

**SUSTAIN**  
Sustaining Development in Early School Education  
518321-LLP-2011-TR-COMENIUS-CMP

**II EXPERTS' REPORT**

**1/ General overview**

During the test implementation phase of the project 22 test implementations were carried out in Italy: 17 Lesson plans were implemented before the Good practices selection; 5 new Lesson Plans based on the SD theme of World Citizenship and Democracy were implemented by teachers and educators before the SUSTAIN Biennial held in Istanbul.

16 teachers were directly involved in the implementation phase together with other teachers that supported them, 6 teachers implemented more than 1 lesson plan.

5 schools + 1 Intercultural Educational Centre (Palermo) were involved in the test implementation process: 3 pre-primary and primary schools located in Palermo (city-school) 2 schools located in rural area (Partinico and Zafferana Etnea)

21 LPs were developed.

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During the second phase of the test implementation, the number of teachers involved in the testing phase of the LP increased enormously. Indeed, after the approbation seminar, teachers declared their availability to cooperate with CSC bringing in their classes the LP from the SUSTAIN project.

CSC enhanced its cooperation with the Pre-primary and Primary schools F. Ferrara, Maggiore Guida, "Mirto" and Centro per le Culture Ubuntu, a multi-ethnic pre-primary and primary educational centre in the heart of Palermo. Around 9 new teachers were involved in this test-implementation phase. 17 test-implementations were carried out.

Local experts (LE) took an active part in the implementations, leading teachers to the LP approach by translating and presenting the contents, proposing specific ESD methods according to the classes' groups; helping arrange the activity; providing all necessary materials and attending the implementations both to help and supervise; taking notes of potential difficulties for teachers or children. Eventually, LE collected teachers' feedbacks and organized those informal contents in feedback schedules.

The last phase of the test implementation opened the new School year.

Some of the schools we were working with changed the headmaster and also some teachers. For this reason, it was useful to organize face to face meetings in the schools in order to introduce the project and involve new people in it.

Basically, the teachers welcoming the implementations were already aware of the project. It is important to underline that all the activities and initiatives developed during the project contributed to build up a new attitude towards it.

The involvement of new schools was a feature of the last phase of the project:

- Istituto G. Cusumano, primary school in the city centre of Palermo.

4 teachers from this school to deal with the project, thanks to CSC dissemination. These teachers gave their enthusiastic collaboration, implementing in class one of the activities proposed during the SUSTAIN BIENNIAL and expressed their desire and availability for new activities.

- Circolo Didattico Zafferana Etnea , Catania

A one-day educational path guided 6 teachers and 4 educators, together with their children, around the area of Partinico and Jato Dam. Teachers and children implemented one of the new LP activities developed in the framework of the Sustain project for the Biennial titled *Walking through Democracy*. One of the LP's author, an educator working with the Organization *NOE* (No exclusion) led the implementation of the activity.

- Centro per le Culture UBUNTU: this educational centre already worked within the project, but this last phase involved 2 new educators and it played an important role in the framework of the project.

During the test implementations, 2 Local experts took part in the process, to be sure that teachers could easily deal with potential difficulties, working beside them and their students, taking note of potential difficulties, facilities or anything useful in order to improve the suggested activities.

Implementation table:

