D4.1 Evaluation Plan

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3	12/11/2014	Andreas Koskeris, Evangelia Boufardea	Final version based on the Quality Review

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INTRODUCTION

Evaluation involves the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics and outcomes of an activity or action, in order to determine its worth or merit. It is a major part of learning, and can provide a wealth of useful information on the improvement of the outcomes of E-STEP project.

The purpose of this evaluation is to determine the effectiveness of the implementation of the produced Training Framework in the context of E-STEP project and which are the lessons learned out of which the project can improve the Training Framework for future use.

The aim of this document is to present the evaluation plan for

- The training framework produced by the E-STEP project
- The procedures followed for the the training framework's implementation

The contents of the document include:

- Evaluation needs
o Project aims
o Analysis of needs of involved stakeholders
- Objectives and target groups
o Specific objectives of the evaluation
o Target groups
o Evaluation Axis and indicators (e.g. Axis: Participation in the seminars, Indicators: number of participants, Number of blog posts in the supporting platform etc)
- Evaluation research method
- Evaluation techniques and procedures (activities per phase)
- Timetable of activities
- Responsibilities between partners

The final evaluation report should allow the readers to see not only the results of the use of the Training Framework but also the process that the pilot users have gone through.

1. EVALUATION NEEDS

1.1 Project aims

The summary of the project's aim, as defined by its proposal are the following:

E-STEP intends to help teachers and school managers acquire and reinforce such attitudes, skills, knowledge and qualifications that will enable them to effectively engage parents in schooling and interact with them through social networking technologies. The designed activities are planned in ways that will enable them to achieve this goal through developing, implementing and evaluating a training scheme for teachers aimed to improve such skills.

To this end E-STEP has set the following objectives:

- To effectively **identify teachers', school managers' and parents' needs for effective collaboration** on school activities to the learners' benefit.
- To locate the obstacles and the change enablers of teachers'-parents' partnerships.
- To **develop a training framework** so as to improve teachers' and school managers' awareness and skills for effective collaboration with parents through social networking tools.
- To **implement the proposed training framework** by training teachers, school managers and school ICT experts.
- To **develop a community of practice** (teachers, school managers and parents) that will also facilitate the project's sustainability.
- To **evaluate the impact of the proposed approach** in terms of effectiveness of the teacher training framework and engagement of parents in school-based activities**.**
- To **widely disseminate the project approach and outcomes to European educational and policy-making communities**.

1.2 Analysis of needs of involved stakeholders

It is important to ensure that all relevant parties have an understanding of the evaluation process, and its anticipated outcomes. The list of involved stakeholders (either directly or indirectly) are:

- Teachers
- School managers
- Parents
- Students
- Schools/ Schools networks
- Ministries/Policy makers/ Educational authorities
- Researchers in the field of educational innovations
- Project partners
- EACEA

Each from the above stakeholders has different needs relevant with the project's scope, as follows:

TEACHERS

Teachers could benefit from social networking technologies by obtaining the means for connecting with parents. They will have a set of guidelines on which will enable them to involve the parents of their students more in school life. Overall, they will gain the benefits that parental engagement could offer.

SCHOOL MANAGERS

School managers need to address the obstacles and the change enablers of teachers'-parents' partnerships. To achieve this they need to improve their awareness and skills for effective collaboration with parents through social networking tools.

PARENTS

Parents should be expected to benefit from social networking technologies by gaining the means and skills for engaging better with teacher, education services, resources and collaborative learning support opportunities.

STUDENTS

Students are expected to be the long-term beneficiaries from this whole process, taking into consideration that schools' and parents' collaborations have been found to have multifold benefits on students.

SCOOLS/SCHOOL NETWORKS

School networks (e.g. the European School Network, e-twinning schools) need a concrete plan on securing that the outputs of the project will be exploited in the long term.

MINISTRIES/POLICY MAKERS/EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITIES

Educational policy makers need to be able to integrate the proposed training programme in teachers' training and professional development programmes that they are implementing at national level. To do so it is important that concrete and relevant good practices will be available after thorough evaluation.

RESEARCHERS IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATIONAL INNOVATIONS

The field of parental engagement is an important issue on primary and secondary education. The results of the E-STEP project will further enlighten research on this field and more accurate observations and results will be produced concerning parental involvement.

PROJECT PARTNERS

Project partners should benefit from the project and especially from the implementation and evaluation of the Training Framework. Since the nature of most partners is educational and consulting they will take advantage from the results of the project (e.g. by integrating the lessons learnt on their activities). Moreover since almost all the partners support ODS (Open Discovery Space) they will have the chance to see its benefits more closely.

