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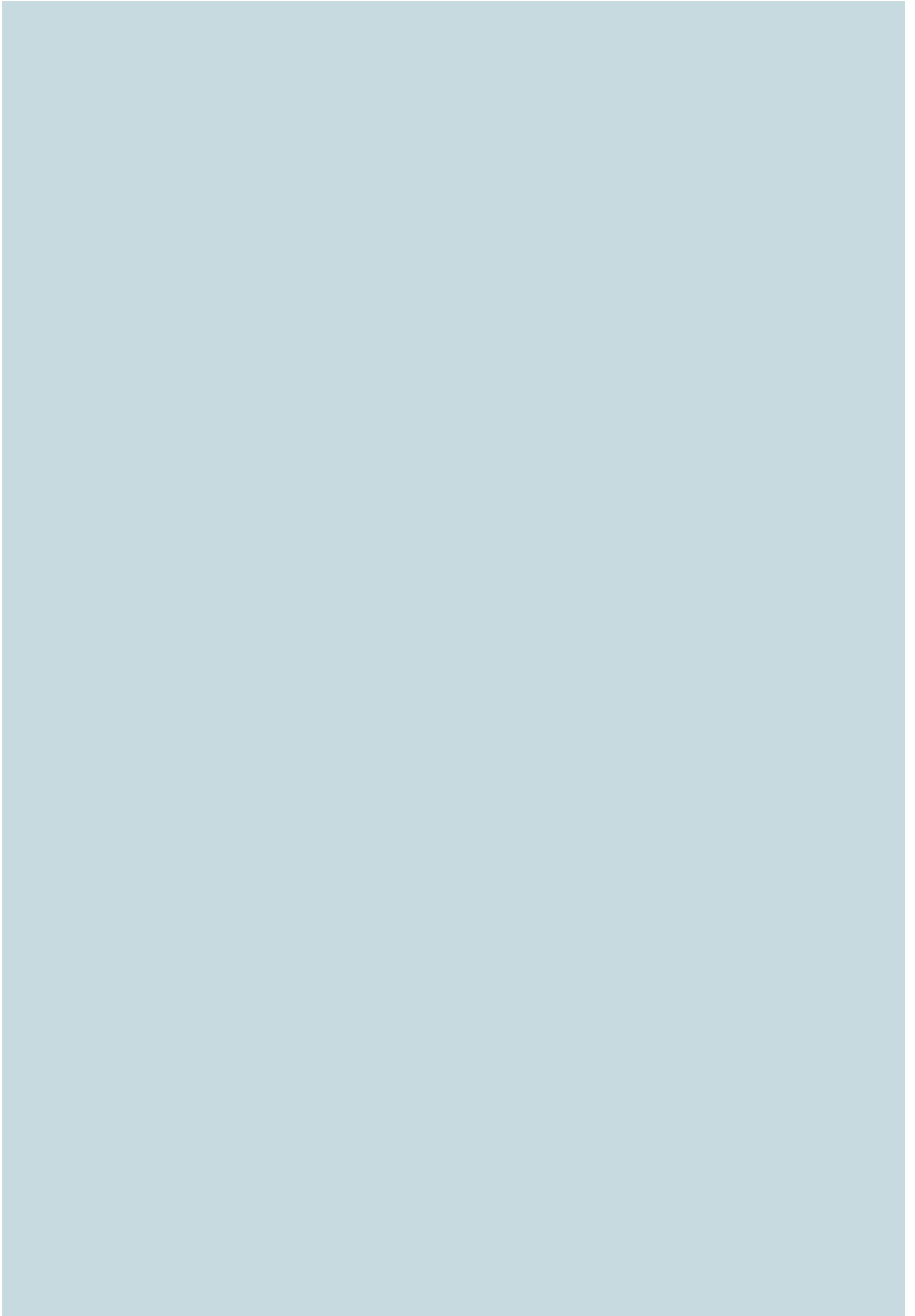
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TEN YEARS - FROM THE ROOM FOR CONVERSATION TO THE ROOM FOR CHANGES

In 2006 The Helsinki Citizens' Assembly marked its tenth anniversary. The Report you read presents our activities and results achieved in 2006, as well as the short review of the results achieved in the past decade.

In accordance to our goals, we developed three program areas: development of civil society and transformation of the public authorities into citizens' service; advocacy for gender equality; creating conditions for intensive involvement of youth in public life. Implemented projects were as follows: *Woman Today*, *Cotenants*, *From Local to Global Dialogue*, *YOUthMOVE*, *Women's Human Rights on Western Balkans*, *Thank You for Asking How I Feel*, *Training Centre "Open University"* etc. All this is followed by publishing, which is crucial for public presentation of organization and its projects as well as with numerous media activities.

This is how it is nowadays. But, how it all started? How it all was ten years ago? Physically, years of war were years of living in ghetto. People were dying, general destruction everywhere, territories were ethnically cleansed. Just after The Dayton Peace Agreement was signed, we faced all consequences of cruel war, need for renewal of all what was destroyed, refugees and displaced persons' problems, deep ethnic divisions and broken ties of unity between people. We felt we needed to start a hard work of renewal of life in general, not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but in the region too. On the other side of official and governmental structures, with great enthusiasm and true hope, we started our first steps.

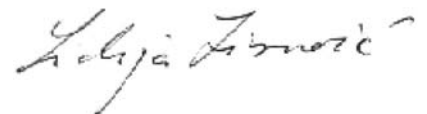
In January 1996 I made the first contact with activists from the other entity, England and The Netherlands. Such communication was unwelcome for the authorities of that time, which focused their efforts in preserving the situation made by war, but also for the public which was deeply divided and intolerant to everything which might involve the "other side". Just after the first contacts, in August 1996 we organized the roundtable discussion "Room for Conversation", with participation of women from all over Bosnia and Herzegovina. Main topics of this meeting related to analysis of the first after war elections in the country, participation of women in public governance, women's engagement in renewal and building of education system, etc. Not only by this occasion, but in many others, it turned out that we need a room for conversation after the war in order to build normal future and return hope to people. We traced our activities with youth on this goal, and later on some other activities of The Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka as well. I also wish to remind the regional dimension of our work and making contacts and networking with like-minded colleagues in Croatia and Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (at that time). Our further activities consisted of training programs for our target groups, mostly marginalized social groups and related public institutions, human rights campaigns and advocacy for their involvement in public and political life, elimination of prejudices etc.

It is sure, activities Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka, its partners and the whole NGO sector in BiH initiated in the last ten years contributed and still contribute to building of civil society and strengthening of democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, our effects could have even been better, if there hadn't been political obstacles not only to these processes but also to reforms in different segments of our lives from economy to ecology.

Causes to these obstacles are in two levels: first these are structural disorders, where dominantly tribal organization of the state and society according the ethnic matrix, which is constitutionally verified, and there is absence of political will of the governing structures not to change such conditions, to be engaged in social reforms and raising awareness on responsibility for the reforms and building of better life in this region.

Due to all these reasons, there are huge tasks in front of the NGOs and other institutions of civil society and individuals in BiH. Above all, they relate to, gradual daglocking of the current situation, instigation and release of various citizens' initiatives in civil society building as a life style. When it is about NGOs, this could also mean its organizations should also profile themselves and focus on more specific issues and work on them more intensively. Therefore, Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka, should enforce its programs (particularly gender equality and youth programs), but also become more intensive in the field of education and educate new generations dedicated to peace, development, equality and responsibility.

We started with creation of room for conversation, as the first our activities were entitled, we turned to creation of space for changes on which we still work and I hope we will reach the transformed space, in which all interests of social groups will be acknowledged and all will have equal possibilities for normal life.



Lidiya Živanović
Executive Director



ABOUT US

Helsinki Citizens' Assembly (hCa) Banja Luka is a nongovernmental organization established in 1996 in Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Since then, it has been actively involved in promotion, strengthening and networking of civil initiatives both in the country and regionally in South Eastern Europe, working on reconciliation and empowerment of marginalized and disadvantaged groups for political engagement. Nowadays hCa Banja Luka is an advocacy and support organization as well as a resource centre directing its actions into three main program areas: strengthening civil society and transformation of public institutions into a citizens' service, advocacy for gender equality, creating conditions for more intensive involvement of youth in public life.

OUR MISSION: The Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka is an organization supporting and stimulating autonomy and freedom of all citizens, involving marginalized groups in democratic processes, particularly women and youth.

OUR VISION: Society of equal opportunities for all

With such a policy we wish to provide permanent support to marginalized and disadvantaged groups and help them become a corrective factor to the governing structures.

Priorities of the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka in the nearest future:

- Empowerment of marginalized groups, particularly women, youth and minorities for political engagement and improvement of their status in society,
- Influence on public authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina with purpose of improvement of public policies related to these groups,
- Increase of representation of women, youth and minorities in the media and improvement of reporting in qualitative terms,
- Raising of public awareness in Bosnia and Herzegovina on discrimination of marginalized groups and mechanisms for protection of their rights,
- Strengthening cooperation with other organizations and institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and internationally,
- Providing access to resources, educational programs, knowledge and skills related to peace-building, civil society development and human rights to all citizens' in BiH,
- Continuous education and training of personnel of the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka and work towards organizational sustainability.

NOTES FROM BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA 1996 - 2006

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21 November 1995 - Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Federal Republic of Yugoslavia concluded peace negotiations in Dayton, Ohio, United States of America. 14 December 1995, Dayton Peace Agreement was signed in Paris. With this Agreement, Bosnia and Herzegovina was established as sovereign state, comprised of two entities. Territorial division in the areas of Brčko and Sarajevo was left to be solved through later arbitrary processes. New borders within Bosnia and Herzegovina lead to migration wave of population into new ethnic, and this time entity borders. In December, International Stabilization Forces IFOR is beginning with peace keeping mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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1996 More than two million people displaced during the war are out of their homes. There is no return, and no freedom of movement between two entities. There is also no freedom of movement between ethnically clean territories within entities. Bosnia and Herzegovina gets Office of the High Representative. Since then, five High Representatives chaired this institution, and, instead of our authorities, they adopted several hundred decisions. Although Bosnia and Herzegovina is called developing democracy, many political analysts tend to say that B&H is a protectorate. In September, first post-war elections were held, and citizens confirmed their support to governance of SDS, HDZ and SDA that were on power also during the war. Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) organized these elections. In May, first process for war crimes in the area of former Yugoslavia begins in The Hague.

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1997 In Summer, Biljana Plavšić, President of RS dismisses the People's Assembly, calls for exceptional elections, and enables oppositional social democrats to win majority of votes. This caused shaking of the governance of nationalistic political parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the first time after the war. The year was marked with high party divisions within official institutions, and fight of new authorities for establishing control over territories where SDS had a strong ground. Return of refugees begins, especially in small places in both entities of B&H. Telephone communications between entities in Bosnia and Herzegovina were established in September.

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ACTIVITIES OF HCA 1996 - 2006

January 1996 Even before formal establishing of Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka, our group of activists interested for improving cooperation in war destroyed country established communication with like minded people, citizens groups of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Europe, which supported us in getting together and initiating our activities (Forum of Tuzla Citizens, Helsinki Citizens Assembly Tuzla, Helsinki Citizens Assembly Sarajevo, hCa International, and IKV The Netherlands).

August 1996 - By the will of thirty or so citizens, and with support of the above mentioned organizations, Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka was established, with following objectives: support and development of a civil society and confirming autonomy and freedom of women and men citizens, overcoming all state and national restrictions through integration processes, support for implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement, and development of citizens' awareness, human rights and social rights, political culture and tolerance.

