Meeting of the NECE Focus Group
„Exchange between North Africa and Europe“

11 December 2013
Goethe Institute, Alexandria

Participants: see list attached
Programme: see attached programme

list of abbreviations:

CSO civil society organisations
NGO non-governmental organisations

After a short introduction round Petra Grüne introduced into the programme and working methods of the meeting.

Exchange on recent developments

Susanne Ulrich, Monia Ammam EP Feki and Nelly Corbel briefly introduced the transformation partnership project between Germany, Egypt and Tunisia (Training Manual for Community Leadership in Transformation Countries).

Susanne Ulrich explained that the publication of the “Training Manual for Community Leadership in Transformation Countries” forms a further milestone of the Leading Change Across the Mediterranean Project. The draft of the manual was created in a comprehensive and participatory deliberation process that involved trainers, young leaders and researchers from Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, the Czech Republic and Germany.

The process started off with the first planning workshop in June 2012, which identified community leaders as target group and specified workshop formats. In September 2012, methods for the community leader workshops were developed and criteria and indicators for success were set in a workshop in Sidi Bou Said. After running two test-workshops (one in Egypt, one in Tunisia), an evaluation session was conducted in Cairo in December 2013. In this session, a roadmap was scheduled for developing the training manual. Based on the preparation done throughout 2013, the editorial team from Germany, Tunisia and Egypt created a sketch for the Community Leadership Manual in Sidi Bou Said in October 2013. In November 2013, the first version of the manual was printed in English and Arabic.

For testing purposes regarding the implementation of the manual, a train-the-trainer workshop was held in Cairo from December 5-8, 2013. The 18 participants from Egypt, Tunisia, Germany and the Czech Republic discussed the manual in depth, analysed sample activities and developed steps of implementation for their home countries.
The following discussion targeted questions of experiences from NECE exchanges. Both the participants from Europe and from North Africa felt that the previous exchange was interesting and stimulating for their own work, which was particularly based on the following arguments:

- In discussion on civic education, participants particularly enjoy different perspectives and contributions as enormously enriching for their own work as it leads to new perspectives.
- Common issues and topics were identified that come from different backgrounds, but nevertheless can be attributed to the same core at the level of political education. This leads to a changing mutual perception on the one hand as well as to questions, which are worth to be elaborated together in order to use the creative potential of the participants’ group to the fullest.

The following projects/project proposals were listed:

- Establishing a German - Moroccan teacher exchange
- Approaches to establishing a Tunisian - Moroccan- Egyptian network for political education
- Approaches to establishing a national network for political education in Egypt
- Integrating further partners in existing international projects

**Networking: Opportunities and Pitfalls**

The group intensely discussed the question of how to bring NGOs and CSOs in the region together in order form a network association, similar to NECE. How does networking work? What can one learn from NECE?

Petra Grüne briefly described the background of NECE. Initially, it was planned to found a network of citizenship organisations as an association according to Belgium law, but this attempt failed due to the lack of trust and the variety of background administrations with distinct regulations and different expectations on this network. Nowadays, NECE’s advantage is not to be an institutionalised network, but an informal association with a core group of steady partner institutions and several cooperation partners and supporters. Each partner institution is supposed to contribute to the network. Petra Grüne emphasised the importance of trust building, which can only be achieved through regular meetings, an eye-level status of all cooperation partners and persistent communication on activities and events. As NECE is an informal network, everybody can participate and contribute. It is open to a variety of stakeholders and target groups.

In the following discussion, it became evident that NECE cannot offer financial support, but can foster the founding of a citizenship education network in the region by providing contacts and recommendations as well as a platform to meet and exchange (-> focusgroup).
Group work on further Issues

Then, the group was split into four small working groups as follows:

1. How to set up a network similar to NECE in North Africa? (Ali Moez)
2. How to collect and coordinate all efforts in the region? (Jakob Erle)
3. Developing new common projects: Cooperation between the Sofia Platform and relevant stakeholders in Egypt (Louisa Slavkova)
4. Collecting ideas and projects for the programme design of the upcoming NECE conference 2014 in Vienna on 100 years of World War First (Petra Grüne)

Ideas and outcomes discussed in the working groups:

1. Network building in the region (Ali Moez):
   The network should be based on shared values and common grounds. The individual NGO should be able maintain its specific identity in a network. The network should be open to all NGO that respect human rights and foster democracy and participation. Whether the network should be formal or non-formal remains an open question, so the organisational structure still needs to be determined. However, the network should be built on synergies and establish a common charta including goals and ethics. Goals should be:
   - Strengthening political awareness and citizenship education in the region
   - Making civil society more visible
   - Fostering processes and steps towards the state of law and democracy
   The next steps will be:
   - Starting research about existing networks
   - Identifying a group of core partners
   - Being open for NGOs as well for other organisations and individuals
   - Setting up an agenda and plan subsequent activities (annual conference, focus group, newsletter...)
   - Setting up a communication and lobbying strategy
   - Organising a continuous exchange of ideas and experience

2. Network building and mapping of activities in Egypt (Jakob Erle)
   The working group first focused on discussing the manner and ways in which the network should function, including national get-togethers every three months and ensuring participation from outside of Cairo. Then, possibilities of integrating the governmental and private sector (including youth centres) were up for discussion.
   The next steps will be:
   - Output 1: Collaborative mapping
   - Output 2: Thematic subareas and responsible convenors for those
   - Output 3: How to relate to media, use social media for cooperation, and further mapping
   - Output 4: Planning of next meeting - time etc.
   - Output 5: Agreement of flexible form of organisation - including how to participate with others from similar areas
   - Output 6: Decision on name of network
3. Developing new common projects with the Sofia Platform
Outcomes: The „Mobile Cairo Platform“ can be a venue for discussion in order to put
issues on the national agenda. The outcome of the platform could be handled as
recommendations.
Further activities and formats can be (1) high-level such as annual meetings in Sofia
(snapshot, recommendations, advocacy, networking), (2) mobile platform (inclusive,
ownership/ responsibility, flexible in place) and (3) training platform for political
leaders (young leaders EU/ MENA, staff from EU/ MENA)

4. Collecting ideas and projects for the programme design of the upcoming NECE
conference 2014 in Vienna on 100 years of World War First (Petra Grüne)

Results see attached mind map

Common publication – a proposal by Goethe Institute and bpb

The initial idea is to compile and edit a common publication on the current status quo of
citizenship education in Europe and North Africa. The book might correspond to the structure
of the book „Citizenship education in Europe“.

The following discussion focused on first ideas on structure and content:

In General:
- The publication will consist of updated already published articles as well as new
  articles
- The timeframe that has to be taken into consideration to realise the project is one to
  one and a half year
- The publication should provide articles from Europe and North Africa as well as
  articles that are written in a NA-EU-tandem

Content:
- Best practice (cooperation projects)
- Introduction: relevance and common mission
- Defining CE/Civics (multi-perspective)
- From shared concepts to universal CE
- Case studies (Countries)
- Concrete Tools
- Cooperative articles on common concerns (i.e. stakeholders, hard-to-reach learners
  etc.)
- Interviews
- NECE as an example

The following conceptual questions remained open in the discussion and must be
determined later:
- Definition of citizenship education used as basis of the publication
- Descriptive or comparative manner
- Focusing on shared concepts to universal citizenship
- Cooperative writing on topics of a common concern (interviews can be useful)
It was further suggested that lessons learnt as well as good and bad practices (case studies, concrete tools) should be part of the publication. The approach, the structure and further strategies will be developed by the editorial team prior to the next meeting.

The editorial team will consist of:
- Gabriele Becker, GI Cairo
- Nelly Corbel, AUC
- Louisa Slavkova, Sofia Platform
- Ali Moez, UTL
- Monia Ammar EP Feki, Arab Institute for Human Rights
- Abdelghani Bakhach, Youth Association for Culture and Development

Petra Grüne will contact the members of the group at the beginning of 2014.

**Conclusions and Outlook**

The Topic of networking and the publication will continue to be core topics of the focus group. In addition, various topics of common interest will be put on the agenda of the meetings.

In addition to the core topics the following issues will be put on the agenda of the next meeting:
- International Concept on the base of Mursi Meter (www.morsimeter.com),
- Approaches combining art and CE