GLOBAL EDUCATION: ENGAGING CITIZENS IN TIMES OF CRISIS?

Abstract
This article summarizes the process and findings of the first action research of DEEEP/CONCORD on Quality and Impact of Global Education in Europe. Mainly focused on Portugal’s development education community of practitioners, the research brought them together with informal groups, social movements and local initiatives, to analyse citizen engagement understandings and practices. An interesting analysis of the current situation as it specifically examines the challenges of development education in times of economic crisis and austerity in Europe.

Key words:
Development Education; Global Citizenship Education; Crisis; Engagement; Citizenship; Cycle of Change; Impact.

1 Sandra Oliveira is project manager at 4Change. She was the Portuguese researcher responsible for the Quality and Impact report by DEEEP, a European project dedicated to DE or global education and led by the DARE Forum of the European Confederation of Development NGOs. É gestora de projetos na 4Change. Foi a investigadora portuguesa responsável pelo relatório de Qualidade e Impacto do DEEEP – projeto europeu do Fórum DARE, da Plataforma Europeia das ONGD, dedicado à ED ou à Educação Global.
Impact might currently be the most frequently repeated word on the internet and in political discourse when discussing “development” or the social sphere. There is always a word like this in all eras – some years ago it was “sustainability” or “interdisciplinarity”, amongst many others.

The words do not lose their importance as a consequence of this. The urgency of making the human way of life “sustainable” or of mobilising all available interdisciplinary knowledge to be able to learn or act better did not vanish when these words stepped out of the limelight. Likewise, determining the impact or assessing more than just the immediate results of an intervention do not stop being a pressing need, especially when resources are scarce, as in the current situation where the word “crisis” is being used to justify cuts in funding for what is essential and the selection process for so-called “social investments” is more rigourous.

Still, for anyone working in development education (DE) – or, as many prefer to call it, global citizenship education2 – the word “impact” immediately involves a challenge that means it is feared by many, hated by others, and skilfully manipulated by some.

The impact of Global Education or Development Education

This is the question at the root of GE: how can we measure the lasting impacts of motivating a child to think about the world? And how do we know what contribution to this maturing process might be made by, for example, including workshops on human rights in curriculum classes? How can we evaluate the outcomes for a young student of a process of learning about global citizenship supported by information and mobilisation activities by a local NGO? Or even, how can we measure the expansion of the global conscience of a citizen that is inspired by the activities in a GE project, but that occur at the same time as the many events of everyday life?

These questions unite and concern NGOs, not just in Europe but also at a global level, in a transitional phase between paradigms that the post-2015 debate seems to make urgent3, it

2 The concepts covered by these two expressions are not closed but they are, nowadays, perhaps less divisive for the development NGOs that work on these topics on a day-to-day basis than they were in the past. At an institutional level, the expression “DE” has attained recognition – it is the name used by most of the European bodies in this area. In Portugal it was made official by the “Visão Estratégica para a Cooperação Portuguesa” (“Strategic Vision for Portuguese Cooperation”, Cravinho, 2005) and by the “Estratégia Nacional de Educação pele Desenvolvimento” (“National Strategy for Development Education”, IPAD, 2010) – and so it is still used for strategic reasons. Nonetheless, the study revealed that a significant majority of organizations and practitioners identify more with the current concept of education for global citizenship, as they believe that the word “development” still has a significant influence in the perpetuation of paternalism, interventionism and inequalities, critiqued at various levels. Consequently, at the start of this action-research we paused to clarify some key concepts and request the suspension of doubt regarding differences in concepts so as not to prolong the “classical” argument about what DE/GCE is and lose the focus of the work. Throughout the article we use both sets of initials, DE/GCE, with this multiple meaning.
also being a phase between funding streams with the end of the United Nations’ Millennium Campaign, cuts to state funding in these areas, and the new EU framework programs.

The term impact appears to be on the agenda of European, national and local decision makers, and DE and GE are now required to evaluate, measure and find frameworks for evaluating and demonstrating lasting results, under threat of exclusion in the changes already taking place in the new EU funding frameworks, to give one example.

