**Active citizenship through social entrepreneurship**

**Institutions:**
- NGO Women for future
- Centre for Education Initiatives
- Center for Globalization, Integration Research and Socio-Cultural Cooperation
- Belarusian Association of UNESCO Clubs
- Lab of innovative projects
- Youth is Power NGO
- Lifelong learning center

**Countries:** Armenia, Belarus and Ukraine

**Time period:** 13th – 18th of November 2019

"Active citizenship through social entrepreneurship" is five day training course for three countries and organizations of EENCE network that intends to increase practical skills and competencies of 13 experts, trainers, educators within the topics of civic activism, social entrepreneurship by having a special stress on women rights.

The general intention of the project was to get familiar with the concept of social entrepreneurship, its main difference from other types of activities, e.g. business, philanthropy, corporate social responsibility etc., to have an experience exchange between different experiences in participating countries, learn best practices and lessons learnt from the experience in Armenia, and eventually to understand how social entrepreneurship education can serve as a tool for civic education.

The methodology of the training course was based on the approaches, values and models of non-formal education. This was guaranteed by the involvement of a professional facilitator with long-term background in organizing and conducting training courses (especially in the sphere of social entrepreneurship). The course was participants-based and participant-oriented, presentations were accompanied with interactive special group works and discussions, so learning process was based on active involvement of participants in knowledge sharing and experience exchange.

The concrete activities implemented during the training course included extended sessions aiming at team building for getting familiar with other participants, who did not meet before, that allowed participants to develop appropriate working relationship in order to make the further mutual learning process effective.

The thematic sessions were the following:

1. **Introduction to social entrepreneurship:** a group was conducted where participants discussed the difference between business – entrepreneurship – philanthropy – and social entrepreneurship, which was followed by an input by the trainer. This gave an opportunity to understand the main concept of social entrepreneurship and get familiar with the Armenian experience.
2. **Social Impact**: A separate attention was paid to the concept of social impact and current developments in various fields (e.g. social impact investments).

3. **Good practices of social entrepreneurship**: In total five presentations were conducted by the participants themselves, to present the good practices of social entrepreneurial activities, that they are involved themselves. A special guest, who founded the School of Social Entrepreneurs in Armenia had a presentation and QA about their school. Afterwards 10+ good examples of social enterprise in Armenia were presented to the group, in the development of which the trainer was involved himself.

4. **Social entrepreneurship and Civic Education**: A group work based on Word Café method was conducted, during which participants understood and shared afterwards how social entrepreneurship and civic education sectors together can support developments in various levels: a. personal, b. community, c. country, d. global. A short input by the trainer followed.

5. **Idea generation**: The next sessions were dedicated to step-by-step going through the process of development of social entrepreneurial ideas:
   a. **Problem identification**: at first social issues were identified based on a model for Rapid Foresight.
   b. **Cause – effect chain** was analyzed by Fishbone method, during which participants were discussing why the chosen problems exist, and then on another level – why the causes of the main problem exist. At this point participants identified the main intervention level that they want to have effect on.
   c. **Ideation**: Several frameworks and criteria were presented to participants for development of ideas, and based on finalized framework participants developed SE ideas for solving the social issue chosen.
   d. **Business CANVAS model**: Participants went step-by-step through business model generation, where they identified their main customers, their main products and services, schemes for money generation, identified needed resources and costs related to them etc.
   e. **Pitching**: An input of conducting effective and successful pitching was presented, and based on the given framework participants prepared and made presentations of their work.

The experts had a study trip to Geghakunik region and the city of Sevan to get familiar with two social enterprises. "Bohem" that works in city of Sevan and "Mountain goods" that works in the village Vardenik of Gegharkunik region.

"Bohem" studio-cafe is a social enterprise. The main purpose of this studio-cafe is to create a platform for young creative people. In this space there is a nice cultural environment and it’s become one of the most beloved places for inhabitants and guests of Sevan. In Bohem one can find an atmosphere of art and freedom, harmony in mind and soul. 50+% of their profit is used for projects pertaining to cultural life in the city, such as Sevan Music Festival.
The second example of a successful case is the village Vardenik in Gegharkunik region where “Pulse of Community” Youth NGO came up with the idea to gather herbs and other organic foods from the mountains and introduce them to the bigger market. The SE “Mountain goods” provides jobs for more than 70 families in the village.

The experts also visit the ancient monastery of Sevanavank that was founded in 874 by lake Sevan.

One of the aims of the TC was to build an international network and enable participants to create concrete follow-up activities for further exploitation and dissemination of the project results, hence a specific attention was paid to this during the training and a separate session for follow-up activities.

In the proposal we didn’t put follow up actions but while working on agenda we understood that the knowledge, skills, tools, competencies provided during our training are so rich that we should include follow-up actions which will give the training the following opportunities:
- to disseminate the project result
- to provide visibility
- to multiply the effect
- to raise awareness about EENCE

Last day the experts with the trainer worked on follow-up actions, discussing the format, topic, target group, dates etc. All the materials such as presentations, videos, useful links etc were provided to experts. We are glad to state that all experts involved in training expressed interest and willingness to organize it. Moreover, some of them will do a few follow-ups with different audience.