We established contacts with other organizations throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. With women and men, our colleagues from Tuzla and Sarajevo we are organizing first postwar conference of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina "Room for Conversation" in Zenica. Despite of media criticism and "bad" reputation in the public that accompanied all of those who dared to cross the division lines between two B&H entities, the conference was followed by many meetings, trips looking impossible at the first sight, establishing broken connections, campaigns for promotion of freedom of movement, but also discussions about key issues of importance for our future.

We organized second conference of women "Room for Conversation," for the first time in the area of Republika Srpska, which was perceived as closed part Bosnia and Herzegovina. We experienced several months of preparations with women participants, political parties, but also with a police, because we wanted to guarantee safety to all. As a result, we gathered 53 women from the area of Bosnia and Herzegovina and had a dialogue about political process and reform of education in the country, as well as other social issues.

Following were conferences about interethnic relations, internal organization and building of the country, as well as regional reconciliation, under titles "Dayton - Continued", "Civil Dialogue and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Federal Republic of Yugoslavia," and "Bosnia and Herzegovina, Peace and Reintegration from Bellow," in cooperation with nongovernmental organizations from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and, of that time, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

1997 We begun with implementation of "Woman Today" Project, with long term objective of improving position of a woman in political life of Bosnia and Herzegovina and eliminating gender based discrimination in this sphere of life. In cooperation with United Women Banja Luka, we are opening the office "Woman and Law" for legal and psychosocial assistance for women, with SOS telephone line for victims of violence.

In partnership with Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Tuzla, we organized first youth meetings in Bosnia and Herzegovina in Laktaši, and created Youth Network that gathers young people, and encourages communication and cooperation between youth associations throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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1998 In February, joint car license plates were introduced, without marks of cities or entities. They contributed significantly to freedom of movement. New flag of Bosnia and Herzegovina was chosen. During this year, first commercial bus lines between two entities in Bosnia and Herzegovina were opened. Privatization of state owned companies and banks started in August.

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Postwar period was marked with numerous interethnic incidents. In 1998, riots in Drvar, when returnees were forced to leave and houses were burned. Demonstrations and attacks on Catholics were occurring in Derventa. Frequent attacks on houses of returnees were occurring in Janja near Bijeljina. In 2001, protests and incidents during setting up a corner stone for reconstruction of Ferhadija mosque occurred in Banja Luka, and one person died during these events. After 2002, riots and incidents were weakening, but nationalistic passions and hate speech were still visible during pre-election campaigns and sport events.

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1999 Final arbitrary decision for Brčko was adopted, and Bosnia and Herzegovina gets additional administrative unit. In October, property laws were adopted, which opened the process of returning property and rights to occupy an apartment, deprived during the war. This process is mostly completed until the present time.

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2000 In August, Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted the form for joint passport of B&H. Students in B&H regained possibility to learn both Latin and Cyrillic scripts in schools. In April, Bosnia and Herzegovina was conditionally accepted as a member of Council of Europe.

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2001 Adopted Election Law in B&H and established Public Radio and Television Service of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Established gender centers of governments - centers for equity and equality of sexes, on the level of entities.

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2002 Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina independently organized and conducted first elections.

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1998 Following are second and third youth meetings in Bosnia and Herzegovina. "Woman Today" action continues with a cycle of public discussions about position of women in postwar society, and participation in the campaign of women's nongovernmental organizations with a title "There Are More of Us," with objective of introducing quota in Temporary Election Rules of Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe that was organizing elections in the country.

As result of this action, quota was introduced, and it guaranteed 1/3 of candidates of less represented sex among first ten candidates on a list. Less represented sex was always women. This change resulted with increase in number of women in the People's Assembly of Republika Srpska, from 1,9% to 23,8%.

We established contacts with Canadian Institute for Conflict Resolution. In following four years, together we educated around 600 people active on protection of human rights, return of refugees and reconciliation, peaceful conflict resolution, mediation and facilitation skills in conflicts.

1999 As a part of "Woman Today" Project, beside in Banja Luka, we were organizing public discussions about violence, human rights and legal protection of women, and we were informing women and men citizens of Doboј, Mrkonjić Grad, Gradiška, Brčko...

Youth Network continues with its activities, young people were gathering through summer schools, cultural festivals, conflict resolution, nonviolent communication and leadership trainings. This year, we initiated a pilot project "Future," and introduced non-violent communication in elementary schools, among pupils and teachers.

During 2000, we were conducting education of women politicians in Bosnia and Herzegovina about Law on Local Self-Governance, participation of women in decision making, public advocacy and lobbying, and media presentation...

Youth people were organizing bus tour, with accompanying poster campaign in 20 cities, with which they call their peers to vote on the elections. We participated in coalition of nongovernmental organizations "Elections 2000," which organized 110 public discussions and poster campaign to inform public about importance of the election process and each and every vote on the elections.

We continued with educational programs for women and youth people in political parties and nongovernmental organizations.

Project "Future" evolves from a pilot phase to implementation in many schools in Republika Srpska, and involves 3600 pupils of elementary schools. Youth Network organizes the campaign "Give Us Back Youth Spaces," which results with granting spaces for work of youth associations in 11 municipalities of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In 2002, beside our regular activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, we initiated regional youth activities through program "Alternative = PEACE," cycle of workshops for young women and men activists of nongovernmental organizations from Southeastern Europe.

In cooperation with our partners, we wish to inform the public with ways of European integrations, and we initiate the issue of accession of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the European Union through the Project "B&H and Europe." Within the "Woman Today" Project, we devoted to this topic also a regional round table about integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina into European Union.

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2003 Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted Gender Equality Law of B&H and Law on Protection of National Minorities. A year latter, People's Assembly of Republika Srpska adopted the Law on Protection of National Minorities.

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2004 Agency for Gender Equality of B&H has been established with decision of the Council of Ministers of B&H. It started with its initial activities a year after that. .

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2005 European Union opened negotiations about stabilization and association with Bosnia and Herzegovina. B&H is facing reforms of Constitution, public administration, police, Public broadcasting service, education, health, energy, agriculture, forestry, banking system, auditing, custom services, taxation system, transport and communication, fulfilling obligations of extraditing rest of persons indicted for war crimes to The Hague Tribunal. Obligatory military service was abolished in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Old bridge and old city zone of Mostar were placed on the list of objects protected by UNESCO.

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2006 Value added tax with common rate of 17% has been introduced in B&H. Bosnia and Herzegovina marked tenth anniversary of peace. According to the American magazine "International Living," Bosnia and Herzegovina holds 92nd place on the quality of life world list in 2006. This research included examination of living costs, culture, environment, economy, freedoms, health, infrastructure, security and climate conditions in 196 countries worldwide. Bosnia and Herzegovina is sharing place on this list with China, Bhutan, Lesotho, Moldavia. Bosnia and Herzegovina holds 62nd place of Human Development Index of United Nations, and it holds disastrous 88th place per Global Index of Corruption Perception of Transparency International. According to the report of Reporters Without Borders, Bosnia and Herzegovina holds an enviable 19th place in relation to media freedoms.



2003 We created an informal network "Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina - Be Seen Be Heard," with objective of mutual support of women politicians and women activists in smaller local communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which will work in upcoming years on joint pre-election campaigns

2003 We are offering to the associations of national minorities a good practice from the activities aimed for eliminating discrimination and strengthening groups of women and young people. Through partnership project "Cotenants," we are implementing educational programs about organizational development and public advocacy, lobbying actions for ensuring media space, and financing from the public budgets. This results with better picture about national minorities in media, regular programs and improving cooperation of associations and local authorities, especially in the western part of Republika Srpska.

2003 We are formalizing cooperation with City Administration of Banja Luka. A year latter, we established cooperation with Municipalities of Teslić, Modriča and Mrkonjić Grad, with objective of easier communication of the public with their elected representatives in municipal institutions.

2005 In cooperation with youth associations and young politicians of Bihać, Mostar and Zvornik, we developed youth strategies for these local communities, and their implementation is currently ongoing process.

We participated in preparation and publishing the first study about domestic violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with analyzing the legal framework for domestic violence, practice and issues in the practice for victims of violence, and pointed at defects in laws. 2005 We decided to unite our long term experience in education and trainings, and offer trainings to the public as regular programs of our Association. With that objective, we initiated the project "Training Center - Open University," and we organize education for citizens of Banja Luka on monthly basis.

2005 Knowing that tenth anniversary of peace will be discussed a lot in political circles, we decided to provide the opportunity for ordinary citizens to say their opinion about it. More than 500 people in cities and villages of Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to ask them how they feel today, 10 years after the war, and if their expectations from peace became reality.

On 21 November, we organized street distribution of postcards with interesting answers and published the book "Thank You for Asking How I Feel."

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With passport of Bosnia and Herzegovina, citizens can enter only twenty or so countries, many of them "distant," "exotic," island countries, and countries of former Yugoslavia (with exception of Slovenia). Citizens are craving for visa benefits discussed by media. There are no signs of visa abolitions. In the same time, citizens of fifty or so countries can enter Bosnia and Herzegovina without visas.

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According to data of High Commissioner for Refugees, more than million people that were refugees or displaced persons during the war returned to Bosnia and Herzegovina and their homes within the country.

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1999 - 2006 - War leaders in the area of former Yugoslavia and signatories of the Dayton Peace Agreement are dying. In December 1999, Franjo Tuđman, President of Croatia, in October 2003, Alija Izetbegović, and in March 2006, Slobodan Milošević, extradited by Serbian authorities to The Hague Tribunal in 2001, and prosecuted for war crimes committed in the area of former Yugoslavia. These events showed once again the divisions between people. Supporters of each of these war figures were grieving, and many opponents of their politics felt sorry because all of them did not faced The Hague Tribunal, and lived long enough to be sentenced for their crimes.

