from inclusion into the partnership's activities and debates, and fulfil *ad hoc* tasks, but would have lighter responsibilities than the core group. There are good grounds established for the ARCA partnership to grow, however, its growth has to be manageable.

The Evaluator questions the need to put further effort into establishment of an on-line directory of peace educators and trainers in Europe. The EGT attempted to so, but eventually the effort came to a halt since users were reluctant to put any negative information about the trainers if they used them and were not satisfied. In practice, reputation spreads more by the 'word of mouth'. The recommendation is to proceed

with dissemination of information and strengthen the links with the existing outlets, such as the Berghof Center for Constructive Conflict Management which already has directories established. The webportal can also provide an opportunity for trainers to advertise their services and look for team members in case of large assignments. However, these networking activities would have to be moderated.

In future, it is suggested to develop a more realistic timetable, since collaborative efforts of a number of partners from different countries tend to take up more time than it was envisaged. This would prevent an overload at the end of the Project as it happened.

Quality control needs to be given further consideration. In the ARCA partnership so far this was done mainly by peer review. It may be good to establish a more formal process for this purpose.

APPENDIX 1

Documents Used

Project Proposal to the Socrates/ Grundtvig 1 Programme of the European Commission, March 2005
Peace Training: Preparing Adults for Peacework and Nonviolent Intervention in Conflicts (the Guide), ARCA, 2007.
'Adult Training And Education For International And Intra-National Interventions For Peacebuilding, Conflict Transformation, Mediation And Crisis Management in Europe', ARCA, 2007.
Progress Report to the European Commission, 23 June 2006.
Final Report to the European Commission (draft), October 2007.
Agenda and Minutes of the international seminar "Resources and paths towards peace training for Adults in Europe", Stadtschlaining, 14-15 September 2007.
Summaries of evaluation questionnaires held at the end of events
Internal Evaluation Reports (UNIFI)
'Improving and Assessing Skills for Civilian Peace Missions', workshop report, Marly le Roy, France, 2-6 July 2006
Map of Training and Recruitment in Europe
'Conflict Resolution in Intercultural Communities', workshop report, Bonn, 4 – 6 May 2007.
www.peacetraining.org

APPENDIX II

List of participating organisations

Peace Action Training and Research Institute of Romania	PATRIR
Nonviolent Peaceforce Internatioanl	NP
Department of Social Studies, Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Florence	UNIFI-DSS
Bund für Soziale Verteidigung e.V. (Federation of Social Protection)	BSV
Austrian Study Center For Peace And Conflict Resolution Institut für angewandte Kulturforschung e.V. (Institute for Applied Cultural Research)	ASPR
Norges Fredslag (Norwegian Peace Association)	IFAK
NOVA-Centre per a la Innovació Social (Nova, Center for Social Innovation)	NFL
Peaceworkers UK (later – International Alert)	NOVA –CIS
Partners for Democratic Change Slovakia	PW-UK
Bokor Öko Csoport Alapítvány	PDCS
Mouvement pour une Alternative Non-violente	BOCS
Centro Studi Difesa Civile (The Center of Studies for Civilian Defence)	MAN
	CSDC