

ARTiT: development of innovative methods of training the trainers

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ARTiT: development of innovative methods of training the trainers

Management and
Evaluation Report 2011



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INTRODUCTION

This paper is part of the evaluation of the ARTiT project: development of innovative methods of training the trainers, Life Long Learning Program. This is an interim paper mainly focusing on the process of communication and meeting activities among partners within the program. The evaluation is based on a concept of formative evaluation and thus respecting the work in progress of ARTiT.

The paper presents and documents results of the evaluations carried out so far:

- General Management and Evaluation No. 1, May 2011
- Kick-off co-ordinating Meeting, Athens Dec 13th-15th 2010
- Development Group Meeting 1, Athens May 30th-31st 2011
- Development Group Meeting 2, Copenhagen Sept 7th-9th 2011
- Intermediate Coordinating Meeting, Stockholm Nov 17th -18th 2011
- General Management and Evaluation No. 2, Nov 2011

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation is based on the WP Management and Evaluation Plan (appendix 1).

So far the evaluation has taken place at different times relevant in the project; hence the evaluation focuses on the activities in progress. The WP Management and Evaluation Plan will be revised in accordance with the work in progress.

The WP Management and Evaluation Plan is based on evaluation forms 1-8, which are adjusted to suit the actual situation and work packages in the project. The evaluation forms 1-8 are as follows (cf. appendix 2):

1. ASPECTS OF PROJECT DEVELOPMENT/MANAGEMENT
2. ASPECTS OF COMMUNICATION / COLLABORATION ISSUES
3. ARTiT – OUTPUTS
4. DISSEMINATION AND VALORISATION ACTIVITIES
5. ASPECTS OF PROJECT MEETINGS
6. STRENGTHS/WEAKNESSES
7. ACHIEVEMENTS
8. DEVELOPING MEETING ACTIVITIES

Evaluation forms 1 – 5 is based on ratings from 1-5 and further it is possible to add explanatory comments on dimensions such as ‘criticalities’, ‘satisfactory aspects’ and ‘suggestions for improvement’. Evaluation forms 6, 7 and 8 provides the opportunity for attendees to formulate - in their own words - strengths, weaknesses and achievements made so far, and to make suggestions for improvement. The evaluation forms have so far been circulated to all partners and returned by email by each attendee.

The evaluation is planned as mentioned above in order to gather both positive and negative aspects and to reflect the actual situation of the cooperation among partners, and in continuation hereof, manage and make room for adjustments based on results of the evaluation.

RESULTS

GENERAL MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION NO. 1, MAY 2011

Results from the first evaluation of work package 1 were based on evaluation forms 1-7. The results are as follows.

The main achievements of the ARTiT project at an international and national level are expressed as follows:

- A good overview of the field and key scholars at an international level.
- The synthesis report is a very solid base for the next steps and it can be a very interesting document for many actors in the field of adult education.
- The identification of sources for optimizing adult education through the use of art and artistic means in the teaching process.
- The creation of an efficient multinational partnership for promoting the use of art and artistic means in adult education.
- We started out comparing our views on how to use and develop art-based methods.
- A good overview of the field and key scholars in Denmark.
- We have a very good picture of the use of art based learning methods in Greece.
- The debates with the students at the Pitesti University, Romania, regarding the use of art and artistic means in the training activities in general, in adult education activities in particular.
- The main result is that our survey is tuned with the result of similar surveys. We can clearly see that our study circle leaders are interested in improving their skills and to learn more about art-based methods.
- We have a very illuminating report for the use of arts in adult education for the first time.
- The creation of a favourable framework for the application of art and artistic means in several adult training programs.