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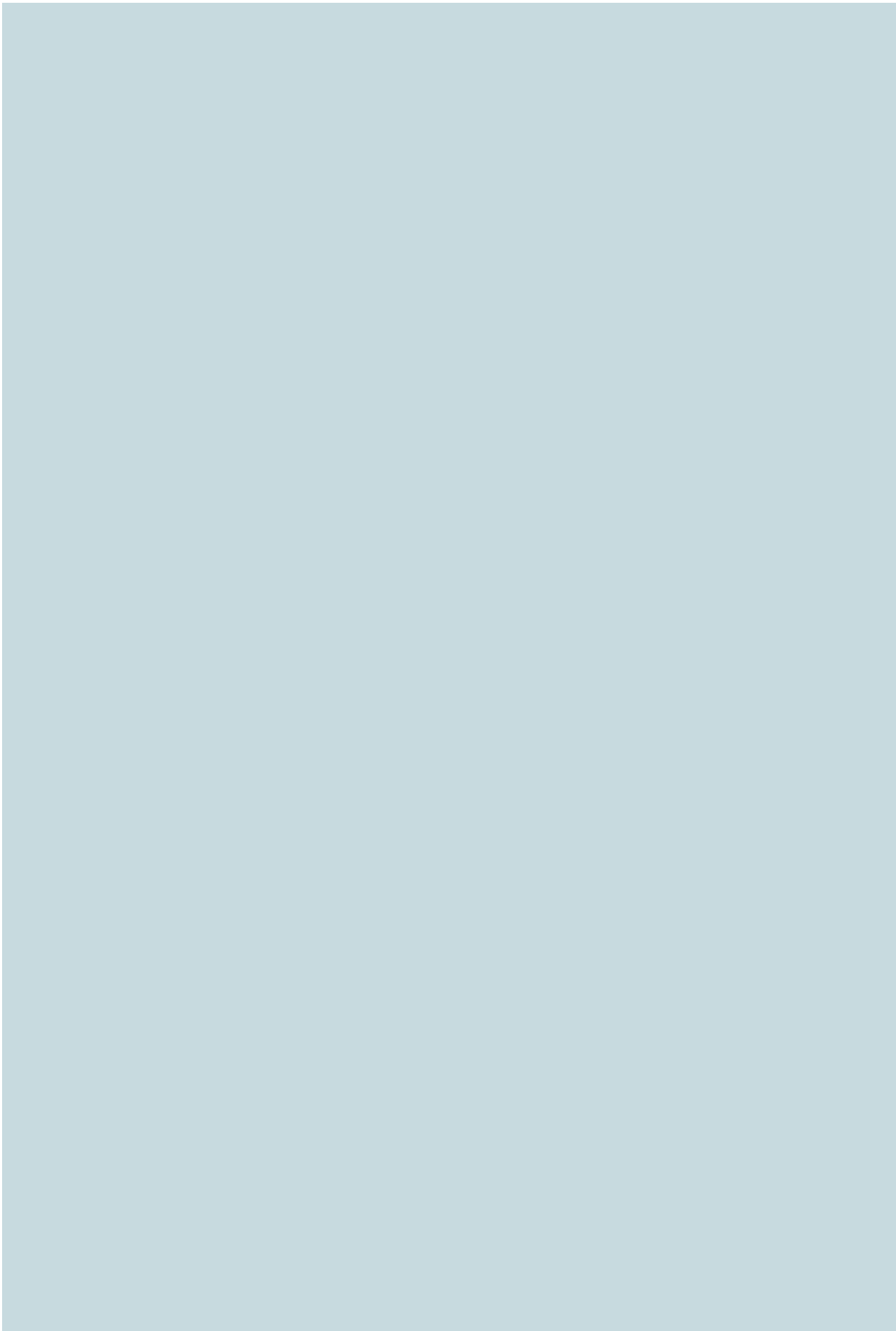
The Hague Tribunal indicted in total 161 persons for war crimes committed in the area of former Yugoslavia. Five publicly accused persons are still at large.

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There are still discussions and political rhetoric in the public about character of a war and number of killed persons in the period from 1992 until 1995.

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THANK YOU FOR ASKING HOW I FEEL

With the book "Thank You For Asking How I Feel" we marked tenth anniversary of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina in November 2005. In 2006, we promoted this publication in five cities, and distributed the book in more than twenty different occasions. Vehid Šehić (Forum of Tuzla Citizens), Zdravko Grebo (Law School Sarajevo), Slavo Kukić (University in Mostar), Miodrag Živanović (Faculty of Philosophy in Banja Luka), Branislava Memon (female journalist), Lidija Živanović and Dragana Dardić (Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka) were talking about a book and testimonials. The book was also presented in a TV program of Television of Republika Srpska, and ten viewers that called during broadcasting received one copy. English language edition was presented by our partners from IKV in the Netherlands, and we sent copies to the embassies and international organizations and institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Readers accepted the book very well, especially because of the fact that "ordinary man/woman" had the opportunity to speak out about this topic. From the feedback comments we received, we find out that many people recognized in the book their friends, brothers, sisters, cousins, mothers, aunts, grandfathers and grandmothers. Other people find out similarities with their own destinies.

PROJECT RESULTS

- The book "Thank You For Asking How I Feel" was printed in 1200 copies on local language, and 500 copies on English language, and distributed to BiH population, local and international institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and our partner organizations abroad,
- We marked tenth anniversary of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina with giving the opportunity to 500 women and men citizens to express their opinion about it,

"Despite all misfortunes, our people showed once again how much spirit and charm they have", Branislava Memon

"The book could be named as conversationalist about human topics, because ordinary people spoke out about human, personal challenges and believes", Miodrag Živanović



- We determined that majority of population welcomed end of war with happiness and relief, but also that their expectations from years of peace were much higher from what was actually realized,
- Hundred and forty people was directly informed about the book through public promotions held in Banja Luka, Sarajevo, Mostar, Srebrenica, and Tuzla,
- Many readers had emotional reactions and showed understanding for destinies of those who were "on the other side" during the war, and contributed in promotion of values of peace and humanity. We believe that with this we contributed to the positive dialogue in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



In the period from May until September 2005, women and men activists of our organization talked with 500 people from many cities and villages in Bosnia and Herzegovina about how they feel on the day of signing the Dayton Peace Agreement, what they planned, if some of these plans materialized, and how do they live today. Three hundred and fifty stories were created from these conversations, through which they share with readers their sadness, pain, happiness, plans and expectations. Pessimism said with a dose of humor is prevailing, as this was characteristic for this region from the beginning. However, there are also rare fellow townsmen, mostly young people, which believe in better future and have modest, sometimes feasible plans. Despite difficult life with 220 BAM monthly income or high loans, unpaid bills, and worrying how to feed the In December 2005, we published 1200 copies of the book on local language and 500 copies on English language.

program area/
DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIL
SOCIETY AND
TRANSFORMATION OF PUB-
LIC INSTITUTIONS
INTO THE CITIZENS'
SERVICE

The goals of this program area are establishment and development of democracy through rising awareness of citizens about democratic principles and processes, by encouraging citizens to start different initiatives and take part in decision making at all levels of governance. We make efforts to offer them necessary knowledge and skills, open and strengthen their cooperation with official institutions, and encourage accountability of authorities. During 2006, we implemented three projects within this program area, as follows: "From Local to Global Dialogue II", "Cotenants", and "Training Center: Open University". These projects were financially supported by European Union, Olof Palme International Center and Friedrich Ebert Foundation. Our organization also helped implementation of several activities of other organizations.



FROM LOCAL TO GLOBAL DIALOGUE

During 2006, in the area of municipalities of Teslić, Modriča and Mrkonjić Grad, we cooperated with municipal authorities and associations "Budućnost" Modriča and "Youth Union" Teslić, and continued with implementation of the project "From Local to Global Dialogue" with objective of improving communication of municipal authorities and citizens, and active involvement of local communities in decision making processes on the local level.

ACTIVITIES

During 2006, we organized a cycle of public discussions and media presentations aimed to inform the public about the work of municipal institutions. We were also publishing bulletins for citizens with the most important information about work of municipal administrations and important events in the local community, and citizens' guides with information about procedures for submitting requests in municipal services and answers on the most frequent questions. As we completed the activities supported by the European Union in middle 2006, we published the final report about activities in Modriča and Teslić. The publications were distributed to citizens and were available in premises of municipalities.

On the public discussion held in February 2006 in Teslić, Borislav Predojević, Head of Municipal Department for Economy and Social Affairs announced support of municipal authorities to the youth associations in Teslić, in amount of 30.000 BAM, and establishing Youth Commission, which will make decisions about allocation of financial support to the youth associations. There were 33 participants on this public discussion. In the public discussion with the same topic held in Modriča, it was said that Municipality of Modriča does not have special budget for youth people, but it anticipated 79.000 BAM for supporting project of nongovernmental organizations. Municipality of Modriča created Council for Youth People and signed Strategy for Youth People. New Statute of Municipality of Modriča foresees introduction of officers for youth issues and nongovernmental organizations. Participants emphasized wish for creating special budget for youth people, and issue of lack of focus among nongovernmental organization, which negatively influences their efficiency.

The last report of the monitoring of work of local authorities in this year focused on the right and level of participation of citizens in part related to youth people. In November 2004, People's Assembly of Republika Srpska adopted the Law about Youth Associations in RS, and importance of participation of local communities in implementation of this Law was emphasized. The Law requires from local communities to adopt five year and one year operational plans for youth policies, which would reflect real needs in a community, and to involve youth people in this process. Beside in Banja Luka, cooperation with youth people in municipalities where we worked in has been initiated. Institutions of local self-governance are still not sensitive for work with youth people, and they are not aware of importance of their participation in activities of local communities.

In the period from 12 to 14 June, we organized the conference "Models of Cooperation Between Local Administrations and Nongovernmental Organizations." Conclusion was it is of key importance to define authorities of executive and legislative institutions of governance on local level, in order to establish more efficient cooperation with nongovernmental organizations. Local communities should have clearly defined authorities, and to be more active in actions toward local official institutions. Citizens should be educated to be stronger in public advocacy for solving their problems and realizing their rights on local level. Local administration should involve representatives of nongovernmental organizations and local communities in work of municipal commissions, in order to strengthen citizens' participation. Local administration should conduct analysis of efficiency of previous models of cooperation with citizens and citizens' participation, and adopt strategies for improving cooperation with citizens. The Conference gathered 47 women and men participants from 16 municipalities of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Municipality administration of Mrkonjić Grad also showed interest for conducting similar activities. In the second half of 2006, the project activities were also initiated in this local community, and activities in Modriča were continued, thanks to the support of Olof Palme International Center. Two bulletins and one citizens' guide were published in Mrkonjić Grad, and citizens were regularly informed about work of municipal institutions through these publications.

In November, representatives of Municipality of Mrkonjić Grad informed the public about results of their activities in the period after local elections held in 2004. In December, public discussion was organized and citizens were informed about draft budget of Municipality of Mrkonjić Grad for 2007. Presentation of the draft budget was also the topic of the public discussion held in December in Modriča.

At the end of 2006, in each of the targeted municipalities, we organized two workshops on the topics of role of civil society and public advocacy, with participation of approx. 50 representatives of local communities, nongovernmental organizations and municipal officials. We prepared the manual with title "Dialogue", which covers the topics that were discussed during this year, or will be addressed through our work in upcoming year, as follows: role of citizens and nongovernmental organizations in democracy, planning of citizens' actions, presenting the problem and lobbying, communication skills, negotiation and conflict resolution. The manual will be published in 2007.

During second half of 2006, we intensified meetings with representatives of municipalities and local communities, and we tried to assist them in identifying issues that are characteristic for each local community, and come to proposals for solving these issues. Approximately 90 women and men citizens participated on these meetings, and we also discussed following issues: transport of pupils to schools, reconstruction of schools' objects, asphaltting roads, reconstruction or building of water supply network, waste depots, protection from flood, and reconstruction of houses destroyed during the war. Municipal authorities announced that some of the identified activities will be included in the planned municipal budget for upcoming year.

RESULTS

- Improved and increased level of information about the work of local public administrations in municipalities of Modriča and Teslić and secured continuous flow of information to the local authorities about needs of citizens,
- Established contact and cooperation between municipalities of Modriča and Teslić, and with City Administration of Banja Luka,
- Municipal authorities provided free space of the Local Assembly halls for organizing public discussions, as well as distribution of publications and other material to citizens,



- Citizens provided possibility to comment statutes and draft budgets in each municipality,
- Municipality of Modriča provided financing for some projects of the local NGO “Budućnost” Modriča, that participated in the project,
- Youth Association Teslić, partner organization of the project “From Local to Global Dialogue II,” received free rent premises from the Local Public Administration in Teslić,
- Municipal administration Mrkonjić Grad showed interest for implementation of the activities in this municipality, due to which the project was broadened in the second half of 2006,
- Municipal administration of Čelinac requested approval to use the same model of the newsletter and guide for citizens,
- Readiness of local administrations in Modriča, Teslić and Mrkonjić Grad to continue with implementation of the activities, such are bulletins and citizens’ guides in 2007,
- Results of research at the beginning and at the end of the activities in municipalities of Teslić and Modriča showed improvement in level of information citizens receive and level of cooperation with the local authorities,
- During the whole project, about 6000 families in Teslić were informed about activities of local administration and about 18000 on procedures of requesting various documents,
- Approximately 230 citizens in Modriča, 110 in Teslić and 100 in Mrkonjić Grad participated in public discussions about the important issues for local communities.



