



FROM TRAINEE

TO TRAINER



Please meet Steliana Burlacu from Foundation for Education and Development (Moldova). The organisation focuses its activities in the area of education, science and development and targets the public at large through research, educational, development, training and awareness activities.

INTEREST IN BECOMING A TRAINER

My interest in becoming a trainer comes from my childhood and was reinforced by my parents-pedagogues throughout my life. Our home was always a place for lessons and lectures preparations, studies and researches. Our huge library was at my disposal and I made full use of it. Regular visits of students who could come to our house for consultations added to the atmosphere of permanent learning and teaching that my family lived in. It inevitable grew on me, too, sparking my interest in becoming a trainer.

THE TOT PROGRAMME OF THE PROJECT

The Training of Trainers (ToT) Programme was a new step on my professional path, opening new doors and opportunities by empowering me as a civil society leader and a trainer. *The biggest challenge was to elaborate and actually implement a training project that would be really needed and useful for CSOs in my country.* A pleasant surprise occurred when I learned about the possibility to apply in practice the knowledge acquired during the ToT via applying for a small grant. Along with other ToT Programme graduates, I received an opportunity to submit a training project proposal for a chance to receive the mentioned grant for the training project implementation. It was a real opportunity to make the dream come true, and I was incredibly happy when I found out that my project would be supported by the “Civil Society. Dialogue for Progress” Project. And, finally, the greatest inspiration came after I tried the trainer’s role myself and successfully achieved the objective of the ToT Programme.



YOUR EXPERIENCE IN DESIGNING A TRAINING PROJECT

The idea of the training project called “Capacity building for NGOs in organizational development, policy dialogue and influence” was inspired by the content of the ToT Programme, as the training project basically comprised the information of the 4 ToT study modules in a very concise manner. *The overall aim of the training project was to strengthen and empower NGOs for achieving their objectives and taking an active part*



in the policy and reforms process in Moldova by creating and implementing strategic plans for their NGOs. The training project was designed for three days: the first day covered organizational development issues, the second day - policy dialogue and influence questions, and the third day - drafting a strategic and operational plan for the participants' NGOs. I have chosen this particular project for two reasons: first, to fulfil the commitment of sharing the knowledge and information I got from the ToT Programme, and, second, to offer a topic that is in high demand by NGOs in Moldova, according to the recent researches on civil society development needs in Moldova carried out by local organizations and experts in the field.



IMPLEMENTING A PROJECT – THEORY AND REALITY, LESSONS LEARNT

The process of implementing a training project was both challenging and inspiring. Promoting the training project and selecting the right people to participate, as well as the process of sticking to the agenda and fitting the training into the proposed timeframe were challenging, however, the inspiring part came when I found out about the high interest of CSO representatives towards this training, their commitment to learning, and appreciation of the offered topic for the training.

The interest and willingness of all invited guests and organizations to participate in the activities throughout the training made a very memorable positive experience. The lesson learned is that these “outside” participants can bring a tremendous added value to the training: the EU Delegation representative talked about



two major challenges that CSO sector in Moldova faces and urged the participants to take advantage of the training; the two local representatives from the EaP CSF Moldovan National Platform and the National NGO Council of Moldova emphasized the importance of the content of the training; the representatives of two big local NGOs: IDIS “Viitorul” and “Promo-LEX” provided a valuable input by sharing examples of successful local practice of the policy dialogue, and, finally, experienced representatives from UNDP, FHI360, and East Europe Foundation gave real-life evaluations of the participants’ performance as donors at the end of the fundraising role play.

My lectures and presentations were based on the knowledge I got during the ToT Programme and I used numerous ToT training techniques when teaching, namely, passing ball from each other when speaking, principles of self-management in small groups, the “journaling” method every evening, designing a campaign exercise presented in front of the jury, and the press-conference role play. The participants particularly appreciated the technique of creating a sustainability diamond for assessing an organization’s capacity in 3 main CSO sustainability areas: institutional, programme and financial, and listing evidence to support the assessment of every area.



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