

Ladies and Gentlemen

Dear organisers

Thank you very much for inviting us to this international forum

I am Armenuhi Sargsyan, a Program Development Director of Ayrudzy Eco-Cultural NGO from Armenia. Don't be surprised by this magic transformation, as in your Agenda under the name of our organization you can see the photo of a handsome man with a beard. He is my colleague, a Chair of our organization, Armen Kirakosyan, who preferred to stay in the hall with the other participants and to give the floor for the speech to me. Thank you, Armen.

I will briefly present the legislative framework for Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy and Energy Cooperatives in Armenia, as well as the Ayrudzy NGO's input and experience in this sphere.

RA Law on Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, which was adopted on November 9, 2004, aimed to identify mechanisms of state policy principles for development of energy efficiency and renewable energy and the mechanisms of their implementation.

In May 2016 the amendment were made in the RA Law "About the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy" enabling the use so called net metering. It gives an opportunity to use the electric net as an accumulator of the electricity generated in the own station, which stimulated construction of new solar and wind stations. Also the tariffs of electricity produced in solar and wind stations were set.

In the end of 2017 the Law has been amended again. The capacity of the plants without the license which generated the energy only for own needs has been increased. Today it is 150 kW for physical bodies, and the capacity of legal entities for a maximum of 500 kW. In case of greater capacity, you will need to obtain a license. During the last year, about 4.2 MW total power plants were constructed and licenses for the construction of solar stations for another 8 MW were generated. According to decision of PUBLIC SERVICES REGULATORY COMMISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA in September 2018 the new tariff of solar energy of 23.804 AMD (about 5 US cents) was set. It also allows to obtain a license for constructing up to 5MW capacity solar power plants.

Speaking about cooperatives: there is no any complete, comprehensive law on cooperatives in Armenian legislation. Cooperative sector is regulated by the following primary legal acts.

- The RA law "About Cooperatives" allows to establish a Production Cooperative in order to construct a power plant which uses any renewable energy source (sun, wind, etc.)

- The RA law “About the Consumers’ Cooperatives” (13.12.1993)
- RA Civil Legislation

Energy Cooperatives & Gender

The feasibility of energy cooperatives can be a stimulating way of solving the issues of gender equality and the protection of human rights. On the basis of the origin and operation of cooperatives the idea of equality is given. Cooperative will also allow women who are isolated in an individual work, unite and contribute to reaching a mutually beneficial result.

Energy cooperatives could ensure an operating platform and a healthy environment for overcoming social barriers existing between men and women contributing to the healthy internal functioning and development of community.

In order to maintain gender equality in energy cooperatives from the first day of its establishment, equal number of female and male representatives should be involved if it is possible.

With the same aim, in order to be effective, here is one of possible models which can be followed by the members of the cooperative: if the cooperative accountant is a woman she will contribute to the strengthening the accountant capacities of organization and development of knowledge of male members. Conversely, men share their experience of technical capabilities to female members of the cooperative.

Last several years Ayrudzy Eco-Cultural NGO have implemented more than 10 projects connected with renewable energy. The projects were implemented in rural areas in different regions of Armenia. They were focused on raising awareness of population on Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy and consist of both: theoretical and practical parts, such as the principals, construction and installation of solar heaters and solar power plants.

Since 2016 Ayrudzy NGO started its activities on promotion and establishment of Energy Cooperatives. In cooperation with WECF and financial support of EU we conducted the awareness seminars for 20 Non-Governmental organization of Armenia. In 2017 we started the activities directed on establishment of 1 mW Energy Cooperative in Basen Village of Shirak Region of Armenia. The space was provided by the local government and the Energy Capacity Assessment was done by Ayrudzy NGO; then the business plan was developed. Now according to September 2018 decision mentioned above it's possible to obtain a license for constructing the solar power plants and finalise the project.

Since March 2018 Ayrudzy NGO and Troja Environmental Association from Canakkale have been implementing “Under the Same Sun” project. It is a great chance to learn

from each other and to share our good practices on Energy efficiency and renewable energy, as well as Energy Cooperatives.

Now this Conference gives us an exceptional opportunity to widen our vision of Energy Cooperatives and to enrich it through the international experience of participants.

Thank you for attention.