



CONCEPT PAPER

Visegrad Regional Seminar on Global Development Education

24 - 25 March 2011, Prague, Czech Republic,
Hotel IRIS

Collaboration between the NGO platforms:

FoRS - Czech Forum for Development Co-operation;
HAND - Hungarian Association of NGOs for Development and Humanitarian Aid;
Zagranica Group of Poland;
MVRO - Slovak NGDO platform

Background Information on the Countries of the Visegrad Group

The very first initiatives in, what is called today Global Development education (GDE), originated already in the 1990-ies in some of the four Visegrad countries (V4), i.e. Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and Hungary - V4). However, the very first attempts to develop comprehensive programs in this area, in the formal and non-formal education fields, go only back to the years 2004-2006. Only in the last couple of years, different stakeholders started to engage more intensively in GDE, namely non-governmental organisations (NGO's), schools, pedagogic institutions, universities, ministries of foreign affairs and education among others. Initial multi-stakeholders initiatives have been established with the crucial support of national governments, development NGO platforms, European Commission (EC) and the North South Centre of the Council of Europe (NSC).

Following in the footsteps of some 'old' EU member states (EU-15), the Visegrad countries, more recently identified the need to give GDE a more comprehensive structure, to clarify the concept of GDE and to work on the improvements to integrate GDE in school curricula. Recent initiatives leading to the development of national GDE strategies or equivalent approaches, have been supported in all four Visegrad countries. In some cases, some countries have been more successful and have advanced to a larger extent with the conceptualisation of a strategic approach to GDE. Nevertheless, this challenging process to develop a comprehensive strategic document for GDE have not been formally adopted by any of the four central European countries concerned, thus leaving space for further efforts and improvements.

Moreover, an evolution has taken place in terms of understanding of GDE and its relation to Official Development Assistance (ODA) at a global level - in the 'old' EU-15 as well as in 'new' EU-12 countries. In recent years, a number of diverse concepts have emerged such as global education (GE), global development education (GDE), development education (DE) and awareness raising (DEAR) or education towards global citizenship. Since the 'new' EU-12 countries joined the European Union (EU) the primary aim of GDE has originally been to promote foreign development cooperation and projects. While these development projects have mainly been implemented in the global South, GDE projects and activities have taken place predominantly in Europe, bringing awareness to development cooperation at large. However, in recent years, many actors have further developed their understanding of GDE, emphasising the need for education towards global citizenship which is necessary for all citizens given the ever increasing interdependency of our societies, and thus, removing the aforementioned division between GDE activities in the North and development projects in the South.

Besides the focus of the EU-12, including the V4-countries, on the (common) understanding and meaning of GDE, initiatives have been carried out around other subjects related to the relatively low conscience of global issues in the societies of the EU-12 countries. The topics discussed by development education actors in this regard, have been e.g. to elaborate on the identification of the most appropriate tools for awareness-raising. Therefore, bringing the current debate at global level, to the context of the V4 countries, as well as clarifying the diverse concepts related to GDE, is crucial.

Another very important topic linked to the discourse of GDE is the funding possibilities and mechanisms of GDE. In most V4 countries, the emergence of GDE initiatives has been supported by special funding mechanisms created in the

framework of Official Development Assistance (ODA) throughout the last 5-8 years. However, the current trends and financial crisis is creating severe difficulties to gain financial support for GDE activities. As a matter of facts, budgets for GDE have been cut in several V4 countries and, furthermore, threats of shifting funding originally allocated for GDE activities to projects carried out in the global South, does exist as a realistic option. In order to break current negative trends in the V4 region, the proposed regional seminar for the central European countries, aims at bringing in the current global debate in a (sub-)regional context and, thus, help in clarifying the '*raison d'être*' of GDE and developing a deeper understanding of the GED concept and, furthermore, motivate the key stakeholders to engaged in and support of GDE. By bringing together multiple stakeholders (NGO activists, representatives of governmental structures and agencies, local authorities, teachers and other school actors, donors and European institutions) and creating space for interactions and discussions, exchange of knowledge and experiences, providing spaces for the possible joint initiatives, the event aspires to search answers to the following questions:

