







Harnessing diaspora expertise for women entrepreneurship in Armenia

ACTION BASICS

Beneficiary	 <p>The Armenian General Benevolent Union Europe (AGBU Europe) is a pan-European diaspora organisation devoted to upholding Armenian heritage through educational, cultural, social and humanitarian programmes. AGBU is present in 30 countries around the world, including in 14 EU Member States.</p>
Duration	17 months
Sustainable Development Goals	  

MAIN FEATURES

Context & needs	<p>In Armenia, women face multiple barriers to joining entrepreneurship programs, such as expectations to fulfil domestic roles at home, poor financial independence, and lack of capacity to successfully run a business. The barriers faced by Armenian women entrepreneurs have worsened following the six-week Nagorno-Karabakh war in 2020, ongoing political instability, the COVID-19 pandemic and economic crisis. These have led to drops in sales, strains in partnerships and cancellations of planned business projects.</p> <p>AGBU has been providing assistance to women entrepreneurs in Armenia through their Women Entrepreneurship (WE) Program since 2017 and has helped more than 150 women start up or scale up their businesses. However, several organisational challenges still remain, including limited access to knowledge, finance, sectoral expertise, markets and networks, as well as insufficient capacity for innovation. AGBU has requested assistance in addressing these gaps through the input of diaspora mentors, specifically young diaspora professionals with fresh entrepreneurial ideas. They have also requested support to develop their organisational capacity to manage these mentorship relations using the right knowledge, skills and tools for their staff.</p>
Objectives	<p>General objective</p> <p>The action aims to empower AGBU staff in Europe and Armenia with the knowledge, tools and capacities they need to implement efficient and sustainable diaspora mentorship programmes for local women entrepreneurs in Armenia.</p> <p>Specific objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equip AGBU with thematic training tools on how to access the EU market and spur the potential of women entrepreneurship in Armenia. • Improve the diaspora mentoring component of AGBU’s educational program for women entrepreneurs. • Enhance the mentorship and coaching capacities of AGBU in terms of business development and extend the reach of AGBU’s virtual program to include face-to-face sessions.



ACTION PLAN

EUDiF Areas of intervention

- Empowering diaspora organisations based in Europe
- Supporting partner countries in enabling diaspora engagement for development
- Fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships

Capacity development support

- Conduct of assessments, research and/or evaluations**
- **Background assessment of business and training needs** of women entrepreneurs enrolled in AGBU's WE Program
- Organisation of knowledge transfer events**
- **Facilitated workshop** to equip AGBU staff with knowledge and training tools on how to comply with EU rules for the export of products into European markets
 - **Training of trainers (ToT)** to equip AGBU with modern techniques to coach diaspora members in preparation for their role as mentors
 - **Mentorship sessions by diaspora experts** for women entrepreneurs to gain knowledge on accounting, business management, marketing, partnerships and networking, with a special focus on access to EU markets
- Development of strategic documents and/or training tools**
- **Drafting of a guidebook** as a new thematic training tool on how to export products from Armenia into European markets, to be integrated into AGBU's Armenian Virtual College platform
- Visibility and communication activities**
- Facilitation of networking and partnerships**
- **Peer exchange session and partnership building** for AGBU to gain insights from influential diaspora actors on how to run successful diaspora mentorship programmes

Outputs

- **Guidebook** about EU legislation and procedures for the export of products into the EU
- **Improvement of the diaspora mentorship component** of AGBU's WE Program
- **Deployment of diaspora experts to provide mentoring support** in business development for women entrepreneurs in Armenia
- **Thematic factsheet** to document lessons learned and preliminary results of the diaspora mentorship sessions, to be shared across the AGBU network in Armenia and in the diaspora

Expected results

- Increased knowledge among AGBU staff on the EU market and on rules for the export of products into the EU, allowing them to update the guidebook as needed
- Increased knowledge among AGBU staff about how to run diaspora mentorship programmes and how to train diaspora members to become effective mentors
- Improved mentorship relations between young experts from the Armenian diaspora and local women entrepreneurs, with support from AGBU staff
- Increased general awareness of the WE program, its mentorship component and support provided by EUDiF

Find out more at www.diasporaforddevelopment.eu

© 2021

Funded by the European Union



Implemented by ICMPD