Nonetheless, returning to the idea proposed initially: the word impact has not lost its value just because it is in fashion. The nightmare of everyone who works seriously and consistently in DE/GE or related areas is disrupted funding streams, and hurried or poorly conceived projects in response to funding streams that are poorly-designed with regards to the original objective and that, when they end, leave a feeling of greater impotence and waste in the citizens that they were supposed to help. The fear of “will it be better for us to stay quiet?” is a shadow that accompanies anyone who wants their professional efforts to have “impact”.

This dark side could actually turn out to be very useful then as, in conjunction with other questions (such as “is this the right action in this situation?”), “will I be communicating effectively with these people?” or “if we keep quiet, we won’t have our feet on the ground alongside the citizens”, amongst others), these doubts could become systematic for everyone who works in DE/GE.

These questions are taken into account in the strategy by CONCORD, the European confederation of NGOs (and its DEEEP project by the DARE Forum) in response to the demand for greater rigour by researchers. It is clear that the European Commission’s pursuit of a more rigorous evaluation framework for actions co-funded by EuropeAid is not simply because it is a burocratic institution, and DEEEP’s commitment to prepare annual reports on the impact and quality of DE/GE following applications by national platforms is a strategy which the group of Portuguese NGOs could be the first to benefit from this year.

This report, “Journeys to Citizen Engagement – Action Research with Development Education Practitioners in Portugal, Cyprus and Greece”, was, first and foremost, a significant

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3 These paradigms are sometimes simplistically presented as an opposition between charity and solidarity, or even contrasting the paternalism in the word “development” with true “cooperation” between equals in a globalised world. They are however more radically critiqued by, for example, John Hilary, of War on Want, Matt Baillie Smith, of Northumbria University (in the papers at the European Research Conference, 21 November 2013, for example) or by Olivier Consolo, of CONCORD (in his paper at the Seminar organised by GTED in Lisbon in February 2014) for the fact that NGOs have become part of the very system that they want to change, or that they are an “industry” that risks becoming irrelevant if the very social change that they advocate were to become reality through intervention by citizens or for the role of the economy (and economic agents are already privileged in the new EU funding framework, for example).

4 This is the first “Quality and Impact Monitoring Report” prepared in Europe for the area of DE/GE, often called DEAR: Development Education and Awareness Raising in English.
achievement for the members of the DE Working Group (Grupo de Trabalho de ED – GTED) of the Portuguese Development NGO Platform (Plataforma Portuguesa das ONGD).

In light of the urgency of reflecting on its practices and disseminating the reflections that have shaped its actions in recent years, the GTED presented itself for the DEEEP call, with the result that this first report, a European-level case study, would focus on Portugal. This case study was enriched by repeating the methodology at a smaller scale with NGOs from Cyprus and Greece that work in DE/GE. This revealed similarities and differences in southern European settings and countries under economic austerity policies.

**Action-research in search of a framework**

For the lead researcher appointed by DEEEP to carry out this action-research and produce the report, the initial question centred on systemic doubt: how can we evaluate the quality of the DE/GE carried out in Portugal and its impact on citizens, converted into engagement in global questions? At present, at a national or European level, there is no agreed evaluation framework for DE or GE.

As an example of what occurred in this first phase of the National Strategy for DE in Portugal (ENED – for its implementation in 2010-2015, a quantitative analysis was carried out on projects and of their types), assessments and national reviews of types and quantities were also done at a European level.

An initial evaluation of the degree of development and the DE/GE practices in each country was performed as part of the European Development Education Monitoring Report. However, having completed this research we can agree with the typological categorisation in the aforementioned report and agree that the Development NGOs that are members of the GTED in Portugal already effectively use “Global Education” and “Experiential Learning” approaches (while in Greece and in Cyprus, the work is still very much focussed on “raising awareness” of global questions), even though this evaluation and typology is still not agreed. Nonetheless, while there are a large number of organisations, academics and researchers reflecting on these questions, there is still no fixed evaluation framework for DE/GE, with agreed indicators and methodologies that is ready for use.

