



# CARMA

Non-formal learning for student motivation

## External Evaluator Mid Term Report (WP6-9)

**Project no.**

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[www.carma-project.eu](http://www.carma-project.eu)



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## 1. Introduction

This report is the interim external evaluation review (deliverable WP6-9) and it is produced following 12 months of operation of the project “**CARMA, RMA and other non-formal learning methods for Student Motivation**”. The report focuses on evaluating the ongoing development of the project, its activities, achievements, issues and recommendations for future action, as they are determined by the goals and objectives of the CARMA project.

The CARMA project addresses **Priority 3** (Strand 1) – **Promoting innovative collaborative teaching and learning**. It intends to introduce non-formal learning methods as a collaborative learning strategy to innovate school culture and transform classroom practices. The project will use the Reciprocal Maieutic Approach (RMA) as an inclusive assessment tool for increasing the skills of teachers’ and thus improve retention. The results achieved by the partnership will be applied for pushing policies towards the inclusion of disadvantaged learners and reduce early school leaving.

The CARMA project foresees a consolidated process of proposing, enriching, and piloting an innovative learning approach. The direct target groups are a) teachers and b) pupils aged 11-16 in general, that are identified as disadvantaged and at risk of early school leaving. There are also indirect target groups including the wider school community and policy actors.

The main results will be:

- **CARMA toolkit** on how to use collaborative learning with students,
- **Inclusion strategy** with recommendations to EU education authorities on how to integrate non-formal learning within schools and form collaborative relationships with the school community,
- **Assessment model** for teachers,
- **Online network** promoting non-formal learning methods and continuous professional development of teachers.

The project will make these available online and in hard copy in English and in the seven partner languages.

The CARMA project is based on RMA – the Reciprocal Maieutic Approach - and other non-formal learning methods for Student Motivation. RMA is a dialectic methodology of research and self-analysis. It promotes a sense of responsibility in the communities and individuals. Each educational act is described as ‘like giving birth to all the inside potential of the individual’.

RMA helps the learners bring their own knowledge to light, using the dialogue as a dialectical tool, such that knowledge can arise from the experience and its communication or sharing of it. In creating an intense dialogue, a new way of education based on increasing individuals’ and group’s creativity is created. The maieutic process concentrates on the capacity of people’s potential to discover their own vital interests and freely express their own reflections based on their experiences and their personal discoveries.

The CARMA project responds to key benchmarks for education from the Education and Training Strategic Framework which require urgent attention and actions by Member-States, such as reducing the rate of early school leaving in the EU to less than 10% and reducing the share of 15-year-olds under-skilled in reading, mathematics and science to less than 15% by the year 2020.

The main target groups are school teachers (now widened to include teachers from all disciplines) including teachers on an entry level and those students, aged 11 to 16 (increased to include students up to 18 years old in some partner countries), identified as disadvantaged, low achieving and at risk of early school leaving. Indirectly teaching staff and professionals within school education, community of stakeholders in the policy making process i.e. parents, school service providers, civil society organisations and policy makers in school education are also priorities. CARMA offers a process to integrate the participation of all these actors, and transform them into an active part of the knowledge chain.

The Mission of the CARMA Project was stated in the application as:

- To **increase student motivation and participation** by offering an alternative form of teaching and learning using non-formal approaches to education and RMA to support disadvantaged learners and increase achievement levels of students, particularly those at risk of early school leaving;
- To support the integration of the RMA as an assessment tool within school curricula to enrich the learning environment and support school communities to become collaborative learning communities;
- To increase and improve the competences of teachers through providing a training and assessment framework with the necessary skills, knowledge and resources on how to use inclusive and participatory practices in their own teaching and develop **collaborative relationships in and out of the classroom**, thus decreasing the distance between the teacher and learner.
- To provide **inputs and policy recommendations for intervention strategies** to reduce early school leaving and increase basic skills through a network that will facilitate close collaboration with key actors across different levels of education.

A number of Project Objectives were agreed at the outset of the project.

- To increase student motivation and participation by offering new form of teaching-learning using non-formal approaches to support disadvantaged learners and increase their achievements;
- To integrate the RMA as an assessment tool within school curricula;
- To expand teachers' skills through training and assessment framework with knowledge and resources on how to use inclusive and participatory practices and develop collaborative relationships in and out of school;
- To provide policy recommendations for strategies to reduce early school leaving and increase basic skills.

This is achieved through providing inclusive teaching practices that offer non-formal and collaborative learning practices at school. The aim of the proposed methodologies is to encourage collective exploration among the target groups. The results from

different school environments in different European countries will be analysed to establish whether they make a positive impact on the development of more effective policies to support the inclusion of disadvantaged learners and reduce early school leaving. The promotion of a CARMA inclusion strategy will reach out to policy makers thus producing a sustainable impact in European education systems.

The project intends to bring teachers and experts in non-formal education together from seven European countries in order to create and tailor a collaborative learning practice that will result in increased participation and interest of the learners. Teachers of different subjects will cooperate and therefore expand the use of the suggested tool for the assessment of professional skills further within school and the larger community of stakeholders.

## 2. Project Context

This report is produced following the first 12 months of operation, from a planned 30 months in total, of the **CARMA Project: non-formal learning for student motivation**.

CARMA is based on four phases of operation (Figure 1) and is described from the application as follows:

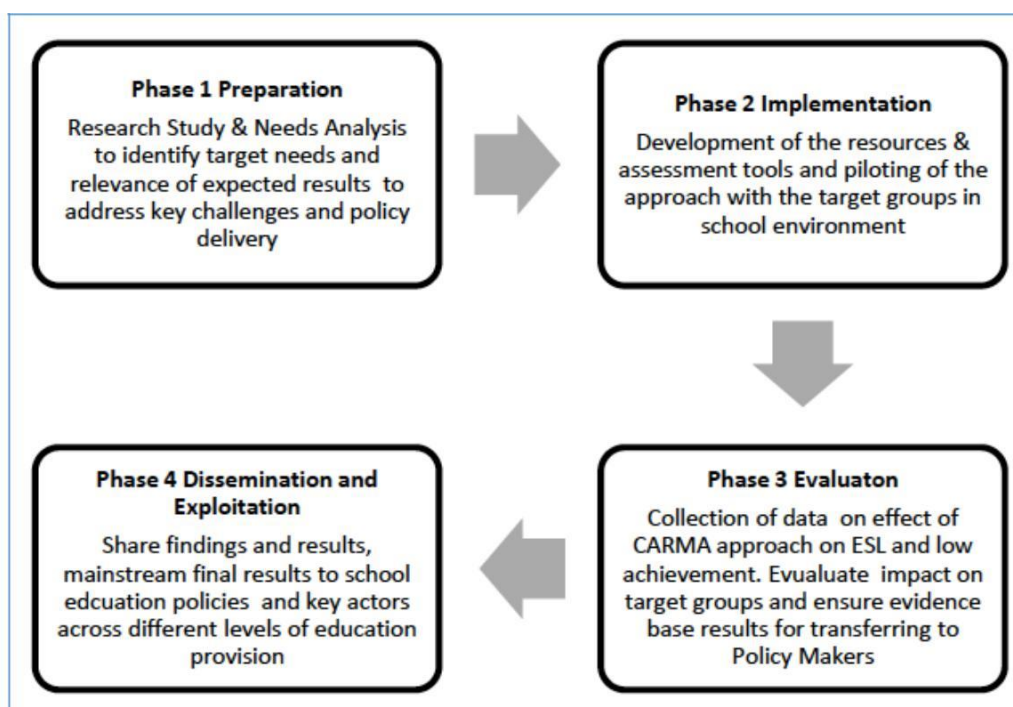


Figure 1: Phases of CARMA Project implementation

*"M1 – M7 (January 2016 - June 2016)*

*Foresees in-depth research on the situation in each of the partner countries regards Early School Leaving (ESL), best practices in collaborative learning and national frameworks for the assessment of teachers' competences. The objective is to provide the consortium with an updated common ground on project themes and research findings from across all partners' countries will be shared to support the implementation phase of the project.*

