

## **DESIGN WITH SOCIAL IMPACT**

### **Participants**

Zurich University of the Arts.

University of Nairobi, School of the Arts and Design.

Ss Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, Macedonia.

### **Project partners**

Biovision Africa Trust

Swiss Contact

### **Funder**

Mercator Stiftung

## **INTRODUCTION**

Design offers a wide range of knowledge and skills with a huge potential to deal with societal challenges in a sustainable and often unusual way. Through participatory design methods and dialogue with the affected people, designers can become facilitators of creative processes and enable affected communities and stakeholders to solve problems by themselves. The word "Design" is not limited to the creation of objects, but comprises the design of services, spaces and processes, hence, design has the power to be a catalyst for social change and innovation.

The program "Design with Social Impact" was initiated by the Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK) in February 2016. It aims to equip students from Switzerland, Macedonia and Kenya with knowledge and methods to work on social- environmental and ecological challenges. In interdisciplinary and intercultural teams, students work close with stakeholders and affected communities.

Three Design workshops and exchange programs have been offered for students from the participating universities in Zurich, Switzerland 2016, Skopje, Macedonia 2016 and Machakos, Kenya 2017. [Biovision](#) and [Swisscontact](#), two swiss NGOø, have supported the design workshops with their expertise, know-how and networks that allowed students to work on real cases in the field. The main focus for workshops has been on Organic agriculture and youth in business development. The program is funded by [Mercator](#) foundation.

### **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

- i. To design and develop innovative and user-centered solutions to local organic farmers.
- ii. To assess and use participatory methods and application of a social design approach.
- iii. To integrate modern science, innovative practices and traditional knowledge to maximize food production and reduce environmental effects.

### **CHALLENGE**

Design is a discipline that combines and translates complexities and needs into tangible and effective solutions. Design with Social Impact (DWSI) requires designers to embark on a journey and explore territories that had little or no design interventions. DWSI Designers take responsibility for work produced, understand that every design has influence on the environment and society. Creating solutions that have meaningful and positive development in the world.

The interdisciplinary and intercultural workshop being an exploration working with Swiss farmers and organic markets to identify the challenges in organic farming and provide design solutions to the same.

### **RESEARCH OUTCOMES**

- i. Collaboration technological output, cultural experiences and learning processes.

- ii. Ideation and prototyping of design solutions.
- iii. Testing of design solutions for implementation.
- iv. Feedback for success and failures for future research and development.

## **IMPACTS**

Farming is critical to all world economies and is one of the drivers of development in many countries. Issues with sustainability has led to the development and influence of organic agriculture in many countries to mitigate the changing climates, land degradation, pests and diseases, poverty alleviation and provide food security to the population growing demand. The total impact of the organic farming practice seen through animal health, human health, plant and environmental health. The collaboration is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of zero hunger and no poverty through sustainable food production, achievement of food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. Other associated goals include good health and wellbeing, clean water and sanitation, responsible consumption and production, climate action, life on land and partnerships for goals.

In Kenya the projects aims at achieving impact through the Vision 2030 pillars of social, political and economic goals through increasing value in agriculture (innovation and technology), increased productivity and more inclusive trade. It also offers human resource development through youth education (globally competitiveness), enhanced equity and wealth creation opportunities for the marginalized communities.

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