How has global development paradigm change been reflected in the Visegrad countries? How is GDE understood in this particular region? What is the vision of the respective key actors in the field on GDE? What have been the outcomes of efforts to develop GDE national strategies in the region? How can the V4 countries cooperate to foster joint efforts in advancing the development of GDE national strategies? How can such strategic approaches be put successfully into practice? What can the V4 countries learn from more experienced partners in the EU context (peer learning) as well as from the global South? How different European initiatives (initiated by e.g. NSC, EC) have been or could be utilized in V4 countries?

Objectives

- To exchange and jointly discuss existing perspectives on concepts of GDE to reach a better understanding of the concept;
- To identify common challenges in the Visegrad countries and exchange information on best practices with GDE experts from the V4 region, other European countries/institution as well as with experts from the global South;
- To provide the space and opportunities to develop joint action and collaboration within and beyond the Visegrad countries;
- To promote GDE as an integral part of education as well as of development cooperation in the Visegrad countries;
- To elaborate recommendations for furthering GDE in the V4 countries.

Preliminary date

24-25 March 2011

Preliminary venue

IRIS Congress Hotel, Prague

<http://www.hoteliris.cz/en/>

Preliminary list of participants

Participants will include key GDE stakeholders from each V4 country, given as follows:

- 1 representative from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Development Agency (4)
- 1 representative from the Ministry of Education (4)
- 2 representatives from higher education, including teacher training institutes (8)

- 6 NGO representatives, including the national coordinators for the Global Education Week (24)
- 2 teachers active in the GDE field (8)
- National and/or European parliamentarians (4)
- 1 representative from the national platform for local authorities (members of Platforma - European Platform of Local and Regional Authorities for Development) (4)
- Experts from the global North and South - workshop facilitators and a key note speakers (4)
- International organisations (8)
 - o CONCORD (Board members, DARE, DEEEP, TRIALOG representatives) (2)
 - o NSC representatives (1)
 - o EC representatives (1)
 - o Potential donors (e.g. UNDP, OSF, another EC DG) (4)
- Organisers (4)

The numbers above are roughly estimated. Given the upcoming Hungarian and Polish EU presidencies and other national initiatives in GDE, the number of participants from each country may differ slightly. In total, the seminar aims at gathering a total of approx. 72 participants.

Main partners for organising the seminar

Host organisation:

FoRS - Czech Forum for Development Co-operation is a platform of Czech non-governmental non-profit organizations (NGOs) and other non-profit institutions, involved in development cooperation, development education and humanitarian assistance. FoRS represents more than 50 organizations, which share the common interest of pursuing more relevance and effectiveness of both Czech and international development cooperation and enhancing its positive impact on people living in developing and transforming countries. FoRS has been strongly focusing on GDE on the national level since its inception in 2004. More than two thirds of FoRS members are active in this area and therefore formed the following working groups: “Global Development Education” for formal education in primary and secondary schools, “Public Awareness” for non-formal education (both groups have merged recently) and “Development studies” for formal education at universities. With respect to public awareness, FoRS has acted as a partner in the campaign Czech Against Poverty that has been running since 2005 and is the most widely known campaign related to development cooperation in the Czech Republic. FoRS also contributed to the development of the national GDE strategy in 2009-2010.

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Statutory representative: Pavel Gruber, Chair, pavel.gruber@charita.cz and Jarmila Lomozová, Vice-chair, jarmila.lomozova@charita-adopce.cz

Partner organisations:

Hungarian Association of NGOs for Development and Humanitarian Aid (HAND) is a platform of 20 member NGOs that aims at contributing to the formulation of an effective, transparent and sustainable development cooperation policy and becoming a co-operative partner of the Hungarian governmental bodies. A working group on global education within HAND was established in 2007.

