



European Union

CLEEN: Making local grassroots organisations stronger by working on energy efficiency

WECF and partners organise regional network meeting and workshop in Georgia and Armenia

WECF and its Georgian and Armenian partners will organise a regional network meeting of grassroots organisations from four countries, working jointly on energy efficiency and climate change awareness. Only a few days later, from the 26th to the 28th of September 2016, WECF and Armenian partners Ayrudzy and Tapan will organise a workshop on energy cooperatives. Both events are financed by the European Union.

The events are addressing a strong need to establish better cooperation between local grassroots organisations giving them a stronger voice in relation to local and regional politicians and policy makers.

The network meeting, which takes place on September 19-21 in Bakuriani Georgia, is organised by the Georgian NGOs 'Students for Energy Efficiency' and 'Society Development Centre of Akhaltsikhe'

The workshop on energy cooperatives will take place on September 26-28 in Ashtarak, Armenia. The workshop aims to develop alternative and gender-sensitive business models for renewable energy and energy efficiency and to consider whether these are feasible and useful in Armenia, considering the current legal and economic conditions in the country.

The workshop will emphasise the importance of energy cooperatives for a country like Armenia. Energy cooperatives not only create local jobs but can lead to increasing incomes for both women and men in the villages, while at the same time diminishing carbon emissions and environmental pollution.

"Energy efficiency measures and working on sustainable energy is of utmost importance in many countries in the Eastern Partnership region who mainly depend on Russian gas" states **Olga Plekhanova, energy coordinator** at WECF.

Anna Samwel, head of WECF branch office Georgia, states: "We see grassroots organisations grow strong, self-confident and more professional with the CLEEN programme, working with the local governance and making a real difference in their communities. "



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The meetings are seen as a next step within the CLEEN program. “Last year the grass root organisations were trained on organisational development, now we’d like to take it a step further by supporting them in cooperating with each other, by establishing a strong network, to exchange experiences and share expertise and best practice” states Olga Plekhanova, CLEEN project leader.

CLEEN (Civil society Local Energy Efficient Network) is a 3-year EU-funded project aiming to build a partnership of civil society organizations (CSOs), as well as to strengthen CSO's capacities in Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. The project focuses on energy efficiency and cost savings, and increased accountability of local and national authorities on this issue. WECF coordinates this project and provides technical expertise. The project is funded by the European Union, Auswärtiges Amt, GLS Bank and the RAJA foundation.

www.cleenet.org

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