Cross Cutting Themes – Resource Document

Introduction to the Cross Cutting Themes

There are two ESF cross-cutting themes (sometimes also called "CCTs" or "horizontal themes") that must be fully integrated into the development and delivery of every BBO project. These are sustainable development and gender equality and equal opportunities.

Sustainable Development - Sustainable development is about meeting the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It recognises the need to balance environmental, social and economic considerations when designing and delivering activities.

Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities - The need to treat everyone equally, regardless of race, gender, age, religion and belief, sexual orientation, marital status or disability, plays an important part in the sustainable development of local economies. As an employment and training based programme, it is a key aim of BBO to reduce inequalities in the labour market.

Resources to further help you or your staff understand what the CCTs are:

- ****Key document**** BBO Guide to Delivering European Funding – Section 10 of the guidance – Cross Cutting Themes produced by the Big Lottery Fund

- Points to consider document produced by the BBO Support Contract which briefly explains the background and mandatory requirements on CCTs

- Cross-Cutting Themes Guidance for European Social Fund (Sustainable Development and Equality) produced by the Managing Authority.

Cross Cutting Themes in BBO – The Requirements

Lead organisations within the BBO programme, need to develop and implement a Policy and Action Plan for **each** of the CCT themes and notify Big Lottery Fund regularly on your progress towards them.

Resources on the BBO CCT requirements

- ****Key document**** BBO Guide to Delivering European Funding – Section 10 of the guidance – Cross Cutting Themes produced by the Big Lottery Fund

- Cross Cutting Themes webinar recording and slides produced under the BBO Support Contract which provides a more detailed introduction to CCTs within BBO and a potential template for the action plans

- Suggested action plan templates were produced under the BBO Support Contract for Sustainable Development and Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities

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Sustainable Development in more detail

This regulatory theme has developed out of the EU's long held and serious commitment to the environment. Today's broadening from *environmental* sustainability to sustainable *development*

appreciates the growing interconnectedness of globalisation and the developing environmental and economic demands. Many real world effects (such as from climate change, or financial crashes) are felt at both the macro, global, scale and the local level.

ESF regulations require projects to consider the impact of their activities on the environment, to fulfil the commitment to sustainable development set out in the operational programme document. All projects, whether they have an environmental focus or not, must take the environment into account when delivering their services.

The sustainable development action plan should explain what specific action would be taken to ensure that each organisation involved in delivery of the contract would:

(a) Reduce emissions/energy consumption to help limit climate change and adapt to its effects

(b) Promote sustainable transport

(c) Promote the efficient use of natural resources

What works/good practice from previous delivery

Several reviews and evaluations of ESF delivery under the previous programme have highlighted a number of practical approaches which can contribute to the sustainable development CCT. Many of these are things you or your organisation may already be doing.

- Consider the location of the training or interventions you plan to deliver, for example:
  - locate training close to where participants live;
  - consider a 'pram pushing policy' - offer provision within walking distance of the community being served; and
  - is it accessible to public transport routes?[1]
- To make this as easy as possible for members to use public transport, make bus/train times available on any leaflets or posters you issue. Make copies of local timetables available at all of your venues.[2]
- Using shared transport or car sharing for staff attending events. Purchase bicycles, rather than using motorbikes, for staff to use during their outreach work.[3]
- The use ICT and other technologies supports sustainable development. Electronic communication, including Skype and video conferencing, reduces the need for travel within the project.
- Adopting ICT technologies also reduces the need for paper based activity within enterprises.[4]
- Where new equipment is purchased, ensure the most energy efficient that is able to undertake the role is purchased. Check whether any other surplus equipment was available, rather than buying new products as a default.[5]
- Where possible joint events with other organisations, rather than two separate events being run. This reduced the amount of advertising materials that had to be printed.[6]
- Having a dedicated person that co-ordinates the approach overall and having clear goals at the beginning of the project makes the response to CTT stronger[7]

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[1] European Social Fund in England Gender Equality Good Practice Guide
[2] http://www.brighterfuturestogether.co.uk/brighter-futures-together-toolkit/write-an-environmental-policy/
[3] CESI (2013) Evaluation of Want to Work
[4] Welsh European Funding Office Cross Cutting Themes Environmental Sustainability Fact sheet ESF Programmes
[5] CESI (2013) Evaluation of Want to Work
[6] CESI (2013) Evaluation of Want to Work
[7] WEFO (2015) Cross-cutting Themes Evaluation Equality and Sustainability

