



# MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE 2019 IMPACT EVALUATION

*Conducted by Genesis Analytics*

We want to thank the Argidius Foundation for giving us the opportunity to work with Genesis Analytics to review our programming around the world. We are grateful to Genesis Analytics for their collaborative approach and flexibility and agree with the vast majority of the findings of this thorough analysis. CEED believes in adaptive management and many of the recommendations of this analysis are already underway.

## What We Are Doing Well

CEED is pleased that this evaluation was able to confirm that we have made remarkable progress toward our vision of being 'the most valuable resource for entrepreneurs in their growth by developing sustainable local communities, around the world.' The findings that resonated most with us are that:

**In 2019, CEED's contribution to revenue change was US \$ 21.6 million with a 9.35 ratio of revenue increase per dollar invested**

CEED has developed a model that increases its cost-effectiveness the longer a center is in place. For example, **CEED Slovenia**, founded in 2006, achieved a cost effectiveness ratio of **30.28** and **CEED Macedonia**, founded in 2007, achieved a ratio of **15.33**. As CEED continues to contribute to long-term revenue gains, it looks forward to achieving higher cost-effectiveness ratios in existing centers and scaling this methodology in new locations.

**The evolution of CEED's approach incorporates learnings on how entrepreneurs learn, grow, and what is required for each growth stage**

Since 2006, CEED has been laser-focused on developing the most effective support to emerging-market entrepreneurs at their stage of growth. **CEED's 4-in-1 model** reflects years of collecting best practices, understanding the needs of our members, and adapting our programming accordingly.

**CEED plays a substantive role in growing and developing leaders which helps build their confidence to better manage their enterprises and teams and implement accountability mechanisms**

CEED's methodology involves supporting the whole entrepreneur. Our goal has always been to go beyond the basics of how to run a business and to develop leaders who are prepared to address the many obstacles that entrepreneurs in emerging markets face. CEED members hold their peers accountable to making small incremental changes that lead to outsized impact for their business and their community.

**Through peer-to-peer and CEED B2B events, business connections and mentorship, CEED members have been able to create valuable connections which guide and support entrepreneurs in overcoming business barriers**

In 2019, over half of CEED members reported making at least one connection with a client or business partner through the CEED network. These connections are invaluable aspects of CEED's programming because they enable CEED members to grow their businesses much more quickly than they otherwise would have.

# How We Can Improve

CEED teaches its entrepreneurs that part of building a learning culture means acknowledging and accepting constructive criticism and using it to change for the better. CEED Management agrees with the recommendations made by Genesis Analytics, and in many cases steps to address these recommendations are already underway. The recommendations from this report fell into 4 categories:



## Enhancing value to members

As part of CEED's strategic scale up, CEED is planning to further refine the value proposition of the 4-in-1 approach, especially for older members. The strategic scale up will also evaluate the efficacy and replicability of the chapter model and create clear guidelines and criteria to scale it. In 2020, CEED began a partnership with Creative Metier to improve its mentorship program by strengthening matchmaking services and mentor engagement. Furthermore, in March of this year CEED launched its virtual Global Leaders Talks series, designed to connect entrepreneurs globally and guide members through the COVID-19 Pandemic.



## Achieving gender equity

CEED is actively engaging with its female entrepreneurs to better understand their challenges and support them and using this input in combination with existing literature about how to best support women and partnerships with donors interested in providing tailored support for women entrepreneurs to improve its offering for women and women-led enterprises. As part of its strategic scale up, CEED is also planning to institute a program-wide understanding of what constitutes gender equity and CEED's gender inclusion approach to ensure consistency in centers' considerations around, and approaches to, gender equality.



## Achieving center financial sustainability

CEED is in the process of hiring an external consultant to better define the role that financial sustainability plays in establishing a center and to determine what the criteria are for rolling out the 4-in-1 model in an existing center. As part of its strategic scale-up, CEED plans to develop a fundraising strategy and hire staff and implement systems to support this strategy. The scale-up also aims to further reduce the workload of staff and improve their efficiency through better management tools and training.



## Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation

While CEED core indicators currently exist, CEED's Impact and Learning Manager will do training to ensure that our core indicators are well understood and measured correctly. In addition, CEED is in the process of creating an annual impact report to document and share member case studies on an annual basis. CEED has completed a Salesforce overhaul to revamp its monitoring and evaluation and member management system and now needs to focus on training center staff to maximize these tools, including a mechanism for capturing more consistent feedback loops. As part of the strategic scale up CEED aims to develop a robust and diversified fundraising strategy, increasing local M&E capacity. In addition, by increasing the frequency of M&E trainings, CEED hopes to build local M&E capacity even among staff who are not M&E experts.

## What CEED learned

This evaluation allowed CEED to externally confirm its impact gains and validate its innovative model that has been refined to meet entrepreneurs' needs over the past 14 years. More importantly, the evaluation highlighted strategic areas for improvement that directly feed into CEED's strategic scale up initiative. CEED confirmed its need to enhance member value, evaluate center financial sustainability, and strengthen monitoring and evaluation efforts. CEED learned that while programs catered to women entrepreneurs are important to create and pursue, refining its existing services to better serve women entrepreneurs is equally important. We hope this evaluation will serve as an important baseline against which CEED can measure the effectiveness of its strategic scale up initiative.