

OBJECTIVE 01

To increase accountability and visibility of CSOs toward the public including measures to improve enabling environment for civil society

SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION CENTRE

MELİS EROĞLU, SEZİŞ THOMPSON,
DİDEM EROĞLU, EBRU DENİZ TEKMAN



Photo Credit: Social Transformation Centre



THIS ACTION INVOLVED

Setting up a CSO (Social Transformation Centre-STC) in November 2016.

Two animation videos promoting individual and corporate social responsibility.

A live crowdfunding event for selected civil society organisations (CSOs) on 30 June 2017, in Nicosia.

Participation in the "Philanthropy in the Western Balkans and Turkey Conference" in Belgrade from 4 to 6 July 2017.

ABOUT MELİS EROĞLU, SEZİŞ THOMPSON, DİDEM EROĞLU, EBRU DENİZ TEKMAN

The founders of the Social Transformation Centre, Melis Eroğlu, Seziş Thompson, Didem Eroğlu and Ebru Deniz Tekman have many years of experience in civil society actions. They know first-hand the hardships of fundraising in the northern part of Cyprus. They wanted to improve the philanthropy culture in the community by working with potential donors and CSOs on improving their trustworthiness and communication.

STORY OF THE ACTION

The Grow Civic action aimed not only to raise awareness on different societal problems but to also help develop an environment that will help civil society organizations thrive. The founders of STC believe that this type of environment can be created by enhancing philanthropy and specifically encouraging youth and women to become social entrepreneurs.

"Various CSOs exist in the northern part of Cyprus that support the environment, animal rights, women's rights, and youth rights, but a comprehensive centre didn't exist where all social rights were advocated for the whole community. We wanted to set up a civil society organization that would target the entire society. The centre exists mainly for promoting and advocating the concept of "giving back to the community", through corporate social responsibility and individual social responsibility. The centre's motto is "an enhanced culture of philanthropy is the key for the sustainability of civil society."

Melis Eroğlu

In November 2016, the Social Transformation Centre was registered with the mission to raise awareness on social entrepreneurship and philanthropy. The STC developed two animation videos that promoted corporate and individual social responsibility. It also organized a pilot live crowdfunding event aiming at fundraising and supporting selected CSOs working with disadvantaged and rural groups (Cyprus Foundation for Hearing and Speech Impairment-KIKEV, Society for the Protection of Turtles-SPOT, and Maraş Union and Solidarity Association - MARAŞ-DER) while raising awareness for their activities.

"The event was highly successful and gave us hope about the journey on which we are embarking. We have seen that people are ready to come together and invest in the community through financial and practical support of CSOs that they believe in."

Didem Eroğlu

"During the event, CSOs were able to raise funds, increase their visibility and promote their missions and visions to the wider community. It encouraged us to organize the Giving Circle event, in cooperation with Civic Space, which was another significant success in the history of the northern part of Cyprus' philanthropic culture."

Seziş Thompson

Under the scope of the action, Seziş Thompson, attended the "Philanthropy in the Western Balkans and Turkey Conference" in Belgrade from 4 to 6 of July 2017. This led to observing best practices and establishing new contacts, especially with Catalyst Balkans, which became an important partner.

RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

The action raised awareness on the concept of philanthropy through videos on corporate and individual giving and a live crowdfunding event that supported three local CSOs (called Giving Circle). In addition to the action, STC reviewed the legal texts which should encourage philanthropic actions, such as tax incentives, and found that the legal system does not sufficiently encourage such activities. It also showed that due to bureaucratic processes, even existing incentives are not promoted. These results will pave the way for a larger, more holistic advocacy campaign to promote philanthropy in the Turkish Cypriot community.

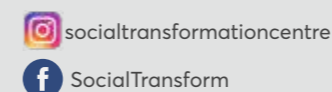


Photo Credit: Social Transformation Centre

WHAT'S NEXT?

Social Transformation Centre plans to go through an internal restructuring and strategic planning process to achieve its long-term goals. However, one of its concrete plans is to continue the Giving Circle events and turn them into annual philanthropic night, where different CSOs are supported, but most importantly, where the circle of potential donors gets bigger with each event.

TO FIND MORE ABOUT THE ACTION



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