
Development Education and Awareness Raising in Norway and the EU: a comparison

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for

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This comparative study has been undertaken on request and cost of the RORG Network of Norway, and is open for anyone to copy and distribute freely. For further enquiries or questions about the report, please contact the RORG-network on rorg@rorg.no

1. Introduction

This paper provides a comparative analysis of the Norwegian Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) concept and scene and the situation in the European Union. The paper is developed for the Norwegian RORG Network.¹ As requested by the Network the guiding question of this analysis is: "How do the work, the concepts and the Norwegian framework compare/seem/appear/relate to the European landscape of DEAR?"

Our work draws on information contained in the following documents which were supplied by the RORG Network:

- GENE: Peer Review on Norway (2009);
- Norad: Regulations for the RORG funding mechanism (2010);
- Norad: Citizen Enlightenment for a new era – Funding guidelines (2010);
- Norwegian Parliament Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs: Statement on DEAR (2009);
- RORG Network secretariat note: What is 'North/South information'?" (2010);
- RORG Network: Be Careful poster (2006);
- RORG Network position paper: North South information (2004);
- RORG Network position paper: Southern perspectives on co-operation with the South (2004);

In addition, we have drawn on our own experiences in DEAR and in particular on our research on DEAR in Europe:

- ECO for the European Commission: DEAR in Europe - Final Report of the Study on the Experience and Actions of the Main European Actors in the Field of Development Education and Awareness Raising (2010)²;
- European Multi-Stakeholder Steering Group on Development Education: European Development Education Monitoring Report - 'DE Watch' (2010)³;
- European Multi-Stakeholder Steering Group on Development Education: The European Consensus on Development - the Contribution of Development Education and Awareness Raising (2007)⁴.

Three points need to be made about the limitations of the following analysis:

1. Our analysis is mainly an evaluation of those documents which the RORG network preselected for this purpose. We found a high degree of coherence between these documents and we were able to confirm their validity through occasional checks with own investigations. However, our analysis relies strongly on the documents that were preselected by one of the Norwegian stakeholders.
2. In these documents we found little empirical information about the quantity and scope of DEAR activities in Norway, about target groups reached, methodologies used, themes covered, etc. We were not able to assess quality aspects such as relevance, effectiveness, sustainability or impact of DEAR efforts.
3. The investigation was also limited in terms of input provided by us: three days each enabled us to assess the information provided and draw on our existing knowledge. It did not, however, enable us to do significant additional investigations that might have given different or more detailed perspectives. This paper must be read with this limitation in mind continuously.

Inevitably, as a result of these conditions, many nuances are lost in the following. This analysis can therefore only give a short overview and comparative critique of DEAR in Norway and across the European Union. Nevertheless, we hope that our observations and suggestions can provide a useful input for the debates in Norway.

2. The concept of DEAR

Core terms “North/South Information” and “Citizen Enlightenment”

The area of work this analysis focuses on is called different names in different European countries. The most common ones are “Development Education”, “Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR)”, “Global Education” and “Global Citizenship Education” or translations of these terms into the local languages. The understanding of these terms differs a bit from country to country, from context to context. However, all of them are describing one area of engagement. In Norway this area is most often described with the terms “Citizen Enlightenment” and “North/South Information”.

“Citizen Enlightenment” is a very broad and widely used concept that refers mainly to non-formal education or information work. Based on ideas of the pedagogue and philosopher N. F. S. Grundtvig (1783-1872), “citizen enlightenment” or “citizen information” describes the process of providing knowledge and skills to people (including adults) from all walks of life. The concept includes the notion of democratic empowerment of people for informed participation in society. DEAR in Norway is conceptualised as part of so understood “citizen enlightenment”. This indicates that the Norwegian concept of DEAR is perhaps close to the idea of “Global Citizenship” (popular e.g. in the British DEAR scene). Global Citizenship emphasizes that in a globalised world “a global dimension” needs to be added to efforts of citizenship education and empowerment.

