

**2010 WACC International AWARD**  
**Report from non-profit union Women Against Cervical Cancer (Estonia)**

**1. Organization details**

Name of the organization: **Emakas.ee MTÜ** (until February 2010 we were Naised Emakakaelavähi Vastu MTÜ, in English: Non-profit union Women Against Cervical Cancer)

Location: Estonia

The Project leader: Gerly Kedelauk, union Women Against Cervical Cancer, Founding member and Member of the board from July 2009

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**2. Project background**

Non-profit union Emakas.ee is one of the most competent organizations to give information for Estonian women that they have to visit a doctor regularly. It is necessary to change women's beliefs and attitudes. From the questionnaire it is known that Estonian women often associate visits to the doctor only with pregnancy or with childbirth.

**Barriers to screening and to HPV vaccination are the same and are linked to a lack of information: the first reason is unawareness of the disease, of the virus and its link to cervical cancer.**

**3. Project aim**

To increase the awareness of the society about the possibilities of the prevention of cervical cancer through educational lectures and different activities. The goal of educational lectures is to teach young people to make right choices in their sexual behaviour, to take care of their health.

The long-term purpose is to turn society's attention to that problem and initiate women to have a more careful attitude to their health, already from school age.

**4. Project target**

WACC International Award application was for sexual lectures for young people and to their parents in spring 2010:

- a) topical lectures for young people from ages 12 to 18
- b) sexual education lectures for parents
- c) interactive new website [www.emakas.ee](http://www.emakas.ee)

With the WACC International Award money, the union organized lectures in 40 schools, 10 of them in Tallinn- capital of Estonia, 3 of them for Russian people because the Estonian population is 1,4 million and 400 000 of them are Russians.

In some schools there were only girls, in some boys and girls together. In bigger schools we made 2-3 lectures on same day, for example grades 6-7, grades 8-9, and high-school grades 10-12 separately. One afternoon lecture was for girls with their mothers. Parents' lectures were mainly in the evening, for students in the morning, during school hours.

In total ca 2350 people listened to these lectures.

For the same target groups we plan to make an educational video for distribution on memory sticks to schools and also for uploading to several internet sites. We contacted with the university Baltic Media School and we will make a competition among university students in the autumn. We give them our Power Point presentation and they have to make a short movie on the subject.

With the rest of the sponsorship money the union will cover in 2010 other target groups to amplify the message.

**4. Project team**

**a)** Project leader was Gerly Kedelauk - school selection, presentation preparations, organizing trainings, materials, conclusions.

**b)** Pille Minev - also a union member, who was responsible for choosing people who visited schools, their school selection, schedule, collecting feedback, etc.

- c) Doctor Terje Raud - founding member of the Estonian Colposcopy Union, responsible for lecturers' training and educational material in the presentation.
- d) Reet Roos- union member, organized brochures, printed materials.
- e) Tanel Kuningas - helped with translations from Estonian to English.
- f) Aive Levandi - union PR-person, wrote press releases, organized appearances in media.
- h) 2 lecturers who are specialized lecturers for young people.
- i) Advertising agency - made hand-outs, linked school lectures to our other activities and made negotiations with media partners.
- j) Sponsors - for example Dermoshop, who provided youth cosmetics to give to students who ask questions. Print media partners gave free space to increase awareness and talk about problems of young people, etc.
- k) Other union members - searched for sponsors for the awareness campaign for students to amplify the message.

## **5. Project preparations**

Gerly chose schools for the project. During the project we visited 40 schools that we had not visited earlier. Selected schools were situated all over Estonia.

Doctor Terje Raud went over our last year power point presentation and made additions.

The team organized 2 trainings for lecturers. In the first training union member presented the school lecture, so future lecturers could listen and ask questions like students. Then a union member introduced the union, for the lecturer to become a union fan and would continue sharing message after the project. In the second training doctor Terje Raud talked about cervical cancer, chances of prevention and detection, not as a lecturer speaks to students, but to prepare future lecturers to give answers to students questions.

Aive wrote press releases and booked spaces in media.

## **7. Project details**

I - The first part of the project - training specialists

The first part of the project was in the end of February to train five specialists who would conduct lectures in schools. Participants were 7 specialists who are working with union + 1 union member. These specialists were: 1 gynecologist, 1 midwife, 3 youth lecturers, 2 union members.

There were 2 training courses for specialists. One in North-Estonia and the other in South Estonia – in the city of Tartu.

The lecturers for specialists were a well-known and renowned doctor, a pap-smear specialist and an Estonian Sexuality Union project manager who talked how is better to get contact with young people to speak about sexual behavior.

II - The second part of the project – topical lectures

We organized topical lectures in schools all over the Estonia, from March to May.

The projects main focus is engaging Estonian young people to take care of their sexual health and trying to decrease the spread of Human Papilloma Virus (HPV).

The goal was to make them think about their own body and health. Cervical cancer is the first cancer for what the cause is known. Through these lectures the parents and teachers can learn to make better choices and support and guide their children and young people.

