

OBJECTIVE 02

To promote human rights and democracy, involving citizens in policy dialogue, design and monitoring



FILM PRODUCTION TO PROMOTE CYPRUS WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH INITIATIVE PROJECT

CYPRUS WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH SOCIETY (CoHERS)



Photo: Cyprus Women's Health Research Initiative Project Film

THIS ACTION INVOLVED

Three short films to raise awareness on women's health.

Two long films to introduce the Cyprus Women's Health Research (COHERE) Initiative project and to encourage women to take part in research studies.

Broadcasting of women's health themed films in cinemas in 2018 and on social media from May 2018 to March 2020.

ABOUT CYPRUS WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH SOCIETY

Cyprus Women's Health Research Society (CoHERS) was founded in February 2017. Its objectives are to conduct scientific research to understand the prevalence of women's health conditions and women's access to health care systems as well as factors that may affect women's health conditions specific to the Eastern Mediterranean region, to advocate for awareness around women's health risk factors and diseases.

STORY OF THE ACTION

CoHERS is conducting comprehensive research on women's health and illness in the northern part of Cyprus. The purpose is to understand the health and disease patterns of Cypriot women and to establish a women's health resource to investigate the consequences of the Mediterranean lifestyle and genetic factors specific to the Eastern-Mediterranean populations. CoHERS' Grow Civic action produced five films to invite women to take part in the research and to raise awareness on women's health issues.



Photo: Cyprus Women's Health Research Initiative Project Film

"Considering the complete absence of data on women's health level in the Turkish Cypriot community, we aim to collect data from 8,000 women to estimate the prevalence of various women's health issues and associated symptomatology. We will map these issues geographically and investigate their distribution and frequency. We will also investigate the effects of the 'Mediterranean lifestyle' and other genetic factors specific to the Eastern-Mediterranean population on women's health. Finally, we will identify the social and economic burdens of the investigated issues, normalise the discussion around women's health and define symptoms for which preventive healthcare can prove beneficial."

Nilüfer Rahmioğlu

"The films that we have produced with the support of Grow Civic are playing an important role in encouraging women to join the project and in raising awareness on women's health conditions. The films highlight the lack of statistical data on women's health issues in our community and the need to create such data not only to have a clear picture of our problems but also to be able to provide better solutions."

Nilüfer Rahmioğlu

RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

CoHERS has been collaborating with more than fifteen civil society organisations, as well as representatives from the private and public sectors, in implementing their data collection and finalizing their mapping. They want their study and related recommendations to play a pivotal role in shaping public health policies in the future.

"The promoted project provides people with the necessary data to seek their rights from the healthcare system. Without actual data, we do not know the health status of the population, and public health policies and strategies cannot be based on actual problems. Moreover, women's health issues continue to be taboo and many women suffer without seeking treatment. The project and its results empower women to seek treatment and preventive care to increase their life quality."

The results of the Grow Civic supported action will be instrumental in setting priorities in women's public health issues, defining symptomatology and disease profiles and care-seeking patterns of women representative of the population and generating focused advocacy plans (e.g. bringing menstrual cycle/periods into the education system; breaking the taboos around talking about periods targeted to different publics).

WHAT'S NEXT?

CoHERS' first academic paper presenting the ethics and study design was accepted by BMC Women's Health Journal and published on the 3rd of April 2019. In the long term, they aim to continue raising awareness for patient support and specific health issues. While this project is taking place in the Turkish Cypriot community, they plan to compare the obtained data with the ones from the Republic of Cyprus to find similarities and develop a broader advocacy action.



Photo: Cyprus Women's Health Research Initiative Project Film

CoHERS needed to contact approximately 25,000 women to ensure to collect data from 8,000 of them. To this end, CoHERS disseminated short films on social media and various TV stations and showed them at a local movie theatre in 2018. The contribution of the films for spreading the awareness and the project is reflected by 7560 women taking part in the study.

TO FIND MORE ABOUT THE ACTION

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