

**PEACE III PROGRAMME (2007-2013) – WORKING GROUP REPORT**

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**Reported by**

**INTERREG IVA/PEACE III Joint WG**

Monitoring and Evaluation  
Working Group

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**EU Structural Funds 2007-2013**

**Working Groups**

Environmental Working Group  
Equality Working Group

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**PURPOSE OF PAPER**

To provide information and an update on activity for each of the Working Groups of the PEACE III Monitoring Committee.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Members of the Monitoring Committee are requested to **note** the progress of the Working Groups.

## **1.0 Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group (MEWG)**

The MEWG oversees the implementation of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the PEACE III Programme, which highlights the importance of on-going evaluation at operation and programme level. This approach will provide information on the overall impact of the PEACE III Programme in the context of its aims and in combination with on-going monitoring activity. It will capture both quantitative and qualitative comprehensive evaluation information during each project life cycle.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group has met twice, 16 December 2008 and 11 March 2009, since the last Monitoring Committee meeting in Loughgiel on 22 October 2008. The main areas considered by the Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group were:

### **1.1 Programme Implementation**

Information considered to date includes a breakdown of the number and value of applications received, and Steering Committee activity including application approvals. This is monitored against overall programme targets and enables the group to identify any issues that may emerge.

### **1.2 Aid for Peace Indicators**

NISRA have been working closely with development officers supporting the Local Councils and clusters to develop and agree their Aid for Peace indicators. This process is on-going and progressing well with all the first reports expected by the end of June 2009.

### **1.3 On-going evaluation**

At its meeting on 16 December 2008, a sub-group was formed to consider the first steps in implementing the PEACE III Evaluation Plan. Three key areas of work were considered:

- a. Attitudinal Survey: it was agreed that an attitudinal survey be carried out in 2010 with Terms of Reference to be agreed and tenders invited in the last quarter of 2009.
- b. Contextual data in the Border Region of Ireland: the subgroup considered information provided by ARK (Access Resource Knowledge, Northern Ireland) on

the options of how to collect contextual information similar to that contained in the NI Life and Times Survey for the border region. The sub-group agreed that this data should be gathered to ensure comprehensive information is available at this level. It was agreed that this be undertaken in association with the planned attitudinal survey.

- c. Implementation Analysis: following an open tender process, SEUPB has commissioned Fitzpatrick Associates (March 2009) to undertake an analysis of implementation of both the PEACE III and INTERREG IVA Programmes. In relation to PEACE III the evaluation includes:
- A geographical analysis of applications from across the eligible region.
  - A geographical analysis of successful projects including partner involvement, area of intended impact and cross border activity.
  - Presentation of data on maps including intensity maps reflecting the intensity of funding.
  - An analysis of the successful projects' intended target areas in relation to the overall programme's target areas identified in paragraph 3.61 of the Operational Programme. These include sectarian interfaces, disadvantaged areas, areas that have experienced high levels of sectarian and racial crimes, communities in decline and those where economic and social development has been inhibited by the conflict.
  - An analysis of the successful projects' intended target groups in relation to the overall programme's target groups identified in paragraph 3.63 of the Operational Programme. These include victims of the conflict, displaced persons, people excluded or marginalised from economic, social and civil networks, former members of the security services, ex-prisoners and public, private and voluntary organisations.
  - An analysis of the current portfolio of successful projects in order to examine how communities of different religious belief and racial group will benefit from the Programme in Northern Ireland and the Border Region.

This work is on-going with initial/interim findings to be presented at the Monitoring Committee meeting.

#### **1.4 Other Information**

There have been two events that members of the Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group have taken part in. The first was the INTERREG IVA Strategic Fit Seminar which took place on 14 January 2009. The purpose of the seminar was to provide the Monitoring Committee, Steering Committees and Working Groups with a greater understanding of INTERREG IVA's strategic fit with relevant European and Member State policies, and the practicalities of implementing the programme. The second event was a visit to the ILEX PEACE Bridge and Ebrington Barracks on 2 March 2009. A tour of the site enabled members to see the location of the bridge and illustrated how the bridge is integral to the success of the wider development of the area. The group also met with local community group representatives to discuss their involvement and perceived benefits of the project. The visit proved to be successful with members confident of the project's contribution to peace and reconciliation in the area.