EACEA (Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency)

The program agency's main aim is to assure that the project funding will lead to a concrete and important impact on EU schools.

2. OBJECTIVES AND TARGET GROUPS OF THE EVALUATION

2.1 Specific Objectives of the evaluation

The aim of the evaluation is to assess the following factors related with the project's training framework:

- The impact of the developed training framework on teachers (as primary target group) and on parents (as target group involved in school based activities of teacher-parent collaboration).
- The quality of the implementation/ piloting process of the training and the school based activities of teachers' – parents' interaction.

The whole approach is expected to lead to recommendations for policy makers (e.g. Ministries of Education, teacher training providers) and future educational initiatives concerning teacher training on engaging and collaborating with parents.

2.2 Target groups of the evaluation

Primary target group: Teachers

Scope:

To evaluate the:

- impact of the developed training framework
- quality of the implementation/ piloting process of the training

Secondary target group 1: Parents

Scope:

To evaluate the:

- impact of the developed training framework

Secondary target group 2: School managers

Scope:

To evaluate the:

- usefulness of the whole project approach and results

2.3 Evaluation Axis and indicators

Based on the aims of the evaluation and the target groups as identified previously we present below the selection of

- Assessment items
- Evaluation Axis per item
- Indicators per evaluation axis

Assessment Items/ Evaluation Axis/ Indicators

1. Course structure
    1.1 Structure and sequence of training sections
        - Evaluation on logical interconnection between sections
    1.2 Duration
        - Feasibility/Sufficiency

2 Training material
    2.1 Quality
        - Evaluation of the content quality (e.g. . well written, comprehensive, substantial)
    2.2 Quantity
        - Sufficient quantity of training material per section
    2.3 Trainees guide
        - Usefulness
        - User friendly
        - Comprehension (Language, figures, etc)

3 Trainers
    3.1 Educational methods
        - Use of suitable techniques for the introductory lesson
        - Use of education techniques to support collaboration between trainees in groups
        - Method easiness
        - Use of educational techniques (e.g. group work, brainstorming) appropriate for the educational group

4 Trainees
    4.1 Knowledge and skills acquired
        - New knowledge acquired

- News skills acquired

4.2 Participation in the seminars
- Absences
- Quantitative data from the platform usage

3. EVALUATION METHOD

The educational research bibliography includes several such methodologies and the selection among them is mainly depended on:

- The evaluation aims
- The training program characteristics
- The context on which the evaluation will occur

Research literature suggests the most used evaluation methods for educational programs are:

- Responsive evaluation (Stake, 1975)[1]
- Four level model (Kirkpatrick, 1976)[2]
- CIPP (Stufflebeam, 1983)[3]
- Empowerment evaluation (Fetterman et al, 1996)[4]

Out of these methods (based on the study of the above references), the most suitable and efficient for the E-STEP training framework evaluation is considered to be a customised evaluation based on the **responsive model** since:

• It is more suitable for a two-step evaluation, providing feedback for training program modifications.

• It is more feasible based on the specific time limits and resources available within the E-STEP project.

This method is based on the evaluation on the situation before the seminars, during them and afterwards.

For each one of the above three stages of evaluation, a separate matrix will be developed based on the evaluation data received.

In our specific case it will be developed as follows:

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[1] Stake, R. (1973). *Program Evaluation Particularly Responsive Evaluation.* conference on "New Trends in Evaluation", Goteborg, Sweden, October 1973

[2] Kirkpatrick, D. L. (1976). Evaluation of training. In R. L. Craig (Ed.), Training and development handbook: A guide to human resource development. New York: McGraw Hill.

[3] Stufflebeam, D.L. (1983), *The CIPP model for program evaluation,* at Madaus, G.F., Scriven, M.S., Stufflebeam, D.L. (eds), Evaluation Models: Viewpoints on educational and human services evaluation, Kluwer-Nijhoff Publishing, Boston, p. 118.

[4] Fetterman, D.M., Kaftarian, S.J., Wandersman, A. (1996), *Empowerement Evaluation: Knowledge and Tools for Self-Assesmenent & Accountability,* Sage publications, California.

