

Schools for Future Youth – Final External Evaluation

Alasdair Collins, DP Evaluation, August 2017

1. INTRODUCTION

“Schools for Future Youth” (SFYouth) was a three-year European Commission Erasmus+ funded project which ran from September 2014 to August 2017. The project was implemented by five Partners, led by Oxfam GB. Four of the Partners were NGOs: CARDET (from Cyprus specializing in research and development in education, innovation, ICT, global citizenship and social justice), international development NGO Oxfam GB, and Oxfam Italy and Polish Humanitarian Action (PAH) (involved in humanitarian and development aid and in development education and social campaigning). These Partners worked with teachers and young people to deliver the project in their countries. The fifth Partner was the Development Education Research Centre at the UCL Institute of Education (IoE), a leading research centre on development education, whose main role in the project was to design and manage the gathering of detailed monitoring and evaluation data to assess the impact of the project on teachers and young people.

The project developed an extensive set of materials for teachers to use in curriculum teaching and to support them in setting up and facilitating a Youth Ambassador Group. Partners worked with schools in their country to trial and refine these materials, gathering feedback and a wide range of quantitative and qualitative data along the way. The materials have been made freely available on the project website (www.sfyouth.eu) which in conjunction with a specially developed App also hosts the Youth Wall, a space for teachers and young people to share ideas and materials. The project was aimed at secondary school students in the age range 12 to 19.

The overall aim of the project was to “increase educational engagement and active civic participation through using Youth Participation and Global Citizenship (YPGC) in formal and informal education”. The three specific project Objectives were to:

1. develop innovative support for European teachers to use YPGC effectively through their core teaching
2. develop innovative support for European youth to use YPGC to promote social actions through their formal and informal education
3. influence school systems across Europe to increase opportunities for teachers and young people to carry out YPGC

The project was working towards three areas of Impact:

1. improvements in the 4 school needs¹ as a result of the better use of YPGC in formal/informal education in partner countries and across the EU

¹ The four “school needs” are:

- improvement in use of more relevant and inspiring curricula and student centred pedagogies by teachers using project tools
- improvement in motivation of youth (esp. at risk of dropping out) using project tools
- improvement in transversal skills and competences development by youth using project tools
- increase in civic engagement of youth using project tools

2. 2,000 teachers and 50,000 youth from 500 schools use YPGC by using the project tools and online social network
3. improvement in the scale of support for YPGC offered by the partner organisations

This short external evaluation complements the detailed internal evaluation report produced by the IoE (Hunt, 2017)² and seeks to give an objective, external assessment of the extent to which the project has met its intended objectives. It is based on a review of the project materials, the IoE research and a range of project documentation as well as attendance at the project's "international multiplier event" (an IoE / GENE conference³) and a Partners' meeting and finally on a series of interviews with all Partners and two other stakeholders (a teacher and a policy-maker).

2. PROJECT DESIGN

2.1. Was the overall concept and project logic sound?

Broadly speaking all the Partners feel that the project was well conceptualised and that the planned activities were well aligned with the intended outcomes and objectives. I would generally concur with this although there are a few areas where Partners say, with the benefit of hindsight, they would have done things differently, and I also identified one or two design flaws. Before I discuss these, it should be noted, in the interest of balance, that the basic design was good and that it translated into a range of very solid project activities and outputs.

Probably the most significant design fault was in underestimating the amount of time that would be necessary for dissemination. This was compounded by the fact that during the project implementation a great deal of time was invested in the creation and refinement of materials (with very good results) meaning that the time available for dissemination was further squeezed. One Partner commented, perhaps a little harshly:

"Essentially what we have done is a very thorough trial with relatively little dissemination at the end."

A more positive interpretation of this was given by another Partner:

"We decided it would be better and more realistic to trial the materials in more detail with more schools rather than just focus on dissemination to as many as possible. In fact we managed to test the materials in a lot more schools than the official trial schools so we feel the trial has been very thorough."

It seems to me that relatively little attention was paid to how Objective 3 would be achieved:

Objective 3 – Influence school systems across Europe to increase opportunities for YPGC

² Hunt, F. (2017) "Schools for Future Youth Evaluation Report: Developing young people as active global citizens." London: UCL Institute of Education

³ GENE: Global Education Network Europe. The IoE / GENE conference was entitled "Evidence Based Research for Policy Development on Global Education": <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ioe/news-events/events-pub/may-2017/research-evidence-policy-learning-global-education>

Activities specifically aimed at this included holding an international conference and producing an academic paper and a set of policy and practice recommendations at the end of the project as well as dissemination through participation in other conferences such as the European Conference on Global Education in 2015 and the UNESCO Global Citizenship Education and Development Education Conference in Ottawa, 2017. There has been some successful contact between the Partners in Italy and Cyprus with policy makers in their countries (discussed in Section 5.1 below). However, there does not seem to have been any detailed planning for advocacy activities to supplement and exploit the findings emerging from the project

Partners and others have also commented on the fact that the learning exchanges (one in Italy in year one for teachers and one in Poland in year two for teachers and young people) were very effective and they wished that there could have been more of these, although this would have had significant implications for the project budget.

There seems to have been a disconnect at the design stage between setting some of the targets and thinking about how data would be gathered to measure progress against those targets. The project had three stated Impacts. The second of these was:

Impact 2 - 2,000 teachers and 50,000 youth from 500 schools use YPGC by using the project tools and online social network.

Yet, it has not proved possible to gather data on the number of schools using the tools and the social network or to disaggregate the number of website users into teachers and young people. This makes evaluating the progress towards achieving the intended impact difficult, which could have been avoided by some clearer thinking at the design stage – this is discussed further below in Section 5 Effectiveness and Impact.

I also feel that the conceptualisation of Impacts, Objectives and Results is somewhat confusing. It is not clear how the Results map onto the Impacts and how these relate to the Objectives. This is not made explicit in either the project application or the logframe and I believe a simpler use of the traditional Impact Chain framework with outputs, outcomes and impact might have helped to avoid some of the design issues mentioned above – such as too little focus on dissemination and advocacy and the fact that some targets were expressed in a form for which data would not be available.

Finally there were two further conceptual issues which, while they seemed sensible at the design stage turned out to be problematic during project implementation. These were the “Hub school and Trial school” approach (which is discussed in Section 3 Efficiency) and the timing of the school trials (which is discussed in Section 5 Effectiveness and Impact).

2.2. Were the methods and tools appropriate for the intended aims? Should Partners have developed additional tools, for example, to train teachers?

Broadly speaking, the methods and tools included in the project design were appropriate for the intended aims. As one Partner said:

“The action plan was very straightforward – we think all the actions led towards the main objective of creating high quality materials.”

As far as developing the materials is concerned I think this is true. The materials for teachers and young people to use are indeed high quality. The dual approach of developing resources for use in curriculum teaching and in the less formal setting of the Youth Ambassador Group (YAG) has worked well. The YAG concept in itself has been successful and popular. The focus on young people taking action as the final phase of the Learn-Think-Act model has also been a successful and distinctive feature.

Working with schools to support teachers in using the materials has proved quite challenging with different factors complicating the task, such as lack of teacher time, lack of confidence to take leadership and pedagogical and cultural backgrounds in Poland and Italy which meant that both teachers and young people were less comfortable with participatory or pupil-led approaches. However, these challenges were not due to poor design – rather they are reflections of the real world environment in which Partners were working. Partners have responded well to these and have adapted their approaches as required to deliver the project. One element which seemed appropriate but which failed was the sharing of experience and ideas through the teacher’s online forum and the Youth Wall via the website and app. These failed not because they were a bad idea, but mainly because they could not compete with existing commercial networking channels (Face Book, WhatsApp etc) and because the need for the protection of young people made the registration and log-in procedures off-putting. Many of these issues are explored further in the following sections of this report.

Several members of staff from Partner organisations have said that although the induction sessions they ran with teachers were very successful it would have been even better if the project had developed additional materials for the training of teachers so that they had more confidence to use the project resources.

