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# One World In Schools

Inspiring the Next  
Generation  
of Active Citizens



Alliance 2015

towards the eradication of poverty



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## WHAT IS OWIS?

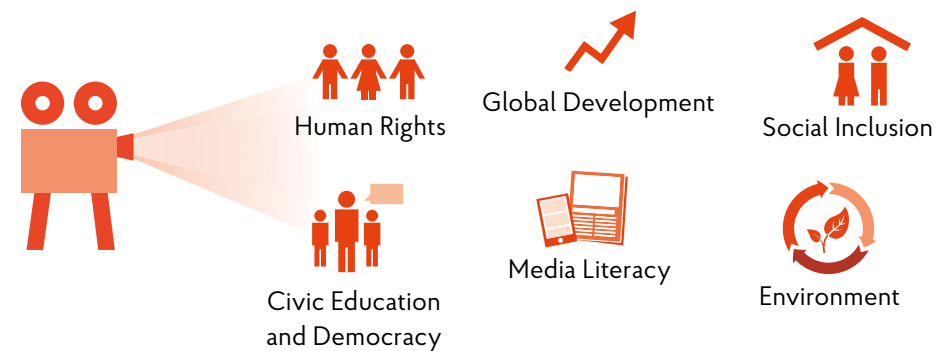
**One World in Schools (OWIS)** is an innovative teaching methodology that uses documentary films and activities to educate and empower the next generation of active citizens. Combining critical thinking and civic engagement with the visual power of film, OWIS has been used in 14 countries worldwide. Developed by People in Need in 2001 to build on the organization's One World human rights film festival, OWIS introduces youth, youth workers and teachers to a range of topics via documentary films and accompanying teaching manuals and activities. The methodology is constantly upgraded to meet changing needs by PIN's Prague-based OWIS team with emerging themes such as media literacy and migration, among others. Via the OWIS documentary film methodology, the saying "seeing is believing" becomes reality by fostering the critical thinking skills of youth and providing them with concrete examples of the power of individuals to make a change in their society.

Beyond the classroom, OWIS can include several integrated activities including OWIS Film Clubs, youth-led community projects, student community leader awards, civic journalism projects and mock elections. These initiatives build on the momentum created by the OWIS films and support youth to make a change in their community via a range of actions from public awareness raising and education campaigns to local-level advocacy.

Depending on the selected themes, OWIS addresses several cross-cutting issues including environment, social inclusion, conflict sensitivity, gender, social cohesion, peacebuilding, among others.

## OWIS Themes

PIN has an extensive library of films, accompanying materials and activities structured in core thematic areas:



# OWIS WORLDWIDE

OWIS has been implemented in 14 countries worldwide since 2001.

## Czech Republic

Operating since 2001 with currently more than 3700 schools registered and using OWIS methodology



## Georgia

OWIS in Georgia has reached over 600 schools and 6 youth houses since 2012



## Mongolia

OWIS human rights education in schools from 2012-2015

## Moldova

Introduction of OWIS Media Literacy programs in 2018



## Angola

Pilot of the first OWIS program in Africa in 2020 as part of a youth civic engagement project.

## THE IMPACT OF OWIS

The impact of OWIS is clear – it opens the eyes of young people who would otherwise have limited opportunities to develop their critical thinking skills or imagine how they can make a difference in their society. Recent OWIS student surveys conducted by PIN in the Czech Republic highlighted that OWIS students are more aware of current events and social problems and more tolerant of migrants and the Roma community in comparison to the national average. An external evaluation of OWIS in 2014 noted that the program’s “greatest impact could be observed in improving the quality of education on human rights and other social issues in Georgian and Armenian schools.”

While measuring the long-term impact of the program can be a challenge given the young target groups often move on to university and larger cities, follow up monitoring of OWIS participants in several countries has enabled PIN to follow both the teachers and youth participants after project completion. In many cases, OWIS participants go on to become student leaders at their universities and working in the community and government service spheres in the years following their involvement with OWIS.