Contact person: Réka Balogh, Network Coordinator, office@hand.org.hu

Zagranica Group is an association of almost 50 Polish NGOs working abroad in cooperation with and for the benefit of foreign partners. All the members of the platform are conjoined by the will of acting together in order to create better conditions in Poland and Europe for developing supportive activities for the countries in need. The Group undertakes actions in these fields, in which close cooperation and common position are indispensable for producing a change in the system and reaching the goals necessary from the point of view of the member organisations. Zagranica Group has led a project on cross-sectorial co-operation on GE with the aim of agreeing on a common understanding and concept of GE.

Contact person: Wojciech Tworkowski, Director, wojtek@zagranica.org.pl

Slovak NGDO platform (MVRO) is an association of almost 30 NGOs which deal mainly with foreign development and humanitarian aid. MVRO is one of the direct actors in the area of foreign development and humanitarian aid, co-operation and policy of the Slovak republic, of the EU and also other institutions focused on the development in economically less developed countries. The NGDO Platform is also the implementation body which carries out development education projects supported by SlovakAid. Between 2007-2008, a working group for DE was established within the platform. In 2010 two working groups have worked on the draft of the national GDE strategy, one focused on elementary schools and one on universities.

Contact person: Lenka Nemcova, Executive Secretary, lenka.nemcova@mvro.sk

The seminar is taking place in the context and with the support of the **Joint Management Agreement signed between the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe and the European Commission (EuropeAid)**, which aims at promoting GDE in the twelve new member states of the European Union and is implemented during 2009-2011.

Draft Programme

Day 1

Introduction

- FoRS, HAND, Zagranica Group, MVRO
- Czech authorities
- European institutions (NSC & EC)

Plenary blocks

- Key note speeches on European and Southern perspectives on GDE

Panel discussion about GDE concepts

- What are we trying to achieve?

National GDE/AR strategies

- 3 parallel workshops addressing all the diverse groups of participants (institutions, teachers, NGOs).

Day 2

Continuation of parallel workshops

Open space & workshop fair

Plenary session

- with presentation of the main findings from the workshops and recommendations for future regional collaboration

Evaluation and closing of seminar

Working language

English will be the only working language of the seminar and no interpretation to other languages is foreseen. The seminar is intended to be interactive and thus only participants with relevant level of English will be selected to participate.

Documentation

Key note speakers and workshop facilitators will provide abstracts of their speeches/workshops prior to the seminar and their contributions will be included in the final seminar report.

The final seminar report from the seminar will be written in English by FoRS and before finalising the content, a consultation for approval by the regional partners (for the organisation of the seminar) will be made. A language editing of the report will be made prior to the submission of the report to the NSC. The report will be disseminated to all participants of the seminar, by each national partner via their networks and websites, and to relevant stakeholders and will also be available at the NSC's special website for the JMA.

Budget:

The budget can be found in the agreement.

Action plan:

- Concept note incl. the preliminary programme confirmed by the partners and submitted to NSC by 30 November 2010 (done).
- Seminar venue confirmed by 30 November 2010 (done).
- Contract between FoRS and NSC signed by 20 December 2010.
- Workshops selected, speakers/facilitators defined, the programme further elaborated and logistics officer and seminar rapporteur hired within January 2011.
- Payment received from the NSC by 30 January 2011 (and key payments made incl. salaries, hotel booking etc.).
- Organisation of the conference, distribution of invitations, promotion of the event, registration of participants, preparation of background materials etc. for the seminar starting in January 2011 and running until March 2011.
- Delivering the event on 24-25 March with possible coordination of organisers with speakers/facilitators on 23 March 2011.
- The report from the conference will be written in April and distributed in May 2011.
- The final report from the project will be submitted to the NSC by 31 May 2011.