2.3. Were the methods and tools appropriate for all Partners and in all contexts – was there enough flexibility to take account of different national contexts and the different Partners’ skills and capacity?

There are clear differences between the national contexts in the four project countries. These are analysed and described in great detail in the Educational Needs Analysis⁴ which constituted the first “Intellectual Output” of the SFYouth project. These relate to pedagogical traditions, the extent to which Global Citizenship Education is included in the curriculum, general levels of familiarity with global education and the experience and approach of the NGO partner in each country.

My sense is that overall SFYouth did a good job of taking the core recommendations of the Educational Needs Analysis and applying these to the project, such as the importance of supporting and working with teachers and the importance of taking an approach which “emphasises linkages between learning and action”. However, the NGO partners were inevitably faced with different challenges on the ground and had to respond to these in order to deliver the project. Thus in Poland and Italy, where there is a more formal, didactic pedagogical tradition where teachers impart knowledge from the front of the class and participatory methods are not widespread, it was difficult for Partners to pay full heed to the recommendation that the NGOs “see themselves more as facilitators and enablers”. If they had done so the project would have failed – they had to be more proactive, for example taking a lead in facilitating YAGs and enabling teachers and young people to work together towards taking action.

⁴ “Global Citizenship & Youth Participation in Europe”, Douglas Bourn, UCL Institute of Education, 2016

Similarly, the opportunities for collaboration with decision-makers and policy-makers vary hugely from country to country, so it would have been impossible for Oxfam GB to cooperate with the Ministry of Education in the same way that CARDET were able to in Cyprus.

The Partners seem to have recognised these differences in context and to have adopted a pragmatic and flexible approach to responding to them. Although this meant they may have deviated from some of the design elements of the project, I feel this was the correct approach.

Finally, the Partners have worked well in supporting each other and playing to their respective strengths. They have all reported that they felt comfortable with their allocated roles and that they were able to draw on each other's expertise.

3. EFFICIENCY

3.1. Was the project well managed and did the partnership work well?

Project management and the partnership

All the evidence I have seen suggests that the project was very well managed and that the partnership was very effective. I have been impressed through my own direct contact with the efficiency and professionalism of the project management by Oxfam GB and the willingness of Partners to contribute to the external evaluation process. In interviews with me all the Partners confirmed that the project management has been excellent, that Partners have worked well together and that they have benefitted personally and organisationally from their involvement in SFYouth. One Partner summed it up thus:

“Project management and partnership cooperation is very important. I think we were very fortunate; the two Project Managers⁵ have done a great job. The team of Partners have worked really well together, playing to all our strengths. There were of course some occasional tensions but these were discussed and dealt with. All the Partners have worked beyond the hours they were budgeted for and were open to communicating and collaborating because we were all passionate about achieving the outcomes. The monthly Skype meetings with extra follow-ups as required worked well, and the four face-to-face meetings were very worthwhile, helping to deal with staff turnover. I think we are all genuinely very sad that the project is coming to an end.”

The logistics of working with schools

The initial idea was that Partners would recruit a Hub school and that this Hub school would then help to recruit ten trial schools and would also provide leadership to those other schools throughout their involvement with SFYouth. This was based on the model which has been successfully used in the Global Learning Programme funded by the UK Government in England. However in the GLP, the hubs or Expert Centres have been given additional funding, training and support to help them perform this role – and this extra support has not been available for Hub schools in SFYouth. The “Hub and Trials schools” model has not really worked, primarily due to a lack of capacity in the Hub schools – even when there was support from the school leadership. In some instances, the Hub School was used as a ‘Hub’ to bring in Trial schools for induction / review days, but the Hubs did not develop into centres of expertise as had been envisaged. This

⁵ There was a change of Project Manager at Oxfam GB during Year 1

has meant that the NGO Partners had to work hard to recruit the trial schools, using their existing contacts and networks. They have also had to invest a lot of time supporting all their participating schools. In Poland and Italy in particular the NGOs have had to facilitate the YAGs and in Italy, Oxfam Italia had to recruit and train specialist educators to go into schools to run activities. It has been suggested by one Partner that having more formal agreements with trial schools might have reduced the number of schools which dropped out (eight) and increased the levels of engagement.

These developments should not be seen as failures – they are a reflection of the fact that a project such as SFYouth does not have the financial resources of a major government-funded programme such as the GLP and of the fact that in all four countries teachers are under a lot of pressure to deliver core curriculum teaching. Furthermore, in Poland and Italy there is far less tradition of teachers engaging in projects such as SFYouth so it was always going to be challenging to make it work. In Poland there is also increasing competition among NGOs offering projects to schools, many of which involve less commitment from the teachers. Partners have shown considerable resilience, flexibility and determination in the face of these challenges to deliver the project, more or less as intended in more or less the intended number of schools.

In Cyprus, an additional factor which helped in the recruitment of schools was the cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Culture. Because they supported the project they were prepared to actually invite schools on behalf of CARDET to take part. Following successful recruitment CARDET carried out training for all teachers and then tested the resources, introducing the curriculum materials and the YAG at the same time – with one teacher responsible for each of these in each school. It seems that the support from the Ministry and perhaps the fact that it is a smaller country meant that the relationships and collaboration with schools ran more smoothly than in the other countries.

“We also helped with practical support – such as printing materials and producing some t-shirts and caps for young people to wear at events such as festivals. Overall it worked well. We managed to pilot test everything, all the topics. We got lots of feedback from the schools. The only real problem was the short timeframe.”

There has been some additional learning around the engagement with teachers in the UK. It was found that teachers found the induction meetings and final meetings at the beginning and end of the project very useful and would have liked more. NGO Partner staff were in regular contact with teachers during the project (at least once a month) setting and chasing deadlines for actions and feedback but were only able to go into some schools to run workshop sessions. It seems that there was no correlation between the school’s performance (in terms of engagement with SFYouth) and the level of NGO support – this was much more dependent on capacity within each school. It has been suggested that there may have been more consistent engagement if one of the partners, perhaps even the lead partner had been a school rather than an NGO. My sense is that this is probably an unrealistic prospect in all of the countries and that without real proactive direction from NGOs the project would not have worked.

3.2. Have Partners met the technical requirements?

The immediate focus of the project was to produce a series of Intellectual Outputs and the work-plan⁶ in the original application detailed the activities that would be undertaken in order to achieve this. My

⁶ See Appendix

understanding is that all of these activities were carried out as planned, with a few changes in timings and locations.

The Partners have achieved varying degrees of success in meeting the project objectives and delivering the intended impacts as discussed in other sections of this report. This has meant that in some cases they have not reached the numerical targets initially set but this is more a reflection of the difficult nature of what they set out to do, the challenging operating environment they were working in and perhaps some over-ambitious targets in the first place, rather than any lack of commitment or effort. Indeed Partners have shown considerable flexibility and resilience in the face of some real challenges to deliver all of the planned elements of the project. There can be no doubt that they have produced a high quality set of Intellectual Outputs⁷ as originally planned and that some of these will continue to be accessed and used by teachers and young people beyond the life of the project.

Although I have not reviewed financial information it is my understanding that the budget is on track to be spent out as intended. Similarly, I believe that all project reporting to the EC will be completed on time.

On this basis I am happy to state that Partners have met the technical requirements of the project.

3.3. Were the data gathering methods and tools used the correct ones?

Data for measuring the impact of the SFYouth interventions were gathered by the IoE using two methods. Quantitative data were gathered through online surveys of teachers and young people and qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews and focus groups with teachers and young people.

The online surveys consisted of two questionnaires for each target group, teachers and young people. One questionnaire (the “baseline”) was administered at the beginning of their involvement with SFYouth and the second (the “impact”) at the end of their involvement. Generally speaking there was a three to four month gap between the first and second questionnaires.

The questionnaires were well designed, asking relevant and understandable questions – although they were quite long and fairly demanding.

