



ACTIVE INCLUSION LEARNING NETWORK

Minutes of the 2nd Steering Group Meeting

10th – 11th December, Hamburg
Behörde für Arbeit, Soziales, Familie und Integration, 'BASFI'
ESF-Öffentlichkeitsarbeit

Attendees

Craig Georgiou, Project Manager, NOMS, UK
Kim Lau, NOMS, UK
Chris Holmes, NOMS, UK
Lloyd Broad, Birmingham City Council, UK
Ioan Durnescu, University of Bucharest, Romania
Giovanna Mangano, ISFOL, Italy
Claudio Franzosi, ISFOL, Italy
Enrica Marsilli, ISFOL, Italy
Carlo Franco, Regione Piemonte, Italy
Rita Festi, OPEN Consortium, Italy
Jurgen Hilmer, Justiz, Bremen, Germany
Rhianon Williams, Justiz, Bremen, Germany
Nora Obenaus, BASFI, ESF Hamburg, Germany
Ulrich Wolff, BASFI, ESF Hamburg, Germany
Aggeliki Stabouli, Epanodos, Greece
Nijole Smitaite, ESFA, Lithuania
Koen De Temmerman, ESF Agentschaps, Flanders
Dries Van Gool, ESF Agentschaps, Flanders
Christian Rabergh, Svenska ESF-radet, Sweden
Olwen Lyner, NIACRO, North Ireland
Heather Reid, NIACRO, North Ireland

Apologies

Phil Taylor OBE, Project Director, UK
Allen Mercer, EU Monitor, North Ireland
John Noble, Proteus, North Ireland



Date: 10th December 2013

1. Welcome and Updates - Craig Georgiou (CG)

After welcoming all Steering Group (SG) members and thanking everyone for attending, CG introduces the contents and aims of the meeting.

He updates the group on his last meeting with Marie-Anne Paraskevas (EC) during which a careful use of 'best practice' was suggested as essential in the process of the network. It was stressed that not just best practice is required but what else works in an innovative way. Partners agree.

CG briefly lists the content subjects and goes through the partner agreement that was discussed at the 1st Steering Group meeting.

Questionnaires: positive comments from partners as a tool very comprehensive and easy to understand. The questionnaires can now be circulated to Stakeholders, umbrella organisations, etc... working in "Active Inclusion" areas. NOMS will use its huge database of contacts, but needs more from other countries. Thus CG thanks partners who have already sent him contacts and asks if others can do the same so that the questionnaire can be circulated to a wider audience. CG is also happy for partners to circulate the questionnaire to organisations they deem suitable. It would also be more useful to receive the questionnaires back in English.

New meeting structure (see Annex 3) – in order to rationalize efforts and costs, it is proposed a new meeting structure with three main thematic meetings for each Platform. Each meeting will have workshops where participants will be split up. It is feasible to fund 10-12 participants per workshop. Using a template provided, each Theme Lead will compile an interim report after each thematic event.

Aims are the same: the aim of the Platform 1 events is to obtain a pool of "best practices". The aim of the Platform 2 is to obtain a pool of "very best practices", for then drafting a research report with the main findings and formulating policy recommendations.

The risk: organisations may not be able to host these events as they are larger.

Positive aspect: rationalisation of costs and topics debated on the same board.

Support from partners: providing experts to attend the meetings. However, as we need views from different countries, the numbers of experts from each country will be restricted.

Funding – the final conference will hopefully be held by ISFOL and if approved by their director, they may be able to cover translation costs too as the conference will be in English.

So far we have had no translation costs. CG thanks partners who have already translated the questionnaire in their own languages and ask partners for supporting the translation into English of questionnaires filled in other languages.

Mainly it would be helpful in regards to funding, if partners can:

- ♦ help with translations
- ♦ provide venue to host the workshops
- ♦ recommend experts to attend the workshop whose travel costs have not to be covered. The network can only fund experts to attend if they are from non ESF organisations.



The funds can be flexibly circulated, most importantly we must plan which partner will host which meeting first.

