

Report GALE 2013

Introduction

This is the annual report of the GALE Foundation for 2013. This is the 7th year of GALE's existence and the 3rd year as an independent Foundation.

The GALE Foundation Supervisory Council

The GALE Foundation Supervisory Council consists of 3 people: Florence Gaillard, Josee Rothuizen and Wilma den Uijl. Wilma den Uijl stepped down in the end of 20-13 and was replaced by Björn Klinkenberg. Björn is a teacher at the Hofstad Lyceum in The Hague and he regularly works in European school exchange projects. The Council advises the director and has final supervision of the budget. The Council met 2 times in 2013.

Renovation of the structure

In 2013, GALE intended to strengthen the democracy of the GALE platform by making it technically possible to have elections for a platform board and ask members for feedback on strategy. The platform board would have an advisory position towards the Foundation. We did not succeed in this. The work needs to be done in the free time of the director since we do not have funding for this.

The Right to Education Project

The year 2013 is the third year of a 4-year project to cooperate with UNESCO and help create an international coalition of organizations and states to support better education for LGBT people and for tolerance. This project is financed by the Dutch Ministry of Education. These two years will focus on the formation of an active coalition.

Monitoring

In 2013, GALE will proceed to monitor the right to education by stimulating NGOs to fill in the checklist and organize meetings and workshops to assess their national situation. For 5 months, we had an intern, Els Weerstra, who reached out to advocacy organizations and managed to get GALE Right to Education Checklist responses of about 40 countries. To enable better research on sexual diversity and education, GALE intended to take part in the Outgames Human Rights Conference in Antwerp and the International Conference on

Comparative Research in Buenos Aires. The communication with the Antwerp Outgames organization was extremely slack on their part. GALE decided not to take part in the expectation the Outgames conference would become a failure. It turned out the conference did take place but with a very small number of participants. GALE was invited by GLSEN to take part in the LGBT workshops and a pre-conference in Buenos Aires, GLSEN developed an encompassing global action plan for research and action on homophobic bullying in schools for which GALE provided input about existing interventions and strategies. It was expected the US government and large US donors would combine funding for this global plan, but in the end of 2013 it seems not likely the expected funding will be made available so easy.

GALE initiated experimental research on a cross-culturally usable questionnaire by assisting the University of Amsterdam to develop and test such a survey. The survey is available online since February 2013 in several languages. GALE also intended to cooperate with GLSEN to organize an international expert meeting on such questionnaires. However it turned out GLSEN was not so interested in this, preferring to disseminate and implement their own "School Climate Survey" in different countries like Chile and Israel.

Networking

In 2013 an important focus was on networking. The networking focused on identifying and connecting with government officials to form an international coalition. We started this by organizing a Dejeuner Pensant (March 15) for ambassadors and Permanent Representatives at UNESCO, which was kindly hosted by the Dutch ambassador in his private residence in Paris. GALE started a mailing list for government officials. It turned out that identifying the right officials and inviting them for the list was more time-consuming than we expected. In the end of 2013 we identified about 30 officials and invited 5 of them to the list, which will be properly launched in 2014.

Apart from meetings at conferences and through email, there would be an effort to improve our PR among our own members, international organizations and international media. We did this by being more active through twitter, also by adding a twitter feed to the GALE website. We visited the ILGA Europe conference in Zagreb where we networked to involve NGOs in the Right to Education Project. We were represented the international IDAHO conference in The Hague (organized by the Dutch government).

We also did a workshop at the "Breaking The Walls of Silence" conference in Ljubljana (February 18) on concrete educational interventions like the Ruben anti-bullying method, teacher training based on the theory of social exclusion we developed and on how to assist school to develop a spiral curriculum on citizenship and sexual diversity.

Advocacy

In close cooperation with the Dutch government and other governments, GALE supports the establishment of an international coalition of 'friendly states' which support LGBT rights in general and educational rights specifically.

We worked on this by offering countries to facilitate strategic workshops on the right to education. In May/June the director did a workshop tour in South-East Asia (Indonesia, Cambodia, Vietnam, South-Korea and China). In each country (except Cambodia, where the local partners did not follow-up their agreements) the workshops yielded interesting recommendations. These recommendations were tailored to the attending NGOs and educational institutions. This the workshops mainly had impact on cooperation between LGBT NGOs and mainstream organizations. Government officials did not attend the workshops for various reasons. Usually the rift between the government officials and NGOs is too great to allow 'mingling' of this kind. However, in Indonesia and Vietnam, the GALE director had informal meetings with representatives of UNESCO Committees. These meetings were the first time these officials ever thought about sexual diversity. Although the meeting with the GALE director was quite open, the UNESCO Committee representatives felt apprehensive about contact with local NGOs because of their 'activist' perspective and their sometimes perceived insensitivity towards the governmental status of the UNESCO Committee.