PLAN FOR 2007

Until the end of 2007 with support of The Olof Palme International Centre the project will be continued in municipalities of Modriča and Mrkonjić Grad. We plan to continued publication of newsletters and citizens’ guides, workshops for representatives of municipal districts and administration on civil society, public advocacy and negotiation and conflict resolution skills. Special manual entitled “Dialogue” will be published about these topics.

COTENANTS

Joint projects with associations of national minorities initiated during 2003 were focusing on improving position of this population in a society, especially in media and political and public life, and networking of associations of national minorities in the area of whole Bosnia and Herzegovina. During four years, project "Cotenants" accomplished good results especially in the area of cooperation with media, where associations of national minorities experienced significant promotion, improved communication with journalists, and special media programs were introduced as a part of public broadcasting services and some local radio stations. Here we would like to emphasize good cooperation with Radio Television of Republika Srpska, Radio "Uno" Banja Luka and Alternative Television Banja Luka. Journalists said that "Bulletin of National Minorities" was especially useful publication. It provided to the media representatives the information about work of associations of national minorities, and directory of associations of national minorities, which helped them to establish contacts with them more easily. Through the activities of this project, associations of national minorities and Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka advocated toward official institutions for financing activities of the associations from public budgets, which materialized in Banja Luka and Prijedor, but also from the entity budget, while some other municipalities provided one time support for work of associations of national minorities. Until the end of the project, associations of national minorities took over numerous activities, such are writing project proposals, organizing cultural and other events, and participation in public promotions. In evaluation interviews with the project participants conducted at the end of the project showed significantly improved communication between associations of national minorities, their communication with media and local authorities, as many of them initiated practice of regular meetings with the associations of national minorities. We implemented activities during 2006 thanks to the support of European Union and Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

ACTIVITIES

In March 2006, we organized training about facilitation skills and group decision making at Ilidža. Participants tested the methods of analyzing problems and objectives through analyzing challenges and issues in daily work of their organizations: preserving culture and language, need for improving relations, and financial support of official institutions. We discussed hierarchical and horizontal structures in processes of decision making, facilitation skills and methods of guiding meetings through "brainstorming", discussion, determining priorities and voting. Women and men participants evaluated the training as excellent, stating they will use combination of hierarchical and horizontal decision making in future. Associations that had closed decision making processes will invite members to enhance their participation, while leaders who were usually taking all responsibilities will share it with others.

In May 2006, we organized training about public advocacy and media presentation, where we exchanged experiences about research of the problem, planning of advocacy actions, and practiced public speaking and media presentation. Participants evaluated as especially useful simulation of press conferences, which by their opinion reduced stage fright and fear of public appearance.

As a part of regular activities in Club of National Minorities in Banja Luka, jointly organized by Union of National Minorities and Helsinki Citizens' Assembly, two public discussions were organized: "Cooperation of Associations of National Minorities With Home Countries", and "Implementation of Law About Protection of Rights of Members of National Minorities in Republika Srpska", in May 2006, cycle of photo exhibitions organized by Association of Germans and Association of Italians, and cycle of documentary "Cotenants" about national minorities in Republika Srpska. These events were visited by more than 300 women and men citizens of Banja Luka.

We continued with publishing the bulletin "Word of National Minorities", which informed the citizens and associations about course of the project, cultural and other activities of the associations, legislative solutions that are covering the position of national minorities. While at the beginning of publishing the bulletin, majority of texts were prepared by women and men activists of Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka, we accomplished that today approx. 60% of texts is coming from the associations.

RESULTS

During 2006, following results were accomplished:

- 26 representatives of associations of national minorities were trained on facilitation skills, decision making, public advocacy, and media advocacy,
- We established contacts with associations of national minorities throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina,
- Official institutions at entity and municipal level continued with financial support to the Union and associations of national minorities, as they did during previous year,
- Directory with information about associations of national minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina is available to the public and distributed to associations, embassies, media and official institutions throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina,
- According to statements of project beneficiaries, regular communication and exchange of information was established between associations of national minorities and official authorities in Prijedor and Banja Luka, and official authorities in Tuzla were informed about existence and activities of associations of national minorities in this area,
- Regular programs about national minorities continued within program scheme of Radio Television of Republika Srpska,
- During past year, we recorded 110 texts about national minorities in three daily newspapers and one weekly magazine - one quarter of texts was related to human rights,
- Improved exchange of information about activities of the associations, and increased number of texts on 60% as contribution of associations in bulletins,
- Recorded slight increase of interest from the embassies of home countries of national minorities and other nongovernmental organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina in relation to 2005, and their participation in almost all open activities of the project,
- Contacts and cooperation of associations of national minorities and Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka continued after finishing the project in June 2006.

PLAN FOR 2007

Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka, associations of national minorities and Union of National Minorities of Republika Srpska will continue cooperation in future as well. We will participate in conducting the research about implementation of the Law for Protection of Rights of Representatives of National Minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, initiated by Office for Human Rights Tuzla. In middle 2006, we established contacts with the organization "European Dialogue" from the United Kingdom, with which we will cooperate on transferring experiences and knowledge about rights of national minorities in Roma communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



TRAINING CENTER “OPEN UNIVERSITY”

System of formal education in Republika Srpska does not focus enough on issues of protection of human rights, development of civil society and peace building, and it still relies on traditional learning methods, on the harm of interactive methods of instruction. Current way of life and communication requires from people to learn some new skills and knowledge, which is not offered by this type of formal education. With opening of the Training Center “Open University” we wanted to offer possibility for wider population, namely high school students and university students from Banja Luka region to adopt knowledge and skills in the areas of human rights protection, gender equality, public advocacy, nonviolent conflict resolution, fundraising, facilitation and media presentation, with using innovative, different, more accessible and interesting way. Through the project “Open University”, we want to improve cooperation between NGO activists and high school and university professors, and influence introducing interactive teaching methods in official educational system. Implementation of the project Training Center “Open University” started in October 2005, and will last until April 2007. The project is financially supported by the European Union.

ACTIVITIES

As a part of the project during 2006, we implemented following activities:

- **FIVE PUBLIC DISCUSSIONS** in which we talked about status of human rights, economic situation, peace, educational system, and position of youth people ten years after the war.

In the public discussion about respecting human rights ten years after the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, introductory speaker Vehid Šehić concluded that “only two human rights are respected in Bosnia and Herzegovina ten years after the war - right on freedom of movement and right on private property, although this right has not been respected on the whole”. Vehid Šehić also said that peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina are slaves to their national identities, which as he said, leads to situation that “it is more important to us which nationality has our physician or a judge that will put us on trial, than the fact if they are professionally doing their work”.

When it comes to economic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina ten years after the war, “we are barely alive”, as Damir Miljević, introductory speaker in this public discussion concluded. According to him, half of social resources in Bosnia and Herzegovina are spent on functioning of the state. “Situation is more than disastrous when it comes to employees and right on work”, said Damir Miljević, and added that unemployment rate of 40% in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the highest in Europe.

Situation in educational system is not much better. Introductory speaker in this public discussion was Nenad Suzić, and he said that private faculties and private high schools are slowly pushing out state schools and universities, although, as he said, out of 30 private faculties, only 2 are satisfying legal standards. “Bosnia and Herzegovina is to become the country with the lowest public resources dedicated to education”, said Nenad Suzić. In discussion that followed his introductory presentation, young people, high school students and university students criticized educational reform, and emphasized they still do not know how interactive teaching and learning looks like, they do not know which university they should enroll, and they need to have connections or bribe someone for many things.

In June 2006, Srđan Puhalo was the introductory speaker on the public discussion on the topic of peace and facing the past. According to him, “all researches show that people in Bosnia and Herzegovina are ready to live as good neighbors, but not together”. Srđan Puhalo said that we had “at least three truths” in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and that war vocabulary had changed only a bit for past ten years.



Some of the participants on this public discussion believe that nothing changed in relation to reconciliation since 90-ties, and all attempts are useless, while other participants said it is high time for initiating story about reconciliation and determining truth.

“UN Resolutions from 1985 and 1995 are seeing youth people as young men and young women between 14 and 25 years of age. However, all people between 15 and 30 years of age are fitting into category of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina”. Age limit of youth people in Bosnia and Herzegovina is extended because in young woman and young man with 25 years of age are definitely not independent in our country. They still live with parents, mostly studying, and mostly do not have any personal income”.

These words of Bojana Trninić, introductory speaker in the public discussion held in September 2006 are reflecting position of youth people in Bosnia and Herzegovina ten years after the war.

- **EIGHT PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS** in which we presented working program of Training Center “Open University”, to the citizens, mostly university and high school students. Some of the presentations were really well attended, and we also had our stand on 11th International Book Fair in Banja Luka. All material placed at the stand was distributed to visitors during the first day.
- **ONE TRAINING FOR TRAINERS** with which we wanted to “strengthen local trainers’ capacities”, and identify persons from Banja Luka that already have significant experiences in work as trainers and wish to share their knowledge with students of the Training Center.
- **EIGHT WORKSHOPS** on the topics “Human Rights in My Community”, “Media Presentation and Public Speech”, “Gender Equality”, “Conflict Resolution”, “Role and Activities of Civil Society”, “Public Advocacy”, and “Fundraising”. In their evaluations after the workshops, women and men students are praising them as “useful”, “excellent”, “interesting”, “dynamic”, “instructive”...
- **ONE STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP** in which we wanted to create a strategic pathway for further work of Training Center and it’s developing into self-sustainable institution. During this workshop, we defined strategy for work of Training Center in upcoming three years, and agreed to examine readiness of official institutions to verify certificates, which Training Center students are receiving after completed trainings.
- **ADVANCING LIBRARY WITH NEW EDITIONS** in order to enable Training Center beneficiaries, but also other interested people, to have access to high quality literature from the area of protection and promotion of human rights, civil society development and peace building.
- **COLLECTING INFORMATION FOR INFORMATIVE - RESOURCE CENTER** about seminars, conferences, scholarships, job vacancies, round tables, etc, in Bosnia and Herzegovina and worldwide.
- **CONDUCTED RESEARCH** with aim to examine needs and wishes of citizens of Banja Luka to attend educative workshops organized within the Training Center. Questions were related to content of workshops, type of lecturers, readiness to pay for attending trainings, etc. It is interesting that all 500 examinees answered with yes, we need it, on the question “Does Banja Luka need the Training Center”.

On the strategic planning workshop, mission and vision of the Training Center “Open University” were developed.

***Vision:** “Continuous education accessible to all”.*

***Mission:** “Training center “Open University”, as a part of Helsinki Citizens’ Assembly Banja Luka is offering possibility to all citizens to adopt knowledge and acquire skills through different educational programs, with aim of promotion and protection of human rights, civil society and individual development of people “*



- **REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE PROGRAM TEAM** composed of three external members and five employees of Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka, with objective of continuous exchange of information and monitoring the activities.

RESULTS

- 154 women and men citizens participated in public discussions organized to mark ten years of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- 336 people, mostly university and high school students informed about the work of Training Center through public presentations organized during 2006.
- 13 women and men trainers successfully completed training for trainers.
- 136 students successfully completed workshops of the Training Center.
- 382 books donated to the library of the Training Center. Books were donated by: Stock Company for Graphic and Publishing Work "Glas Srpske", Delegation of the European Union in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Embassy of Switzerland in B&H, Heinrich Boll Foundation, International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and individuals.
- At least once a week, 95 beneficiaries of the informative-resource center receives information about seminars, conferences, scholarships, job vacancies, and round tables organized in Bosnia and Herzegovina and abroad.
- 500 women and men citizens of Banja Luka were part of the research about wishes and needs to be a part of alternative type of education organized through educational workshops.