**Phase 1 Milestones and indicators:** *In depth knowledge among consortium on the target needs and the challenges the project will address, quantitative and qualitative comparative research reports - national and EU level, delivery of 7 Educational Forums events across the partner countries involving 70 organisations/140-210 participants in total, completion of 2<sup>nd</sup> consortium meeting and report with research & needs analyses review.*

### **Phase 2 – Implementation**

*M2 – M29 (February 2016 – May 2018)*

*Will involve the development and adaptation of diverse non-formal methods into training materials for school education and RMA as an assessment tool for students to*

*measure impact from collaborative learning, creation of Toolkit and accompanying Teacher Competence Assessment model to measure competences" development of teachers in collaborative practices, Development of a "CARMA network for School Communities" to facilitate collaborative practices between teachers, educational staff and wider school community; training for teachers across partner countries led by non-formal learning Experts and RMA experts which will lead into the testing of the CARMA methods into the school learning process by the trained teachers with students at school involving different school stakeholders, continued peer learning support, peer review and collaborative working among teachers and educators across the schools using developed resources supported by non-formal Experts.*

**Phase 2 Milestones and indicators:** *Timely completion of tasks, shared understanding of objectives and activities to be delivered, collaborative working among the non-formal Experts and teachers to support the piloting phase in schools and relevance and transferability of the produced results to policy makers, delivery of 1 European Workshop for 28 Teachers led by the 7 Non formal Experts from the 7 partner countries, established online group involving the non-formal learning Experts and DTG1 teachers, competence and skills acquisition of 28 teachers and increased motivation, engagement and achievement levels of more than 500 disadvantaged students, creation of 1 Toolkit resource (80 pages) with minimum of 15 resources and 1 Teacher competence assessment model, production of the online network with Forum and Resource bank and developed products available online as an open educational resource, completion of 3rd consortium meeting and report."*

This report addresses the first of these phases in full and the initial activities and actions of Phase 2. It is a formative report, offering an external review of the development of the project, its aims, activities and actions so far and with recommendations to partners.

CARMA has 8 Work Packages structured to improve and assess project implementation and to offer milestones and performance indicators to ensure good overall management of the project and each WP from start to finish.

Two face-to-face partner meetings have so far been held, attended by members of all partner institutions. Two online progress meetings have also been held. Smaller bilateral and multilateral meetings have also taken place.

As external evaluator, I attended the second full partner meeting in Murcia and participated in the second online progress meeting. I discussed the project with Karine Hindrix, UCLL, who leads the Evaluation Work Package and the project coordinator Rosina Ndukwe, from CESIE.

Through Google Drive I have had full access to all documentation and materials from partners, except for financial papers.

I was contracted to join the project after 6 months of activity, as a result I was not involved in many of the early exchanges of information. Following discussion and agreement I therefore decided in this first external evaluation to focus on the perceptions of the partners in terms of their understanding of the project, its significance; the involvement of their organisations; their roles in the project and

positive and negative perceptions after 11 months of activity.

At the end of month 12, I then undertook a review of the progress, the deliverables that had been produced and the visibility of the project online in order to contribute formative ideas that might help the project to enhance its outcomes.

### 3. Evaluation Context

#### 3.1 Evaluation Approach

The present evaluation should be considered an important part of the CARMA project. It should be seen as an opportunity for the project coordinator, administrators and the partners to understand the specific needs of the project and any areas requiring adjustments or further actions, defining thus the requirements and strategies for the successful completion of the project and possible actions to maximise the impact of CARMA.

#### 3.2 Evaluation Methodology

This external evaluation has applied the following methodology:

*1. The evaluation process concentrated on four areas:*

- Management and Administration of the project and partnership
- Deliverables (quality, availability etc.)
- Partner Perception, Involvement and Benefit
- Potential Impact and wider project network

*2. It is applied at two levels:*

- The Project as a whole
- The Work Packages

*3. It is applied in two time periods:*

- After the second partner meeting (partner perceptions)
- At the end of month 12 (deliverables, online presence)

*4. The following materials have been used:*

- The results of the partner evaluation survey
- Internal reviews and evaluation documents
- Other materials and information available

*5. As well as these related activities:*

- Review of all the completed deliverables.
- Participating in face-to-face meeting 2 and the second online partner meetings.
- Talking with as many partners as possible.

Three methods have been used to evaluate the state of the project.

Firstly the degree of engagement, involvement and participation in the project has been assessed through attendance and participation, the roles and activities performed by different members of the team, delivery of products and deadlines and willingness to take responsibility.

Secondly the significance of the completed deliverables has been assessed.

Finally, open-ended feedback responses made by all project members at the second consortium meeting used as part of the project development process to evaluate the

state of the CARMA project in terms of the challenges and how they might be overcome. These included identifying the positive elements in the project so far; the important issues, which partners said needed to be dealt with to remain on track; and the barriers to completion and how to overcome them.

A follow-up to this was undertaken in an online meeting with the coordinator and leader of the Evaluation Work Package.

A summary of the evaluation methodology is provided in Table 1.

*Table 1: Methodologies employed for the interim external evaluation*

<b><i>What?</i></b>	<b><i>How?</i></b>
<b>Management and Administration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication tools</li> <li>• Internal reporting</li> <li>• Quality of Partners Meetings</li> </ul>	Evaluation of administrative documents Discussion with coordinator and Evaluation WP leader Open discussion with partners Anonymous survey
<b>Partner involvement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involvement/Participation In deliverables, In meetings</li> <li>• Opportunities for sharing experience In deliverables, In meetings</li> <li>• Activities progress</li> </ul>	Anonymous survey Evaluation discussions Attendance at meetings
<b>Deliverables</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of outcomes</li> <li>• Dissemination potential</li> <li>• Potential impact</li> </ul>	Evaluation of deliverables Evaluation of dissemination activities Feedback meeting with coordinator
<b>Impact of the Project</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Web site, online presence</li> <li>• Partner Activities</li> <li>• Other Outputs</li> </ul>	Evaluation of CARMA Online activities Evaluation of Activities Evaluation of other Outputs

### 3.3 Partner Questionnaire

A short online questionnaire was developed and made available using Survey Monkey. It was opened to participants at the end of the second full partner face-to-face meeting in Murcia, Spain and completed by all meeting participants shortly afterwards.

The survey was promoted as an opportunity for participants to reflect on the project and provide them with a forum for an open and free exchange of opinions, where the positions of individuals would be shared, with anonymity ensured.

The purpose of this questionnaire was to provide the coordinating team and the external evaluator with evidence to ensure the project develops clearly and successfully and specifically to examine three areas:

- Clarity of participants concerning the goals and objectives of the project.
- Identification of any positive or negative issues related to the meeting, project and
- Rating a series of factors describing the state of the project.

Based on the above goals, the following aspects are reviewed in next section of the external evaluation report:

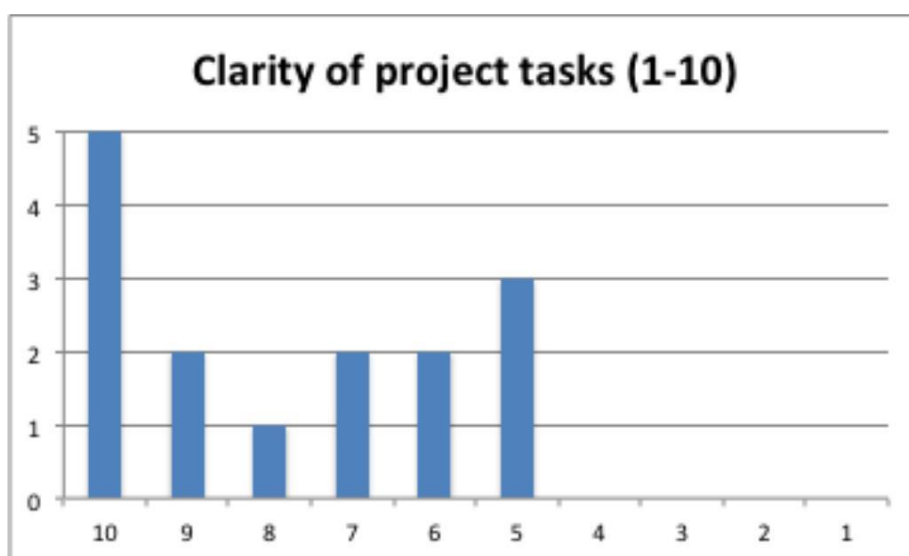
- i. Understanding of the CARMA project, role of partners
- ii. Engagement with CARMA
- iii. Achievements of the project so far and
- iv. Challenges and possible solutions.

