



SEP Bulletin 01/2004

Introduction

I am very pleased to present to you the first issue of the SEP Bulletin. We are offering the SEP Bulletin as a medium for sharing information among the wider membership within the partnership. The SEP Bulletin will be issued six times a year and contain useful information and project highlights. The Bulletin will be focused, user-friendly and brief. We hope the Bulletin will make it easier for you to find out about other interesting activities within SEP and to communicate with other SEP partners.

We are looking forward to receiving input and short articles from all SEP partners. Please send us information about your project that you want to share with other SEP members. In this issue we are presenting two SEP projects: An update on the activities of the Quality and Impact Project as well as latest information from the North-East Social Enterprise Partnership (NESEP).

*Gerold Schwarz
SEP Programme Director*

Content

1. DPA Update
2. New SEP central team in place
3. SEP programme meeting on 19th of March 2004 in London
4. SEC Update
5. Project Highlights:
 - Quality and Impact Project Update
 - NESEP: Business ideas for social enterprises

1. DPA Update

The revised SEP Development Partnership Agreement (DPA) and the revised SEP budget have been approved by Ecotec with only some minor changes. We will finalise those with Ecotec until the end of this month. The embargo on payments has been lifted and payments are coming in again (so far, payments for activities until the end of March 2003). We expect to make payments for those activities until February. We would like to use this opportunity to thank the whole team of Economic Partnerships for their tremendous work and help with re-organising and re-structuring the Social Enterprise Partnership.

2. New SEP team in place

We are very pleased to inform you that the new SEP central management team is now in place in the new office on 9 Red Lion Court in Central London. Please find the names and email addresses below.

Gerold Schwarz, programme director, gerold.schwarz@sepgb.co.uk
Anke Lehmann, programme administrator, anke.lehmann@sepgb.co.uk
Elizabeth Lopez, programme assistant, elizabeth.lopez@sepgb.co.uk
Heather Squires, project manager, Training, heather.squires@sepgb.co.uk
Lisa Sanfillipo, project manager, Quality and Impact, based at nef
lisa.sanfillipo@neweconomics.org

Anke will be responsible for all issues regarding project administration, claims and queries regarding ESF funding. Over the next weeks, she will take over the programme administration from Carol Bell of Economic Partnerships. We will contact each SEP project soon with the date from when you need to send claims to Anke. Elizabeth will support Anke with programme administration. Heather is responsible for the SEP Training project and Lisa for the SEP Quality and Impact project.

3. SEP Project meeting on 24th March in London

We are planning to invite representatives from all SEP projects to a meeting in London on the 24th March. At the moment we are finalising arrangements for the meeting place and the meeting agenda. We will send out an invitation with detailed information to all SEP projects soon.

4. SEC update on Equal/SEP project activities – January 2004

The Social Enterprise Coalition's key role within SEP is to facilitate the dissemination and mainstreaming of the project activities and outcomes. This includes supporting the development of regional social enterprise networks and supporting the sharing of information and resources across the sector, through networks and communication channels including the internet.

SEC recruited 2 members of staff to develop this work – a Networks Manager and an Information Officer who both started on 29 September 2003. Since Mahua Nandi, Networks Manager, started she has been visiting each English region and the three nations of the UK to gather information on existing networks and social enterprise activities. She is producing a report for SEC and SEP on all 12 regions and nations, making recommendations on how SEC can support the development of the networks. The next phase of her work, along with implementing this support, will be to look at how the networks can work with each other and with other networks to develop and promote the sector, eg through information dissemination and the sharing and mainstreaming of best practice.

Sven Desai, Information Officer, has been updating the SEC website with additional information. He is also overseeing the upgrading of the website into a comprehensive, database driven web portal, which will be a one stop shop for information about social enterprise in the UK. The new portal will be launched in March and will then be constantly updated with information about training, events, news, policy, resources, publications and links, with a database of social enterprises and a discussion forum area. It will have the potential to host other network websites and for listed members to update their own information, e.g. on up coming events.