The surveys were to be completed online and schools involved in the project were asked to manage this process – ensuring that teachers and young people completed the baseline and impact questionnaires. Unfortunately, this proved to be a major stumbling block. For reasons such as lack of time or lack of timely access to IT facilities many schools did not manage to administer the young people’s surveys effectively, with the biggest problem being that there were not enough identifiable young people who took both the baseline and impact surveys – which was of course necessary to enable the ‘before’ and ‘after’ comparisons. There were additional issues such as a lack of control over the conditions in which surveys were completed – for example the IoE, quite rightly, excluded a number of questionnaires in Poland which had been completed in less than five minutes, on the basis that such hurried responses could not have been properly thought

⁷ I have reviewed IOs 1-4 and have seen a full draft of IO 5. I have seen an early draft of IO 6 which is still being developed.

through. Further responses were lost due to administrative errors, such as in one UK school where students erroneously completed the teachers’ impact questionnaire instead of the one designed for young people.

The teachers also failed to complete baseline and impact surveys in the anticipated numbers – possibly due to lack of time and the other competing pressures of the project and their normal workload and also because there were fewer participating schools than planned. It seems that the NGO Partners did everything they could in terms of reminding and chasing the schools. However, some schools did drop out and there were fewer students participating in the project than anticipated. The result was that the IoE ended up with fewer paired (baseline and impact) surveys than had been intended:

	Targets			Actuals		
	Participating schools	Paired surveys teachers	Paired surveys young people	Participating schools	Paired surveys teachers	Paired surveys young people
Cyprus	10	20	300	7	8	66
Italy	10	20	300	6	3	17
Poland	10	20	300	8	8	25
UK	10	20	300	9	12	111
Total	40	80	1,200	30	31	219

This means that the findings which emerged from the data analysis are unfortunately less robust than they might have been. The low numbers also made it impossible to carry out comparisons between countries. These problems were particularly evident in Poland and Italy, where for cultural reasons the teachers were generally less engaged with the project and expected the NGOs to take much more of a lead.

The reasons for choosing online surveys administered by schools as the method for quantitative data collection (ability to collect large amounts of data over geographically dispersed locations using minimal NGO staff time) were sound but the reality was that the method did not work very well. My experience is that online surveys work best when a member of staff (i.e. from one of the Partners) is physically present to administer them. I appreciate that this may not have been possible in SFYouth (given the numbers of schools and the limited time available) but this is definitely something for Partners to bear in mind for future projects. It is difficult to know what could have been done differently – would it have been possible for NGO staff to be present in each school to administer the baseline and impact surveys (perhaps combining this with some other input activity)? Could teachers have been giving more training in how to administer the surveys and the importance of ensuring that the same students took both baseline and impact?

The qualitative information was collected through interviews and focus groups with teachers and young people. Although I have not seen the interview guides it is clear from the rich spread of qualitative evidence presented in the final IoE SFYouth Evaluation Report (Intellectual Output 5)⁸ that these were well designed and administered. A good number of participants took part in interviews or focus groups and produced a large range of illuminating insights which go part way to making up for the low numbers of quantitative responses.

⁸ Hunt, F. (2017) “Schools for Future Youth Evaluation Report: Developing young people as active global citizens.” London: UCL Institute of Education

	Teacher Interviews (no. of teachers involved)	Young People Focus Groups (no. of young people involved)
Cyprus	5 (10)	3 (24)
Italy	4 (9)	2 (12)
Poland	5 (10)	3 (26)
UK	6 (18)	3 (26)
Total	20 (47)	11 (88)

Although Partners have expressed frustration that the survey sample was not larger they have also stated that this element of the project has produced a much larger amount of quantitative and qualitative data than they would normally be able to gather and that they will be able to use the IoE analysis to inform their thinking on the delivery of Global Citizenship Education in the future. Given the challenges involved in gathering the survey data, all five Partners should be congratulated on this achievement. NGO Partners will also be using the tools that the IoE devised to collect data in the future too (e.g. the Learner Outcomes Matrix, Surveys and Focus Group questions).

4. QUALITY OF INTELLECTUAL OUTPUTS

IO 1 – Educational Needs Analysis

The paper “Global Citizenship & Youth Participation in Europe” was written by Douglas Bourn with support from colleagues at the UCL Institute of Education, and was published in 2016. It seeks to describe the context in which the SFYouth project is operating, both at a European level and in the four project countries. The three main sections deal with the policy and practice context, the ways in which young people engage with Global Citizenship and teachers’ perceptions of Global Citizenship Education. It does all of this very thoroughly through an extensive literature review supported by direct evidence from interviews with teachers and young people and contributions from the NGO project partners. The final section makes recommendations for the Project and more widely for the practice of Global Citizenship Education in Europe.

This is an extensive piece of academic research which identifies a number of themes and approaches which are clearly picked up in the SFYouth project, including the need to support teachers directly, to focus on the connection between learning and taking action, the need to promote skills such as critical thinking and to take advantage of curriculum opportunities whether they relate to specific topics, to Global Citizenship more generally or to Education for Sustainable Development.

CARDET have said that the Educational Needs Analysis was very useful in helping to gain interest in the project from the Ministry of Education and Culture. The resulting cooperation with the Ministry was an important success factor for the project in Cyprus. The Educational Needs Analysis was also shared with schools and teachers and because of this some additional schools asked to join the project.

IO 2 – Online teacher toolkit for YPGC and IO 3 – Online/app youth toolkit for YPGC

These were initially conceived of as two separate outputs. However, after early feedback from users that it was confusing to have two separate toolkits Partners decided to merge them into one. All of the resources are provided in each of the four project languages⁹.

While, overall the quality of the toolkit is very high there are differences in how it is perceived in the different countries. For example in the UK both Oxfam GB and teachers felt that many of the materials were not substantially new compared to what Oxfam had previously offered although there was a welcome new focus on skills-based materials (plus a few new issues including refugees, humanitarian aid and inequality) . In contrast PAH have said that all the materials are really useful and that they were particularly pleased that the toolkit included resources on climate change and health as they did not previously have resources in these areas.

One of the strongest features of the toolkit is the fact that it is so comprehensive. This was commented on in particular by CARDET:

“The toolkit is a complete package. Teachers can use it without having to do any additional work. Everything they need is there, lesson plans, videos, pictures and so on. This meant we did not have to convince teachers to use the toolkit – they could see that it was a high quality resource. And this made it easier to get approval and support from the Ministry of Education and Culture – when they saw that the toolkit was comprehensive and high quality with everything the teachers needed it was easier for them to support the project.”

The toolkit is astonishingly comprehensive. The main content is divided into five sections:

1. Global Citizenship Education

This section presents a general theoretical framework for Global Citizenship Education covering topics such as participation, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Learn-Think-Act model. The Youth Outcomes Matrix is presented and for each competence there is a detailed activity plan for teachers to use in their classroom teaching to help their students develop skills and acquire knowledge. These plans include all the information the teacher needs to carry out and evaluate the activity and provide links to further resources which can be used. In addition there is a booklet introducing participatory learning methods with example activities.

2. Youth Ambassadors Groups

This section provides background information to help teachers set up and facilitate a YAG, with information on the skills needed and concise presentations on the principle, practice and potential impact of the groups.

3. Explore Global Issues

This is the real heart of the toolkit, providing a plethora of resources across seven topic areas: Climate Change, Food, Education for All, Health, Inequality, Refugees and Humanitarian Aid. Each topic is introduced with an overview of the key issues and this is complemented by additional background information and a range of activity plans and resources, such as workshops, quizzes, presentations, critical thinking activities and suggestions on how to take action. Many of these include photos or links to films, sources of information

⁹ Resources are also available in Welsh for use in the Welsh Baccalaureate

and statistics. There are a lot of first-hand, personal stories from people around the world which are particularly powerful. Having seen and worked with a large range of development education resources over many years I can state unreservedly that these resources are first rate.

4. Skills Development

This section contains materials to support teachers in helping young people to develop a range of transversal or generic skills, such as Critical Thinking, Deciding on and Planning for Actions, Public Speaking and Working Together. These include top tips, exercises, examples (some of which are videos), materials to use in exercises and links to further resources.