The initial phase of this action-research was, therefore, an adventure in territory that is only just starting to be explored, in search of the missing methodology, the controversial framework, the specialist who does not have a ready solution. The challenge was, however, equally inspiring and with scope for innovation; more is known about what cannot be used, what does not produce results, what the “DE community” knows will not work for evaluating DE practices, actions and projects.

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6 With this idea of “community”, we refer to the groups of NGOs, facilitators and practitioners of DE projects at a national and European level.
In truth, everything is out in the open. Old participatory methodologies and emancipatory theories that include the evaluation of the very action framework are being resurrected. Cost-benefit analyses are being debated along with their value as a criterion for funders. Provisional frameworks are being proposed and indicators that are clearly defined but require constant evolution are starting to be designed. Interdisciplinarity and the advances made in other areas are being reinvigorated, such as, for example, the transition theories\(^7\) that emerged from the environmental field.

The lead researcher, focussing on the case study in Portugal, considered all of this and suggested to the research team – Amy Skinner, a reseracher from DEEEP who coordinated and co-wrote the report, Gerasimos Kouvaras, who implemented the process described in Greece and Kerstin Wittig-Ferguson in Cyprus – an approach and methodologies that attempt to meet not just the terms of reference of the DEEEP, but fundamentally the concerns of the GTED and of the DE community in Portugal.

In general terms, the chosen approach should lead beyond the reflection that the GTED has carried out on the pratrices of development NGOs that work in DE in Portugal. It should complement the positive, but as yet restricted, role of the ENED’s quantitative evaluation. Likewise, it should indicate possible pathways, tools and guide values for other organizations that work on these topics and ensure that this process is enriched with a constructive dialogue between the usual development NGOs and other organisations, social movements and local initiatives.

Taking this into account, the team considered some old ideas, other innovative ones and others found in a variety of fields. During this process, the lead researcher suggested including methodologies with which they had recently had contact (such as ABCD – Asset Based Community Development\(^8\)), and also invited a researcher from the field of transition and sustainable development, Inês Campos, to come on board and co-facilitate the workshops set out in the action-research with methodologies that are being used in the processes of transition of communities in Portugal, such as Aldeia das Amoreiras\(^9\).

We can now establish that the action-research achieved good results, some of which were surprising and some inspiring, but the team quickly determined that the terms of reference and also the objectives of the research team were over ambitious. For example, producing significant theories of change for the “DE community”, in a few hours of workshops is not realistic, as these are processes that take various days, as, for example, in the communities of the Transition movement.

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\(^7\) This has arisen in association with the network of transition towns or the “transition movement” as it is called in Portugal that is connected with research in the environmental area on climate changes and based on the idea of paradigm change that will be urgent in a situation following the peak in oil consumption (or peak oil).

\(^8\) As used by Cormac Russel, Director of the ABCD Network Europe and Nurture Development Ireland (for more information, see [http://www.nurturedevelopment.org/](http://www.nurturedevelopment.org/)).

\(^9\) Regarding this process see [http://centrodeconvergencia.wordpress.com/](http://centrodeconvergencia.wordpress.com/)
Engaging citizens in times of crisis?

The background to this research was actually the “crisis”, or more specifically the effects of the financial crisis and austerity policies on citizen engagement. The first effect is internal reflection by NGOs on what they do and what they want to do. In this sense, the “crisis” is not just a threat – with cuts to funds and an inability to look beyond problems in the local setting – but can also, partly, be an opportunity to make it necessary to look for alternatives, both economic ones and other types.

However, as one participant noted, “change cannot just come from frustration – there has to be a dream, a vision that moves people.” And it is here that NGOs can play a central role, showing alternatives, designing possibilities, opening cracks in what might be a new paradigm of reality. Only in this way can we escape from the immediate effects of the crisis: the difficulty of considering the global level; protectionism and a process of enclosure; collective apathy and fear; even a growth in extreme right-wing movements...

The connection to the local, in order then to be able to connect with the global dimension, is decisive.