*“Documentaries are a great way to initiating debates and promoting interest among students in human rights topics and enabling them to form their opinions and attitudes.”*

*“Unknown content becomes accessible, it enables overcoming routine in teaching and awakens interest in students, provides life-relevant knowledge.”*

*“Concrete and emotionally powerful human stories told through documentary films can have a much deeper impact than hundreds of words.”*

*“A documentary film is an opportunity for marginalized people to play the main role, and that the viewer understands the complexity of the world in which he lives. Thus, documentary engaged movies contribute to the development of democratic values in society”*





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## WHO IS OWIS FOR?

OWIS targets the next generation of active citizens and lays the foundation for them to hold their governments accountable and responsive to the needs of their constituents. The methodology achieves this via a range of film topics and follow up activities that introduce young people to civic life. OWIS focuses on strengthening the capacity of teachers and youth leaders to deliver the methodology while youth themselves engage in integrated activities aimed at developing active citizens. As a result, it is a starting point from which youth can critically analyse the world around them and gain the skills and motivation to fight injustice and improve the communities in which they live.

## WHERE DO YOU IMPLEMENT OWIS?

OWIS is implemented via different approaches and partners, with the aim to ensure the best quality and outreach to the target groups given the specific context in the target country.

One of the most important questions to ask when considering OWIS is whether the program will be more effective within the formal or non-formal education sector. Depending on the specific country context and PIN or local partners' relations with education authorities, OWIS can be implemented directly in schools, youth centers or social hubs managed either by local organizations or government authorities.

Integrating OWIS into official formal education system is the most effective to ensure longer-term sustainability and institutionalization. This can include being adopted as part of the government's official civic education curricula, teachers being officially recognized for their capacity to deliver the OWIS methodology and the OWIS trainings being paid for by the Ministry of Education. However, such a goal can't be achieved overnight and requires strong relations with relevant educational authorities and often a track record implementing OWIS in the country.

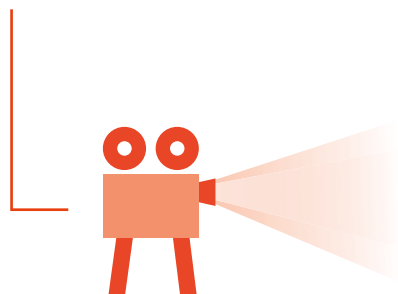
OWIS can also be an effective methodology via community-based structures such as community centers, youth houses or social hubs. Such an approach often requires a local partner to support with the day-to-day operation of the program and be trained in order to eventually handover the OWIS methodology. By working via these community-level structures, OWIS has the potential to reach a wider audience outside of the school system and integrate into the non-formal education sphere.

## HOW DOES OWIS WORK?

OWIS uses documentary films to initiate debate about complicated topics with the aim to change attitudes among the younger generation. It is an indispensable tool to develop critical thinking skills and can be adapted to focus on a variety of topics including human rights, environmental protection, among others. The films are organized in audio visual lessons jointly designed by OWIS experts and teachers and include a documentary film, lesson plans, accompanying interactive activities/discussion points and recommended sources for further research. As part of the OWIS 'package', all participating teachers are trained on how to use documentary films as a teaching method and organize lessons using the OWIS materials. Outside of the classroom, OWIS can also be a non-formal education tool by local organizations or youth groups going further attitude change and inspiring young people to changes in their communities.

### Film and Activity Selection

Film selection is the first and the most important step for OWIS projects. Relevance of the films greatly affect the effectiveness of the methodology and a number of criteria are taken into account including country context, topic, length of the films, target groups age, etc. Films are protected by copyrights and PIN organizes licence agreements with film directors or production companies. Once the films are selected, a methodological manual is developed that includes contextual details to the specific theme, synopsis of the films, descriptions of specific interactive activities and worksheets for the OWIS moderators.



### Resources Required

Depending on the specific country context, OWIS requires a minimum level of technical equipment and materials such as data projectors, DVD players or laptops for USB sticks and printed materials for production of methodological guides.



### Capacity Building of Teachers and Youth Leaders

Well-trained teachers and youth leaders are crucial to the success of OWIS. Led by OWIS experts, the OWIS trainings include overall methodology description, introduction to the manual and overview of the basic tools for non-formal education. Part of the training includes actual OWIS screenings and follow up activities led by participants themselves. The trainers provide personalized feedback during the trainings and ongoing support is provided to OWIS moderators during project implementation.



