Introduction to the Service-Learning methodology

27.01.2023 Bologna, SE4Ces Learning Mobility training

Christina Galani - Stimmuli for Social Change

Part 1: What is Service Learning ?

Service Learning: an experiential educational method in which students engage in community service, reflect critically on their experience and learn from it at personal, social and academical level.

Benefits:
✓ hands-on experience and networking
✓ cultivation of multiple transversal and professional skills
✓ enrichment of academic knowledge with real-world problems
✓ creation of impact with engagement
✓ promotion of civic responsibility and investigation of local needs

'Learning to Serve, Serving to Learn'
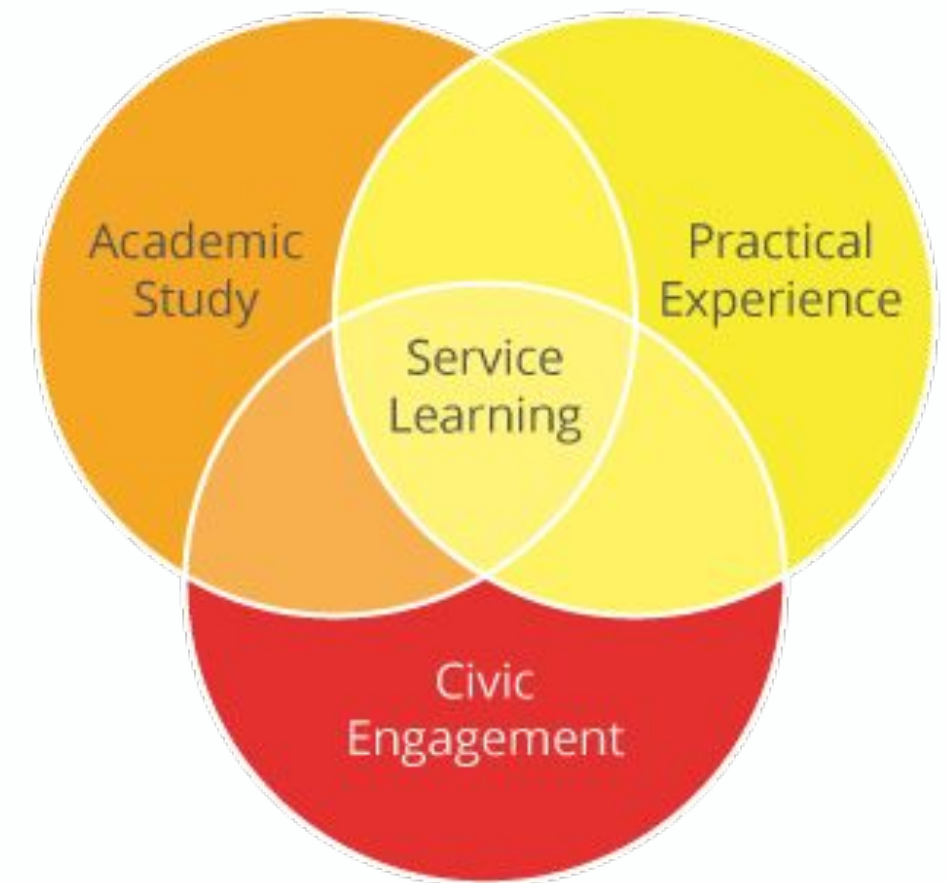
Part 2: The role of Service Learning in SE Living labs pilot phase

The SL method is the 3rd approach of the SE Living Labs framework.

As an action-learning method, it is designed to be implemented in the Pilot and Evaluation phase of the project, under WP5

Objectives and mission of SL application in the pilot phase of SE4Ces:
1. Students from SE-related studies will collaborate with local SE organisations and develop SL projects, by integrating real life societal issues into their curricula while offering service to the organisation
2. Selected local SE enterprises will host students in their premises in a form of **short-term 'voluntary' placement**

At the end of SL activities, all participants reflect on their experience

Part 3: KPIs and targets for SL activity

Self-reflection sessions: will take place at the end of the Living Labs' pilot implementation phase (M30-M33), to identify the areas of further improvement and encourage students' and SE partners' self-reflection on their service-learning experience and on their collaboration.

Final result: creation of a self-reflection handbook by UNIBO, under WP5, based on all participants' feedback and reported experience

Self – reflection activities regards the following actors:
-Students
-Educators
-SE organisations
-Any involved community members (if any)

Performance indicators:
1. Total number of service-learning projects designed and implemented by students: **> 50**
2. Total number of SE Living Labs participants involved in the reflection sessions: **> 50**

Part 4: Inspirational session – examples of SL activities

Example 1: Action-learning groups
Students engage in weekly seminars and co-create a project, by working in groups and thinking about a type of SE organisation in which they would like to create, as potential SE entrepreneurs, reflecting on all elements required to set up this organisation (e.g,: business plan, marketing, ethical finance, human resources, governance structure, potential environmental or business risks).