Lloyd Broad (LB) expresses a few concerns:

- ♦ Travel and subsistence – organisations will have less funds, what flexibility is there in the budget?
- ♦ Transparent costs for each event such as venues, costs of food and drinks etc... so that partners are aware of what they can provide.
- ♦ Language flexibility – this can stop people engaging in the work.

CG – costs will be transparent through an agreement with the hosting partner. In case of economic problems from partners, we will try to be as flexible as EC allows. We will look at ways to reducing costs and support partners anyway .

Roles: Theme Lead, Sub Theme Lead, and Sub Theme Support roles defined within the Partnership Agreement. The idea is for more than one partner to be involved, someone to facilitate and the Theme Lead to record the event outcomes.

All partners agree on the new structure and roles. CG will redesign the timeline with the new structure and circulate.

SG Meetings: as it was agreed with Marie-Anne Paraskevas (EC) that the official start date of this project would be June 2013 and not April, the SG meetings are estimated dates and not yet set, therefore can be changed to accommodate each countries public holiday dates. CG will contact partners with a proposed date for the next SG meeting in order to avoid public holidays.

2. **State of play of research** – Ioan Durnescu (ID)

ID updates partners on the survey questionnaire that have been circulating to identify 'good practices' across Europe on Active Inclusion. The objective is mainly to identify elements critical to success and to estimate their transferability. The questionnaire was developed and aimed to capture as much information as possible. It was also designed to make it easy to follow. The research was approved by the National Research Committee (UK). The questionnaire was then sent to different potential respondents. Most of the returns are from England as those were the early contacts we had. At present we are still awaiting 60-100 more returns.

So far, the questionnaires received back were:

- ♦ very positive
- ♦ very good examples
- ♦ most of them with promising results
- ♦ innovative
- ♦ informative

ID thanks everyone for their comments and for providing contacts in order for the survey to be circulated.

A few problems that occurred:

- ♦ not enough returns received,
- ♦ focused was mainly in England



- ♦ contacts list was not comprehensive
- ♦ see document developed on Google:
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1DSgCKDZggai-VkFZ0JiYIHylQ6Hk5yBeUHLYFJx0h2k/edit?usp=sharing>
- ♦ a small number was externally evaluated

The Criteria Success Factor - ID explains the theme project methods of interventions and their success factors - see Annex 4.

The preliminary conclusions on the success factors are:

- Inter-agency work
- Involving agencies, private sector, NGO sector and beneficiaries – wide networking approach. Services should be advertised and made available to people. They should be offered to people who need this service rather than them having to search for it.
- Whole person approach
- Tailored / personalized / mobile services / bespoke
- Involving beneficiaries in defining the desirable outcomes and co-designing the intervention
- One stop shop
- The Whole System Approach in evaluation (mentioned in two returns) – focus on outcomes.
- Innovative funding – mixed approach
- Importance of the State involvement in funding local initiatives

Most of these focus on procedural aspects and not on the content of the interventions (supplement with systematic review and discussions in the working groups). These factors are quite valuable in terms of implementation, there are more success factors but these need to be evaluated. There are some success factors that are validated and would like these to be discussed with partners and decide on which to use before using this in the workshops. We are still waiting for more questionnaires to be returned before designing a more comprehensive one. Discussion takes place between SG partners.

3. Quality analysis of the research results – Ioan Durnescu (ID)

A systematic review focuses on a research question that tries to identify, appraise and select. It aims at comprehensively locating and synthesizing all high quality research evidence (relevant to research) on a particular question using organised, transparent, and replicable procedures at each step in the process. The final aim is to produce hard evidence on successful methods in reducing unemployment and enhancing it for the disadvantaged groups.

Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

- To look for and use published papers produced and published in EU in the last 5 years (2009-2013). Papers published in other areas will be taken into consideration.
- Priority given to papers published in peer reviewed scientific journals.
- Unpublished studies will be accepted where peer-review papers are not available.



- To look at employability or/and employment for the mentioned disadvantaged groups and as showed in the “overall objective” section.
- To present results or impact on employability or employment.
- The report is to be English with some other EU languages. If one report is available in many languages, the English version of it will be preferred.
- Reports based on evaluations conducted by the project/program staff will not be included. This can be taken into consideration when writing the final report. The result of the systematic review will be presented in a narrative form.

