

## **Annex X**

### **Description of the completed and ongoing subgrants**

#### **Project title: ConNect, Implemented by Surgery Club Initiative (Yerevan State Medical University)**

The project aims to enhance both the theoretical knowledge and practical skills of students at the Yerevan State Medical University (YSMU), as well as to encourage their active engagement in student life. The project also contributes to student participation in academic and clinical medical communities. By supporting this small project, the Action envisaged the *Surgery Club* initiative to serve an example within the YSMU and beyond on how student-led professional interest groups can function and thrive.

Through extensive use of social media platforms, the project team managed to attract the interest of over 200 students, from which 92 aged 15-18 from the Yerevan State Base Medical College and 122 aged 18-26 from the YSMU. Thanks to the clear distribution of specialized courses, the students' dutiful attendance, and the space and equipment provided by the university, the project was able to transfer practical, theoretical, and ethical skills to students and evaluate their progress through tests and competitions. In addition to the initiative team's activities, students had meetings and consultations with specialists in various medical fields, gaining insights into life as a doctor beyond the hospital. During the five events held throughout the project, around 140 students demonstrated their knowledge to skilled professionals. Students received certificates of completion and opportunities to participate in other university projects and hospital internships. Some of the active students initiated their own projects inspired by the "ConNect" surgical project, while others shared their successes. The team highlights the collaboration with the Lancet surgical project and the opportunity for project beneficiaries to attend experimental surgeries, which strengthened the knowledge gained from the ConNect surgical program. Cooperation with the specialists at Michael University Hospital was also notable, as they expressed interest in working with the personnel retrained by the project and including them in the hospital's volunteer work.

Through practical courses, competitions, and experimental surgeries, students improved their practical skills. The participating students voluntarily transferred the acquired knowledge to their colleagues and friends, positively impacting the educational level of the students. To develop the ability to integrate into medical, scientific, and clinical communities, the project conducted consultations and theoretical courses on medical ethics and patient interviewing. Students learned to evaluate their knowledge and create logical links between theoretical and practical skills, which contributed to adopting a skeptical approach to university education and introducing effective educational tactics. At the end of the project, 130 students participated in the final contest, including 83 females and 47 males.

**Project title: Student Democracy in Shirak Region, Implemented by “Hartak” Research Center NGO**

The project aims to establish advocacy and cooperation mechanisms between universities in the Shirak region. To achieve this goal, the project has two objectives. The first objective is to establish a student body comprised of students from universities based in Shirak. The second objective is to improve the level of accountability and transparency of universities through research conducted by the student body.

It is noteworthy that the group that initially submitted the proposal to the Action in a capacity of an informal initiative, as a result of proposal review and co-creation process, has established and formally registered an NGO. Consequently, the small grant was received and implemented by recently formed Hartak NGO.

The project brought together ten female students from three state universities in Shirak region who jointly did analysis of in-demand professions among the three state universities of Gyumri over the last three years, and assessed the effectiveness of specializations and educational programs offered by the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law. Both reports were submitted and approved by the EUD. The team also performed some advocacy efforts at the local level, such as initiated a meeting with Tigran Petrosyan, the director of the Gyumri branch of the National Polytechnic University of Armenia. The findings and concerns of the studies were presented to the students and professors in Gyumri. This project contributed to the Action’s objectives by dragging attention at the regional level to the disparity between offered university courses and market demand. It is also important that the project was implemented in bottom-up modality, empowered by students, with students and for students.

**Project title: An initiative to promote students' organisational and research abilities, Implemented by Innovative Education Foundation (European University of Armenia)**

The project aims to unify active students around common ideas, organisational and research projects. To achieve this goal, the project has two objectives: to promote the development of students' research and organisational skills; to form a student initiative group at the university. Activities for this objective include promoting the establishment of student initiatives at universities, inviting first assemblies, and physically bringing all participants together.

The project group has successfully implemented a number of actions aimed at promoting the development of students' research and organisational skills, and contributing to the formation of a student initiative group at the university. The group started by holding a practical meeting to discuss the steps of project implementation and to develop a training program. They also worked on the development of a course guide with simulation games, as well as case studies.

To engage with the beneficiary students of the university, Ani Ghazaryan organized a meeting with 25 students from the Faculty of Economics and Management, including 15 boys and 10 girls, in an informal laboratory attached to the management chair of the university. This meeting was a success and helped to lay the groundwork for future activities. In October and November, the group continued their work by developing regulations and holding project discussions during

the first meetings of the Young Managers Student Club. They also organized meetings of the student club of young managers, which helped to bring together active students around common ideas, organisational and research projects. A 2-module course was held with the participation of students and certificates were awarded to those who completed it. The regulations developed by the group also helped to promote the development of research and organisational skills among students, while the meetings of the student club helped to contribute to the formation of a student initiative group at the university.