Example 2: Volunteering or job-shadowing in a Cooperative or Social enterprise
Students can work alongside local cooperatives and familiarise with its system of operation, the challenges these entrepreneurs face today and suggest solutions on how the members can further ensure the sustainability of their social business, economically and environmentally, by maintaining its democratic structure.

Ideas for **self-reflection on the gained experience** after the end of SL activity:

group discussions, journal entries, worksheets, essays, blog posts, digital storytelling narratives
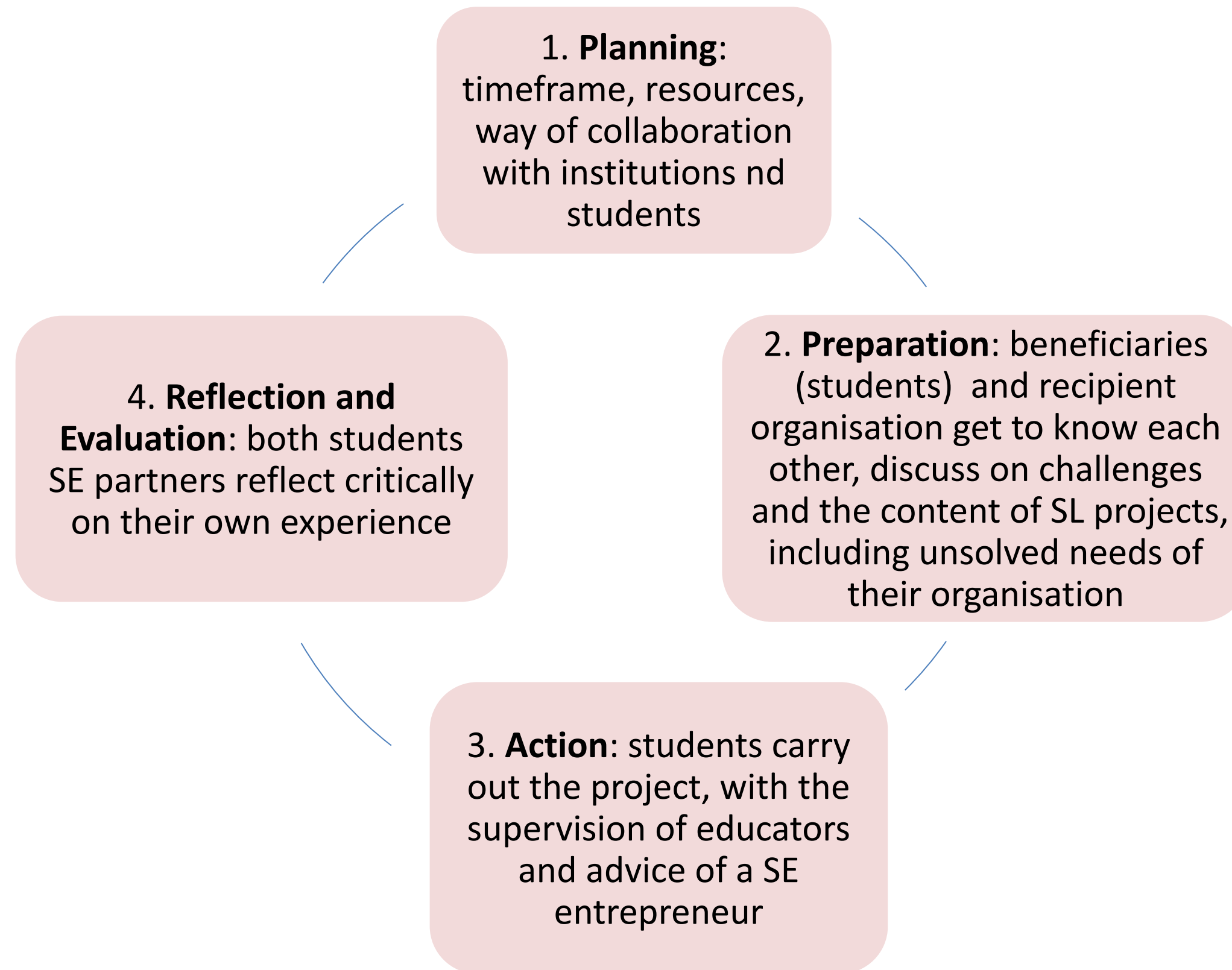
Part 5: Ideas from surveyed students for applying SL in four pilot countries

Cooperate with a SE organisation in rural areas for supporting local sustainable socio-economic development

Cooperate with rural or newly established female associations in social economy or social entrepreneurship

Implement a placement/ short-term volunteering activity in a local cooperative to work on circular economy activities

Part 6: Main steps to organise a SL activity

1. Planning: timeframe, resources, way of collaboration with institutions nd students

2. Preparation: beneficiaries (students) and recipient organisation get to know each other, discuss on challenges and the content of SL projects, including unsolved needs of their organisation

3. Action: students carry out the project, with the supervision of educators and advice of a SE entrepreneur

4. Reflection and Evaluation: both students SE partners reflect critically on their own experience

Thank you for your attention!