

Study tour to Estonia August 9–16, 2014



Verbal evaluation and reflections

Discussions in two country groups

1. What ideas will you personally take with you from the study tour?

2. What ideas will you bring to your organisation from the study tour?

Discussions were held first in two groups, then everybody had to say something about the ideas they had gathered or their final thoughts.

- I want to implement the social impact measures and organise a training on emission schemes (we haven't paid enough attention to this) and a training on organisational management choices.
- All the museums/educational centres we visited inspired me. I got some new ideas for making a better design of our museum and to start certifying museum teachers and guides. And for improving the networks I am working with. NENO brought lots of good example, and the cherry on the cake was of course meeting with the Let's Do It movement.
- I go back with the knowledge that Estonia is a perfect country, all the people recognised the beauty of the nature, your approach of the people and professionalism. I take with me lots of ideas on how to improve my work and then the work of the organisation, and improve accountability and visibility. I have made a list of organisations I want to work with — NENO, PRAXES and others. We don't have the system of NENO (network of non-profit organisations), what was lost a few years ago should be re-established.

- Estonia is a beautiful country and Estonians are people who are responsible to nature, they do love nature, and the wide public participation makes your government accountable. I am also planning to reshape our website and put success stories of our activities there. It is important for the public to understand what you are doing and for you to present results, activities and impacts, not how many years you have been working for. Also the Social Impact Pond is something to be exercised.
- People in Estonia and the government work to develop their own country, not be a barrier. They try to improve the place they live in. Estonians love nature; it is not only in words but in practice. We saw lots of practical examples. Also networking has to be done as well as crowd sourcing.
- I am impressed by the instrument of crowd sourcing and crowd funding. It is important to take good stories to donors and society. Amazed by natural recourse centres and museums. Impressed by Kaidi.
- New ideas for different kinds of campaigns we can do in Moldova. I want to develop green gate type of electronic journalism. Estonia has great experiences in different kinds of spheres, we can learn a lot from here. Crowd sourcing also sticks out.
- Estonia is a fantastic and very beautiful country. People here are very active and quick. I totally changed my mind about Estonia and Estonians. I learnt how to organise an event perfectly and stay patient. I learnt how to create networking and heard many good presentations. I loved the leisure time and I discovered that I like swinging☺ I have many project ideas already, locally oriented specific projects, many inspired also by the Law Centre: on how to effectively train civil servants, mediation activities.
- Hiking is fun. A nation that loves nature is a healthy nation. Neighbourhood associations are very important, I try to do something in this regard. I will start making pictures of birds. We need to introduce the technology in our country, to be more collaborative, more active in public participation processes.
- The Estonian spirit surprised me. My vocabulary is too poor to express what I saw. The nature educational centre, the State Forest Management Centre, rural tourism, territory development we discussed. Networking with NENO, theoretical and practical examples. The management game was very useful, also the measurement of social impacts and social innovation. Also it was important to understand what Moldova is doing now.
- I take with me the Estonian attitude: Estonians like each other, they cooperate to reach the goal, not compete. They are happy with their government and authorities. They jointly do things together. Social impact issues.
- Discovery of Estonia: professionally very fruitful, privately very emotional. Innovation of high tech, at the same time respect for traditions and customs. Want to cooperate with Estonian Fund for Nature and the ornithological society.
- Meeting with professional environmental lawyers from Moldova and Estonia. State environmental legal activities in Estonia I take with me, and of course Let's Do It.
- Discovering Estonia, Estonia is beyond stereotypes. Seeing people from all the different NGOs, establishing friendships, brainstorming together on potential common projects.
- Estonians themselves, you are very motivated people, the level of civil society is high, you are real self-starters. To implement social impact is new for me. You cannot attract people while not showing them impacts. The programme was well designed, we also managed to understand Estonia as a whole and see it. This is knowledge to take while organising events.
- Hiking, high techs, everything was necessary for me as a young member, perfect visit.

