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ECOVISIO

Annual report on activity in 2016

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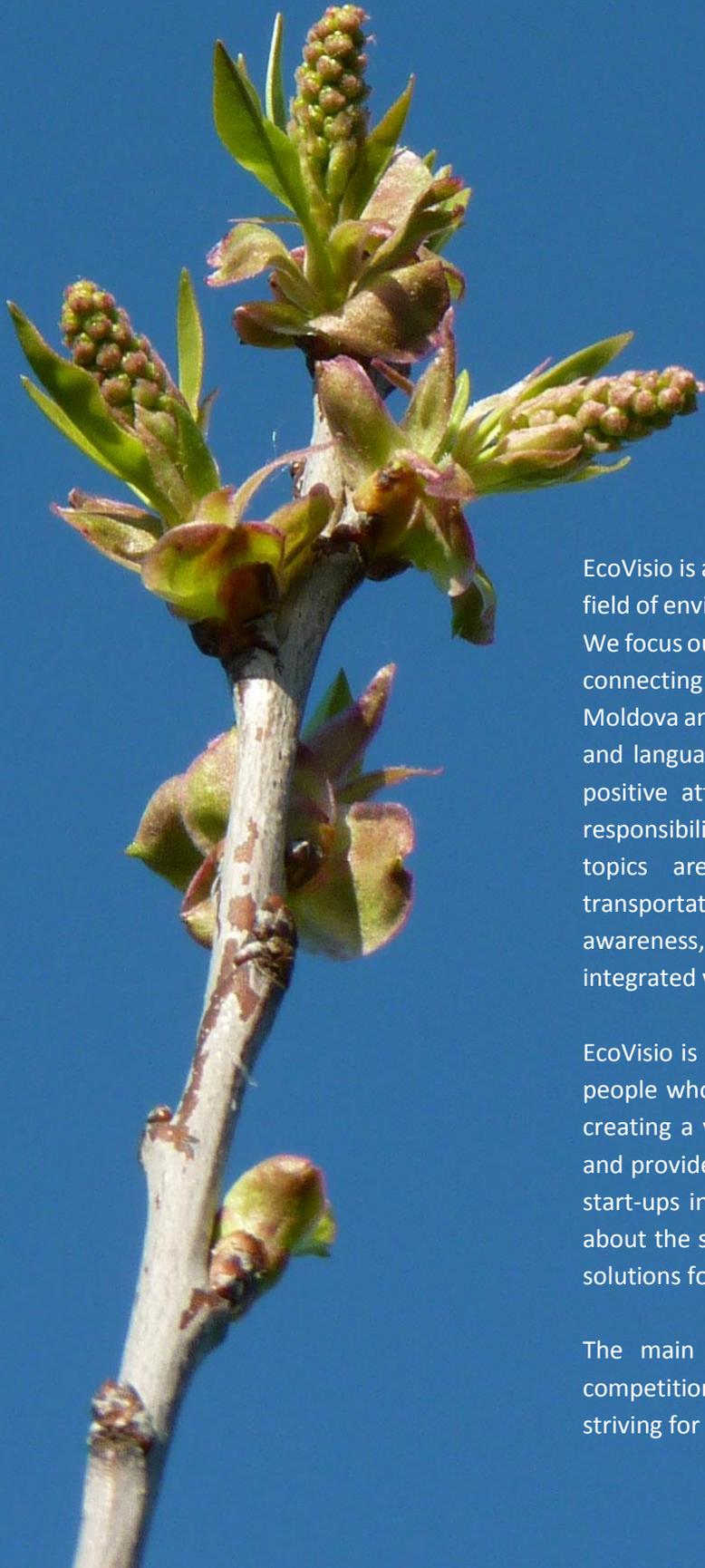
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Gabriela Isac, Sasha Nikitin, Inna Gordeeva, Alex Stacanov, Valeria Șvarț-Gröger, Liliana Botnaru, Agata Maziarz, Tamar Marianashvili

Introduction



Our Vision

EcoVisio is a youth led grassroots NGO from Moldova working in the field of environment, social entrepreneurship and civic engagement. We focus our work on empowerment through education, action, and connecting people. Our vision is the sustainable development of Moldova and the neighboring regions by uniting all the ethnic groups and languages present in a diverse and resilient society based on positive attitude, values of creative economic cooperation, and responsibility for natural resources as commons. Our main working topics are education, organic agriculture, eco-construction, transportation, energy efficiency, renewable energies, consumer awareness, urban/rural development and resource flows, including integrated waste management.

EcoVisio is implementing its mission by connecting more and more people who want to work on a common vision for the region and creating a vibrant community of change makers. We train people and provide them with instruments to implement small projects or start-ups in their neighborhoods or villages; we share information about the situation of our planet and work together on alternative solutions for making our world a better place to live.

The main principles of our work are cooperation instead of competition, transparency and trust, unity in diversity, quality and striving for excellence, simple life, and sustainability.

*The picture of our team you can find on page 29 of this report, however the team is so big and busy that there is no picture where all team members are present

Our Team

The interdisciplinary team of EcoVisio* combines experiences of civic involvement in democracy with environmental expertise, entrepreneurship, international development, and peace and conflict transformation based on diverse work and backgrounds in volunteering. Currently EcoVisio has 15 active staff members (almost all work part-time).

There are also several hundred volunteer helpers and supporters in the extended circle, who are extremely important to the overall success of our joint activities. Each year the EcoVisio team, as well as the number of members and partners of the association, is growing. We put a high emphasis on cooperation with other actors of sustainable development in Moldova and abroad.

Botnaru Liliana	- Board Member, "Eco-Village Moldova" Coordinator
Bujoreanu Victor	- activEco facilitator
Cazacov Veronica	- IarmarEco and Social Entrepreneurship (SE) Forum coordinator 2016, Torbesc team
Cebanu Mihail	- activEco facilitator
Gordeeva Inna	- activEco facilitator, IarmarEco 2016 team
Gröger Julian	- Financial auditing committee, activEco facilitator
Guzun Eugen	- Seed It Forward founder and coordinator
Isac Gabriela	- EcoVisio Board Secretary, Communication and PR coordinator, Seed It Forward coordinator, activEco team, activePeace team, Keep Cool team
Lozinskii Alexandru	- Eco-Village team, facilitator
Mamaliga Elizaveta	- Vice-president, activEco facilitator, activLocal ("Harap Alb") founder and coordinator
Nuca Iurie	- activEco alumni coordinator in 2016
Patel Bhavesh	- organizational development consultant and coach, facilitator
Pijevskii Maxim	- Executive director of EcoVisio, activEco coordinator, activePeace founder and coordinator, facilitator
Popova Maria	- activEco coordinator, facilitator
Stewart Meghan	- Harap Alb coordinator, facilitator
Șvarț-Gröger Valeria	- EcoVisio President, activEco coordinator, EcoVisio Trainers' Pool Coordinator, facilitator
Tarigradean Maria	- ClimateLaunchpad Moldova 2016 coordinator
Ungureanu Ion	- PR and design coordinator, activEco and activePeace team and facilitator, Keep Cool team
Vinari Petru	- Waste prevention and management