ID presented a few literature reviews, some dating back to 1999. These papers relate to the themes of the A.I. network which would be useful to help develop the survey. Literature for Integrated Comprehensive strategy: found only 1 paper, the “Qualification Programme” from the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Organization (NAV). The aim was to improve people’ life by helping them into employment through individualised pathways. Unfortunately, as Norway is not part of the EU, this paper cannot be used even though it was published in Europe. However, as the method was useful if not the best, it can still be used to develop the survey.

The literature for meta-analysis 100 active labor market programs by Dar and Tzannatos (1999) proves useful. This paper has been evaluated and validated on the regress methods?

As criteria for success these papers can be reviewed by

- ♦ paying attention to personalised, intensive and labor market led programs
- ♦ ‘one stop shop’
- ♦ sport-based activities – to engage and social capital

Group discussion on ‘the need to transfer experiences’ with the following points:

- ♦ need to respect different contacts and contexts
- ♦ be clear about transferable and replicable work
- ♦ Are the criteria’s measurable?
- ♦ to be clear on how we can extract information from a different contact

4. The selection of practices - Chris Holmes (CH)

Discussion surrounds the following:

- * Identifying success criteria in expert areas, the issues and impacts
- * How do we define success?
- * Success can be quantitative and qualitative
- * Inter-agency work
- * Tailored approach for individuals
- * Start from the information we already have
- * Flanders use the PCM technique which we could possibly align the criteria with ESF Flanders as they are using this until 2020.

SG partners split into 2 small groups for a brainstorming session on criteria for selecting best practices from the systematic review and survey questionnaires.(chaired by CH and LB).



After a long discussion, which eventually brought them around to the conclusion that the questionnaire already contained most of the elements needed and that further success criteria would emerge from the systematic review, partners stress:

- The importance for interventions to be able to evidence clear goals, outputs and outcomes, both for funders and service users
- Criteria should accommodate/reflect different sizes and approaches of interventions from European > national > local levels
- At a national level: looking for what needed to be in place both from a top down and bottom up perspective; the importance to understand the intervention from a service user perspective (what it means / feels like for an individual service user)
- Looking for innovation but based on understanding of existing "what works" evidence and flexibility - both in managing funding, and in response to changing service user needs
- Service design: looking for personalisation, individualised and tailored responses, and these reflected e.g. in mixed flexible finance and service user outcome definitions
- Measuring impact: considering time lag between the intervention and outcomes being realised
- Cost effectiveness in design
- Sustainability / legacy of the A.I. projects are a major concern from the group. Partners want to ensure that the description of interventions is captured to ensure most effective future sustainability and transferability. They suggest that recommendations would need to be framed around common themes but recognising different national structures and systems, and should describe principles not recipes.

Conclusions on selection criteria, interventions and outcomes:

Success criteria's

- Does the project have a clear understanding of the problems it is addressing (clear issues and resolving)?
- Does the project fully understand the Active Inclusion type barriers (culture, language, disability, drugs, homelessness etc...)?
- Do they have a clear and full understanding of the policy and legislation process? The national and local supplementary are not in the questionnaire.

Interventions

- Does the project have beneficiary involvement? Is it 'people' focused?
- Does the project have partnership and multi-agency approach (including delivery partners, NGOs)?
- Does the project demonstrate an integrated approach e.g. integrated/holistic actions and whole systems approach?
- Is there innovative approach to funding e.g. flexible/multiple funding approaches (single pot)? We need to be careful in regards to funding as some costs are more than others such as language barriers, in nature costly for translation services.
- Are these interventions transferable?



Outcomes

- Has the project delivery tangible and sustainable outputs and outcomes (people)?
- Is the project sustainable, i.e. has it been able to identify a legacy for continuity?
- Is the model of intervention transferable?