FIRST PHASE

Existing Situation

Indicator	Intensions	Observation	Conclusions/Suggestions
Trainees guide usefulness and easiness to comprehend	All first phase trainees must be confident on what to expect from the training after reading the trainee's guide		
New knowledge to acquire	All first phase trainees must evaluate as useful the new knowledge they will get in relation with parental engagement		

Intervention

Indicator	Intensions	Observation	Conclusions/Suggestions
Evaluation on logical interconnection between sections	At least 75% of first phase trainees must evaluate this positively		
Program Duration Feasibility	All first phase trainees must evaluate the program duration as appropriate		
Content quality	All sections content must receive at least 4/5		

	evaluation		
Content quantity	All first phase trainees must evaluate the content as enough but not too much		
Trainees guide evaluation	All first phase trainees must evaluate the training guide as useful		
Educational techniques used in the seminar	Positive assessment from all trainees		
New knowledge acquired	Positive assessment and confidence from the trainees on - new theoretical knowledge acquired - knowledge in relation with social networking tools to use for parental engagement		

Results

New skills acquired	Developed confidence on abilities gaining new knowledge and skills		

Indicator	Intensions	Observation	Conclusions/Suggestions
	applicable to own educational contexts		

SECOND PHASE

Existing Situation

Indicator	Intensions	Observation	Conclusions/Suggestions
Program Duration Feasibility	All School managers must find the program feasible All second phase teachers must be confident about the feasibility		
Trainees guide usefulness and easy to comprehend	>80% of second phase trainees must be confident on what to expect from the training after reading the trainee's guide		
New knowledge to acquire	At least 80% of first phase trainees must evaluate as useful the new knowledge they will get in relation with parental engagement		

Intervention

Indicator	Intensions	Observation	Conclusions/Suggestions
Evaluation on logical interconnection between sections	>80% of second phase trainees must evaluate this positively		
Program Duration Feasibility	>80% of second phase trainees must evaluate the program duration as appropriate		
Content quality	All sections content must receive at least 4/5 evaluation		
Content quantity	All second phase trainees must evaluate the content as enough but not too much		
Trainees guide evaluation	All second phase trainees must evaluate the training guide as useful		
Educational techniques used in the seminar	Positive assessment from >80% of trainees		
New knowledge acquired	Positive assessment and confidence		

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	from the trainees on - new theoretical knowledge acquired - knowledge in relation with social networking tools to use for parental engagement		
Participation in the seminars • Absences • Quantitative data from the platform usage • Qualitative data from the platform usage	Targets: - 0 absences - Significant usage of the platform and its supported tools (e.g. forum) based on analytics gained from it		

Results

New skills acquired	High level of Confidence from all trainees on their capability to apply what they learnt		
Importance of the whole initiative	Positive assessment from trainees and school directors Parents from the schools involved must evaluate		

	positively the first results they have presented to them right after the training conclusion (e.g. establishment of a social network group)		

4. EVALUATION TECHNIQUES

Using the method described in the previous chapter, the evaluation will follow a two-phase approach, in line with the equivalent time scheduling and design of the implementation (WP3)). The observed outcomes for all indicators (for the first phase) versus the intended ones (along with qualitative data collected) will provide the feedback for the second version of the training framework.

In this section, we present the

- Participants in the evaluation within each phase
- Tools/techniques to be used for each participant category for each phase

FIRST PHASE

The evaluation will follow an one step approach:

- Participants involved: Trainees (i.e. teachers and heads of schools from the participating pilot schools)
  - Tools to be used (based on the table presented the needed observations per step):
  o Questionnaires including qualitative information

SECOND PHASE

The evaluation will follow a three-steps approach:

1. Before the organization of the workshops
- Participants involved: Trainers, trainees and school managers
- Tools to be used (based on the table presented the needed observations per step):
  o Questionnaires including qualitative information
  o Interviews with school managers
2. Right after the closure of a seminar
  - Participants involved: Trainers, trainees and school managers

- Tools to be used (based on the table presented the needed observations per step):
  - o Questionnaires including qualitative information
  - o Interviews with school managers
  - o Collection of quantitative data (absences, platform usage etc)
3. 15 days after the seminars
  - Participants involved: Trainers, trainees and school managers, parents
  - Tools to be used (based on the table presented the needed observations per step):
    - o Questionnaires including qualitative information
    - o Interviews with school managers

5. TIMETABLE

The timetable of the evaluation activities will be depended on the actual implementation plan for the training (WP3 of the e-step project). This plan will be delivered on M11 of the project (30/9) and as a result the actual detailed plan for the evaluation will be delivered then.

However, in the current phase of evaluation design, it is important to present the interconnection of evaluation activities with the two phases of training implementation in order to identify dependencies which will have to be taken under consideration for the training implementation plan.

In the following paragraphs we present this information:

FIRST PHASE OF TRAINING

The evaluation activities – as presented in the previous sections- will be developed at the end of the one day event and they will involve only the trainees.

