



Report on the learning needs of each Target Groups

HERo – New narratives towards a gender equal society

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The Project

HERo - New narratives towards a gender equal society is aimed at supporting transformation of deeply entrenched patriarchal behavioral attitudes in society by fighting against the spread of gender and social discrimination in education, mass media, and applying an effective and productive response to gender-based discrimination, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 5. The project wants to support government bodies, civil society organizations, education institutions and the media in promoting gender equality and preventing gender discrimination, and disseminating positive gender narratives at all levels of society.

“HERo” is implemented by the Public Association “Social Technologies Agency” (Kyrgyz Republic) and the Center for Creative Development “Danilo Dolci” (Italy) with financial support from the European Union for 36 months, from 2019 to 2022 (European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights – Country Based Support Scheme for Kyrgyzstan 2018 – 2019).

PRIORITY AREAS

Stereotype-free education

Supporting the conduct of anti-discrimination and gender expertise of standards and training materials, as well as increasing the gender competence of educators in the Kyrgyz Republic.

Gender-sensitive media standards

Assistance in the development and implementation of standards of gender-sensitive journalism in Kyrgyzstan as well as methodological support to universities on the application of these standards in the training of journalism specialists, thus improving the cooperation between the media and gender experts & NGOs.

Gender Policy Collaboration

Supporting interagency cooperation to prevent and respond to gender discrimination and violence at the national and local levels by increasing the capacity of gender-responsive ministries, departments, local self-government, strengthening the capacity of civil society organizations to effectively interact with state bodies and local self-government in order to advance the gender equality agenda.

Products and results

- Research and analytical reviews of the gender dimension in the priority areas of the project
- Normative legal documents on the regulation of gender issues in the framework of priority areas
- Methodical guides, manuals for target groups of the project in Kyrgyz and Russian languages
- Training modules, training courses, including online, in Kyrgyz and Russian Videos, educational materials, information campaigns and actions in
- Kyrgyz and Russian Raising-awareness events to spread the results and involve the target groups at all levels



Introduction

In December 2020, within the framework of the project "HERo – New narratives towards a gender equal society, focus groups were held to strengthen cooperation to promote the gender agenda through the media, in the education sector, government bodies, and civil society.

The project awants to support government bodies, civil society organizations, education institutions and the media in promoting gender equality and preventing gender discrimination, and disseminating positive gender narratives at all levels of society.

Focus groups were conducted to identify needs for raising awareness and understanding of gender equality issues; mastering skills and application of tools, standards in the field of gender-sensitive journalism, in the education sector, government bodies, civil society.

The expanded thematic focus groups were attended by representatives of government agencies, the media, education, civil society, experts and members of the Transversal National Board, which includes representatives of the following target groups of the project:

- Government officials responsible for gender issues;
- CSOs for human rights, NGOs dealing with gender issues;
- Religious organizations;
- Educational experts;
- Media;
- Local government.

The focus groups also presented best practices in all four main areas of the project and discussed the needs of target groups in raising awareness and understanding of gender equality issues, taking into account the project's case study of best practices.

The learning needs of the target groups of the project identified based on the results of the focus groups are presented below.



Report on the learning needs of each Target Groups

A. Media

Questions for discussion during the focus group:

- 1) How to define gender-positive media? What criteria can be used for this?
- 2) Are there gender-positive media in Kyrgyzstan? Why?
- 3) Characteristics of the most common gender stereotypes in the media
- 4) What factors contribute to the development of gender sensitivity in the media?
- 5) What are the barriers and risks for the application of gender approaches in media activities in Kyrgyzstan?
- 6) What strategies can be used to overcome these barriers and risks?
- 7) How to improve cooperation of the media with civil society organizations and government bodies in the field of gender policy?
- 8) Do you have needs for raising and awareness / understanding on gender equality issues and mastering skills / application of gender-sensitive journalism standards tools?
- 9) What knowledge, information, materials, skills development on the topic of gender equality do you need in your work?
- 10) Indicate the preferred format of trainings and seminars (offline or online)
 - If offline, then on-site or in the city?
 - If online, how many hours a day?Indicate your preferred duration of study (days and hours), etc.
- 11) What topics for training would you like to suggest?
- 12) Do you have a need for training other employees of your organization (media)?
- 13) Do you have a need to increase your capacity to develop or strengthen cooperation in the field of gender policy with government agencies, local self-government bodies, women's gender NGOs and other partners?

