



## StartUP: Social Venture Workshop

### Objective of the programme

StartUP: Social Venture Workshop is a second phase of engagement for previous youth-led projects that went through UPSHIFT: Social Impact Workshop. The workshop's main goals are fostering entrepreneurial culture and employment for adolescents and youth. The activity includes experiential learning in market research, SWOT and KSF analysis, and use of the Lean Canvas and Business Model Toolkit, as well as additional financial support towards the establishment of social enterprises.

### The programme methodology

Participants in the StartUP methodology learn and concretely exercise 21<sup>st</sup> century approaches in developing the concept of a successful enterprise in categories including: market research, communication, customer segmentation, distribution channels, revenue stream and cost management.

The specific practices and techniques in which young people are capacitated via the StartUP methodology were selected as accessible and easy-to-use approaches to starting an enterprise and overcoming challenges commonly faced in the different industries. While the terminology ("Lean Canvas Business Model" "Key Success Factors" "SWOT analysis" etc.) is specialized, they consist of practical approaches and frameworks young people can call upon to understand market needs, identify key players in the industry, better understand the competition, create a clear picture of the predicted cost and revenue and equip the product and/or service with the main features needed to enter the market.

The StartUP methodology commences with introductory training and mobilization activities delivering to adolescents and youth capacities in researching that will help them gain a clear understanding of the entrepreneurial ecosystem (individuals, businesses and organizations) and its driving forces; gather in depth information regarding the competition, suppliers, and threats in the market; and understand customer perception and preferences. Mobilization activities, which involve the field presence of project staff and face-to-face interactions between staff and beneficiaries, are a vital confidence-building and accessibility measure: Field presence allows the team to have a tangible understanding of the market and the needs of the customers and creates awareness of the opportunities in the market and the industry of a particular product and/or service.

To ensure accessibility, the application is made available online and via presentations in schools, youth centres, and municipal offices in Albanian, Serbian, and English by the project staff, and the contact

information of project staff is made available to support teams requiring additional information. Selection of teams is conducted by project staff in cooperation with local partners; selection criteria prioritizes vulnerable groups (girls and women, young people from rural areas, young people from non-majority communities, and young people with disabilities). Additional criteria include: the quality of the application (valuing grit and effort over writing talent) and the impact of the proposed product and/or service in the aimed industry (in terms of severity and scope, and whether the product and/or service enriches or improves the existing industry, or create a new industry of its own).

### **StartUP Phases**

To better understand the market, after selection, participants learn how to craft market analysis surveys to acquire more information about potential users of their intended product and/or service. Throughout this phase known as “Phase 0, Market Research”, participants create an action plan.

In the next phase, “Phase 1 SWOT Analysis”, participants do an in-depth analysis of their product, comparing every detail with other existing or supplementing product and/or service in the market and the competition. Through this phase, the participants determine their strengths in comparison to the competition. Later, participants identify their product/service’s weaknesses and mechanisms for mitigating them. Lastly, the final section of the SWOT analysis is the threats section whereby participants identify external risk factors associated with their potential products and/or services.

In “Phase 2, Key Success Factors”, participants focus on analysing the key determinants for success of their product/service. The different aspects of a business model on which this exercise focuses are technology, marketing, employee skills, and organizational capacity.

In “Phase 3” Lean Canvas Business Model, participants work on customer segmentation, unique value proposition, channels, key metrics, unfair advantage, revenue streams and cost structure. This phase represents the most important elements pertinent to a well-crafted business model.

In “Phase 4” Business Model Toolkit, participants create a map of collaboration, channels of distribution, sales, transactions, suppliers and buyers, and communication mechanisms with relevant stakeholders.

### **Impact**

So far, there have been **4** Social Enterprises established, which operated in **4** different industries (from self-employment to kinetic technology for speech impaired people). These Social Enterprises included **500+** direct beneficiaries and **3,000+** indirect beneficiaries. Aside from learning how to develop and execute a business plan, the beneficiaries have also acquired negotiation skills, financial literacy skills, organizational management skills, communication skills and decision making skills in real enterprises.