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CSR FOR ALL PROJECT

4th PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

17.09.2013

PODGORICA-MONTENEGRO

MEETING MINUTES

Participants:

1. Matthias Thorns	IOE	6. Biserka Sladovic	CEA
2. Mile Boskov	BCM	7. T. Burcu Şenel Gülderen	TISK
3. Gabriela Ciuciula	CNIPMMR	8. Nil Mit	TISK
5. Jelena Ognjenovic	BCM	9. Irmak İnan	TISK

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The fourth PSC meeting of 'CSR for All' Project, funded by the European Commission was held at MEF Premises in Podgorica-Montenegro on 17.09.2013, aiming to review previous activities as National Review Reports and to take decisions regarding the upcoming activities of the Project with special focus on Round Table Discussion, Evaluation Document and Awareness Raising and Capacity Building Support Package.

Agenda:

1. Approval of the decisions and meeting minutes of the 3rd PSC Meeting on 22.05.2013 in Belgrade
2. Presentation and Comments for National Review Studies
3. Activity plan for the upcoming 3 months
 - 3.1. Round Table Discussion
 - Participants
 - Location&Date
 - Topics to be discussed

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- 3.2. Support Package by IOE
- 3.3. Selection of NTFs
 - Selection criteria
 - Training Programme
4. Documents to be collected;
 - Time sheets and financial documents of contact persons
 - Internal Progress Report (Inception Period + Summer Period)
 - Quarterly Financial Report (Inception Period + Summer Period)
 - Invoices (with brief English explanations)
 - Boarding Passes
 - NRS file
5. Progress Report
6. Determination of the date and place of the next PSC meeting (Switzerland/Croatia – December 2013)
7. Financial Issues
8. FPA collaboration (Inviting to Conferences)
9. Any other business / Questions and Answers

Jelena Ognjenovic welcomed partners and expressed her greetings for having them in MEF Premises.

Nil Mit expressed her pleasure for partners regarding their hardworking effort on the National Review Studies in the partner countries. She presented her special thanks to Matthias Thorns for his efforts during the National Review Study process and also for the preparation of the Round Table. She noted that all the reports were submitted to IOE and IOE will be working on drafting the Evaluation Document based on the outcomes of the reports. She stated that all partners will be responsible for providing contribution to the Round Table Discussion and providing feedbacks on the general outline of the Support Package proposed by IOE as well. She noted that, when the support package is finalized with the inputs of PSC Members and PITs; partners will select their National Task Forces after the Round Table Discussion. She requested partners to review meeting minutes belonging to previous meeting and approve it; she added that if partners would like to translate the newsletter, the Project office will take action to put them on the website. She stated that, financial and progress report need to be submitted to the Commission at the end of this year and the project office is working on that. She also expressed her pleasure that the Inception Report is well received by Commission as it was mentioned by Jelena Ognjenovic. She requested each partner to give a very brief information regarding the National Review Studies.

Biserka Sladovic stated the study was started a bit later but they pushed their agency to work faster. She stated that, the agency they worked together, subcontracted a person who is called as Ms. CSR in Croatia, who is the head of National Sustainable Development Council so her presence provided great contribution to the study. She noted that they needed to send the survey to many companies; even though it was summertime, they have



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managed to get enough response. She noted that even though some companies don't implement CSR activities, they were not willing to accept this. She said that since Croatia was in recession since few years, CSR activities were bit lower. She also added that the most important problem in Croatia is that the unemployment rate is pretty low among youths, as 59%. She added that CSR activities started in Croatia in 1999 with special focus on environment than spread to the human resources but CSR activities are still not applied systematically in Croatia. She remarked that, Croatian economy were highly regulated in the process of EU membership but small firms have prescribed goals to be achieved and they don't have enough sources to invest for their voluntarily actions as CSR is and will always be voluntarily. She noted that the first National Conference on CSR was in 1995 and right after 10 years, Voluntary Agenda was conducted in 2005 which implemented many projects, promoted csr activities and develop domestic methodology for measuring CSR but it was always initiated by the business sector. She stated that as the outcome of the survey, Croatian companies want government to promote activities based on csr more with partnership with the private sector. She remarked that the awareness for CSR is pretty low outside of the business community as they already aware of the importance of CSR as it also misperceived as hidden PR by the general public in Croatia. She also added the philanthropy and CSR might be mixed. She also shared some important ratios from the survey outcomes.