5. Platform 1 meetings – roundtable discussion and agreement on the aims and products.

- ♦ Scoring/marking criteria that are transparent and written
- ♦ Experts using the surveys to score approaches and to come to an agreement.
- ♦ Use experts recommended by SG members. They will be a mixture of academics and practitioners from different backgrounds. Only concern is, they may demand payment but we can only pay T&S. However we can use the selling point - they can take this experience/learning as an 'advantage' back to their organisations.
- ♦ Possibility of giving the experts some pre-homework to bring to the meeting, but it has to be a manageable load since they are not being paid.
- ♦ ID and Theme Leads have a research meeting to discuss the criteria
- ♦ Using a diverse group of experts for both Platforms may bring different points of view. Partners can identify a balance of high quality/just available experts to invite but also ensuring experts are from different backgrounds. CG will collate this from partners for selection process.
- ♦ Concern – there is no incentive for the experts to take part in the work
- ♦ From this first round of meetings, the outcome should be a selection of best practices.

CG summarises the meeting and thanks SG members for their contributions and efforts.

Close of meeting

11th December 2013

6. Work Process – CG

CG provides a summary on how Platform 1 and 2 meetings will run throughout the project. Theme Leads to facilitate and Sub Theme Support to record the meetings. Templates will be provided to Theme Leads to complete and gather evidence before sending this to the Project Manager and Research Partner after each meeting. The work role and responsibility will be stated clearly in the partnership agreement so that members are aware of their roles and responsibilities..

Points arose:

- ♦ To ensure there is a shared responsibility, any other requirements should be made clear.
- ♦ key bullet points to illustrate core responsibility/ies so people do not have to always refer back to the partnership agreement.
- ♦ It would be ideal if participants, Theme Lead and Sub Theme Support to meet before to work on the meetings. Would there be a budget for this?

Suggestions to this last point: they can meet a day before the meeting or use Skype to save on costs.



LB - The concern for meeting a day before is time constraint as researchers/participants require time (usually 1-2 weeks before) to collate information, discuss the research, scoring and markings, task allocations and practical issues before the actual meetings. The meeting beforehand can help Theme Leads and Sub Theme Leads prepare and ensure work is understood and aligned. They then arrive the day before just to discuss meetings and workshops. However logistics can be worked out.

CG - Once the meeting dates are set, we then identify who we need at the meeting then can invite the attendees. NOMS is happy to send out the invitations, and also happy for partners to send invitations themselves. If partners are to send invitations, it is suggested they include a letter explaining who A.I is and what the network does.

From an earlier discussion with Giovanna Mangano and Karolina Medwecka on platform meetings, it is thought that the theme 'Youth' will have more work. CG asks partners for suggestions on how the meeting can run.

Concerns and suggestions:

- ♦ Hand out questionnaires for discussion – concern: who does the marking? how many practices do we use to present at PL1 meetings? Realistically, we cannot present all of them given the meeting time constraint. Suggestion: questionnaires will be collected by the Project Manager and Research Partner and sent back to Theme Leads according to topics. Theme Leads, supported by partners if necessary, will organize questionnaires on the basis of selected criteria. Theme Leads, supported by the Research Partner, will take 10 best practices to be submitted to PL1 meetings with the General Overview. Participants can then go back to clarify a few points and at the same time collate more information. After discussion participants will decide which practices will go to Peer Review (PL2).
- ♦ Concern: participants will not have a chance to discuss practices in depth. Suggestion: clear descriptions of contents and aims of the meeting to be sent to participants before they attend with the “General Overview” of what has been done; so practices are well understood.
- ♦ Concern: there may be issues of conflict of interest. Suggestion: we must have things written clearly and ensure transparency of how the process is operated and conflict of interest should be set aside.
- ♦ Only 10-12 participants can be invited per workshop and cannot have more as this will go over the budget. It should be also unfair to have more participants in certain meeting than others.
- ♦ To do a final check to ensure that it is not the same countries with the same results – all partners agreed.
- ♦ Platform 2 meetings – concern: if the top best practitioners have already presented in the Platform 1 meetings, it can be unfair and unattractive. Suggestion: just experts (researchers, academic experts, evaluators) will be invited to PL1 meetings and the 10 best practices will be presented by partners. This also helps against conflict of interest.
- ♦ SG partners can organise meetings using their own experts.
- ♦ Use a standard questionnaire template



7. Agreement on the process

To ensure fairness:

- ♦ Selected SG members and Research Partner to select 10 practices to present at the Platform 1 meeting using the agreed marking template.
- ♦ The TLs or STLs will briefly present all 10 practices to the experts using a standard template.
- ♦ The experts will decide which will be the best practices and why they were selected.
- ♦ Best practitioners will then be invited to the Platform 2 meetings.
- ♦ The results will be presented at the final conference and produced in the final report.