- A 'Community of Practice' for example sharing experience and ideas on CCT achievement with other projects or providers within your partnership can reinforce the approach to CCTs[8]
- Raising awareness of environmental sustainability with participants was done in various ways by projects.
  - Participating in activities linked to environmental sustainability, such as litter picking, learning about the outdoors environment.[9]
  - Frozen Planet DVD resource; this was watched and discussed by participants; Global Warming project; Fairtrade week; Young passport for global citizenship; A Duke of Edinburgh expedition which incorporated a theme on marine life.[10]

Evidence of outcomes from effective sustainable development plans: Evaluation of the CTT of sustainable development in the last programme in England found evidence of positive organisational impacts of compliance. This included raised awareness of the need to minimise environmental impacts, a raised profile for sustainability issues within their organisations, and similar approaches being applied to other services.[11]

Sustainable development objectives and measures

The CCT of sustainable development is subject to monitoring, audit and evaluation. The sustainable development action plan should be a document, which is updated, and its implementation monitored. The objectives and activities in the SD plan therefore need to have measures and indicators attached.

Table 1 and 2 overleaf summarises some example activities, measures and indicators that have been used in other SD action plans.

It is also important to include in the plan how staff awareness of sustainability will be increased in line with the Sustainable Development Plan.

Resources to support identification of objectives, activities and measures for SD plans

- The action plan template produced under the BBO Support Contract for Sustainable Development included some example measures.
- Other ESF programmes (and projects within them) have produced sustainable development action/implementation plans which can provide inspiration, for example:
  - Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service Co-Financing Organisation
  - Greater London Authority ESF 2014 - 2020 Co-Financing Authority
  - Individual provider SD plans:
    - Shaw Trust
    - Career Connect

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[8] WEFO (2015) Cross-cutting Themes Evaluation Equality and Sustainability

[9] People and Work Unit (2012) External Mid Term External Evaluation of the Building the Future Together (BTFT) European Social Fund (ESF) project.

[10] Wavehill (2013) Engage Project – Final Evaluation

[11] Dickinson, P. & Lloyd, R. (2011) European Social Fund Evaluation of Sustainable Development and Green Jobs: report pub GHK Consulting for the European Social Fund and DWP UK

Table 1: Example activities, measurement approaches and indicators for Sustainable Development action plans[12]

Objective	Activity	Measuring Performance	Specific Indicators
Reduce emissions/energy consumption	**Energy saving and carbon reduction at office base of project staff** **Staff** ➢ Attend meetings and discuss sustainability as a standard agenda item. ➢ Staff training and feature sustainability elements in staff handbook ➢ Run a staff energy awareness campaign **Lighting** ➢ Use natural light wherever possible. Keep windows clean and encourage the staff to open the blinds rather than turn on the lights. ➢ Selected members of staff who are responsible for office made aware of switching all lights off when leaving the office at the end of the working day. ➢ Encourage staff to switch off lighting when not in use (i.e. meeting room) and display appropriate signage **IT** ➢ Printer terminals within the office set to hibernate mode when inactive for a length of period of time ➢ Staff are informed about switching their computer terminals off at the end of the working day.	Metered energy use Review of staff handbook and training materials	*Reduce absolute carbon emissions/energy consumption by X% a year* *X% of staff attend training and sign off understanding information containing in materials*
Sustainable transport	**Reduce travel & encourage the use of public transport** ➢ Encourage the use of public transport ➢ Encourage vehicle sharing ➢ Encourage staff to utilise teleconferencing facilities as opposed to travelling to meetings.	Review business mileage expenditure on a quarterly basis Log all instances of teleconferences and calculate potential travel savings	*X% reduction in business mileage expenditure* *£X saved as a result of usage of teleconferencing facilities instead of travelling to meetings*
Promote the efficient use of natural resources	**Paper Usage** ➢ Purchase recycled paper for all office use ➢ Encourage staff to limit printing and encourage working electronically	Stationery order evidences recycled paper purchasing.	*No of IT items/ink cartridges recycled*

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[12] These examples are drawn from plans developed under the Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service Co-Financing Programme as part of the 2014-2020 European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme in England. Full plans are available here

	Recycled Ink Cartridges ➢ Purchase re-manufactured ink cartridges ➢ Recycle all computer ink cartridges **Recycled Waste** ➢ All waste to be recycled via the recyclable bins within the kitchen area ➢ Recycle all waste paper via a paper recycling company ➢ Recycle computers and related hardware **Water** ➢ Communicate regularly with staff to ensure they understand the importance of efficient use of water.	Collate receipts from recycling company to evidence frequency of collection Featured in the staff handbook & induction pack	*X% reduction in paper orders*

