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KEY HIGHLIGHTS 2022 - 2023

ARMENIA





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"As the mayor of Areni, I am glad to be a part of the EU and UNDP M4EG project, where we are embracing a portfolio approach to address the complexities of urban development. This approach recognizes that there is no single solution to the challenges cities face,"

Husik Sahakyan

Areni Mayor

"The Urban Imaginariness programme under the M4EG has been an eye-opening experience for our municipality. By researching and evaluating multiple cross-cutting areas, we are able to address our unique challenges and drive sustainable growth for the future,"

Nazeli Arsenyan

Ashtarak City Council Member

"We have shared this approach with active youth groups in the community which is critical. We are going to continue using this process going forward,"

Ashot Tserunyan

Charentsavan Municipality Local Economic Development Officer

"Seeing support from the EU and UNDP, and commitment of the government, the investors have become further enthusiastic!"

Karine Simonyan

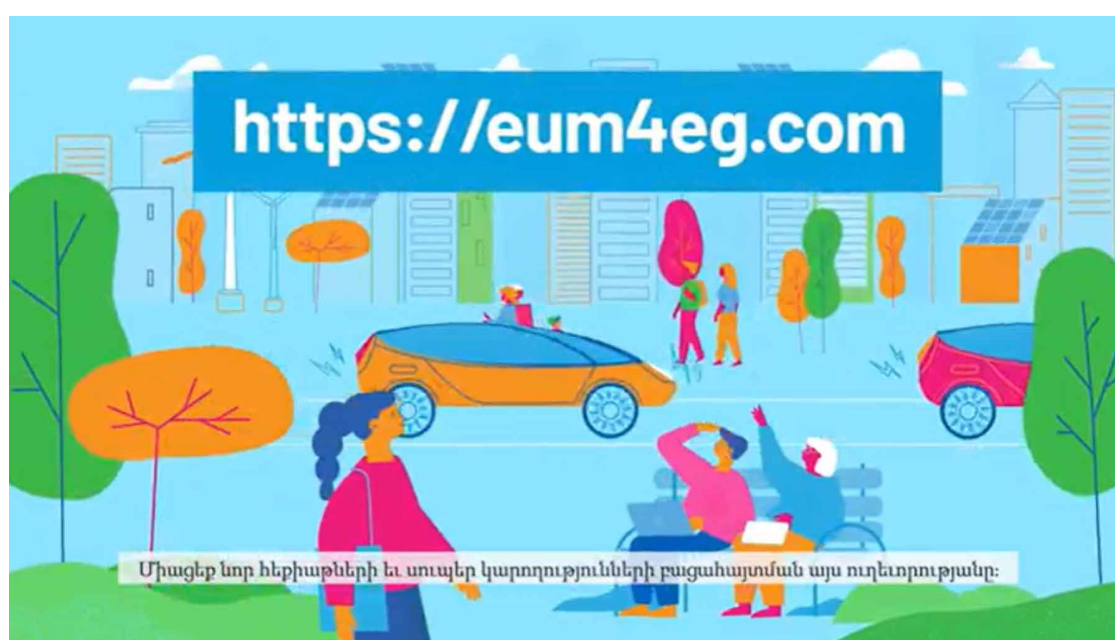
Alaverdi Municipality Local Economic Development Officer

"Deep engagement with M4EG created numerous valuable learning opportunities for our Municipal staff, tools and approaches which would be critical in sporting us to address the complex development challenges,"

Vardges Samsonyan

Gyumri Mayor

Background & translated version of the intro video



Key figures

number of total members / new member	48 (8 new in 2022)
number of reconfirmed members	at least 30,000
people reached via comms channel	67 events, sessions, meetings
number of events / sessions / meetings, workshops, info-sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 Portfolio Bootcamps• 15 Learning events for M4EG Network incl. on Innovative Urban Development Approaches• 10 Urban Imaginaries mentorship sessions• 6 Portfolio learning sessions• 16 Portfolio design session• 18 Portfolio team working meetings
number of grantees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3 under Portfolio Journey• 3 under Urban Imaginaries

Key events

Urban Innovation Forum

Yerevan, 30 November 2022



DESCRIPTION AND OUTCOMES
UNDP together with the EU Delegation to Armenia and Yerevan Municipality hold and Urban Innovation Forum to promote Innovation and Learning within the M4EG Network. The event aimed at generating new innovative solutions across Armenia municipality to strengthen local communities.



“Such meetings are important for municipalities as they introduce us to new tools and mechanisms,”

Emma Baghdasaryan
Expert Gyumri municipality

Six Armenian municipalities are part of the deep engagement, and participate in Portfolio Journey and Urban Imaginaries programme.

- Areni, Gyumri, Kapan were selected for the Portfolio Journey.
- Alaverdi, Ashtarak, Charentsavan were selected for Urban Imaginaries Programme.

Areni

Portfolio development and public engagement meetings

June - October 2022



Gyumri

Portfolio Development Bootcamp

5 - 9 December 2022



Pushing the boundaries: pioneering for change

Alaverdi

Reimagining community cultural spaces



STATEMENT

How might the Municipality redesign public spaces to reinvigorate the city's art and culture scene for residents as well as a way to attract tourists?