All SG partners agree on the process.

CG goes through the Platform 1 and 2 meetings table for partners to agree on their meeting roles. Apart from Greece and Piedmont Region to be confirmed, all partners agree on their work role as per the table of meetings for Platform 1 and 2.

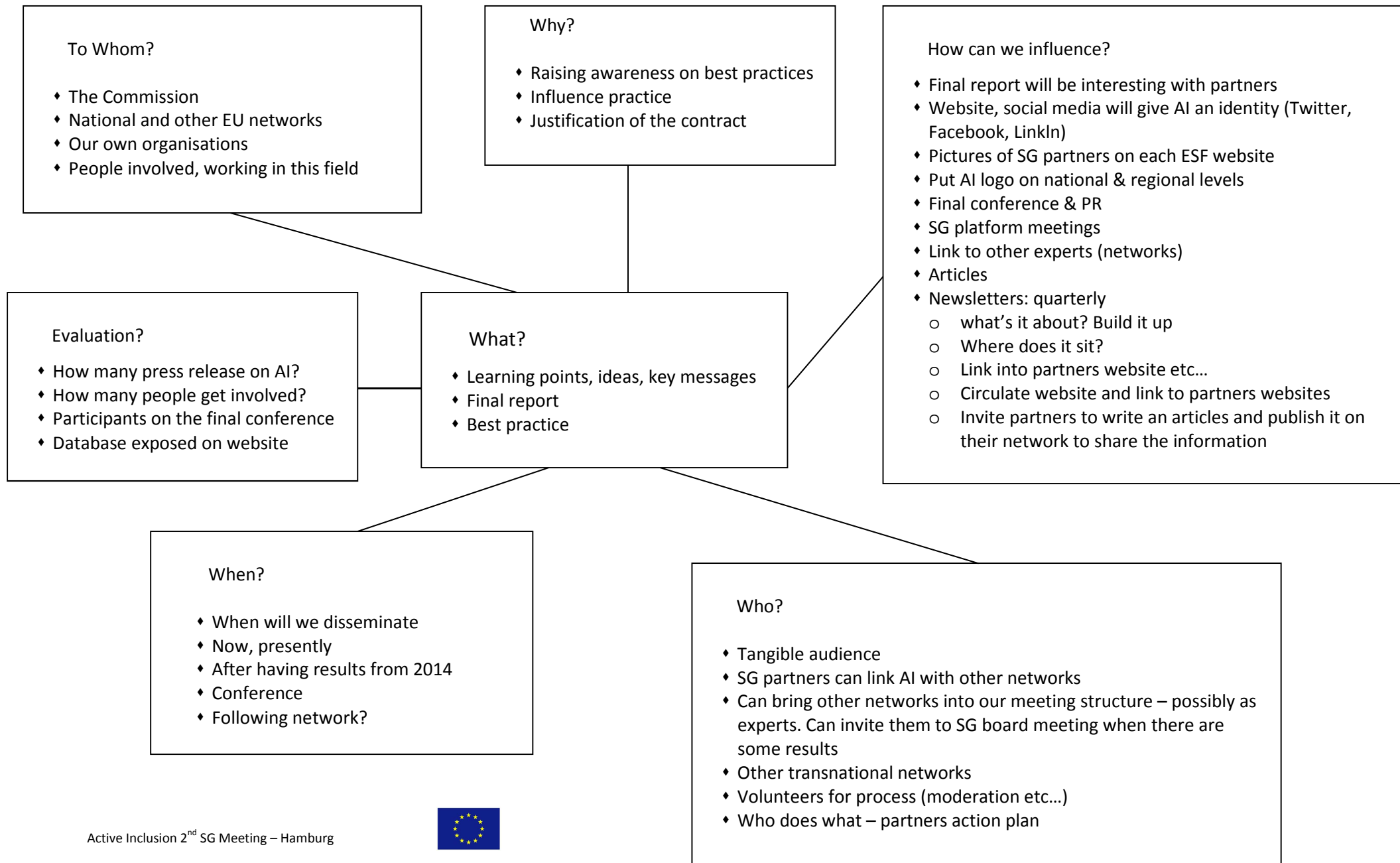
8. The dissemination strategy – Rhianon Willaims (RW)

Partners split into 2 workshops to discuss and share ideas on dissemination strategies of network outcomes and possible cooperation with other networks (see “Communication strategy”) and planning out the dissemination strategy of the network.