Summary of the main developments and changes in 2016

- One important feature of the development of the EcoVisio Association in the recent years, as well as its main characteristic for this period, was “Growth”. The Association has been growing constantly and organically in terms of the number of members, projects, partners, beneficiaries, areas of activity, and geographical dimensions (partners and beneficiaries from Ukraine, Romania, Germany, etc.). To deal with this growth, we marked the year 2016 as the year of “**Consolidation and permanent improvement**”. We have been specifically working on enhancement of all programs, projects and processes, as well as personal development within our team
- Expanding the **alumni network** and focusing more on offers for and from our alumni - our key instrument to bringing sustainable changes to the region
- The topic of **Social Entrepreneurship** in Moldova was brought to a new dimension and integrated deeper into the work of the Association
- **Social Entrepreneurship Forum** organized more professionally with increased number of participants and experts
- Launching of “**activePeace**” – a program for youth from all regions of Moldova, and especially Gagauzia and Transnistria, aimed to develop their capacities in dealing with conflicts
- Launching of “**Harap Alb**” / **ActivLocal** – the rural youth development program
- For the first time, the **International Annual Meeting of THK Coordinators** took place in Chisinau and the organization of the event was performed by EcoVisio Team
- First EcoVisio **Strategic Development Workshop**
- Formalization and Consolidation of the EcoVisio **Pool of Trainers**
- Undergoing first ever **External Evaluation** of the work of the EcoVisio Association and the activEco program by a professional evaluator
- Improved **structure, content and mentoring support** of activEco program
- Launching the construction of the **Environmental Training Center**
- Growth and **professional development** of the EcoVisio team: new positions within the association have appeared (Alumni coordinator, new IarmarEco Coordination team, PR coordinator)
- Growth of the main program implemented by EcoVisio - “activEco” (more projects implemented, expanded geographical coverage, more participants from Transnistrian region, participants from new Ukrainian regions, regional training for mentors, more alumni activities)
- **Expanded fundraising and network of partners**: continuation of successful cooperation with existing donors (MitOst Association, German Foreign Office, Theodor-Heuss-Kolleg), new **partnerships** established (Dialogue for Change), first experience with new private companies as sponsors, establishing new strategic partnerships with local and international organizations (the Embassy of Sweden)
- Undergoing first external **Structural and Financial Audit**
- Starting the process of consolidation and improvement of organizational structure of EcoVisio, approaching the other stage of organizational development
- Continuation of the initiatives launched by our **alumni** in previous years
- New partnerships in frames of **Erasmus+** program
- Increased level of **media coverage** of the EcoVisio activities (new video spots)
- The “**IarmarEco**” event was brought to a new level in terms of content, number of participants, topics covered, and professionalism of preparation – in 2016 for the first time the event lasted two days
- EcoVisio becomes more **family friendly** - this year for the first time families with children have participated in our seminars and first children have appeared in the team
- Many simultaneous activities – challenge and **increased synergy**

Educational Programs of EcoVisio in 2016

“activEco” program for Sustainable Development and Social Entrepreneurship

What is activEco?

Launched in 2013, the yearly educational program “**activEco**” is currently the largest project implemented by the EcoVisio Association. It consists of two program lines: **Sustainable Development** and **Social Entrepreneurship**. Its main aim is to empower creative and motivated young people to focus their energy on the transition of our society to sustainable living. Through facilitating an exchange between young people from the South, North and Center of Moldova, including Transnistria and Gagauzia, as well as neighboring regions of Ukraine and Romania, the program contributes to an ongoing constructive dialogue and democratic grassroots peacemaking, trying to work beyond current language and ethnicity controversy present in the region. This approach also makes tackling ecological issues more efficient and comprehensive.

The program involves young people from the whole region in a process of constant interactive learning, capacity building, practical implementation of the acquired skills, and multiplication of the impact in a broader society. To attain that, the “activEco” program includes a capacity-building curriculum, seed funding for volunteers’ micro projects or start-ups, and peer-to-peer mentoring for the participants. Overall, the “activEco” framework offers a secure platform for learning, sharing, and trying out innovations in the field of sustainable development and social entrepreneurship.



The major outcome is that at the end of each program year there is a group of skilled and inspired multipliers of sustainable development strategies, who are eager to engage in the growing network of changemakers in the region. As of December 2016 (after completion of its 4th edition), activEco has **116 graduates from Moldova, Romania and Ukraine**, who have implemented **63 civic projects** in the region and, in their turn, engaged thousands of people.

The program is implemented in collaboration with the German NGO “Active Commons” and Theodor-Heuss-Kolleg (a program of the Robert-Bosch-Stiftung and MitOst e.V., which provides training and support for international facilitators), and is further supported by the Ministry of Environment of Moldova. The main program funder is the Federal Foreign Office (Germany). Some components of the program are supported by other donors and partners.

More info can be found at: www.activeco-program.org

Summary of the 2016 program cycle

In 2016, the program consisted of three “**Impulse Seminars**”: two on the general topic of **Sustainable Development** (one in Russian and Romanian, and the second one in English, to better meet participants’ capacities and needs), and one focused on **Social Entrepreneurship** (in English), the second edition of the “**Social Entrepreneurship Forum**”, “**Regional Mentoring Seminar**”, “**Participants and Mentors Meeting Day**”, “**Project Proposal Writing Weekend**”, “**Project Management Seminar**” and the “**Harvesting seminar - Reflection and Future Opportunities**”. The year culminated with the traditional, large public networking event “**IarmarEco**” - the Fair of Ecological Opportunities and Social Entrepreneurship in Moldova.

During the period of 8 months, the program has involved over **65 participants** who took part in at least one seminar, and 41 young people went through the whole cycle, being trained and coached to implement their own dream idea, which should make a lasting change in their community.



Figure 1: a simplified structure of the activEco program

At the end of the program year, **24 participants’ projects were implemented** (mainly in groups of 2-3 people, but also individually), addressing **various directions of sustainable development**: energy and resource efficiency, conscious consumption, waste prevention, healthy lifestyle, street safety, responsible underground and rural tourism, afforestation and, especially, ecological education and community involvement with multiplying effect. The activities took place in different regions of Ukraine and Moldova, including Transnistria and Gagauzia. Only through direct involvement, the projects have **reached out to over 2,500 people** (participants and visitors of mini-projects and initiatives).

activEco guided self-evaluation

In 2015-2016 we launched, with support of external consultant, a **self-evaluation process** of the program. The first survey has shown that activEco program is very effective as a training program for well-educated youth, and provides them with relevant learning opportunities and support to foster their civic activism; that it has a strong impact on program participants, and that activEco alumni gain the confidence that they can effect change in society.