Mile Boskov noted that they really wanted to work with Aleksandar Nikolov, the president of the Zenith Company which BCM worked together on the report, as he is very important person in the area and also part of European CSR Awards agenda. He also added BCM will be responsible to organize CSR awarding ceremony under the Project next year so it will add great contribution to raise awareness regarding the Project as well. He noted that it was a bit difficult to collect the responses from companies since it was summer time and another team in BCM was also conducting a survey regarding environment mostly to the same companies and that's why most of them were not willing to send response to this survey as well. He stated that medium and small sized companies in Macedonia know about CSR but they don't want to do it because of lack of financial resources so this gave clue to BCM to develop more tools to lead them, promote HR activities and environmental awareness.

Gabriela Ciuciula noted that they had to prepare many documents since Romania needs to follow EU public procurement procedures. She remarked that CNIPMMR shared its database with the consultant company since it was summer time which is really difficult to collect answers from companies on time. She noted that they wanted consultant to improve the report after they got it first time, since they wanted the report make more comparison between SMEs and large companies as it is an issue in Romania. She added that CSR activities started in Romania in late 1990's mostly by the civil society organizations but it is not very common among SMEs as it might be case for almost all partner countries. She noted that SMEs only know about ISO26000 but that aware of UN Guiding Principles. She shared few most important ratios from the report with the partners.



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Jelena Ognjenovic shared the ppt regarding the Montenegrin report (please see attached the ppt). She stated that the consultant company that worked on the study, was working with academicians. She noted that they had a special request from the consultant that whether the companies were informed regarding the csr activities of MEF which was implemented many times in the past and whether they got any other inputs from other organizations. She added that with the report, they got very efficient and well conducted outcomes regarding the national situation of CSR.

T. Burcu Şenel Gülderen stated that the summer time was challenge for all partners to collect data and it was the same with TİSK as well. She noted that TİSK worked the consultant company which is actually owned by a group of academicians. She stated that even though the survey was sent to more than 500 companies and got less answer that it was expected even though both the consultant company and TİSK sent the survey through their own channels. She added that since it was summertime and the questionnaire was a bit sophisticated for some people to understand, they reorganized it with some slight changes. She said that they got some expected and some really unexpected answers; the interesting one is the misunderstanding of the some concepts. She stated the main results of the report gave them clue for the next term of the project especially while the NTF trainings. She also noted they might revise it to use for national purposes as well.

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Jelena Ognjenovic asked if they can use this National report with other purposes for example to use it as it is fresh data on the press conference that they will organize very soon to be able to make promotion for MEF and the Project as well.

T. Burcu Şenel Gülderen noted that if partners want to make some changes on the national version of the report, they are free to do it as well.

Nil Mit stated that it is preferable to use the report with other purposes as well since the goal is to raise awareness and this visibility will raise the attention to the Project.

Jelena Ognjenovic stated that they would like to add more recommendations with the sense of the confederation.

T. Burcu Şenel highlighted that there is a budget item in the project for the translations (5.5 1 Translation of written documents) and printing the reports (5.1.1 Printing of national review reports -5 partner languages + English-) so that it is expected to print them and distribute. She remarked that the detail information will be sent by the Project office to all partners regarding this budget item.



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Mile Boskov asked how much do they have for the make up on the reports since they would like to revise it.

Matthias Thorns indicated that would be very efficient if they can finalize it until 23rd of September latest as he needs to finalize the evaluation document until the Round Table Discussion as well.

Nil Mit noted that the all reports gave very important outcomes for the implementation of the Project activities. She asked Matthias Thorns if he is satisfied with the report.

Matthias Thorns expressed that he was very impressed by the country reports since all of them presents different instruments and results regarding the CSR in the respective country. He presented the very draft version of the evaluation document and remarked that it requires attention not to be a benchmarking report since countries and their situation on CSR might be different based on their differences on economy, population, environment, size etc. He highlighted that they need to avoid benchmarking and expressed that this report is more about bringing data together. He also underlined that the preparation of the document requires attention since the company size differs country to country such as in Romania, SMEs are more than large companies in contrast to Turkey and others. He said that there are also other points which requires attention to be interpret different results of the report for example in Turkey, there are also CSR departments established, but in many other countries, there is no such a department since the size of the companies differs. He also highlighted that the awareness of CSR is pretty high in the partner countries.

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Biserka Sladovic expressed that this might be a little bit unrealistic since the surveys were sent to those people in the companies who already know what CSR is all about but it doesn't mean that those companies are active CSR implementers and aware of what CSR actually is.

T. Burcu Şenel Gülderen explained the issues regarding Turkey by indicating that CSR activities are mostly conducted by Corporate Communication departments and just selected companies have their CSR departments. She mentioned that they would like use this opportunity to promote companies for having CSR teams which will gather employees from each department.

Mile Boskov highlighted that even though there is a result in the surveys that the CSR awareness is high, that doesn't mean that all those companies who responded the survey or the other companies exactly know how CSR should be implemented; therefore, in the evaluation document it must be stressed that employer organizations should lead companies for their well-established CSR activities, provide consultancy services and build capacity.