“North/South Information” is the specific terminology used in Norway to describe the part of “citizen enlightenment/information” dealing with development or global issues. This term is uncommon across Europe. Compared to the classical terminology “Development Education”, “North/South Information” seems to indicate (a) a thematic attention to broader global issues beyond aid and development co-operation (see below) and (b) a focus on the relationships, links and interdependencies between the North and the South. Within the EU, the term “Global Education” is mostly used in order to point to the multi-faceted global interconnections. But “Global Education”, again, goes beyond North/South issues and generally includes environmental education, intercultural education etc.

The Norwegian term “North/South Information” is, as it seems, a quite specific one. It combines the North/South dimension of “Development Education”, the “beyond aid” and “global interdependency” aspects of “Global Education”, and the participatory and empowering intention of “Global Citizenship” and “Citizenship Education”.

Why are Norwegian actors engaged in DEAR and what are their core approaches and strategic priorities? Six aspects are striking when the Norwegian scenery of DEAR is compared with other European countries:

- the clear focus on broader development issues rather than aid;
- the focus on “central and current” issues;
- the appreciation of a critical and political role of DEAR in Norwegian policy debates;
- the strong efforts to involve Southern perspectives into DEAR;
- the focus of Norad’s and the RORG network’s approaches on (quality) Campaigning/Advocacy; and
- the good basis for the further development of the Global Learning approach of DEAR.

a. Development beyond aid

In many European countries, a shift in the development paradigm is being discussed: development is not anymore primarily understood as a result of *development aid or co-operation* – a process in which rich countries guide and support poor ones – but as a complex process which happens in a world of multifaceted global connections and interdependencies. In Norway this paradigm shift appears to be very well advanced already:

“There is clearly a growing emphasis in Norway regarding the need for a public policy debate that goes beyond issues of aid to a deeper, more informed debate on issues of development policy and global justice, and this is a perspective that, in the view of the Peer Review, seems to be shared by political leaders, officials, NGOs and broader civil society” (GENE Peer Review, p. 23).

“An overall tendency in addressing issues of poverty as a matter of unequal power and economic relations between North and South should be mentioned. There is evidence of a clear critical development policy perspective, and strong political and policymaker awareness (as mentioned above) that development as a concept should not be equated with aid” (GENE Peer Review, p. 27).

The recent White Paper on Development Policy indicates that the Norwegian government explicitly considers the development impact of various policy areas beyond development co-operation, including “domestic” policies as relevant for development:

“The term ‘development policy’ encompasses the result of political interventions and tools Norway actively applies in order to influence those factors framing development in poor countries. The initiatives taken and the messages expressed in different international contexts constitute central elements in this politic. The same goes for the consciousness with regards to the effects of domestic policy on poor countries condition for development” (quoted in GENE Peer Review, p. 27).

DEAR, in this broader perspective on development issues, is no longer concerned with promoting development co-operation and ODA (“aid works” messages) but with broader global issues, such as sustainable production and consumption, debt, trade, climate change, global justice and the distribution of power in the world community.⁵

Norway is part of a general trend in Europe to shift from “promotion of development co-operation in order to increase public support” towards “affecting changes within European society and in the global relations in order to achieve greater global justice” as overall objective of DEAR.⁶ However, in many European countries it remains a matter of controversy also among DEAR actors, how far this paradigm shift should go. Norway seems to be particularly clear and progressive, in this respect: Norad recognised already in 1992 that DEAR is more than a public information annex of development co-operation:

“DEAR should be linked to educational work in a holistic North/South perspective. The main objective is to help create understanding and public support for Norwegian North/South-policies that can contribute to the global changes that are necessary for a global development that is economically, ecologically, socially and politically sustainable” (Norad 1992, quoted in Nygaard 2009, cf. footnote 1).

b. Focus on “central and current” issues

A key quality criterion for DEAR work in Norway is the focus on “central and current” issues. This point seems to be crucial for both Norad and the RORG network, and indeed this focus appears to be decisive in the evaluation of DEAR activities. It means that NGOs implementing DEAR programmes and projects are asked to reflect and make plausible what they themselves regard as the most important and pressing issues of the given time in the context of North-South relations.

We are unable to assess how this criterion functions in practice but it may be assumed that it is a very useful tool to ensure the *relevance* of DEAR initiatives. If properly implemented it may guide DEAR actors to do activities that really matter rather than activities which are “nice to have” or which one is used to do.