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To point out a few of the dimensions evaluated; re 'management/development' all attendees gave very positive ratings on e.g. the role of the coordinator: 5 out of 6 gave the highest possible score. The coordination was described in terms like: *"The coordination of the activities scheduled in the first project performance stage was very efficient."* On the dimension 'outcomes' 5 out of 6 rated the Synthesis Report with the highest possible score and 4 out of 6 rated the national reports with the highest score. On collaboration/communication issues the ratings are very optimistic too, and is described as an: *"Excellent collaboration."* Further 5 out of 6 rated 'Effectiveness and transparency of handling of administrative and financial matters' with the highest score. (For all ratings please see appendix 3).

The most critical part, at this point, is the dimension 'dissemination and valorisation activities'. On this dimension we get a more mixed picture with both high and low scores. This, of course, is a very significant part of the project that should be intensified. Given some of the supplementary comments like: *"The project promotion campaign at a national and international level must be intensified"* and the suggestion that *"We might create guidelines for dissemination"*, the evaluator considers the ARTiT team to be constructive and forward thinking. These comments express awareness of the fact that the ARTiT team need to have a more intensified focus on dissemination activities. Given the above, evaluator considers this an aspect that has a specified attention among members of the ARTiT team.

There are also some indications that the cooperation and communication is a challenge, as the team works on a long distance and is communicating in a foreign language.

Concluding, given the fact that the process related to the establishment of a multinational research team is still in progress, we consider the ARTiT project to be solid. We consider all partners to be committed and handling tasks of the project in a constructive way. Having completed the first phase of the ARTiT project, we see very positive ratings in the evaluation in general. Dimension 1-3 is in general rated with high scores, with a few neutral ratings only.

We suggest that dissemination activities are given more attention.

The results of the General Management and Evaluation No. 1 were also presented by evaluator and discussed among project partners in the development group meeting 1 in Athens, May 2011.

KICK-OFF COORDINATING MEETING, ATHENS DEC 13TH-15TH 2010

Results are based on evaluation forms 5 and 6 and are presented in the following. The overall ratings regarding the Kick-off Coordination Meeting are illustrated in table 1.1. (Cf. Appendix 4)

Table 1.1 - Overall ratings (A)

| Dimensions | 1 Poor | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Excellent | Participants Total |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---|---|---|----------------|-----------------------|
| a. Face-to-face meeting overall impression | | | | 1 | 6 | 7 |
| b. Communication and discussion | | | | 4 | 3 | 7 |
| c. Partners' active attitude | | | | 3 | 4 | 7 |
| d. Efficacy in solving problems | | | | | 7 | 7 |
| e. Efficacy in reaching to, and making decisions | | | | 2 | 5 | 7 |

As appears in Table 1.1 the rating gives an overall positive impression of the meeting. When it is not only excellent ratings we find explanatory comments like *"There was a small problem till we got a common language, still I believe we were successful"* to be a general explanatory factor. And as stated by the same participant *"Everybody was quite active and participated with great interest"*. Taking into consideration that this is the first meeting within the project, it is only natural that partners spend time clarifying tasks of the ARTiT project.

Even if it is not possible to fully generalise from the collected data, we consider above statements to reflect the actual collaboration among partners e.g. the process of overcoming challenges concerning language and communication in a constructive way. Especially worth noticing is column d, where 7 out of 7 participants rate the efficacy in solving problems as excellent. We would also like to emphasise that there are no negative ratings in the evaluation of the meeting.

Concluding: we consider the partnership to be successful at this point. Both in terms of an overall positive attitude towards the project among project partners - and the will and ability to collaborate and to obtain goals and tasks of the meetings.

DEVELOPMENT GROUP MEETING 1, ATHENS MAY 30TH-31ST, 2011

Results are based on evaluation forms 5 and 6 and are presented in the following. The overall ratings regarding the Development Group Meeting 1 are illustrated in Table 1.2. (Cf. Appendix 5)

Table 1.2 - Overall ratings (A)

| Dimensions | 1 Poor | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Excellent | Participants Total |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---|---|---|----------------|-----------------------|
| a. Face-to-face meeting overall impression | | | | 4 | 5 | 9 |
| b. Communication and discussion | | | 1 | 3 | 5 | 9 |
| c. Partners' active attitude | | | | 2 | 7 | 9 |
| d. Efficacy in solving problems | | | 1 | 3 | 5 | 9 |
| e. Efficacy in reaching to, and making decisions | | | 1 | 2 | 6 | 9 |

At this point the evaluation of the meeting leaves us with a positive impression as appears in Table 1.2, though we see a few neutral ratings.