SECOND PHASE OF TRAINING

The evaluation activities – as presented in the previous sections- will be developed in 3 steps as follows:

- Before: Just before the beginning of the second training phase
- During: At the end of the training activities
- After: 2 weeks after the ending of training activities

The final report of the first phase evaluation will be delivered 1 month after.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

All partners will carry out the needed data collection activities (interviews, questionnaires) for the 2 phases of the training implementation. They will also review the evaluation results reports created by WP leader (Computer Technology Institute – CTI).

The questionnaires will be collected in print (CTI will create them and all partners will make the needed translations) and the results will be included from the partners in an e-form document, which CTI will create for each questionnaire. The results of the interviews will be given to CTI in a form of a small report.

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CTI will provide the evaluation tools, carry out the data analysis and produce the evaluation reports. The data analysis will be based on indicators related with course structure, educational material and training methods in order to provide the needed feedback for the improvement of the main project outcome, i.e.is the training framework. However, the data for all other indicators will be analysed to provide valuable lessons learnt from the implementation process.

APPENDIX

DEFINITIONS:

Trainee = the teachers participating in the seminars.

Trainer = the person responsible to provide the training to the teachers participating in the seminars

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE FIRST PHASE (only for trainees)

Questions:

- Do you find the trainees guide useful for the training activities? (1 = not at all, ….5 = very useful)
- Was the trainees guide easy to comprehend? (1 – 5)
- Before the seminar did you consider that the skills/competencies you will gain from it as useful? (1 – 5)
- After the seminar do you consider that the skills/competencies you gain from it as useful? (1 – 5)
- How do you evaluate the logical interconnection between the various sections of the training program? (1 –5)
- Was the program duration appropriate to meet your expectations? (Y/N)
- How do you evaluate the quality of the training program? (1- 5)
- Was the content of the training program section, adequate? (1 – 5)
- How do you evaluate the educational techniques used in the seminar? (1- 5)
- Do you feel confident to apply what you learnt (in real cases concerning your communication and collaboration with parents)? (1 – 5)

(Each question will also include a "please explain" qualitative element).

QUESTIONNAIRES FOR THE SECOND PHASE

1 questionnaire for trainers

Before: Just before the beginning of the second training phase

Just one Question:

- Are you confident about the feasibility of the training program duration? (Yes, No, Not sure)

   (Each question will also include a "please explain" qualitative element).

3 questionnaires for trainees

<u>Before: Just before the beginning of the second training phase</u>

- Do you find the trainees guide useful for the training activities? (1 = not at all, ...5 = very useful)
- Do you consider that the skills/competencies you gain from the seminar as useful? (1 – 5)

   (Each question will also include a "please explain" qualitative element).

<u>During: At the end of the training activities</u>

- How do you evaluate the coherence between the various sections of the training program? (1 –5)
- Was the program duration appropriate to meet your expectations? (Y/N)
- How do you evaluate the quality of the training program? (1- 5)
- Was the content of the training program section, adequate? (1 – 5)
- Was the trainees guide easy to comprehend and useful? (1 – 5)
- How do you evaluate the educational techniques used in the seminar? (1- 5)
- Do you find useful the new acquired theoretical knowledge on parental engagement? (1-5)
- Do you find useful the new acquired knowledge in relation with social networking tools to use for parental engagement (1-5)

   (Each question will also include a "please explain" qualitative element).

<u>After: 2 weeks after the ending of training activities</u>

- Do you feel confident to apply what you learnt (in real cases concerning your communication and collaboration with parents)? (1 – 5). Please explain.
- Within these two weeks after the seminar have you utilized in real cases any of the things you learnt? (Y/N)
- If Yes in the previous answer, how do you evaluate the importance of the seminar? (1-5)
- If No in the previous answer, please explain why

1 questionnaire for parents

After: 2 weeks after the ending of training activities

/* target group: parents interacting with the participating trainees which already utilized some of the lessons learnt */

- Within the last 2 weeks which were the methods for interaction with you child teacher?
    - o   Face to face
    - o   Through email
    - o   Through social networking platform
    - o   Other ………..
- Please give a small evaluation on positive impact and possible drawbacks (in one paragraph for each one) from this interaction (with the selected means from above).

INTERVIEWS FOR THE SECOND PHASE

1 interview as a follow up, with the school managers

The questions of this interview will include:

-    Opinion on the feasibility of the training program (before its actual implementation)
-    Opinion on the importance of possible positive impact of the whole initiative
-    Possible drawbacks and problems which might make difficult for teachers to apply what they learnt.

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