Likewise, not fearing innovation and inspiring change is of central importance, whether it be in life styles, in the social economy or in political citizenship proposals. This last area was one of the most heated discussion points during the workshops: should DE engage citizens for evolution of for revolution? How do we make change? The participants from the three countries agreed that it is urgent to engage and motivate political participation to promote systemic change – there were even, in Portugal, some participants who upheld the need for DE to be more interventional and take clear positions on, for example, public policies, in order to finally observe a change in favour of global social justice.

How did this turn out in Portugal?

In Portugal the action-research process involved the members of the GTED and other civil-society organizations, and local groups and initiatives between October and January 2014. The final report was written based on collective reflection engaging participants as a tool to contribute to better citizen engagement approaches by the sector.

The two main objectives of the project are:

1. to divulge the citizen engagement knowledge and processes created by development NGOs in a political setting of economic austerity and the connections they make to local, national and international questions;
2. to contribute to better approaches used in DE actions, suggesting frameworks and recommendations for the quality and impact of activities that promote citizen engagement.

This action-research consisted of five phases: an initial phase with a survey-information collection about how development NGOs, groups, social movements, trade unions or networks outside DE engage citizens when working on local or national questions; reflection and discussion on this information with the participants in Portugal, and then in Greece and...
Cyprus; analysis of all of the material and reflections obtained to prepare the report and, finally, an action plan – structuring the conclusions as a way of improving DE work on citizen engagement – that was initiated with the participants and developed throughout the writing of the report.

Throughout this research project the researcher from DEEEP coordinated and supported this team – the lead researcher in Portugal and the two facilitators in Greece and Cyprus – through meetings on Skype, emails, written guidelines and material shared online. The working language was English, but the research was carried out in the local languages. Translation was the first of the challenges and the loss of context or meaning was compensated for by simplifying and clarifying the language, sharing long explanations in the materials produced and many hours of calls on Skype to clarify “grey areas”.

The research process followed these steps:

1. Creating trust, preparing the reflection – In December 2013, the lead researcher developed a preliminary questionnaire in preparation for the first workshop with the GTED. The researcher was also present at the November GTED meeting where she gave a brief presentation of the methodology and the research, guaranteeing anonymity in the quotes in the report, and at a final review by the group’s representative at CONCORD’s DARE Forum.

2. First workshop – This was held in Lisbon, on 10 December 2013, with the following objectives: to work on a definition of engagement; to evaluate the strategies used and the impact obtained; to design a theory of change for engagement through DE/GE. The main methodologies used were a debate using the fishbowl group discussion technique with the introduction of the 5 principal research questions on the specific topic to discuss engagement; mapping the GTED’s assets and potentialities using the principles of the ABCD methodology; a world café and collective discussion in order to construct a theory of change (or vision of change) and of the assumptions on which it is based, such as plotting “pathways” or an outline of programming-action, for more effective citizen engagement.

3. Documentation collection and surveying civil society organisations, alternative groups, local initiatives; invitations and pre-interviews in preparation for the workshop-meeting between December 2013 and 13 January 2014.

4. A workshop-meeting with the GTED and civil society organisations, alternative groups and invited local initiatives was held in Lisbon, on the morning of 14 January. The principal methodology was a group interview covering 5 main topics with the guests and completed with presentations by members of the GTED on the topics. This was followed by mapping of objectives, strategies and challenges in citizen engagement from each GTED member and guests, and finished with a well-attended discussion about contacts, imagined partnerships and ideas to improve citizen engagement.
5. Group planning-action work – this took place on the afternoon of 14 January and its aim was to take the theory/vision of change further and construct concrete pathways/strategies to obtain more impact from ED in various spheres. The main methodologies were a process of rapid creative writing of visions for change followed by a group discussion and elaboration of the group vision, group work and presentation of possible pathways to attain this vision of more effective citizen engagement. It ended with each participant choosing a specific idea to use in his or her work.

6. Writing the report – the process comprising steps 1 to 5 was applied in a brief form in Greece and Cyprus in January 2014 and a report structure was created for the two facilitators who supplied the information from these two case studies for the report, complemented with a team meeting via Skype. This simple report structure was then turned around completely with a return to the survey’s initial questions, creating new chapters and sub-chapters into which the main questions and the wealth of material produced fitted. An outline of the report was produced by the DEEEP researcher and the lead researcher and it was completed after a critical reading by the facilitators, the Portuguese representative at CONCORD’s DARE Forum and the research coordinator from CONCORD. The final version is available online and was presented in a webinar on 21 May 2014.