III - The third part of the project

Making a new interactive website [www.emakas.ee](http://www.emakas.ee) (not made with WACC Award money). The unions' site was old-fashioned and static. The union will create a new site that is easily navigable and changeable. There is information about HPV, PAP test, colposcopy, cervical cancer and prevention in Estonian, Russian and English. Also all information about the union, activities, galleries, information on how to become a supporting member or a sponsor. Also questionnaires and forums where specialists will answer peoples questions. Also a place to tell your story and places for banners that we can offer to our sponsors. The plan is to gather supporters, help-seekers, doctors and other related people. We told at schools that people who are interested to see more, are welcome to read from our new website, with the main parts published in June 2010.

VI - Informative activities, press releases, interviews throughout the year

Some main topics in Spring 2010 were:

- WACC Award winning, all about WACC-Network
- Topical lectures, how they went and how it ended
- New calendars with the message
- Co-campaign with sports magazine Hers

- HPV prevention
- other events: out-door campaign, Mothers' and Womens' Day events, etc.

### **Lecture structure**

The main project activities were sexual education lessons carried out by specialists. They all had medical or social education and a lot of extra training for communicating with young people. And they have long-term experience as lecturers.

The lecture lasted 45 minutes. Training started with a 20 minutes lecture.

The material of the lecture was coordinated with doctors and the audience was based on age.

The material (Power Point presentation) of the lecture was coordinated with the medical faculty of Tartu University and with the National Institute for Health Development. Topics in the lecture included sexual health, HPV, PAP-smear, necessity to visit a gynecologist and advice on how to live without sexually transmitted infections. The use of a lot of photo material gave the possibility to communicate in a more free form. Materials took into account the students' age.

After every lecture was a questionnaire and then 10 minutes for interactive questions. The lecturer left simple handouts to everyone, they are composed by the union, gynecologists and the Estonian Cancer Society. Also a small calendar with the message: Cervical cancer is preventable, visit a gynecologist regularly. Calendars are business-card size and easy to fit inside a wallet to mark the menstrual cycle.

In schools where there was no lecture for parents, we gave handouts for children and kindly asked them to show them to their mothers because they certainly want their mothers to be healthy and to know how to prevent HPV.

### **8. Project feedback and outcome**

By the end of May 2010, within 3 years, the union had visited already 70% of all primary and high-schools in Estonia.

The main purpose of the project was to raise the awareness of good sexual and reproductive health among young people and their families to reduce the number of sexually transmitted infections (including HIV).

All schools were positively surprised when we contacted them to offer a free lecture about sexual health and HPV. Only one school from Tallinn said that they just had an HIV lecture, so could we come in Autumn.

Smaller schools in South-Estonia were extremely happy, they said that usually those kind of projects are for bigger schools, they never had a guest lecture. They offered coffee, tea and biscuits after lectures. Those lectures were mentioned in local newspapers also.

After lectures, almost always smaller groups of students stayed in the classroom with the lecturer to ask several questions in a more intimate circle. Some students were afraid to ask questions in front of class mates so they stayed to ask them later.

Main questions were:

- Can I get HPV from my parents/mother?
- Should a boy go to a doctor also?
- Is there any more information for young people?
- How much I have to pay for a gynecologist' visit?
- Where should I go to visit a gynecologist?
- Can I go visit a gynecologist with my boyfriend or mother?
- Are there any pills against HPV?
- My vagina produces a strange smell, might it be caused by HPV?
- How much does HPV vaccine cost?

**Lecturers** who took part of this project know how sexually transmitted infections are spread, know what gynecologists are doing and will continue spreading this message among their friends.

As parents they know how to speak with their children. They enjoyed this project so some of them will continue working with union by charity.

**Students** who took part of this project know how sexually transmitted infections are spread, know what gynecologists are doing, know not to be afraid them and know how to protect themselves and their partners against HPV. They will be aware where to get consultation and medical treatment in Estonia and also where to get more information in the internet. They will spread this message among other young people, share it with friends, family and relatives.

When students after each lecture filled the questionnaire about what kind of new information they

acquired, they did not know all the right answers so they immediately wanted to know those too. They started to read hand-outs, ask questions from class mates and from lecturers, often individually.

**Parents** and **teachers** who took part in this project know how sexually transmitted infections are spread, know what gynecologists are doing and what is happening inside young peoples' heads and bodies, what are the dangers, how to take care their health and how to support their children, so young people can discuss this topic with them. They will also continue spreading this message among their friends. Teachers asked for materials so they can use them in the next school year.

Interactive website helps to share information about cervical cancer.

Experience of the school tour demonstrates that the topic of sexual health is very important to teachers and pupils. In quite many schools the teachers have asked for the lecture material to be left with them.

Also the specialists with whom we had meetings after lectures, gave feedback and details about schools to give the union a chance to improve the lecture. Also it was possible to chart social pressure points concerning the topic and list most frequently asked questions, to focus our activities and messages in the future.

With this project it is possible to save Estonian women's lives and the outcome is more wholesome families.