### Implementation and Monitoring

The OWIS monitoring process is inseparable part of the project implementation and has important impact on its effectiveness and quality. It includes the regular visits to the screenings, where a monitoring officer provides feedback to teachers and youth leaders on the reflection after the screenings, facilitation of discussions, managing group dynamics, providing clear instructions for the interactive activities etc. This is, in a way, a continuation of the capacity building process and is highly appreciated by teachers. The process also includes feedback mechanism - experience-sharing meetings among teachers in orders to incorporate lessons learned in the implementation process and ensure better quality of screenings.



## OWIS INNOVATIONS

OWIS is more than films – it’s an integrated methodology that uses documentary films as a starting point to engage youth and develop the next generation of informed, active citizens. OWIS can include a range of innovative activities to complement the documentary film methodology.



### **OWIS in Action – Community-based Youth Initiatives**

To translate the students’ heightened awareness of different themes addressed by the selected films into civic action, OWIS participants can have the opportunity to implement OWIS in Action initiatives. Youth can be provided with small grants to implement a range of community-level civic initiatives. Interested students work together with their skills in planning and implementing a small project. The initiatives can range from public debates and community improvement initiatives to public information campaigns and cultural events. The aim is two-fold: empower youth with the skills and means to implement small civic projects and motivate and engage the wider population.

### **Gratias Tibi Award - Awarding youth who make the “world a better place”**

Since 2013, OWIS in the Czech Republic has been awarding the Gratias Tibi Award to active young people who are not afraid to be engaged in public affairs. The aim is to thank young people for their dedication to civic life, motivate others to engage and show the wider public that young people care about the world that surrounds them. In 2018, the Gratias Tibi was awarded to were leaders of a project called Consent that educates students, bartenders, and parents about sexual harassment – what it is and how to prevent it.

### **Hledá se...? Searching for...?**

“Searching for....?” is an online initiative that combines competition with educational and debate activities targeting youth in the Czech Republic. From 2016-2018, PIN organized “Searching for a LEADr” to encourage and support youth to become civic leaders and engage in public life and in 2019, PIN organized “Searching for a Journalist”. Similar to modern reality TV competition shows, there is an open competition to be selected for “Searching for....?” and selected applicants then go on to participate in workshops, have specific tasks and compete with other youth to win. Youth throughout the Czech Republic follow the competition live online and themselves be motivated to engage in civic life like the “Searching for...?” competitors.

### **Mock Student Elections – Preparing the next generation of voters**

OWIS can be adapted to align with a country’s election cycle and mock student elections are an innovative way to get youth engaged in the process. Prior to the election, films and accompanying materials can be selected that tie to democracy, elections and other related subjects to spark the interest among students. The OWIS team then prepares an election toolkit for target schools that include ballot papers, instructions for voters and voting commissions, posters and signs that students use to promote the election event, brochures introducing the specific election, whether it is municipal or national.

## SPOTLIGHT ON MEDIA LITERACY

In recent years, the dramatic growth in citizens' exposure to fake news and propaganda via social media and online sources has highlighted the need for youth to have the knowledge and tools to objectively analyze the myriad of information available.