The team considers that the most important achievement of the project is the formation of the Young Managers Student Club at the European University of Armenia, capacitating the students of the Club, and developing guidelines for formalization of such groups at the European University of Armenia.

### **Project title: Point of View, Implemented by Risomastic NGO**

The project aims to increase student involvement in university management by enhancing their awareness, identifying issues, and proposing solutions. The objectives include encouraging students to suggest internal management policy and campus organisation ideas and promoting the dissemination of students' rights and responsibilities. To achieve Objective 1, a three-day workshop was conducted for students from four Armenian universities. Six universities in Armenia, namely YSU, YSMU, American University of Armenia, Brusov State University, Armenian-Russian University, and European University, were represented by a total of 15 students (4 males and 11 females) who participated in the three-day workshop. The students prepared reflections and short videos based on the workshop discussions. Objective 2 involves organizing discussions for students from each university group, with each member sharing a social media post about the issues discussed.

During the project, a group of participants identified several problems that were characteristic of most universities, including bureaucratic systems, lack of literature in Armenian, insufficient facilities for people with disabilities, library-related problems, and technical saturation of classrooms. The group proposed potential solutions to these problems. To address bureaucratic issues, the group suggested using email and an electronic evaluation system. To improve libraries, they suggested extending working hours, involving students as volunteers, allowing graduates to donate or discount their purchased books to university libraries, and making it an opportunity for students to gain experience. For accessibility, the group proposed building ramps and lifts. To improve technical saturation of classrooms, they suggested reallocating more funds towards technology, organizing fundraisers to repair and equip classrooms, and naming the room after the supporter. To address the lack of literature in Armenian, the group suggested translating literature by students and graduates of respective departments, recruiting volunteers, and engaging in publishing Armenian literature. Finally, to address issues related to the absence of a cafeteria, the group suggested collaborating with relevant organisations such as Art lunch.

During the project, many students from different universities in Armenia shared their concerns about the lack of buffets in their respective campuses. They expressed their dissatisfaction with

the inconvenience caused by the unavailability of food and refreshments within the university premises.

As the project team were reviewing the final results of the project, they had already discussed this issue with the YSMU. It is exciting to note that YSMU has taken a step forward in addressing this problem. Today, YSU has opened an Artlunch branch on the campus, which will provide food and refreshments to the students. Moreover, the issue of library working hours was also discussed during the project, and the project team reports that YSMU has taken note of these concerns and has put them on the agenda. It is expected that YSU will take appropriate action to improve accessibility for students with disabilities and extend library working hours. As for the other 5 universities, no tangible results are registered yet, but it is a work in progress.

### **Project title: Creating a Student Club, Implemented by Yerevan State University Ijevan Branch**

The main aim of this project is to enhance the capacity and practical skills of students at the Ijevan Branch of Yerevan State University through non-formal and extracurricular education, while also encouraging their participation in cultural activities. The following objectives have been identified: (1) Establishing a platform for non-formal education, (2) Providing students with adequate practical skills and capabilities.

To achieve Objective 1, a student club has been formed comprising students from the Ijevan Branch of Yerevan State University. This has involved acquiring necessary resources such as space, furniture, and equipment. Objective 2 has been met through the execution of training programs facilitated by experts, organisation of excursions to historic places in the Tavush region, collection and digitization of information about these historic places, and development of a guidebook to for new tour guides. In particular, the publication showcases various excursions held in frames of the project to popular attractions located in the Tavush region. The objective of these expeditions is to familiarize the new guides with the region's renowned tourist destinations, allowing them the student participants of the project to share their knowledge and skills with new guides.

### **Round 2 (ongoing subgrants)**

#### **Project Title: We are Together, Implemented by White Cane NGO**

In Armenia, students with disabilities encounter various academic challenges, such as inaccessible classrooms and physical barriers. As the number of students with disabilities in each educational institution is relatively small, their problems are not consistently addressed. In response to this issue, the White Cane NGO has launched a project with the primary objective of establishing a student council for persons with disabilities in the Republic of Armenia. The council's mandate is to tackle the challenges faced by students with disabilities who are pursuing higher and secondary professional education in Armenia. Specifically, the council will aim to

enhance communication between universities and the labor market, safeguard students' rights and interests, and promote the self-organisation of disabled students.