Recommendations are provided in insert and summarised in section 5.

## 4. Key Findings

### 4.1 Understanding the CARMA project, role of partners

**Q: How clear are your tasks and responsibilities as a project partner, on a scale of 1 (none) to 10 (full)?**



*Figure 2: Perceived clarity of tasks and responsibilities*

As can be seen from Figure 2, two different perceived perspectives concerning the clarity of project tasks appear to be present. Some project participants seemed quite hesitant and unclear of their roles and tasks and others were very confident in terms of what they were expected to do.

This represents one of the biggest challenges facing the coordinator. Making sure all partners are comfortable enough to be able to share their concerns and ask to clarify their 'hesitations' and 'misunderstandings'.

The second online meeting was a good opportunity to address this, followed up by a concise list of tasks, responsibilities and deadlines.

## 4.2 Engagement with the CARMA Project

**Q: How well do you feel you have been able to undertake your tasks so far, on a scale of 1 (not at all) to 10 (fully able)?**

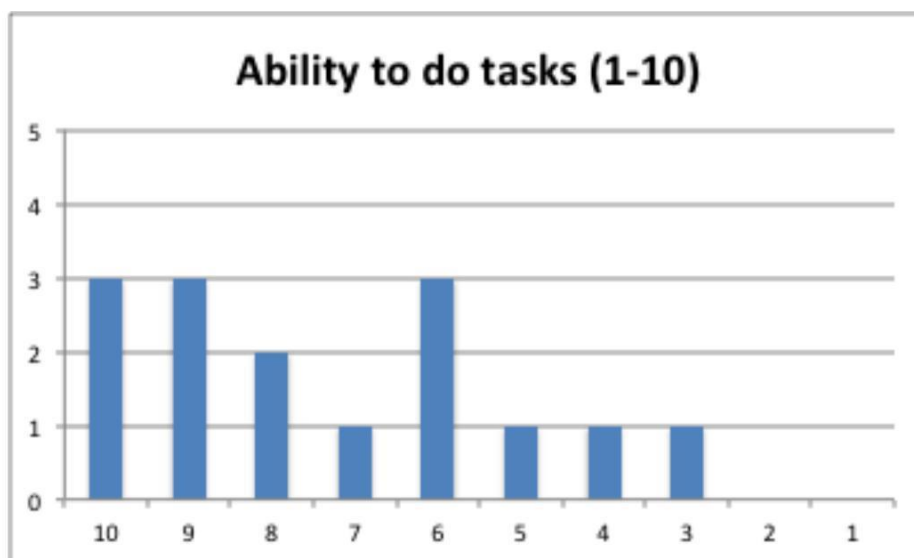


Figure 3: Perceived ability to undertake tasks

Figure 3 shows a considerable variety of perceived opinions in the partnership concerning partner ability, so far, to complete tasks. This diversity was to be expected, as a couple of the meeting participants were new to the project, however there were other partners who expressed some concerns about the ability to be able to complete the tasks being asked of them.

I suggest the coordinating partner should continue to stress and encourage open dialogue between partners.

More opportunities for collective problem solving of issues would support partners who are having issues with completing tasks. This could either be achieved using more frequent online meetings, with collaborative online tools and / or with the use of a project management tool.

**Q: a) List your overall role(s) in the CARMA project? b) What specific tasks have you been asked to undertake in the project?**

In general almost all partners effectively described their specific and in-depth roles in the project activities – more than half of the responses were able to add detailed descriptions of tasks and outcomes and in a few cases reference was made to specific work packages and project development processes.

It was encouraging to see that specific leadership perspectives and responsibilities were mentioned by almost all of the Work Package leaders. However, only one

partner commented on their role to manage their team of colleagues, either within the partnership or within their institution.

Collaboration across Work Packages would seem to be an essential component of international multilateral projects like CARMA and measures to encourage this should be considered by the partnership.

Work Package leaders should take the responsibility to work with and be responsible for the team of partners, rather than the coordinator always being at the centre of the actions. This will bring a greater sense of “collaborative actions” to the project and ownership by partners.

The role of the experts was not elaborated, either by the partners or the experts themselves. This was surprising as they play a key role in advancing certain aspects of the project.

It is important that partners ensure that they acknowledge and understand the work of the education and policy experts. They are an essential resource if the project is to succeed in terms of impact. Once their roles are clearly recognised, these experts can be more effectively utilised by all partners to achieve the project goals.

***Q: How would you estimate the involvement of your organisation in the CARMA project?***

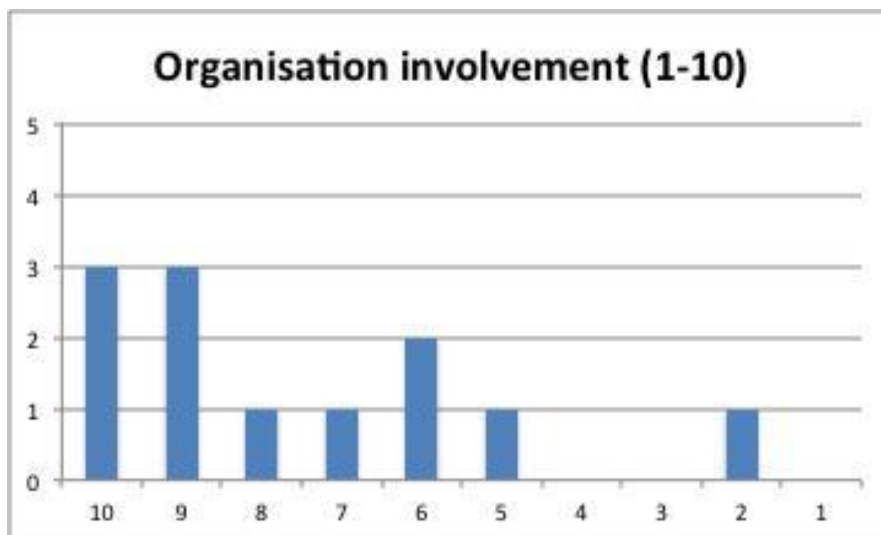


Figure 4: Perceived organisational involvement in CARMA

One of the important elements of projects like CARMA is to ensure their activities and outcomes become embedded into the different partner organisations. Quite a number of participants perceived that their organisation was not particularly involved in the project. It is important to address this during the rest of the project.

When considering dissemination the partner institutions should be a specific component that partners address and meet.

As part of their dissemination plans, all partners should now consider the ways they can embed the project in different activities taking place in their organisations.

In large institutions it can be very difficult to successfully embed 'external' projects, but it should be planned for and attempted.

As part of reporting, internal multipliers should be sought and commented on by each organisation.

**Q4: How would you estimate your own personal level of involvement in the CARMA project?**

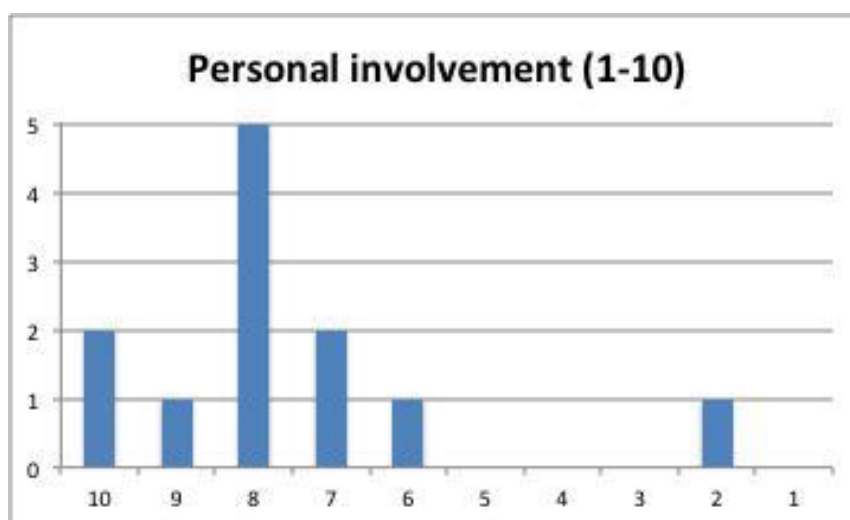


Figure 5: Perceived own level of involvement in CARMA

In terms of their level of involvement, one participant in the partner meeting was very new to the project. This explains their perceived low level of involvement so far in CARMA, at this time. Other partners varied in perceived involvement. It appeared that there was some connection between the responses for personal involvement, the ability to complete tasks and the challenges or difficulties being faced by those partners who were less involved.