PLAN FOR 2007

Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka has permanent offer of trainings implemented upon request of other organizations. Project "Training Center Open University" continues with activities until April 2007. Our objective is to implement the strategic plan despite completing of the project, and to keep educational programs continuously available to women and men citizens of Banja Luka, to meet their wishes.





PROVIDING TRAINING SERVICES ON REQUEST OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

- "Mark These Elections" cycle of two day workshops for Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Tuzla about importance of participation of youth people in election process, Tuzla, Konjic, B&H,
- "Financial Management for Nongovernmental Organizations" three day seminar for International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) and fifteen nongovernmental organizations from Northwestern Bosnia and Herzegovina, Jahorina, B&H,
- "Writing Project Proposals and Fundraising" and "Public Relations and Media Presentation", two three - day seminars for International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) and Saint Sava Youth Community of Banja Luka Eparchy, Slatina, B&H,
- Three-day workshop "Politics of Women's Way", organized by "Women to Women" Sarajevo, for female politicians of Canton 10, Livno, 2006
- "Public Advocacy, Negotiation, Lobbying and Cooperation", five-day training for FORS Montenegro and CHF Foundation, held in Kolašin, Montenegro,
- "Public Relations and Media Presentation", three-day training for Coordination Board of Organizations of Invalids of Republika Srpska (KOOIRS),
- "Peace Building and Team Work", two-day training for World Vision, Tuzla.

program area/
**ADVOCACY FOR
GENDER EQUALITY**

General aim of the program area is diminishing all forms of gender based discrimination, and creating environment in which women and men have equal possibilities. Special focus of the program is on participation in public life and decision making. Activities of this program area are following: networking and support for initiatives related to gender issues, empowering women as currently the largest marginalized group for their participation in public and political life, education of women and men about gender equality issues, trainings for women in developing of different skills, campaigns, researches and analysis of public policies.

During 2006, as the part of this program area, we implemented following projects: "Woman Today 11", "Support for Women's Human Rights in Western Balkans", and "Woman and Law".



WOMAN TODAY

Project “Woman Today” is a partnership project of nongovernmental organizations “Helsinki Citizens’ Assembly” and “United Women” Banja Luka, with financial support of Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation and Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). In 2006, we marked tenth anniversary of the project activities. This is the project that helped our organizational development, acquiring new skills and experiences. It also assisted us to develop our program area - Advocacy for gender equality.

ACTIVITIES

2006 was the year of parliamentary elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina, so our project activities were directed to improving position of a woman in public and political life, and increasing women’s representation at all levels of legislative and executive governance. We organized seven meetings of the Advisory Board, where we planned each project activity together with women from different sectors, and discussing it in a light of current situation and events in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

First of five public discussions was held in March 2006, under title “Role of Media in Promotion of Women’s Human Rights.” Mira Lolić Močević, Program director of Radio Television of Republika Srpska emphasized that in election year, key issue for women is how they will be portrayed by media. She emphasized that in the period of past five years, significant improvements in media promotion of women were made, thanks to the activities and public advocacy of nongovernmental organizations. Mira Lolić Močević added that Radio Television of RS was the first media in Bosnia and Herzegovina that started to use gender sensitive language for titles and professions, e.g. editors, proofreaders, journalists, etc. Women participants on the public discussion emphasized that journalists mostly ask them about gender equality topics, and avoid asking comments on actual political topics. They noticed that women were almost totally excluded from political and news programs, and when it comes to high political topics, such are constitutional reforms and reform of police structures, women’s views can not be heard at all.

Having in mind high dissatisfaction with low representation of women in actual political topics, we devoted second and third public discussion to actual political topics - “Constitutional Changes in B&H” (April), and European Integrations - Where We Are And Where We Are Going To” (May). We organized these two public discussions with support of Igor Radojičić, President of the People’s Assembly of Republika Srpska. This way we created the opportunity for women and men citizens to have direct communication with actors of negotiations, and to acquire information about these important political topics directly from them. Introductory presenters on the second public discussion were Dragan Čavić, President of Republika Srpska, Mladen Ivanić Minister of Foreign Affairs of B&H, and Nikola Špirić, Board Member of House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of B&H. They explained to the participants on the public discussion which parts of the B&H Constitution are planned to be changed and how, and presented their views how this would reflect on Republika Srpska. Women and men participants expressed dissatisfaction because process of constitutional changes is happening behind closed doors. Citizens were interested to know how much constitutional changes will cost Bosnia and Herzegovina, which authorities of the entities will be transferred to the state level, why there were no public discussions about this issue, why experts of constitutional law were not involved in the process and why constitutional changes were discussed on level of political parties and not the level of institutions.



On the third public discussion related to European Integrations, women and men citizens could talk with Igor Davidović, chief of B&H negotiation team for EU accession, and learn about course of negotiations. They were interested how they can access European Union funds, how small and middle enterprises and farmers will be treated, and when population census will finally be conducted in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in order to identify available human resources in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the aftermath of the October elections, we organized public discussion on the topic of “Gender Aspect of Pre-election Campaign”, with Sanela Pašić Delahmetović, as the introductory speaker. The public discussion pointed at unequal representation and inadequate media promotion of women in the election process.

As a part of 16 Days of Activism against Violence against Women, from 25 November - International Day of Fighting against Violence against Women, until 10 December - International Human Rights Day, we organized public discussion on the topic “Discrimination of Women, Local and Global Issue”. Apart from introductory presentations by Snježana Savić, Professor, who talked about discrimination from normative aspect and Nikola Dorončić, Representative of Center for Social Work Banja Luka, which presented experiences of the Center in work on cases of domestic violence, we again pointed at the issue of domestic violence and necessity adequate legislative and institutional solutions for this problem.

Through media activities (four television programs and two radio programs), and five press conferences, we introduced the public with topics and recommendations of the public discussions.

During 2006, as a part of the project we organized six workshops about public advocacy, lobbying and media presentation for female politicians and candidates on the elections. We also organized the training for trainers for nineteen female activists from Bihać, Mostar, Višegrad, Trebinje, Modriča, Sarajevo, Bratunac, Bijeljina, Zenica, Livno, and Bosansko Grahovo. Women parliamentarians and experienced politicians from several political parties in Republika Srpska assisted us in organization of the workshops.

We also prepared TV spot, the only one that appealed during pre-election period on voters to vote for women, with the message “Think in the Name of All of Us, Decide, and Vote for Woman”.

At the round table “What We Did So Far and Where We Are Going To?” held at the beginning of December 2006, twenty five women activists of nongovernmental organizations from Bosnia and Herzegovina analyzed pre-election activities and effects they had on the target groups. We agreed it is necessary to modify the approach to this issue. We expressed dissatisfaction with representation of women in newly elected institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, because it does not reflect equality, but we also expressed contentment with those results accomplished by female candidates that participated in our programs for strengthening women in politics. Accomplished results are only partially encouraging. We agreed it is necessary to meet with female politicians in upcoming period and define mutual expectations and strategy for further actions, in order to accomplish important results in a future.

“Organization of the workshops should be continued, even more frequent. Women are withdrawing too much, and they do not have support from their families and political parties. Women need more self confidence, and they develop it during workshops”, Ljerka Stanić, Social Democratic Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina

“There were a lot of different women, with different social and family status, from different political parties. That is good, because we are usually stuck in our environment and do not see anything out of it. It is good to step out and look at the things from different perspective. Workshops were helpful to me, although I was not elected. They helped me to release from stress and tensions when I was presenting on pre-election public meetings. Women and men colleagues from my political party also noticed that I am somehow different”, Marica Carević, DEPOS





“How did I use what I learned? I corrected my behavior and way of work. I was poorly organized, worked without plan and program, but when I introduced systematization in my everyday life, I have more time for other activities”, Azra Pašalić, Party for B&H.

“We need to involve more men. I recently had a verbal duel with my colleague, and he said ‘To you it is only important that it is a woman’. I said here we do not talk only about a woman, but about having equal possibilities. Women are required to have skills, education, even physical appearance, and men are not judged with same criteria. This is the reason why I believe that workshops should involve more men, with which we will exchange experiences and opinions”, Nada Tešanović, Union of Independent Social Democrats.

RESULTS

- Approximately 240 women and men citizens of Banja Luka had the opportunity to receive information and express their views about actual issues in the country on public discussions.
- 19 women activists of women’s nongovernmental organizations were educated on trainer’s skills from the area of “Advocacy and Media Presentation”.
- 91 female politicians from five cities of Northwestern Bosnia and Herzegovina improved skills of public advocacy and media presentation.
- We improved communication between women from different political parties.
- We contributed that more experienced female politicians start to share their knowledge and skills with young women politicians that just entered the world of politics.
- We contributed for more experienced female politicians to start sharing their knowledge and skills with their colleagues that are just entering the politics in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- We contributed to election of 25% of female representatives in the People’s Assembly of Republika Srpska.
- We contributed to increase of reports about women’s human rights in media of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- We improved communication with media in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- Thanks to the support of Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, we succeeded to present our views to the European Union and other international circles.

PLAN FOR 2007

Helsinki Citizens’ Assembly Banja Luka and United Women Banja Luka will continue with implementation of the project “Woman Today” also in 2007. We are planning to conduct a research about gender stereotypes in ten cities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to inform citizens about the results through public discussions. We will continue to organize a cycle of public discussions with title “Actual Moment” in Banja Luka, in order to provide the opportunity for women and men citizens to be heard in the public. We will promote project activities and results through the press conferences. We will advocate for real implementation of the Gender Equality Law in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and harmonization of other laws with its provisions.

LINK - EFFICIENCY THROUGH COOPERATION OF INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Lack of mutual knowledge about the activities and lack of cooperation between institutional mechanisms for gender equality and nongovernmental organizations led us to start the pilot project "Link" in the second part of 2006. The objective of the project was to support development of efficient mechanisms for gender equality, especially on the level of municipalities, and to establish their cooperation with nongovernmental organizations. We implemented this project in cooperation with Gender Center of RS Government, with financial support of United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and means of Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

ACTIVITIES

We organized the seminar "Working Together", which gathered women and men representatives of nongovernmental organizations and institutional mechanisms for gender equality from Bosnia and Herzegovina, with objective of identifying strengths and weaknesses of these two sectors, and examples from previous good practices. Conclusion was that official institutions on higher levels have knowledge, authorities, and influence provided by laws. However, their weaknesses are small number of employees, lack of visibility, and lack of legal practice. These institutions are also facing with lack of interest from the other institutions within the system for gender equality, stereotypes within institutions, etc. There is enough knowledge about functioning of local governance on the local level, but there is no gender sensitivity and knowledge about Gender Equality Law in Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to develop and adopt gender sensitive public policies. When it comes to nongovernmental organizations, there are not equally developed in all municipalities, and in some areas, official institutions do not have partners to work with. Participants on the seminar recommended that all municipalities conduct situation analysis and determine priority issues for solving, as well as activity plans. Additionally, to conduct new cycle of educational programs about developing gender sensitive public policies for municipal commissions, and to publish a guide with fundamental legal regulations and instructions for their implementation.

Basic and advanced training about gender equality for women and men members of municipal commissions for gender equality followed. The basic training focused on the basic concepts of sex, gender, discrimination, etc., and division of gender roles in a society and gender stereotypes. The advanced training focused on presentation of legislative framework for gender equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and topics of gender analysis of official documents, gender sensitive public policies, including budgeting, as well as developing working plans of the commissions until the end of 2006.