The next meeting will be held on 17 June 2009 in Northern Ireland.

#### **2.0 Environmental Working Group (ENWG)**

The Environmental Working Group has met twice since the last Monitoring Committee, on 18 November 2008 and 26 March 2009.

The second meeting in March 2009 was attended by Gunter Raad, a Desk Officer from DG Environment.

The following issues were discussed at both meetings:

##### **2.1 Strategic Assessment of Offshore and Marine Renewable Energy**

DETI gave a presentation on the Strategic Assessment of Offshore and Marine Renewable Energy to inform the development of a Strategic Action Plan. The presentation outlined the current position of renewable energy in Northern Ireland and the targets that DETI were striving to achieve. The aims regarding the offshore wind and marine renewables were also outlined. It was agreed to investigate the possibility of DETI's soon to be appointed SEA consultants making a presentation to the working group in future.

## **2.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment progress**

An update on SEA was provided by the relevant programme Managing Authorities. The Working Group discussed the importance of ensuring that effective programme indicators are set to monitor areas identified in each SEA. The representative from DG Environment advised the group about a European sub-group focusing on SEA and invited participation from the group on this sub-group. He also informed the group that draft guidance on SEA for Member States was currently being reviewed and would be issued by the Commission in the next few months.

## **2.3 Indicators – Table of Comparison**

The draft table of Programme Environmental Indicators was circulated to the working group. It was agreed to add the PEACE III Greenhouse gas indicator document.

## **2.4 Greenhouse Gasses Indicator**

There was no progress to report on this indicator. The working group was invited to give input on how to best measure this indicator.

## **2.5 Guidelines on Environmental Policy**

The members agreed on a revised 'How to Write an Environmental Policy' document which has been shared with the Managing Authorities for each programme. It was agreed that the policy will remain open to amendment by members in the future.

## **2.6 Development Path Analysis Reports**

It was agreed that NISRA will provide analysis for the ERDF and ESF Programmes once the Structural Funds database had been populated with approved projects to date. The SEUPB representative provided a report outlining DPA scores for approved projects to date based on information provided by the Joint Technical Secretariat for the PEACE III and INTERREG IVA Programmes.

## **2.7 European Open Days**

The Chair of the group attended European Open Days in Brussels, October 2008, participating in seminars on climate change and greenhouse gasses. Her report has been circulated to the group with links to key presentations for further information. Findings continue to inform the work of the group with particular consideration given to the use of statistics in monitoring the effects of Structural Funds on climate change

### **3.0 Equality Working Group (EQWG)**

The Equality Working Group has met once since the last Monitoring Committee meeting. The EQWG considered the following:

#### **3.1 The Equality Guidance Note**

The Monitoring Questionnaire is currently under review by the DFP Minister. The issue of the finalised guidance, including the questionnaire, is held pending final approval.

#### **3.2 Mainstreaming Equality Guide.**

The Mainstreaming Equality Guide, which provides practical guidance on equality issues to all those involved in EU Programmes, including applicants and those involved in selection is nearing completion. DFP are currently tendering for a contractor to produce the guide.

#### **3.3 Review of the selection process**

The sub-group tasked with reviewing equality aspects of the selection process in programmes have developed a template which provides examples of best practice in equality matters to assist both project applicants and those involved in assessment and selection. The Managing Authority has shared this checklist with JTS and the Consortium and it is available on SEUPB website for information for applicants. It will also be included in version 3 of the Programme Manual.

The sub-group also recommended that the Equality Working Group work with Managing Authorities to organise equality events for those involved in selection to facilitate discussion of issues and promote best practice.

#### **3.4 Equality Audit of Programme Bodies**

As reported at the last meeting the Equality Working Group will report on the equality audit of programme bodies as soon as information is available. The Equality Working Group is planning to conduct an equality review of programme bodies by circulating monitoring questionnaires. This will take place as soon as the Equality Guidance Note and monitoring questionnaire have been released by the DFP Minister. The group have collated contact details of those involved to facilitate this process.

#### **4.0 Recommendation**

The Monitoring Committee is requested to:

- **Note** the progress of the Working Groups.