T. Burcu Şenel Gülderen underlined that if there is a result on the surveys and on the evaluation documents that doesn't sound realistic, an explanation can be added to the report



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saying that there might a misunderstanding regarding the concepts. She added that they did so by adding a comment on the report for the surprising rate for the knowledge regarding Human Guiding Principles for Human Rights and Business which is quite new initiative hence it is pretty difficult to be known by majority; but it might be mixed with Universal Principles for Human Rights. She highlighted that this kind of comment or explanation on the surprising survey results may lead evaluation document more efficient.

Nil Mit asked partners how they foreseen the outline of the Capacity Building and Support Package which will also include trainings since the evaluation document and Round Table Discussion will lead the preparation of it.

Matthias Thorns highlighted that over the surveys, it can be easily seen that struggle for the companies for CSR activities is that the lack of time, sources, government support etc. He indicated that the Project cannot do anything regarding this approach; but what It can do is adding extra sources to the Support Package since many companies face to challenge of the lack of perception for the question: 'how a CSR policy look like'. He added that there is also need to give guidance on different instruments. He suggested to do it by two ways either a handbook as a bible which address everything; or a preparation two pages fact sheets for different instruments as well as general topics such as introduction to CSR concept, anti-corruption, risk management; since many companies are not willing to read hundreds of pages hence it would be way easier for them to find exactly what they are looking for. He also suggested another way by finding what is already in the market- since there is already too much guidance around such as UN, OECD, IOE etc- and combine all the related guidelines for those who are looking for a specific subject, with a system which can be implement by the internet. He also addressed that, recommendations might be added to this package but it requires extra attention since they must be in line with the approach of all partners.

T. Burcu Şenel Gülderen noted that it would be their preference to shape the recommendations as showing CSR activities as voluntary and keep this approach as liberal as possible so that companies shouldn't feel under pressure to implement CSR activities. She added that, companies must be informed that employer organizations are the right address which they can go for guidance.

Biserka Sladovic suggested using the survey and its results to promote CSR for those companies who are not yet involved or doing a little for CSR. She also added that they would like to keep it liberal as well but also CSR must be highlighted regarding its advantages for companies.

T.Burcu Şenel Gülderen explained the steps for the Project as saying that we have round table discussion ahead where we are going to discuss the evaluation report and then Awareness Raising and Capacity Building Support Package which will be the first step for the capacity building within our organizations since this package will consider the National Task



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Forces that we will have within our organizations. She highlighted that it is not especially for companies it is actually for NTFs and then the formators which will be trained by NTFs. She added that there will be EO Handbook which will be prepared through the end of the Project and address the needs of the companies for the employer organizations.

Biserka Sladovic mentioned that it is still would be very efficient to promote CSR as a very advantageous activity for the companies since it mostly won't require additional employees. She added that it would be quite effective to suggest companies to stick with general CSR principles and in the end they will realize its benefits.

T.Burcu Şenel Gülderen stated that she doesn't princely agree to support it that strong since it may not create advantage as well or it may start as creating advantage and then may turn to a disadvantage. She added that it is an increasing trend at the moment but this trend may go down in the near future as it can be seen from many other initiatives based on the implementers' approach, economic conditions and so on.

Matthias Thorns noted that it would be better to develop a bridge between those approaches by saying the advantageous aspects of CSR engagements as economic goals-supply chain management, investments, customer attraction etc- and still by leaving it to the decision of companies as it must be voluntary.

T.Burcu Şenel Gülderen suggested that it would be more efficient to suggest companies to apply CSR activities by listing the possible advantages but also make them aware of risks as well to be able make them prepared.

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Nil Mit asked partners what their proposals are for the content of the training package as common and country specific?

Matthias Thorns suggested most of the companies don't know how a well-established CSR policy look like that's why it is very important to include the best practices into the trainings as well. He also added that it is better to prepare fact sheet regarding the different instruments on the market for general topics such as what is CSR, what is Human Rights Guiding Principles etc as one or two pages for easy readable purpose. He noted that a data collection by listing all the guidance which are already on the market for specific topics by an internet link where companies can download.

T.Burcu Şenel Gülderen highlighted that NTF need to have more in depth trainings starting from the very beginning of the CSR concept since there might be other people as well who haven't heard anything about CSR before in the trainings. She noted that two pages fact sheets are good idea to give brief information but NTFs need to have detailed information as well. She also suggested having a look at ILO training modules as an example by drafting the training package.



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Matthias Thorns noted that there must be different speakers to be invited as trainers to be able to keep the NTFs' interest alive since the training will last for five days and it would be difficult for them if only person train.

Nil Mit noted that in the budget, two IOE experts can be covered as trainers but if support needed, that can be arranged.