As an explanatory comment the participant who rated with the score 3 on the dimension 'Communication and discussion' states: a criticality is the *"Divertive and unclear knowledge and understanding of the project"*. This aspect could have something to do with the fact that there has been

a change of people in the project, as another participant explains. And as stated by the same participant *"We ended up finding a common understanding"*.

One point that is emphasised as an obstacle by several participants is the lack of time. However due to the commitment of the partners, there is a will and flexibility among these to find a solution. We see this from the following quotation, where one way of finding solutions is illustrated (it is decided to expand the time frame for the following meeting). *"The lack of time (only two days meeting) was an obstacle concerning a deeper approach of the issues at hand. For this reason we decided that the next meeting will last three days."*

The lack of time is considered partly to be due to the change of people in the project, which meant that more explanations or elaboration of the project was needed in this meeting specifically. On the other hand the commitment of the partners and the active participation in the project causes a need for a deeper approach and more time for development. As one participant puts it *"Communication was very positive and open and the several ideas presented or proposed were welcomed and discussed thoroughly."* This is expressed by several of the participants. At the end, it is considered that this aspect will entail production of better results, suitable to the situations of each partner country.

Given the above it is considered a very positive factor that all partners seem committed and that partners managed to fulfill the main tasks in time. Further we were left with the impression that all partners have reached a common place for cooperation.

DEVELOPMENT GROUP MEETING 2, COPENHAGEN, SEPT 7TH-9TH, 2011

Results are based on evaluation forms 5 and 6 and are presented in the following. The overall ratings regarding the Development Group Meeting 2 are illustrated in Table 1.3. (Cf. Appendix 6)

Table 1.3 - Overall ratings (A)

| Dimensions | 1 Poor | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Excellent | Participants Total |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---|---|---|----------------|-----------------------|
| a. Face-to-face meeting overall impression | | | | 2 | 6 | 8 |
| b. Communication and discussion | | | 1 | 3 | 4 | 8 |
| c. Partners' active attitude | | | | 2 | 6 | 8 |
| d. Efficacy in solving problems | | | 1 | 2 | 5 | 8 |
| e. Efficacy in reaching to, and making decisions | | | 1 | 2 | 5 | 8 |

We still see pretty positive ratings of the ARTiT programme concerning meeting activities within the Scientific Development Team at this point – cf. Table 1.3. As we also know from the previous evaluation there are no negative ratings, yet there are some explanatory comments that we find of great importance for the further development and cooperation among partners.

The main challenge of the ARTiT project seems to be cultural aspects and differences. One issue here is expressed by diversity in ways of approaching cooperation and continuation hereof – concerning the implementation of the methodology in some of the partner countries. These aspects are among others expressed in the following *“...the projects’ intentions have a focus rather unfamiliar to e.g. Nordic views on adult education, on learning processes, methodology and even organisation which sometimes give you the feeling that it will be hard to implement the ideas to our ways of organizing studies, pedagogy and methodology.”* The same participant continues, *“This leniency from, my part, makes you feel that you are working more or less for others rather than together with others. This isn’t a major difficulty but something you can learn from.”* Similar concerns are expressed by others; and one participant suggests that *“Maybe we can use the method of ‘active listening’.”* Though challenging, it is mentioned as a positive aspect that partners were able to find *“A balance between implementing the ARTiT methodology in the different National Curricula and the forming of a new methodology including different ideologies.”* We should add that the challenge of finding common solutions suitable for all partners is expressed by a majority of the project partners.

