



# External Evaluation of Cyfenter 2 Development Partnership 2005 - 2007

*Final Report*  
*April 2007*

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## **Preface**

The external evaluation was commissioned by the Cyfenter 2 Development Partnership in September 2005 and this Final Evaluation Report builds on a Baseline Report produced in November 2005, an Interim Report produced in April 2006 and a separate Transnational Report produced in March 2007.

As with all the above reports produced by Consultus and in keeping with the general formative approach repeated in the following pages, this report is intended to provide judgements on the operation of the partnership to date but, just as importantly, to offer ideas for further discussion with the possible development of key messages that have emerged from the delivery of Cyfenter 2.

The external evaluators wish to again record their thanks to the Cyfenter 2 management and operational team and other Development Partnership members for their willing co-operation in the work leading to this report.

<b>PREFACE</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>7</b>
1.1 A brief background to Cyfenter 2 Partnership	7
1.2 External Evaluation	8
1.3 Evaluation activity and structure of report	9
<b>2 Aims, objectives and management of Cyfenter 2</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1 Aims, objectives and brief overview	11
2.2 Management arrangements	13
<b>3 The developing partnership in practice</b>	<b>14</b>
3.1 Contextual developments	14
3.2 Organisational continuity and change	15
3.3 Partnership organisation and DP activity	17
3.4 Achievement and lessons as reported in April 2006	19
3.5 Strategic and whole partnership observations	21
3.6 Operational level observations	22
<b>4 The development partnership in 2007</b>	<b>24</b>
4.1 Key milestones	24
4.2 Further research	26
4.3 The impact	29
4.4 Future impact	29
<b>5 Taking the message of Cyfenter forward</b>	<b>32</b>
5.1 Practical suggestions	33
<b>6 Observations on the achievement of EQUAL principles</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>7 Concluding Observations</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>ANNEX A Evaluation Methodology</b>	
<b>ANNEX B Cyfenter Development Partnership</b>	
<b>ANNEX C Monitoring and Evaluation Workshop</b>	

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The second phase of the Cyfenter Development Partnership (Cyfenter 2 DP) is part of round 2 of the EQUAL Community Initiative that

*'Tests and promotes new ways of tackling all forms of discrimination and inequalities in the labour market, both for those in work and for those seeking work.'*

The Development Partnership is jointly funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) from July 2005 until June 2007.

At the beginning of this period the Lead Partner of the Cyfenter 2 Development Partnership was the Welsh Development Agency (WDA), a 'sponsored' organisation of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG). In April 2006, the WDA was formally merged into the civil service structure of WAG which thereby took on the role of Lead Partner and provides the Development Partner management and operational team within its Department for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks (DEIN).

Organised around an action research model the DP seeks to actively engage a range of relevant stake-holders and aims to *'Inform and develop mainstream (business support) policy and practice that is ... client focused and respond to the principle of diversity.'*

Its Development Partnership Agreement (DPA) is designed to actively engage a range of policy-makers, business-support providers, 'equality' organisations universities and other relevant bodies with each other and with members of eight identified 'Under-represented Groups' (URGs) - women, ethnic minority groups, 18-30 year-old people ('18-30s'), Welsh speakers, people over 50 years of age ('50 plus'), refugees, lone parents and disabled people –that

have been identified as under-represented in enterprise activity, specifically in establishing and maintaining businesses.

Drawing on a range of documentary analysis, interviews and participation in DP activity this Final Report

- Provides a brief review of the Cyfenter 2 aims, methods and organisation.
- Gives a similarly brief overview of project activities from September 2005 to April 2007
- Offers some ideas and observations about the DP's achievements and it's remaining challenges – both in general and within the framework of EQUAL 'leading principles'
- Raises points for discussion and possible development
- Inter-alia, provides some formative feedback drawn from the interviews with project participants.

As a broad summary of progress and achievement of the Development Partnership, the report observes that Cyfenter 2 has achieved substantial results in terms of deliverables during the period covered by this report.

***Achievements that warrant this judgement have included the***

- Establishment and delivery of a new and operational Development Partner Agreement and Transnational Cooperation Agreement
- Running a series of successful Steering Group meetings
- Engaging partners in the design of the survey research
- Meeting its progress milestones in terms of research activity, in particular the longitudinal and commissioned survey research.
- Extending the useful life of Cyfenter 1 research
- Organising and running a well attended two day transnational conference that, among other benefits, engaged individual DP members as workshop presenters or facilitators.
  - Hosting an unscheduled visit from Sweden of new business starters

- Organising, facilitating and successfully delivering a series of focus groups across Wales
- Developed synergy between Cyfenter (research focus) and Potentia (delivery focus)
- Provided empirical researched findings for the partnership and wider use.
- Producing a full range of reports and documents for dissemination
- The Development Partnership, collectively, provided a wide scope of contacts including academics, mainstream organisations and policy makers.
  - In validation of this view partners offered a range of collaborative National and Transnational work that had been possible due to their involvement with Cyfenter for example:
    - ‘Spin off’ projects
    - The use of Cyfenter research in policy - the WAVE document
    - Use of the research in practice - setting up incubators for different groups.

#### **The overriding message**

The overriding message from partner discussion on the value of Cyfenter 2 was described as **a powerful support mechanism for delivery** that would not have been available prior to or without EQUAL funding. One DP member offered *“Cyfenter has been instrumental in understanding the issues”*

In terms of lessons that have been learned, this Final Evaluation Report brings together some of the ‘formative’ observations and suggestions raised during the evaluation process to date which may be viewed as lessons learned. These included

- The observation that issues, lessons and influences from Cyfenter 1 persist into Cyfenter 2 resulting, for example, in the consolidation of good practice while simultaneously raising the challenge of establishing

the added value in *changing* DP practices and relationships between phases.

- The judgement that strategic challenges being dealt with by the Development Partnership appeared to have been compounded by the merger of the WDA into the Assembly Government - with associated uncertainty about what the future organisation of directly funded Business Support may look like under WAG - and, at the more organisational level, the need to live with 'interim' Project Management arrangements for a significant period.
- The suggestion that current proposals for discussing, clarifying and sharing details about which individuals, organisations and policies are to be the targets for action and influence are timely and worthwhile.
- The observation that the Development Partner process should have more input to and from banks and local authority Business Support Providers continues to be persuasive for some partners.
- Suggestions from some partners that, ideally, the process of *interpreting* research results might be linked more to the final 'end users' (audiences) identified as both policy makers and Business Support Providers – and the *reporting* format of the data might be varied for different audiences, including the media.

#### **The three key messages of lessons learned**

- Wider partnership involvement
- Testing/validating research through action based recommendations
- The missed opportunities for maximising the work of Cyfenter 2 in terms of
  - Focused marketing strategies for informing influencing, and impacting on policy

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 *A brief background to the Cyfenter 2 Partnership...*

The Cyfenter 2 Development Partnership (DP) is supported by the European Social Fund (ESF) and is part of round 2 of its EQUAL Community Initiative.

The EQUAL Handbook for round two explains that the initiative is not a mainstream funded programme and is one that *'Tests and promotes new ways of tackling all forms of discrimination and inequalities in the labour market, both for those in work and for those seeking work. It does this through transnational co-operation. Equal also includes actions to help asylum seekers to integrate both socially and in the labour market.'* The Handbook goes on to say that *'While Equal may provide direct support to individuals, its focus is on producing evidence of successful outcomes that can influence future policy and practice and bring effective change.'*

The Cyfenter 2 DP is co-funded by the ESF and the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG), which also acts as Lead Partner and provides the DP's operational and management team.

Organised around an action research model that seeks to actively engage a range of relevant stake-holders, the DP aims to *'inform and develop mainstream (business support) policy and practices that are ... client focused and respond to the principle of diversity.'* Its Development Partnership Agreement (DPA) is designed to commit a range of policy-makers, business-support providers, 'equality' organisations universities and other relevant bodies to active engagement with each other and with members of identified demographic categories that have been identified as under-represented in enterprise activity, specifically in establishing and maintaining businesses. These categories, or 'Under-represented Groups' (URG), comprise women, ethnic minority groups, 18-30 year-old people ('18-30s'), Welsh speakers, people over 50 years of age ('50 plus'), refugees, lone parents and disabled people.

The DP is the second phase of an initiative that began in 2003. The present phase has received ESF finance for the period 1<sup>st</sup> July 2005 – 30 June 2007. This phase involves Partnership research activity that concentrates particularly on identifying and analysing the barriers for the identified URGs in sustaining and growing enterprises. More details of Cyfenter 2 aims and organisation will be found in the following sections.

## **1.2 ... and the External Evaluation**

Consultus Ltd. Is a private consultancy that was commissioned to undertake the evaluation of Cyfenter 2 with effect from September 2005.

The evaluation aims to provide a range of outputs to inform Cyfenter 2 and others both during and at the end of the project. More specifically, these outputs<sup>1</sup> comprise

- A report of *project effectiveness* within the context of EQUAL requirements, including the transnational dimension.
- An identification of related elements of *good practice*, including those that are innovative or empower or have other positive impacts on the those involved, including URGs
- An assessment of the project's *working and collaboration with UK bodies* as well as of the project's *impact on business support policies and practices* and
- A report on how identified good practice '*could usefully inform policy makers responsible for enterprise in other contexts*' together with recommendations about how the results of Cyfenter research might be effectively *mainstreamed and disseminated*.

Expressed in other terms the evaluation can be seen as having the objective of providing formative and summative evaluation reports both on Cyfenter 2 processes and on its outcomes. It has no direct remit to analyse or comment in detail on the finances of the DP or of ESF EQUAL financial compliance.

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<sup>1</sup> This list of outputs summarises those given in the pre-tender brief.

In *process* terms the evaluation reports will concentrate on the ways in which and degree to which Cyfenter 2 manages, concurrently,

- To exemplify the EQUAL principles of
    - Innovation
    - Empowerment
    - Partnership working
    - Transnational working
    - Equal opportunities
    - Mainstreaming and creating impact
- and
- To realize its strategic approach of working in partnership with URGs, their representatives, transnational partners, business support providers and policy makers.

