

Building the ECOVILLAGE force

Partner organisation(s) Landsforeningen for Økosamfund

Donor CISU

Amount applied for 999.999 kr.

Period (# of months) 18 months 1.10.2023-1.04.2025

Summary

'Building the ECOVILLAGE force' shows another way of combating the effects of war than the military style.

The project is a capacity building intervention in that it equips GEN Ukraine extended membership with skills and competences that can be applied elsewhere - building skills that can create hope and optimism.

The purpose is therefore to empower people both inside and outside the network of the eco-communities with both 'soft' and 'hard' skills to help them adapt in the context and conditions of long-lasting aggression, economic instability and growing social crisis. Mainly there will be two intense 'Soft Skills' training seminars, for a diverse group of participants, but also a Soft Skills ToT and a line of external seminars. A collection of resources translated to Ukrainian language and a manual for the Soft Skills courses and the additional home seminars will enable GEN Ukraine and its members to provide a series of high-quality training modules that can support social cohesion in war torn Ukraine - building up the 'ecovillage force'.

This project seeks to build the 'ecovillage force', indicating the inherent power of peace-seeking methods aimed at enhancing social cohesion in Ukraine, which is the overall objective of the project.

OBJECTIVE 1 - BUILDING THE FORCE

The organisational capacity of GEN Ukraine and its members within provision of training programmes have been strengthened and GEN Ukraine has composed its own 'expert training group' with a peer-to-peer and a mentoring system to strengthen quality, impact and ensure sustainability of the 'ecovillage force'.

OBJECTIVE 2 - CREATING THE CONTENT PACKAGE

Manual creation has become an integrated part of GEN Ukraine and there is a growing collection of own resources available for the GEN Ukraine training team and wide audience.

OBJECTIVE 3 - SHARING THE IMPACT OF THE FORCE

Alliances between GEN Ukraine and collaboration partners have grown in number and quality of interactions and GEN Ukraine has inspired collaboration partners to include Soft Skills in their training plans, preferably utilising the expert training group members from GEN Ukraine, while the organisational structure of GEN Ukraine and partners have gained enhanced transparency and smoothness in decision making.

[Посилання на сайт \(буде\)](#)

LEVEL UP - GENerating Change

Donor CISU

Danish organisation Landsforeningen for Økosamfund

Amount applied for 999.999 DKK

Period (# of months) 1.01.2023-1.06.2024

GEN Ukraine as an organisation feels responsible for the processes that were launched with the Green Road project and for accompanying the eco-communities together with the many IDP's in their adaptation processes - and to respond to the visibility the Green Road project has created. Wherefore this project seeks not only to mitigate the challenges occurring when doubling the eco-communities population in a war context, attending to the rapidly growing GEN network, both in members and activities, but furthermore to take advantage of the opportunity to strengthen the voice of eco-communities in public life, so the ecovillage approach and the learnings from Green Road can be considered planning the reconstruction of the regions and the immediate settlement of the IDP's. This can be achieved through a number of much needed trainings and gatherings that will bring together leaders of hosting communities (who normally do not meet apart from IDP related issues during DERF, over Zoom), to learn from their experiences so far, and engage with local authorities that like GEN Ukraine have to respond to new challenges of their regions. This situation is new for all actors, creating a situation where both GEN Ukraine, the eco-communities and the local authorities are learning how to navigate operations during - and after - a war. This intervention wants to facilitate more spaces for learning together and across the actors to ensure aligned and cooperative action. Therefore GEN Ukraine needs to be well equipped for that task, not to navigate blindly or carelessly in this new situation, both locally and nationally, but being invited in as one of the Ukrainian CSO's that actually have made a mark and plays a role in Ukraine.