5. Useful Links and References

This section presents yet more links, by topic, to further information on global citizenship methodologies, skills development and global issues.

The Partners have done an excellent job in sourcing, structuring and presenting a wealth of material. It is clear, easy to use, authoritative and engaging. As one Partner said:

“The strongest part of the project and the part which I think will last the longest is the toolkit. Many of the materials are ‘first-hand’ and are presented from the perspective of the Global South which makes them especially valuable.”

The main criticism of the toolkit was voiced by two of the Partners, namely that it was perhaps too large and therefore perhaps overwhelming for both teachers and young people trying to access it. They wondered whether the Partners had got slightly carried away, due to the breadth of their joint expertise and had not exercised enough editorial discipline:

“The content is good but it also huge, with the result that some things are hard to find.”

While it is true that there is a great deal of content and this could be somewhat daunting, my impression is that it is well structured and that the benefits of being comprehensive outweigh any issues there may be with size. It does require a certain investment of time to engage with the toolkit but it was not designed for the casual observer but for those who really want to make use of it. One partner also wondered whether the toolkit was too wordy with not enough audio-visual content but I also feel that this is overly harsh.

IO 4 – Online sharing space for YPGC

As well as hosting the toolkits the website was intended to provide a platform for teachers and young people to share their views and experiences.

After a lot of time and effort had been put into developing the teachers’ forum space it transpired that it was just not being used so Partners decided to get rid of it.

Similarly, the Youth Wall which was intended to provide a space for young people to share (via the website or the dedicated app) received disappointingly low numbers of users and relatively few posts. Partners believe there were two main reasons for this – firstly that young people prefer to use other existing channels for networking, such as Face Book and WhatsApp. There is anecdotal evidence that young people involved in SFYouth were indeed networking (locally) in relation to the project using these platforms. The second reason for the low usage seems to have been the need for users to go through an onerous registration and logging

in process. This was driven mainly by Oxfam GB's need to comply with its own guidelines on the protection of young people online (which are considerably stricter than the norms in the other three countries). A third reason mentioned by Partners was that language may also have been a barrier.

Some Partner staff feel that given longer it would have been possible to encourage more young people to use the Youth Wall but that this would then have created a problem of having to spend more time on moderating the content. Others disagreed, feeling that it was unlikely to succeed:

“The Youth Wall was the main weakness of the project. It was not used by the young people, although teachers sometimes put things up. This failure was not just due to the barrier of logging on, but because the young people are already using other social media.”

IO 5 – Academic Report on YPGC

The IoE Project Evaluation Report (Hunt, 2017) is very thorough. It presents and analysis the quantitative and qualitative data very clearly, offering reasonable and insightful explanations for why there was impact in some areas and not in others. I have drawn heavily on it in the following Section 5 Effectiveness and Impact. Partners should take some time to consider how to apply its findings to their future work.

IO 6 – Policy and Practice Recommendations for YPGC

The IoE is leading on the development of these recommendations. I have seen an early draft, awaiting comment from the other partners. The recommendations seem clear, well-founded and appropriate, urging policy-makers to become better-informed about global citizenship initiatives, to recognise their importance, to place young people at the core of initiatives and to support teachers, researchers and organisations across Europe. The key aspect will be how well partners are able to disseminate the recommendations and influence policy makers to take note of them.

5. EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACT

5.1. Did the project achieve its stated objectives?

I will discuss the effectiveness primarily in terms of the three main project objectives. However, the targets and actual data recorded are categorised in terms of the three Impacts and therefore I discuss these briefly first.

Impact 1: improvements in the 4 school needs as a result of the better use of YPGC in formal/informal education in partner countries and across EU

The four “school needs” are:

- improvement in use of more relevant and inspiring curricula and student centred pedagogies by teachers using project tools
- improvement in motivation of youth (esp. at risk of dropping out) using project tools
- improvement in transversal skills and competences development by youth using project tools
- increase in civic engagement of youth using project tools

The evidence for assessing the extent of the project's impact in these areas comes primarily from the comprehensive and well-documented research led by the IoE as part of the project (Hunt, 2017), based on both quantitative and qualitative data gathered from teachers and young people as described in Section 3.3 above. This evidence is supplemented by feedback from the NGO Partners, gathered by the IoE and in my own interviews.

I discuss this evidence in more detail in the sections below, relating to the three project objectives. The quantitative data shows whether there was a statistically significant¹⁰ shift in teachers' and young people's answers to specific questions between the baseline and impact surveys. As mentioned above, the sample size of paired survey responses was much lower than intended, with the teachers' sample size typically between 23 and 31 and the young people's sample size usually just above 200 but sometimes lower. It is very unfortunate that it proved impossible to gather paired data from a larger sample because it means that the findings which emerge from the excellent analysis carried out by the IoE are not as robust as they would otherwise have been.

The IoE (Hunt, 2017) also point out that there is some difficulty with the issue of "causality", particularly in the UK where teachers were already working on Global Citizenship and where in some schools there was already a YAG – in other words it is impossible to be sure that the measurable impacts resulted solely from involvement in the SFYouth project. I feel that this is also more generally true – particularly when it comes to impact on the more generic things like "transversal skills" – there could well be other factors at play and therefore impact cannot be attributed solely to SFYouth. This issue of attribution is a common problem in the evaluation of Development Education, Awareness Raising or Advocacy projects. There is no simple solution – it is basically impossible to attribute changes in skills, attitudes and behaviours to one specific cause and what we normally do is to look for evidence of "contribution". The IoE's evidence presented below in relation to Objectives 1 and 2 shows that there has been a range of impacts towards meeting the four "school needs". It is reasonable to assume, particularly in the light of substantial and wide-ranging qualitative information, that the SFYouth project interventions have made a significant contribution to these impacts.

Impact 2: 2,000 teachers and 50,000 youth from 500 schools use YPGC by using the project tools and online social network

Impact 1 is about the changes in teachers and young people brought about by their participation in SFYouth and their use of the wide range of materials and resources. Impact 2 is about the widespread take-up of those materials and resources across the four project countries and beyond.

In terms of the numbers directly involved in the project, SFYouth did not quite meet the targets it had set as a number of schools, having signed up, then dropped out. Nevertheless, a good number of schools, teachers

¹⁰ "For the most part analysis takes the form of paired-sample T-tests which compare the mean response between baseline and impact data and identifies the statistical significance of the change if there is any ... statistical significance in terms of impact requires a T-test score of ≤ 0.05 ." Hunt, F. (2017) "Schools for Future Youth Evaluation Report: Developing young people as active global citizens." London: UCL Institute of Education

and young people were reached. Instead of 40 schools as intended, the project ran in 31 schools. It was hoped that each school would set up and run a YAG. In fact 29 schools had YAGs and these involved a total of approximately 400 young people. Similarly, each school was supposed to test the materials in at least one curriculum session and in fact the materials were tested in at least 34 separate classes, involving a total of approximately 1,000 students. It is also the case that the project managed to involve teachers from a wide range of subjects including art, maths, science and English as well as the more predictable geography and religious studies. These are good, solid results.

In terms of the wider uptake of resources, the project set itself some extremely ambitious targets. It was intended that 500 schools would use the online toolkits and social network – 100 from each partner country plus 100 from other EU countries. An assumption was made that on average each school would translate into 4 teachers and 100 young people being involved, giving total figures for those using the tools and social network of 2,000 teachers and 50,000 young people.

Unfortunately, the targets were set in terms that are not readily measurable. It has not been possible to identify how many schools have accessed the online resources and social network. Rather, it is only possible to see how many “unique users” of the SFYouth website there have been. Because the initial, planned division of the toolkits into a teachers’ toolkit and a young people’s toolkit was dropped on the basis of feedback from early users and instead just one toolkit has been produced, it is not possible to disaggregate the visitors to the website into teachers and young people. It is not possible to tell whether a visitor to the website has actually “used” the tools. It is possible to see how many people visited the resources section of the website and this may give some indication of their interest in using the materials.