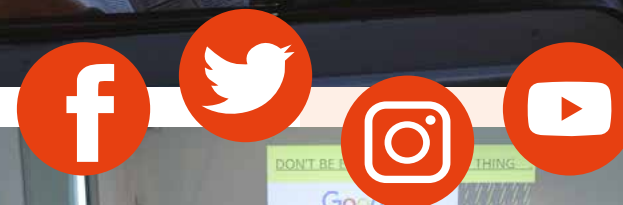
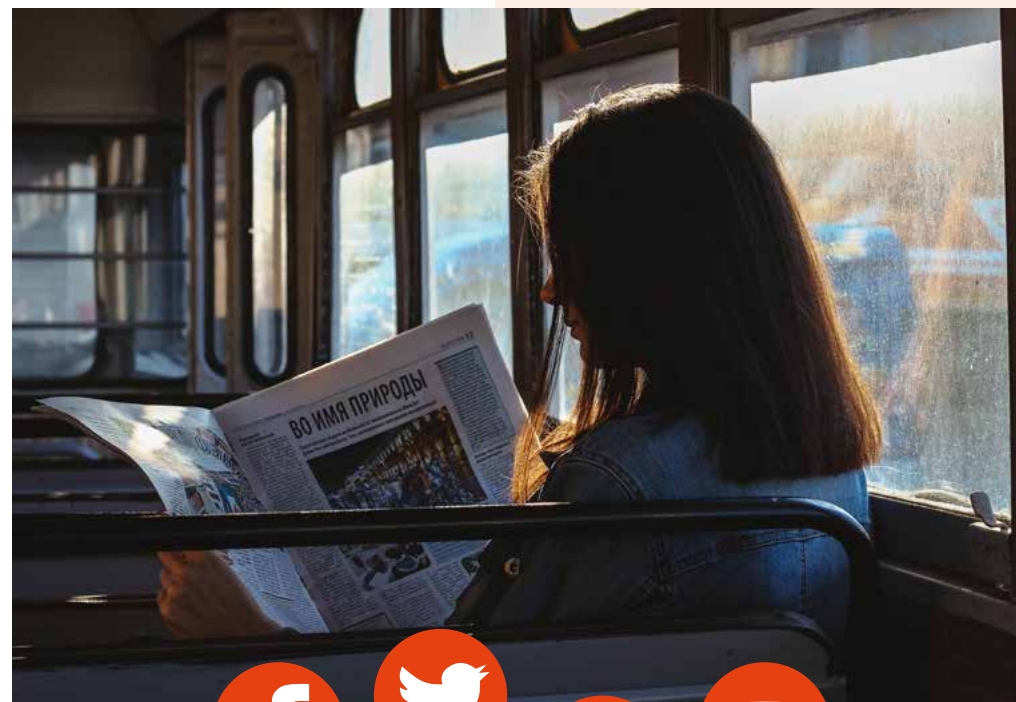
PIN recognizes that media literacy is a prerequisite for active citizenship and understands the critical role a media literate population plays in development of a fully democratic society. To respond to this need, PIN developed the OWIS Media Literacy program in 2016. The OWIS Media Literacy program in the Czech Republic expanded to Moldova and Serbia in 2018, with plans to start in Georgia in 2020.

The OWIS Media Literacy program in the Czech Republic is comprehensive and includes a number of activities:

- **26 audiovisual lesson themes** and accompanying teaching materials - News, Advertisement and Entertainment, Social Networks, Media Activism, Propaganda and Contemporary Russian Propaganda, Communist propaganda
- **"5 Questions"** tool to help students determine the credibility of news plus an ongoing analysis of current news using this methodology with the analysis being published online for teachers
- **"8 Tips"** guide on how to recognize fake news and propaganda online
- Monthly Media Literacy **Bulletin**, teacher **conferences and seminars**

The Media Literacy program can also include OWIS in Action grants to translate the participants' heightened awareness of media activism and the role propaganda plays in public life into concrete media-related activities. Such OWIS in Action initiatives can include: investigative journalism pieces, media activism, public awareness raising campaign focusing on fake news, among others.

**"Media and social networks in Moldova are full of fake news, They are hidden behind the mask of trustful news. We discussed this topic during the training organized by People in Need and learned how to understand the difference between fake and trustful information"**







## OWIS SUCCESS FACTORS AND HIGHLIGHTS

PIN has been implementing OWIS in the Czech Republic since 2001 and abroad since 2009. During this time, the methodology has been fine-tuned, with many lessons learned along the way. The OWIS team from Prague works closely with PIN country programs to ensure these best practices and lessons learned are considered when designing and implementing OWIS programs.

### Key Best Practices and Lessons Learned

- ✓ Film selection is key - Appropriate selection of films, taking into account its emotional power, topic, relevance to the country context, length and age of the audience.
- ✓ Local ownership and institutionalization of the methodology via strong local partners, education authorities and local authorities
- ✓ OWIS Innovations – Follow up activities are integrated into the film screenings to reinforce the impact of the methodology and lead to the behaviour change and support their proactive civic engagement in their communities.
- ✓ Longer-term projects enable PIN to strengthen partnerships, and establish a mechanism to update the films and have them available on an online platform, develop new modules and train new teachers
- ✓ Develop the manual with local experts to ensure adaption to local context, including all necessary tools for facilitation and step by step guidance on the use of the methodology.
- ✓ Selection of teachers and youth workers should be done through an open competition rather than assigned by the relevant government structures. Open competition ensures teachers' motivation to use the method in their practical work.
- ✓ Ongoing monitoring by PIN OWIS team or external experts is key to ensure quality delivery of the methodology and ongoing support to the capacity development of teachers, youth leaders and local partners.