Similar conclusions can be traced while observing and analyzing the content and impact of the projects – an increase in community-engaging and multiplying initiatives, as well as an increase in alumni activities.



activEco participants' projects in 2016

In the framework of activEco 2016, the following projects and initiatives were launched by the participants:

Socio-Ecological Initiatives:

1. **"Ecological Future"** | Team: Ion Gheorghita, Andrei Grosu, Ana Bita, Maria Gheorghita - *Soroca & Glodeni districts, and commune Stauceni, Chisinau municipality, Moldova*
2. **"Revitalization of the cave "Surpriznaia"** | Team: Victoria Galbur, Natalia Dibolskaia, Dimian Rusnac - *Criuleni, Moldova*
3. **"iParc"** | Team: Stefan Cretu - *village Peresecina, Orhei distict, Moldova*
4. **"EcoShift"** | Team: Anna Ereshkova, Daria Bogdanova - *Bender, Transnistria*

5. **"Taking care about what's important"** | Team: Ohksana Garbuz, Maxim Nikolaev, Alexandra Markova - *Bender, Transnistria*
6. **"Green Community"** | Team: Maria Grigorita, Mihail Procopciuc, Sorina Cerneavschi, Vladimir Erhan, Valentina Zagnitco - *village Costesti, Ialoveni district, and village Chirileni, Ungheni district, Moldova*
7. **"Healing River"** | Team: Zaharii Dolomanji - *Tvarditsa, Taraclia district, Moldova*
8. **"EcoSurvive"** | Team: Eduard Kondrea, Alexandr Bezdetnii, Stepan Nikolaev - *Bender, Transnistria*
9. **"Eco Society"** | Team: Elena Arama - *Cimislia, Moldova*
10. **"MoB (Metamorphosis of Butterfly)"** | Team: Dumitrita Jitari - *village Falestii Noi, Falesti district, Moldova*
11. **"Reward Yourself"** | Team: Alina Creciun, Ana Grecu - *village Chiscareni, Singerei district, Moldova*
12. **"ECOlectare"** | Team: Adrian Nacu, Tatiana Bogaci, Valentina Zagnitco, Victoria Zama - *Chisinau, Moldova*
13. **"Mad Welders in Park"** | Team: Tatiana Kalugareanu, Liubovi Zhernovska, Katya Semes - *Jmerinka town, Vinnitsa province, Ukraine*
14. **"Sustainable Development Goals"** | Team: Svitlana Miroshnychenko, Max Kravchenko - *Mykolaiv, Ukraine*
15. **"Clean Spring"** | Team: Irina Popusoi, Artiom Cocerjenco - *village Chetrosu, Anenii Noi district, Moldova*
16. **"Solar Dryer"** | Team: Ivan Rabei, Liliana Botnaru - *village Riscova, Criuleni district, Moldova*
17. **"Social Video"** | Stanislav Barciuc - *village Zarojeni, Floresti district of Moldova*

Social Entrepreneurship Initiatives:

1. **"Live Green"** | Team: Afanasii Blidari, Dumitrita Vataman, Romeo Fagurel, Elena Blidari - *Causeni, Moldova*
2. **"UleiUș"** | Team: Mariana Seremet, Maxim Visileac - *vil. Cigirleni and vil. Razeni, Ialoveni district; village Riscova, Criuleni district, Moldova*
3. **"DOM art cluster"** | Team: Anna Vasina, Ecaterina Verbitskaya, Alexandra Petrash - *Chisinau, Moldova*
4. **"And I can do it!"** | Team: Veronika Shevchenko - *Chernivtsi, Ukraine*
5. **"Development of the civic society in Transnistria through trainings: An Introductory Lectures Module"** | Team: Dmitri Delukov & Olga Snegur - *Transnistria*
6. **"The Vacation Village: Inauguration of the Vacation Village"** | Team: Adriana Buciuscanu, Elena Sirghi - *village Vatici, Orhei district, Moldova*
7. **"YG Moldova - Tours, Assistance, Research. "Căruța" - Trips with fun and social impact"** | Team: Maria Axenti, Dmitrii Elnic, Tatiana Obuh, Ana Durlescu - *Moldova*
8. **"Guguță: Trainings about street safety with kids in schools"** | Team: Maria Mogildea, Eva Bunici, Liudmila Zgurean - *vil. Zubresti, Straseni district, and Orhei and Chisinau, Moldova*

Details about each project can be found at:

<http://www.activeco-program.org/en/participants/projects-in-2016/>

“activePeace” Program



The “activePeace” program, launched in 2016, is aimed to develop the capacities of young people in such areas as critical thinking, peace education, diversity, conflict resolution/transformation, communication and negotiation skills, emotional intelligence, civic activism.

The overall goal of the program is to increase the ability of young changemakers to deal with the conflicts which appear naturally (within their organizations, groups, communities, as well as on the level of structures, states and inner peace) and ultimately to transform such conflicts into collaboration.

“activePeace” was developed and launched by Maxim Pijevskii and the team. One of the ideas was to combine the new trends in peace education with methods of non-formal education and human-centered design approach, focusing on the needs of each particular community, group or individual. Besides, the program aims to create an atmosphere of mutual appreciation and cooperation for the citizens from different cultural backgrounds, languages, nationalities and thus contribute to the establishment of sustainable peace

Stages of the program:

- Training “Introduction and Defining”
- Homework Phase “Ideation”
- Training “Project development and Prototype Testing”
- Project Implementation Phase “Testing”
- Training “Implementation and Evaluation” and Networking meetings

In 2016, the program started in July and brought together 18 young people from different regions of Moldova, Transnistria and Gagauzia. They went through a series of seminars and meetings, discovering together new places (including Lalova, Riscova, Trebujeni, Vadul-lui-Voda, Chisinau), new perspectives, as well as understanding better each other and themselves. The program empowered them to elaborate and implement their own methods and approaches to work with conflicts and to provide “activePeace” in their organizations, communities and groups.



The first participants of the program realized many field visits in different locations in Moldova, Transnistria and Gagauzia, implementing projects in interregional teams. They have worked together with local and international trainers and have met several experts with valuable real-life experience in the topic of conflict transformation from Russia, Japan, United States, etc. As a result, the participants from different regions jointly initiated and implemented eight small projects. Moreover, they have learned more about the ways to work with the conflict and discovered more about the region they live and about themselves.

The program “activePeace” is implemented by the public association “EcoVisio” in partnership with MitOst e.V. (Berlin) and a friendly financial support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Germany and the Robert Bosch Foundation in the framework of the project “Dialogue for change”.

More info at: <https://www.facebook.com/activePeaceMoldova> or <http://ecovisio.org/activities/activepeace>

“activLocal” Program, or “Harap Alb”



Harap Alb, or activLocal, is a rural youth development program launched in 2016 by an activEco-2013 alumna, founder of social enterprise “Dulce Plai” and active member of activEco/EcoVisio team, Liza Mamaliga. Her goal was to reach rural teenagers, who have limited possibilities, and provide them with inspiration, knowledge and skills for making a difference in their local communities. While the structure of the program is similar to activEco, the participants’ age is different – 13-15 years old – and the focus goes to a single community. The title of the program alludes to a Moldovan folkloric personage, a prince, who had to overcome many challenges nameless, called by the nickname Harap Alb, in order

to regain his identity and become the hero he ought to be. This image should inspire youngsters to be confident and active, giving life to the changes they want to see around them and getting to learn more about surrounding world and themselves. That is why the motto of the program announces proudly: *“We are the heroes!”*

In 2016, the program debuted in village Todiresti, Ungheni district, and in village Riscova, Criuleni district, Moldova. As a result, 42 teenagers got the chance to learn what it means to elaborate and implement a project, and to feel themselves valuable in their communities, getting inspired and empowered for further advancement in the field of social and environmental activism. Overall, 9 community projects were implemented - among them, organization of a Sports Day at school, renovation of two sport fields, initiation of a Sport Club and a Book Club, and creating an edition of village newspaper. The quality and complexity of the projects was really impressive, especially considering how young the participants were.