There are some good reasons why this more useful data is not available. As mentioned, the two toolkits were merged into one based on user feedback. It was also felt that requiring users to register and create an account with school details etc could create a barrier and that it was more important to make the site easy to access and make all the resources freely available. This prioritisation of easy usage over data-gathering was the right decision but it makes it hard to assess progress against the original targets.

Oxfam GB has calculated that through all their dissemination activities Partners have reached over 15,000 stakeholders (teachers, young people, NGOs, policy-makers, GCE Consortia, academics). In addition to this there have been 11,773 unique website users and 968 users of the SFYouth app. This means that in addition to those directly involved in the project through their schools, SFYouth has reached approximately 28,000 people and a large majority of these are likely to be teachers and young people. Furthermore, the website users registered 11,917 hits on the Resource Bank (later simply via the “Explore Global Issues” tab) suggesting that for many users their primary interest was to look at and/or make use of the resources. And there were 127 members registered to use the Youth Wall who added 551 posts, 292 photos and 17 videos.

The figure of 28,000 people “reached”, while quite some way short of the targets of 2,000 teachers and 50,000 young people, is still a substantial number – although we cannot say for certain how many of them actually used SFYouth resources. Nevertheless, Partners have been engaged in a wide number of dissemination activities over the last few months of the project and they have expressed the view that while 50,000 in the lifetime of the project was over-ambitious (especially as they concede that the dissemination started too late) it is still realistic to think that over time this sort of total will have accessed SFYouth materials. Given Partners’ plans for sustaining impact (which I discuss in Section 5.4 below) I feel that the following claim made by one Partner is probably reasonable:

“We must be realistic about impact. I think the materials can reach many thousands of young people through teacher downloads, but it will be not be possible for us to do follow up with individual schools and YAGs. We will try to track the numbers, and while I always thought that 50,000 would be very hard to achieve within the lifetime of the project, I do think we will get there over time.”

Impact 3 - improvement in the scale of support for YPGC offered by the partner organisations

As mentioned above, the mapping of Results, Impacts and Objectives to each other is not made completely clear in the project documentation. It is easy to see that achieving Objectives 1 and 2 would make a contribution to delivering Impacts 1 and 2. However, it is not clear to me how Impact 3 relates to the project objectives. It seems in fact to be an additional and worthwhile objective in its own right (which if met would potentially contribute to Partners’ future delivery of YPGC).

When asked to rate their performance in this area two NGO Partners felt that they had done well and two felt they had done moderately well. My sense is that while the “scale of support” may not have yet been significantly increased there has definitely been impact in this area. It may be better to think of this in terms of capacity building.

All the Partners have spoken about the fact that they have learned from each other and from the project in terms of future work with schools. All four NGO Partners are planning to continue their work with YAGs. For Oxfam GB, this is an expansion of an already existing programme, with an aim to have 100 active groups by 2019. Oxfam Italy has incorporated YAGs into its departmental strategic plan for 2017-2020 and will be using them in new projects. CARDET is also looking at expanding the use of YAGs as part of their core programme and in conjunction with the Ministry of Education and Culture in Cyprus. PAH also wants to create more YAGs in both primary and secondary schools in Poland and to use the concept in future projects. This is a real endorsement of this methodological approach.

Three of the NGOs (Oxfam GB, Oxfam Italy and CARDET) are cooperating on a new Erasmus+ project called Future Youth School Forums and have commented that they will take the learning from SFYouth into this new project. One of the Partners in particular feels that SFYouth has been a very important building block for them organisationally:

“This project has been a driver for us to work in a more structured way with schools, so it has really added value to our work. It has enabled us to develop the YAG concept and has changed the way we work with schools, leading to more active participation of young people. SFYouth was just the beginning for us – it will not stop here.”

Other significant comments from Partners included:

“I think transnational projects are really important for partners in different countries to learn from each other and I am really grateful that we had this opportunity.”

“We learned a lot from each other, whether it was watching how others deliver sessions to young people, getting fresh perspectives on Global Citizenship Education or learning more about how to create effective resources and the technical requirements of sharing these online.”

These are all signs that skills and knowledge have been transferred and that capacity has been built and I think it is reasonable to conclude that the project has significantly enhanced all of the NGO Partners' ability to offer YPGC in future.

Objective 1 – Develop innovative support for teachers to use YPGC

It is clear from the quantitative and qualitative evidence analysed by the IoE (Hunt, 2017) that Partners made good progress towards achieving this objective. Teachers and young people were asked a large number of questions before and after the project under a number of headings. There was a statistically significant change in their responses to a good number of questions showing that an impact had been made in those areas. This is supported by evidence from interviews and focus groups and also from my interviews with Partners. When asked to score their performance against objectives, all Partners reported that they had performed well or reasonably well against Objective 1.

An important factor in the success in this area has been the comprehensive nature of the toolkit. One Partner said:

“The curriculum in our country is not very focussed on global issues, so having a package which covered a wide range of topics with all of the necessary resources has made it much easier for teachers to introduce these issues to students – this is why they have been so keen to keep on using the materials.”

A teacher in the UK said:

“I used some of the resources in lessons and they were good. A colleague also used some of the materials and found them very good. In particular the materials showing issues faced by people from other countries and the fact that these were real stories made our students want to engage, they became more enthusiastic, more responsible and more confident in their opinions. Because the students could use the materials as the basis for presenting to their peers, SFYouth has helped to grow our YAG from 55 to 200 members.”

Type and frequency of activities in schools

There was no statistically significant change in the frequency of lessons or activities or in the number of hours teachers aimed at developing young people as global citizens. There were however significantly more opportunities for young people to develop knowledge of global issues, to work in small discussion groups and to be involved in pupil-led learning. Teachers also used more real life examples and case studies. There was no statistically significant impact on other types of activity such as “young people giving ideas and opinions” or “opportunities for young people to think critically”.

Pupil-led learning was new for many teachers and young people (especially in Poland and Italy) and was welcomed. It most often took the form of awareness-raising among their peers through newsletters, assemblies and presentations.

Teachers' perception of global citizenship and the skills and values needed by young people

There was very little impact on teachers' views as to the skills and values needed by young people to be global citizens. When asked which qualities best described an active global citizen teachers' responses (before and after the project) were heavily biased towards having knowledge of global issues.

Teachers' confidence in their knowledge and ability

There seems to have been mixed impact in this area. There was a statistically significant increase in teachers' confidence in their "knowledge of global issues" and their "understanding of how to teach young people to be global citizens". Yet they were no more confident to "incorporate global citizenship into the curriculum" or "apply youth participation methodologies into their teaching". This fits the finding above that teachers only made limited changes to their pedagogical approach. There was qualitative evidence that teachers developed new relationships with their students, giving them more responsibility and getting to know them on a broader, less formal basis.

Youth Ambassador Groups

Youth Ambassador Groups (YAGs) were a distinctive feature of the SFYouth project, marking it out from other citizenship education, and were new in Cyprus, Italy and Poland and in some UK schools. They usually took place outside of school hours and the young people were supported to take more responsibility and leadership, particularly in discussions and then in developing actions.

YAGs seem to have been very popular. They were best suited to the Learn-Think-Act approach in that the initial use of SFYouth materials stimulated further discussions and then planning for actions as described by this teacher from Cyprus:

"We had several meetings with the members of the YAG during April and May. We first had discussions based on two videos that we watched, one on 'The broken food system' and the other on 'Climate Change'... Then we started thinking about what activities we could organise."

YAGs produced a good range of actions¹¹, from producing posters and t-shirts to making presentations and running assemblies in school, from creating a website to organising a picnic or a flash-mob in public spaces, attending a lobbying event and contacting politicians. The majority of actions were some form of awareness-raising in school though many of these employed innovative methods. The actions that took place in public spaces or involved politicians seem to have made a big impact on the young people. For many of them the YAG was their first chance to get involved in any kind of action. They really valued this, as illustrated by this comment from a young person in Cyprus:

"In the past we didn't have the chance to learn in depth about global issues, and we never had the opportunity to take part in the decision making process of organising activities related to those issues."