The Dutch government urged GALE to organize specific international workshops on the right to education for government officials. However, it is difficult to see how we can do this. GALE as an NGO cannot easily function as a credible host for such meetings. Apart from that, the project does not have financial means to pay government expenses to attend such workshops. This is why in 2014 we will focus on cooperating with local NGOs in countries where the distance between the NGOs and government is not so great and where government officials have their own budget to travel to a neighboring country.

GALE hoped that the 2013 evaluation of the Convention against Discrimination in Education would prove an action point for political advocacy within UNESCO. This did not work out. GALE visited the UNESCO office to cooperate on this and organize NGO input to the evaluation of the Convention, but the UNESCO department who was responsible for this did not respond any more after the first meeting. This is a real missed opportunity; the next evaluation is in four years.

We also hoped there would be advocacy opportunities during the meetings organized on the initiative of the South African government, which could propose a resolution on LGBT rights at the Human Rights Council in June. During the ILGA World conference in Stockholm in 2012, GALE provided some suggestions to the Canadian organization Arc International, who took a lead in the development of an NGO lobby in this government led process.

The GALE recommendation was to focus on the prevention of violence rather than on broad human rights for LGBT. This would link into the UNESCO strategy against homophobic bullying and be less controversial than broad human rights, because the strong international coalition on traditional values is mostly focused on preventing 'gay marriage'. Even the Vatican has now conceded violence against LGBT people is not acceptable. Thus, a resolution against violence specifically against LGBT people would be more easily acceptable while a broader resolution would be in danger of being rejected. However, Arc International rejected this suggestion, preferring to advocate for a more vague resolution and the concrete establishment of a Special Rapporteur on LGBT Issues. This would at least make sure the international visibility and dialogue on LGBT issues would be secured.

The further process was quite opaque and complicated because the initiator, South-Africa, did not really take a lead. So the meetings in each continent were quite independent of each other and differently organized. GALE did not manage to get itself invited to one of the meetings on the resolution; invitations were mostly given to national grassroots NGOs. The leadership of Arc International of the NGO advocacy process was less effective than their strategy at the time of the Brazilian resolution, a decade back. Their global leadership was contended by some African NGOs. This forced Arc International to incorporate a series of specific demands in the final NGO statement, which made it more authentic but also weaker as an advocacy instrument. In the end, South-Africa did not table a resolution during the Human Right Council in June. Since the composition of the HRC will be less favorable in the next few years, the opportunities for adopting a global resolution on LGBT rights have become limited.

The NISO Project

The two-year NISO project ended on 31 January. The final effort to disseminate the tools in the Netherlands were focused at integrating them in the on-going My ID campaign and as a part of youth participation projects in and outside schools.

Next to this, we wrote a scientific article based on the NISO research. An in-depth "Mokken" analysis of these data revealed that the used questions in the survey together form a reliable instrument to measure homophobia among students. This analysis was presented at a scientific conference at Kingston University in London.

The final financial report cost a lot of time and cost GALE almost 100 unpaid hours. The final payment of more than € 32.883 was still not made when the financial year closed.

The LCC Training Project

The Dutch LCC Project is a consortium that empowers LGBT Christians and educates Christian schools and churches. In 2013, we facilitated a training of LGBT Christian activist groups in Eastern Europe. The training was evaluated positively by the participants and the LCC Project. However, GALE put more than 3 times as much hours into this training than budgeted, so although it got GALE good credit, it was financially quite a loss.

The ARES Project

In January, GALE was approached by ENFAP Toscana, a trade union training centre, to take part in a European learning partnership (Long Long Learning Grundtvig program). This type of partnership consist of a number of 'mobility's', in other words: travel and subsistence costs. The ENFAP proposal was called ARES: ARTistic Educational System for LGBT People and aims to explore how film can support the personal development and emancipation of LGBT young adults. In September, it became clear 5 of the 7 partners got funding from their national agencies for this 3-year exchange: ENFAP Toscana (Italy), Rinova Ltd (UK), Sekü (Estonia), Szczecińskie Centrum Edukacyjne (Poland) and GALE (Netherlands). GALE has 15 mobility's, 5 for its own staff and 10 for other 'learners'. Because there are no staff costs, GALE staff will take part in this project as volunteers unless we find additional funding for related activities.

In October we started a national mailing list for learners (film makers, teachers, film festival organizers). In November we had a lick-off meeting with the other partners in Florence. In December, we launched a Facebook page to inform people about the project and the activities: <https://www.facebook.com/aresnetwork>.

