

ymca 
europe - roots for reconciliation

Project Presentation





- roots for reconciliation



The YMCA Europe Roots for Reconciliation project was established in 2007 with the objective to strengthen and extend the YMCA Movement in the region of South Caucasus, as a mass-membership, ecumenical network standing for integrity of creation, peace and justice.



Central to the way the project has worked is the enhancement of camping programme as a shared activity that unites young people across socio-political and cultural dividers, with added value for the YMCAs sustainable development.



Within the project, during 2007 – 2011, three YMCA camps were constructed which already generate income. Those are:

- ✓YMCA Camp Lake Sevan in Armenia (500m²)
- ✓YMCA Camp Aramian in Armenia (360m²)
- ✓YMCA Camp Orange in Georgia (600m²)



Through the project first phase 19 different regional or international service learning activities were held, enrolling 800 participants predominantly from Armenia, Georgia and Nagorno Karabagh, yet also from more than 20 countries all over the world ranging from Iceland to Russia, from the USA to Bangladesh.



The 2007 – 2011 project phase budget was EUR 873'000, with the following key donors:

- ✓ EED Germany
- ✓ ICCO Netherlands
- ✓ HEKS-EPER Switzerland
- ✓ Aramian Family (through the YMCA of the USA)



In 2009, in coordination with the project stakeholders, YMCA Europe commissioned an external assessment, which was led by Bruce Britton - an independent consultant from Framework (UK)



“The Roots for Reconciliation project has been very successful in devising a process that **creates a safe space** for relationship-building based on ‘**Do No Harm**’ principles. The young people have used this space to build relationships across cultural divides.

They have done this on the basis of what can only be characterised as a **deep love** for their fellow young men and women. It is this ability to engender love across cultural and political divides that represents the main achievement of the project”. (*Conclusion of the Project Assessment Report*)



Currently YMCA Europe is in process of setting-up the continuation of the project over 2012 – 2015 with core funding from EED Germany.

This phase primarily presumes two sets of activities:

- ✓ Peace Work Institute
- ✓ Regional ProFests



The Peace Work Institute is designed for capacity building of youth opinion leaders from the conflict affected regions in Europe (Caucasus, Balkans) as well as Middle East, including:

- ✓ Three one-week-long **training seminars**,
- ✓ **Home-work** tasks in between,
- ✓ **Tandem Grant Tool** for successful graduates to implement **cross-border initiatives**,
- ✓ **Reunion** to evaluate the results of the scheme.



The Regional ProFests, or in other words programme festivals, are annual activities primarily designed for the YMCA Movements in the South Caucasus and their international and local partners. The ProFests are aimed at facilitating joint service learning and sharing best practices in:

- ✓ Digital Activism – ‘It’s mY Story’,
- ✓ Civic engagement and community mobilisation – ‘It’s mY Home’,
- ✓ Camping programme – ‘It’s mY Camp’



YMCA Europe will continue to apply the **'Do No Harm'** approach as the project implementation methodology and the **'Theory of Change'** as its impact orientation tool. Externally facilitated Outcome Evaluation and Impact Assessment will be carried out during the final year of this phase – i.e. 2015.

