

Orange Moldova Foundation helps women to develop their entrepreneurial spirit

Another 655 women and girls have benefited from digital and entrepreneurial education courses provided under Women's Digital Center Project, 2020-2021 edition. Women aged between 18 and 45 years old have been helped for a period of six months to undertake the first steps in the entrepreneurship area and to promote online their start-ups and already existing businesses. The project is fulfilled with the financial support provided by Orange Moldova Foundation and implemented by the Educational Advising Center.

Ludmila Nistorică, President of Orange Moldova Foundation Board: "Digital inclusion and fairness represent a pillar of Orange social responsibility strategy, aiming to reduce inequalities in access to Internet, devices and digital skills. We really want to get closer to women from the entire country, for them to launch interesting projects and develop business ideas, to become more competitive on the labor market, more independent and to remain home, around their loved ones. The interest shown by all the participants and the impressive results obtained by them really encourage us to continue and to develop the project. Orange Moldova Foundation further intends to support the community so as to harness together and in a responsible way all the opportunities provided by digital innovations and technologies".

Angela Mușet, Director, Educational Advising Center: "The project is of great relevance and value not only from the perspective of opening new training opportunities in the digital and entrepreneurial areas, but also of educating and encouraging the beneficiaries to believe in their own powers and capacities".

The training courses were provided in three Women's Digital Centers, established and equipped under the NGO "CONTACT-Cahul" Center from Cahul, NGO Social-Economic Policies "CONSENS" Center from Sângerei, and NGO "FĂCLIA" from Ungheni in 2019. To implement the respective project, the partner Centers received grants in the form of financial resources and digital equipment additionally to the set donated in the previous edition. As well, the training course curriculum got extended this year: from 2 modules to 4 modules. Hence, the trainings (provided in online and offline format) focused on 4 basic components: digital literacy, initiation in entrepreneurship area, business online promotion, useful apps and website creation.

Angela Ciocârlan, President, NGO for Children and Youth "Făclia", Ungheni: "The essential lesson learned would be that even during difficult times, whenever we think that the ground is washed away from beneath, we actually can act by learning. Another takeaway would be that a flexible program gives the participants the possibility to learn and to apply whatever they learn during their free time. And last but not the least, we have learned from each other. We became a more powerful and well-known organization in the region".

Mihail Cucereanu, Director, NGO "CONTACT-Cahul" Center, Cahul: "The Project contributed a lot to the social-economic development of communities, as women are involved. Women are capable to change and renew the society in whole. But they need support, at their turn, as well as encouragement to participate on equal footing in the development of these communities".

An additional element of this year edition was the fact that Orange Moldova Foundation came up with a beautiful initiative meant for the beneficiaries of "Women's Digital Center" Project and namely the opportunities of **financial grants**.

In this context, by offering grants of 20.000 MDL each, the Small Grants' Call for Women intends to support and encourage 30 contest finalists in launching their start-ups or developing their existing business, as well as in growing their economic opportunities. The financial grants are meant for procuring technological equipment, devices, working tools and other assets related to the operational cycle and/or for financing qualification/retraining or professional development courses.



Thus, a number of 115 applications were submitted in this contest – all of them signed by women/girls from all over the Republic of Moldova, who got trained by the trainers from Women’s Digital Centers. As a result of the applications’ assessment by an Independent Experts’ Commission, 30 women with business idea projects got selected to receive financial grants for up to 20.000 MDL each. The grant-winning projects will be implemented during October 2021 – February 2022.

Alionușca Ralea, business woman, Călărași: ”Besides the fact that I have learned a lot of things in this program, this project provided me the possibility to participate in the grants’ contest in which I won 20.000 MDL for business development. This is an important support for us and just on time, because we plan to extend our production of covers for musical and photo-video equipment, by procuring the necessary raw material and a new sewing machine”.

Irina Bordian, business woman, Rezina: ”We have been thinking since long ago to diversify our services to be provided in the cold salt mine. We decided to enrich our services with new procedures and we have participated in the Orange Moldova Foundation project, which provided us the opportunity to improvise a phyto barrel. We would not have had the possibility to do it with our own resources. Now, we are sure that our clients will love it”.

Women Digital Center is a digital and entrepreneurial education project for women and girls from the Republic of Moldova. The project was launched in 2019, with the full financial support from Orange Moldova Foundation, creating and equipping three digital centers for women from regions. Starting in 2020, thanks to the financial support provided by Orange Moldova and ATIC, under the Tekwill Project, financially supported by the USAID and Sweden, Women’s Digital Center got extended in two other regions of the country. In total, over 1630 women benefited from free-of-charge courses within the two editions of the project. The five centers are located in Bălți, Comrat, Cahul, Ungheni municipium’s and Sângerei town.

More information about the project may be accessed on www.eac.md/ro