I suggest the Work Package leaders should try to take more responsibility for engaging partners in the tasks, decisions and updates.

An internal newsletter for partners has been suggested to involve partners more closely in all aspects and achievements of CARMA – this would have information related to each Work Package, accomplishments and future developments.

### 4.3 Achievements of the CARMA Project, so far

#### **Q: Make a list of the most positive aspects of the project?**

Each of the partners contributed several items here. The following responses (in no particular order) were given:

- *Collaboration, supporting and friendly atmosphere, respect for diversity*
- *The complementary competences of partners;*
- *The topic, i.e. seeking to introduce changes in current schools way of working;*
- *The practical activities envisaged with teachers in real context of education provision*
- *The expertise and knowledge of the partnership with links to different levels of school education i.e. Experience and expertise in collaborative teaching, non-formal learning and ESL is a big strength*
- *Diverse partnership*
- *7 different countries working together to address common challenges*
- *Partners accessibility to school community, policy makers and stakeholders in education*
- *The innovation the project brings to school education i.e. RMA integration*
- *Teachers and students are at the heart of the project and engaging with them from the very start of the project*
- *It is really innovative, thus motivating for me!*
- *It gives the opportunity to my organisation to extend the network at European level but also at local since we barely work in collaboration with secondary schools.*
- *IMPLEMENTATION Time for the pilot phase Presence of expert beside the teachers common resources and understanding of the concepts and specific vocabulary*
- *Dissemination: well organised from the WP leader Already strong impact at France Level (communication at NA level and publication in its trimestrial magazine)*
- *Management: experience of the beneficiary*
- *Cooperation in WP 3: Important WP, good cooperation between organisations*
- *Partnership: super resources inside the consortium*
- *Good mood. Nice people. Interdisciplinary vision.*
- *One very positive aspect of the project is the strong partnership. All partners are fulfilling their tasks and are very supportive to each other. There is also a very good communication and cooperation between the partners.*
- *Really nice people. - Flexibility. - Really interesting topic.*
- *The content*
- *The involvement of schools in different countries*

- *The well considered methodology*
- *The consortium composition*
- *Leadership, and especially in being supportive towards UCLL struggling to arrange our problems*
- *Partners*
- *The topic*
- *The climate among partners is very good and positive.*
- *The communication is easy and every people can speak and listen to the others. This aspect is really relevant to develop the work in group.*
- *The objectives of the project are relevant and interesting, I feel that I am working in something important...*
- *The tasks are well defined.*
- *Good consortium easy to communicate project proposal well described project theme is relevant and it makes sense in the actual context*
- *The goal of the project*
- *The partnership*
- *Amazing coordination*
- *Leadership*

The project partners appear very pleased at being able to participate in the project and contribute to the outcomes of CARMA. Almost all practical and conceptual aspects of the project were positively mentioned.

#### **4.4 Challenges faced by the CARMA Project**

***Q: a) What major challenges have you encountered in undertaking these tasks? b) How are they being addressed?***

In response to this question, the partners provided three categories of answers:

- i) challenges with solutions already being implemented,
- ii) challenges with suggested solutions and
- iii) those situations where no particular solution was being offered.

The partner responses (in no particular order) are listed here in italics.

##### ***i) a) Challenges with b) solutions being implemented***

*a) Attracting teachers and schools to be engaged in the project*

*b) addressed through **networks** created during previous projects and a strong dissemination campaign (on-line platforms and by email).*

a) Due to the size of the project and the vast number of deliverables, the clarification of some tasks in this early stage of the project and ensuring everyone understands their roles and responsibilities and keeping to the timeframe set in the project

b) these challenges are being addressed by **being flexible** with the delivery of some deliverables and ensuring **communication with partners** is consistent and fluid via email, telephone, online meetings etc. to avoid confusion on their part and ensure the project moves forward.

a) The major challenges were related to finding enough participants for the primary research and for the European Workshop

b) the challenges have been addressed by **discussing each situation with the Project Coordinator** and trying to find solutions appropriate for the local context, but at the same time making sure that we respect projects' aims and specific objectives and ensure the quality in the project.

a) Getting the work done: we both weren't institutionally freed up to work on the project, then my colleague become ill and I had to do a lot of work on top of my 100% job, this made us fall behind in the work

b) insisting on a **structural solution** in our institution and now it is well being taken care of and we are catching up and delivering quality work

a) The distribution of work with all partners is not always easy

b) the **coordinator** (Italian partner) is always **helping** us

a) minor delays due to time frame

b) contact with partners, **precise timetables** with deadlines, renegotiating deadlines

## **ii) Challenges with proposed solutions to be implemented**

a) Involvement of other stakeholders, namely decision makers on school education

b) we will try to **schedule meetings and use the national events** to engage this target-group.

a) It starts early and needs a bit more time and collaborative work with formal teachers competencies assessment bodies. No official connexion so far

b) try to **establish a partnership with a research laboratory**

a) Sometimes is difficult to follow all tasks we have to do in different workpackages

b) maybe we should **use some internal tool to help organize** the tasks could be useful.

a) The project has a lot of activities to implement

b) it is necessary to have a **better control of the project implementation** rhythm to avoid to have a large set of issues to discuss and agree on in so short time (as in this 2nd meeting).

## **No indicated solutions so far**

The problems we have found are related to the fact that some partners did not sent the data by the agreed deadline, so we could not finish the report.

Obtaining enough data for the questionnaires: we tried and tried and tried to contact people and ask to complete a questionnaire, looking for teachers in 4 different schools

*The main challenge in completing the work is the delay in answering with the different tasks from partners. Some of them do not answer at all - it hasn't been addressed yet.*

*The major challenge has been to obtain the participation from some partners*

*Planning the piloting activities for all partner countries, arranging the calendar for the piloting phase*

*Getting feedback for the partners to improve deliverables*

*Finding the innovative assessment techniques*

*Time restraints since I joined the CARMA project recently. Not addressed.*

*Working extra to catch-up.*

*Another issue is the engagement of teachers and schools towards all the activities of the project. In fact teachers need to be motivated to participate and its participation should be pleasant and simple and I do feel that we are asking to many things to them in terms of questionnaires and assessments and diaries and in-school workshops, etc....*

*we need to understand that they have already large administrative tasks to perform daily.*

The intricacy and variety of these identified challenges was an expected outcome of the survey. This is due to the evaluation being undertaken at a relatively early stage in the project. Indeed, it would be surprising if many of these issues did not exist in an initiative like CARMA, which is quite complex.

Nevertheless, several of the issues, such as delays, organisational matters and delivery of outcomes on time, indicate that partners have been experiencing some significant issues with meeting deadlines in completing the project deliverables.

Some of the early misunderstandings in roles and tasks might have been solved by the use of a project management tool.

I am aware the coordinator has tried to ensure that these difficulties are being addressed and where necessary individual partners have been coaxed / mentored / supported to complete the actions asked of them. It is clear that the coordinator is playing a very positive and active role in doing this and is extensively supporting many of the partners.

Always having to get the opinion and feedback of the coordinator can cause blockages and slow the implementation of certain actions. The leadership and management role of the Work Package leaders could be stressed further.

I would recommend that a more pro-active role in supporting partners could be played by Work Package leaders and specifically in managing the deadlines for deliverables.

Some of the delays have been beyond the control of the partners, for instance the difficulty of working with teachers during the summer period. This has created a knock-on delaying effect on other deliverables.