The challenges of this research

- Time: this is the great enemy – and potentially also be the great ally – of ED. Finding a space and time to bring people together is a challenge. This type of reflection, a process of collective construction of knowledge, requires time and this research project was a real DE action, a learning process that demands continuity. Some of the methodologies used, such as the processes for constructing a vision and theories of change also require time.

- The representativeness of the results: most of the information was obtained in Portugal as it was the focus-country for this research project and was complemented with information from Greece and Cyprus. Attempts were made to limit the risks of extrapolation by clearly indicating the differences between countries. The imbalance in the depth of the results was also considered, but the limitations of the survey meant that it was not possible to take this further in the other two countries.

- Translation: while the survey was delivered in the local languages, there is a risk of loss of some meaning in the process of translation into the working and publication language. This risk was mitigated through revision and analysis of the report in English by the facilitators from Cyprus and Greece before the final version.

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11 Film of this can be found at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8UcTQlA-DQA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8UcTQlA-DQA)
• Quality and impact: there is no formal or agreed framework for evaluation of DE or of the processes for engaging citizens in Europe. Instead of “measuring” using pre-defined criteria and indicators, we carried out a brief literature review to contextualise the research and guide our analysis of the results. The report was mainly constructed with the participants’ view of what makes “quality DE”, by including a table of recommendations in the final chapter.

Research inputs

Based on the analysis of the results of the research-action, it is apparent that this research project’s major contributions are at the level of methodology, approaches, tools and evaluating impact. Along with the challenges identified and the assets mapped, they gave rise to some recommendations that might be useful for the “DE/GE community”.

The participation stimulated by group discussions, the inspiration from the ABCD methodology and the vision processes were powerful moments of reflection and mutual learning that inspired engagement and ownership amongst participants from the GTED. We will describe the methodologies in the “Tool Kit” (next page).

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**Tool Kit**

Anyone who is part of the “DE community” in some way might find some of the methodologies used in this research project useful for their work – here is a summary of them.

1) **ABCD – Asset Based Community Development:**  
This can be used as an alternative to traditional SWOT analyses as it focusses on assets instead of centring its analysis on the deficits and problems of a community. It can help NGOs, platforms and networks to construct databases that are useful for working in partnership.

2) **Vision building processes:**  
Creating a space for visualising change can be an inspiring process for a group or community. This space can simply be somewhere to imagine that they are a certain period of time (let us say ten years) into the future and participants visualise the changes that they want to see come about – they are asked to visualise greater involvement by citizens through DE and what specific changes are in place in the future. For more inspiration, vision exercises used by the transition network or the theories from which they originated can be found on the internet.

3) **Theory of change:**  
This methodology is a useful way for NGOs to strengthen their strategic planning with the development of a solid theory of change (organisational, practices or for a specific project) as a foundation. It helps question assumptions and preconceived ideas on which the work is based and develop pathways with specific actions focused on the impact to be attained.

4) **Fishbowl method:**  
The fishbowl is a simple method that incentivises participation by everyone who is engaged and makes debates more pluralistic. Participants develop greater awareness of whether they are participating a lot or a little, topics can be added gradually and it stops discussions from stalling on the most complex points.

5) **Model of engagement as a pathway:**  
Based on the transtheoretical model of behavioural change we have adapted this cycle as a tool that can be used in DE to support pathways for change by an engaged citizen. It is not a model to follow, but rather something to provide inspiration: the focus is on the type of support (information, reinforcement, inspiration or directions) that must be given at different moments of change. This type of support must be...
evaluated constantly in order to be appropriate to the point in the cycle in which each citizen finds him or herself⁴.

Throughout this research project, the main approaches used by participants to engage citizens were identified, but despite being considered a fundamental part of the work, development NGOs did not really have defined strategies. Their target-audiences are engaged in specific actions or projects at a given moment, in the short term, instead of through a pathway – and they mainly reach the same audiences every time.