Matthias Thorns suggested inviting people who are experts on specific topics to be able to get the congregate information and ensure efficiency over the trainings.

T.Burcu Şenel Gülderen noted that as a result of this Project, it is expected that employer organizations will engage with international networks hence those experts as key people on their organizations will bring many opportunities on the desk for the expected results of the Project.

Matthias Thorns stated that experts from ILO and OECD do not require travel costs so that they won't create problems for the budget but for other people it would be more efficient to find source.

T.Burcu Şenel Gülderen suggested using the money left from the NRS for this purpose by creating new budget line but she added that this amount may be left to partners for their own usage for the other activities related with the Project.

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Irmak Inan noted that there is 12.500 Euros left from national review studies hence this amount may be used for this purpose if all partners would agree.

Nil Mit added that partners are free to use that money for their own purposes regarding the Project activities but that would be more efficient to use it for this kind of purposes since it will create advantage for all partners.

T.Burcu Şenel Gülderen noted that this situation regarding the cost needed for this proposal, partners will be informed after it is discussed with TISK authorities and the budget will be examined according to those needs and she indicated that the proposal and the budget item which can be used, will be presented to partners for their approval as everything is transparent since the beginning of the Project.

Matthias Thorns asked if the training package must be ready till the Round Table Discussion or it will be shaped over there with the contribution of the participants.

Nil Mit highlighted that in the round table, the priority is the evaluation document and the outline of the support package which will be actually shaped with new ideas from other participants in the discussion. She indicated that, after this process, Matthias will focus on the training package.



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T.Burcu Şenel Gülderen noted that Matthias has only one month for the designing of the package.

Matthias Thorns noted that he will send the evaluation document to partners on 30th of September for their comments; partners will inform him till 3rd of October and he will finalize it and send it to all partners on 7th of October.

T.Burcu Şenel Gülderen highlighted that the Evaluation document will be only downloaded to the website so no need to print or translate since it is prepared as internal reasons.

Nil Mit noted that some of the participants can only come for the second day of the round table discussion so she would like to send the evaluation document to them before the discussion.

T.Burcu Şenel Gülderen stated that there is also need for some questions to be prepared for the moderator to lead him for the discussion among representatives of enterprises. She also asked partners to prepare some questions and shared with Project office.

Nil Mit highlighted that partners need to prepare a presentation for national review studies to be presented in the Round Table Discussion and she noted that Project Office will prepare a template for that and share with partners to ensure that all presentations are on the same line. CSRforALL

Irmak İnan noted that since there are limited PSC meetings left, it might be good idea to keep the official ones for the next year and have an informal meeting right after the Round Table Discussion in İstanbul as partners will be together already.

Partners approved this suggestion and it is decided to have unofficial PSC meeting after the Round Table Discussion in İstanbul.

Nil Mit noted that the external audit will be done with the company which is mentioned on the contract before as it is obligatory to have in the end of first year of the Project.

T.Burcu Şenel Gülderen noted that after the external audit, the progress report will be submitted to the Commission and the Commission will take it as the proof of the transparent spending and if they approve, the other installment will be done since the Project has already spent the first installment.

Matthias Thorns stated that the date for the NTF training must be fixed in order to invite resource people and let them organize their agenda according to this date. He suggested having the NTF trainings on the last week of January 2013 instead of the first week due do holiday season.



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Partners agreed on having the NTF trainings on the last week of January 2013.

Mile Boskov stated that it would be good idea to have the training in Antalya in a hotel so that all partners and trainers will be together.

T.Burcu Şenel Gülderen clarified that since it was foreseen that NTF training will be held in TİSK premises in Ankara, there is no budget for venue and local people to travel to Antalya but she added that this suggestion will be examined and discussed with TİSK authorities.

Irmak Inan reminded the importance of collecting financial documents on time and thanked partners for their kind care. She highlighted that some English explanations and Euro currencies are missing on some invoices. She clarified that as soon as this missing information is completed, another installment for partner payments will be done when next payment comes from the Commission.

Nil Mit underlined the importance of collaboration with an FPA of which objectives fit to Project and she suggested to choose one FPA and invited them to one of the Project conferences or NTF training as the spoke person. She also added if partners do not approve this option, it is also acceptable to invite only the partner of a FPA in their own countries to one of their activities. She distributed a list of all FPAs to partners and presented her suggestions.

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Matthias Thorns suggested to invite them to the NTF training as the spoke person and he noted it would be great contribution to give them opportunity for joint activities and say their views so that Project can include those as well.

Mile Boskov suggested having the subject of philanthropy to be discussed in the NTF training by one of the FPAs working on that issue.

Partners agreed on Sign for Sustainability Project to be contacted for the possible collaboration for the upcoming activities.