In *outcome* terms the evaluation is focused on

- The impact of this strategic approach - namely to what degree it succeeds in generating and using action research outputs in a way that positively affects business support policy and practice towards URGs both within Wales and more widely.

In undertaking its work the external evaluation remains ever mindful of the exploratory and strategic intentions of the programme as a whole. As current EQUAL Support Unit advice stresses: *'The key point ...is that the purpose of EQUAL is to test new ideas ... (and) ... as long as you properly evaluate your activities and learn and share lessons, it's acceptable not to succeed in the way you had planned. Don't focus too much on delivering outputs alone – do focus on delivering overall objectives!'*

Accordingly, the evaluation intends that its formative approach<sup>2</sup> to activity and reporting should help in this essential learning and development process.

As part of this formative process a work shop session was undertaken with the Cyfenter Steering Group in March 2007 where the emerging themes of the

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<sup>2</sup> Further details of the evaluation's approach and methodology can be found in the Baseline Report.

final evaluation were presented and partners were invited to discuss, challenge, add value to the evaluation before its final production. (The notes of the workshop have been presented as **Annex A** of this report)

### **1.3 Evaluation Activity and Structure of the Interim Report**

In keeping with its methodology and ultimate objectives the evaluation has prepared this Final Report by drawing from a wide range of resources and participating in a range of activities. A brief overview of this evidential base has been detailed here. (A broader list of actions has been presented as **Annex B of this report**).

*Briefly, the evidential base consisted of:*

- Attending a Cyfenter round 1 seminar
- The reviewing of monitoring and other information and documents provided by the Cyfenter project team;
- Holding face to face discussions with the operational team, two senior managers and the internal evaluator for Cyfenter (1 & 2);
- Attending Steering Group meetings held during the evaluation period
- Participating in transnational workshops
- Holding discussion with transnational (TN) partners and attending Transnational evaluation meetings with TN evaluators
- Supporting the delivery of a Steering Group Final Evaluation Workshop
- Conducting face to face semi structured interviews with Development Partners.
- Attendance at three focus group meetings

*Drawing on the sources described above this Final Report is intended to*

- Provide a brief review of the Cyfenter 2 aims, methods and organisation.
- Give a similarly brief overview of project activities during 2005 to April 2007
- Offer observations about the DP's achievements and its remaining challenges – both within the framework of EQUAL principles and more generally.

- Raise points for discussion and a possible development of a number of key messages that can be structured and shaped for wider dissemination purposes including policy and practice audiences.
- Inter-alia, provide formative feedback drawn from the interviews with project participants.

It was agreed with the individuals involved that quotations would not normally be attributed to them or their organisations in this report.

Following previous formatting practice direct quotations are shown in the following pages by the use of italics and 'quote' marks combined. Elsewhere italics are used alone for *stress* and quote marks to indicate a specialist or 'contestable' meaning.

## **2 Aims, objectives and management of Cyfenter 2**

### **2.1 Aims and Objectives – brief review**

In its Baseline Report the external evaluation observed that the Cyfenter 2 Development Partnership (DP) is contributing to the Entrepreneurship 'Pillar' of the European Employment Strategy (EES) and focuses on the thematic field of '*opening up business creation to all...*'<sup>3</sup> (Theme C)'.

The same report noted that '*Underpinning the Partnership's approach is an ultimate aim of increasing the number of businesses set-up and sustained in Wales by the selected URGs, hence their greater economic and social inclusion*'.

More immediately and specifically, the DP has itself explained that '*The aim of the second phase of the Cyfenter DP is to inform and develop mainstream policies and practices, which are truly client, focussed and respond to the principle of diversity. - both reaching and supporting a wider range of*

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3 EQUAL Handbook for Second Round p.11

*entrepreneurs when running or growing a business in Wales, whereas before we were looking at pre-start.’<sup>4</sup>*

As a ‘second phase’ Cyfenter 2 had built directly on a successful EQUAL Community Initiative, Cyfenter 1, which had *‘Explored the value for policy and practice of a multi-agency, action-research approach to understanding and supporting increased entrepreneurship among seven identified under-represented groups (URGs) in Wales.’*

More detailed similarities and differences between the two Cyfenter ‘phases’ will be explored in the next section, but it can be noted here that in *general process* terms both can be seen as aimed at influencing business support policy and practice by three main routes, namely;

- The production, sharing and use of both quantitative and qualitative information (including ‘data’) obtained via a programme of action research.
- The formal exchange of experiences, understanding and best practice ideas between providers, policy makers and under-represented groups – both through the Cyfenter 2 transnational dimension and its ‘domestic’ partnerships.
- Indirect and sometimes informal networking among DP members and more widely.

In more detail the planned action research for Cyfenter 2 aims to involve the partnership *‘...conducting a programme of primary research through a series of questionnaires, individual case studies, focus groups and specialised surgeries, seeking to address the many unanswered questions relating to the needs, aspirations and potential of all entrepreneurs – as well as identifying any common drivers and motivational factors.’<sup>5</sup>*

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<sup>4</sup> Taken from the DP’s briefing note circulated at February 2006 transnational event .

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

A central requirement of the successful Cyfenter 2 funding application was that it specified the intended application of the EQUAL programme's leading principles. The evaluation's Baseline Report cited the example of innovation, which the application for funding described as an '*essential and an intrinsic element of its work plan and activities both at domestic and transnational levels*'.

Translated into a practical example, following the principle of innovation would mean that '*DP participants would attend specialist surgeries ... (and) diaries will be kept to record a more personal view of running a workshop.*' Further innovative features were listed as including '*The use of action based research within mainstream economic development*' and the '*unique make up of the Partnership with business support practitioners, RDA, policy makers, senior civil servants, equality organisations and academics all working together to implement inclusive policies into the mainstream.*'

Elsewhere the application gave similar details of how the remaining EQUAL principles would be realised in practice. These are illustrated further in Section 4 of this report. Here it can be noted that the timeframe for enacting most of these principles was understandably listed within the application as '*on-going*'. Elsewhere a more definite timescale was put on specifically organised events and activities – such as the components of the action research and its reporting.

## **2.2 Management Arrangements**

As noted the management and operational team of the Development Partnership are employed within the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG).

When at full strength the 5-person operational team<sup>6</sup> was intended to comprise a Project Manager, 2 Research Officers, a Project Administrator and a Communications Executive. They are line-managed in turn by two more

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<sup>6</sup> This has been referred to in some project documents as an 'administration' team. The evaluation uses the alternative 'operational' term to convey the wider range of tasks with which they are involved beyond administration.

senior managers who hold overall strategic responsibility. The Cyfenter 2 Management and Operational Team as a whole are located in the Capacity Building section of the recently formed Department for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks (DEIN) of WAG.

DP business is formally organised around a Steering Group, which was generally supported by two sub-groups, each with its own explicit terms of reference. It was expected that all DP member organisations would be represented at the Steering Group whereas the two sub-groups (Research and Strategy) were seen as more likely to recruit those with a specific interest or expertise.

### **3 The DEVELOPING partnership in practice**

It will be evident that the following account is brief and selective and does considerable injustice to the many details in the busy and complex life of the DP. It is included with the limited objective of providing some narrative background to the more bullet point summaries of achievements, issues and lessons found in the following sections.

#### ***3.1 Contextual developments***

During the period covered by this report the management and organisation of Cyfenter 2 has been subject to some significant and general 'contextual' change. Specifically, the DP's initial Lead Partner which was the Welsh Development Agency (WDA) and was constituted as a 'sponsored' organisation of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) at the beginning of the period. By the end of this time, in April 2006, the organisation had been formally merged into the civil service structure of WAG - along with the previously sponsored Education and Learning Wales (ELWa) and Wales Tourist Board. Whilst it is clearly beyond the remit and resources of the evaluation to examine the reorganisation in general, it can suggest that it had some specific effects on Cyfenter 2 – as will be noted further below.

### **3.2 Organisational continuity and change**

It was observed earlier that Cyfenter 2 has both similarities to and differences from its earlier phase. In other terms the Baseline Report proposed that Cyfenter 2 could be seen as *'both a continuation and development of Cyfenter 1'* As a *continuation* it has drawn *'its rationale, operational focus and a range of practical lessons from the earlier stage of the initiative'*. In operational terms it has maintained the same Lead Partner and many of the same domestic partners. Similarly, the transnational dimension that *'continues to be an essential feature of Cyfenter 2 retains two of the four original international partners'* (and three of four countries). When the external evaluation attended its first Cyfenter 2 Steering Group in October 2005 it was introduced to many of the same organisations already met at an evidently successful and major Cyfenter 1 dissemination event held two weeks earlier.

As a *development* the DP has sought to build on the evidence of Cyfenter 1 that there was a need to concentrate further research into the barriers and possibilities for URGs around *'a thematic focus on the sustainability and the progression of businesses post start up'*.

While this focus led , in research terms, to the inclusion of a longitudinal survey to follow the post-start experiences of a sample of Cyfenter 1 contacts, the new DP has also included a new survey and proposed more radical innovations *'such as action research around the provision of 'specialised open surgeries' for URGs and partner initiated research projects.'*

And although there is some continuity in the membership of both the domestic and transnational partnerships there have also been a number of additions to both, including the present external evaluation team.

The second phase of the DP clearly and naturally drew substantially on the experience of the first. The strategic focus on growth and sustainability provides one illustration of this. This, in turn led to the commissioning of the University of Glamorgan to undertake baseline research to explore the issues

involved in this theme across the EU, leading to a report in June 2005. Such intelligence potentially served to inform both the Cyfenter 2 domestic and transnational partnerships. In practical terms however there were limitations to take into account also. To give one example the Transnational Cooperation Agreement (TCA) needed to be guided not only by the research and EQUAL principles but also by the availability of suitable partners and their capacity to engage both from a national and transnational perspective. The issues of capacity and resources have been explored within the Final Transnational Evaluation Report produced in March 2007.