Some of the tools identified are awareness-raising campaigns and activities, complemented by social advocacy work and global training and education in formal or informal settings. Workshops with schools, seminars for teachers, training sessions with volunteers, as well as online campaigns, are some more of the most frequently used methods.

With regard to the impact attained with this type of approach and strategy, members of the GTED mentioned good results with the participants in their actions and projects:

– training teachers to become the protagonists of DE actions;

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2 Inspired by the circular model of J. O. Prochaska – Transtheoretical model for behaviour change at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transtheoretical_model](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transtheoretical_model) – this was shared during the workshop by the participant from the transition movement that uses it in its courses. It is a good tool for supporting individual change or community-level change.

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- participants developing a deeper interest in the world and understanding of interdependencies;
- changes in consumption patterns;
- greater political awareness;
- greater capacity for making local-global connections;
- changing attitudes.

However, they also emphasise the difficulty of measuring these results or making them visible, and they list a multitude of challenges that were explored during the research:
- What is “engagement” and how should it be translated into Portuguese? “Envolvimento” is the most widely agreed word, but the concept of “compromisso” is also present.
- Is mobilisation the same thing as engagement?

These two terms were seen as different by the Portuguese participants: “envolvimento” does not necessarily mean mobilization for specific actions. One member of the GTED said: “the role of DE is to unite people and facilitate their engagement – what they decide to do later is outside the scope of DE.” Moreover: members of the GTED believed that DE itself is in transition; they are abandoning a “supporting” paradigm from earlier decades and searching for another role – some claim that the role of DE is not to promote immediate change but to facilitate reflection, debate and, so, engagement. Creating spaces and time for thought and creativity are essential in a world in which we are bombarded with information and where time is scarce. Other participants felt that as DE topics are complex and, sometimes, “hard going”, there is a danger of creating a feeling of powerlessness amongst people – and should the role of DE not sometimes be to accept responsibility and shape specific actions?

The question of what is citizen-engagement “action” was discussed in the sequence. One participant felt that “action is vital, but reflection can also be an action!” An involved citizen can go through a process of in-depth reflection without campaigning or adopting critical public positions; he or she can simply care for an elderly relative or start a simpler life more connected to nature or to the community. Other participants felt that DE should be more “concrete” and tangible, something linked to the issue of “individual” or “collective” action. A member of the GTED summed up this discussion by saying “engagement is a personal transformation that should lead to collective action.” In Greece, one participant noted the role of the individual values and peer pressure as being essential for overcoming the “KAP gap” or, the disconnection between “knowledge-attitude-practice”, reinforcing the idea that engagement is not just individual, but is a collective endeavour.

The previous reflection led to a discussion about whether engagement is a continuum, a pathway or a journey. The Portuguese participants considered that there are various phases of engagement along a continuum, underlining the importance of “going to meet people where they are” and of the “needs at each moment/location.” This means resisting the temptation to judge more “juvenile” or non-critical involvement, despite DE aiming to avoid superficial engagement: “it is necessary to have differentiated entry levels,” another participant added, and “not to moralise about enthusiasm,” owing to the danger of demotivating younger people, for example.
It was, therefore, noted that it is necessary to “create” more time to support the engagement pathways and include learning moments even in an online campaign – promotion of the encounter is also valued here. This is related to the need to design actions and projects that are adapted to the target-audience and to the context, to serve the objectives and attain a real impact.

The need to simplify the jargon of NGOs, tackle the complexity of DE topics with more creative perspectives, bring organizations closer to citizens and enable participation was the last of the questions covered. It also relates to the question of scale: the strategy must be considered depending on the impact to be attained, as it is not possible to engage massively in more than a single one-off action. And strategic, alternative, creative communication has an important role here.

