

GLEN Visionary and Networking Seminar 2013

Working Group: Partnership and Cooperation

„Partnership and Cooperation“ was one of the core topics in the preparation of the seminar and the beginning of the vision process. The following questions / proposals came up in online statements and the applications to the seminar (the number behind the statements shows how often this comment was raised):

- Developing a Global Partner Network (*Overcome the North-South approach(2)*host partners should get the possibility to meet and discuss the vision of GLEN as well * GLEN should host young people from the South in Europe (4)) * who is member, who is partner?
- Improving the current partnerships (*reduce power bias / inequality between northern and southern partners (2) *How can GLEN partners be involved in the network and informed about global education? * Involvement of southern partners in the selection process of volunteers *host partners should be asked for assessments (2)*host partners should be supported in building small networks to improve the work of GLEN hosts *involvement of african partners in training process (3) *sending the report of the pps to the partners *improve communication between sending and host partners and pps *Let the volunteers sign special agreements that they stay until the end of the internship *Prolong the intern period to 6 month, building small networks)
- Including capacity building for southern partners (*support the hosting organizations financially to make the impact of the volunteers sustainable (2) /*critical view on North-South values exchange *involvement of embassies and consulates of pps to build partnerships)

Based on these aspects the core question of the working group on the visionary seminar was: “**What kind of partnership do we want within GLEN?**”. This working group discussed in two different compositions of participants. On Friday we discussed in one group for the whole day. On Saturday this topic came up again and a lot of participants had the wish to discuss it once more. Therefore another working group (which included most of the pps of Friday) discussed the issue again.

Basic understanding of partnership

At the beginning the facilitator (Dominique Pannke) presented four different models which could shape the future partnerships of GLEN. These types derived from the history and former discussion of GLEN. The participants of the group had the task to position themselves towards their favored model.

- Improvement of current partnerships

Right now there is the GLEN network with 9 partner organization in Europe and many different host partners in the Global South. The different partners have different goals. The European partners focus on the training of multipliers with the MTC. The host partners are looking for support for the current activities of their organization. The approach would be to accept these different aims and improve the partnership regarding communication, transparency, a.s.o..

- Strengthening partnerships within GLEN and making the idea of global education global

The idea of this model is to strengthen the partnerships within GLEN step-by-step. Networks like they developed in Benin should be fostered. New partners should be found, who also work with the idea of global learning or similar concepts (like education for development, transformative education,...). All partners of the network share the same goal: to train multipliers and spread and develop the idea of “global learning” (or similar concepts). Partners can have different roles in this network (see below).

- Building a global partner network

The idea of this model is to make a radical new start with a completely changed partner structure. All partners are equal in their role. The common aim is not defined as it has to be defined by all partners. The proposal for the aim would be to train change agents.

- Take away the internships in the Global South

Here the whole activities in the Global South would be taken away. Partners are only organization in Europe. The aim is still to train multipliers, but without the practical experience in the South.

The positioning was very clear. All participants stood at the model to strengthen the partnerships within GLEN. Therefore the group decided to focus in the following discussions on this model. Nevertheless some of the group members considered the model without internships worth to talk about as well. We kept it in mind, as an option which could be added to GLEN as a new training cycle (there was no time on the seminar to resume this topic).

Why do we need to rethink partnership?

To add greater depth to the discussion and the model, the group discussed why they think a new partnership model is necessary. The main reasons were:

- To overcome old structures of partnership, resulting of colonialism and power structures
- To celebrate diversity
- To empower emancipation (to develop own potentials through interaction) of partners
- To enlarge outcome /impact of the program
- To achieve other goals of GLEN / to become congruent with the values of GLEN
- To integrate the view of partners / built up together a definition of GE (considering existing similar concepts)
- To recognize global inequities
- To connect existing concepts about educational approaches
- To be a platform / space for transformation

- To ensure an equal benefit for all

How could it look like?

Moreover the group discussed how this new partnership model could develop and look like:

- Focuses firstly on strategic countries in order to scale up (e.g. Benin / South Africa)
- Should become a network of host-, sending- and training organization
 - Hosting organization: Host interns in their structures which support their activities
 - Sending organization: Administer the training cycle (and mainly the network?)
 - Training organization: Support with the development of the pedagogical work and the development of GE
- All partners agree on the aim “to train change agents / multipliers” and contribute with their special skills and opportunities. Therefore GLEN combines learning, interacting and contribution.
- The combination of established structures and loose structures should be maintained
- Heading to open established structures (now GLEN members) for sending and training organization in the Global South and host organization in the Global North
- Looking for the establishment of regional networks based on long lasting partnerships

Summary

On Saturday the new working group was introduced to the results of the Fridays working group. Afterwards an intense discussion was held about the new partnership model. Nobody doubted the approach itself and it was soon clear that all participants are in favor of this model. But there were still a lot of comments on resources of GLEN, the role of the internship and questions of privileges and power structures. The results were the following sentences which describe the essence of the discussion and the new partnership model:

- GLEN is an educational network with the aim to train people in the sense of global education / global learning
- GLEN strives towards a Global Partner Network with equal partnerships (which includes the celebration of diversity of aims and goals)
- Step by step GLEN is starting partnerships with organizations which share the aim to train change agents. GLEN empowers current host organizations in GE if they are interested and jointly develops the idea of GE/GL together
- The internship is an important transformational element in the training process
- There will be host partners worldwide which have to benefit from the work of the interns. Host partners don't need to work in GE. Educational organizations are not identical with hosting organization.