To address this, I recommend the partnership could consider submitting an application for a project extension, to ensure that deliverables are not rushed so that their quality is maintained.

There remain issues, which indicated that from the outset, the use of a project management tool could have been desirable.

The list of perceived challenges without solutions should be examined by the coordinator and addressed with the partners at the next opportunity.

The other lists of challenges should be considered by partners, and where necessary either addressed or simply monitored.

The coordinating institution, together with all partners, should consider whether or not to employ a project management system, though they may decide not to change operational modes of communication.

***Q: What aspects of the project and its activities could be improved and how?***

In response to this question, the survey participants referred to three specific areas:

- i) Project Management,
- ii) Project Goals and
- iii) Operational Aspects.

These are listed here in italics (in no particular order):

***i) Project Management***

*- Clear step-by-step planning for implementation of the various activities - so far this has not been very timely provided.*

*- Taking decisions process would be improved being a bit clearer and determined with it. The decisions must be taken at a precise moment in order to ensure the solving of the task in the planned time, otherwise, the risk of not finishing on time is always open, and the frustration of the partners that are completing everything would create a bad mood.*

*- CARMA is a big project with many activities to be implemented and can be at times overwhelming, but with a strong partnership these issues can be easily tackled.*

*- It could be good to clarify tasks in each moment and to use other tools (email sometimes is confusing to clarify all things) to help with the process of work.*

*- Meetings could be more active and group work; the pace is slow sometimes, even though we work well. I know this is not easy*

*- It's necessary that people take into account the deadlines of the activities*

- *Every partner must respect the deadlines to finish the task and this point could be improved if we develop group awareness. The delay of one involves the delay of all others.*
- *Better control of the milestones and deadlines avoiding large delays.*
- *Implementation: communication between partners should increase*
- *The schedule for producing deliverables and for implementing activities is very tight, however, each partner is responsible for a respective WP and they are experienced in it, hence if the partners feel the ownership of the project it should be handled as foreseen.*
- *Better communication between partners.*

Placing a number of large and complex deliverables into the early stages of the project places considerable stresses on deadlines and time management.

Scheduling and partners keeping to deadlines appeared to be common issues for several different partners, with the completion of some project deliverables being delayed. This is not surprising given that some partners did not appear to be clear of their role in CARMA and thus their engagement in the project was probably not always as high as necessary.

Communication channels between partners have been questioned during the survey and decision-making has not always been clear to certain partners. The reliance on emails between project meetings means it is hard to track what needs to be done and by when. Several partners felt this was an important issue.

An on-going list of tasks and deadlines which is prepared and updated/signed off using Google Drive (currently an internal process for the project team of the Coordinating organisation CESIE) should be shared with partners. When tasks are visibly ticked off as completed, it is good for partner motivation. It also provides a clear, definitive list of things to do, which will avoid misunderstandings.

This list could be maintained not just by CESIE as it currently is now, but also by the leaders of the different Work Packages, leaving the coordinator with the role of keeping an overview of the activities across whole project, this is important in cases where there are connections between items, significant problems or possible serious delays.

## **ii) Goals**

- *Common definitions*
- *I think at this point it is very early to say, but just to be sure that all partners are really aware and understand the context of CARMA and that is focused on policy intervention within school education and the methods by which we need to influence policy changes. Therefore understanding that for this to be successful our results and impact*

*have to be monitored and evaluated effectively by all partners which is quite a big task but it is key to ensuring the project is assessed well by the Commission.*

One of the most important misconceptions between partners is the purpose of the project and the 'bigger picture' of the Action. As a Forward Looking project, policy impact must be a central consideration of all the activities that are taking place, the actions of the consortium and the outcomes and deliverables. So far this has not been the case.

I recommend that Work Package leaders should be asked by the coordinator to consider the **policy impacts** of their tasks and deliverables.

A list of policy impact opportunities could then be created and discussed with the Policy Advisor. From this list, a clear policy impact plan can be created and implemented **as part of the dissemination plan**.

An additional online meeting to discuss policy could be arranged before the next full partner meeting to focus all partners on the importance of this aspect.

### **iii) Operational**

- *More good practices*
- *Testing in the classes*
- *Until now, I do not have any clear answer about it. I am waiting for the **concrete implementation and the feedback of the teachers** after the training in order to know if they feel at ease to go on with the implementation.*
- *Research study and needs analysis: questionnaires were not considered relevant by teachers and we don't know how they will be reused/useful for the project*
- *Training course: the place for the teacher and the work between trainers and experts.*
- ***The impact of the project in every country**, but we are in the beginning of the project so this aspect will be improved along the process.*
- *I think it was important to **get into the contact with the stakeholders (policy makers/ decision makers) from the early beginning** of the project. This can be improved by taking immediate action and starting the collaboration with relevant stakeholders.*

Operational issues related to improvements in methods and approaches, information gathering and the impact of the project.

These operational issues could be shared between partners, discussed and practically addressed by the project team.

***Q: Make any other comments here. You can raise any issues that need to be shared or even congratulate colleagues on what has been done so far***

*The coordinator's encouraging and respectful attitudes build stronger partnership.*

*Congratulate! I want to say that all partners have worked really well together in this first phase, which has been a very busy first 9 months of the project. We are progressing well in the project. The next phase is crucial to the project implementation and all partners are committed and focused to achieving the objectives of the project. Thanks!*

*I really love the way for helping each other, the amazing patience for working and the great project created.*

*I am happy to be working with these colleagues in this project, so I hope that the feeling will be shared by all members of the group.*

*I believe that every partnership meeting helps to establish closer relationships among the partners, thus building trust at the individual level. The higher level of trust brings more ownership for each partner and more responsibilities to respect the deadlines and produce high quality results.*

It was pleasing to note the respect and support felt by partners to one another and the project coordinator.

## **4. Results**

The interim results of the project are reviewed and evaluated in this section.

### **4.1 Work Package 1 Management and administration**

*Overall:* The Management of the project is the responsibility of the lead institution CESIE. However, the project is also organised through the actions and activities of Work Package leaders.

The main areas of project management are reviewed below, which in addition represent the deliverables of the Work Package 1 allocated to the coordinating partner, CESIE.

CESIE is in charge of overall project management and coordination in collaboration with project partners. The active involvement of all partners throughout the project relies on the use of efficient communication channels. These have so far involved two project consortium face-to face meetings, two virtual partner meetings and the use of email. All documents are made available through Google Drive.

A partnership agreement was signed with all partners (WP1-1).

Partner meetings are clearly focused, well organised and efficiently planned (WP1-2). Partners appear to have the opportunity to debate and participate in all areas of decision-making. Good quality minutes from the first two partnership meetings, called Consortium Reports in the proposal (WP1-3), are being kept and shared. Partner presentations and meeting details are stored on Google Drive.

It was pleasing to note that in order to support partners and maintain clarity, a list of tasks, responsibilities and deadlines, derived from meetings, have been produced in the second partner meeting Minutes.

As mentioned earlier in this report, a list of action points that are regularly updated and added to items signed off i.e. (currently implemented by CESIE) should be made visible to partners. This will make the ongoing responsibility for actions more collectively owned and the ongoing tasks clear to all.

A Risk Management Plan (WP1-4) was prepared for each of the Work Packages and for the project as a whole. It included possible risks, conflict situations that might arise and the exit strategy and measures to be undertaken to overcome. A Risk Assessment Matrix approach was used and mitigating actions presented. A monitoring process was suggested. The Plan was agreed upon, with a full consensus of partners.

The Plan is sound, well elaborated and with a suitable structure and approach. The only area of concern I have is that it does not seem to fully address the importance of policy impact.

As identified elsewhere in this report, partners should review the importance of policy impact and define risk issues and possible mitigation as part of future project development.

Two online meetings have taken place (WP1-8). I attended the second of these and an audio recording was made. As with the face-to-face meetings there were well attended by all partners and excellent sets of notes have been maintained and published. A series of next steps and deadlines were included.

Summary:

The CARMA Project appears to be very well coordinated and effectively led in terms of meetings, materials, resources and the positive nature between partners. CARMA is well managed from administrative and technical points of view. After some initial questions, the administrative and financial issues seemed to have been effectively and competently dealt with. This implies considerable preparation and planning.

