

Second South Caucasus Youth Festival

*Life itself is a miracle indeed
And the health in life is a gift to live it much free.*

With the financial support of EU and UNFPA the RHIYC project has presented the Second *South Caucasus Youth Festival "Healthy Wave"* that was held in Batumi, Georgia on September 12-14.

Hence the participants of the festival were meant to be members from different NGOs the board members of UNFPA have honored our NGO YERITAC to take part as well. The project was designed to improve sexual and RH concerns of the youth and reach out to at least 2, 850, 000 young people in three Caucasus countries-Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

As far as the festival was appealing for healthy life therefore the participants from three countries were divided to participate in two different although interrelated projects. The format of the first one was training entitled *Management and Advocacy Program on Sexual and Reproductive Health of the Youth*. The second project was based on the idea "in healthy body-healthy spirit" and was constituting of sport activities in mini football, volleyball and water marathon.

The opening ceremony of the festival was very bright and took place in the Liberty Square where officials of Georgian Parliament, board members of UNFPA Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan as well as EU representatives made speeches and congratulate everybody with the opening of this great event.

Starting from the next day our trainings have began. Our trainer was a lovely Galina Cherkina from Kyrgyzstan. After the ice-braking part we were happy to find out that the participants appeared to be of age 17-65, with different professional backgrounds and nationalities which have expanded the scope of impact of the information received during the training.

Starting right from the beginning we have agreed on some general rules of behavior as well as each of us has pointed out several preliminary questions the answers to which we were expecting to get by the end of trainings. As far as I mentioned before that the participants were people of diverse professional backgrounds therefore the preparatory part was of a great importance for the best outcome. Ms. Cherkina has provided us with material containing some general definitions about medical as well as other professional vocabulary which was going to be on the agenda of upcoming days. We were presented some demographic and socio-economic statistics of each country enrolled (such as the percentage infected people with HIV/AIDS, the usage and abuse of harmful substances etc.), some indicators of ten main reasons of youth mortality in the world making parallels with our own countries. The direct influence of values of culture, religion and traditions was also a matter of our attention on behalf of negative or even fatal results of sexual reality of the youth. Hence this quotation might be said on time: "*Death, taxes and childbirth. There's never any convenient time for any of them*". M. Mitchell

It was inevitable not to evoke especially the international legislative institutions of the matter. Therefore we couldn't but not to relieve the natural right of life, later on integrated into the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child protecting them against any danger to their welfare.

After the revelation of the importance of knowing and preserving sexual and reproductive health problems we have passed to the next step which was concerning the management of programs for prevention and implementation of S/RH problems of our countries. Moreover basing on methods of suggested *Bandura's Theory* (*information-I know, motivation-I want, skills-I can, resources-I am doing*) representing a basic formula for a successful outcome of any project we have given some possible solutions for the prevention of up mentioned issues. This phase of training was directed towards involvement of possible sectors of the society and government. I would like to mention the

valuable and effective role that was given to *Youth Friendly Services* based on peer to peer basis serving for educating and helping young people.

I believe that it was very pleasant to mention that the trainings were very wisely combined with number of interactive games concerning our subject matter. The task of one of those games was to produce a product (balloon) which was going to serve for children. For that reason the participants were divided into groups of producers, children, specialists, optimists and opponents. So, according to the role of each of the group the participants were to state their well argued positions. It was great to confess that each and every one was taking this task very seriously (not anticipating the humor as well) which has helped us to understand the meaning and importance of each of the group for the best integrity and quality of the process of management and advocacy of any project. For the control and regulative parts of advocacy and management we have explored the notions of internal and external indicators of the progress of the activity of the project as well as monitoring and estimation of the latter.

By the last day having covered possibly all the involved issues of the training we were given evaluation forms for estimation of the work of our trainer Ms. Cherkina as well as the organisatory part of the conference in general. The formal part of the Conference has been completed with handing in the Certificates of Participation at the training. As a proof of our concern of the reality in sphere of RH the most tangible and responsible part of the Conference was signing the Youth Declaration appealing to the Governments of Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan to obtain their support and commitment for the efficient provision of one of the basic rights of young people –their right to reproductive health on behalf of almost 2,850,000 young people of South Caucasus.

In the evening all the organizers, participants and inhabitants of Batumi were again gathered at the Liberty Square for the formal closing ceremony of the Conference accompanied with unforgettable colorful fountains, fireworks and music.

No doubts that all the participants were simply in love with wonderful nature and spirit of Batumi which besides the professional part has also enriched us with its harmony and with friends that we have got acquainted with.

I would like to express my gratitude to those who care for humanity and for those who act to express his concern towards the destructive and inhumane that we ourselves do and do not do for us.

It's easy to be saint when you don't want to be humane.

Karl Marx