In the UK and Cyprus YAGs were facilitated by teachers but in Poland and Italy the NGO Partners had to take the lead in creating and/or facilitating them. Partners have pointed out that while the teachers took less of a lead in these countries, there was still a high level of activity for the young people (both through YAGs and in the curriculum classes) and that this should not be overlooked even though the teachers may have been less engaged. In Poland, after PAH had helped to set up the YAGs the teachers were involved in the regular meetings. In Italy, the specialist educators also had very close contact with their schools as did the Project Team at Oxfam Italy meaning that the engagement and delivery of actions within the YAGs was actually very successful.

¹¹ See Appendix for tables showing examples of YAG actions from each country

Objective 2 - Develop innovative support for youth to use YPGC

This is the area in which the project has had the greatest impact. It is the objective against which Partners feel they have made the most progress, rating their performance as good or very good. There is a great deal of evidence from the IoE research (Hunt, 2017), across a great many questions to show that there has been statistically significant impact in many (although not all) areas and this is again backed up with qualitative evidence from interviews and focus groups and from my own interviews. The following comments from two of the Partners are typical:

“Some of the strongest evidence of the impact on the young people was at our National Multiplier event. It was amazing to see 13 to 16 year olds presenting to a large audience including teachers and policy makers in a way that showed just how much they believed in themselves and how comfortable they were communicating their beliefs and trying to convince other people to change their attitudes.”

“We saw a real change in the young people, particularly through their involvement in the YAGs. Many started off not really wanting to participate but ended up very engaged. One young woman changed from being very shy and barely audible to being the project manager for a campaign action in the city centre. Another young man was already confident but has learned so much about NGOs and vulnerable people that he says he want to be an advocate with an NGO either professionally or as a volunteer.”

Young people’s knowledge of global issues and political processes

There was a statistically significant increase in young people’s perception of their knowledge and understanding of some global issues, such as “issues that affect people across the world, e.g. health, education, climate change” and recognising that “some people in the world are more powerful than others”. This was backed up by a statistically significant increase in teachers’ assessment that their students “have good knowledge of global or social issues.” This was also true for young people’s perception of their understanding of politics such as “the ways people can take part in political processes”. There were other questions such as “the rights people have in the world” and “the reasons for global poverty” where there was no impact on young people’s perception of their knowledge.

Qualitative evidence also shows numerous examples of specific areas of learning, such as the interconnectedness of global issues and a wider awareness of the problems facing other people. When teachers were asked what the greatest impact of SFYouth has been on their students, the highest ranked answer (74%) was “the young people have better knowledge and awareness of global, social and political issues”.

Confidence, communication, thinking critically and other skills

Young people were asked a large number of questions relating to these transversal skills, with some additional survey evidence being gathered from teachers. The strongest impacts were in the areas of confidence and presenting to others with young people and teachers reporting an increase in response to a number of questions (though not all). This was reinforced by interview comments about improvements in these areas through increased knowledge and being involved in activities, especially involvement in the YAG, discussions with peers and presenting to other students inside school or carrying out actions outside of school. The following comments (from a UK teacher and one of the Partners respectively) were typical:

“...even with my youngsters (with special needs) who need an awful lot of support to access anything, to just trust them to do something was really important. This morning, for my two delegates to get

up and read in front of however many people, I've just been blown away and absolutely shocked. One of those individuals, literally, I can't get him to speak loud enough in class and to hear him do that today was just phenomenal."

"One of the students I did a focus group with – the teacher had asked them to pick a topic, they picked education, their teacher gave them three classes to plan and deliver and they adapted some SFYouth materials to do this. At the feedback meeting the student said that as a result of this they now wanted to become a teacher."

There was only limited impact on critical thinking, reported by teachers. Although some qualitative evidence suggests that some students benefitted in terms of their ability to reflect and question information, one of the Partners feels that the SFYouth materials perhaps did not place enough emphasis on critical thinking.

The survey evidence showed no impact on young people's competence in areas such as planning and working with others, but interviews and focus groups did suggest that many students had indeed made considerable progress in these areas. There seems to have been no impact on creativity which may be due to the fact that the project produced such a wide range of high quality resources, leaving little room for extra creativity.

Values young people think are important

There was a limited impact on values with a statistically significant increase in the importance young people attached to "being healthy and safe" and a statistically significant decrease in the importance they attached to "money and owning things - having money and things like a car, TV, house". Otherwise there was no impact on a long list of other values, whether those associated with global citizenship (such as empathy and making a difference) or egocentric values (such as enjoying life). There was not a strong emphasis on values in the materials and it appears that this was not a prominent feature of teaching or discussions. The IoE report that it was an area mentioned very little in the interviews and focus groups.

Young people's thinking about global issues and global citizenship

There was clear impact on young people's interest in global issues and their sense that global issues affect them. The survey data was supported by qualitative evidence with young people talking about being proud of themselves and expressing a wish to continue to learn about global issues. It is therefore perhaps surprising that there was no statistically significant increase in their desire or motivation to take action to make the world fairer or more sustainable. The IoE's explanation seems reasonable, namely that the baseline responses to these two questions were quite high and that young people had a narrow sense of what "taking action" means which excluded awareness-raising.

The surveys show that young people's sense of connection to local, national or international communities did not change as a result of their participation in SFYouth, perhaps because the main focus for taking action was in school. Although some qualitative evidence did suggest an increased sense of connection it also showed that some young people experienced a heightened sense of difference (realising how lucky they are compared to others). Their sense of agency did not change according to the survey data. However the qualitative evidence suggests that a good number (though not all) of young people did develop an increased sense of agency through SFYouth. This was reinforced when they took action particularly if this involved an outside actor such as their MP responding to them.

Young people's actions and motivations

The quantitative data showed a positive impact on young people being involved in awareness-raising or trying to influence others on global issues but no impact on their personal behaviour in terms of ethical shopping, recycling or volunteering. However this is perhaps not surprising given that the main focus for action was usually in school. There was no particular focus in SFYouth on changing individual behaviour. This pattern was reinforced through many comments from the interviews and focus groups, such as this from a Cypriot young person:

"We now follow the learning path "Learn-Think-Act". The most important part is the Act. We didn't know how we could act after learning something. Using the SFYouth Toolkit we read some examples of real actions and we understood how we can take actions to raise awareness and help people that are in need."

There was no survey evidence from the young people of a positive impact on their motivation for or enjoyment of their school work, although teachers did report a positive impact on motivation. Similarly young people reported no impact from their involvement with SFYouth on their enjoyment of school, their motivation to get involved in activities and actions or on skills such as critical thinking or confidence. These findings are at odds with some of the evidence from other questions discussed above.

Objective 3 - Influence school systems to increase opportunities for YPGC

This is the area where the project has been weakest in terms of delivering on objectives. There were relatively few activities planned in this area and accordingly little has been done. There is also variation between the four countries although this is the objective where all Partners rate their performance as weakest.

It is in Cyprus and Italy that the greatest impact has been made. In Cyprus CARDET cooperated closely with the Ministry of Education and Culture who were very supportive of the project. There is the intention to make some small amendments to the structure of the SFYouth materials to make them suitable for inclusion on the official Ministry of Education and Culture platform for teachers to use. Discussions around this have already started and CARDET are optimistic that this will happen given that the Ministry is always interested in having new methodologies and good quality materials to promote to teachers. They are also hoping to collaborate in identifying some students who took part in YAGs to do some peer to peer education with young people in other schools – to spread the ideas from SFYouth.