Some of the detailed organisational changes to Cyfenter 2 resulting from the 'lessons' of Cyfenter 1 recorded in the evaluation Baseline and Interim Report included

- A proposal for one round of data gathering rather than three *'to allow more time for dissemination and feed back into policy and practice'*.
- The arrangement that, while the Cyfenter 2 operational team would continue to deal with all aspects of the longitudinal survey, *'a new sample of interviews (was to) be administered and analysed under an external contract to Beaufort Research. Among other effects this was planned to free the project team for other more interactive relationships within the DP as a whole.'*
- Associated with this latter change, project team roles were planned *'to be somewhat less differentiated and (would) include what could be termed a 'key worker' being assigned to maintain a close relationship with a designated group of DP organisations.'*

How these lessons translated into practice is analysed later, but here it may be suggested that the fact that phase 2 followed directly on the heels of the earlier phase provided both advantages and disadvantages. On the plus side there had been established, successful working relationships with organisations alongside invaluable learning - such as the new strategic focus and the operational changes proposed above. On the more 'challenging' side there had been the need to organise simultaneously for the dissemination

activities of one phase and the establishment of the second. An illustration of this was given in the fact that, although Cyfenter 2 formally started in July 2005, organising the final reports and seminar for Cyfenter 1 were still active tasks for the team in September.

Without straying too far back into the first phase it can be noted that much of this 'overlapping' activity was accomplished without the original Project Manager, who left the project earlier in 2005. This absence of a specifically designated Project Manager was to continue for the duration of Cyfenter 2 and illustrates something of the interaction between the contextual change (noted in the last sub-section) and the practice of Cyfenter 2. More specifically the merger of WDA within WAG presented restrictions on new staff recruitment and consequent delays that were essentially beyond the control of the staff directly involved.

- Cyfenter 2 drew upon lessons learned from Cyfenter 1
- There were both advantages and disadvantages in operationally running the two projects in parallel.

It is therefore an even more commendable achievement that the operational team, under the guidance of their more senior managers, moved successfully to the final stages of the project, bringing it to dissemination and close.

### **3.3 Partnership organisation and DP activity**

The Cyfenter 2 domestic partnership has continued to rest in significant part on the relationship with Potentia - an associated European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) initiative and part of the Wales Entrepreneurial Action Plan (EAP)<sup>7</sup> - to which the WAG (and previously the WDA) acted as Lead Partner.

Delivered by a range of specialist organisations, the aim of Potentia has been described as '*To unlock the enterprise potential amongst groups not*

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<sup>7</sup> It can be noted here that the EAP currently has no successor.

*traditionally associated with business by providing them with tailored and relevant support during those crucial initial stages. Be it personal development workshops, entrepreneurial psychometric testing, exploring business ideas or working on a one to one level with a dedicated client adviser, Potentia will support clients to overcome barriers to self-employment.'*

Focused on the same URGs the relationship between the two initiatives has been summarised by one DP member in a description to the evaluation that *'Potentia is the delivery arm of Cyfenter.'*

Organisationally Potentia has shared DP members with Cyfenter in both phases. These make up a quarter or so of the Cyfenter 2 DP and – from early and provisional observation - probably in excess of this fraction of those who are more active in attending Steering Group meetings. An additional link with Potentia has existed in one of the senior WAG management team who holds responsibility for both initiatives.

Beyond the Lead Partner and five Potentia members, the new DPA has maintained the involvement from Cyfenter 1 of;

- Three mainstream business support (BS) organisations which have significant or substantial contracts with the WAG, plus
- One BS organisation which is also part-WAG funded and focuses on cultural enterprise
- A representative from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)
- Two university business and enterprise departments
- A representative involved with economic and business policy at WAG (involved prior to the absorption of the WDA) and
- Three 'equality' organisations.

*For Cyfenter 2 these have been joined by*

- Two new support organisations with specialist areas of expertise and interest – one in Social Enterprise and the other in Management and Leadership.
- Beaufort Research Limited.

(A list of the organisations signed up to the Cyfenter 2 DPA is included as **Annex C**).

As and when appropriate the Lead Partner has recruited participation by other initiatives to Cyfenter that are 'internal' to the WAG and have a potential to add value to the partnership. A good example is an Incubator Project that has sought to develop a more strategic approach to this aspect of enterprise support within Wales. When the then 16<sup>8</sup> member domestic partnership held its first Steering Group meeting in early July 2005 the University of Glamorgan's report on Growth and Sustainability provided a substantive base for 14 individual DP members to present sections and for all those present to begin contributions on the possible issues, themes and questions to be covered in the planned survey research. By the October 2006 Steering Group the partners were told of substantial progress in the first element of this activity - a longitudinal survey for which 80% of the telephone interviews had by then been completed. The second 'element' – the 'main' Cyfenter 2 survey projected at 3000 interviews - was contracted to Beaufort Research largely as a result of the learning from Cyfenter 1.

### ***3.4 The achievements and lessons of Cyfenter 2 by April 2006***

By April 2006, Cyfenter 2 had accomplished a range of deliverables these were expressed in some detail in the interim evaluation report, section 4.1 *"The Cyfenter 2 Development Partnership has already achieved some substantial outputs in moving towards its aims and objectives"* A summary of which is provided here:

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<sup>8</sup> This figure was to grow over the succeeding period and stood at 19 by the time of compiling the Interim report in 2006.

**CYFENTER MID TERM ACHIEVEMENTS  
(Interim Evaluation stage 2006)**

- Establishing a new and operational DPA and TCA, including its management and committee structures.
- Running successful Steering Group and Research Sub-Group meetings.
  - The evaluation estimates that SGs to date have been attended by an average of 22 individuals spanning 12 organisations (involving approximately 55% of those signed up to the DPA)
  - The attendance at Research Sub-Groups has been, perhaps understandably, lower and less widespread.
- Engaging partners in the design of the survey research, including modifying or contributing additional questions of specific organisational interest
  - Perhaps significantly, additional questions have tended to come from more recent members of the DP.
- Meeting its progress milestones in terms of research activity. In particular the survey research.
  - Despite the need for some 'rescheduling' both longitudinal and commissioned – is judged to be firmly '*on schedule*', with the provisional results from the former being ready to discuss and the latter anticipating the imminent analysis stage.
- Extending the useful life of Cyfenter 1 research through the activity of individual DP members, for example
  - Two organisations reported making reference to it during their response to the WAG consultation on its proposed economic strategy Wales a Versatile Country (WAVE)
  - A paper based on Cyfenter1 findings was presented to a PROWESS conference by a member of the DP in February 2006.
- There are verbally reported views of useful interaction and mutual learning plus potential 'spin-off' activity between members of the DP
- The two day transnational conference organised and run in Cardiff attracted over 60 delegates and involved 12 DP organisations as well as engaging individual DP members as workshop presenters or facilitators.
- There is evident interest in learning from the TN experience, and additional 'spin off' potential, for example
  - The overwhelming opinion canvassed by the evaluation at the Cardiff event was that it had been a worthwhile and productive experience. One TN partner highlighted the ideas accumulated for discussion and possible transfer on the study visits. Another found an exemplar project (Dynamo) of how to engage young people in entrepreneurship particularly stimulating while the third found a highlight in sharing experiences with a DP member operating within a similar organisational structure to their own.
  - All TN partners showed interest in the 'incubator' aspect of the visits and two suggested they might extend this to a more structured analysis. In Cyfenter 2 this has indeed been extended to a '*Questionnaire for comparative analysis of start-up support centres*'.

### **3.5 ....and a summary of Strategic- and Whole Partnership-level observations that may be offered as some of the lessons learned by mid term 2006**

- There are evidently issues, lessons and influences from Cyfenter 1 that persist into Cyfenter 2, for example in the judgements and attitudes of some DP members. This observation clearly has a positive value where good practice is being transferred. It may be suggested that the greatest challenge it raises is in establishing the added value in *changing* practices and relationships between phases – for example, the relationship between, and relative inputs of, DP members.
- Because Cyfenter and Potentia are closely related in terms of their remit to affect entrepreneurship among URGs, their potential *impact* can't be easily separated. In practice the operational relationship between the two partnerships may be seen as one of parallel initiatives, interacting and supporting each other. As one interview put this: *'By running in parallel Cyfenter reinforces the work Potentia is doing.'* Despite this, some of the DP partners perceive a functional distinction in that, *'Cyfenter is the more strategic, policy end of things and Potentia the practical side'*.
- The DP (and team) was asked to draw a model of the key features of Cyfenter 2 during the evaluation's Baseline discussions. No-one provided a model of the partnership *process*. Most simply listed the elements that made it up – who was involved, what the overall aim was, what activities were to take place etc. This tentatively suggested that they didn't have a clear process model to hand - a 'who contributes what, how and to what end' analysis.' This may in turn indicate that there is room for greater clarity about specific DP processes; roles and objectives.
- Taken at face value such observations as those above suggest that current proposals for discussing, clarifying and sharing details over the coming months about which individuals, organisations and policies are to be the targets for action and influence are timely and worthwhile.
- This process might usefully include clear (if sometimes provisional!) statements of the scope and limits of the DP and its activity – what it cannot or is not attempting to do.

- The strategic challenges offered in the above observations appear to have been compounded by
  - The merger of the WDA into the Assembly Government and an associated uncertainty about what the future organisation of directly-funded BS may look like under WAG.
  - An 'interim' Project Management arrangement. The absence of a full time Project Manager not only means fewer 'hands to the pump'. The role of such a manager typically has the vital function of mediating between the strategic context and its practical, operational context.

### **3.6 Operational-level observations**

- The observation that the DP should have more input to and from local authority supported BS providers and banks continues to be persuasive for some partners. One partner felt the operational priority of Business Eye could be changing from being one of referral (often to the local authority based organisations) to giving more direct advice and support – and this could warrant a closer link with Cyfenter 2.
- The report has already described the efforts being made to secure greater DP interaction with the research process. Despite these, the action research dimension of Cyfenter 2 is presently seen by some partners as restricted. While there were questions added to the 'Beaufort' questionnaire by DP organisations, there has been less success in producing engagement in anticipating the analysis - for example in partners suggesting cross-tabulations that would be useful for their individual organisations.
- The nature of action research is that it involves practitioners in the research process with the view to using the results to improve practice. There are typically differences in the degree of involvement by the practitioners – who sometimes interact with the research process work, sometimes work with or alongside a professional research facilitator, and sometimes – as in the original model for action research in the UK – are direct researchers as part of developing 'reflective practice'. In the case of

Cyfenter 2 the action research model for most DP members appears to be taken as one of some interaction with the research process but not directly undertaking research activity themselves – research *for them* and perhaps *with them* but not *by them*.