Workshop ideas chart below.

RH will design and circulate the dissemination timeline to SG partners.





9. Project Manager - Craig Georgiou (CG)

This meeting has been valuable and work is now clearer. CG thanks BASFI, Nora and Ulrich for hosting this meeting and providing the venue, lunch and refreshments.

10. Next Steering Group meeting – Vilnius 2014, date yet to be agreed.

Close of 2nd Steering Group Meeting

Annexes

Annex 1 - Action Table

Annex 2 – Timeline

Annex 3 – Meeting Structure

Annex 4 - Returns & Critical Success Factors Table



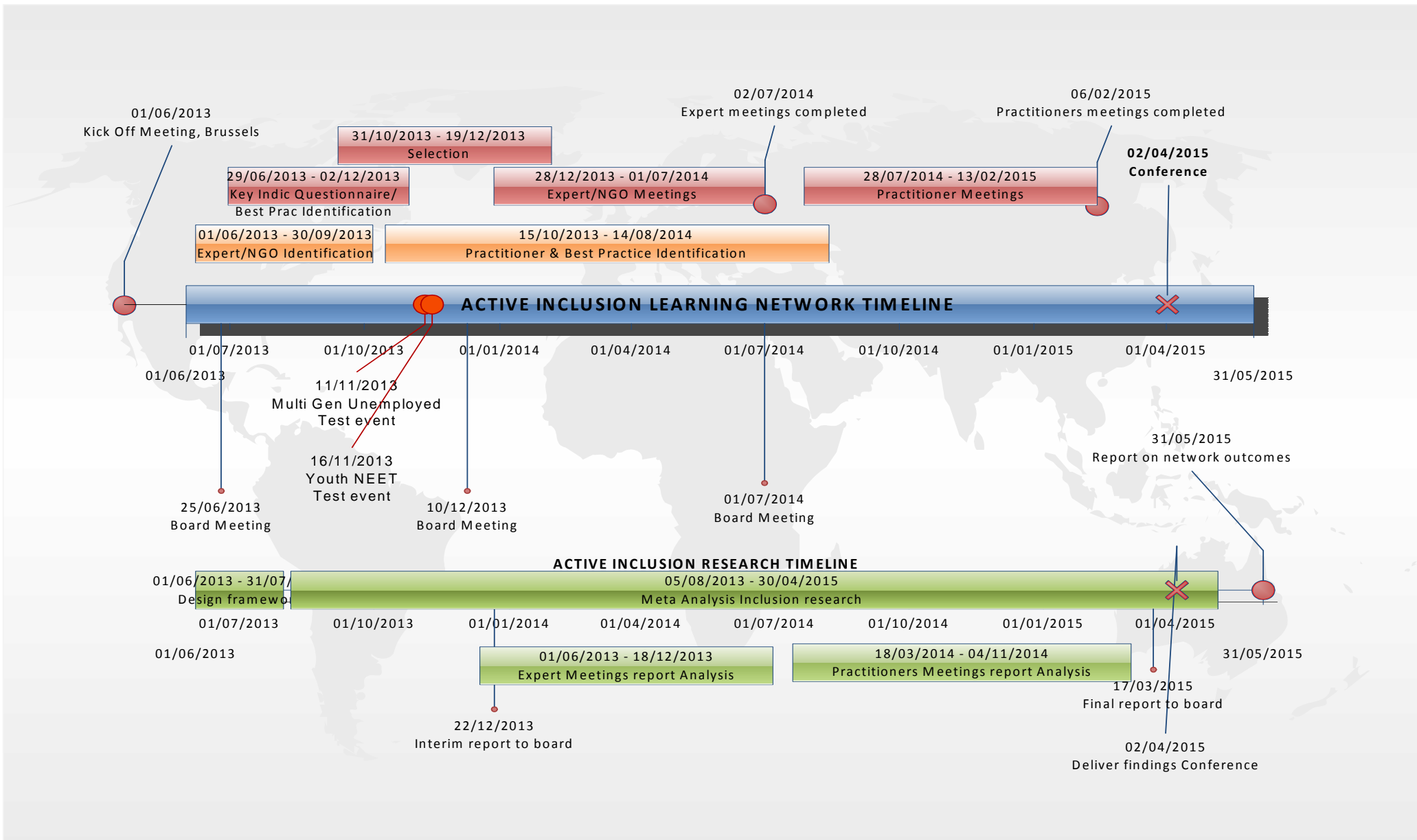
Annex 1 - Action Table

Actions	Owner	Status
SG partners to send contacts to CG so that the questionnaires can be circulated to a much wider audience.	ALL	Pending
Redesign the timeline with the new platform meeting structure and circulate to partners.	CG	Pending
Contact partners to arrange next SG meeting	CG	Pending
Design the dissemination timeline	RH	Completed
SG Partners to identify experts and send details to CG with a brief expertise background by end of January 2014.	All	Pending
Draft a guideline to partners to seek experts	CG	Pending
Send literature that maybe are useful for the systematic review	ALL	Pending
To arrange for website work and work on the newsletter	CG	On Going
Send the report on the 'single pot approach' and the link to find the evaluations of the ESF projects	LB	Complete