The program will certainly continue in the next years, and now the Harap Alb team is actively looking for local coordinators able to support the program implementation in their communities.

More info at: <https://www.facebook.com/harapalb.moldova/> or <http://www.ecovisio.org/activities/harap-alb>



Promotion and development of Social Entrepreneurship

Working in the field of ecology since 1999, since 2013 the "EcoVisio" Association has been continuously and increasingly exploring the topic of **social entrepreneurship**, because we believe it is a **powerful approach for the current challenges** our region is facing.

We believe young people in our region have an enormous potential to accelerate the transition to sustainable development; however, many of them either do not see any future at home, or are faced with a conflict - either they contribute to improving the situation, or earn money. Here, social entrepreneurship comes to aid, enabling combination of those two purposes. This way, young people can develop projects or new businesses that tackle some concrete issues, and at the same time have the capacity to generate resources necessary for the continuity of their initiatives. Social entrepreneurship has a great potential to contribute to social-economic development of our region in a sustainable way, through youth self-employment and job creation, through developing products and services with a positive impact or orienting the profits towards social needs.



Thus, in our national and international activities we combine environmental approaches with entrepreneurial ones, working on bringing this topic to a new level through:

- *Facilitating the discourse and nurturing the network* - Social Entrepreneurship Forum, IarmarEco, International Social Entrepreneurship and Social Innovations Cluster Meeting, etc.
- *Developing capacity of young changemakers* - activEco program, ClimateLaunchpad Moldova and study visits - empowering young people to become social & ecologically-friendly entrepreneurs through helping them acquire necessary skills and tools to start their own enterprise
- *Making local heroes visible to public* - IarmarEco, the yearly Fair of Ecological Opportunities and Social Entrepreneurship
- *Developing the idea of an Impact Hub* - a common Centre for Social Entrepreneurship and Innovations in Moldova

More about it here: <http://ecovisio.org/topics/social-entrepreneurship-and-green-economy>

Social Entrepreneurship Forum



The **Social Entrepreneurship Forum** is a public event organized by EcoVisio since 2015, both as an element of the activEco - Social Entrepreneurship program and as a space for relevant actors to meet and interact. Thus, the goal of the Forum is to **enhance the cross-sectorial dialog and cooperation** between actors in this field and **make social entrepreneurship initiatives more visible** to the public.

In 2016, the Forum took place on May 28th and consisted of two parts. In the first part of the event, **Internal Feedback Session**, the participants of the activEco program, Social Entrepreneurship branch, presented their project ideas and received feedback from people with experience in various fields – social and simple entrepreneurs, social workers, and the Most Active International Volunteer in Moldova, *Steven Mantani* from Peace Corps.

In the second part, the official opening of the event took place followed by **panel discussions**. During the first panel, "**Active Moldova**", the participants spoke about the existing social initiatives of Moldova, about the difficulties they encounter and about what makes them continue. After a break for refreshments and networking, the second panel followed, the "**Opportunities for Business**". In its framework, the guests found out about the existing opportunities to transform a project into a business by obtaining grants, as well as by becoming member of an association that aim to ease the process of founding a small enterprise in Moldova.

The event was attended by around **100 people** active in the field of social entrepreneurship, social activists, students and other people who wanted to learn more about this area. Besides, the participants of the activEco - Sustainable Development branch and their future mentors also came to get acquainted with the community.

More about it here: <http://ecovisio.org/activities/social-entrepreneurship-forum>



“IarmarEco” – the Fair of Ecological Opportunities and Social Entrepreneurship

IarmarEco - the Fair of Ecological Opportunities and Social Entrepreneurship in Moldova - is a socio-cultural event that has been uniting EcoVisio and its many partners and supporters since 2013. Started as an exposition of activEco participants' initiatives, it grows larger and more significant each year, getting hundreds of its guests acknowledged with the **world of ecological opportunities & products, and social initiatives** that exist in our region. The mission now is to **build trust among NGOs, general public, entrepreneurs and state institutions**, the process that leads to emergence of new ideas leading to sustainable development of our country, and their implementation.



IarmarEco is also the space to introduce general public to our values – it is a **plastic-free event**, where no single-use plastic bags or glasses are allowed: both exhibitors and visitors are provided alternatives from fabric and paper. Same with beverages – no alcohol, - and food: no meat or fish, and as few artificial ingredients as possible.

In 2016, for the first time in its history, IarmarEco lasted 2 days instead of one: **October 15-16**, and provided vast space for theoretical and practical workshops, and fair of ecological & social products, services and initiatives. It was also about **networking** - IarmarEco actIV gathered together majority of the participants and alumni of different programs implemented by EcoVisio, and all the other interested people - friends, partners, participants of international Cluster on Social Entrepreneurship and Social Innovations, etc. The event was attended by over 600 people both days, and highlighted 75 initiatives, entrepreneurs and NGOs from Moldova, Ukraine and Romania.



And in the framework of all this, activEco-2016 teams presented the results of their almost half-a-year work to the general public, got certificates of program completion, and interacted with the larger community interested in and living environmental and social values that activEco is based on.



Each year IarmarEco is coming closer to its aim of becoming an educational event. In 2016, we have managed to hold the fair for 2 days, and the first day was devoted only for workshops and presentations of existing initiatives. With many guests from neighboring countries and local entrepreneurs, food court, children playground, practical workshops, moderated discussions and informative sessions, IarmarEco 2016 was really a unique combination of fair, distraction, networking and educational activities that made the atmosphere inspiring and participatory.



IarmarEco 2016



IarmarEco 2016

More info at www.iarmareco.md or <https://www.facebook.com/iarmareco/>

“ClimateLaunchpad Moldova” (CLP) program for green start-ups

Yet another specific activity in the area of social entrepreneurship is **ClimateLaunchpad Moldova** - national level of the world's largest cleantech business ideas competition ClimateLaunchpad, held in over 30 countries. The selected participants, along with their ideas, go through a 2-day Business Boot Camp and six personalized Coaching Sessions to get prepared for the National and the European Finals. Apart from getting valuable prizes, the Top-10 of the European Finals get accepted into the Climate-KIC Accelerator, the 18-month real-life business school where "great ideas grow into great businesses".

EcoVisio has brought ClimateLaunchpad to Moldova and has been organizing it for two years in a row - in 2015 and 2016. Despite have not yet taken any place at the European Finals, ClimateLaunchpad Moldova was a good opportunity for activEco alumni and participants, as well other motivated entrepreneurs and activists, to bring their ideas to another level. While this is surely a competition, albeit a learning one, our team is set on "infesting" it with the value of collaboration, and it really works - while the teams work hard on development of their ideas and winning, they are helping each other, contributing to further advancement of the world of social and ecological innovations in Moldova.

More info at: <http://ecovisio.org/activities/climatelaunchpad>



International Social Entrepreneurship and Social Innovations Cluster Meeting

Social Entrepreneurship is not an issue only for Moldova to work on. It is relevant for the whole region, where the connectedness and trust between people suffered a lot since the collapse of Soviet Union, and each country is somehow working on restoring the community feeling and impulse for positive change.