Example activities, measurement approaches and indicators

Area	Actions	Baseline and reporting
Waste	• **Reduce** what comes into the organisation; buy less, use multiuse products, avoid single use/disposable items, pay attention to packaging, cancel unwanted mail. • **Reuse** have re-use points (stationary, plastic bags etc), re-purpose and donate. - *Where new equipment is purchased, ensure the most energy efficient that is able to undertake the role is purchased. Check whether any other surplus equipment was available, rather than buying new products as a default.[13]* • **Recycle -** Find out what your waste contractor/council collects, Set up well signposted recycling bins to segregate the waste, clearly displaying what can go in them, Get rid of desk bins to encourage people to think about their waste, See if anyone wants your compostable organic waste (teabags, coffee grounds, fruit, veg).	For an approximate figure use the number of collections/number of full bags/recycling boxes. For a more realistic figure use luggage scales to weigh the waste for a selected short period of time.
Energy Consumption	• Switch things off when they are not in use. • Educate people on what can be turned off/efficient equipment use. • Use low energy lighting and when choosing new equipment look at the energy ratings. • Think about the heating and cooling of buildings and stabilizing the temperature by using windows/blinds/heaters/doors/air con/thermostats effectively. • Only heat/light/power the areas you need to.	Gas and electricity bills Meter readings Equipment/lights spot checks Clip-on energy meters (for separate pieces of equipment/rooms/floors).
Travel	• Make public transport the standard way to travel. - *Hold meetings in locations well serviced by public transport.* - *Make bus/train times available on any leaflets or posters you issue.* - *Make copies of local timetables available at all of your venues.[14]* • Encourage walking as a mode of transport - *Consider a 'pram pushing policy' - offer provision within walking distance of the community being served* - Look at the provisions for cyclists (some LA's offer grants to improve this). - *Purchase bicycles, rather than using motorbikes, for staff to use during their outreach work.* • Make car journeys the exception. - *Use shared transport or car sharing for staff attending events.* • Embrace flexible working, consider allowing home working. • Only hold face to face meetings when they add value. - *Use electronic communication, including Skype and video conferencing*	Mileage claims/rail tickets booked/taxis expenses If a travel management company is used to book tickets through they can produce reports (including CO2). Record number of public transport timetables distributed, car share journeys etc
Paper	• Avoid printing where possible, if printing: - Set the printer defaults to black and white/double sided. - Use 100% recycled paper - Print preview the document, format it to fit on a few pages as possible - Print the necessary sections of large documents rather than the whole document. - Limit meeting paperwork (everyone doesn't need a printed agenda) - Recycle paper when it is no longer useful • *Adopt ICT technologies to reduce the need for paper based activity.[15]*	Paper used or ordered. The number of toner cartridges used. Print reports from the printers or from the printer contractor.

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[13] CESI (2013) Evaluation of Want to Work

[14] http://www.brighterfuturestogether.co.uk/brighter-futures-together-toolkit/write-an-environmental-policy/

[15] Welsh European Funding Office Cross Cutting Themes Environmental Sustainability Fact sheet ESF Programmes

| | | • *Where possible joint events with other organisations, rather than two separate events being run. This reduced the amount of advertising materials that had to be printed.*[16] | |

Source: Produced by Natalie Fergusen – BLF 'Green Champion'

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[16] CESI (2013) Evaluation of Want to Work

Reviewing progress action plans

It will be important that progress against the action plan can be measured. Learning from the from the previous ESF programme[17] highlighted the need for the following to allow monitoring to occur:

> ➢ a baseline assessment of current position in terms of waste minimisation, recycling and energy consumption (where available)

> ➢ annual estimates of the progress of sustainable development actions or indicators

> ➢ details of how staff awareness of sustainability will be increased in line with the Sustainable Development Plan (details of staff communications, training etc.)

For BBO:

(i)   set simple baseline/s;
(ii)   action and monitor (implementation plan) as regularly as G/Hs can;
(iii)   satisfy the requirement of showing 'continuous improvement' by keeping a record and reviewing it (as regularly as G/Hs see fit). This point can easily include what is currently your third step of "how staff awareness of sustainability will be increased in line with the Sustainable Development Plan (details of staff communications, training)"

The MA guidance, Feb 2017, p.5, has bolded this line and underlines the message (*their* emphasis): "**The baselines and subsequent measurements can be set in <u>very simple terms</u>**"

Other tools for measuring progress against action plans:

Several other practical tools are available that could be used as part of a self assessment process and integrated within existing monitoring regimes for the BLF.

- The Implementation Plan Assessment Tool[18] is detailed tool for assessing how ESF providers are delivering sustainable development in practice.