To support this view the following can be mentioned:

- Administrative and financial issues raised at the beginning of the project appear to have been effectively dealt with. This implied considerable preparation and planning.
- The CARMA project has been, to a large extent, extremely well coordinated and effectively managed, specifically in terms of meetings, materials, resources and activities.
- The coordinator, together with the Work Package leaders, appears to have resolved the management issues and overcame the barriers to project developments.

- Based on the partner meeting in Murcia and the second online meeting, the partners seemed to have knitted together well, becoming an effective unit. There have been some misunderstandings in what input was required from some partners, this may possibly be due to English language issues. These appear to have been resolved during the second online meeting.
- Partners appear to be prepared to take responsibility for actions and to support one another where and when needed.

The following are considered as issues of possible concern:

- The team have had some problems in meeting some of their deadlines.
- There appear to have been different levels of commitment and involvement from partners.
- There has been an initial lack of understanding amongst some partners about the exact nature of what was required with respect to the different tasks and deliverables.
- Despite meetings, reports and notes as well as email instructions, there were some communication problems with a few partners. This is possibly the result of relying predominantly on email exchanges and quite infrequent partner meetings. I am aware bilateral meetings have also taken place to resolve issues and work on specific actions. This seems to have largely been resolved now following the second online project partner meeting.

#### ***4.2 Project Partnership***

In terms of partnership, CARMA has brought together an interesting range of experience and expertise from academic, professional, pedagogical and training perspectives. The CARMA Project has an enthusiastic and seemingly well-motivated set of partners. It appears the project team has knitted together extremely well as an effective unit.

A number of partners have commented on the need for a project management tool, providing internal communication and collaboration. The use of this may specifically help deal with and track the more complex tasks and deliverables. However to adopt such a system mid-way through the project may not be advisable.

Partners should discuss this and decide whether to use project management tools/platform to support the more complex tasks of the second part of the CARMA Project.

#### ***4.3 Work Package 2: Research Study and Needs Analysis***

The CARMA Project has examined non-formal learning development, in a cross-curricular and interdisciplinary approach with national reports.

The Country Specific Report mapping data across the 7 partner countries (WP2-1) explores data, national action plans, benchmarks, standards and projects. It draws on statistics from a number of official sources and analyses the attempts to address Early School Leaving and opportunities for using collaborative learning. It attempts to

explore the relevance of non-formal collaborative learning with respect to the CARMA Project and uses 11 case studies to illustrate what has been done so far. The absence of existing standards and frameworks for collaborative learning in the partner countries gives a clear rationale for the importance of the project.

This is an in-depth, well constructed report of some significance to future European and national education policy. There are many key messages that could be drawn from its findings, both at European level and in learning from initiatives in different countries. The challenge for the partnership is to consider how the main messages should be used to connect with national and European policy makers. Dissemination of this work is essential to raise the profile of the project.

In order to maximise the impact of this excellent research report, the main headlines should be abstracted from the report and used for project dissemination. The report and the headlines should be placed in a prominent place on the Web site and translated. Awareness raising about the report should be undertaken and the communication of the key findings to policy makers should be initiated in all partner countries.

A questionnaire was prepared for different target groups (WP2-2) leading to a Needs Assessment report of these stakeholders (WP2-3). Despite some problems in getting contributions, ultimately an impressive sample of survey participants (more than 1200) was obtained across the partnership and target groups. The outcomes identified the roles these different groups can play in the process and their perceived awareness of collaborative methods. There are many interesting insights in the results of the surveys, which can help to inform the project partners. The danger is that the outcomes of this important research will be lost in the busy schedule of the project.

I would suggest CARMA partners could consider writing up the results of this Needs Analysis and the main findings from the Country reports as an academic paper published in an open, electronic journal such as the “Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning” or the “International Journal of Open Collaborative Learning”. This would broaden access to the results and provide peer-reviewed credibility of their findings.

An Education Forum has been planned in each partner country (WP2-4). Their purpose is to focus on the outcomes of the stakeholder questionnaire by gathering experts together to discuss the issues and outcomes and identify and involve stakeholders who will take part in the next phases of the project. These are important operational events, but unfortunately events in 2 partner countries them have been delayed for various unanticipated and unavoidable reasons. A project extension could be sought to ensure these delays do not adversely impact on other aspects of the project.

Summary:

Making use of CARMA Project products must be maximised, especially those that could lead to awareness raising and impact at policy level.

#### ***4.4 Work Package 3: Non-formal learning and RMA resources & assessment tools for collaborative practices***

WP3 creates resources and assessment tools for collaborative teaching and learning practices. A catalogue of 21 non-formal learning techniques has been produced (WP3-1) where partners shared their approaches using a standard template. These are based on existing practice and give teacher instructions for their completion.

A toolkit resource (WP3-2) is envisaged later in the project as a teaching resource aiming at raising school achievement levels and therefore reducing early school leaving. An online, non-formal learning group (WP3-3) has been initiated to share information, ideas and practices. A list of almost 50 people are involved in this activity. At the moment it seems to be mainly used for sharing the techniques from the catalogue with little discussion or connection between participants.

As described in the proposal, partner organisations should now start to regularly work with this group of teachers, in order to support peer learning, peer review and feedback during the upcoming piloting phase. Indeed, it will be interesting to see how this process develops and the ways partners use to engage the teachers in online activity.

A definition assessment framework has been created (WP3-4) as a tool to support the assessment criteria of the specific competences and skills. It is based on a holistic framework for non-formal learning and Kolb's learning cycle. A set of useful characteristics has been defined in this valuable document.

Summary:

A very useful start has been made to this very important Work Package. The creation of the toolkit and the teacher assessment framework will be critical components for the success of the project in schools. It will be interesting to find out what online platform the partnership will aim to use to connect teachers and how the resource bank will be made available.

#### ***4.5 Work Package 4: Piloting of the CARMA approach***

By and large this Work Package has only recently been initiated. A European training event (WP4-1) was held in Palermo in October 2016. There were 26 teacher participants. The training included quality inputs from all partners and with lots of active participation from the teachers involved.

The European workshop event has been very well favoured by the participants and partners alike. It has motivated the teachers with the application of new knowledge and skills, furthermore in the collaboration with teachers from other countries, a EU dimension has been brought to their teaching. This was an important milestone achieved by the project before the piloting had begun at local level in schools.

The assessment was very interesting and produced valuable comments on the benefits of the workshop and any doubts raised by participants. It reflected on the perceived gaps and problems encountered, using the four pillars of learning.

Summary:

A very interesting assessment approach has been used in the workshop.

The piloting and demonstration workshops will predominantly take place in the second part of the project.

#### ***4.6 Work Package 5: Quality Assurance***

This Work Package combines quality and some elements of internal evaluation.

At the outset partners were asked to recommend quality criteria for their work. This participative approach is to be complemented as it engages all partners in quality elements of the project. The resultant Quality criteria document is part of the Quality Assurance Plan (WP5-1). The partner criteria reports were evaluated, discussed and are included final plan, synthesised by the Work Package leader.

When I joined the project I was asked to comment on and review a draft version of this document. I believe it to be a comprehensive and well-organised plan, which is being implemented to enhance the outcomes of the project. Of particular interest are the comprehensive set of output indicators and the quality criteria for didactical approaches. In the latter, theory and practice has been merged to establish key evaluation elements.

#### ***4.7 Work Package 6: Evaluation***

The Evaluation Work Package seeks to monitor and collect data in order to track the progress of CARMA and make recommendations. It includes the activities of the External Evaluator and this report.

An Evaluation Guidelines Model (WP6-1) has been drawn up which explores the processes of change and presents key questions to be asked as part of the evaluation process and methodology. It also addresses areas such as sustainability and impact. An ethical code is presented for working with students and schools.

This is a key document for project partners to use in reflecting on their work. I believe it to be a very good example of best project practice.

Two Internal Evaluation reports have so far been produced, based on the partner meetings (WP6-2). They record the level of satisfaction of the partners following the meetings. I believe the main issues brought out are the same ones as this external evaluation document. Other deliverables in this Work Package were produced.