Oxfam Italy is hopeful that the considerable work they have put into their recent national multiplier event will continue to offer opportunities for engaging with and influencing policy-makers. They managed to convince both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education to take part in a debate on the topic of "How can public institutions and CSOs effectively collaborate for quality education for all". The event was a success, attended by around 50 participants including CSOs, researchers, NGOs, policy makers and EC representatives. It fostered dialogue between various coalitions including Concord Italy, GCAP Italy, GENE and ASviS with the aim of speaking with one voice for the implementation of a national strategy on SDG4 in general and GCE in particular. The stakeholders also committed to continue supporting the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education in the creation of an "inter-ministerial thematic table" for the national implementation of GCE.

In the UK the only tangible example is the work which Oxfam GB is doing to map the SFYouth materials onto various levels and topics of the Welsh Baccalaureate which will mean that teachers will be able to use them to deliver specific parts of the curriculum. It is too soon to know what the take-up will be but Oxfam is also trying to influence Welsh Government policy by using SFYouth materials along with other Oxfam resources.

PAH in Poland does not feel that they had enough access to the Ministry of Education to have any influence, saying that the Ministry is quite detached from teachers on the ground. PAH thinks that it might be more realistic to have some influence at a more local level and they have plans to introduce the SFYouth materials to some teacher training institutions in the future.

These contrasting experiences in different countries are illustrated by the following comments, one from a Partner and the second from a policy-maker:

“Our impact on the national educational system has been minimal to zero. Through the multiplier events it is possible that there may have been some indirect impact but it will be impossible for us to quantify. It shows that we need to collaborate with other organisations such as Think Global for example if we are to have more chance of influencing the education system and policy-makers.”

“From our perspective this project has been a good experience. We need projects like this to enrich the whole idea of Global Citizenship Education. Some elements, like the YAGs, were pioneering. The materials were very comprehensive and very good, especially as they were translated into all four languages. We really hope that some of the young people will continue to be ambassadors to other schools.”

The IoE organised a successful academic conference jointly with GENE on the subject of “Evidence Based Research for Policy Development on Global Education” which may indirectly have some influence on policy although it would be extremely difficult to attribute. This was part of the project’s “international multiplier event” and did create opportunities for influencing and networking. For example, meetings at the conference led to additional funding from GENE for the SFYouth Italian national multiplier event and helped to get Italy more plugged into the GENE network.

Finally, the project is developing a set of policy and practice recommendations based on the research findings and these will present an opportunity for further advocacy and influencing work.

5.2. Which methods and approaches worked well? (Were there examples of best practice?)

Partners have noted a number of elements that they feel worked really well, all of which seem to be supported by the quantitative and qualitative evidence.

The first was that the project introduced participatory learning into the school curriculum and for many teachers and young people this was new. Both groups seem to have really enjoyed these new ways of working and in particular the chance to establish new (more informal) relationships between teachers and students. As one Partner said:

“What young people found most motivating and exciting was not just the topic and the content but more the way in which they were being encouraged to engage with their teachers and with each

other – so the peer to peer education, learning new skills, critical thinking, running assemblies etc. There was more impact in these areas than on any specific topic.”

It seems that it was important to have the two elements of the project, the classroom materials and the activities (even if teachers did not always use them in exactly the way intended) and for these to be integrated as a whole package worked really well. This worked well in both contexts – but it was easier for the teacher to adopt a more collaborative approach in the YAG extra-curriculum space. This is supported by evidence from the interviews and focus groups which suggest that there was greater impact on those young people who were involved in a YAG, such as this comment from Cyprus:

“The members of the YAG were active participants in the activities organised in the context of their group and they learned how they can organise similar actions, aiming to raise awareness on global citizenship. The students that participated in the curriculum activities have also understood how they can get involved in similar actions but they will need more guidance in order to be able to get involved.”

The YAGs, although supported differently in the different countries seem to have been very successful and very popular, with all four Partners planning to increase their future use of this approach. They were the main catalyst for students to take action and seem to have made the biggest impact on the young people.

Finally, the toolkit is a very impressive achievement. The resources are high quality and the fact that the toolkit is so comprehensive, providing teachers with everything they need and the fact that all the materials were translated into all four languages means that they have been well used and are likely to continue to be used.

The YAG and the SFYouth toolkit can definitely be seen as examples of best practice.

5.3. Which methods and approaches did not work well? Why, what can be learned?

One factor which worked against the project was timing. Partners have noted several aspects to this and with the benefit of hindsight, they would try to organise the timing of future projects differently. Receiving the Erasmus+ funding in September meant that Partners were starting to recruit schools after the school year had already started for them to participate from the following January. It transpires that many schools would have found it easier to participate more fully if they had a longer lead-in time – in other words to start planning during the previous school year. As one Partner said:

“Asking schools in September if they would participate from the following January they often said that they would have needed an additional six months’ notice. So looking again at timelines would be something to think about in future.”

There is also a large amount of qualitative evidence to suggest that schools would have liked to be involved for a longer period of time and that the relatively short length of the project (three to four months) meant they did not have enough time to do all the curriculum teaching and/or YAG activities that they would have liked to do (Hunt, 2017).

Finally, the fact that schools involvement was in the period from January to June meant that it coincided with the run up to and the sitting of exams, when teachers and young people understandably had other priorities. One Partner commented:

“The basic approach of testing the materials then amending them, testing again and amending again each year was valid but the timeline was very tight - maybe we should have allowed more time for amending each time. We also ended up having to test materials in schools in January and February which is a very busy time for schools so this was very difficult.”

Something which all Partners agree on is that having good relationships with key members of staff in schools was an important factor in the success of the project. This was a challenging area for SFYouth, where the project came up against barriers such as the lack of teacher time and lack of curriculum space or the teachers lacking the confidence to take on the project. Some schools dropped out of the project and some teachers did not fully engage despite the NGO partners investing a lot of time. Partners have reflected that this aspect of the project would probably have worked better if they had delivered more formal and in-depth training to teachers at the beginning of their involvement to help them prepare for their engagement in SFYouth. One Partner wondered whether an additional factor here may be the fact that so much time was invested in producing the excellent materials that not enough attention was paid in general to engaging schools.

As discussed earlier, the online sharing spaces for teachers and young people (the teacher’s forum and the Youth Wall) failed because not enough people used them. Although the idea was good (and indeed some young people who did use the Wall said that they really liked being able to exchange ideas with students in other countries), the reality is that it is extremely difficult to compete with commercial social media. In the case of the Youth Wall the complicated registration and log-on processes introduced for protection purposes simply made it unattractive to most of the intended audience.

5.4. How sustainable is the impact achieved likely to be and how can partners maximise this?

Partners have conceded that their dissemination work started later than they would ideally have wished, mainly due to the large amount of time it took to perfect the final version of all the materials. Having said this, there is evidence that all Partners have undertaken a wide range of dissemination activity, from successful national multiplier events and the international conference, to numerous local events, presentations, mailings, case studies, blogs etc. These efforts are helping to reach a wider audience and should be maintained over the immediate future.

The impact of the project will be sustained by the continued use of the materials and approaches. All Partners have said that they intend to bring SFYouth materials into their ongoing resource offering and to actively include them where relevant in other projects. SFYouth materials have already been included in a successful bid for new project funding in Italy. All Partners intend to expand and develop their use of YAGs. Other planned actions include using SFYouth materials as part of a teacher-training initiative (including in Erasmus+ in-service training for teachers), supporting YAGs to send ambassadors into other schools, adapting the materials for use in primary schools, further dissemination through newsletters and adapting materials for use in foreign language teaching. All of these are good initiatives and increase the likelihood that SFYouth will in time reach the 2,000 teachers and 50,000 young people it had targeted.

I agree with Partners' claim that the materials will continue to be relevant for the next few years. There is already evidence of continuing demand for the materials as these comments from Partners show:

"We have already had feedback from participants at our national multiplier event. Eleven schools have said they are interested in using the materials next year. I think the materials will be relevant for the next 3-5 years and we are confident they will continue to be used. Our policy is to keep all these materials updated and live and accessible on our website for this period of time. Also in our end of project focus groups teachers have said they want to continue to support their YAGs even though the project has finished."