It would be interesting to know more about the mechanisms for implementing this criterion and for monitoring its implementation. A focus on central and current issues is crucial for high quality DEAR. If the Norwegian DEAR actors are successful in putting this ambition into practice, it may be interesting for the European DEAR community to learn from this specific Norwegian experience.

c. A critical approach seen as ‘a right and a duty’

Among Norwegian key actors of DEAR – Parliament, government (MFA/Norad) and civil society (the RORG network) – there seems to be a broad consensus that North-South information should make a critical contribution to a broad and open public debate about Norwegian policies, development policies in a narrower sense as well as other policy areas that have an impact on development abroad. DEAR actors have a role of “advocates” for global justice and development and as “watchdogs” in the Norwegian policy debate. They are supposed to be critical of state policies and of the behaviour of other Norwegian actors – and the state agrees to “finance its critics” without restricting their independence in providing critique. This Norwegian consensus seems to be based on the common belief of the mentioned key actors that an active and critically engaged civil society which is empowered to hold its government accountable and to facilitate critical public debates (a) is an essential element of a democratic Norwegian and global society, and (b) contributes to improve the quality of the policy outcomes in Norway.

This broad consensus about the right and duty of DEAR to play the role of a critical (and political) element in the public development debate and in policy making processes is unique in Europe. In most countries state actors are only tentatively recognising the contribution which DEAR - as independent, critical citizen engagement effort - can make to democratic public involvement in a globalised society. Indeed, in most cases it is far from being acknowledged as a major rationale for DEAR in the first place.

d. Strong involvement of Southern perspectives

Involving Southern perspectives into DEAR is an important issue for DEAR actors across Europe. According to the DEAR Study, good practices in engaging with Southern perspectives include:

- facilitating personal relationships and long lasting contacts (e.g. through mutual visits, partnerships, twinning);
- involving migrant communities and Southern representatives in DEAR projects in key roles;
- co-organising DEAR projects with Southern organisations as equal partners, with similar or complementary activities in both North and South.

The RORG Network seems to play a particularly prominent role in Norway as an advocate of authentic involvement of Southern perspectives in North/South information. Among the Norwegian DEAR practices that stand out in this respect are the South evaluation (2002/2003); the ambition to ask Southern actors to critically comment on Norwegian policies and practices; and the request for DEAR actors in Norway to explicitly reflect on their mandate from the South when discussing ‘Southern’ perspectives.

While the Norwegian DEAR scene and particularly the RORG Network seem to be among the leaders in the European debate on the inclusion of Southern perspectives into high quality DEAR, Norway is not exempt from the general problem shared by the European DEAR community that a lot of current DEAR practice is marked by a fundamentally Eurocentric perspective. The DEAR Study expresses this as follows:

“Many DEAR initiatives, including this Study, are led by European actors, using European concepts and experts, involving Southern perspectives in a marginal if not tokenistic way. ‘The South’ often is the object and Europe the subject of DEAR. Moving beyond such Euro-centrism would require conceptualising and implementing ‘citizenship empowerment for change’ programmes as global efforts with full, equal involvement of actors, concepts and expertise from across the globe” (DEAR Study, Final Report, p. 12).

Overcoming Euro-centrism would mean to go beyond involving “the others’ perspective” every now and then in one’s own work. It would require inclusion of truly *global* advocacy, campaigning, education and learning approaches which would be shaped by a diversity of actors and their particular perspectives, be it Eastern, Western, Southern, Northern or non-geographical ones. Norwegian actors are very well placed to contribute their experiences to such a global process of renegotiating the basis of what European institutions currently call DEAR.

e. Focus on Campaigning and Advocacy

The DEAR Study describes two major approaches in DEAR which can be observed across Europe and which should be conceptually distinguished:

- “The ‘Global Learning’ approach focuses on the learning process and aims at enhancing the competences of the learner. It uses learner-centred, participatory and facilitative, dialogue-oriented and experiential methodologies which involve a multiplicity of perspectives and empower the learner to evaluate and reflect his/her place, role and responsibility in his/her community and in the dynamic and changing globalised world; to change perspectives and critically scrutinise his/her own attitudes, stereotypes and points of view, to value benefits of co-operative action; to form and express an own opinion, to make autonomous and responsible choices, to participate in decision-making processes; to learn how to learn.
- The ‘Campaigning/Advocacy’ approach aims at concrete changes in individual behaviour or institutional/corporate policies. It uses results-oriented strategies. It facilitates and supports informed citizen engagement and advocacy for more just and sustainable policies, political/economic structures and individual practices.” (DEAR Study, Final Report, p. 11)

	<i>Global Learning</i>	<i>Campaigning and Advocacy</i>
<i>Aims</i>	Development of competences of the learner.	Change in individual behaviour or institutional/corporate policies.
<i>Philosophy</i>	Pedagogic, constructivist	Activist, normative
<i>Distinguishing feature</i>	Process-oriented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focusing on the learner and the learning process • an open learning approach cannot have predetermined results such as a certain behaviour change 	Results-oriented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aims at achieving specific results in terms of changed policies and/or behaviours • a strategic approach towards concrete results
<i>Global Citizenship & Change perspective</i>	Developing personal skills and competencies is essential for enabling people to live a meaningful life and to be responsible members and agents of change in their local communities and in the interdependent world society.	Enlightened global citizens, critically engaged in campaigning and advocacy, are essential for a living democracy and for bringing about the transformative changes required by today’s world.
<i>Current challenge in the context of development</i>	Bringing together development actors and actors of the Formal Education System in order to effectively integrate quality Global Learning in school practice.	Contributing to a critical public debate on development in order to achieve policy coherence for development

(DEAR Study, Annex A, p. 119)

From the documents and statements by the Parliamentary Committee, Norad and the RORG Network it appears that in the Norwegian concept of North/South Information the focus is on a Campaigning and Advocacy approach. Norway seems to be particularly strong in this area. Norwegian North/South Information has got quality standards which are indicative of a wealth of experience in Campaigning and Advocacy. The Norwegian practice includes:

- a strong results-orientation in terms of change effected in Norwegian policies and/or the conduct/behaviour of Norwegian actors;
- a strong democratic, participatory approach in which critical civil society engagement for change is explicitly appreciated;
- an ambition to not only superficially mobilise public support for a certain cause, but to enhance people’s understanding of global issues, showing a variety of perspectives and to empower citizens for informed engagement and action;
- a high awareness of the importance to listen to voices from the South, let Southern actors play an active role in information work and listen to their comments on Norwegian policies;
- the willingness to address all issues that affect development, including Norwegian domestic policies.

Norway's explicit strengths in the Campaigning/Advocacy approach may provide inspirations for DEAR actors in other European countries.

f. Potential in Global Learning

The Global Learning approach, however, is less visible in Norad's and the RORG Network's approach to North-South Information. Global Learning is more process-oriented, learner-centred and aims at enhancing individual learners' competences for an autonomous, fulfilling and responsible life in the global-and-local society. A key aspect of Global Learning is that it has no predetermined results in terms of a certain behaviour or change of attitude.⁷ Learning is a subjective process which is steered by the individual learner who should be empowered to make his/her own conclusions and decisions. This openness of the Global Learning approach is not always compatible with a watchdog and advocate's function which appears to be the primary role of DEAR actors in Norway – at least of those DEAR actors that are associated with Norad, like the RORG Network.

The Gene Peer Review implies that much DEAR work done in Norway relates to the Formal Education Sector – as it does in most if not all countries of the EU. The GENE Review indicates that in the Formal Education Sector there is a high awareness of the need to apply an open approach to learning, and that the curriculum opens opportunities for a Global Learning approach focussing on competences. However, we have observed a prioritisation of Campaigning/Advocacy in the overall concept of North/South Information in Norway, which may skew DEAR in formal education (and indeed also in non-formal education) away from a Global Learning approach.

What is noticeable from the GENE Review is that many of the competencies and dispositions, which the DEAR Study considers to be aspects of good quality DEAR, are enshrined as a matter of course in, and indeed appear to be a major driver of, the Norwegian education system. This includes, for instance, a focus on the development of personal identity, values, ethical, social, cultural competences, and an ability to participate in democracy. In the context of the UK such competences and dispositions have been summarised by one organisation as relating to a learner's entitlement:

"Learners are entitled to develop ...