No	Implementer teachers	Lesson title	Schools	Level	Date	Lesson owner / Country
1	Cristina La Rocca	Rubick's Cubes	Ferrara School	Primary	20.12.2012	Ramazan Sezer / Turkey
2	Giacomo Di Domenico / Amico Dolci	Recycled music	Ferrara School	Primary	24.01.2013	Giacomo Di Domenico-Amico Dolci/Italy
3	Vincenzo Di Paola	From geometric shapes to geometric objects	Maggiore Guida School	Primary	29.01.2013	Ramazan Sezer / Turkey
4	Agostino Cassarà	The building yards of cubes	Mirto School	Primary	15.02.2013	Emanuela Iannazzo-Agostino Cassarà / Italy
5	Patrizia Pappalardo	Maths is joy!	Ferrara School	Primary	19.02.2013	Anelia Nikolova / Bulgaria
6	Giusy Saitta	Friendship	Ferrara School	Primary	19.02.2013	Coman Alexandra / Romania
7	Emanuela Iannazzo-Agostino Cassarà	We are able together	Mirto School	Primary	20.02.2013	Cristina La Rocca / Italy
8	Agostino Cassarà	Ants and lady bugs	Mirto School	Primary	03.03.2013	Lyubka Minkova / Bulgaria
9	Gianni Lo Biundo - Emanuela Iannazzo	In the world of plants	Centro per le culture Ubuntu	Primary	18.03.2013	Nadya Velislavova Doycheva / Bulgaria
10	Giusy Saitta	I love my school my house and my country	Ferrara School	Primary	19.03.2013	Duygu Sagiroglu / Turkey
11	Patrizia Pappalardo	The sketch of our classroom	Ferrara School	Primary	21.03.2013	Beyza AYDIN & Colleagues / Turkey
12	Serena Antioco	Sincerity and lie	Ferrara School	Primary	27.03.2013	Rebiana Petrescu / Romania
13	Patrizia Pappalardo	Follow up Rubick's Cubes	Ferrara School	Primary	12.04.2013	Ramazan Sezer / Turkey
14	Patrizia Pappalardo	Geometric figures	Ferrara School	Primary	18.04.2013	Ramazan Sezer / Turkey
15	Maria Caronna	Shopping	Mirto School	Primary	17.05.2013	Özlem Metin Günes / Turkey
16	Maria Imperiale (supported by Anna Maggio)	Moral Values	Mirto School	Primary	17.05.2013	Rebiana Petrescu / Romania
17	Tiziana Giordano, Maria Caronna	Using time properly	Mirto School	Primary	28.05.2013	Nilay Yuncu (Yakacik), Neslihan Celik, Didem Misirli, Esra Sucu / Turkey
18	Patrizia Pappalardo (supported by Danilo Blanco)	Direction DiversityVille!	Centro per le culture UBUNTU	Primary	05.11.2013	Sara Maria Manzo / Italy
19	Gabriele Tramontana (supported by teachers of Primary school- Circolo didattico of Zafferana Etnea)	Walking through democracy	-Primary school- Circolo didattico di Zafferana Etnea, Italy	Primary	05.11.2013	Gabriele Tramontana /Giuseppe Burgio/ Italy
20	Marcello Troisi, Angela Grasso, Grazia Manunta	Hanging Rights	Primary school "G. Cusmano", Palermo, Italy	Primary	14.11.2013	Giorgio Tosto / Italy
21	Giusy Marabeti – Maria Caronna (supported by Anna Maggio and Adriana Geraci)	Direction DiversityVille!	Mirto - Primary school, Partinico, Italy.	Primary	15.11.2013	Sara Maria Manzo / Italy

22	Giusy Marabeti (supported by Maria Grazia Viola)	Talking puppets	"Mirto" Primary school, III Circolo Didattico, Partinico – Palermo, Italy	Primary	18.11.2013	Giusy Marabeti/ Alice Aldinucci / Italy
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## 2/ The Testing phase suggested practices for the partner countries:

Teachers accessed suggested practices mainly through CSC Local Experts (LEs). Unfortunately some of the teachers we work with had some difficulties in dealing with technologies and met some language obstacles too, for this reason CSC prepared translations of the LP developed in the partner countries to be shared with the teachers, in order to select the most appropriate practices for the classes involved. It is important to underline that, after the intense dissemination of the database contents and after the Approbation seminar and the ITTC promotion, several teachers started to access the database to read the LPs suggested and check out for some others.

As for the **difficulties**, CSC LEs highlighted the lack of time to promote and implement the activities during the school hours. The duration of the implementation of some lesson plans took often longer than expected by the LP's authors.