"The toolkit is of huge value and will be useful over at least the next five years, especially as it ties in with the SDGs. At recent dissemination events where I presented the materials to around 100 teachers, many of them came back to me saying that they found the material very useful and that they will be using the website."

Furthermore, the IoE will publish Intellectual Outputs 5 and 6 in a range of academic and professional journals and will promote the materials through the Development Education Research Centre's website and mailing list to over 2,000 contacts around the world as well as to future MA and PhD students.

In terms of the schools, teachers and young people who took part in the project it is impossible to say how sustained the impact will be. There is clearly evidence to show that some teachers have adapted aspects of their teaching style and that many more have increased their confidence to teach Global Citizenship. Similarly, many of the young people have gained new knowledge, learned new skills and been involved in taking action for the first time. How lasting these impacts will be on those individuals, to what extent they will dictate their future attitudes and behaviours and to what extent this is solely attributable to SFYouth it is not possible to say.

I believe that the more lasting impact of SFYouth is likely to be in the way in which the Partners apply the learning to future projects and to their future provision of Global Citizenship Education and in particular to their future collaboration with schools and teachers. One Partner captured this well:

"During the implementation of the project we found it difficult to focus on sustainability but this is something we are now able to pay attention to. We are developing a new strategy to work with schools on active citizenship and Global Citizenship Education, building on the relationships and materials developed through SFYouth, including helping schools to develop and then independently maintain YAGs. The Future Youth School Forums project offers an excellent opportunity for us to consolidate our learning."

Finally, Partners should consider how to make best use of the IoE project Evaluation Report and in particular the Policy and Practice Recommendations once these are complete.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The SFYouth project has largely achieved two of its three objectives and made significant progress in two of the three impact areas and reasonable progress in the third. In these terms the project can be deemed to have been a success.

There is good evidence that the project developed innovative support for teachers to use YPGC (Objective 1). Teachers have amended their teaching approach by, for example, increasing the amount of work done in small discussion groups and the amount of pupil-led learning. They have improved their confidence in their own knowledge of global issues and have worked well with students to plan and implement actions related to their learning. This has particularly been the case through YAGs, although in Poland and Italy it was necessary for the NGO Partners to take the lead in facilitating these.

Similarly, there is a great deal of evidence to show that the project developed innovative support for youth to use YPGC (Objective 2). Young people have increased their interest in and knowledge and understanding of global issues and have gained in confidence, in the ability to present to others and to a certain extent in their ability to think critically. While there has been little impact on their behaviour as consumers many of them have enjoyed getting involved in actions related to the learning they have done on global issues. These actions have mainly involved awareness-raising activities and peer to peer presentations within their schools but some were also involved in raising public awareness or engaging with politicians.

There has been limited progress towards influencing school systems (Objective 3), although there has been some promising engagement with policy-makers in Cyprus and Italy. There are still some opportunities to build on this through the dissemination of the Policy and Practice Recommendations when complete.

The evidence relating to the achievement of Objectives 1 and 2 has shown that the project has done well in terms of meeting the four school needs (Impact 1). Teachers and young people have been motivated to use the project materials and approaches and although there is no evidence relating to those at risk of dropping out, there is plenty of evidence to show that using the materials and the participatory methods promoted by the project (in particular the Youth Ambassador Groups) has led to a significant increase in the civic engagement of young people in relation to global issues.

The project has not reached the ambitious targets of 2,000 teachers and 50,000 young people it set for attracting those not directly involved to use the materials (Impact 2). However, overall it has reached around 28,000 people and there is a good chance that over the next few years this number will rise substantially. There is evidence to show that the capacity of all the NGO Partners has been strengthened and that they will use this to enhance their ongoing support for YPGC (Impact 3).

The project has produced an impressive array of Intellectual Outputs with the SFYouth toolkit being of especially high quality which means that it is very likely to go on being used by Partners and teachers in particular.

Some learning to note for future projects centres around the following:

- trialling materials and methodologies with schools requires a longer timeframe and a longer lead-in time
- more in-depth training for teachers at the beginning of the project would pay dividends in terms of their ongoing engagement and confidence to use materials
- it is very difficult to gather large amounts of online data through schools, (especially across language and geographical borders) – support through training for teachers may help but the only way to be sure of good outcomes is to administer surveys in person, which in itself presents a challenge for the organisations involved in terms of staff time
- creating project-based online sharing applications is time-consuming and they do not get well used by the intended target audience
- dissemination to attract more users is very time consuming

Beyond these specific points and the more detailed suggestions included in the discussion above, my main recommendation is for Partners to implement what they have already said they intend to, namely to learn from the experience of SFYouth, to build on the research findings and to use this to inform the development of their strategies for working with teachers and young people. They should also make every effort to exploit the Policy and Practice Recommendations as an opportunity for engaging with policy-makers.

7. APPENDIX

7.1. Work-plan of activities from the project application

This means across the whole project, the following work phases will be used:

1. Preparation (Sep 14 – Jan 15)

Capturing partners current expertise for sharing with each other/hub schools – including Future Workshop methodology and Youth Ambassadors

2. Exchange (Jan 15)

Sharing this practice through an experiential training event with 4 hub school teachers (transnational learning exchange 1) in Italy.

3. Development (Feb 15 – Aug 15)

Based on the exchange of practice, partners and key stakeholders (hub schools) will apply and use methodologies in their own country to co-develop the main content for each IOs.

4. Draft IOs (Sep 15 – Dec 15)

Using the content co-developed by partners and key stakeholders, lead partners for each IO will create draft versions of the IOs.

5. Induction (Jan 16)

A second experiential training and sharing event (transnational learning exchange 2) in Cyprus with project staff and hub school teachers and youth. This will induct and train participants to use & share the draft IOs.

6. Trialling (Feb 16 – Aug 16)

Draft IOs will then be trialled in hub and also 10 trial schools to test them and gather feedback.

7. Finalisation (Sep 16 – Dec 16)

Based on the feedback from the trials, lead partners for each IO lead will review and amend the draft IOs to create final versions for their final dissemination and multiplication.

8. Dissemination (Jan 17 – Jun 17)

Based on dissemination plans IOs will be shared and disseminated with both target 1 and target 2 groups and other key education stakeholders regionally and nationally, supported by national multiplication events and one European transnational multiplication event.

9. Closure (Jul 17 – Aug 17)

Final review and evaluation of the project, to assess the achievement of the project objectives and build future sustainability.

7.2. Examples of YAG actions

Cyprus

Topic	YAG 'Action'	Space
Climate change	Posters for awareness-raising to students and teachers. Designed T-shirts for themselves. Cake sale.	School and Red Cross Day event
Refugees and migrants	Photo-shoot and posters for awareness-raising. Presentation of posters to whole school.	School
Various	Website: https://sfyouthgymakropoleos.wordpress.com/	

Italy

Topic	YAG 'Action'	Space
Climate change and link to inequalities	Social action in the city centre: awareness-raising about the causes and consequences of climate change; measuring people's carbon footprint; discussions on reducing carbon footprint.	Public space
Citizenship and food security.	The final action was a flash mob that took place in Expo Milan 2015	Public space

Poland

Topic	YAG 'Action'	Space
Inequality and climate change	Peer-led learning for fellow students using resources	School
Fair Trade	Picnic with Fair Trade products to raise awareness with members of the public about Fair Trade. Young people handed out postcards and booklets to members of the public and asked them to try the Fair Trade products.	Public

UK

Topic	YAG 'Action'	Space
Refugees Education	Prepared and delivered assembly. Peer taught in Citizenship class and Y7 Send my friend to school.	School
Climate change	Attended climate lobby in UK Parliament, met MP and asked questions. Wrote letter to MPs about climate change.	Public / political
Wealth, climate change.	Taught assemblies and peer taught younger classes on wealth. Designed films on climate change. Wrote to their MP.	School

7.3. References

Bourn, D. (2016) Global Citizenship & Youth Participation in Europe. London: UCL Institute of Education.

Hunt, F. (2017) Schools for Future Youth Evaluation Report: Developing young people as active global citizens. London: UCL Institute of Education