- Ideally, and therefore as something of a counsel of perfection, the process of interpreting research results was also seen by some as needing to be linked more to the final ‘end users’ (audiences) identified - both policy makers and BS providers.
- Related to the last observation, there was a general acknowledging of the usefulness of the research information produced in Cyfenter 1. At the same time some of the DP members who had been involved felt it could have been more effectively deployed. Among the more frequent cautions for Cyfenter 2 – and one noted in the Baseline and Phase B interviews – was that useful information shouldn’t be ‘left *to gather dust*.’
- One interviewee stressed that ‘*Whoever is doing the policy needs to be aware of the research ... not only within the Assembly (WAG) but also at County Council level.*’ Another felt ‘*the question is how can we change the programme to produce recommendations for policy makers but more importantly for deliverers?*’ The same individual believed that mainstream BS organisations should be asked directly ‘*What would you expect the recommendations to be? How far do these recommendations come with you in mind? What would be the practical implications for your own organisation?*’
- In part the ‘operational’ challenges raised here - of producing greater involvement as a route to greater impact - clearly return to the strategic-level challenges already noted above and to the issues of dissemination and mainstreaming, including the direct linking of Action 3 proposals to present Action 2 priorities. However the challenges have also been associated with more detailed, ‘technical’ observations such as
  - Much of the Cyfenter 1 reporting was essentially ‘descriptive’ in its analysis and presentation and not sufficiently related to specific recommendations for best practice across the partnership as a whole.

- The reports were generally well written but not in media-friendly formats.
- Data analysis was generated in a form that distinguished between demographic groups but didn't in general reveal the interplay between such categories, nor the variations within them. (This was seen as particularly problematical for any 'diversity awareness' approach that seeks to identify common barriers and remedies across URG.)

The evaluation ends this section by offering the overall judgement that much DP activity was securely 'on course' at the time of the mid term reporting (April 2006) and that the external evaluators looked forward to interacting positively with those engaged in Cyfenter 2 as the partnership consolidated and extended its achievements over the following 12 months.

#### **4     *The Development Partnership in 2007***

The Cyfenter 2 DP (and the team) continued to extend its achievement in 2007, and it will become evident that the following account is brief and selective and does considerable injustice to the many details in the busy and complex life of the DP but its intention is to offer a '*snap shot*' of the partnerships achievements in its final stages of operation.

##### **4.1    *Key milestones in 2007***

At a Steering Group meeting in June 2006, the commissioned researchers (Beaufort Research) presented their survey findings of '*Underrepresented Groups in Recently Established Businesses in Wales*'. The research which was focused on identifying barriers and issues being experienced by URG's in enterprise offered a quantitative survey based on 2,678 interviews.

The overwhelming opinion canvassed by the evaluation at this Steering Group event was that the survey had been a valuable and productive exercise, partners later expressed that the findings of the survey had validated what they knew anecdotally.

The real value of the findings was the new empirical data that was now available and may be used for a variety of reasons as one partner offered "*the data has reinforced our anecdotal evidence, it has backed up of what we have claimed and we have used the data for this purpose*"

The survey had provided Cyfenter with the quantitative data and the next phase of research was to engage URG's in focus group settings to qualitatively validate the data.

In October and November 2006, the Cyfenter team ran a series of focus groups (18). The sessions were organised around four themes: Succession, Growth, Business Support and Home Enterprise.

The evaluation attended a sample (3) of the eighteen meetings held across Wales. The meetings were facilitated by the Cyfenter team who also used a 'digivote' method to canvass attendees' opinions on topical issues. The evaluation noted that the participants were encouraged to interact by the professional yet informal facilitation ambiance that the team created. The facilitators meaningfully steered the meeting to ensure the group focussed on key issues which in turn encouraged good discussion and clarity of purpose.

At an opportune moment attendees were canvassed by the evaluator for their thoughts on their motivation to attend. A range of suggestions were offered for example one participant voiced that "*it was an opportunity to feed into policy, ideas and needs of small enterprise*" another offered the view that events of this nature offered... "*networking opportunities*" Eighty nine people attended the events pan Wales.

In the remaining months of Cyfenter the team have expressed a number of consolidation tasks that would further enhance the research that has been carried out. The expressed proposed actions are:

- Follow up of case studies from the focus groups
- Work with Beaufort Research to identify areas of further analysis.

- Consolidate information thematically to produce comprehensive regional reports

These actions will further support the robustness of the Cyfenter2 research.

#### **4.2 Further research**

During 2007, three areas of further research were discussed, with at least two of these actions in operation by April 2007

- The Cyfenter team felt that the succession focus groups had not offered the expected results and there was a need to strengthen and build on this area of work.
- A research proposal from Taste of Enterprise in collaboration with Menter a Busnes was seen as *“an extremely relevant research project for the Cyfenter 2 partnership and a good opportunity for the mainstreaming and dissemination element of the partnership”*.

The main focus of the project was the provision of physical locations enabling a cluster of different clients to test the market and themselves with a business idea. This new research was a follow through of the earlier mentioned interest of the incubator model.

- Communities of Practice (COP) testing and adapting an assessment tool for inclusive entrepreneurship developed at EU level under EQUAL.

#### **4.3 Where and what has been the Impact of Cyfenter?**

The final stage of evaluation was concerned with the impact of Cyfenters' strategic approach - namely to what degree it succeeds in generating and using action research outputs in a way that positively affects business support policy and practice towards URGs both within Wales and more widely.

The intended impact of all EQUAL initiatives is described as<sup>9</sup> *‘The dissemination and transfer of outcomes from Development Partnerships which influence policy, the delivery of policy (including delivery of services) or*

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<sup>9</sup> **Mainstreaming and creating impact – a guide for Development Partnerships, ECOTEC guidance page**

*the take-up of new products and services at peer or higher levels (including local, regional, national, transnational or sectoral)'.*

There are still six months remaining in the life of Cyfenter, during which time a significant impact can still be made at each or a number of the EQUAL described levels of impact. The External Evaluation will report on the identified impact as at the time of writing the report (April 2007)

There is already evidence of impact at;

**Peer level – influencing partners at local level and impacting on delivery services:**

- The DP has brought together specific organisational expertise from a broad spectrum of equality fields. That has enabled cross fertilization of ideas and an increased awareness of equal opportunities across the spectrum, which in turn has changed delivery practice.

Testament to this **change in practice** has been echoed amongst a number of development partners with examples of training of disability awareness being offered to businesses as part of the Business Support Programme. Another point of view offered by a partner was that *“partners are generally very good on their particular specialisms of equality issues. Working in partnership has made us more aware of other equalities”*. In expressing this point another partner suggested that they perceived the partnership work of *“personal value as it was a constant refresher of the needs of the job and services to clients, that it raised awareness in recognition of the differing needs of clients”*.

Anecdotal evidence offered by another partner was the impact at organisational level – reference was made to the training that Potentia offers to all advisors as a matter of course. It was suggested that *“this training is good as it keeps issues at the forefront*. The partner further explained that as a trained advisor it has generated a level of confidence in the referral agencies the example offered was *“....an advisor says they refer all clients to me as I am good, does that mean that I am good or that others are not?”* The suggestion here was that not all Business Support Providers benefited from this type of training.

Finally, it was summed up by one partner as *“partnership working has made a difference – working with one equality head, understanding the effect of other groups..... Concluding, there are multiple barriers – i.e. women ethnic, welsh speaker, over 50’s.....an awareness of all is essential”*.

- There has been evidence of sharing of practice with potential future changes in delivery of services and in creating new services in Member States.

The Cyfenter External Transnational Report (March 2007) offered the evidence base for the above statement, the more tangible outcomes have been listed in bullet form:

- The development of a new project entitled the MEPLAN 50+ is a partnership with Germany, Ireland and Wales.
- Community of Practice is currently being used as an international tool with links in Offenbach, Germany and Ireland
- The opportunity of a Development Partner to work with Sweden and Germany independently to support the exchange of a Welsh practice model of working with ethnic groups in business support.
- The share of a model Junior Chamber of Commerce between Germany and Wales
- The opportunity for future collaborative working between individual Development partners.

**Policy level influencing - by feeding in to emerging policy or directly impacting and changing existing policy**

There is evidence of Cyfenter data feeding into organisational policy changes for example: one partner offered the view that *“usage to add value to tendering for contracts, funding opportunities and referencing of reports”*. Other partners followed this view by expressing the following:

- Wales Management Council have utilised the Cyfenter 2 research data to produce reports on Management training.
- An EQUAL partnership in Merthyr has used Cyfenter data to support their findings.

- Academic papers/ topic areas – the data has been used to explore areas for further research and enquiry, one student in Glamorgan University has based their PHD on the research that Cyfenter2 provided and has gained funding from the research office.

#### **At policy level**

- Cyfenter data was used to feed into the WAVE policy document.
- A window of opportunity exists for Cyfenter to inform the Enterprise theme of the New Structural Programme – Convergence Funding.

The steering group workshop, supported by the evaluation identified a number of areas where the research had been or was going to be used to inform and feed into policy level. The workshop was useful for partners to identify a range of collaborative National and Transnational work that they themselves had attributed directly to their involvement with Cyfenter 2.

*The notes of the workshop including a table of dissemination levels has been included in this report as Annex C*

#### **4.4 Future impact**

As already noted the evaluation completion date was April 2007 and Cyfenter Action 3 is to close in October 2007. Thereby, allowing a further six months for dissemination and impact influencing actions to be undertaken. Here the evaluation offers a sample of partner views of what they perceive as the key factors (KF) during the final six months of Cyfenter 2 and some practical suggestions of how to realise the aspirations of the partners.