- *a positive sense of self, respect for others and a wider sense of social responsibility;*
- *skills of enquiry and critical thinking;*
- *the confidence to communicate and work as part of a team;*
- *an ability to engage with different perspectives"*

(Tide: Enabling Global Learning through the KS3 Curriculum; Birmingham 2009, p5).

In most EU states such an entitlement of learners is something leading DEAR promoters would try to see incorporated in DEAR. In the reality of EU countries, however, attention to DEAR in the formal curriculum is often piecemeal, limited to aspects of development and content driven.

The GENE Peer Review elaborates that the challenge in Norway appears to be one in which the values of the curriculum, "akin to Global Education", are given meaning as a practical entitlement to learners. The GENE Review does not specify what such a practical entitlement might mean, but in a different context the organisation 'Teachers in Development Education' (Tide) in the UK suggested that it might mean some or all of the following:

"Learners are entitled to engage with ...

- *global issues [from natural, economic, social and political perspectives];*
- *the reality of interdependence;*
- *processes of development and change and the implications of this;*
- *the challenges of sustainability;*
- *perceptions of identities and belonging in a diverse society;*
- *debates about how we participate as citizens and recognise the rights of others in a democratic society"*

(Ibid).

... and that it should be up to debate by each school how such an entitlement can be made real across the school's formal and hidden curriculum.

Starting and supporting such a debate in Norway would, it seems from the reviewed literature, relate well to the good basis and high potentials for Global Learning that already exists (e.g. through the critical development debate in Norway, the involvement of Southern actors etc.). Such debates and support might be further enriched through exchange with the most experienced Global Learning actors in countries such as Austria, Germany, Ireland and the UK.

3. Support structures for DEAR

a. Funding for DEAR

Taking a very broad top level view, the mechanism of allocating funding for DEAR in Norway appears to be largely the same as that common in EU member states:

- either directly through activities organised by Ministries of Foreign Affairs/Development Cooperation or their governmental implementation agencies (in the main relating to information provision about aid and development policies, programmes and projects, but sometimes also including veritable DEAR programmes),
- and/or indirectly through the allocation of grants to third parties.

The latter typically has conditions attached relating to, for instance, information provision or awareness raising about international development or about a country's international development support, and/or it relates to education for development and the moral, economic, political, social (including educational) importance of understanding of and engaging with international development.

However, the difference is in the strategic detail: typically support by EU member states (and by the EC) is geared towards *projects* in which aims, objectives, approaches and activities are stated in advance. Although this is also used in Norway, by allocating relatively significant and long term funds to particular agencies for a *programme* of work, whose details might not be known in advance, Norway has added a dimension that is uncommon amongst EU member states. Although multi-year 'framework agreements' have been used in a number of EU member states between governments and NGOs⁸, this is relatively rare across the EU, despite the fact that weaknesses of only relying on project-based funding are evident to many actors. The Norwegian mechanism of funding through framework contracts may appear as model to be explored for replication in the EU.

Similar to the situation in most EU member states with a governmental DEAR funding programme, the thematic focus of government funding in Norway is on priority themes and issues of government policy. In the case of Norway such themes and issues are based on a broad consensus in parliament. This has been highlighted by the recent Government white paper and in the Parliament's response to this, and has been summarized as 'Climate, Capital and Conflict', and Coherence in all relevant Norwegian policies.

However, unlike the situation in many EU states there is in Norway not a focus on particular audiences, target groups or beneficiaries – at least not more specific than NGOs/CSOs, and the 'general public'. In other words, the target group of supported work is, at least in theory, very wide (although the practice as implied by the GENE Peer Review suggests some focus on formal education and young people). Nevertheless the question has to be asked if such a broad audience approach is an effective or indeed efficient way of disbursing funds. An absence of evaluations and comparative studies makes it impossible to answer that question at the moment.