Thus, EcoVisio and its partner organizations from the THK/MitOst network decided to hold the first in-person meeting of the International Cluster on Social Entrepreneurship and Social Innovations (SE/SI). The meeting took place on October 14-19, bringing together 15 dedicated activists and multipliers from Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Germany, Moldova, Russia (Ulyanovsk and Northern Caucasus), Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The aim was to exchange and develop joint approaches for fostering the educational programs and general ecosystem of SE/SI in our regions - because we believe that combining approaches of civic education work with entrepreneurial methods gives social innovators a chance to make their initiatives more resilient and trustworthy.

The highlights of the event include a visit to IarmarEco 2016 actiV, meeting alumni of activEco - Social Entrepreneurship direction and learning about other practical examples of SE in Moldova; acquiring inspiration

for educational and ecosystem development work in the topic of SE and SI, diversifying the network and creating an explanatory video on what SE is.

The meeting was possible due to support of Theodor-Heuss-Kolleg / MitOst e.V., and the Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung.

More information could be found on EcoVisio page ([here](#)).



Field Visits and SE Initiatives

Field Visits: To enhance the learning experience of our educational programs, on September 9-10, 2016, 14 different alumni, participants, mentors and trainers went to Iasi for a study visit to our partner organization Mai Bine, to learn about their wonderful environmental initiatives and social enterprises: "CUIB" - urban center for good initiatives & social impact cafe; "Legumesti" - emerging greenhouse for organic seeds, built of cob; and "REDU" - fabric reuse and plastic reduction project.



SE initiatives

Finally, we would like to present you some projects and initiatives that were born in our community in 2015/2016, and are evolving even as this text is being written. These are the initiatives born out of our alumni's skills and passions, and it is enticing to observe how they grow and engage – or inspire! - other alumni as well.



As mentioned above, activEco has 116 graduates from Moldova, Romania, and Ukraine who have implemented 63 civic projects in the region and, in their turn, engaged thousands of people. 13 of those projects have been in the area of Social Entrepreneurship, and most of them have grown into real initiatives, NGOs or enterprises. Just a few names: "**Torbesc**", "**Atelier 99 / FabLab Moldova**", "**Bunasol**", "**UleiUş**" ("Grădina Moldovei"), "**Căruța**" ("YG Moldova"), "**Guguță**", "**DOM art cluster**", etc.

Those initiatives are working on providing an alternative to plastic bags; reusing tools and materials and creating a community of Makers; producing organic fertilizers to save our soils; establishing a connection between small farmers and urban consumers; bringing foreign tourists to rural communities in Moldova; offering an innovative solution to the street safety issue; and creating a space where creative and socially active people could meet, discuss their ideas, hold various events, relax and enjoy themselves.

Projects and Initiatives of EcoVisio

“Eco-Village Moldova” and the “Environmental Training Center”



Eco-Village Moldova, our partner initiative, is a diverse group of people who strive for a more sustainable lifestyle and are committed to building an organically evolving eco-community in the village of Riscova, Moldova. Currently, after several years of work, the Eco-Village site contains two buildings (one for workshops and one residential), a community bread oven, a bike shed built from upcycled pallets, a plastic recycling station, a compost bin and an organic garden. First two pioneer families have been living there for more than a year now, successfully testing the practical side of the eco-construction techniques and rural life.

Since the beginning, the Eco-Village Moldova site has served as a base for various **practical learning / team-building activities** – numerous workshops on eco-building, organic gardening, vegetarian cooking, renewable energies, etc. Through contributing to the building process, the participants could learn about the particularities of reed and straw-bale construction methods, natural plastering and lime coloring techniques, as well as building from upcycled materials. Working in the garden, they were also learning more about growing seedlings, compatible plant associations, mulching, natural pest control, seed collection and storage, fostering biodiversity and savoring fresh vegetables.

In 2015-2016, the Eco-Village team launched the construction of an **Environmental Training Center**, which will serve as a regional hub for practical education in the fields of organic agriculture, energy efficiency, eco-construction and community development. The smaller workshop space is ready for use. In 2017, another larger building for events hosting up to 50 people will be finished. It is going to become home to the program “activEco - sustainability in action”, developed in cooperation with Theodor-Heuss-Kolleg; but it will also serve - and already does - as a venue for environmental education and civic engagement seminars and workshops for the local and international community.



The place is already becoming popular. In 2016, for the first time, Eco-Village Moldova hosted an activEco seminar (May 2016), part of the Fifth Yearly THK Coordinators meeting (June 2016), EcoVisio Strategic Workshop (August 2016), final seminar of Erasmus+ course “Actors of Transition” (September 2016) and, finally, the International Social Entrepreneurship and Social Innovations Cluster Meeting (October 2016). Most of the participants agreed that it is a perfect place to learn and work on sustainability issues.



Last, but not least, Eco-Village and its founders continue to deepen collaboration with local community. Throughout the whole year tens of locals have a chance to earn some income without leaving the village through construction jobs, catering, hosting visitors, transportation and other services. In 2016, village Riscova was one of the two villages in Moldova where the “activLocal” program (“Harap Alb”) was piloted, providing rural teenagers with skills and motivation for civic engagement and community development. Moreover, in November 2016, in collaboration with “Seed It Forward” initiative and “MEGA” Association, the process of greening the village was initiated, with hundreds of trees planted in Riscova and around it.

More info can be found at: www.ecovisio.org/training-center and www.eco-village.md

“Seed it Forward” initiative

Seed It Forward is an **agroforestry initiative** founded in 2015, led by an activEco-2014 alumna and a ClimateLaunchpad Moldova 2015 alumnus. The goal of the initiative is to **“grow trees and people for a greener Moldova”**. They do it with persistence, day by day, by planting and growing trees and other plants in different regions of the country, and sharing their passion and skills with other people, especially those ones who have never planted a tree in their life.

Seed It Forward **long-term projects** include: restoration of a former landfill, planting orchards and protective belts along rivers, an Open Tree Nursery and the Solar Food Dehydrator.

The most recent development is the **Carbon Footprint Offset** project - raising awareness about our personal ecological footprint, offering precious tips on how to reduce the emissions, and showing the right path towards considering yourself eco-neutral at least.

Since autumn 2015, **more than 600 people have been directly involved**, including alumni, participants and applicants of various programs implemented by EcoVisio. It would also not be possible without fruitful cooperation with local communities, especially youth, local authorities, local and international companies, organizations, volunteers and initiatives.

More info at seeditforward.org or <https://www.facebook.com/seeditforward/>



“Torbesc” initiative

Since end of 2015, EcoVisio is honored to include “**Torbesc**” initiative - a former activEco-2015 Social Entrepreneurship project that has had a goal of **upcycling old clothes by transforming them into various ecobags, providing thus an alternative to plastic ones**. Thus, Torbesc initiative was following up with “EcoBag Moldova” project, implemented by EcoVisio in 2014-2015. The goal of this project was to reduce the amount of plastic bags used, to raise awareness on ecological issues among young people, and to promote responsible consumption and active citizenship in Moldova - through round tables for various stakeholders, seminars for youth, practical workshops and a public campaign. As the main EcoVisio team is becoming busier, Torbesc is now its representative in terms of promoting rational waste management in this and other areas as well.