**KF 1 Sustainability and longevity of data** – partners voiced that the Cyfenter data is new information and not available elsewhere “...and it is important that collectively we safeguard it post Cyfenter 2”

There are two separate, but interdependent factors here; where should the data be sited in order to maximise its usage and what practical steps could be taken to maximise the data’s longevity beyond Cyfenter 2?

Partners offered the view that in terms of sustainability and where the data should be sited, DEIN would be the best placed location, as *“the responsible body for Business Start-up”*; an additional view was that *“the data should sit with all partners and feed through their organisations”*. In terms of longevity, it was acknowledged by all that the current data has a ‘shelf life’ but partners overwhelmingly felt that more could and should be done with the data. One partner offered that *“WAG is the only one with resources to take the data forward.”* A range of views were offered as to what valuable pieces of work could be undertaken as an example: *“to re-visit longitudinal studies a year down the road to see what has happened.”* It was also felt that *“more research could be undertaken to build on what has already been done”* this in terms of ‘micro-scoping’ data sets. It was also deemed valuable to compare data with recent published data in England as one partner had noted differences in statistics between new research data available (2007) in England that had been conducted by Kingston University.

**KF 2** *Taking clear messages to policy level* - a view on infiltration at policy level was offered by one partner *“...it was difficult to pass information onto senior civil servants”* partners concurred with this view suggesting that more could be done to access Assembly Members.

If Cyfenter is to successfully impact on policy it requires clearly defined messages, it needs to present the data in a range of formats in line with its audience, it requires a carefully planned and targeted approach and it requires support from all the partners.

There are a number of messages that may be shaped up for policy, not least that under represented groups require support measures to meet their needs.

The second message may be to offer validity to lifestyle and start up businesses and demonstrate that this is an area that requires continued support measures. Partners presented the view that the political focus had shifted in terms of support for lifestyle businesses and start-ups with the future focus on business growth.

Perhaps, a measure of impact for Cyfenter might be how far the data could influence policy, as one partner suggested it depends “.....on what the Assembly are planning to do with the Business Support in the future, as we are nearing the end of the current programme.... Not certain of what we are able and not able to offer to lifestyle businesses in the future as there has been a shift from start up to growth”.

A further example is the data research which offered that 53% of businesses interviewed felt that equal opportunities did not apply to them <sup>10</sup> as one partner asked “how has this been followed through has it prompted a change in the way business advice is offered i.e. to raise awareness of equality legislation and practice”

Cyfenter can provide the evidential base to influence policy focus changes and to change the way in which support services are provided, the challenge is will it do so within the remaining time frame.

**KF3** The Cyfenter 2 legacy was an overwhelming key factor for all the partners and they themselves had taken steps towards the partnerships growth and sustainability post Cyfenter:

**A newly formed network** of Cyfenter partners named Business Dragons that aims to identify funding opportunities under the new Convergence Funds for business support work. **Legacy of relationships** – there was agreement that there will be a natural confirmation of informal relationships and different areas of working through the partnerships made within the partnership **Future collaborative working** – suggestions of widening the URG to encompass all areas of economic activity.

An immediate inheritance of Cyfenter is the new spin off projects that have developed between domestic and transnational partners, with a life expectancy of at least a three-year working relationship. It is evident that the partners eagerness to emphasis that there is *more work to be done*, together with the message from the Convergence Funds is as one partner put it

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<sup>10</sup> Cyfenter II – March to May 2006- report of Survey Findings, Beaufort Research Ltd.

*“mainstream is still not ready for our clients.... Cyfenter has addressed some issues and flagged up others”*

## **5. Taking the messages of Cyfenter forward**

The Equal advice here is that:

Mainstreaming can take place in two complementary ways.

- *Horizontally: aimed at the DP, partners and other local or regional agencies with similar interests, and commonly focusing on practical lessons.*
- *Vertically: aimed at influencing national and European policy, with the role of intermediaries and enablers (such as Regional Development Agencies) being important in passing on key lessons.*
- *A mainstreaming strategy can provide you with a useful focus ... and you need to consider*
  - **What** do you think is worth mainstreaming?
  - **Who** is likely to benefit?
  - **How** will you target or involve them?
  - **When** will you pass on information and products?
- *The strategy should not be static, it is important that you carry out on-going monitoring and evaluation of its effectiveness.*
- *You need to frame your messages with the audience in mind. ... the way you deliver your message is crucial.*
- *Don't be afraid to get a second opinion or to mainstream lessons you learned from problems you encountered as well as successes. Remember ... that different approaches will be required for different audiences.*
- *Consider the audiences ... and prepare the ground by involving policy makers and practitioners as early as possible.*
- *To achieve the greatest impact, you need to involve policy makers and practitioners as 'messengers', and preferably as partners, as well as the target audience.*

## **5.1 Practical suggestions for dissemination**

- 1 A list of key policy and practice messages may be shaped by the partnership that hook directly to policy areas

For example the opportunity for Cyfenter to inform the Enterprise Theme of the New Structural Programme – Convergence Funding and the opportunity for Cyfenter to 'lobby' WAG on the type of support needs of URG's. To mainstream the required supports throughout business support service providers for example: develop an opportunity to share practice amongst all Business Service Providers including Local Authorities providers of business support.

- 2 To better engage the policy makers by using the DP contacts and wider network to take the messages to policy.

The DP itself will have a wide net of policy makers that they are working with – pooling of DP contacts could offer Cyfenter a wider policy audience.

A range of organisations within the DP have a wider remit than Wales and this could be of benefit to Cyfenter for dissemination.

Cyfenter could nurture and use 'champions' from within the DP and focus group participants to take the messages of Cyfenter forward.

- 3 Use of other EQUAL DP's as a means of dissemination – this may be joint thematic dissemination activities

Linking with other UK Development Partnerships and working thematically could offer Cyfenter a platform for UK policy influencing and support in creating a critical mass.

- 4 Development of a dissemination plan that will include the above points i.e. clear policy and practice messages that link to policy areas with a broad target audience
- 5 Develop literature and information formats to suit the target audience

## **6 Observations on the achievement of EQUAL principles**

The judgements about the ways in which the EQUAL principles are expressed in Cyfenter 2 have been taken substantially from a review of project documents and DP interviews over the whole evaluation period.

At Interim Report Stage the evaluation presented a table with a brief outline summary which included EQUAL guidance on each principle, a demonstration of how this was set into practice by Cyfenter and offered a summative account of the degree to which the principles were becoming embedded in practice, as well as, providing examples of any good practice, issues and lessons involved. The intent of the table was for the Cyfenter DP to use the information as stimulation for discussion and debate.

It had become clear through this exercise that the different principles overlap in practice and the final evaluation does not wish to replicate the table format as this information has already been provided but will offer an overview of how Cyfenter 2 has engaged with each of the principles.

**Empowerment** – The DPA explained how the expression of this principle in Cyfenter 1 would be reinforced by new methods of engagement in the present Cyfenter 2 project. A brief overview of the detail expressed in the DPA for example the new elements of Cyfenter 2 were to be advanced by capacity building at organisational level, expressions of views and engagement of participants at individual level and collectively, empowerment of target groups by networking and inputting into policy.

Evidence of DP organisations being encouraged to participate in research activities and Transnational work has been noted during the evaluation period.

Similarly, judgements about the intended empowerment for individuals from URGs – for example in their participation in focus research and transnational activity have been reported upon.

In general the evidence for both collective and individual empowerment is evidenced by involvement but in some degree still remains as a legacy as it may rest on outcomes that only become manifest beyond any formal monitoring or evaluation. As one DP member saw things: ' *the only ones to realise this (empowerment) is the URGs – when they are supported into a successful business it will affect their lives ... until this (happens) there is no empowerment.*'

**Innovation** – The Cyfenter 2 DPA indicated that many of the innovations involved would be of the *process-oriented* type. For example, under 'new empowerment and capacity building methodologies' the DPA noted the detailed innovations of: *Diaries* - Providing an insight into the issues facing the target groups that can not be provided through traditional research methods: *Contracting Partners* -Ability of partners to carry out detailed work as part of the project: *In Depth Interviews* - the In-depth interviews used to influence the research themes of the project. Under 'new quality assurance methodologies' it noted the 'Use of demographic analysis to improve targeting and quality of business support resulting in better levels of individual treatment.' The same section of the DPA recorded what may be seen as the more goal oriented innovations of 'Two new databases ... the first will be a database of 3,000 individuals. ... The second ... of hundreds of secondary research reports ... around the area of sustaining and growing a business. Also ....'the research reports produced will inform the delivery of business support services .... This could include the production of new materials by business support providers and *Context-oriented* The eventual impact of Cyfenter 2 (as Cyfenter 1) was intended to produce context-orineted innovations in the form of new networks expressed as:

### **1. Focus Groups**

Will allow target group businesses to meet and network with each other as well as policy makers and business support practitioners.

and

### **2. Specialised Surgeries**

The Specialised Surgeries will facilitate regular networking opportunities for the target group businesses and mainstream business support providers.

The context innovations in the form of changes to (or new) policy related to business support for URGs was also at the heart of the DP.

The overlap and similarity between the two phases of Cyfenter in both timing and approach meant that some DP members found the question of what was innovative in Cyfenter 2 difficult to answer. As perhaps more of a commentary on the all-to-common experiences of conferences than innovation was an observation by one of those asked that *'The working groups at conferences are relatively innovative compared with other conferences I've attended ... where there is no interaction and people go to sleep.'* This comment was made early on in the evaluation and as Cyfenter 2 built momentum there was evidence of this *innovative* delivery practice in each of the workshops and conferences held. An example of this would be the *'gold fish bowl'* technique that was used in Germany and the Digivote that was used at the focus group meetings in Wales.

At a more strategic level a distinction was made between the two phases of Cyfenter the 'new' (and hence 'innovative') features of this model in its second stage were usually seen in the specific change of focus onto growth and sustainability, as well as the additional engagement and research techniques – such as the diaries and specialist surgeries. Again it was not these techniques as such that were seen as innovations but their specific, contextualised application.