EXPERIMENT

Renovation of the city's Culture House.
The team set-up an experiment at the Alaverdi's Culture House and hosted different cultural groups for concerts and other events to understand better the interest levels of the city's residents. The team engaged with the owner of the building to facilitate this and collaborated with local businesses and media to promote and hold performances for the city's residents.

"I am surprised at the results of the interviews! It seems the residents are really keen to get involved and they have a MUCH bigger understanding of the issue than what we have."

"The work helped us identify small but important issues to solve for the larger problem. We learnt to experiment to avoid larger mistakes in the future,"

Karine Simonyan

Local Economic Development Officer,
Alaverdi

Ashtarak

Reimagining public transport between communities



STATEMENT

How might the Municipality prioritise routes and timings in a way so as to encourage usage by residents?

EXPERIMENT

Operationalizing an inter-settlement route. Within the scope of this experiment, one minibus was leased for the experimental route twice a day. According to the team's projections, around 130 passengers on a daily basis would use this route. This assumption was confirmed during testing, where residents confirmed how valuable this new service was. The team also gathered important insights such as on frequency and timetables of routes, the need to introduce bigger buses at some times of the day and ensuring the buses are accessible.

“Through this program, we realised that as a result of Urban Imaginaries, and the process and tools for identifying problems and solving them, has helped us and supported us a lot during this testing process. Our community is already using this and seeing the impact of applying these tools. Our working group is encouraged by the progress made through the methodology and we will apply it in other projects going into 2023,”

Ishkhan Barseghyan

Local Economic Development Officer,
Ashtarak Municipality

Charentsavan

Reimagining public spaces and key heritage sites



STATEMENT

How might the Municipality build more functional and better designed pedestrian pathways and connect local businesses of Charentsavan and its surrounding rural areas?

EXPERIMENT

Renovation of the city's Culture House. One part of Central Street, the Cinema Theatre Square, was refurbished into a cultural space. After tiling, roofing and installing a lighting system, a cultural event was organised. Following this, the opposite part of the Central Street was also renovated, and the area adjacent to the square, which was used by the elderly was also tiled.

“We saw how important these improvements were, and how people were thankful to have such a cultural space in the city. All this gives us confidence to believe that we’ll continue further in our work, especially in engaging with community and rural residents,”

Ashot Tserunyan

Local Economic Development Officer,
Charentsavan

Areni

Sustainable Tourism Development Portfolio

Areni Municipality together with its population and local businesses, have the intent to leverage the distinct set of resources and capabilities. The collective will and well known reputation as a wine region to design and dynamically manage an Urban Makeover Portfolio of Development Options, that attracts resources, informs policies and models actions, as a transformative intervention in the Sustainable Tourism space in the consolidated community of Areni to produce the following system-wide effects:

- Agreed shared ambition and strategic argument that commits to transformation and mobilises all stakeholders towards the creation of an inclusive, innovative and resilient tourism sector.
- Enable and maintain a clean, green and safe environment for visitors and residents across generations, allowing social exchanges and mutual learning taking place.
- A diverse, connected, sustainable and attractive tourism economy that attracts funding towards infrastructure renewal and other benefits applied to Areni's community as a whole.

Gyumri

Equitable and Resilient Cultural Tourism Portfolio



The Department of Culture & Youth Affairs of Gyumri Municipality has the intention to leverage our distinct set of resources and capabilities of the Gyumri municipality and municipal run cultural institutions in Gyumri to produce the following system-wide effects:

- Gyumri becomes a known destination for cultural tourism around the world
- The Municipality becomes the owner and manager of the comprehensive cultural tourism strategy in Gyumri
- Visitors have positive and memorable experiences throughout their entire journey to and in Gyumri
- Gyumri has the necessary infrastructure and conditions for the preservation and continuous replenishment of its cultural capital

Kapan

Participatory Community Wellbeing Development Portfolio



The municipality of Kapan have the intent to design and dynamically manage a portfolio of development options to attract resources, inform policy and model action to achieve the following transformation effects:

- Diversified economic opportunities, in service of the community
- Strong supportive social fabric
- Engaged Citizens with Agency
- Effective local authority

Learning opportunities

- Learning sessions under UI: Systems Thinking, Social Listening, Sensemaking
- Learning sessions under Portfolio: Deep Listening, Portfolio Design Bootcamp (four sessions), Dynamic management10 Urban Imaginaries - CPI weekly mentorship session
- Inspiration sessions "Storytelling for Systems Change" (July 20, 2022)
- Inspiration sessions "Participatory Foresight" (September 6, 2022)
- Inspiration sessions "Human Learning Systems" (October 25, 2022)

Updates

You can find more information on human centered design and the first cohort' journey under the Urban Imaginaries here. From early spring to summer of 2022, human-centered design thinking was introduced to the communities, where they explored their identified problem and vetted and designed solutions through end-user research with residents. In November, all three presented their learning and effects so far in a regional Show and Tell event.

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