Although we planned to choose one of the municipal commissions for gender equality that participated in the project to monitor follow up activities agreed on the seminar, we decided during project implementation to involve all present municipalities, and to publish manual, as it was recommended during the first seminar.

RESULTS

- Women and men members of 6 municipal commissions for gender equality from Northwestern Bosnia and Herzegovina were informed about legislative regulations related to gender equality, gender analysis of municipal documents, examples of good practice in developing and adoption of gender sensitive public policies,



- Improved cooperation of nongovernmental organizations from this area and institutional mechanisms for gender equality,
- Identified issues of lack of motivation for work in the commissions, and their marginalization from the institutions where they work, unequal representation of women and men in the commissions - lack of men in the commissions, or in some cases, commissions have only male members, so they are not functioning as well,
- Identified recommendations: each commission should develop annual action plan, gather gender disaggregated statistical information about employees, and initiate direct implementation of the Article 18. of Gender Equality Law in Bosnia and Herzegovina, organize trainings for municipal officials in their local communities, keep more frequent contacts of the commissions with Gender Centers, collect and publish examples of good practices in developing, adoption and implementation of gender sensitive public policies, initiate researches in order to identify specific needs of women and men in municipalities, etc.
- Created module about gender sensitive policies
- Published manual "Introducing principles of equity and equality of sexes on local level of governance",
- Upon finishing of the project, women beneficiaries organized numerous identified and agreed activities, as follows: presentation of the Gender Equality Law in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Law on Protection from Domestic Violence in RS in Višegrad, initiated more frequent meetings of the Commission for Gender Equality in Municipalities of Bijeljina, Prijedor and Prnjavor, initiated change of Operating Procedure about work of the Local Assembly, in order to involve women representatives of nongovernmental sector in the work of the Commission, during discussion about municipal budget of Prijedor, requested financial support for the work of local gender equality commission, and raised issue of unequal financing of female and male sport, Gender Equality Commission in Prnjavor developed working plan for 2007, etc.

PLAN FOR 2007

Project "Link" showed there are first results reached with stimulus of gender equality commissions, and it is necessary to ensure continuous cooperation of institutional mechanisms on local, entity and state level, as well as the support of nongovernmental organizations to the local commissions, at least during the first phase of their work. Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka will continue to monitor the work of gender equality commissions in municipalities where we worked, and to involve their women and men members in current activities of the organization.



SUPPORT FOR WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

At the end of July 2006, we completed one and half year project "Support for Women's Human Rights in the Western Balkans", on which Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka worked together with "Women to Women" Sarajevo and "Lara" from Bijeljina.

The project had regional character, and beside Bosnia and Herzegovina, involved countries were Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia and Albania. General aim of the project was analysis of the national legislation from the aspect of implementation of international norms and standards related to domestic violence. Beside legal analysis, field research was conducted in all participating countries. It included collecting and systematizing information about prevalence of domestic violence, collecting information about nongovernmental organizations that are offering legal and psychosocial support, and shelter to victims of domestic violence, and analysis of factors that influence on violence. Domestic violence was recognized as common social issue in all countries targeted with the project. The research also identified that the countries use different methodology to work on this issue. Idea was to point out different experiences and practices, and findings acquired with the research in one regional study that would present cross section of the situation in the region, in relation to the issue of domestic violence. The project was supported by Dutch Committee for Human Rights - HOM.

ACTIVITIES

During first half of 2006, activities were directed to finding financial support for printing of the "Study about Domestic Violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina", and its presentation to the professional that are working on domestic violence.

In March 2006, together with the Center for Education of Judges and Prosecutors of RS, we organized presentation for bearers of judicial functions in Republika Srpska. In May 2006, we presented the Study to the female delegates in the City Assembly Banja Luka and female representatives in the People's Assembly of Republika Srpska. In June 2006, we presented the Study to media on the press conference in Banja Luka. In July, together with Gender Center of RS Government, we organized a working meeting with representatives of the ministries authorized to work on the issue of domestic violence, and with representatives of the Center for Social Work Banja Luka, police, and nongovernmental organizations, with objective of their introducing with the fundamental conclusions and recommendations of the Study, and steps that Gender Center of RS Government will take in upcoming period in fighting domestic violence.

*At one of the presentations, women and men professional that work on domestic violence were also introduced with the results accomplished in Sombor in Vojvodina in fighting against domestic violence. Model established in this city is also known as "Sombor model". Participants on the presentation expressed viewpoint that Banja Luka could have "**Banja Luka model**", based on experiences from Sombor, which should be based on strong networking on all official institutions and nongovernmental organizations that are working on domestic violence. This type of networking and continuous exchange of information in Sombor led to the situation where professionals in this city identified days in the week when violence against women is more frequent. These days are Wednesday and Monday, and now they can preventively work, with increasing their activities on these days.*



As a part of the project, one female activists of Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka participated at the training for trainers "Gender Identity and Building Civil Society", which was facilitated by Dorine Plantenga, Dutch expert for gender equality issues. Additionally, as the part of the project "Support for Women's Human Rights in the Western Balkans", Regional Conference was organized in Ohrid, Macedonia in October 2006. It gathered representatives of nongovernmental and governmental sector from seven countries, with objective of exchanging experiences and good practices in fighting against domestic violence. Regional study "International Standards about Domestic Violence and Their Implementation in the Western Balkans", was also presented at the conference.



RESULTS

One of the most important results of the project "Support for Women's human Rights in the Western Balkans", was publishing "**The Study About Domestic Violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina**", "Excerpt from the Study About Domestic Violence in B&H", and translation and publishing of the English language version of the "Study". (www.hcabl.org).

Beside detailed analysis of the domestic legal norms and factual situation, the Study also offers concrete recommendations for governmental and nongovernmental organizations with objective of harmonization of legislation that regulates the issue of domestic violence, establishing efficient system for protection of victims of violence, and introducing measures for prevention of domestic violence.

In summarizing quantitative indicators, we can say that around **150** judges and prosecutors of Republika Srpska and Federation of B&H, women and men representatives of political life, ministries authorized to work on domestic violence, and representatives of nongovernmental organizations participated at public presentations, and were introduced with the key findings of the Study, as well as the international documents ratified by Bosnia and Herzegovina, and still not implemented in our judicial practice. Objective of the organized presentations and working meetings was also to actualize the implementation of the Law for Protection from Domestic Violence in RS, adopted by the People's Assembly of Republika Srpska at the end of 2005. This Law is still not implemented in the practice because of non-adoption of accompanying bylaws and legal ambiguities.

The Study was also distributed to the other relevant institutions, representatives of the international organizations and foreign embassies, numerous nongovernmental organizations, journalists, women and men members of different political parties, and other women and men individuals interested for the issue of domestic violence.

One of the results of this project was also establishing concrete cooperation with governmental bodies - such are Gender Center of RS Government and Center for Education of Judges and Prosecutors of Republika Srpska.

PLAN FOR 2007

During 2007, we are planning to conduct the research about implementation of the Gender Equality Law in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in terms of implementation of the right on judicial protection regulated by this Law. According to available information, although almost four years passed since the adoption of this Law, only one court case was initiated based on the provisions of the Law. Our intention is to collect information from the field, from courts in Bosnia and Herzegovina, about eventual court procedures and cases based on Gender Equality Law in B&H, to precise which courts are authorized to lead such cases, and how someone can initiate the court case because of violation of this Law. The research findings will be published and presented to women and men judges, prosecutors, attorneys, activists of nongovernmental organizations, and students of the Law Schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

WOMAN AND LAW

Thanks to the long term support from Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation from Sweden, United Women Banja Luka and Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka are implementing this project since 1997, with objective of providing legal and psychosocial support to women victims of domestic violence.

ACTIVITIES

During 2006, activities focused on providing free legal assistance and representation of women victims in court procedures and procedures in front of other official institutions, free assistance of social worker and psychologist. SOS line for victims of domestic violence continued with the work and received 1176 calls for help. We organized self-help discussion groups for women and girls victims of violence, educational workshops for health workers and social workers, and employees in other official institutions with which we cooperate in solving these problems. We were actively working on implementation of the laws related to protection of victims, and advocated for creation of adequate and efficient legal framework for protection from domestic violence, and introducing financing of the safe house on the public budget.



RESULTS

- 768 women from wider Banja Luka region were beneficiaries of legal and psychosocial assistance, and we successfully closed 96 cases, some of them continuing from 2004 and 2005.
- Women and girls victims of violence had support from other women who survived domestic violence through discussion groups, which helped them to start openly to talk about the problem, and take first steps to solve it,
- Information about possibilities for protection of victims of violence and legal procedures are available to the public through "Book of My Friend", which was printed during previous years of the project implementation,
- City Administration Banja Luka assisted reconstruction of the safe house,
- 32 women and men health professionals from 10 municipalities of Northwestern Bosnia and Herzegovina were informed about specific issues related to providing medical assistance and approach in work with victims of violence, as well as legal, social, and economic perspective of this issue,
- Increased understanding of police officers and social workers in wide Banja Luka region for the issues related to domestic violence.

PLAN FOR 2007

Continuation of the project is planned with similar activities that were implemented during previous years, and work of the "Safe House" in Banja Luka.



program area/
CREATING CONDITIONS FOR MORE INTENSIVE INVOLVEMENT OF YOUTH IN THE PUBLIC LIFE

Objectives of the program area are creating conditions for more intensive involvement of youth people in public life, strengthening and networking of youth people per areas of their interest for more active participation in the public life, and increasing number of young people in the political life. We are implementing this program area through educational activities, campaigns, analysis of the position of youth people in different social fields, and promotion of youth activists.

TEN YEARS OF WORK WITH YOUTH

*Since 1997, Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka is implementing programs dedicated to youth people in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These programs were merged in the program area with title **Creating Conditions for More Intensive Involvement of Youth People in the Public Life**. During this period, **more than 1200 young people** passed education in skills that will help them to implement their wishes and objectives in real life through concrete activities.*

Through the workshops about strategic planning, nonviolent communication, conflict resolution, public advocacy, media presentation, and negotiation, and gatherings of youth people, we supported the efforts of youth sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina for improving position of youth people. Many participants contacted us with examples of successful campaigns, approved projects, and some of them are saying they find jobs or opened their private company, thanks to the workshops they attended through our programs.

*Through these projects, and in cooperation with our partner organizations, thousands of youth people throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina organized various public advocacy campaigns. Through the campaign "Youth People Against Corruption", young people had the opportunity to express their views about this issue. With action "Give Us Space Back", **11 municipalities** returned to the youth people public premises, or they received financial support for youth activities. This also encouraged other organizations to work on this issue. With the campaign "We Voted, Now What", we were checking responsibility of politicians, and with the campaign "My Vote is Original" we called young voters to vote on the elections. We supported young politicians through joint campaigns for their visibility in the pre-election campaigns with titles "YOUthMOVE" and "Youth Be Visible".*

Results of these efforts of nongovernmental sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina are that number of youth people in official institutions is continuously increasing. For example, representation of youth people in official institutions on local level is now 12,4% while their percentage was 5,9% after the elections in 2000. When we look at the higher levels of governance, participation of youth people in decision making also increased, and now they are represented with 7%.

During this period, we conducted numerous researches related to youth people, such are: Youth people and elections, Youth people and media, Youth people in politics, etc. These researches were used as the argument for public advocacy for higher participation of youth people in decision making (political parties, official institutions at higher levels, etc.)