Now, a year and a half later, the team has sewn **over 1,000 ecobags and backpacks** – both from old clothes and new fabric - for EcoVisio activities (e.g. IarmarEco, ClimateLaunchpad Moldova, Harap Alb), other events (campaign “Căstigăm când Reciclăm”, national conferences, etc.) and various expositions. They also provide educational sessions and practical workshops about the plastic problem and the alternatives that everyone could use at fairs, but also at schools and in summer camps. Finally, they have been involving other alumni as well - one of activEco-2015 alumnae is now decorating simple ecobags with astonishing paintings, as a part-time job.



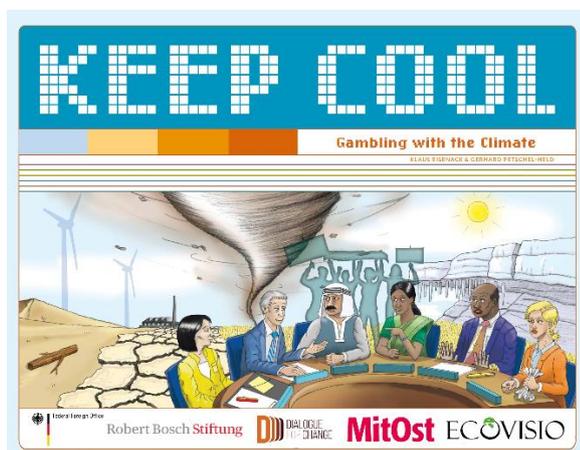
More info can be found here: <http://ecovisio.org/activities/torbesc> or <https://www.facebook.com/torbesc/>

“Keep Cool” Together

Our love towards the climate negotiations game “**Keep Cool**” has not ceased since 2014, when it was first introduced into the community by one of the facilitators. In winter-spring 2016, with permission from the game authors, the international team of activEco alumni and EcoVisio members had improved and translated the game into Russian, Romanian and Ukrainian, in order to make it accessible for the people of Moldova and Ukraine who do not know English or German; published 40 copies of new versions and has been teaching more and more multipliers to use it as a method of non-formal education. Topics like geopolitics, climate change, conflict management and economics are all included!

Currently, a new edition of the game is being printed in the framework of project “Dialogue for Change” - 40 more games in Russian-English version for our partner non-formal education programs in other countries.

More information here: <http://ecovisio.org/activities/keep-cool>



Other Projects, Activities, Initiatives of 2016

Following its mission **to connect and empower people and initiatives** that want to work on a common vision for sustainable development of the region, the EcoVisio Association supports different projects in the Republic of Moldova and beyond its borders. Some of those projects were initiated by EcoVisio and its programs, and have grown organically from our participants' ideas or were developed in cooperation with other partners. Moreover, we try to keep the network of our alumni, participants, and members active, offering opportunities that would fit different interests and inspire them to stay active and take on increasingly more complex responsibilities. That is how the network of EcoVisio members, partners, and supporters is growing year by year. Year by year, the number and quality of the things we can do together increases substantially as well.

We are proud to say that our alumni and EcoVisio members are also actively getting involved in organization of other projects, events and campaigns:

First international activEco alumni meeting - "Active and Sporty"

On July 10-11, 2016, there was the first ever activEco international alumni meeting in the four years of program existence, gathering 20 young people from Moldova and Ukraine, activEco alumni from 2013, 2014 and 2015. As the topic of the meeting was "Active and Sporty", they first had some fun doing sports, like playing volleyball, and throwing an American football and Frisbee around. However, the meeting was also dedicated to sharing and getting to know each other, and finding new methods of work inside the alumni network in order to keep it strong and proactive. Last, but not least, there was some productive time of sharing experience with the participants of the activEco 2016 Project Management Seminar, which still had some months and things to do before becoming alumni themselves.

You can find out more about it at activEco page [here](#).



activEco & FLEX alumni project “Sustainable Development – Big Vision, Small Steps”

In February-April 2016 our team got involved into the project "**Sustainable Development - Big Vision, Small Steps**", implemented in collaboration between activEco and FLEX alumni, with support from initiative “Seed It Forward, partner NGOs “Academia Nicolae Dumitrescu” and “MEGA”, and social enterprise “Dulce Plai”. The project included:

- The “Renewable Energy Day” (March 5, 2016) – an open event with discussions on renewable energies in Moldova and beyond, watching a thematic movie and playing two board games – “Keep Cool” and “Energy Network”.
- Tree planting events with volunteers – planting a hazelnut orchard (March 12, 2016) and a river protection belt (April 8-9, 2016), for the benefits of communities and biodiversity.
- A series of movie nights



Movie night: "The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces"

The movie nights are not limited only to certain project – it is a constant initiative of activEco alumni that activates in times when there are fewer other social activities, and has a goal of raising awareness of general public about all types of social, cultural and environmental issues through screening documentaries and discussing them. An example is below:

On July 27, 2016, activEco alumni, with support of Association Oberliht, held yet another documentary movie night - at Flat Space, "*The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*" by William H. Whyte. Filmed in New York and finalized in 1979, the movie is still relevant for many cities, including Chisinau. Being part of one of the most renowned researches in the domain of urbanism, the film attracts the attention of its viewers to the interaction between human nature and built environment, and gives ideas of how city planners and designers can encourage and allow the creation of spaces people will actually want to use.



In order to make the film (originally in English) accessible for the general public, the organizers of the event took upon themselves translation of the film and creation of Romanian subtitles.

Campaign “Câștigăm când reciclăm”

In between March - May 2016, with help of the Peace Corps Moldova volunteers and with support of the “Caroma Nord” Association, the Resource Center for Environmental Education “Green School” and the “EcoVisio” Association, in Balti, the first edition of the “*Câștigăm când reciclăm*” competition took place. In the framework of this project, pupils became the protagonists of the recycling idea, and the teachers of the communities on the topic of waste management. This process demonstrated to the pupils themselves, as well as to their parents, teachers and the whole communities that used paper and plastic can be transformed from waste to valuable recyclable materials.



In October 2016, the second edition of the campaign was launched, first in town Riscani, and then, after the national competition "Eco-Hackaton", the team wants to develop it at national level. The aim of this project is to transform the collected waste into money that will be used for the needs of the pupils (books, computers, reparations in classrooms, excursions).

The waste management topic continued throughout the year, marked by participation in the School of Sustainability (August 2016) and involvement of some of our alumni into the organizational team of **Hai Moldova**, national movement for cleaning the country of trash. Together with other colleagues, they have been raising awareness about this issue, and made it possible that on September 24, 2016, 3.500 people have gathered more than 8.000 sacks of garbage in parks and other public zones of Chisinau municipality.

Festivals, Conferences, Meetings and Youth Exchanges

In 2016, the alumni of activEco program took part in many different conferences, festivals, exhibitions, trainings, and meetings related to civic activism, sustainable development, social entrepreneurship or environmental protection – both as participants and as organizers.

For example, Gabriela Isac was invited as an expert for sharing the experience of being a crazy environmental activist at EcoVisio with young participants of «Sources of Tolerance» International summer camp, organized by the Center of Non-formal Education "Diversitate" (village Leordoia, July 2016).