The Envisioning Human Rights Project

GALE is (a small) part of the Envisioning Human Rights Project, which was initiated by the University of York (Canada). This projects aims to remove homophobic laws in the (former) countries of the English Commonwealth and uses storytelling and video to start dialogues on homophobia and human rights. GALE would be involved in this large consortium to train some of the local partners in Kenya and Jamaica in storytelling. Die to local changes of management in NGOs and difficulty to logistically plan trainings, none of the trainings took place yet.

Fundraising

In 2013, GALE focused again on acquiring on or more European projects. Next to this, we intended to cooperate with the US government and private donors to assist UNESCO and GALE in empowering LGBT activists, researchers and educators. We also attempted to work with UNESCO in the context of the UNESCO participation program.

Our European 'Jamey' proposal that was rejected in 2012 got a high score and we submitted an improved version in August 2013. to the Daphne III program. This proposal focuses at combating homophobic bullying by developing a range of simple anti-homophobia interventions that can be used in mainstream school contexts.

The support of volunteer educators in Europe remains a priority for GALE. The rejected 2012 "CATCH : Create Attention To Combat Homophobia" proposal was edited and improved in cooperation with our partners, who we met during a preparatory meeting in January 2013. We submitted the proposal to the Comenius subprogram of the Long Life Learning Program of the European Community under a new name "PEC: Pink Educator Competences". The content was also changed: since the Comenius program focuses on schools, we included schools as partners and cooperation between volunteer educators and teachers a core learning impact of the project. However, the proposal was rejected. One of the reasons was that the proposal does not demonstrate an identified need on the European level. This is true but there is no research on this on the European level, so more clear evidence does not really exist.

In 2012, GALE brainstormed with the Dutch national Alliance for the LGBT Elderly about a synergetic plan in which both young people and elderly cooperate as MyID ambassadors, who aim to make environments safe so everybody can be themselves. This idea was redeveloped into a concept note for the Dutch tender of the European PROGRESS program. This proposal was rejected mainly because the competition of other proposals was high. With the Vocational Education Institute (Hogeschool) of Amsterdam, we discussed the potential of a learning partnership of European vocational training institutes on social work in 2011. We intended to follow this up with a proposal for 2014-2015, but we did not manage to do this.

GALE intended (in cooperation with GLSEN) to connect with the US government and private donors to assist UNESCO and GALE in empowering LGBT activists, researchers and educators. During the year, it became clear GLSEN did first want to acquire the funds themselves and only afterwards communicate about this with partners.

The priority of the UNESCO affiliated NGOs is to initiate a youth participation program. GALE wanted to develop a proposal for youth participation to advise on comprehensive sex education and on sexual diversity. This did not happen, because the UNESCO budget for youth participation was organized in such a way that only youth led organizations could submit small proposals without staff costs. GALE developed a model proposal for LGBT youth organizations, disseminated it through various mailing lists and encouraged organizations to submit proposals. GALE also took time to coach some organizations to better focus their proposal; it turned out that the capacity of LGBT youth organizations to write a proposal is limited. GALE is not aware how many proposals were finally submitted, but from the UNESCO website we understand none of the selected proposals includes LGBT issues (<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/youth-forum-2013/participate/youth-led-projects/15-youth-led-action-projects/>).

In the summer it became clear that there would be a new tender for the Dutch Human Rights Fund. GALE improved and resubmitted the proposal we already made in 2011 "Education in Mediterranean Conservative Societies (SEEMCS)". We made sure the partners in Turkey, Palestine, Algeria and Morocco visited the Dutch ambassadors in their countries to get acquainted, to prevent the main reason for rejection in 2011: that the embassies could not vouch for the partners' reliability. However, in December the proposal was rejected again.

In the summer, also a tender for the European Human Rights Fund EuropAid came out. This tender request a concept note and after acceptance of this, a full proposal. We submitted a concept note "Combating Discrimination Through Sexual Diversity Education". We developed this with 3 organizations in Vietnam, 3 organizations in Indonesia, 2 organizations in China and with Global Human Rights Defence which would work on behalf of 2 organizations in Bangladesh.

Financial Report

GALE expected a positive balance of about € 18.000. However, this turned out to be a financial loss of about more than € 87.269. A large part of this is the € 32.883 overdue payment we still expect from the European Community for the NISO Project. Secondly, we did not incorporate the own contribution of € 27.400 for the NISO Project in a proper way, so it became a deficit. Third, GALE had to pay € 10.000 tax which due to an administrative error was not paid in the years 2010-2012. Fourth, GALE made substantial losses on projects where we spend more hours than budgeted.

The GALE director loaned €37.000 to keep GALE solvent of the year. At the end of the year, € 9.000 of this still needs to be returned.