Compared with the situation in EU member states, state funding for Development Education & Awareness Raising is relatively very well provided for in Norway. Almost €14 million was available for this work in 2009 from the national government⁹, amounting to approximately €2.85 per head of the population. A cautious estimate of government funding in EU member states suggests a figure of around €0.50 per capita in the EU, but this hides significant variations between no or virtually no governmental support in a dozen member states and the situation in, for instance, Belgium (c. €2.66/head), Luxembourg (c. €3.65/head) and the Netherlands (c. €4.87/head).¹⁰ (A note of caution in referring to such absolute figures: what is considered to be – and funded as – Development Education and Awareness Raising varies significantly from country to country.)

Although funding for DEAR in most EU member states relies significantly on government funding, in many cases it is augmented by additional funds raised from within or by the relevant NGOs, either directly from the public or through provision of (paid for) services. The impression obtained from the documentation is that DEAR in Norway relies (almost) solely on government funding. For the NGO sector this should be a potentially worrying situation.

b. Actors in DEAR

The following provides a schematic overview of the main actors in DEAR as mentioned in the investigated literature:

<i>Main actors engaged in DEAR</i>		
	<i>Typical EU model¹¹</i>	<i>Norway model</i>
<i>Main state agencies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ MFA or Ministry of Development Cooperation and/or relevant government agency ○ [in some countries, e.g. Austria, Finland, Germany, Poland, Romania, Wales and Scotland, active engagement by Ministries of Education] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ MFA and NORAD
<i>Main implementing agencies</i> <i>(including those who do not receive or rely on government funding for DEAR)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Non-governmental development organisations (NGDOs) ○ other local/regional/national Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and their national network ○ other (usually local/regional) Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) ○ Local and Regional Authorities (LRAs) ○ [in some countries, including from those mentioned above: curriculum authorities, teacher training institutions] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ RORGs: development and solidarity organisations, adult education associations of political parties, women and youth networks, church organisations, trade unions – framework contracted by Norad ○ Large development assistance organisations (NGDOs) ○ United Nations Association
<i>National coordinating and supporting bodies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NG(D)O networks for DEAR ○ [in some countries, e.g. Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, a Multi-Stakeholder Group is providing or has provided coordination and strategic direction] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NORAD ○ the RORG Network (of framework contractors)
<i>Main audiences and structures addressed by DEAR</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ‘the general public’ ○ educators (and increasingly the formal education ‘system’) ○ ‘decision makers’ ○ youth workers and youth work organisations/networks ○ young people/students ○ churches/faith groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ‘the general public’ ○ educators in formal education ○ ‘decision makers’ ○ adult education ○ youth networks ○ students ○ church organisations ○ trade unions

The two most important single actors in DEAR in Norway seem to be Norad on the governmental side and the RORG network on the civil society side. Both are praised for their very supportive and constructive role in DEAR by the GENE Peer Review:

“The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and Norad’s work in the field of Global Education is acknowledged by key stakeholders for strengthened support, consistency, and predictability, and for supporting a wide range of critical voices” (p. 77).

“There is broad recognition of the important coordinating role of the RORG Network, and the expertise and commitment to developing quality and building capacity, and of integrating a strong Southern dimension into the work” (p. 78).

Although the Norwegian model is based on a sense of ‘multi-stakeholder’ engagement in DEAR (through direct dialogue between for example MFA/NORAD and the RORG Network agencies of NGOs), there does not yet seem to be a process of bringing together *all* stakeholders and actors in DEAR, nor is there a national network that brings together the range of engaged NGO/CSO parties (beyond the RORG Network).

Perspectives that are highlighted in the perused literature are from those who have a stake in the (governmental) funding arrangements that enable their DEAR work to be done. The GENE Peer Review gives an indication of the range of stakeholders beyond this group, but the extent to which their perspectives on DEAR differ from those of national government funded ones (if at all) is unclear.

The overall impact created by the actors engaged in DEAR – on the chosen audiences and target groups – has not recently been assessed (a situation common in most EU member states).¹² Where Norway has done innovative work however is in organising peer reviews between RORG network members: aiming to improve the quality of work done by those members. This is an area where DEAR organisations and networks in EU member states can benefit from Norwegian experiences.