In 2016, EcoVisio has fruitfully enhanced its cooperation with the Erasmus+ program: the number of E+ projects where EcoVisio was a partner organization or where our participants took part has also increased - study visits and seminars on sustainable development, conscious consumption, project development, community engagement, organic gardening, cultural diversity, etc. Some examples:

- Second stage of the "FoodCHALLENGE" project (Romania)
- "Project Development for Social Transformation" (Georgia)
- TC "Ecolab 4 Sustainable Development" (Armenia)
- "Actors of Transition" (Germany, Poland and Moldova)
- "Grow Roots In The Countryside" (Spain)



The Fifth THK coordinators' meeting in Moldova

On June 22-26, EcoVisio had the great honor of hosting the **Fifth Annual Meeting of coordinators from the non-formal education programs of the Theodor-Heuss-Kolleg network**. The largest gathering ever - 70 people from 29 countries, from Berlin to Krasnoyarsk and from St. Petersburg to Cairo, marvelous exchange of practices, stories, ideas and inspiration - all under the topic of Sustainability!



And though the organizational team of the meeting was strong, the event still wouldn't be possible without the active involvement of our alumni, coming from Chisinau and regions in order to take part in the meeting as coordinators, but also to support the organization of the City Rally, EcoVisio visit, etc. and making the foreigners' stay in Moldova as enjoyable as possible. If we go on like this, it might be possible to host the grand MitOst festival here in Chisinau in a few years!

MitOst Festival, 14th edition

Each year, MitOst community - alumni of different educational programs and events held in the framework of this network, gather at the **yearly MitOst Festival**. In 2016, it took place in Tbilisi during October 5-9, 2016, providing its guests – including our alumni – with an exquisite chance to visit autumn Georgia...and, of course, participate in further trainings and networking opportunities with fellow activists from 40 different countries across Eastern and South Eastern Europe, Northern Africa, Caucasus and Central Asia countries. EcoVisio was represented at the festival by several members and program coordinators.



Team and organizational development

Each year, EcoVisio team is evolving. Naturally, there are some people dropping out due to limited time availability or other issues, but there always is a core team of people working on the program. In 2016, it was complemented by 3 new facilitators (former 2014 and 2015 alumni), a new alumni coordinator (activEco 2015 alumnus), a kitchen facilitator (activEco 2015 alumna), etc. In 2016, the EcoVisio team was also supported by one Peace Corps and one independent volunteer from Germany. The coordinators of our programs are also benefiting from the participation in various trainings and events, improving their skills and getting valuable international experience. Mentoring possibility is open to more people; future mentors are usually provided a coaching/mentoring training, learning materials, books and presentations. This way, we strive to ensure the continuity of capacity building for the totality of involved actors, not just the participants of our activities, but for the programs and for their teams (as groups and individuals) as well.

Opportunities:

- **capacity-building for facilitators** (Theodor-Heuss-Kolleg educational program for facilitators; the alumni of this program can facilitate trainings not only in EcoVisio programs, but in any of the THK non-formal education partner programs);
- **capacity-building for mentors** (e.g. Regional Mentoring training in Khata-Maysternya, April 2016, and Regional Mentoring training in Chisinau, May 2016);
- **capacity-building for program coordinators** (e.g. Organizational Development and SMART PR training in Binz, June 2016);
- **taking an organizational position within EcoVisio** (alumni or PR coordinator, kitchen facilitator, etc.)
- **trying yourself in event organization** - Social Entrepreneurship Forum, IarmarEco, etc.
- **internships within partner programs and organizations** (MitOst Office in Berlin, etc.)
- participating in international youth exchanges and **training courses** organized in partnership with EcoVisio



Current **EcoVisio team**, as well as association's **support circles**, **are largely composed of our alumni** (there only a few people who have not gone through some or other program). Thus, the alumni can influence the development of organization and its activities, improve the aspects that they feel have to be improved, and enhance the ones that they have appreciated during their time as participants and after that.



The **activEco program** is EcoVisio's core activity. Formally, independent projects such as the IarmarEco or the Social Entrepreneurship Forum are organizationally interwoven with the activEco program. Other initiatives under the wing of EcoVisio include offshoots such as "Seed It Forward" and "Torbesc". These projects continue ideas and activities developed in programs implemented by EcoVisio, and are operated by their alumni. The other two educational programs of the organization, Harap Alb and activePeace (launched in 2016), have been inspired by activEco.

Strategic Organizational Development

As the years go by and the team grows, it was decided to hold a special **Strategic Development Workshop**, which would allow us to concentrate on strategic and qualitative aspects of our work, as well as reconnect among each other on personal level, without stress of everyday tasks. These were two and a half days of very intense work, but, unexpectedly, it was also a great chance to relax, realize what brought us together and think about where we would like to be, together with EcoVisio, and planning the strategy for the next 3-5 years.



The Workshop took place on August 16-18, in Eco-Village, and included:

- Teambuilding exercises for the whole team
- Analysis of the current situation: what is working well, which areas and procedures should be improved
- Review and reformulation of the Vision, Mission and Identity of EcoVisio
- Revision of internal roles and setting up a more clear team structure
- Formulating EcoVisio Strategy 2020 including general tendencies for the programs
- Creating an Operational plan for one year
- Filming material for video business card of EcoVisio
- Sharing the updates from each project and program



Consolidation of organizational structures

In 2016, the Embassy of Sweden selected EcoVisio as one of five organizations of Moldovan Civil Society for a comprehensive process of organizational development support. It commissioned an External Audit to a consulting company Swedish Development Partners. The goal of this audit was to dive deeply in internal organizational processes and structures and elaborate a list of suggestions, which the Association can implement in order to raise its level of professionalism, become stronger and more resilient and attain larger impact. The **Swedish Embassy is supporting EcoVisio** on this path with consultancy, trainings and funds.

EcoVisio Pool of Trainers

One of the results of the Workshop was that we finally decided it is crucial to take some time not only for planning, but also for internal capacity-building. Thus, on November 24, the EcoVisio facilitators pool meeting took place, dedicated to consolidation of trainers' community (mostly composed of activEco alumni), discussions and decisions. It was open for all the facilitators, including the new ones, and the potential ones as well.



The facilitators pool of EcoVisio was formally established. At the end of 2016, it consists of 15 facilitators. The main aim of consolidating the Facilitators Pool is the permanent improvement of quality standards of trainers, mutual support, efficient communication and logistics, sharing of new methods and approaches.

The pool meeting was followed by the first, and highly anticipated Training of Trainers on "**Visual facilitation of seminars and scribing**" (November 25-27), held in the frames of multipliers' program of Dialogue for Change. The training, conducted by Maxim Pijevskii and Julia Knyupa, gathered the trainers from the EcoVisio facilitators pool and their fellow colleagues - facilitators from Ukraine, Belarus and Russia. The training offered the possibility to develop capacities of regional facilitators in using visual methods, drawings, colors as well as graphic recording, visual notes and scribing in their work.



Plans for development in 2017



One important feature of the development of the EcoVisio Association in the recent years, as well as its main characteristic for this period, was “Growth”. The Association has been growing constantly and organically in terms of the number of members, projects, partners, beneficiaries, areas of activity, and geographical dimensions (partners and beneficiaries from Ukraine, Romania, Germany, etc.). To deal with this growth in 2016 we launched the process of “Consolidation and permanent improvement”. We have been specifically working on enhancement of all elements of the organization and on personal development within our team.

We will continue that path of consolidation and improvement in 2017. EcoVisio will undergo a significant quality development and restructuring process along the improvement suggestions of the external audit. It will be a great jump in further maturation of internal processes and structures.