According to the LPs presented on the database, CSC LEs and teachers underlined some weaknesses related to the structure of some of these LPs that hinder the test implementation.

As for the **positive results**, it is important to highlight teachers' satisfaction about this virtual and, at the same time, concrete exchange with foreign colleagues. For the local reality it is meaningful to compare the proper situation with foreign realities, understanding how different didactics and education could be.

The last phase of the implementation process was characterized by a increased autonomy of teachers according to the project activities and initiatives. It means that CSC did a huge work of translation to make all materials produced so far accessible for international partners, and make everything useful for local teachers. Furthermore CSC Local experts went on holding face to face meetings with teachers giving them all the needed support and materials to learn more about the SUSTAIN activities and to implement the lesson plans.

Some of the teachers decided to implement activities they liked more, even when these were not developed in foreign countries. Some of them decided to test their own activities before sending them to the international colleagues or to upload them in the database, others accepted to test the activities suggested by the LE. Differently from the initial phase of the test implementation, in the following phases, LE decided to let teachers decide, without influencing them, just trying to keep their minds on the project and on the possibility to educate on Sustainability through different paths.

## 3/ Test-implementation which produced new lesson plans:

In the II phase, LEs worked beside teachers to implement new lesson plans uploaded on the platform from teachers of the partner countries. Eight new LP were implemented in the schools "Mirto", "Maggiore Guida" and "Ferrara".

CSC LEs and the Italian teachers involved in the project agreed on suggesting a better explanation of the implementation phases of some Lesson plans.

It is very important to highlight that some LPs are vague about some points, such as connections with materials needed, but the most problematic fact is that, frequently, the implementation phase is not described properly.

LEs from Italy had a II peer coaching session during the PM held in Targoviste, exchanging feedbacks on:

- We are able together
- Let's play with food

LEs from Italy exchanged feedbacks during the ITTC held in Istanbul on the following LP:

- Community mapping
- We are able together
- Try walking in my shoes
- The city of children
- Sound tales

All the feedbacks shown a full comprehension of the Italian LP, teachers didn't propose to edit any step of the LP, they all enjoyed the implementation of these activities.

CSC got some written feedbacks from Turkey for "Community mapping", promptly sent to the LP author Soad Ibrahim. Inspired by "Community Mapping" Rebiana Petrescu from Romania developed the LP "Moral Values", that was successfully implemented in Mirto School .

In June, the implementation phase in primary schools is suspended because of summer holiday and the work with schools start again in September.

Teachers carry out only a basic work on the implemented LPs. Basically, they only make simple changes to the structure or materials to make them more usable.

It's important to underline that when a teacher reads a LP and understands it is too complicated or not explained properly, she/he will soon decide not to implement it. For this reason some LPs were ignored by the teachers. It is true that teachers easily get inspired by few sentences and soon they plan their own vision of the activity. It leads to different positions:

- 1/ they decide to read the whole LP and implement it the way it is presented;
- 2/ they completely change the activity, and it soon becomes a new LP, totally different from the one that inspired them.

For this two reasons, it's hard to talk about new LPs developed from previous ones.

New peer coaching sessions took place, mostly face to face.

17 Peer coaching sessions were held by teachers, educators and Local experts.

These were developed in different moments of the project. The face to face approach was the favorite solution, because Italian teachers can easily express their ideas, and they feel more comfortable than in front of a screen. LE are sure that this worked as a sort of training course for teachers, that will have a positive impact in the future on their professional development.

CSC worked together with the implementer teachers after each implementation, in order to record their ideas and opinions about the activity.

Teachers are fully satisfied about the implemented activities and the SUSTAIN project.

#### **4/ Thematic overview:**

Most of the local schools involved in the SUSTAIN project are located in disadvantaged areas, for this reason it is necessary to focus on civil society education, guiding children and generations of tomorrow, to face reality in a new way, towards a respectful and active citizenship. The SUSTAIN project gives teachers the possibility to focus on these topics through ESD and to promote the acquisition of Key competences.