**Project Title: Contributing to strengthening the connection between Yezidi students and the labor market, Implemented by Yezidi Center for Human Rights**

The Yezidi community has a limited number of young people pursuing education, and there is a lack of systematic and comprehensive efforts to promote higher education opportunities among them. This results in a lack of marketability of Yezidi graduates. In response to these challenges, the Yezidi Center for Human Rights, a human rights NGO, has launched this project aimed at strengthening the connection between Yezidi students and the labor market, as well as enhancing their professional skills. The project seeks to address issues related to resume writing, drafting of motivational letters, and improving interview skills, as well as increasing opportunities for applying and participating in youth programs.

**Project Title: Protection of students' rights as a benchmark for realizing the right to education: Loopholes and Legislative Gaps, Implemented by Viktorya Hakobyanyan's initiative**

The project aims to investigate issues pertaining to students' rights, including violations and protection measures, and provide recommendations for enhancing the safeguarding of students' rights. The rationale behind the project lies in the prevalence of students' rights violations by not only educational institution faculty but also students, resulting in breaches of rights, such as privacy, appeal rights, and other legal entitlements. Hence, it is crucial to scrutinize such cases and propose protection measures that can be later integrated into legislative reforms. Thus, the main goal of the program is to study the problems related to the realization of students' rights, the cases of students' rights violations and to present more effective structures for the protection of rights. In addition, a review of legal acts fixing students' rights and rights protection procedures, highlighting legislative gaps and presenting proposals will be carried out.

**Project title: ReGorsU - Reorganisation of the student council as the university's restart, Implemented by 'Eco-Youth' youth, environmental, tourism NGO**

The project's primary goal is to enhance the capacity of the student council at Goris State University and its members, while also promoting and amplifying student activities and increasing their involvement in university decision-making. The project's direct beneficiaries are the 40 members of GSU, and it also targets the university's 740 students, teaching staff, and administrative personnel. The project aims to achieve three main objectives: (1) increase the visibility and effectiveness of the student council's activities, (2) enhance students' knowledge of university governance and develop policies that prioritize their needs, and (3) review the absence of student council documents and regulations, and if necessary, revise and develop a new charter and other regulatory documents.

**Project Title: The role of youth in the community, Implemented by Youth for Change Initiative**

The project will establish a platform that enables young people to engage in community activities and gain insight into the actions of authorized entities. Through this platform, they will have the opportunity to voice their concerns regarding issues faced by young people in Vanadzor and nearby villages. The ultimate goal is to enhance the participation of young people in local government decision-making processes and improve the mechanisms through which they can contribute to community development.

**Project Title: The Good Doctor, Implemented by Medicus Initiative**

The main objective of the project is to simplify and make medical professional information accessible to a wider audience, and to showcase the experience of the medical students to wider public. Despite the advancements in technology, the Medical University still uses traditional teaching methods, which often make it difficult for medical students to grasp complex topics, hindering their professional development. Additionally, many important materials are only available in foreign languages, making them inaccessible to Armenian students. The project aims to address these issues by making the university's professional literature available in a digital format, translating foreign language literature into Armenian, and using social media to disseminate the information to a broader audience. The expected outcomes of the project include capacity building of the project team, increased availability of medical literature, improved efficiency and effectiveness of medical education, (4) increased social activism among the audience, and highlighting university problems to draw the attention of university leadership.

**Project Title: Assessing civic activity of students of universities of Shirak marz, Implemented by Hartak Research Center NGO**

Hartak Research Center NGO is launching an educational-research project with the aim of exploring the reasons for low levels of civic engagement and motivation among students and developing solutions to address these issues. This project is based on the findings and experiences gained from the "Student Democracy in Shirak Marz" project. The project aims to enhance the research skills of 15 students from two state universities in the Shirak region: Shirak State University and the Gyumri branch of the National Polytechnic University of Armenia. The students will identify reasons for the lack of civic participation and initiative among their peers, conduct intra-university research, and develop a package of recommendations for the two universities involved in the project.

**Project Title: A Democrat Student, Implemented by Youth Power Initiative**

The youth's role is crucial in driving positive change in civil rights movements in Armenia. Unfortunately, their participation in social and civic life remains inadequate due to insufficient civic education and a lack of suitable platforms to express their views. To address this issue, the

program aims to educate about 30 students from Gavar State University about their rights using both formal and informal educational methods, as well as mechanisms that promote democratic education and activism. This will encourage the students to take an active role in university management processes, and improve the university-employer relationship by developing the Career Center as a separate structural unit.