YOUthMOVE - PromijeniTI

The main objective of the project “YOUthMOVE - PromijeniTI” was to engage young women and men activists of political parties to work on improving life conditions in their local communities. During second year of the project implementation, we worked on local level in Zvornik, Bihać and Mostar, where we established informal networks of youth people from political parties, nongovernmental organizations, and young representatives in local governance, which are developing strategies for greater participation of youth people in the public life.

ACTIVITIES

During the last year of the three-year project “PromijeniTI”, we based our activities on work with young women and men politicians, and development of youth policies in three municipalities of Bosnia and Herzegovina: Zvornik, Bihać, and Mostar. Following activities were implemented within the project: meetings with local partners, conference “Participation of Youth People on General Elections”, with objective of preparing politically active youth people for participation on the elections, 6 editions of the bulletin “Young People in Politics” directed to promotion of youth political activism, campaign for promotion of young candidates for the elections from Banja Luka region, action “Silhouette”, which was evaluated very positively by youth people, media, and political parties. On the local level, we organized three workshops for non-affiliated youth people and three workshops of evaluation and strategic planning, as follow up activities on developed plans in 2005. The final activity within the project was Winter School for Young Politicians.

RESULTS

- 50 non-affiliated youth people (they are not members of nongovernmental organizations or political parties) participated in the workshops about youth activism and importance of participation in political and public life
- 50 youth people (from Zvornik, Bihać, and Mostar) worked on follow up strategy of their municipalities related to youth issues. Detailed strategy for Municipality of Zvornik was developed. Youth Council within Municipality of Mostar is in the establishing phase, and Municipality of Bihać established Referent for Youth People. Follow up steps are defined with aim of improving position of youth people.
- 29 youth people from political parties participated at the Conference “Participation of Youth People on General Elections in 2006”
- 28 young women and men parliamentarians throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina participated at the Winter School
- Over 200 youth people were indirectly involved in the action “Silhouette”, where we promoted 30 young women and men candidates on the general elections
- 6 editions of the bulletin Young People in Politics were distributed to over 300 addresses in Bosnia and Herzegovina - youth organizations, governmental institutions for youth people, political parties, media, and international organizations working on youth issues.



THE PROJECT AIMED AT STRENGTHENING CAPACITIES OF YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS “SHOW THAT YOUTH CARE”

During 2006, Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka and Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Tuzla initiated the project aimed at strengthening capacities of youth organizations “Show that YOUth Care” with objective of improving position of youth organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina through educational and public advocacy activities.

Youth organizations in smaller local communities of Bosnia and Herzegovina mostly do not have support of local authorities in realization of their activities, and they have more restricted access to information about potential donations and financial support for youth activities.

With strengthening and empowering capacities of members of youth organizations, we are improving position of youth sector and creating generation of skilled youth people with resources for improving position of youth people in local communities, and in general.

ACTIVITIES

The project started with examining youth views about political, economic, and social situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The research included 1500 youth people that expressed dissatisfaction with relation of the state toward youth people. Follow up activities were based on results of the research, and included visits to youth organizations aimed for improving their capacities, workshop “Writing project proposals and strategic planning”, and campaign aimed for motivating youth people to vote on the general elections in 2006.

RESULTS

Results of the research about views of youth people about political, economic, and social situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina were presented to the representatives of media, political parties, and official institutions, and were distributed to high schools and to large number of youth people in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region through different mailing lists. Based on feedback information, we identified that research results were used by young politicians in promotion of their position in political parties (Note: research results showed that 80% of youth people would vote for young candidates).

- 22 representatives of youth organizations from Bosnia and Herzegovina (from smaller local communities in B&H) acquired skills of writing project proposals and strategic planning. Some of the used acquired knowledge for improving capacities of other members of the organization. (Example of two participants from Laktaši)
- 1700 postcards with messages of youth people to the candidates on the elections were sent to their addresses as a part of the pre-election campaign “Show that YOUth Care”, which covered the whole Bosnia and Herzegovina. The central manifestations within the campaign were organized in Tuzla, Mostar, Sarajevo and Banja Luka.
- 100 political candidates responded on the postcards sent by youth people
- Bulletin of the Youth Network were sent to over 2000 addresses in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region
- According to the data provided by the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina, youth people voted on the elections in a highest percentage since the end of the war.

WORKSHOPS “MEDIA PRESENTATION AND PUBLIC SPEECH”

hCa Banjaluka, in cooperation with Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, organized workshops “Media presentation and public speech” that took place in Mostar (7-9 July 2006.), In Bihać (14-16 July 2006.) and Zvornik (21-23 July 2006.) Workshop’s target group was youth from different political parties in order to prepare them for upcoming elections. During the workshops we discussed different issues from how to present yourself and your organization, how to fight out for your own media space, how to overcome fear of media presentation, how to send a clear and interesting message to public and how can they present themselves in best way. Organizers of these activities were young volunteers from hCa Banja Luka and their capacities were developed during project implementation.



PLANS FOR 2007

As a part of youth program area, Helsinki Citizens’ Assembly Banja Luka will direct its work on education of young politicians and representatives of youth organizations from smaller local communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We are planning the project aimed for strengthening capacities of youth organizations from less developed local communities, and their networking with representatives of municipal authorities, and this will be one of the important segments of our work in 2007.

Academy for political leaders is the project of innovative character, because it will gather selected number of young politicians that will participate in educational programs, seminars and practical works, but also in on-line academy, and improve their leadership, advocacy, negotiation and other skills, necessary in political activism of young women and men politicians.

“Please come to see us again!”, message from a female participant on strategic planning workshop

“We need more of this type of workshops, because this is the only way for youth people to stay in normal life when we see the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina”, a male participant on the workshop for non-affiliated youth people as a part of the project “PromijeniTI”.

“At this conference, young politicians even made coalitions between political parties, so any further comment seems unnecessary”, a message from participant at the Conference about Participation of Youth People at General Elections in 2006.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

NGO FAIR

Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka was one of the organizers of The NGO Fair that took place in Banja Luka on August 25 and gathered 28 NGOs from Sanski Most, Derventa, Drvar, Prijedor, Doboij, Grahovo, Livno, Bosanska Kostajnica, Novi Grad, Teslić, Banja Luka. As one part of The Fair a round table was organized about influence of VAT on NGOs, where the participants concluded that NGOs should not be included in the VAT system since they are non-profit organizations and that they should put more pressure on governmental institutions to provide financial support for this sector as well.

PRESENTATION OF THE HCA RESEARCHES AT FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY IN BANJA LUKA

Our organization presented its researches to students of the Faculty of Philosophy in Banja Luka about position of marginalized groups, particularly representation of youth and women in the median, on May 23, 2006. This presentation aimed at introducing the future journalists with NGOs and their studies as possible source of information in journalism.

PRESENTATION ON WOMEN'S ACTIVISM IN BIH IN SWEDEN

On May 16th and 17th the Swedish Foundation Kvinna Till Kvinna and Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka presented the Foundation's report "To Make the Room for Changes" to the representatives of Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), Ministry of foreign Affairs of Sweden and Faculty of political science in Stockholm. The report is dedicated to strategies of women's organizations in BiH in peace work. The executive director of hCa Banja Luka presented an overview of development of women's movement after the war as well as the recommendations for future work.

ONE MAN CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

In cooperation with The Swedish Institute and The Embassy of Sweden we organized the Seminar "One man can make a difference" which took place in Banja Luka on September 1st 2006, and was dedicated to Raoul Wallenberg and his deeply humanistic efforts in protection of Jews in Budapest in The World War II. Prof. Paul Levine presented introductory topic "Why to speak about holocaust - possibilities and problems holocaust pedagogy faces today", with focus on historical aspect and ideological matrix that produced Holocaust. Marko Oršolić, well known humanist and theologyst and Jakob Finci, president of the Jewish community in Bosnia and Herzegovina pointed out the importance of understanding of holocaust, not only because historical truth but also for promotion of tolerance and mutual respect of different religions, traditions and culture in modern times. Modern generations should learn on the examples of antifascists and antinazis. Amongst other, it was proposed that one street in Banja Luka or Sarajevo gets name of Raoul Wallenberg. The fourth speech was made by Prof. Ivo Goldstein, University of Zagreb, who spoke about holocaust in former Yugoslavia, with accent on events in Croatia. In this session he stressed importance of avoiding politization of holocaust and use of tragedy of one nation for the political causes. The discussion that followed stressed unless we understood holocaust, we could not fully understand criminal-victim relationship, as well as whole set of causes of modern nationalism and the latest wars and conflicts in the Balkans. Participants particularly stressed the need for state and other institutions must pay more attention to research on holocaust in all its aspects and introduce this topic particularly in postgraduate and doctoral studies.



PARTICIPATION IN CONFERENCES

- Two regional conferences were organised for organisations working with Olof Palme International Center, in January and June 2006. CD Online Academy and the game "Glimmering Heights - A better tomorrow" were presented to participants. We made some new contacts with organizations in the region.
- Round table "Language and Gender Equality", organized by The Gender centre of Republika Srpska, Banja Luka, February 2006.
- Study trip to institutional mechanisms for gender equality in Vojvodina, organized by United Nations Development Program (UNDP), with the goal to get familiar to legal solutions and practice of institutions in this County.
- Conference on youth policy of RS, April 28th 2006 in Banja Luka, organized by the Ministry of family, youth and sports of RS, which was the final activity of drafting the youth policy of RS.
- Youth camp "Peace, democracy and human rights", held in July in the island of Aland in Finland, which is the result of the last year meeting of our activists with other organizations from the EU and their efforts to create plans defined in that meeting. It was organized in framework of the Youth Program of European Union focused on youth exchange and education camps.
- Regional conference entitled "Local and regional self-governance harmonized with European standards" - experience, problems and perspectives of cooperation in the region of South Eastern Europe, organized by the Association of Multiethnic Cities "Philia", Podgorica, Montenegro, July 2006.
- Regional conference of women studies centers "From different to equal", organized by the Association "Anima", Kotor, Montenegro, August 2006.
- European feminist conference "Security in Europe - for whom?", European Parliament, Bruxelles, September 2006.
- Regional conference "Promotion of European Values" and a meeting of representatives of local governance in triangle of the Association of Multiethnic Cities "Philia" Pula - Budva -Banja Luka, organized by The Association "Homo" Pula, November 2006.
- International round table entitled "How to Reach the Truth", organized by Citizens' Forum Tuzla, Tuzla, November 2006.
- Conference "Peace building - Process and Results", organized by The Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Republika Srpska, November 2006.
- "Domestic Violence - Presentation of the 'Sombor Model' of Protection of Victims", organized by The Gender Centre of Republika Srpska, Ministry of Family, Sports and Youth and Social Care Center Banja Luka, Banja Luka, December 2006.
- "Possibilities of Implementation of The Law on Gender Equality in BiH on the Local Level - Lessons Learned and Exchange of Experience", meeting with representatives of municipal gender equality commissions, organized by Gender Center of Republika Srpska, Banja Luka, December 2006.
- Serial of strategic planning workshops for youth of the City of Banja Luka related to various issues, such as: employment, sports, free time, participation of youth in decision making etc. Organized by Youth Council of Republika Srpska and the City of Banja Luka.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The staff of the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka participated in 2006 in the education programs as follows:

- Regional training in gender equality in the media, organized by Croatian women's rights group B.a.B.e in Sljeme, January 26-28, 2006. The training covered topics such as how to lead cheap and professional media campaigns for gender sensitivity. Participants from the countries of South Eastern Europe identified problems and issues of ownership of media, language in the media, education through media programs and reproducing stereotypes.
- Training of Trainers, as a support to the activities of the project "Support to Women's Human Rights in the Western Balkans", organized by the Women's Association "Lara" from Bijeljina, in Brčko, June 11-16. The training covered the theory primarily focusing on identities, power, domination and civil society and practical part where the participants could present their ideas and talents in leading the training.
- The workshop on conflict resolution and advocacy, organized by the NGO "Delta for the Balkan's", Jahorina. In this workshop we spoke about improvement of cooperation between NGOs and reaching mutual goals - improvement of lives of all citizens in BiH, through overcoming differences among peoples in BiH. Participants passed through training of conflict resolution and advocacy and in the next period they will be involved in advanced training of trainers of the same organization.
- From May 19-28. the Nordic Forum for Conflict Resolution organized a study trip to Norway and Finland for the representatives of nongovernmental organizations from South Eastern Europe, among which there was the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka. The participants passed training in conflict resolution and were presented various models of community conflict resolution and solving of legal disputes. Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka presented its book "Thank you for Asking Me How I Feel", published on the tenth anniversary of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

PUBLICATIONS IN 2006

I HAVE RIGHTS - Various rights are protected and regulated in a world around us, however the rights are violated on a daily basis. Sad people are passing by. This manual about human rights should inform its readers about how to realize their rights and prevent discrimination of others.