- Work of government towards nature protection and the full trust of people towards their governors and state institutions. I learnt how to attract central authorities, about social impact and entrepreneurship. We are also ready for crowd sourcing, and I want to initiate this.
- Estonians love culture and traditions, their approach to their state. I want to start biking more. Social impact issues. Cooperation with other organisations and creating more visibility of our organisation.
- Biking. Estonians' attitude to nature, how to take care of the environment. I like Estonia, the Let's Do It team. I have already established a meeting with the local Let's Do It people. Social impact issues.
- Self-efficiency of Estonians, mechanism of local economy. Estonians like to spend their money in Estonia, hike in Estonia, and therefore the national economy is OK here as people contribute to it. Volunteers invest their personal time and efforts...
- Kaidi might have been right that Estonia is a wonderful place to be and live in. People like their country, they take care of houses, nature. I learnt what is the real secret of Estonia and it seems to be true. I am very impressed by the civil society, sometimes things are made without any money, people are hardworking.
- Trust towards authorities, e-elections and other high-tech things. Nature. No police on the streets. Good practical examples from nature, crowd sourcing. Lots of success stories. One more day would have been needed.
- Hospitality, people's attitude to nature and the government. Very fruitful visit. We had lots of fun. High organisational quality. Too intensive programme. No time to summarise and reflect enough. I want to increase the visibility of my organisation, general management. I made a long list of ideas I must discuss with my colleagues.
- I was inspired; we should start a dancing festival in Moldova or something in order to get people together. We should start networking and a better communication process among Moldovan people, sometimes we only meet in foreign countries. I want to reshape the website of our organisation, implement impact measurement issues. Crowd sourcing is really beautiful. And I take with me the words of Anne: "*Freedom has no price*".
- Estonian people and their connection to the country. Forest, sea, seashore always stays for Estonia. Meeting with NENO, Praxes, nature schools, story of the manor houses. Estonian model is an amazing one. You have all the reasons to be proud of your country. Three things not so good: ashtrays and wine are missing and Anne is hiking too fast for me ;)
- Two very impressive things: Estonians trust their government, and no mosquitos. Everything was very useful, Let's Do It, NENO, crowd sourcing and so on...
- Ability to love simple things, Let's Do It.
- For the second time you impress me, you are easy-going and open-minded people. In Moldova we complicate things. We are afraid to do things. You just do it. Environmental education centres.
- It was a huge emotional boost and got me thinking is what I am doing worth doing? Everybody seems to like what they do and they do what they like and this is like this. It is so simple. All the communication is understandable and user friendly. Great, I want to thank you!

3. What examples will help you to develop your country network?

One presenter per country

Moldova

A few years ago we had several discussions about networking, we stopped these discussions, but we are in real need of it. We need to find methods to unify people, like the presented cases (opinion festivals, song festivals). The methods of the Urban Lab could also be used. Also NENO gave a very good method to use: filter the NGOs, active NGOs have more power and capacity together. NENO does not want all the organisations among themselves but only the best ones. We could also start with the active ones who want to join.

It would be good to start with some concrete tool/plan of engagement to implement some documents, as for example crowd sourcing.

Belarus

Crowd sourcing could be one networking tool, it is important to create a simple and attractive model. Every person is really important. It is obvious to be less ambitious but to lay yourself out and to make people who work with you really happy and make them want to come and work with you.

Short brainstorming about ideas for the extension of the SECTOR project

- Proper evaluation of this part of the SECTOR project should be done.
- Everything is still half way.
- Poor involvement of Belarusian stakeholders in the project proposal writing, it should be avoided while extension is put ahead.
- More intensive involvement of stakeholders.
- Good to keep all the components of SECTOR.
- Viability: organisations in the process would like to share their experiences with other organisations, when the toolkit is ready we can do it.
- Integrate Transnistria better, share with them the examples.
- Follow up the Master Class using the same system as Bruno came up with – with the roadmap, etc.
- Rural territory development issues (Belarus) to include in SECTOR.
- Community development issues (neighbourhood association etc.).
- Viability programme also obligatory for networks.
- Organisations that have gone through the viability to share their experiences with other organisations within and outside the country.
- Unify different strategic programmes.
- Internship, shadow job to be introduced.

- YEL! course to continue.
- Social entrepreneurship and services.
- Local public authority to get to the Master Class (get people who need to work together to understand the issues in a similar way).
- Networking money to be increased.
- Green Pack/Citizens Pack for Moldova.

Ideas for bilateral cooperation (Estonia–Moldova, Estonia–Belarus)

1. Water management
2. Waste management
3. Approximation to EU legislation
4. Implementation of PP requirements (Aarhus and other instruments), access to information
5. Environmental and urban education
6. Training for trainers
7. More study visits
8. Ecological tourism, nature trails

Note from study tour organiser Kaidi Tingas:

- All the organisations we visited are happy to set up an internship programme for those who are interested – could be written into SECTOR.
- The Moldovan ambassador in Estonia is very active and wants to get from the Moldovan team three concrete environmental ideas to be implemented bilaterally between Moldova and Estonia – discussion still needs to be held on these issues. He is ready for lobbying and finding money.
- Estonian and Moldovan ministries of the environment have a bilateral cooperation agreement, although it is quite loose: one year a Moldovan delegation comes to Estonia and another year Estonians go to Moldova. Ideas for visits and cooperation are welcomed also by NGOs. The Estonian ministry is very open to bring them to the table (e.g. on how the ministry organises participation processes and involves CSOs in decision making).
- E-governance issues via e-governance academy www.ega.ee (see <http://www.ega.ee/node/1220> Estonian and Moldovan e-cooperation), and once a year a cooperation application for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Projects that have found funding can be seen here: <https://peaveeb.vm.ee/?q=en/node/74>