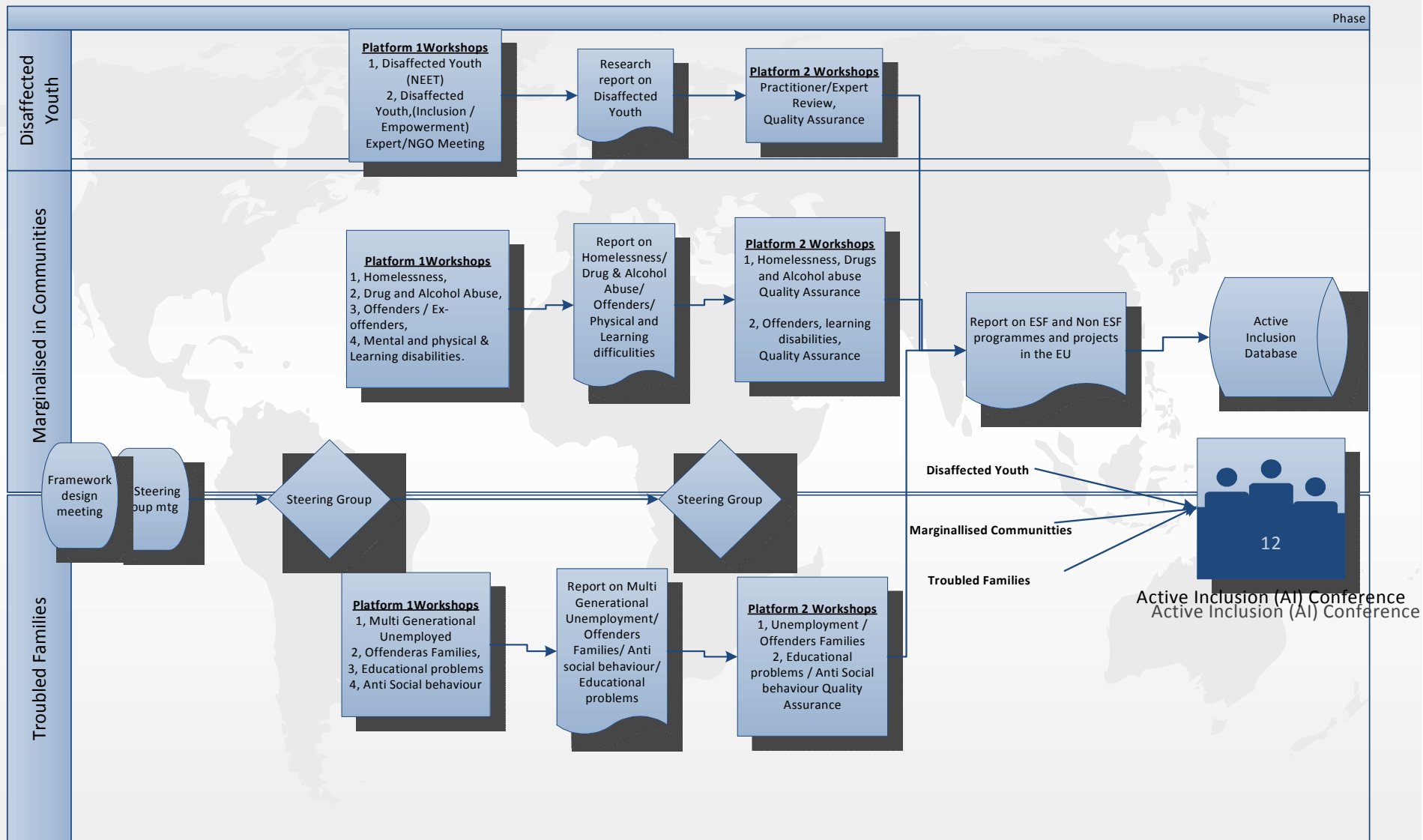
Annex 2

Timeline



Annex 3

Meeting Structure



Annex 4

Questionnaire - Returns & Critical Success Factors Table

Name of the project	Name of Country	Are of intervention	Financed	Success factors (from two questions 11 and 16)
1. Integrated Outreach Support	UK	Disaffected Youth Ex-offenders Offenders families	ESF + West Mercia Probation Trust	Inter-agency work Wrap around support Tailored services for women Family involvement Social enterprise Role of social housing Employer brokerage
2. Supporting people: Housing support Programme	UK	Disaffected Youth Homeless Drug and Alcohol Mental Health Anti-social Educational problems	Revenue Support Grant - UK	Outcome focus – Payment by Outcomes Service users involvement in defining outcomes and planning – co-designing Staff training User Empowerment Install support packages Whole person approach – all needs The Whole System Approach High standards Past experience
3. The Chrysalis Programme	England & Australia	Disaffected Youth	Self funded – contribution from	The cognitive shift – training is learning, behavior is



		Homeless Drug and Alcohol Mental Health Anti-social Ex-offenders Offenders families	beneficiaries	
4. Practical vocational orientation for children who are out-of-home care	Lithuania	Disaffected Youth	ESF	
5. Tool kit for life	E & W	Disaffected Youth Offenders/ex Multigenerational Antisocial Educational	Mixed: Youth Justice Boards, Trusts, Foundations, construction companies	Multi-agency work Cross-sector partnership between private, public, voluntary sector enabling the strengths of each to be drawn upon. Tailored and mobile working – going to where the young person is based and working with local companies to find individual solutions.