We still see very positive ratings such as on dimension c. Further; partners are described as *“active”* and the atmosphere as *“very vivid”* and *“full of energy”*. Though seen as challenging, the ARTiT project also seems to benefit from the cultural differences between project partners, which is expressed in the following quote: *“I think this meeting was a clear example of the importance and richness of international/cultural working groups.”*

It is also considered being a satisfying aspect that objectives of the meeting have been reached. The decision to expand the meeting with one day also seems to be a good solution as the three days duration – according to the evaluation – seemed to be very fruitful.

Finally we should add that the role of the coordinator is emphasised in a very positive way; the coordinator is described as supportive and fast in helping on clarifying matters.

Concluding: though we see some challenges at this point, the evaluation shows that partners are willing to and able to settle problems and find solutions. Further it is found that critique is given in a constructive way. It is also emphasised that in spite of above mentioned concerns, the ratings on the dimension a-e are still in the positive end and the tasks of the meeting have been reached.

The evaluator suggests that the team continues to respond openly to the fact that the program should be embedded in different cultural and educational contexts; in order to fulfill this goal an amenable approach is recommended.

INTERMEDIATE COORDINATING MEETING, STOCKHOLM, NOV 17TH-18TH, 2011

Results are based on evaluation forms 5 and 6 and are presented in the following. The overall ratings regarding the Intermediate Coordinating Meeting are illustrated in Table 1.4. (Cf. Appendix 7)

Table 1.4 - Overall ratings (A)

| Dimensions | 1 Poor | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Excellent | Participants Total |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---|---|---|----------------|-----------------------|
| a. Face-to-face meeting overall impression | | | | | 9 | 9 |
| b. Communication and discussion | | | | 1 | 8 | 9 |
| c. Partners' active attitude | | | | 2 | 7 | 9 |
| d. Efficacy in solving problems | | | | 1 | 8 | 9 |
| e. Efficacy in reaching to, and making decisions | | | | 2 | 7 | 9 |

So far this part of the evaluation is the most positive with high scores in all aspects, as illustrated in Table 1.4.

The following comment might be a good indicator on what went especially well at this meeting: *"The meeting was well planned and structured, which means that we had enough time to talk things through, and there was time for questions and clarifying matters. It was a good idea to appoint a reporter [minute taker]."* Further it is stated that the ARTiT team *"... has developed a firm way of working at our meetings that work*

better and better because we also know each other more deeply". This statement expresses a possible explanatory detail. Further another participant explains: *"The meeting was very good and useful. We received the information from the coordinator for completing the report."* The meeting agenda is also mentioned as well planned.

The more critical comments concern lack of time for preparation, e.g. for reading all documents, and that there could be: *"Confusion sometimes, especially on the work to be done,"* but the same participant thinks, *"Solutions were found on critical aspects."* Another point is that some participants are more active than others, and it is suggested to take minutes rounds to make sure that everyone agrees on proposals and solutions.

The team spirit and the frames in Stockholm offered by ABF are also emphasised as very positive.

Concluding it is found that the ARTiT project and the collaboration among partners are still developing in a positive way.

We suggest that the planning and implementation of this meeting is used as future model for remaining meetings, as the evaluation on this meeting indicates that this has been the most frictionless to date. It is also suggested that the ARTiT team consider taking more minutes rounds, as proposed by a participant.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION NO. 2, NOV 2011

Results from the second general evaluation are based on evaluation forms 1-7. The results in outline are as follows.

The main achievements of the ARTiT project at an international and national level are expressed as follows:

- A common conception upon the methodology of using arts and artistic means in Adult Education.
- The basics for a future partnership in educational projects and research between the institutions involved in the project.
- We have the Synthesis report and the main methodology. We consider these achievements as very serious and valuable for the project's core idea.
- For the first time ARTS have been systematically integrated in adult learning processes.
- A good reason to reflect upon using arts in Adult Education.
- The realisation of a synthesis upon national traditions in using arts and artistic means in education.
- A methodology of using arts and artistic means in Adult Education.
- We have managed to create a very strong team of experts both in adult education and art that are helping us at the development of the project.
- We have been able to attract the attention of many institutions such as the association for the development of local communities and the Training Institution of the biggest workers association in Greece and some very important Greek painters are interested to be involved in the project.
- On the dissemination level we have organised for the first time an ARTiT session (use of cinema in adult education) which members of our association were able to follow from different parts of Greece via Skype.