Summary:

The partners recognise the importance of evaluation. There appears to be some overlap and duplication of effort between Work Packages 5 and 6.

#### ***4.8 Work Package 7: Dissemination***

Dissemination is a core component of projects like CARMA. This Work Package delivers a Dissemination Plan (WP7-1), which is then to be implemented. This establishes how the visibility of the project will be raised at different levels. It identifies branding and tools and allocates tasks to different partners, for example for the CARMA Facebook page. Targets are established and it will be interesting to review them in the light of

the project Interim Report achievements. A series of national evaluation plans are provided.

An omission from the Dissemination Plan is the dissemination which should be undertaken within the partner organisations. This should be considered and implemented early in the next phase of the project.

Dissemination for policy is not explicitly covered by the planned dissemination activities of the project.

Partners should consider how policy objectives will be reached and what specific dissemination activities need to be initiated and then developed.

Awareness raising for policy should be implemented as soon as possible in the next phase of the project.

The development of Project website (WP7-2) has been undertaken (<http://carma-project.eu/>). It is clearly branded, with an extremely attractive and modern design that provides basic information about the project, its goals and partner information. The site is multi-lingual – with translations of basic materials into 8 languages. The site showed elements of very good design features, it loaded very quickly and was easy to navigate. Information about the achievements of the project so far has been published there, however more should be added over time as the project develops. Links to the Facebook page and project progress (the newsletter) was not easy to locate. Subscription / links to these should be available at the top of the main page.

Eventually the site will include the toolbox of resources and link to the CARMA Online Network for School Communities. Care should be taken concerning decisions taken on how this will be achieved and also where key deliverables will be located, if the website is to have coherent and easy navigation.

I recommend that all public deliverables, resources and outcomes are placed on the CARMA Web site.

Translated deliverables (where specified) should be made available.

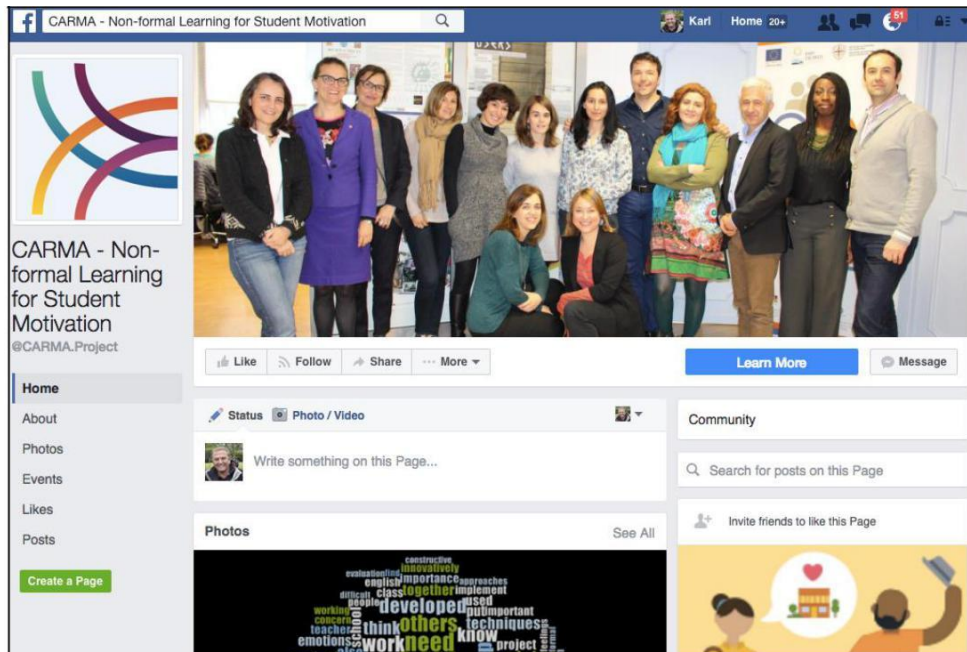
Direct, clear access to key outcomes should be available from the main page.

Future proofing the site for ongoing developments over the next two years will be important, to avoid considerable extra work and untidy navigation.

Care should be taken how best to showcase key deliverables and outcomes. It is likely the download area will eventually become so full that that the deliverables are not easy to find. Main outcomes and messages will need to be specified on the main page.

The CARMA Facebook page (WP7-3) was created in January 2016 to support online dissemination. It had over 110 likes at the time of review

([https://www.facebook.com/pg/CARMA.Project/posts/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/CARMA.Project/posts/?ref=page_internal)). It is good to have established it at early stage of the project, but up to now there has not been a regular supply of project news and dissemination taking place there.



The Facebook page is perceived to be a very important part of the dissemination strategy for some of the target audiences. The challenge will be to decide how it is to be used best, for what purpose and which target groups.

I suggest the preparation, in advance, of sequences of messages posted there about the project, these should promote the public deliverables and the Website, main findings, events, the newsletter and also other more general items related to non-formal learning and the methodologies and approaches including publications and other similar actions. Connecting with other Facebook pages and groups, including policy influencing agencies like European Schoolnet and national Ministries, is also important to raise awareness of the project.

The use of the social media of partner organisation to promote CARMA was not specifically evident in most of the dissemination outcomes.

I suggest preparing a regular series of Tweets for dissemination on partner Twitter feeds, LinkedIn and other outlets. These will enable greater visibility and wider contacts.

Twitter can also be used to attract the attention of policy makers. I suggest researching a list of specific relevant policy maker Twitter addresses and their #handles should be identified. They can then be targeted with tweets to raise awareness of the project Web site and specific deliverables like the research report.

A CARMA Newsletter (WP7-4) in partner languages has been produced and made available on the Web site. It is attractive, but it only exists in pdf form. It is not clear how interested stakeholders might subscribe to receive it, other than through the Contact Database. A fact sheet has been developed along with pdf brochures (WP7-5) in several languages.

The promotional video (WP7-6) has not yet been completed, though video clips are available on Google Drive. It has been decided that an animation will be created for better impact, rather than a video. The Contact Database (WP7-7) has been contributed to by all partners.

Summary: Partners have been very busy completing lots of activities and deliverables. It is now important that any outstanding dissemination deliverables are completed and dissemination actions for the rest of the project are prioritised.

Partners should consider how a focused dissemination campaign could be prioritised and implemented for the next phase of the project and the key target groups accessed.

#### **4.9 Work Package 8: Mainstreaming of results**

In many ways this is the most important of the CARMA Work Packages. This is because it seeks to connect the project activities to concrete policy actions. It seeks to take advantage of the dissemination tools. It also needs to relate to the project deliverables and use them in a strategic way to connect with policy and decision makers, with the advice of the Policy Expert.

A Strategy Plan has been produced (WP8-1) which outlines clearly the goals, types of communication and targets for mainstreaming. An action plan identifies strategies but not an activity timeline or milestones.

As described in the report *“The policy recommendations that are going to be produced during the project need to specify how the non-formal education/ RMA approach promoted by the CARMA project is going to further implement the educational and school curricula development policies being already adopted at regional, national and EU-level.”*

Mainstreaming activities should already be under way. They need to be assessed and evaluated as part of the evaluation undertaken by the consortium. In this way the concrete actions and the milestones necessary for meeting the mainstreaming targets can be prioritised.

The links between WP8 and dissemination could be made much more explicit.

Summary:

Achievements from Mainstreaming did not yet seem to have been presented or assessed at the time of this review. This will be a key area for the project partners to concentrate on during the next phases of project evaluation undertaken during the second part of CARMA.

In the build up to the Second Educational Forum the connections between Mainstreaming and Dissemination need to be stressed, so that a CARMA Inclusion Strategy can be developed and used with education authorities.

#### **4.10 Project Impact**

The impact of projects like CARMA tends to increase as the activities evolve, the outcomes become clearer and key deliverables are finalised and published. This tends to occur towards the latter stages of a project and in the period beyond its funding.

In the proposal, impact at European level was identified as one of the main priorities of the partnership and ultimate goal in terms of the sustainability of the project. Addressing the specific EU benchmark to reduce the ESL to less than 10% and low-achieving students in basic skills – less than 15% by 2020, has to remain a major focus for all partners by campaigning for non-formal education as a practical and acknowledged method of teaching, especially for those at risk of early school leaving.