When the survey was almost complete, a table was drawn up showing the assets identified by the “DE community” that participated in the survey: the potential resources of the NGOs or available through strategic partnerships; the tools and materials that each NGO has already produced or to which it has access; the project cycle, useful for obtaining funding, monitoring and designing projects; the creativity and work, closely linked to the human resources; the resilience of the NGOs’ human resources; the ability to provide context, bring global matters to the local scale and, for example, give a historical framework to the present and recall that change is possible, even in situations of crisis; and a final asset: the connections and bridges that are not limited to the network, but that links to diverse audiences or organizations can achieve – in the case of this survey, the connection between the members of the GTED and guests from other organisations or contexts was highly enriching for the participants. In Portugal, Cyprus and Greece it has already given rise to activities and ideas for joint projects.

In conclusion, here are eight recommendations that might be of use for the “DE community”:

1. Clarify the role of the “DE/GE community” – how do we engage citizens: just through facilitation, by building bridges, by mobilising for change or just being a source of inspiration?
2. Make the link between local situations and the needs of people in order to be able to link them to the global situation;
3. Allow ownership by citizens making co-creation and participation viable, and informing of the results obtained by each of the organisations and the agents involved;
4. Create new approaches and spaces for citizen engagement;
5. Design bespoke strategies for engaging citizens;
6. Build bridges – alliances, long-term partnerships, knowledge sharing;
7. Cultivate values – support growth instead of short-term engagement;
8. Don’t forget to breathe! And appreciate the journey, the rest, life.

Ending with a parenthesis: DE in Portugal?

From the first moment, the DEEEP considered that these national case studies would serve a much larger community, the community of DE/GE facilitators and technicians at a European...
level. The reaction to the report was very positive. The reflection by the Portuguese GTED and members of the Greek and Cypriot NGOs is inspiring, realistic in regards to the central questions and indicates pathways for better DE or GE practice.

So that we can all understand the context of these reflections, one of the first sections is a description of the national settings that we will summarise below.

**Citizen engagement and participation** – Portugal suffers from the same symptoms as many democracies: decreasing participation in the traditional organisations of civil society, increasing abstention at each election and the limited outcomes of new forms of participation and social movements, that cannot participate in elections or have political representation. Trust in politicians and public institutions is at its lowest level, and: “citizens are more available to become involved in fleeting causes, using new media and traditional mechanisms for participation – but are less available for collective or continuous associative engagement”\(^{12}\).

**The DE community and the Portuguese Development NGO Platform’s GTED** – The DE/GE setting in Portugal grew supported by the foundation of the Development NGO Platform 28 years ago. Founded by a dozen very diverse organizations, the Platform came into being in a setting of recent democratic political stability, in the year Portugal entered the European Economic Community with new funds becoming available to fledgling Portuguese NGOs, also feeding a new interest in international cooperation.

In 2001 the DE working group was created and since then has followed a difficult path. These years were a period of active discussion of DE concepts and practices, of organizing Autumn Schools and a European Summer School, in 2003 and training the first generation of DE/GE facilitators and technicians.

In November 2005, the document “Visão Estratégica da Cooperação Portuguesa” (Strategic Vision for Portuguese Cooperation) officially defined DE and emphasised that: “It is vital to create knowledge and make Portuguese public opinion aware of topics of international cooperation and active participation in global citizenship (...) an important factor in civic education.” At the same time, the first line of funding for DE projects opened that, despite an interruption in 2012, has continued to the present day. Since then, a total of €4,556,990.38 has been invested in 105 projects, implemented by 23 development NGOs.

Nonetheless, it is taking time for the role of DE to receive recognition within the Portuguese Development NGO Platform itself. One participant in this research project noted that, even today, “sometimes the leadership does not take the GTED seriously. They think we are idealists and they do not understand the essential role that DE has to play in political decisions.”

The National DE Strategy – Members of the GTED recognise that they sometimes inhabit a niche of funding, target audiences and type of actions and that they very much desire greater openness, but they do not always know how to attain this. Their continued visibility and

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limited impact combine so that, sometimes, it seems to be like filigree, a complicated process only accessible to a few.

One decisive step was the process of creating the National ED Strategy (ENED), formally launched by the old IPAD (Instituto Português de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento – Portuguese Development Support Institute, now the Camões Language and Cooperation Institute) that assumed a role as facilitator of the process, managing to involve various public and private institutions as well as development NGOs, all of which have, in one way or another, worked on topics from the field of Global Education for Citizenship and Development.