GENDER EQUALITY - The story on gender equality is often wrongly perceived as women's issue. However, gender is not a concept which affects women's rights, because our society is not divided into women's and men's world, but their roads daily conjunct, collide and cross each other, and every change of position of the one sex affects automatically the other. This manual on gender equality informs its readers and participants in the training about the history of gender equality struggle, terms of sex, gender, sexual orientation, discrimination and institutional mechanisms for gender equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION - When we think of conflict, the first associations are negative. However, conflicts are neither negative, nor positive, but we can cause them to make negative or positive consequences, depending on how we address the conflict. This manual offers possibility to its readers and participants of the training to learn how to behave constructively in conflicts, teaches them skills of exploration of interests, negotiation and mediation.

PUBLIC ADVOCACY - The manual "Public Advocacy" introduces its readers to the world of struggle for improvement of our environment and society, world of campaigns, lobbying and negotiation through which intend to cause positive changes. Besides theoretic part, this manual provides a practical guide through public advocacy skills and techniques, examples of good practice of certain organizations and informal groups.

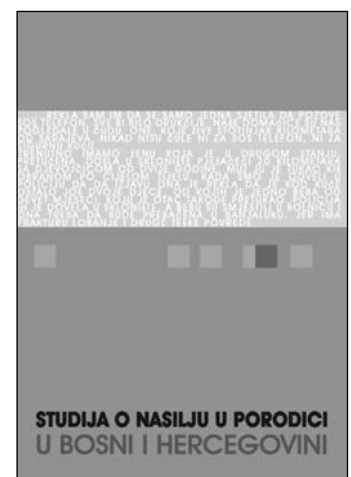
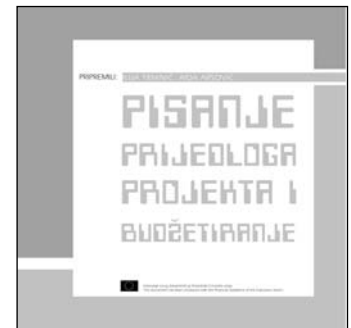


PROJECT PROPOSAL WRITING AND BUDGETING - The system of support through projects is used not only in the organizations of civil society, but also in public sector. Every action will be implemented easily, will give better results, and will get funded if it is carefully planned, it has realistic goals, adequate activities and means and team of people to realize it. This manual helps its readers and participants of the training to plan their actions and necessary means in a systematic way.

CIVIL SOCIETY - The term civil society is unclear to many and it is sometimes considered as an invention of the foreigners. However, civil society simply means citizens. Every citizen has a role in public life in which he or she connects to other people, on a voluntary and friendly basis or a basis of mutual interests and actions for better future. This manual introduces its readers and participants of the training to the world of active citizens fighting for their freedom, improvement of social environment, presents them different forms of organization and activism, and cases of influence of civil society in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

INTRODUCING GENDER EQUALITY PRINCIPLES IN THE LEVEL OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE - Men and women have different priorities; they organize their lives in different manners. They have unequal access to economic and social resources, careers etc. All this is affected by social constructs of their biological sex. Therefore, what seems as neutral policy and measure can influence women and men differently, because they live different social, economic and cultural reality. In order to improve implementation of international and domestic legal standards and gender equality mechanisms Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka and The Gender Center of RS prepared and printed this manual primarily targeting the municipal public officials.

STUDY ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - The Study on domestic violence is a result of several months of research, meetings with governmental institutions and nongovernmental organizations, numerous interviews with experts dealing with domestic violence, analysis of the legal framework on all levels, and analysis of existing publications. This is the first Study of a kind in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



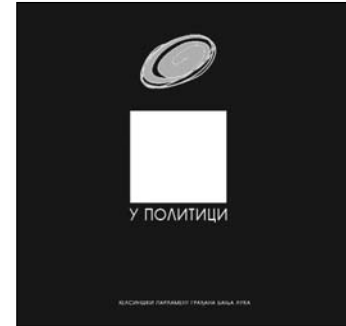
YOUTH IN POLITICS - If you think you don't know enough about politics, if you think all political parties are the same, if you are not politically active in any sense, if you want to become active - this booklet is for you. It consists of two parts: "Politics and youth" by Tanja Topić and the research "Estimation of youth position in political parties by M.A. Srđan Dušanić and Ilija Trninić. This booklet is prepared to familiarize its readers with the political system in Bosnia and Herzegovina and relations of political parties towards youth.

NEWSLETTER "YOUTH IN POLITICS" - The bimonthly newsletter analyzed politics from the youth perspective.

WOMEN TODAY 10 - Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka and The United Women Banja Luka marked the tenth anniversary of their work in 2006 and tenth anniversary of gender equality programs. This was also the year of general elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina so our activities focused on improvement of position of women in public and political life and increase of women's participation in institutions. The booklet "Woman Today 10" presents the overview of our activities, introductory speeches from the public sessions and other meetings in 2006.

FROM LOCAL TO GLOBAL DIALOGUE II - The Booklet "From Local to Global Dialogue II" presents the overview of activities and project results, compilation of introductory speeches of representatives of municipal administrations of Modriča and Teslić, questions and proposals provided by citizens, as well as the results of the research conducted in municipalities of Modriča and Teslić.

BOOKLETS AND GUIDES FOR CITIZENS' IN MUNICIPALITIES OF TESLIĆ, MODRIČA AND MRKONJIĆ GRAD - Booklets and guides facilitated citizens to access the information on activities of municipal administration and procedures on getting certificates, approvals and other documents issued by municipal institutions.

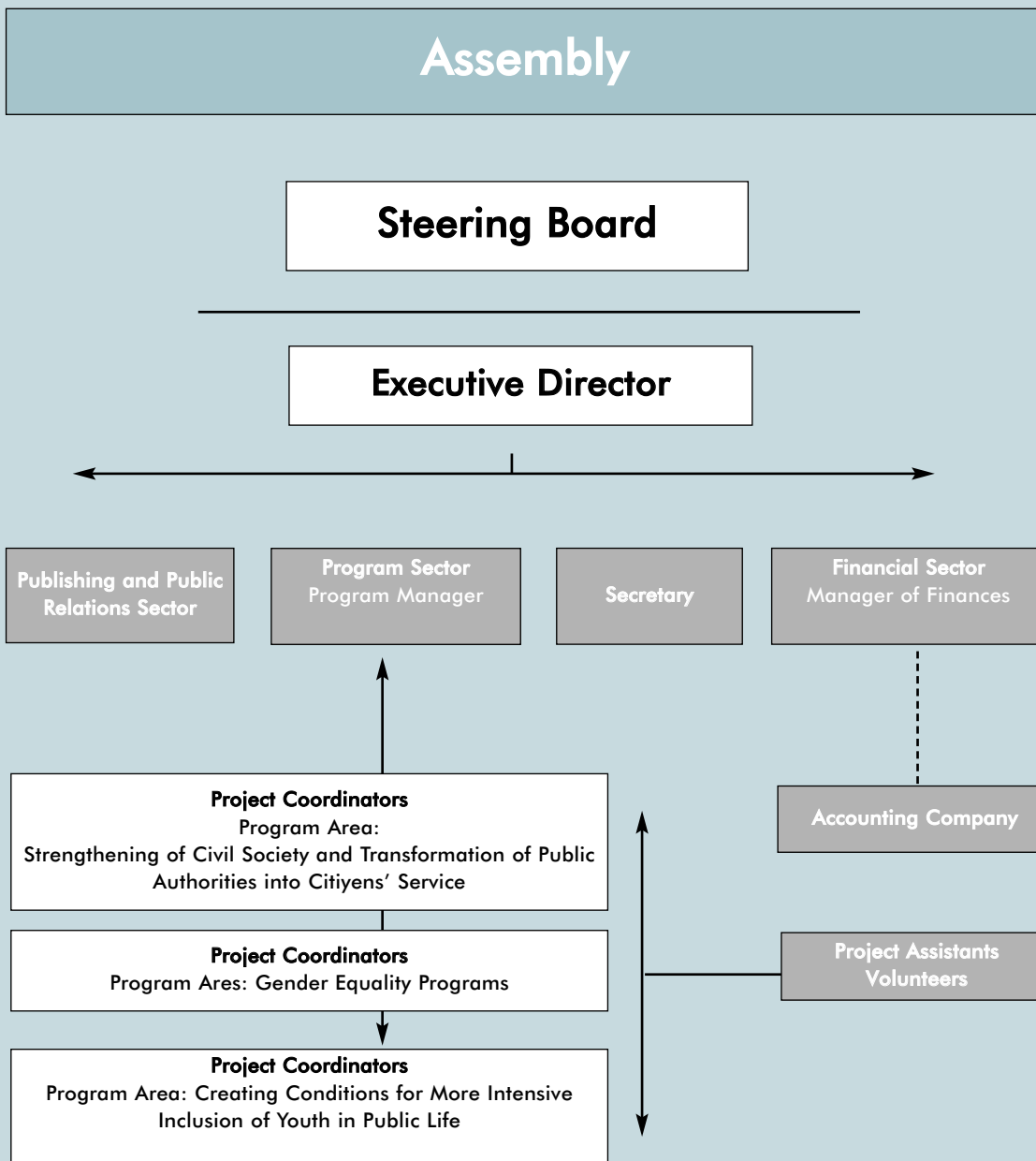


FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

FUNDS TRANSFERRED FROM 2005 (in BAM)	216.416,19
INCOME IN 2006	in BAM
Donations	348.186,59
Trainings	6.645,00
Members' donations	5.692,31
Interests	826,81
TOTAL	361.350,71
TOTAL FUNDS IN 2006	577.766,90
EXPENSES IN 2006	
Salaries (net)	95.443,80
Income tax and other duties	50.844,04
Purchase of equipment and office running costs	48.970,46
Activity costs	280.768,09
TOTAL	476.026,39
REMAINING SUM	101.740,51



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Interchurch Peace Council - the Netherlands

HIVOS -The Netherlands

National Endowment for Democracy (NED) The USA

Friedrich Ebert Stiftung -Germany

Konrad Adenauer Stiftung - Germany

Humanistisch Overleg Mensenrechten (HOM) - The Netherlands

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The City of Banja Luka

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Interchurch Peace Council - The Netherlands

HIVOS - The Netherlands

Westminster Foundation for Democracy - Great Britain

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