



Western NIS Enterprise Fund starts touring through Ukraine with City is Me book



To raise proactive and responsible citizens one should start from a young age. That is why Western NIS Enterprise Fund introduces a new project - educational meetings of little city residents with city mayors throughout Ukraine. During the meetings, children also get acquainted with the picture book "The City Is Me".

The first meeting took place on Children's Day, June 1, in the city of Rivne. The little residents met with the Mayor, Olexandr Tretiak, and attended the presentation of the "The City Is Me" children's book written by the founder of the International Mayors Summit Iryna Ozymok.

"Very often kids come up with ideas that do not occur to adults, and see beyond what is familiar or insignificant to us. Such meetings show how important it is to listen to children and their advice to improve the city. As well as to foster a conscious and responsible civic position in them. After all, "the city" and "me" compose a whole, living organism where we live and interact," said Olexandr Tretiak, Mayor of Rivne.

At the meeting, little attendees from 6 to 9 carried out interesting tasks and competed for the best knowledge of urban problems and solutions. The children asked the Mayor about city functions, learned about city budget, transport, water, heat, garbage, as well as children's contribution in city life.

On top of that, the kids shared their own ideas for quality changes in the city that is to increase electric public transport presence, facilitate waste management, improve the inclusiveness of the city and create animal shelters, as well as to increase green areas in the city. Little residents also took on the role of city council members and “worked” in the debating chamber, learning more about the work of local authorities.

“What I liked best about that meeting was the fact that we could express our opinion on the changes in the city and they listened to us”, - Daryna, 9.

“I liked searching for cones, that is, those negative actions of people or city drawbacks, and turn the attention of the administration to this”, - Artem, 9.

The participants also talked with Iryna Ozymok, the author of the first children's book on city functions. The author has also announced a drawing competition for young residents, which is part of the book.

“Children are not only residents of the city, but also its creators and authorities should pay heed to them. This event promotes dialogue with the Mayor and inspires kids to speak out for the changes in the city, which the authorities will definitely take into account to ensure a high-quality and safe life for young residents of Rivne”, notes Iryna Ozymok, author of “The City is Me”, founder of the International Mayors Summit and WNISEF Local Economic Development Program Manager.

The meetings will be held throughout Ukraine during June-August. Children 6-9, their parents and teachers are welcome to participate.

Want to join the meetings or invite us to your city? Mail us at info@wnisef.org

Info

“The City is me” is the first interactive picture book on city functions and the role of citizens in it. It’s a kind of guidelines for readers to help understand the city, allowing to rethink their role in the community and realize whom they choose to be – responsible citizens or bystanders absently observing city processes. The book does not only uncover city mechanisms, but also encourages readers to participate in quality changes in our cities. The book is published by Knigolove Publishing House.

Western NIS Enterprise Fund (WNISEF) is a \$150 million regional fund, a pioneer in Ukraine and Moldova with over 25 years of successful experience in investing in small and medium-sized companies. WNISEF was funded by the U.S. government via the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Since its inception, WNISEF’s cumulative investments total over \$186 million to 130 companies employing 26,000 people and made it possible to unlock \$2 billion for companies in Ukraine and Moldova. In 2015 WNISEF has launched a \$35 million legacy program focused on export promotion, local economic development, impact investing and economic leadership. WNISEF is funding innovative, high-impact, reform focused programs, aiming to transform lives of the ordinary people in Ukraine and Moldova www.wnisef.org