In addition, we will expand the learnings from activEco to new programs and will focus more on offers for and from our alumni. They are from our point of view key actors for bringing sustainable changes to the region on the long run.

The growth will continue as well. There are several initiatives that will expand the association in multiple dimensions, and some ideas that are still in the process of elaboration, but will be implemented in the near future.

activEco

After 4 years of implementation, we are able to go deeper into the activEco program structure and content, thinking of some small, but crucial modifications.

More interaction between participants and alumni – possibly, **alumni expert visits** and **Challenge Workshops** on different topics (transport, politics, trees) for participants and alumni. This would help consolidate the community and inspire appearance and implementation of more alumni projects. We would also like to update the process of participants' acquisition, organizing a **selection workshop** 3-4 weeks before the impulse seminars, inviting both applicants and alumni.

A special situation has raised regarding the **Social Entrepreneurship** branch of the program. For the last two years, it was implemented in parallel with Sustainable Development direction, resulting in a lot of synergy and mutual benefit for participants from both groups. At the same time, we have been realizing that the development of Social Entrepreneurship aspect is also requiring a separate approach. Thus, in 2017 we are going to try to separate it from SD direction, and maybe even from activEco. This way, it will be possible to make it more advanced, and with a prolonged project implementation period. Besides, we plan more practical study visits, especially at the beginning of the program. As a result, in 2017, we will probably have a **continuation of activEco – Sustainable Development program**, with a module on social entrepreneurship and even more focus on project quality, and a **separate program on Social Entrepreneurship**.

Harap Alb / ActivLocal

The Harap Alb program, working with teenagers from the regions and piloted in 2016, is going to continue in 2017, and the team is already starting to vision how the program will grow in 2018. We are hoping to increase the reach of the program by holding 2 sets of seminars so that we would have 60 participants from 6 villages. We would also like to increase the length of the program from 5 months to 10 months: adding several workshop days for hard skills such as working google drive, using email, and professional networking skills. Last, we would like to invest in alumni network, supporting alumni projects, including alumni in program coordination, facilitation, and mentoring, and including national Harap Alb alumni networking weekends.

activePeace

In 2017, activePeace is going to attract more participants and partners and will expand to other communities, villages and towns in all regions of Moldova and especially Gagauzia and Transnistria. The alumni of the first year will continue working with the program, will become mentors for the new projects, and will launch their own initiatives. activePeace will keep on working with the topics of conflict transformation, critical thinking and communication, and will be focused even more on inner peace and mutual understanding.

Social Entrepreneurship

In 2016, the topic of Social Entrepreneurship has become even more pronounced and more consistently manifested in our activities. The Social Entrepreneurship Forum II held at the end of May served to bring this topic to a new level, attract the attention of a larger audience, and raise the interest and involvement of participants in Social Entrepreneurship. The Forum was followed by activEco – Social Entrepreneurship program, prompting development of a number of social initiatives, ClimateLaunchpad green start-up competition, and "IarmarEco 2016 actIV". The experience was enriched by study visits to social enterprises in neighboring countries, and the meeting of the International Cluster on Social Entrepreneurship and Social Innovations, held in Moldova.

In 2017, we will continue working to contribute to the development of the Social Entrepreneurship Sector in Moldova, because we believe it is a powerful approach for the current challenges our country is facing. We will continue this by: Facilitating the discourse and nurturing the network; Developing capacity of young change makers; Making local heroes visible to public; Developing the idea of a common Centre for Social Entrepreneurship and Innovations in Moldova. As already mentioned above, we are also planning to take a new approach to activEco – Social Entrepreneurship program, and, of course, holding more study visits, if we will find financial support for it.

Within the framework of SE/SI International Cluster, it is planned to create more information materials on the topic of SE in our region, including a possible joint publication of methods of Youth Education and Empowerment based on SE approaches.

ClimateLaunchpad (CLP) Program in Moldova 2017

EcoVisio wants to continue making a contribution to the green economy of Moldova. Therefore, in 2017 we plan to continue looking for promising ecological start-up ideas from Moldova and helping them develop. Currently the main challenge is to find stronger local partners for the program and prepare Moldovan candidates to do their best at this “Eurovision” for green start-ups.

Opening of the Environmental Training Center

In November 2017, it is planned to finalize the construction of the Environmental Training Center on the Eco-Village Moldova site in village Riscova, started in 2016.

The Center will serve as a demonstration and resource platform for sustainable development, allowing change-makers from Moldova and abroad to exchange innovative ideas and learn about permaculture, natural building, water management, climate change, social entrepreneurship, civic engagement, etc. Over the past years, our small trainings have already sparked up initiatives throughout Moldova, like urban gardens, eco-houses and youth-driven community projects. The Center will expand our capacity & impact, enabling seminars and workshops with up to 50 people. It is going to become home to the program “activEco - sustainability in action”; and it will also serve - and already does - as a venue for environmental education and civic engagement seminars and workshops for the local and international community.

Seed It Forward

Seed It Forward, naturally, plans to continue all of its long-term growing projects, especially the Open Tree Nursery, in order to really grow trees, not just transplant them from somewhere, and offer others the possibility to observe the life of trees from the very beginning. This is also going to be connected to increased focus on practical education – deepening interaction with local communities and, possibly, developing a particular program for “Seed It Forward” multipliers, in order to expand the initiative to more parts of Moldova.

In parallel, we are planning to promote the **Carbon Footprint Offset** project - raising awareness about our personal ecological footprint, offering precious tips on how to reduce the emissions, and showing the right path towards considering yourself eco-neutral at least.

EcoVisio in Schools and Universes

One of our most ambitious dreams is to bring non-formal education closer to school/university curriculums, and involve more students and schoolchildren in activEco program. However, instead of inviting them to our seminars (meaning they sometimes need to miss classes and even exams in order to do so), we aim to bring the program directly to them and try to incorporate it into the university curriculum as an elective module, making sure that the strong side of non-formal education and methods of empowerment for civic engagement are not lost. In this concern, we are still working on two ideas: “activEco - University” and “activEco-School”.

Platform for promotion of responsible consumption and ecological opportunities

For several years, we have been developing an idea of providing the benefits of IarmarEco not only in frames of exhibition but also on-line by means of a common platform for sustainable development opportunities. In 2016, we have made the first steps for creating such platform where all initiatives, projects, products and knowledge in the field of sustainable development and social entrepreneurship will be available for users. Such platform should bring together all interested stakeholders, activists, businesses, state agencies, producers and consumers and serve as an online fare for promoting and supporting local sustainable initiatives. Thus, the pilot version of the platform was created (makeitmatter.ecovisio.org) and in 2017, we will continue developing it and attracting more supporters and partners to make the on-line version of the platform finally real and accessible.

Networking and cooperation with state structures and private initiatives

To contribute to the development of good governance and the promotion of the principle of cooperation, in 2017 the EcoVisio Association will try to focus more on building common ground for cooperation and constructive dialogue between civil society activists, the private sector, and state structures.

Strategic Partners, Supporters, Donors

We would like to kindly thank the partners who made all our joint achievements possible. The Republic of Moldova is on a risky trajectory of coping with numerous political, economic and social crises. We believe that through empowerment, constructive dialog, mutual support and establishing of viable best-practice examples, which we develop together with you, we can make a contribution to more prosperous future of Moldova and the whole region.