The **main Key Competences addressed through the lesson plans implementation**, according to the implementer teachers, are:

- Communicative Competence in the Mother Tongue 25%
- Social and Civic Competences 20%
- Learning to Learn 18%
- Cultural Awareness and Ability of Expressing 17%
- Mathematical Competence and Key Competences in Science and Technology 16%
- Initiative Taking and Entrepreneurship 4%

The **main Sustainable Development themes addressed through the lesson plans implementation**, according to the implementer teachers, are

- World Citizenship and Democracy 17%
- Local and Global Responsibility 17%
- Human Rights, Peace and Justice 13%
- Cultural Diversity 13%
- Preservation/Management of Natural Resources and Renewable energy 10%
- Production and Consumption 10%
- Rural and Urban Development 6%
- Waste materials and recycling 6%
- Biodiversity 4%
- Healthy Life 4%

Talking about the matching of sustainable development and the school curriculum, the main difficulty to face is the intense programme implemented by the schools and the little time addressed to the in-depth analysis of SD themes and KCs achievement. For this reason it raises the idea to better agree and plan the collaboration with teachers, for instance, integrating project activities in the school schedule at the beginning of the academic school year.

It is important to underline how teachers responded with an attentive attitude while implementing activities coming from different cultural contexts. The implementation has been a crucial moment in the analysis of the practices suggested, on children response, on the possibilities to modify or enrich the activities developed in the framework of the SUSTAIN project. Developing the project, CSC tried to guide teachers and educators to work constantly considering all the SD themes and to integrate them in their school curriculum.

(For a detailed report on thematic overview based on teachers' feedback please refer to *annex 1: 2<sup>nd</sup> Questionnaire results IT*)

#### **B/ Overview of teachers' feedback**

##### **Summary of the feedback following the main questions answered by the teachers**

All the teachers gave a positive feedback about the implementation of the SUSTAIN Lesson plans.

- All of them answered that they want to use the implemented lesson plan in the future with other pupils and some of them declared to be interested in using again these activities also with the same children.

- Only 23% of the implementer teachers had difficulties in getting the resources suggested for the implementation of the activities or other kind of difficulties.
- 45 % of the implementer teachers made changes in the lesson plan for the implementation in their classes.
- 41% of the teachers involved in the test implementation declared to have been involved in peer coaching mainly held with colleagues or local experts in the preparatory stage of the implementation.

The Italian teachers mainly matched the lesson plans implemented with subjects such as:

Mother tongue, social and civic competence, math, science, art.

### **SUSTAIN platform:**

The Sustain platform is a necessary tool to access to the projects' contents. From the point of view of the local experts, sometime the teachers shown some difficulties to approach to the platform and use it, some difficulties in the log-in were highlighted by the teachers. They need the LE help, but some of them started to use it, to take a look on uploaded contents like LP but also pictures of the collective experience they had during the project workshops.

According to implementer teachers' feedback, the main reasons to use the platform in their work are:

- to get ideas and resources for future lessons >37%
- to share lessons and experience with other colleagues >35%
- to communicate with colleagues from own country and from other countries and to plan cooperative activities >29%

(For a detailed report on teachers' feedback please refer to *annex 1: 2<sup>nd</sup> Questionnaire results IT*)

### **C/ Conclusions:**

At the final stage of the project, collecting all teachers' feedback, their reflections and comments, during the face to face meetings and the implementation phase, it seems now clear that for the local teachers involved in the implementation process of the project it was a positive experience. It gave teachers the opportunity to become aware of the ESD concepts, of their orientations (not only connected to the environmental theme), of the possibility to educate the children using more active and participatory educational methods.

CSC LEs can definitely declare that every teacher, every child and all people involved in the activities were fully satisfied. The concrete exchange with international colleagues, the possibility to involve children in new activities, the importance of the themes suggested and the general atmosphere of collaboration contributed to a complete success of the project in all the schools involved.