5. Project Highlights: Helping Social Enterprises to *Prove and Improve*: SEP Quality & Impact Project

SEP's Quality & Impact (Q & I) Project aims to help social enterprises gain the knowledge, tools and resources to *prove* their impact and *improve* the quality of their operations. The SEP project is the leading programme in Great Britain in the field of impact measurement for social enterprise, bringing together key players in the social enterprise and the impact measurement sectors for the first time. The project's '**proving and improving**' agenda is crucial in light of the increased attention that social enterprise has received in the national and international policy arenas. The Q & I work is aligned with two of the UK Social Enterprise Unit's key aims: the *improving* aspect of the project can help make social enterprises better businesses; and the *proving* aspect can help to establish the value of social enterprise.

The project aims to develop a clearer picture of how 'proving and improving' tools and approaches can be best used by social enterprises with varied characteristics and different needs. To accomplish this, the Q & I work has included a consultative needs analysis to better understand the diverse needs of the sector and has continued to examine a range of different tools and resources from the business and voluntary sectors, as well as developing some new approaches. Work with existing approaches includes a pilot of the corporate-sector developed **Balanced Scorecard** for use within Social Firms, as well as the use of the voluntary-sector developed quality improvement tool **PQASSO** with a range of social enterprises. The pilots also include a scale-able approach to **Social Accounting/Social Audit**, and the ongoing development of **Ethical Explorer**, an online tool to help organisations engage with their stakeholders and practice social reporting.

New tools created in conjunction with the project include two sector-specific tools: the Development Trust Association's **DTA Healthcheck**, and the Co-operative Sector's **Key Social and Cooperative Performance Indicators**. New tools that reach across the sub-sectors, as well as outside of the social enterprise sector include new methods developed by New Economics Foundation, for measuring Social Return on Investment (**SROI**) and for measuring local money flows (**LM3**).

SEP's Q & I project will share its findings broadly across the social enterprise sector through a variety of methods, including a web-based resource and a hard-copy toolkit. In its 'rollout' phase, the project will work with a variety of organisations to build awareness of 'proving and improving' approaches, to make the sector aware of the value of these approaches within a variety of social enterprise settings, and to develop the on-the-ground capacity to deliver training and assistance in social enterprise sub-sectors and regionally.

The Q & I project continues to identify new methods for 'proving and improving' and welcomes additional resources and information. The project is managed by Lisa Sanfilippo at the New Economics Foundation. Social enterprises or social enterprise support organisations interested in linking with this work are invited to contact Lisa.Sanfilippo@neweconomics.org. More information can be found on the internet at www.neweconomics.org, and click on 'new ways of measuring'.

5. Project Highlights: NESEP - Business ideas for social enterprises

One of the biggest hurdles for additional social enterprises being set up is the lack of a good will worked up business idea.

The North East Social Enterprise Partnership has launched a new project to identify areas ripe for exploitation by social enterprises. The purpose of this R&D Unit is to identify potential social enterprise ideas. It will initially focus on enterprises selling to public services. It will involve:

1. Working with established and successful social enterprises as 'path finders' - helping them grow and using them as a model for other areas.
2. Establishing 'Social Enterprise Direct' and creating a secondary marketing co-op to contract with public authorities
3. Staging 'Meet the Buyer' Events
4. Working closely with the government's Social Enterprise Unit on developing a 'public procurement tool kit'
5. Working with public procurers to identify potential social enterprise solutions to their problems.

Other business ideas, such as community renewable energy companies, are also being developed.

One NorthEast, the local Regional Development Agency, has seconded Howard Johnston to work on this issue along with NESEP. Links have been made with the North East Procurement Office and the Regional Assembly. The new Unit has already successfully helped the replication of a domiciliary care co-op, Sunderland Home Care Associates, which looks set to create over a hundred new jobs.

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