- A best practice evidence matrix[19] was developed based on learning from the previous programming period.

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[17] Sustainable Development in ESF 2007-2013: Lessons learned and issues to consider for the next programme
[18] Ecotec and Action Sustainability Sustainable Development in ESF: Guidance
[19] Sustainable Development in ESF 2007-2013: Lessons learned and issues to consider for the next programme

Best Practice Evidence

The following table provides some examples of best practice activity that a provider (and other organisations involved in delivery of the contract) may demonstrate which shows their commitment to continuous improvement in sustainable development (i.e. over and above the minimum/contractual requirement). There is an expectation/aspiration that providers will strive towards continuous improvement throughout the duration of the contract. The table below should be used to record all best practice activity that the provider demonstrates – this can be either from the list of examples provided below or additional/alternative examples that are provided by the provider.

Examples of best practice activity	Achieved (Y/N)	Additional comments/evidence (e.g. Provider has provided a copy of their organisational level policy)
Provider takes part in the annual ESF SD mainstreaming 'Leader' awards		
Provider has an organisational level sustainable development policy Provider has an organisational level sustainable development strategy		
The provider's organisational level policy and/or strategy links with their other organisational level strategies (such as Corporate Strategy, Communications Strategy, Commercial Strategy etc)		
The provider's organisational level policy and/or strategy is supported by senior management and driven down from the very top of the organisation		
The provider's organisational level policy and or/strategy is scrutinised by an external party		
Provider has a named Sustainable Development Champion in the organisation who has received some relevant training		
All staff in the organisation have received sustainability related training and refresher training		
Sustainability related objectives are included in key staff's personal objectives		
Provider publicises their sustainability related achievements		
Provider identifies sustainability risks in their organisation and has a process to manage the risks		
Provider communicates sustainability principles and aims to its sub contractors and suppliers		
Provider has targets to improve sustainability aspects with sub contractors and suppliers		
Provider increases awareness of sustainability to those participating in its provision programmes/contracts (e.g. as part of delivering SD modules)		
Provider measures its achievements/performance in sustainability 14000 series of Environmental Management Systems		

Provider benchmarks sustainability performance against other organisations (either in the same sector or more widely)		
Provider holds /is working towards accreditation standards such as the ISO 14000 series of Environmental Management Systems		

https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/del/sustainable-development-audut-2007-2013.pdf

Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities in more detail

All organisations involved in delivering the projects we fund must be committed to promoting equal opportunities and non-discrimination in all areas of their work. This should be in line with current legislation, including the Equality Act 2010.

What works/good practice from previous delivery

Evaluation evidence and good practice examples from previous programmes have highlighted several examples of activity to support women on ESF. The CCT of gender equality and equal opportunities could be integrated as a 'natural fit' into many activities on a project and of course, be applicable to provision supporting women and men and that which supports individuals with other protective characteristics.

Engagement and recruitment[20]:

- Going out to find particular groups, works better than expecting them to come to you. This might be, for example, meeting women at school gates or when attending surgeries, support or interest groups.
- Building relationships with staff in referral agencies such can be extremely valuable. It can build mutual understanding so that projects can maintain on-going relationships and information flow.
- Informal activity such as coffee mornings or informal taster sessions is effective to offer a safe opportunities to find out about programmes, discuss their interests and concerns and meet staff before they commit to a programme. Including family and carers in these initial activities can help with engagement.
- To build positively on clients' reluctance to get caught up in an unknown project, extending the concept of the open day to the 'open week' or 'open module'. Here clients effectively take their first steps in a project but without making any commitment, or signing-up until the end of the taster period.[21]
- Systems/processes to allow discrete declaration of disabilities or learning difficulties and disabilities[22] assists engagement and ability to tailor subsequent support.

Accessibility[23][24]

- Any training or interventions training should be offered close to where women live or on accessible public transport routes to make it easier to reach the training and to spend as little time as possible travelling. This will assist learners to fit in training with their other commitments. A 'pram pushing policy' can mean provision is within walking distance of the communities they serve. This will also support the sustainability development aim to reduce unnecessary travel
- Women-only groups and spaces can make training more attractive and accessible to some groups. They may feel more comfortable or safer than they would in a mixed environment, for example, because of religious or cultural reasons or their experiences of violence and abuse

[20] NIACE (2011) Engaging unemployed women in ESF-funded training

[21] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/643049/esf-good-practice-disabled-people.pdf

[22] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/28493 6/lldd_evidence_report.pdf

[23] NIACE (2011) Engaging unemployed women in ESF-funded training

[24] European Social Fund in England Gender Equality Good Practice Guide

- Provision must be flexible to support access for individuals with caring responsibilities or those with disabilities. The dates and timing of sessions is a consideration where individuals attending have domestic or childcare responsibilities. Strategies to consider include timing them to fit with school times or to take place in term time. Flexibility in attendance patterns should also be considered where possible.
- Opportunities to train remotely or online can enhance access for some (disabled people, carers etc).
- Provision should promote access for disabled people, including access to premises and provides specialist equipment/practices, covering all forms of physical and mental disability.