The purpose of this intervention is therefore to strengthen GEN Ukraine as an organisation based on a showcase model of democratic practices, and building the capacity and representativity of the organisation to take leadership among civil society in Ukraine, on sustainability and civic action issues in the reconstruction phase. A long-lasting strategy based on the IDPowerment initiative will be drawn up for GEN UKraine, so the direction will be more clear. This intervention will therefore build on and expand on the interventions previously funded by CISU in order to improve the organisational capacity and sustainability of GEN Ukraine as an *organisation*, sustainable development of *the members* in the hosting locations themselves and *empower the voice of eco-communities on both local and national levels*.

With this intervention the next activities were done:

OBJECTIVE 1: ORGANISATIONAL FOCUS

Tours to ecovillages (three tours x one week each) and made 5 films-interview about there trips

GEN Ukraine Gatherings (the there working gathering were conducted)

Strategy workshops with council and team facilitations

OBJECTIVE 2: MEMBER/COMMUNITY FOCUS

Preventing Conflicts in 5 ecovillages

Training on interaction with external actors (World of Communities)

Launching 4 bicycle repair workshops in eco-villages

Green entrepreneurship for ecovillages (5+ courses about entrepreneurship)

OBJECTIVE 3: ADVOCACY FOCUS

Sharing the knowledge: Green Seminars from eco-communitites

Networking with local authorities for 5 locations during 9 months

Networking with NGO's: evaluation conference for stakeholders

WINTER SUPPORT – SUSTAINING ECOVILLAGE LIFE (WISEL)

Donor CISU

Danish organisation Landsforeningen for Økosamfund

Amount applied for 999.999 DKK

22-09-2023 to 08-05-2024

The war in Ukraine has been going on for one year and a half and the end of it cannot be predicted. Big cities are under air attacks every day and night. Civil victims count already 91 thousand people. 7 million Ukrainians are displaced. Economic crisis and unemployment are constantly growing. Tiredness, frustration and fear are present in society. The past winter was hard with everyday blackouts as the energy infrastructure was severely damaged and the winter that will come risks to be even harder. The Green Road project that GEN Ukraine and LOES has been running since February 2022 goes on. The number of displaced people hosted in the countryside locations of the project has decreased but became stable: these people decided to join the eco-communities or at least stay there till the end of the war. At the same time more and more women with children from the eco-communities that were staying abroad now come back. And all the men from the eco-communities live with a very high risk of being taken to the war any day. And there is always a risk of escalation of hostilities and a new wave of IDPs coming, especially to the locations close to the frontline. With the efforts of the GEN Ukraine team and several projects supported by CISU and other donors, the lives of people in the network of eco-communities positively differs from the general situation in the country: they feel support and know that their communities and the organisation will take care of them if they are in sincere need or immediate danger. But they can't not be affected by the general crisis and rise of prices and the resources/inflow of money to GEN Ukraine has decreased heavily as the war has become an everyday thing and have lost much international attention. The humanitarian situation is delicate not only for displaced people but also for the eco-community members themselves. The numerous projects in these communities initiated with the support of GEN Ukraine like craft businesses, educational initiatives and community building processes are under risk as people struggle to sustain themselves.

The main goal of the intervention was to support the locations of the Ecovillage Network in Ukraine that were affected by the general crisis because of the war in the country. Improving the humanitarian situation for displaced people but also the eco-community members themselves were the possibility to support all the numerous projects in these communities initiated with the support of GEN Ukraine before.

1. GEN Ukraine purchased 13 generators and storage batteries for settlements and families. 6 of them are from neighboring regions or those affected by the war

2. GEN Ukraine conducted water and established water supply for 13 settlements. 6 of them are from neighboring regions, or those affected by the war, and 3 work with displaced persons permanently

3. GEN Ukraine helped with the construction, repair and establishment of decent infrastructure in 8 locations, 4 of which are in the frontline regions or affected, 3 of which are constantly working with displaced persons

4. GEN Ukraine helped 9 locations with the construction or repair of children's rooms, 5 of which are in the frontline regions, 4 of which work with a large number of people.