The DP interviews broadly supported the view that the innovation in Cyfenter 2 was in the process it had in common with Cyfenter 1 - using an action research partnership to explore the barriers faced by URGs and to use both the process and results to affect policy and practice. A number referred to the uniqueness of this approach among EQUAL DPs. It was not research techniques as such that were judged as innovative but their combination with new partnerships, processes and objectives.

At a detailed level one DP interviewee suggested that the Cyfenter 2 model was innovative (and *'forward thinking'*) in directly engaging disabled clients within its action research model because such engagement was *'pre-empting the DED (Disability Equality Duty) requirement for Statutory Bodies.'* This was further linked to an observation that Cyfenter 2 should find a ready audience among local authority business support providers: *'the unitary authorities (or their business support providers) need the research to respond to the DED.'*

Linking this principle to that of mainstreaming and making an impact another of the DP organisations interviewed expressed the view that the process innovation rested on the *implementation* of a strategic combination of policy and practice: As it was put to the evaluation: *'I think ... once the policy and practical side meet it will be innovative and seen across other countries as useful'.*

**Transnationality** - On the evidence of the Cardiff, German and Swedish experience E<sup>2</sup> demonstrated a capacity for mutual learning and sharing of experience – and was generally appreciated by those who took part. From the evidence of the Transnational External Evaluation Report, it may be noted that Cyfenter 2 delivered a programme that mirrored and met its TCA objectives. As an overview of the planned activity for the E<sup>2</sup> partnership comprised:

***'A series of workshops***

*Each partner will organise and host a workshop with a different theme along the lines of the agreed goal of the trans-national partnership:....*

***A series of study visits***

*In conjunction with the workshop a series of study visits of interest .... could include different entrepreneurial support structures, public organisations, training bodies or finance organisations*

***Staff exchange***

*The partners will bilaterally organise exchanges to enhance learning processes and specific know-how transfer . Exchanges could also be possible with the target group.'*

More generally the DPA pointed out that

*'During Action 1, Cyfenter2 has engaged and developed strong working relationships with three transnational partnerships within Germany, Portugal and Sweden. These partnerships consist of a wide range of organisations from both the private and public sector with an extensive range of in depth and expertise within enterprise support. In addition to the strength of the transnational partnership the Cyfenter 2 Development partnership encompass a vast range of previous experience and skills (from Cyfenter 1) that will enable Cyfenter 2 DP to manage and resource all transnational activities outlined in the Transnational Cooperation Agreement.'*

### **Partnership Working**

The DPA explained that

*Cyfenter Partners will include both policy makers such as the Welsh Development Agency (as lead body) and the National Assembly of Wales and members representing the various voluntary, third sector agencies and business support practitioners in Wales. The degree of engagement expected of those organisations who signed the DPA was explicit and would be to*

*'- Contribute to the strategic direction and development of the project, engaging in project decision making processes.*

*- Identify policy influencing opportunities and actively engage in developing these.*

*- Contribute to/oversee project activities*

*- Attend monthly DP meetings and participate in transnational activities*

*- Provide specific target group expertise*

*- Implement the principles of the Cyfenter Equal Opportunities Policy.'*

With reference to the skills being brought to the partnership the DPA went on to comment that *'All partners will be highly experienced in delivering enterprise support and advice to the under-represented entrepreneurs targeted by Cyfenter 2'*.

Reflecting on a particular feature in make-up of the Cyfenter DP the Agreement also noted that *'Partners will be empowered to disseminate findings to mainstream business support through a number of key dissemination events'*. Adding that *'This will be particularly relevant and useful to partners who are also Potentia providers as this will form a core part of their mainstreaming remit under this project'*.

In a positive vein it has been noted in the evaluation that Cyfenter *'Involved and engaged a lot of organisations'* the evaluation has recounted how the Cyfenter team had taken steps to increase DP inter-activity within SG meetings. For their part the team had also established a regular 'progress report' agenda item to provide a *'summary ... of all the work Cyfenter had done.'*

The schedule of DP meetings had also been reduced from the DPA proposal to what was a more practicable quarterly period for DP members. However, whilst the DP Steering Groups were respectably attended, during its life span the recruitment of a significant range of partners to the Strategy Sub-Groups continued to be problematical. This led the team to expend efforts to get partners to present their own organisational context and priorities at Steering Groups meetings and to engage in a self-monitoring pilot, the latter had very little if any take up.

At least one of the DP members expressed the pragmatic view that their relative lack of engagement in research activities as such was because *'Cyfenter isn't part of our priorities ... compared with the practice with clients ...research on 'back burner.'* In more organisational terms this interviewee felt that the research sub-group seemed to be over-represented by *'academics'* and so they were *'left to get on with it'*.

A less fundamental inhibitor on engagement by some was suggested as *'asking people to go to Cardiff' for activities'*. At the same time such suggestions were accompanied by the recognition that there were 'practical' considerations at work.

In more 'contextual' terms, attempts to develop the website to reflect good practice - either from Cyfenter 1 in the form of a regular newsletter or, for example, by providing dynamic links in emails – had been restricted during the WAG merger period by wider organisational directives, and this continued to the end of the evaluation.

Similarly visits to individual DP members had been conditioned by the absence of a Project Manager, whose replacement did not materialise due to unavoidable merger issues.

Balanced against these influences at least one of the DP felt that the WDA merger into the WAG could prove to be a *'positive influence – we'll be able to lobby politicians ... and become champions for (URGs) ... We couldn't lobby the WDA in the same way ... public opinion matters more (under the new arrangements)'*

**Equal Opportunities** - In similar fashion to other leading principles such as partnership working, there is an apparent consensus view within DP members interviewed by the evaluation that the cross-cutting theme of Equal Opportunities is systemic to Cyfenter 2 as it had been to Cyfenter 1 – built into its aims, objectives and proposed action to secure greater success for URGs in the growth and sustainability of enterprises.

Continuing the theme of mainstreaming Equal Opportunities the Agreement explained that in 'vertical' terms 'Innovative policies and best practice examples identified by Cyfenter 2 will be able to feed into Diversity Awareness training packages provided by all Potentia partners and delivered to the mainstream business support providers and core WDA business support and development staff across Wales. *The SME Equality Unit also provides equality and equal opportunities training and advice for small and medium sized business across Wales and is a project within the WDA's business support remit. The Cyfenter Partnership will also be able to mainstream and disseminate findings and results through the work of this unit in order to directly influence businesses in Wales.'*

In 'horizontal' terms the DPA stressed that *'All aspects of the Equal Opportunities Policy Statement will continue to be thoroughly applied throughout Action 2 project activities'*. It pointed to its Equal Opportunities Policy Statements main aspects of which are:

*'1 A Set of Guiding Principles*

*These principles acknowledge core values relating to social and individual barriers. ... As an over-arching principle, Cyfenter commits to working towards the removal of physical, institutional and attitudinal barriers to social, economic and political activities'*.

*2. A Set of Commitment Principles*

*...(Comprising) a commitment to ensure that all partners understand and agree to the statement and work towards achieving its goals (and) ... practical measures such as disability enabled meeting venues and premises, use of communication aids and multi-lingual document availability.*

*3. Delivery*

*(Where there is) ...a firm commitment to inclusivity in its widest context within all aspects of project delivery. This includes awareness, promotional activity, participation by URGs and a cross-cutting commitment to mainstreaming equality within policies and practices of participating organisations.*

*4. Implementation*

*Where (t)he Policy outlines a detailed code of practice to ensure implementation of the Equal Opportunities Policy in relation to all meetings, events, steering groups, sub committees and working groups established by the project.*

*5. Monitoring*

*Where (t)he Policy outlines specific ways in which it will be reviewed and monitored at regular intervals by the Partnership'*.

Considered from a systemic perspective the 'test' of the vertical approach to this leading principle rests eventually on the joint realisation of all principles and the DP's overall aims in changing policy and practice in business support.

The evaluation has offered examples of practice and service delivery change for example: Potentia have developed Diversity Awareness Training packages that are being embedded into practice.

The 'test' of the horizontal approach in Cyfenter 2 may be seen in the degree to which it exemplifies and develops its policy statement in practice.

Here the DP has made such observations as '...' and pointed to such examples as the evident monitoring of meetings and the identification of participant's needs. As one of those interviewed saw things Equal Opportunities is *'fairly well embedded ... the culture's there'*. In this respect he was *'comfortable with (this organisation) being part of it – the practical arrangements, enthusiasm... the inclusivity'*

At the level of detailed delivery there has been widespread acknowledgement among the DP that significant efforts have been made over the period as a whole to implement the *'practical measures such as disability enabled meeting venues and premises'* referred to in the DPA.

The observation was offered that Cyfenter continued to have an organisational concentration in south east Wales – although this was followed by an acknowledgement of the practical reasons why this was the case.

Linked with the systemic dimension of this leading principle within Cyfenter 2 it is expected that all members of the partnership will act as practical 'champions' of equal opportunities.

It has been suggested that the horizontal approach to Equal Opportunities might be more focussed by greater discussion of relevant monitoring (or other) information at Steering Group meetings. Another DP member stressed that Cyfenter 2 *'is practicing equal opportunities ... using monitoring forms at the end of every meeting ... etc.'* but quickly added the comment that *'I would like to know if they take any notice of the information (obtained)'*

The EQUAL Support Unit identified Thematic Networking Groups as a 'good practice' route for mainstreaming Equal Opportunities but – as noted below – the position of the operating status of the TNG group did not fully materialise.

