



WECF



Project

WECF and local partners are organizing workshops in the mentioned countries aiming to show cooperatives as successful and sustainable business models. This includes exchange of knowledge and experience with international experts. Energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies are made accessible for a broad public through information events and citizen participation, thus this project supports the NAMA. Furthermore, current energy supply and possibilities for renewable energy projects are analyzed. In Georgia, WECF is supporting energy cooperatives since 2015.

Initial situation

People in rural areas of these countries suffer from energy poverty. They depend on firewood to heat up water as well as for cooking and heating. They spend approximately 30% of their income for heat and electricity. Social and cooperative structures are fragile and embossed by profound distrust towards authorities. People have little experience with setting up and managing organizations, that are economically successful and at the same time democratic. Structures and project opportunities for citizen participation and political involvement are missing.

Energy cooperatives in the countries of eastern partnership

Establishment and support of energy cooperatives in rural areas of Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine to advance the energy transition in a democratic way in the frame of a gender sensitive Nationally Appropriate Mitigation action (NAMA). Objective is the strengthening of cooperative structures, regional value added and personal responsibility.

Women Engage for a Common Future, August 2016

Objectives of the project

The democratic and sustainable cooperative model is set up to make renewable energy in high quality and quantity accessible. Therefore, especially young people and women receive trainings on technologies and management. Concrete targets are:

- Increase share of renewable and affordable energy
- labor burden (mostly women) decreases
- dependence from imported fossil energy decreases
- cooperation between members and trust in democratic structures are strengthened
- cooperatives as opportunity to get involved: as employer or partner
- market development is promoted.

Measures

- market survey about renewable energy opportunities
- workshop to establish cooperatives
- trainings on technologies, management and marketing
- creation of a manual to increase professionalism
- regular exchange with international experts as well as lobbying and PR work
- construction of a production unit for solar collectors in Georgia.

Business model

Energy cooperatives bundle economic and technical know-how about energy technologies (e.g. solar collectors). Furthermore, purchase of materials is organized together and cost efficiently. Citizens participate and are regularly informed. Members of cooperatives are advised on their individual energy

consumption free of charge. Construction and installation of facilities are conducted by qualified and experienced technicians. Solar collectors amortize after about three years. Due to energy poverty, the interest in affordable alternative energy is very high.

What has been achieved until now?

- 2015/2016 founding of four energy cooperatives in Georgia
- So far more than 120 members, of which 40% are women
- Consultation, selling and installation of about 50 solar collectors
- Trainings about technologies, management and marketing
- Special trainings for women about leadership and organization
- Financing model for members
- Lobbying for national energy plan
- Increased demand for collectors

About WECF

WECF is an international network of more than 150 women, environmental and health organizations, which performs projects in over 50 countries in the fields of energy, climate, health, water and gender. With political work, recommendations are introduced into negotiation processes on national, European, UN- and international level and particularly the perspective of women is mediated.

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