A participatory and multi-stakeholder process was organised to construct the ENED’s strategies, typologies and objectives ahead of completion of the document in April 2009. The most important, in November 2009, was the official publication of the ENED following the joint signing by the Ministers of Education and Foreign Affairs, and the action-plan was signed by all of the stakeholders.

However, as was stated in a testimonial collected to mark the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Platform, “the influence of political cycles is visible in Portuguese Cooperation and is very much dependent on the whims of the Secretary of State.”

DE in Portugal at present – At the end of 2013, of the 68 development NGOs associated with the Platform, 14 were members of the GTED: ADRA, AIDGlobal, CIDAC, CPR, Engenho & Obra, FEC, Fundação Cidade de Lisboa, Fundação Gonçalo da Silveira, G.A.S. Porto, Graal, IMVF, ISU, PAR and Rosto Solidário. The representatives meet monthly (generally 10 organisations are present – approximately the same number that participated in this research – to discuss DE questions, exchange experiences and plan activities that reinforce DE in civil society).

The GTED has a central role in preparing the ENED that has become a reference work for actions by the NGOs and other CSOs (Civil Society Organizations). The group also cooperates in the implementation of the ENED, contributing annually to the action and evaluation plan.

The GTED action plan for 2014 has 3 objectives: 1) broaden and solidify knowledge of DE, including the practical dimension, in three levels – GTED, the Platform and other specific agents and actors; 2) accompany and influence national and international policies and groups or institutions with a relevant DE action; 3) strengthen the GTED’s communication with the general public, the leadership of the Platform and the Camões Institute.

Mid-way to implementation of the ENED, with financial challenges and a situation of economic austerity policies in Portugal, the GTED maintains that it is time to look at the work that has been done to date here and think about the future. This survey on impact (what are we trying to achieve with this with DE action?) and quality (how can we attain better DE practice?) responds to these questions from NGOs – focussing here on engaging citizens in the promotion of global social justice. We hope that it is inspiring.
Bibliographic references


Número Ocho (Septiembre 2015)  
Issue Eight (September 2015)
Annexe I – List of participants in the action-research

List of members of the DE Working Group (GTED):
- Ana Teresa Santos – Instituto Marquês de Valle Flôr
- Cármen Maciel – ADRA
- Eliana Madeira – Graal
- João Azevedo – CIDAC
- Jorge Cardoso – Fundação Gonçalo da Silveira
- Margarida Alvim – FEC - Fundação Fé e Cooperação
- Mónica Santos Silva - Instituto Marquês de Valle Flôr
- Noémia Simões – Engenho & Obra
- Sara Peres Dias – Associação PAR
- Sofia Lopes - AIDGlobal
- Tiago Mansilha – Associação PAR
- Vera Borges Pinto – Fundação Cidade de Lisboa

Other civil society organisations, alternative groups, local initiatives:
- Alfredo Abreu – Serve the City-Lisboa
- André Vizinho – Researcher, facilitator from Aldeia das Amoreiras and Rede Convergir
- Francisco Pedro (Kiko) – Various alternative groups (GAIA, RDA)
- Inês Subtil – Que Se Lixe a Troika
- Manuela Ralha – (d)Eficientes Indignados
- Paula Gil – Various citizen initiatives
- Ricardo Alves – Manifesto para uma Esquerda Livre (future Partido Livre
Annexe II

Journeys
to Citizen Engagement:
Action Research with
Development Education
Practitioners in Portugal, Cyprus
and Greece

Co-written by Amy Skinner and Sandra Oliveira
with contributions from Kenzio Ribeiro-Ferreira
and Gerasimos Kavvassos

Primeira Capa do relatório final do DEEEP
Foto da Engagement Tree

1º Workshop, dezembro de 2013
GLOBAL EDUCATION: ENGAGING CITIZENS IN TIMES OF CRISIS?
EDUCAÇÃO GLOBAL: ENVOLVER CIDADÃOS EM TEMPO DE CRISE?
EDUCACIÓN GLOBAL: ¿IMPLICAR A LOS CIUDADANOS EN TIEMPOS DE CRISIS?