Discussions identified the following needs for raising awareness and understanding of gender equality issues; mastering skills and application of tools, standards of gender-sensitive journalism:

- Basic introductory course on gender equality and skills development, application of tools, standards of gender-sensitive journalism for press services of government agencies;
- Training of media representatives in skills and application of tools, standards of gender-sensitive journalism for the press services of state bodies to increase gender awareness of citizens through the media;
- Horizontal and vertical gender analysis of the gender composition of the media;
- Training and increasing the gender sensitivity of the management staff of the media, combating gender discrimination in the workplace. (An example was given that it is more difficult for young girls to get a job than for young men, just because the media



- management fears that the girl may take a break in her career because of her reproductive function, as well as in terms of security);
- Increasing the gender sensitivity and tolerance of editors and other media representatives, since a lot of gender-incorrect materials are covered in the media;
 - Along with raising awareness of gender equality issues, women in the media need digital literacy training. Because, often, all courses on digital literacy and mastering the skills of photography and video shooting are designed for men, and it is more difficult for women to complete this training on their own;
 - In addition to basic knowledge on gender equality, it is necessary to include specialized topics in trainings (gender stereotypes, harassment, gender and economics, gender and climate change, etc.);
 - Include practical exercises in the training program. It is also advisable to use interactive teaching methods.
 - It is necessary to create a database of gender experts, with a clear description of the range of issues in which this expert specializes and indicating contacts;
 - Online courses on gender equality issues;
 - By training format: a combination of online and offline. If traveling, it is better for 2-3 days to dive deeply into training and get a good result.

B. Education system, resources & methods

Questions for discussion during the focus group:

- 1) What is a comprehensive gender approach in the activities of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic and other educational organizations?
- 2) What is the current level of application of a comprehensive gender approach in the education system?
- 3) What factors contribute to the development of a comprehensive gender approach in the education system?
- 4) What are the barriers and risks to applying a comprehensive gender approach in the education system?
- 5) What strategies can be used to overcome these barriers and risks?
- 6) How to improve cooperation of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic and other educational organizations with gender NGOs, other state bodies and the media in the field of gender policy?
- 7) Do the existing teaching materials, programs and standards meet the requirements of gender equality?
- 8) What kind of assistance (technical, etc.) is needed by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic and the education system as a whole to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Tool for Anti-Discrimination and Gender Expertise of educational and methodological complexes?
- 9) What training needs do you have on gender equality?
- 10) What knowledge, information, materials, skills development on the topic of gender equality do you need in your work?
- 11) Indicate the preferred format of trainings and seminars (offline or online)



- If offline, then on-site or in the city?
- If online, how many hours a day?

Indicate your preferred duration of study (days and hours), etc.

- 12) What topics for training would you like to suggest?
- 13) Do you have a need to train other employees of your ministry?
- 14) Do you have a need to increase your capacity to develop or strengthen interagency and cross-sectoral cooperation in the field of gender policy with other state bodies, local self-government bodies and women's gender NGOs and other partners?
- 15) What are the challenges?
How relevant are the problems of access to education for girls based on the religious beliefs of their parents?
- 16) What is the best way to build a dialogue and involve religious organizations / religious leaders in educating parents about the need for girls' education?

Discussions identified the following needs for raising awareness and understanding on gender equality issues:

- Support for the book publishing sector of the Ministry of Education and Science, training of all employees and experts selected for anti-discrimination and gender expertise of educational and methodological complexes;
- Basic training course on gender equality and the development of tools for anti-discrimination and gender expertise of educational and methodological complexes for publishers, authors of teaching materials, editors and teachers;
- Work with universities, training teachers and students of pedagogical universities on gender equality and methodology for conducting anti-discrimination and gender expertise of educational and methodological complexes;
- Creation of video courses to ensure continuous learning;
- Analysis of the admission of students to secondary special and higher educational institutions by specialties. Such an analysis will allow initiating special measures at the discretion of budget places for girls in those specialties (technical specialties) where female students are least represented;
- Information campaigns and outreach to raise awareness and understanding of gender equality issues;
- It is important to support gender-responsive learning at all levels. It is important to carry out anti-discrimination and gender expertise in the system of vocational education, where the choice of a profession by students is often based on stereotypes;
- Provide a special teaching approach for girls who study in madrasahs, since digital technologies are inaccessible in madrasahs;
- Training on gender equality and methodology for conducting anti-discrimination and gender expertise of educational and methodological complexes for methodologists of district education departments. Methodologists represent an important target group, as methodologists work directly with school teachers;
- Conducting information campaigns among young people using interactive elements;
- By training format: a combination of online and offline.