- We have a very clear picture on what is happening in this specific field (mainly by the research carried out). We try to disseminate the project idea and results, not only through official dissemination activities but also in various circumstances (training of trainers and workshops of other projects).

Ratings on the 'aspects on project development/management' are in general positive, both concerning: management, project governance and administrative issues; on the last-mentioned all ratings were the highest possible. It is, however, indicated that some partners have some difficulties keeping up with the deadlines. With the delays occurring by one partner it *"...has a consequence of delay on the whole work,"* as one partner describes it. It is suggested by another that: *"When planning we need to clearly state our possibilities to respect the commonly set deadlines."* Given the high scores on all dimensions in this category, it is not found to be a critical aspect, but something that the partners should be aware of. Further we find the following comment to be a common understanding: *"All partners were committed to find common solutions and share the extra work that sometimes needed to be done"*. It seems as if so far there are no significant problems - and that management is very efficient (For all ratings please see Appendix 8).

Yet again, on 'aspects of communication/collaboration' the ratings are in the higher end. 5 out of 6 rate the coordination with the best possible score and the coordinator is described as *'very good'*. On the other hand it is also mentioned that *"Too many demands coming at the same time were not easily responded to immediately."* Though the ARTiT team still experiences some minor language problems, the communication flow, the active attitude and technical solutions seem to be proceeding in a good quality way. The level of attention is rated a bit lower in average; we see 4 out of 6 on next highest score, 1 in the top while 1 remains neutral on this issue. It is suggested that the team *"...can establish a more direct communication (maybe a list in Internet?)."*

Concerning the 'ARTiT outputs the evaluation shows a more mixed picture. While the methodology, modules and exploitation of results is rated with high positive scores, the web site and interactive platform is rated a bit lower. Especially ratings on the platform differs, whilst 2 have rated the platform in the low scale, 1 remains neutral and 2 rated the platform with high positive scores. 1 participant has responded to this aspect. It should be noted that several of the ARTiT partners have not received the login to the platform yet, and therefore have not had the opportunity to experience the platform. That is why this is not considered a critical situation. As an explanatory comment it is also mentioned that *"It is difficult to develop the website at the same moment that all products are under development. There is a time difference in between that might affect the quality of the site."*

While being the most critical aspect at the first evaluation the dissemination activities seem to be proceeding in a better mode at this point (cf. page 7). 5 out 6 rated dissemination with second best score, and 1 participant gave the highest possible score. On the dimension 'support of the ARTiT initiative among different stakeholders' 1 participant gave a low score while 5 gave a positive score. The differed ratings indicate that activities concerning these aspects differ a bit among the ARTiT partners, and that partners are approaching this aspect in different ways.

While one participant wrote: *"In Greece there is a very big interest from various stakeholders on the projects developments,"* another explains that *"...support will appear after the first training programme..."*

Further, strengths of the project are described as the achievement of *"a very good level of collaboration. All issues and activities of the project are in time and stand at a very good quality"* and that the partners involved are *"very professional people."* Weaknesses are still considered to be *"Different starting points and values when it comes to pedagogical axioms."* However it is also indicated that the cultural differences play a still lesser role.

Finally we conclude that the ARTiT project is successful at this point. Despite some minor challenges and delays the team still manages to fulfil tasks of the project and work packages. This is primarily due to the strong collaborative team and the engagement in the ARTiT project.

We also find that extra activities carried out - such as the organisation of an ARTiT session (with the use of cinema in adult education) which members of one of the participating associations were able to follow from different parts of Greece via Skype - witness of the very strong commitment in the ARTiT project.