As a result, maximising the use of evidence-based messages that are produced as part of the first part of the project is vital thus transferring the key findings, results and recommendations to identified influencers in school education policy. This can support the successful, sustained impact later on when resources, piloting and evidence-based recommendations can be made. Thus CARMA needs to focus on its primary goal from an early stage, namely making connections with policy influencers, recommending the inclusion of non-formal approaches to the European Commission policies on early school leaving. This awareness raising should continue throughout the remainder of the project and beyond its lifetime.

Partners also need to develop their capacity to work within their own countries at both local and national level, not only mainstreaming the new methods for collaborative teaching/learning into different locations, but specifically to raise awareness of the potential of the CARMA tools, materials and practices.

I suggest that promoting the RMA, as a practical, inclusive and non-bureaucratic assessment tool could attract a lot of interest and attention. It should be established as a highly visible part of policy actions and policy recommendations to education systems across Europe.

Possibly the biggest challenge for the CARMA Project will be the transformation of innovative teaching methods into a common practice, which in turn will be translated into concrete policy actions. Close cooperation between all partners will be of vital importance for this. To help achieve this and raise project impact, the role the online group and the teacher network could play will need to be considered.

The Exploitation and Policy Engagement Strategy needs to be implemented closely in connection with the Dissemination Plan. It is not yet explicit precisely how the strategy will be used in conjunction with the dissemination activities and how the completed outcomes of the project will be widely promoted to create awareness of policy makers and other stakeholders. It is also not clear the role of the policy-making expert to help guide this part of the project.

In the build up to the Second Educational Forum after the piloting phase, these connections need to be stressed so that a CARMA Inclusion Strategy can be developed and used with education authorities.

#### ***4.11 Network Building***

In the next phases of the project, network building should become a central theme, networking teachers and educators as well as other stakeholders together to share ideas and practices, but also the development of networks of policy advocates.

As networking requires a culture change in its members, networking processes necessitate significant amounts of time to develop. Initiation, participation, action and sustaining have been identified as the four phases necessary for the development of education communities. Concerted efforts should therefore be made at an early stage to establish the active CARMA community who can then act as local multipliers.

I suggest that the coordinator and national partners should formulate plans as soon as possible, aiming not only at implementing and launching the CARMA Online Network for School Communities, but also in making sure that this network has the time to develop a participative culture so that it is consistent with the vision and goals of the project as a whole. This is so that the network has time to develop and become a central access point and information exchange platform with services, information and examples, thereby enhancing, extending and enriching the impact of the work of the project into the future.

## 5. Summary of recommendations

The following suggestions are the recommendations provided by the external evaluator during this report. Their purpose is to try to support the work of the consortium in achieving their project goals and enhancing the impact of the CARMA project on education systems in Europe.

To the coordinator:

- Make sure all partners are able to share or clarify their ‘hesitations’ and ‘misunderstandings’.
- Continue to stress and encourage open dialogue between partners.
- Encourage collective problem solving of issues to support partners who are having issues with completing tasks.
- Produce a short, regular internal newsletter for partners, with information on each Work Package, achievements and future developments.
- Look at the perceived challenges without solutions and discuss them with partners.
- Consider, with partners, whether or not to employ a project management system, though they may decide not to change operational modes of communication.
- Consider, with partners, whether to employ a project management system for the remainder of the project.
- Make the on-going list of tasks and deadlines, shared and updated/signed off on Google Drive currently implemented by CESIE available to all partners.
- Consider having an online meeting to discuss policy impacts.
- Ask the leader of WP2 to extract the main headlines from the WP2-1 report, for dissemination purposes.
- Ensure all public deliverables, resources and outcomes are placed on the CARMA Web site.
- Prepare, with the leader of the dissemination Work Package, sequences of messages for the CARMA Facebook account and partner social media accounts.

Work package leaders should:

- Explore how collaboration across work packages, where relevant, can be encouraged.
- Take more responsibility to engage partners in the project tasks, decisions and updates.
- Where necessary, take a pro-active role in trying to ensure deadlines are met.
- Provide regular information, when asked, to the coordinator for the internal newsletter.
- Maintain the on-going list of tasks and deadlines for deliverables for partners on Google Drive.
- Make a list of the likely policy impacts from their tasks and deliverables for use in dissemination.

All partners should:

- Consider and decide whether an application for a 3 or a 6 month project extension is needed.
- Consider, with the coordinator, the role of the education and policy experts in the project in order to fully utilise them as central resources to help achieve the project goals.
- Consider ways they can embed the project in the activities of their own organisation and seek internal multipliers for the CARMA Project.
- Consider any challenges they feel still need to be addressed and discuss them with the coordinator.
- Use the headlines from WP2-1 for project dissemination.
- Consider writing up the results of this Needs Analysis and the main findings from the Country reports as an academic paper.
- Consider how CARMA policy objectives can be reached and what specific dissemination activities need to be initiated and then developed to do this.
- Consider and prioritise the dissemination targets for the next phase of the project.
- Consider how best to showcase key deliverables and outcomes on the project Web site home page.
- Disseminate more widely the CARMA Project through the personal/professional and organisation social media accounts, where possible.
- Reflect on how the RMA assessment tool can be used to promote the project and connect with possible policy actions and recommendations.
- Formulate plans, as soon as possible with the coordinator, for the implementation and launch of the CARMA Online Network and use it's launch to promote the project.

## 6. Conclusions

This assessment of the development, existing situation and the future of the CARMA Project provides a detailed review of the principal features of the project including management, ongoing practices, deliverables produced, participant involvement and dissemination activities.

The partnership should ensure that the learning generated through the project is disseminated as widely as possible to those in appropriate positions to influence policy and practice development, for example, teacher training organisations, ministries and consultants.

Based on this review the following recommendations are made which should be addressed in the second half of the project.

### **6.1 General Recommendations**

All of the partners should focus on the **valorisation of the project outcomes** – including impact and dissemination. Valorisation is concerned with ensuring the impact of the CARMA Project is boosted. Partners need to strengthen the awareness of non-formal approaches in formal education in their immediate circles, but also towards the wider education community and to high impact stakeholders.

I believe it is important to build bridges with external multiplier agencies if the CARMA Project to achieve the high-level awareness raising and dissemination of the project necessary to influence policy. This implies cooperating with other institutions in Europe to share CARMA findings and achievements.

Concerning the CARMA Project online presence, considerable emphasis should be placed on continuity of message and awareness raising of key target groups.

### **6.2 The CARMA Toolkit**

To 'bring about pedagogical change' and the adoption of non-formal learning in formal situations means that teachers and educators will need to be convinced.

I therefore urge the project team to consider and identify responses to the following questions:

- i) What actually leads to classroom implementation of CARMA?
- ii) What models might be applicable to improve the training of teachers?
- iii) How could CARMA plans be expanded to the training needs of many more teachers?
- iv) How can policy changes best be advocated for? What messages need to be given?

### **6.3 Final Comments**

The CARMA project addresses very important aspects of school education. The first part of the project has very successfully negotiated. The CARMA Project team has already started preparing for the next stage of the project, which will include piloting materials and toolkit development.

The CARMA project addresses an innovative and novel approach to teaching and learning and therefore provides many and different challenges.

In the first half of the project sufficient progress has been made not only in terms of a smooth operation, but also in partners' participation, dissemination efforts and production of high quality deliverables.

If the impact of the project is to be maximised the next phase is critical. This is where the tools and materials produced by the project have to be promoted and disseminated to the broadest possible audiences and to key target influencers and policy groups. As a result, considerable pressure will be placed on all project partners to achieve this.

In conclusion, the CARMA project has made good progress. This has been a very encouraging start. Good relationships between partners have rapidly developed. The partners appear to be responsible and reliable. The coordinator is working effectively in dealing with issues. In the main, the partners are sharing and dealing with important roles and tasks and the outlook seems positive.

The team have encouraged the role of the external evaluator to be one of challenging them to 'think outside the box'. I believe this is an encouraging situation.

Professor Karl Donert, External Evaluator

Innovative Learning Network Ltd.