**Mainstreaming and creating impact** - Because of its intent to affect both delivery and policy the benefits of Cyfenter are also very clearly designed to extend beyond the project itself and therefore *'by its very nature the mainstreaming emphasis within the project focuses on sustainability.'*

It is relevant to note here that the DPA explained with reference to the 'vertical' mainstreaming that *'There is now considerable evidence that equality and diversity practices developed through projects such as Potentia and the SME Equality project are having a significant practical impact on the delivery of mainstream business service provision in Wales. The impact on policy makers and policy development will by its very nature take longer. However, the extensive research carried out by Cyfenter has already attracted the attention of policy makers both in Wales and transnationally. The on-going quantitative, qualitative and longitudinal research of Cyfenter 2 that will be disseminated throughout the project life will continue to influence and work with policy makers to effect change'.*

One of the DP interviews described Potentia as the 'delivery arm' of Cyfenter. More than one pointed out that Cyfenter 1 should ideally have followed Potentia. At Interim Report stage the evaluation expressed concern as to the status of Potentia post December 2006. *"The evident importance to mainstreaming of Potentia has raised questions among the DP about the effect of most Potentia contracts ending in December 2006, one having ended in March 2006"* One of the Potentia partners offered the personal 'gut feeling' that if the initiative ended in December 2006 (and there was 'no Potentia 3') then *'we would be leaving the job half finished ... it's predominantly cultural change that's needed ... we want full inclusion for our clients.'* The Final Evaluation would like to report that the Potentia contracts were extended in December 2006.

It was clear to the evaluation that those involved in working with non-Potentia partners, including 'policy-makers' and mainstream providers, felt that Cyfenter 2 was aiming to have affect on practice that was additional to that from Potentia (and to affect policy more widely than those providers directly contracted to the WAG.) Here, as noted in other sections, there was comment about the need to engage more business support organisation at some level – and preferably before Action 3.

For at least one of those interviewed this meant asking for the involvement of the 'target audience' in the process of interpreting research findings before publication. Another believed that *'Whoever is doing the policy needs to be aware of the research ... not only within the Assembly (WAG) but also at County Council level...'*

Moving the focus beyond the regional, it was unclear to the external evaluation how influential the Thematic Networking Group might be in extending the outcomes and best practice ideas from Cyfenter 2 more widely. At Final Evaluation Stage there continued to be no mention of Thematic Network Group working in DP interviews.

## **7.0 Concluding Observations**

The external evaluation has pointed out in its reporting that any *development* partnership is inherently dynamic and liable to raise challenges that need to be negotiated and resolved. The Cyfenter 2 EQUAL partnership is no exception and clearly there have been challenges and lessons that have been learned. To return to the EQUAL Support Unit guidance *'... the purpose of EQUAL is to test new ideas ... (and) ... as long as you properly evaluate your activities and learn and share lessons, it's acceptable not to succeed in the way you had planned'*.

The present section therefore gathers together some final observations and 'issues' raised by the evaluation's work with the partnership.

They are indicative of the range of issues raised but not comprehensive. It is anticipated that the reader will have extracted others from earlier pages.

The observations are not all of the same 'weight', their inclusion here does not mean that nothing has been done to respond to them, as there are other factors that may be either restricting or pressing on a response.

- Cyfenter 2 has offered a positive learning experience to Development Partner Members.
- It will be clear from this report that Cyfenter has played a full part in the organisation and delivery of Cyfenter 2 deliverables as specified in their project application. These deliverables have been realised perhaps most vividly in the research activities of the development partnership, and may be substantiated by the range of research documents, reports and findings that Cyfenter 2 has produced as part of its project application commitment. But, also there has been a 'softer' less tangible benefit that may be attributed to the partnership work of Cyfenter 2.
- There has been a general willingness among DP members to participate in and learn from this EQUAL partnership. If there has been a '*lull*' in full participation it has been generally associated to the priorities of the 'day job' rather than disinterest or empowerment issues.
- Cyfenter members have '*gelled*' as a partnership and this has enabled them to engage in planning or delivering 'spin off' projects both transnationally and nationally.
- The '*partnership*' is already looking at the future post Cyfenter 2 and a new network has been specifically set up to develop measures in support of URG's for the future.
- There is clear evidence of the relevance and efficiency of delivering and learning from this partnership and
- There is no doubt that Cyfenter has a long term 'legacy'

One of the potential challenges in the remaining six month period for Cyfenter is that of embedding the impact on practice so as it becomes mainstream practice. The Internal Evaluation at its second reporting stage in January 07 offered *'whilst the ultimate aim of mainstreaming at policy level requires an all Wales approach.....local piloting with the support of local economic leaders...could culminate in providing the evidence in support of a Wales regional impact on practice'*

There is clear evidence of good practice that has emerged from delivery methods and styles that could be shared more widely and could be adapted for wider usage one example was the data collection methods used by Cyfenter in the focus groups, but also the focus groups themselves as a means of evaluation of service provision.

A further example is the Diversity Awareness Training offered through Potentia this is an area where an analysis of impacting would be of benefit ie before and after training. These lessons may be shared more widely throughout Wales and UK.

The greatest potential challenge for Cyfenter 2 is the marked impact that the project will have on policy. The strategic level goals are expressed as impacting on policy. There are opportunities in the remaining months for Cyfenter to sharpen its dissemination tactics and up the ante on informing Regional policy on its findings, particularly when the focus of the region is moving towards business 'growth' with business start-up and lifestyle businesses are becoming less of a focus.

By far the greatest challenge for Cyfenter in its remaining six months will be the influencing of UK level policy. This challenge is compounded by the issues expressed by partners i.e. that actually infiltrating policy level channels and engaging in dialogue with UK level politicians is problematic and that Cyfenter requires a 'champion' to take its messages to UK level.

Cyfenter Development Partnership  
Final External Evaluation April 2007

The final message from the evaluation must therefore be; that in order for Cyfenter to rise and meet its forthcoming challenges it will require very clear and concise messages, a substantive dissemination plan and a platform from which to take Cyfenter 2 findings and lessons learned forward.

## ANNEX A

### EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

#### (Ref 1.3 Evaluation activity)

- *Attending a Cyfenter round 1 seminar*

The evaluators attended the round 1 seminar to support the foundation/baseline of Cyfenter 2

- *Reviewing monitoring and other information and documents provided by the Cyfenter project team;*

A range of documents and information was provided these included the TCA, DPA, various updates, progress and project research results added to which, during the lifetime of the project the Cyfenter Team produced progress updates for the Steering Group.

- *Holding face to face discussions with the operational team, two senior managers and the internal evaluator for Cyfenter (1 & 2);*

During the lifetime of the project ten meetings took place with the Cyfenter team and at least three meetings with the Internal Evaluator.

- *Attending Steering Group meetings held during the evaluation period*

The evaluation attended four steering group meetings.

- *Participating in transnational workshops*

Three Transnational workshops were attended by the evaluation: in Cardiff February 2006, Germany May 2006 and Sweden in November 2006.

- *Holding discussion with transnational (TN) partners and attending Transnational evaluation meetings with TN evaluators*

Three meetings were held with the transnational evaluators – which resulted in sharing of practice and evaluation methodologies

- *Supporting the delivery of a Steering Group Final Evaluation Workshop*

A workshop was convened in support of dissemination and mainstreaming and offered the following explanation: ‘*The evaluation wishes to better engage partners in identifying and discussing their aspirations for mainstreaming and dissemination by facilitating an interactive session with the DP steering group in support of the following objectives:*’

- **Exit/mainstreaming** – what is the legacy? Where should the research sit to maximise its sustainability?
  - **Dissemination** – what have been the lessons of Cyfenter 2
  - **Impact** – where is the impact/what? Do we have a tangible example of impact that may be highlighted through case studies?
  - **Evaluation** – thoughts as to how this can add value to the work of Cyfenter 2 – what would partners' wish to have to validate their work?
  - Any other thoughts?
- *Conducting face to face semi structured interviews with Development Partners. (a list of partners interviewed is offered later in this annex)*

The evaluation used a semi structured questionnaire and Interviews focused on the experiences of the individual organisations involved as well as their motivations, aspirations and intentions for the period of the project. Where appropriate the sample was asked for their views about what lessons might usefully be developed from past experience.

The evaluation intended its discussions with those involved to be formative and discursive in nature. Individual attitudes and opinions have been treated as valuable alongside more 'factual' accounts of experiences. To this end, and in keeping with the all Consultus Reports, quotations have not been identified with specific individuals and organisations.

- *Attendance at focus group meetings*

Three focus group meetings were attended from the 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> November 2006. The sessions were organised around 4 themes: Succession; Growth; Business Support and Home Enterprise.

**ANNEX B**

(Ref 3.3)

**Cyfenter 2 Development Partnership Formal<sup>11</sup> Membership**

**Evaluation interviews carried out to April 2005, April 2006 and April 2007)**

1. Wales Assembly Government	X
2. University of Wales, Newport	X
3. University of Wales, Glamorgan	X
4. Menter a Busnes	X
5. Ethnic Business Support Programme	X
6. Prime Cymru	X
7. Disability Wales	X
8. Venture Wales	X
9. Chwarae Teg	X
10. Finance Wales	
11. Newport and Gwent Enterprise Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry	X
12. Welsh Refugee Council	
13. Jobcentre Plus	
14. Awema	
15. Wales Co-operative Centre	X
16. Wales Management Centre	X
17. Cultural Enterprise	
18. Beaufort Research Ltd.	X
19. Commission Racial Equality	X

**Partner interview dates tables**

**2005**

11th Nov Wales Management Council

9th Nov Welsh Assembly Government

8th Nov Wales Cooperative Centre

8th Nov University of Wales Newport

7th Nov Menter a busnes

7th Nov Welsh Development Agency

26th Oct Ethnic Business Support Programme

26th Oct Newport and Gwent Enterprise

25th Nov Disability Wales

30 March Wales Cooperative

11 April Chwarea Teg

**2007**

1st Feb Autografik

13th Feb Ethnic Business Support Programme

13th Feb University Wales Newport

14th Feb Beaufort Research

16th Feb Prime Cymru

16th Feb Wales Management Council

28th Feb Venture Wales

7 March Commission Racial Equality

**2006**

2 May NGE

13 July DW

17 July Venture Wales

13 Nov Chwarea Teg

<sup>11</sup> These partners had signed the DPA. There are other partner projects such as Potentia and the Incubator Project within the WAG who are effectively 'associates' to the agreement.