C. Public institutions

Questions for discussion during the focus group:

- 1) What is a comprehensive gender approach in the activities of state bodies?
- 2) What is the current level of application of a comprehensive gender approach in ministries and departments, and in the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic?
- 3) Assess the potential of the Authorized Body in the field of gender policy in the Kyrgyz Republic.
- 4) What factors contribute to the development of a comprehensive gender approach in the activities of ministries and departments, the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic?
- 5) What are the barriers to the application of a comprehensive gender approach in the activities of ministries and departments, the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic?
- 6) What strategies can be used to overcome these barriers and risks?
- 7) How to improve cooperation between ministries and departments, the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic with gender NGOs?
- 8) Do you have any needs for raising and awareness / understanding on gender equality issues?
- 9) What knowledge, information, materials, skills development on the topic of gender equality do you need in your work?
- 10) Indicate the preferred format of trainings and seminars (offline or online)
 - If offline, then on-site or in the city?
 - If online, how many hours a day?Indicate your preferred duration of study (days and hours), etc.
- 11) What topics for training would you like to suggest?
- 12) Do you have a need for training other employees of your ministry / department?
- 13) Do you have a need to increase your capacity to develop or strengthen interagency and cross-sectoral cooperation in the field of gender policy with other state bodies, local self-government bodies and women's gender NGOs and other partners?

Discussions identified the following needs for raising awareness and understanding on gender equality issues:

- Include in the training program for public authorities, sessions on specialized topics (gender budgeting, gender expertise, the topic of improving the “system 112”, etc.);
- Prepare methodological materials for each training for the possibility of independent passing of the material;
- Informative materials and a basic introductory online course on gender for government agencies. These materials are needed in open online access, since there is a frequent turnover of personnel in government bodies so that a new person can independently complete an online course and master basic knowledge on gender on their own.
- Support to the Gender Unit of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development, as well as the new Violence Prevention Unit, training of all employees of the new unit



- Preparation of information materials (posters, brochures, videos) for regular seminars on the topic of gender equality and domestic violence for training conscripts of urgent and non-urgent services of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Kyrgyz Republic;
- In addition to the rank-and-file staff and those responsible for gender issues, it is also necessary to increase the capacity of the management, including the state secretaries of ministries and departments;
- Responsibles for gender issues of ministries and departments noted the importance of increasing the capacity of other employees of ministries and departments, because sometimes difficulties arise in joint implementation of tasks to promote gender policy in ministries and departments due to the lack of awareness of gender issues among other employees;
- By training format: a combination of online and offline. If traveling, it is better for 2-3 days to dive deeply into training and get a good result.

D. Civil Society organization

Questions for discussion during the focus group:

- 1) What is a comprehensive gender approach in civil society activities?
- 2) Assess the potential of the Authorized Body in the field of gender policy in the Kyrgyz Republic.
- 3) How to improve cooperation of gender NGOs with ministries and departments, the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic, local self-government bodies, media and other partners?
- 4) Do you have any needs for raising and awareness / understanding on gender equality issues?
- 5) What knowledge, information, materials, skills development on the topic of gender equality do you need in your work?
- 6) Indicate the preferred format of trainings and seminars (offline or online)
 - If offline, then on-site or in the city?
 - If online, how many hours a day?Indicate your preferred duration of study (days and hours), etc.
- 7) What topics for training would you like to suggest?
- 8) Do you have a need for training other employees of your organization?
- 9) Do you have a need to increase your capacity to develop or strengthen interagency and cross-sectoral cooperation in the field of gender policy with other state bodies, local self-government bodies and women's gender NGOs and other partners?

Discussions identified the following needs for raising awareness and understanding on gender equality issues:

- Facilitating the creation of Committees for the Prevention of Domestic Violence in the regions and cooperation with pilot committees. Domestic Violence Prevention



Committees as an effective mechanism in promoting the gender agenda at the local level;

- Strengthen the capacity of non-governmental organizations in the regions so that they can conduct gender expertise and actively work with local self-government bodies;
- Training and increasing gender sensitivity not only for CSOs, but also for representatives of government agencies, as well as employees of internal affairs bodies, since stereotypical thinking often negatively affects the performance of their professional duties;
- It is necessary to create more women's movements and educate women about their constitutional rights, gender equality issues, etc.;
- Even at the highest levels of government, gender equality issues are perceived as purely social and are not considered as a significant part of the economy, which leads to the dropping out of gender equality issues from important government documents when they are adopted. There is a need to strengthen cooperation and raise gender awareness / sensitivity among senior government officials;
- There is a shortage of competent personnel among NGOs to promote gender equality. It is necessary to organize special thematic courses for NGOs and increase the capacity of NGO representatives;
- It is difficult for women's organizations to reach the entire country, so there is a need to build the capacity of women's councils that are active at the local level;
- It is necessary to conduct several pilot gender analyzes of several local self-government bodies, as an example, and show what benefits managers can get from such an analysis;
- Training of journalists and media representatives on gender equality issues and skills / application of gender-sensitive journalism standards tools is needed;
- It is necessary to carry out joint activities and training of NGOs and state bodies to improve cooperation between different sectors;
- By training format: a combination of online and offline. It would also be nice if the training was based on the example of a specific case.