## **MOLDOVA:** **Aspiring Moldovan Civic Journalists Visit the Czech Republic**

Citizen journalism and citizen-led fact checking initiatives in the Czech Republic have grown exponentially in recent years with technological advancements and increase in social media usage. To capitalize on this experience, PIN organized a visit to Prague for active participants from the Moldova OWIS media literacy program. Over several days, Moldovan youth met with leading Czech civic journalists and media activists such as Demagog and HlidacíPes to learn those at the forefront of the citizen investigative journalism movement. Via hands-on trainings and site visits, Moldovan participants learned what it takes to launch successful civic journalism and media activism initiatives and how to ensure their efforts have an impact and reach a wide audience. Following the Prague visit, the Moldovan participants returned home and shared their experience in peer workshops. While it was just a start, there is more to come from the next generation of Moldovan citizen journalists.

## **SERBIA and KOSOVO:** **A Focus on Future Teachers**

For the first time outside of the Czech Republic, PIN's OWIS program has targeted over 150 future teachers at universities in Serbia and Kosovo. By working directly with future teachers as part of their studies, PIN and partners will be able to reach a wider audience of young people. The university professors and their students recognize the need to modernize their teaching via the OWIS methodology and were enthusiastic about introducing such a new approach. One participant noted *"By working with film, there are no definitive answers. Students are encouraged to think, and even more so, to think critically about any content, to be free to express their opinion. Thus, by working with film, this program prepares young people to be responsible citizens who build their opinion and are ready to hear others' opinions, to build a world in which human values such as freedom of speech, tolerance, and solidarity are respected."* As a result of PIN's initiatives, the Teacher Education Center in Belgrade, Serbia has continued teaching the OWIS methodology using their own funds and several other target universities have plans to continue independently to spread OWIS to the next generation of teachers.



## GEORGIA:

### **OWIS Youth Initiative in Georgia - Generation Chips**

With the growing availability and consumption of unhealthy food in Georgia, OWIS students in rural Tskaltubo, Georgia recognized obesity and unhealthy lifestyles were a problem in their community. As a result, a group of students launched the project "Generation Chips". It aimed at encouraging healthy lifestyles and raise awareness of proper nutrition among students. The students began by compiling information on healthy foods and organized school seminars on the importance of healthy food with the participation of doctors, a psychologist, a nutrition specialist, local sports hall representatives, teachers and parents. The student-led project also initiated a school-wide "Healthy Food Day" that was covered by the local media and encouraged students and the local population to adopt healthy food choices. The entire school was able to participate by creating posters with slogans and artwork promoting healthy eating and hygiene. Together, the students of Tskaltubo worked to tackle a problem both at home, at their school and in their community.



## GEORGIA:

### **From Fairy Tales to Reality**

Inspired by the OWIS documentary film screenings, young people the Human Rights Club in Terjola, Georgia decided to implement a project supporting the rights of people with disabilities. They knew of Gela Buiglishvili, a 12 old boy in their town with physical disabilities that wasn't able to interact much others. However, he was very skillful in writing fairy tales and short stories. With small funding from PIN, the students invited a professional editor to edit the stories and the students themselves illustrated the stories. After two months, "From Fairy Tales to Reality" was published and received a special award in the national competition for young others. This wasn't enough for Gela and his team in Terjola. They organized a theatre performance based on the stories in his book with other local children with disabilities playing several roles. More than 600 people attended the event and many bought Gela's book. The project was an inspiration for other young people isolated and lacking confidence due to their disabilities and contributed to raising awareness of disa having the problem of isolation and lack of confidence because of disabilities and contributed to the raising awareness among the general public in rural Georgia.

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