## Annex C

### Monitoring and Evaluation Workshop Discussion Summary

#### Session 1

Partners to think about the impact and mainstreaming of Cyfenter2 DP from their perspectives;

*Q1 What collaborative work have you undertaken with domestic and/or transnational Partners? What impact has this had? (Divide into transnational and domestic; discuss impact on organisation and contribution and changes to practices and policies and knowledge gained) Will you continue these links after Cyfenter2 and how?*

The overriding message was that came from partner discussion on the importance of Cyfenter's links with Potentia, was Cyfenter's role in providing the empirical evidence for Potentia's objectives.

Cyfenter was referred to as a powerful delivery mechanism that wouldn't have been available prior to EQUAL funding.

It was stressed that the partnership had provided a wide scope of contacts including academics, mainstream organisations and policy makers. In validation of this view partners offered a range of collaborative National and Transnational work that had been possible due to their involvement with Cyfenter:

National	Transnational
<b>Business Dragons</b> – Newport and Gwent	<b>ME plan 50+</b> – a new project developed between Germany and Ireland links wouldn't have happened without Cyfenter
<b>Business Succession Work</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wales Co-op</li> <li>- Glamorgan University</li> <li>- Venture Wales</li> </ul>	<b>Community of Practice (COP)</b> – being used as an international tool with links in Offenbach, Germany, Ireland as a result of the CyfenterPartnership.
<b>Taste Of Enterprise</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 12 Month ext working with Menter a Business</li> <li>- Newport move to Merthyr (Heads of Valleys)</li> </ul>	<b>Exchange of practice</b> - Delivery of training by one Cyfenter Partner to Sweden. Links established in Germany for possible future collaborative work.

National	Transnational
Home Enterprise Conference link with Enterprise Nations (strong relationship) DTI and SBS links,	The links between Autografik and the German junior chamber of commerce
A home-working conference organised by DTI enabled connections to be made with Horsham L.A. (English connections), DEFRA,	Links with Estonia on the area of homeworking has developed into an additional piece of research with a Wales EQUAL project.
A scheme called "Empower Cymru" is the new post Potentia Scheme which will enable the Potentia Partnership to continue to support Enterprise - moving to employability.	
New Deal Contract – Potentia  A change in practice i.e. committed to equality training for all new staff, ethos of organisation as a result of Partnership.	

### Impact nationally

The importance of Cyfenter as evidence of much anecdotal information was discussed, as was the link of Cyfenter 1 to Home Enterprise themes.

It was felt that the longitudinal case studies were particularly valuable and had been used in workshops it was felt that the research would be more valuable to policy.

The importance of sustainability and longevity of the data was discussed and it was stressed that as the data doesn't exist elsewhere - collectively we must safeguard it post Cyfenter 2.

A view on policy level infiltration was offered stressing that it was difficult to pass information onto senior civil servants. An acknowledgment followed in which it was suggested that more could have been done to access Assembly Members.

A series of examples of where the information has been disseminated and how this has impacted

- Incubation work (Ed Ryan and Tony Hepburn)
  - South East Wales strategy used some of the research from Cyfenter and links with the Partners. Included under represented group representation in the strategy?
- Prowess
  - Spin offs
  - Used Cyfenter 2 data
  - Model of Regional Development Agency been used
- GTI plus links with beneficiaries
- Focus group attendees mixing with policy makers and business support in seminars
- Providers have looked at different client groups – diagnostic – referrals
  
- Normalisation – tenders – contracts have included the data from Cyfenter2 e.g targets for URG's
  
- Training and awareness links through to partners, champions linking with partners, research used for strategy and policy – raising awareness, data been used to set up incubators for different groups.
  
- Academic papers/ topic areas – it has been used to explore areas for further research and enquiry, one student in Glam has based their PHD on the research Cyfenter2 has undertaken and this has gained funding from research office.
  
- Age diversity awareness training (hard data used for this) – Continuation of funding e.g.WAVE document – the data was used to justify this.
  
- Management training – reports have been produced by WMC utilising the Cyfenter2 research on URGs. Furthermore, this has been used to create policies.
  
- Unemployment – S.E. Merthyr EQUAL Partnership has used Cyfenter data to feed through.
  
- Over 50s – The recognition that there are multiple barriers individuals face not isolated groups.

.....Transnationally

It was felt that the Welsh partners gave a lot to the transnational partnership as they were so advanced with URGs and entrepreneurship in comparisons to the other countries. The differing objectives between post and pre start was also discussed.

The overriding message here seemed to be that the impact was the opportunities for Transnational links that have created spin off projects and as put by at least one member of the Steering Group, the new project work that is now underway with transnational partners would not have happened without Cyfenter

### **Continuation of links post Cyfenter National/domestic partners**

Business Dragons is a new network set up by Cyfenter participants.

**Legacy of relationships** – there was agreement that there will be a natural confirmation of informal relationships and different areas of working through the partnerships made within the partnership e.g. EBSP and health related project wouldn't be there without Cyfenter2.

It was suggested that the existing partnership continues electronically – Virtual, an Intranet that the Partnership can access and exchange, good practice etc

**Future collaborative working** -there were ideas that the barriers of the URG groups should be widened to all areas of economic activity. Enterprise is not going to be focused on as much now. There was a suggestion that it should not just be a paper based project e.g. academic but more strategic and policy orientated, influencing change and focussing on wider arenas such as education and enterprise and putting things into practice.

**Informal networking** – an acknowledgment of partner's expertise and the opportunity to call upon people from the partnership in future.

### **Transnational partners**

The immediate legacy of Cyfenter will be the new spin off projects that have been set up between domestic and transnational partners. There is a life expectancy of at least a three year working relationship.

### **Lessons Learnt**

What would Cyfenter do differently next time?

- Stronger links to delivery (this may have been lost) – route map (linked with EAP, not explicit in WAVE)
- More communication outside group, lost opportunity to sell the excellent work Cyfenter 2 has achieved (communications plan needed)
- Use other groups as a conduit
- Missed opportunities - discussion took place around missed opportunities – with particular reference to the ISBE and Prowess conferences. It was felt that Cyfenter had a real experience element to the research that a number of academic papers don't have.

- Wider partnership – although it was noted that a wider scope of people were initially invited to join the partnership and chose not to.
- Action based recommendations- for example carried out pilot studies of research suggestions.
- Expressed project key deliverables from the outset

**.....external/internal changes beyond the control of the project environment that may have impacted negatively**

- Reorganisation of former WDA into WAG e.g. website disappeared, hard to access outputs, website should be managed separately as a tool for dissemination

**.....more widely**

- It was noted that Wales was not very good at transnational working and obtaining EU funding and it would be valuable if WEFO could provide some assistance.

***Evaluation observations***

Promotion, information and support on the wider EU agenda and programmes could help and support Wales to access more funding opportunities.

**What has been particularly good?**

- The gelling of the Steering Group and the Transnational group - there is little conflict between individuals in Partnership – lots of agreement on the way forward and no hidden agendas
- A commitment to learn from each other – open dialogue
- It has not just been about the data collection – brings reality to the Partners of people working with businesses
- Round table seminar – policy makers, practitioners, businesses working together. Very Good!
- The process of EQUAL providing funding in the “finding partner” phase of a project was highlighted as good practice.

## Session 2

Q 2 *Who should we disseminate the research and good practice to? (Is there anyone we are missing out?)*

*What lessons have we learnt from our involvement in the Cyfenter2 DP? What would you have changed about Cyfenter2 if anything?*

*What are your recommendations for change? (in business support and for policy)*

### DISSEMINATION

The overarching points were that dissemination had to be timely and in a format that was easily digestible.

It was felt that Cyfenter should get together a list of reports to accompany a dvd of reports for use by the partners as a dissemination tool. Partners felt that they could help with dissemination but that the process should be coordinated by core team.

It was highlighted as a problem that Wales didn't have a champion (like Gordon Brown in England) to disseminate the research. It was suggested that Cyfenter has a lobbying process in Sept/ Oct.

It was suggested that Cyfenter should feed into academia via libraries and business schools in universities for dissemination of research.

The research could go on the DEIN website, MEPLAN website, NGE website.

That a clear practical guide could be created in collaboration with EQUAL

Regional	National	International
AMs	MPs	MEPs
Representative organisations who have contact with businesses	DTI	Commission Officials (frameworks)
Sub regional L.A.s (Ed account manager links)	CRE	African Nations (ISBE). Africa interested in the good practice that Cyfenter have created and the Partnership as a whole.
Institute of Welsh Affairs	CEHR	
Accountancy Bodies  Key people included: Sioned Rees; Tracey Burke	NFEA	

### **The key messages from session 1 and 2**

1. A list of Cyfenter product (s) outputs
2. A champion for change
3. A dissemination action and delivery plan to include measures for influencing, informing and or impacting on policy.

1. Missed Opportunities
2. Wider partnership involvement
3. Testing/validating research by action based recommendations
4. Positive, valuable experiences of both national and transnational working within the EQUAL model of partnership work

### **Recommendations for change**

- Building in to the new framework of enterprise work under the EU.
- Longitudinal studies to continue. People discussed the longitudinal work we have conducted and how this shouldn't be lost. This includes quantitative data and the longitudinal case studies. This would be particularly important in terms of all the changes that are taking place within business support at the moment e.g. monitoring has this had an effect.
- Identify Programmes and projects that are doing similar e.g. other EQUAL projects
- Scrap WAVE doc revisit EAP – EAP was able to measure the impact of it's work whereas WAVE hasn't got this mechanism inbuilt. Furthermore, WAVE too much focus on growth.
- Clarity of messages. You are not going to get large high growth innovative business in Objective 1 areas – reality is high growth businesses are in South East and A55 North Wales – Strategy needs revisiting.
- Should focus on economic inactivity
- There are significant regional differences there should be an aligning of strategy with delivery

- Baseline Work
  - Collect evidence at beginning
  - Clear vision and maintaining it
  - Channel resources
- GEM report 2006 has shown a reduction in the number of enterprises, this needs to be focussed on
- Filtering the businesses that are unable to survive.
- Too siloed, should be more holistic and focus on the business agenda.
- Projects not working together needs to be better linkages.
- Clear route of services for clients.