4. Conclusions and suggestions

The previous sections have provided an indication of the ‘state of DEAR in Norway when compared with the EU’, based on the sources mentioned in the Introduction. From this what appear to be the main strengths and weaknesses of the situation in Norway, and what are its main opportunities and threats?

a. Strengths

Core strengths of the situation in Norway when compared with the state of affairs in EU countries appear to be the following:

- Development beyond aid: a key driver and task of DEAR in Norway is the establishment and discussion of relationships between the local (domestic policies) and the global (issues of international political, social, economic or environmental concern);
- Critical role of DEAR: the principle of “the state finances its critics” is widely recognised by MFA, Norad and Parliament as central premise for DEAR. It is believed that a critical civil society makes government policies better and Parliament monitors that the government does not apply pressure on state financed NGOs in their watchdog role;
- In conjunction with the previous point is the directive that DEAR should be focussed on issues that are ‘central and current’: this ensures relevance of DEAR programmes and activities to issues of concern in wider (and not only development) society;
- Southern perspectives and involvement in DEAR: the explicit inclusion of experiences of communities and societies in the South, who appear to have a direct input into relevant projects, forms a core part of the quality of DEAR in Norway. This delivers on the need to provide

perspectives and understandings that change is a multifaceted process across the globe and not always – or not at all – dependent on (Northern) aid;

- A competence and disposition focus within the formal education system: the education system sets great store in the development of aspects of, what from a DEAR perspective are considered to be central tasks of quality DEAR;
- Access to relatively large sums of government finance for DEAR: on a per capita basis Norwegian state support for DEAR compares relatively well with that provided by most EU member states (however, this could also be taken as an illustration of the ‘Cinderella’ status of DEAR in most EU member states!);
- Framework contracts enable NGOs to develop relatively longer term programmes that are relevant to a range of issues rather than relatively short term projects that are more concerned with single issues or themes.

b. Weaknesses

On the other hand a number of comparative weaknesses of the Norwegian situation can be determined, including in particular:

- A lack of recent evaluations and impact assessments: Although we understand that individual project appraisal, peer reviews between organisations, and general public opinion polling exist, we are not aware of recent assessments of the impact of DEAR activities on the competences and dispositions of particular target groups, audiences or groups of participants in DEAR projects and programmes. This absence makes it difficult to make judgements on the efficacy, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of DEAR work in Norway;
- The broad nature of support: funding is available for DEAR work with a very wide range of audiences and participants. Although funding is relatively speaking generous – when compared with the situation in EU member states – it is unclear what the impact and value for money of this approach is when compared with a more targeted approach;
- The absence of a broad, multi-stakeholder network of DEAR: the national DEAR network seems to be focussed on, or perhaps even limited to, those organisations receiving long term programmatic support from the state and not to include organisations or members whose work in DEAR is not primarily reliant on such funding;
- An absence of a theoretical basis for and research into DEAR: research into DEAR appears to be piecemeal and not based on a coherent pedagogy or research approach and supportive mechanisms (e.g. through Higher Education) that provide feedback, set challenges, stimulate debate, and motivate a drive to improve to those working ‘in the field’;
- Absence of Norwegian actors from most of EU-centred European exchange and networking on DEAR (such as NSALA programme, DEEEP Summer Schools, etc.).

c. Opportunities

Externally to the current DEAR field in Norway a number of opportunities exist which, if addressed, can help to move DEAR in Norway to a next level, including:

- The focus on the development of competences and disposition in the education system provide a good basis for the development and implementation of ‘Global Learning entitlements’ relevant to learners and educators;
- The political climate in Norway encourages attention to the domestic consequences of, and impact on, global issues of development and change. This provides a sound basis for the development of, what in, for instance, the UK, Germany or Austria are called, local-global perspectives: perspectives which quality DEAR would seek to address and explore;
- The long-term partnerships between Parliament, Norad, NGOs in *collectively* developing and implementing DEAR strategies and concepts further than they have been to-date. In many EU member states such a multi-stakeholder involvement is only dreamed of and often far from a reality;

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- The existence in parts of the EU, of approaches, discourses, ideas and practices that relate well to the organisational, theoretical and practical issues faced by DEAR in Norway, for instance in terms of national multi-stakeholder DEAR strategy or Global Learning approaches.