Venues[25]

- Venues for training were selected that offered a neutral environment (many participants had bad experiences at school or college).
- Smaller more informal venues may be more approachable for some.
- Accessibility to venues and equipment and materials.

Support[26]

- Supporting access to childcare provision is a pre-requisite to enable some women to attend or engage, especially mothers of pre-school children or in the school holidays. This support might include offering childcare directly or providing details of local childcare provision and information about financial support for childcare.
- The content and delivery of provision needs to be accessed, understood and applied by people of all groups.

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[25] European Social Fund in England Gender Equality Good Practice Guide
[26] NIACE (2011) Engaging unemployed women in ESF-funded training

Area	Actions	Baseline, monitoring and reporting
Engagement and recruitment[27]:	• **Outreach** - Going out to find particular groups, works better than expecting them to come to you. This might be, for example, meeting women at school gates or when attending surgeries, support or interest groups. • **Partnerships** - Building relationships with staff in referral agencies such can be extremely valuable. It can build mutual understanding so that projects can maintain on-going relationships and information flow. • **Engagement** - Informal activity such as coffee mornings or informal taster sessions is effective to offer a safe opportunities to find out about programmes, discuss their interests and concerns and meet staff before they commit to a programme. Including family and carers in these initial activities can help with engagement. Extend the concept of the open day to the 'open week' or 'open module'. Here clients effectively take their first steps in a project but without making any commitment, or signing-up until the end of the taster period.[28] • **Systems/processes** to allow discrete declaration of disabilities or learning difficulties and disabilities[29] assists engagement and ability to tailor subsequent support.	Baseline - Review current engagement strategy Monitoring: No of outreach activities No of new groups visited Monitoring of equality indicators/output targets
Accessibility[3031]	• Any training or interventions training should be offered close to where groups live or on accessible public transport routes to make it easier to reach the training and to spend as little time as possible travelling. This will assist learners to fit in training with their other commitments. • A 'pram pushing policy' can mean provision is within walking distance of the communities they serve. • Women-only groups and spaces can make training more attractive and accessible to some groups. They may feel more comfortable or safer than they would in a mixed environment, for example, because of religious or cultural reasons or their experiences of violence and abuse • Provision must be flexible to support access for individuals with caring responsibilities or those with disabilities. The dates and timing of sessions is a consideration where individuals attending have domestic or childcare responsibilities. Strategies to consider include timing them to fit with school times or to take place in term time. Flexibility in attendance patterns should also be considered where possible. • Opportunities to train remotely or online can enhance access for some (disabled people, carers etc). • Provision should promote access for disabled people, including access to premises and provides specialist equipment/practices, covering all forms of physical and mental disability.	Baseline - Review current delivery plan Monitoring: Record locations Record intervention timings and fit with public transport timetables/caring responsibilities Profile of groups/courses attendees Remote access to support
Venues[32]	• Venues for training were selected that offered a neutral environment (many participants had bad experiences at school or college).	Baseline - Review current delivery plan

[27] NIACE (2011) Engaging unemployed women in ESF-funded training

[28] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/643049/esf-good-practice-disabled-people.pdf

[29] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/28493
6/lldd_evidence_report.pdf

[30] NIACE (2011) Engaging unemployed women in ESF-funded training

[31] European Social Fund in England Gender Equality Good Practice Guide

[32] European Social Fund in England Gender Equality Good Practice Guide

	• Smaller more informal venues may be more approachable for some. • Accessibility to venues and equipment and materials.	Monitoring: Record accessibility features of venues
Support[33]	• Supporting access to childcare provision is a pre-requisite to enable some women to attend or engage, especially mothers of pre-school children or in the school holidays. This support might include offering childcare directly or providing details of local childcare provision and information about financial support for childcare. • The content and delivery of provision needs to be accessed, understood and applied by people of all groups.	Baseline - Review current delivery plan Monitoring: Information on childcare provided Childcare provided directly Adaptions made to provision to meet needs

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[33] NIACE (2011) Engaging unemployed women in ESF-funded training