6. The Pathway project	UK	Disaffected Youth Mental Health Anti-social Educational problems	Schools and educational departments	Good selection of beneficiaries Allowing beneficiaries to own the project – involving them in designing Voluntary participation
7. Tomorrows Women Wirral	England	Homeless Drug and Alcohol	Merseyside Probation Trust Public Health	Creating a safe environment only for women One stop shop approach



		Mental Health Ex-offenders Offenders families Anti-social Educational problems Multigenerational	Big Lottery Fund	Multi-disciplinary approach
8. First Farm Steps	England	Disaffected Youth Drug and Alcohol Mental Health Ex-offenders Educational problems Multigenerational	Working Neighborhoods Fund	
9. Bolsover Leadership and Coaching Academy	England	Disaffected Youth - Employment Multigenerational	Working Neighborhoods Fund	Bespoke approach?
10. Raising Aspirations	England	Disaffected Youth	Working Neighborhoods Fund	Community based learning works best Diversity of options with external partners Demand led approach Measuring success Good HR strategy Flexibility in defining targets Use of Community Champions



11. Bolsover Apprenticeship Programme	England	Disaffected Youth – Employment	Working Neighborhoods Fund	Document not opening
12. Ways to Work	England	All	Working Neighborhoods Fund	Effective operation with partners Partnership work Flexibility with funding