d. Threats

However, there are too a number of threats which may hold back development of DEAR in Norway (as they may do in EU member states), including:

- The current global economic crisis – and on a slightly longer time scale, the end of the oil boom – is likely to affect attitudes to global issues, strengthening views on such issues from a local-domestic ‘the nation first’ rather than a local-global perspective;
- A continuing change in social attitudes focussed on (economic) individualism which hampers or negates interest in exploring (global) similarities and experiences, and attention to global communal solidarity;
- Norwegian cultural values and ethos (for example of fairness, justice and equality) that may within the Norwegian DEAR field be beyond questioning, but that will be and are being questioned by others – leading to a withdrawal from global debate;
- High apparent reliance of DEAR on governmental support makes DEAR vulnerable to changes in government policies and state budgets.

e. Potential in European exchange and shared learning

In addition to considering the consequences for the Norwegian DEAR movement of the issues raised in the SWOT analysis there are a number of aspects which appear to be particularly pertinent:

What Norway may contribute to European DEAR networks:

- Experience in management of quality in DEAR, including through organisation to organisation peer review processes;
- Experience of strong involvement of Southern perspectives;
- Experience with a focus in DEAR on Norwegian policies and individual behaviour and with the principle “the state finances its critics”;
- “Be Careful” experience of suggesting particular issues of “practitioner ethos” that should be considered in public information work;
- Debate on development paradigm and its relevance to considering issues of change locally and globally;
- The focus on “central and current” themes in exploring DEAR as a criterion for focussing on relevant global and domestic issues.

What Norway may learn from other European DEAR actors:

- Global Learning/Life skills approaches and theoretical discourses (e.g. academics and practice in Austria, Germany, Ireland, the United Kingdom);
- Networking with practitioners, learning from good practice (e.g. DEEEP Summer Schools; DARE Forum, e.g. Code of Conduct on images & messages; work done within the European Commission’s NSALA programme);
- Through joining cross-European campaigns and initiatives such as those financed under the EC’s NSALA programme – if Norwegian actors can manage to become eligible as partners or associates in EC-financed projects;
- Experiences of evaluations and impact assessments concerned with particular audiences or groups of participants, for example from Denmark (regarding young people), the Netherlands (regarding local authorities), the United Kingdom (regarding teachers/the education sector);
- A growing interest within the EU DEAR establishment in becoming familiar with pedagogies of development/popular/sustainable development education which are used elsewhere in the world

is potentially beneficial to the further development of “citizenship enlightenment” and related concepts in Norway.

Notes:

¹ <http://www.rorg.no/>

² https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/aidco/index.php/DEAR_Final_report

³ http://www.deeep.org/fileadmin/user_upload/downloads/MSH_group/DE_Watch.pdf

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/infopoint/publications/development/36b_en.htm

⁵ Nygaard, Arnfinn (2009): The Discourse of Results in the Funding of NGO Development Education and Awareness Raising. An experiment in retrospective baseline reflection in the Norwegian context, in: International Journal of Development Education and Global Learning 2(1), 19-30, p. 26-27.

⁶ The DEAR Study (2010), the DE Watch report (2010), and the European DE Consensus (2007) all clearly state that the uncritical promotion of aid and development co-operation is *not* DEAR.

⁷ That is, beyond a disposition that may be described as requiring “... a general concern for the world and the well-being of others and the planet ...” (“80:20 – Development in an Unequal World”, Colm Regan (ed), Wicklow (Ireland) & Birmingham (UK), 2002)

⁸ For example, in the Netherlands through government support to the NGO collective of the National Committee for International Cooperation and Sustainable Development (NCDO) – but this is now undergoing significant change; and in the UK between Department for International Development (DFID) and major NGOs (for overseas development work but with a small aspect of UK based awareness raising included) and between DFID and the main global learning/development education network (DEA).

⁹ GENE Peer Review

¹⁰ DEAR in Europe: Annex A, chapter 6

¹¹ ‘Typical’ here applies to those EU member states with a (government) funded DEAR programme of support.

¹² We were made aware of the existence of the Lagesen Team evaluation report and have seen parts of the report. However, that evaluation is now almost a decade old, seeing that it was produced in 2002.

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