

## **Perma Village: A Way to Sustainable Living!**

**Program:** Erasmus+ KA2 Capacity Building in the Field of Youth

**Deadline for partnerships:** 05.07.2017

The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) has announced a new Call for Proposals for Capacity Building projects under the Education, Training and Youth Programme Erasmus+. Capacity Building projects are transnational cooperation projects based on multilateral partnerships between organisations active in the field of youth.

### **Motivation behind the project:**

According to the UN World Urbanisation Prospects report, globally more people live in urban areas than in rural areas, with 54% of the world's population residing in urban areas in 2015. In 1950, 30% of the world's population was urban, and by 2050, 66% of the world's population is expected to be urban.

Europe is one of the most urbanised regions of today with 73% of the population residing in urban areas and Asia, specifically India, is urbanising faster than any other region of the world. Currently 33% of India's population reside in urban areas in comparison with 18% in 1960. The increasing urbanisation puts at risk the development of agriculture needed to ensure the Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG2) is met.

SDG 2 works towards ending hunger, achieving food security and improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture. To contribute in reaching SDG2 the main focus should be put on strengthening development of agriculture in rural areas and ensuring young people stay in rural areas, taking up farming as a viable livelihood option.

Currently in Europe and India the medium and large-scale farms are adapting to intensive farming production models intensifying the crop yield by soil exploitation, pesticide and fertiliser use and cultivating machines that cater to the needs of the processing industry and global markets pushing small scale farms out of business. The current model is achieved by increasing the input of capital and reducing the number of people employed.

The "*Perma Village: A Way to Sustainable Living!*" project works with large number of farming households and villages most affected by the urbanisation and machination of farms in Latvia, Germany, Italy and India. The villages where large number of medium and small scale farms have closed, farming families have left to cities for jobs in manufacturing and service industries. Youth of rural areas has no intention of prolonging their lives in villages that do not provide the necessary needs of today's youth - employment, transport connectivity, internet, cultural and social activities.

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The project works to create a sustainable, self-reliant village model, build capacities of the rural communities, specifically youth with fewer opportunities and farmers, encourage and promote youth active citizenship in shaping rural communities, generate and diversify employment opportunities for rural populations at a local level and foster exchange of best practices and establish strategic cooperation at a local, regional, national and global level among sustainable, self-reliant villages.

### **Problems the project aims to address:**

#### **1. Village, rural community-related:**

- Increasing interest and transformation into intensive, mechanized agriculture-practices with promotion of fertilizer and pesticide use contributing to the food processing industry and global markets;
- Lack of sustainable, self-reliant agricultural practices producing qualitative, organic food to the local populations

#### **2. Capacity-building, knowledge:**

- Lack of understanding, knowledge of year-round farming, diversification of crop yield;
- Lack of resources, support system in creating/maintaining inclusive village, permaculture-based agri-villages;
- Lack of entrepreneurial mindset, agri-business understanding within rural communities;
- No or very limited understanding/knowledge of global interaction of farming, greenhouse effect, creation and re-creation of own energy sources, water and soil management, agricultural waste and plant combination.

#### **3. Farmer-Youth-involvement:**

- Lack of youth involvement in farming and agriculture business management, inclusive rural community creation;
- Lack of motivation/understanding of active citizenship, ownership of community-matters

#### **4. Employment:**

- Intensified farming with highly mechanized practices massively reduce the number of employed resulting in urbanization of youth and closure of small and medium size farms;
- Lack of year-round employment options for rural youth with fewer opportunities at a local level (NEETs, migrants, disability)

#### **5. Eco-Tourism/Connectivity/Rural Vs Urban:**

- Lack of societal appreciation towards farming, agricultural business;
- Decreasing societal understanding of organic, sustainable farming;
- Lack of knowledge/understanding of healthy living, food processing and human-nature connection;

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- Lack of local, regional and national, as well as global cooperation for exchange of best practices/innovations;
- Limited or no interconnectivity with nearby farms, farmers/communities

The project aligns with the European policies of education, training and youth focusing on strengthening cooperation between organizations working in the field of sustainable agriculture, permaculture in farming, sustainable village creation, environment and capacity building of rural communities, specifically farmers and youth with fewer opportunities in Europe and India.

### **Innovations/Interventions to be developed during the project:**

**1. Perma Villages** (permaculture villages) - piloting permaculture methods on selected villages, creating sustainable, self-reliant, inclusive rural communities - *OERs & Toolkit*.

**2. Perma Farm Capacity Building Program** - using non-formal learning methodologies to build capacities of rural communities, specifically farmers and youth tailored to the local context to create and maintain permaculture farms and maintain sustainable, self-reliant villages - *Curriculum*

**2. ICT-based tool Perma Farm** - mobile app with integrated entrepreneurial training program based on gamification methodology to create healthy competition among rural youth encouraging to take up and generate agriculture-based, farming-related employment at a local level.

**3. Employment Generators** - Inclusive Perma Village model generating employment to the rural community, specifically the farmers and the youth with fewer opportunities at a local level - within agriculture, food processing, village tourism, non-seasonal employment.

**4. Eco-Tourism/Connectivity** - Perma Village brand creation promoting eco-tourism and permaculture-based farming - cooperation with educational institutions and established interconnectivity, twin-village model between Perma Villages in Europe and India.

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A Way to Sustainable Living!**

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