

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2015



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Dear friends, colleagues, associates, donators, readers,

Here is another review of activities implemented in 2015th by Helsinki Citizens' Assembly.

This year, like every other, has had its peculiarities which have largely dictated our work. Thus, 2015 was marked by the adoption and attempts of adopting several laws in the Republic of Srpska, which referred to the right to freedom of expression, assembly and association. In February, in spite of criticism and opposition of domestic and international public, the Law on Public Peace and Order of the RS was adopted, which extended the definition of public space to social networks. The, fortunately unsuccessful, attempts of adopting the draft of the Law on Public Gathering and the Act on transparency of non-profit organizations in the RS followed.

Realizing that the goal of proposed legal solutions is narrowing the space for civic activism and CSOs, Helsinki Citizens Assembly was actively, in cooperation with other CSOs, involved in writing press releases, comments and legislative amendments, trying to influence the members of the National Assembly of the RS not to adopt or to correct Acts in accordance with international and European standards and documents related to protection of basic human rights.

Aside from that, we participated, in now traditional, 8th March which, in 2015th, was organized under the motto „Freedom to birth“, as well as on protest organized by Network of Human rights houses in Oslo in solidarity with human rights defenders who are imprisoned due to their actions, but also to draw attention to activists who were murdered or released. We have actively supported other civil initiatives, “old” ones such as “Jer me se tiče”, but also “new” such as “Građanska inicijativa za Borik”. Also, we continued to contribute, in accordance with the capabilities and time, work and activities of the Peace Building Network BiH, Re: Action and Initiative for European integration, which, among other things, annually publishes Alternative reports on the progress of BiH towards European integration.

The year was marked by some sad events. In October, our Jelena left the organization, who is in search of a better life, went abroad. As much as pleased with her new job, so sorry that people like her are leaving BiH, because here you do not see a future opportunity to lead full and normal lives.

Year was also marked with some unfortunate events. Our Jelena left the organization in October and in search of better life went abroad. As much as we're happy for her new job, the fact that young people like her are leaving Bosnia due to the fact that perspective and opportunities for a full and normal life here is unimaginable, makes us very sad.

We're finishing this short activities and events overview with the idea of establishing a Human rights house in Banja Luka which was „born “at the end of 2015. This is something on which we plan to work on intensively in 2014. Our plan is to get the working space from Banja Luka city officials, and will inform you on the outcome in the next Annual report.

ABOUT US hCa Banja Luka was registered on 16 August 1996, as a local NGO in Republic of Srpska / Bosnia and Herzegovina. Since that time, hCa Banja Luka has been actively involved in promoting, strengthening and networking of civil initiatives at local and regional level, and it has been working on reconciliation and empowerment of marginalized social groups for political activism.

**Our mission:** hCa is an organization that supports and encourages autonomy and freedom for all citizens, including marginalized social groups, especially women and young people in democratic processes. Our vision: a society of equal opportunities for all.

### **Priorities of hCa's activism:**

- Empowerment of marginalized groups, especially women, youth and minority groups for political activities and improvement of their position in society;
- Influencing the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to improve legislation and public policy towards these groups;
- Increased and better representation of women, youth and minorities in the media;
- Raising awareness of citizens in Bosnia and Herzegovina on discrimination of marginalized groups and mechanisms to protect their rights;
- Strengthening cooperation with other organizations and institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also at international level;
- Convergence of educational programs, literature, knowledge and skills related to peace-building, development of civil society and human rights of BH citizens;
- Continuous training of hCa staff and efforts to maintain sustainability of the organization.

In 2013, hCa carried out its activities in three program areas:

- Strengthening Civil Society and the Transformation of Public Authorities into Citizens' Service
- • Advocating for Gender Equality
- Creating Conditions for Active Involvement of Young People in Public Life

**Educational programs** – hCa Banja Luka gathers trainers for its own and other organizations' needs that conduct training sessions in the following areas: strengthening the capacities of nongovernmental organizations (strategic planning, fundraising, campaigns, public relations, etc.), non-violent communication, conflict resolution, human rights and gender equality. In this way, hCa Banja Luka promotes its goals and policies to other social groups that are not directly covered by the projects, and contributes to its financial sustainability.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS**

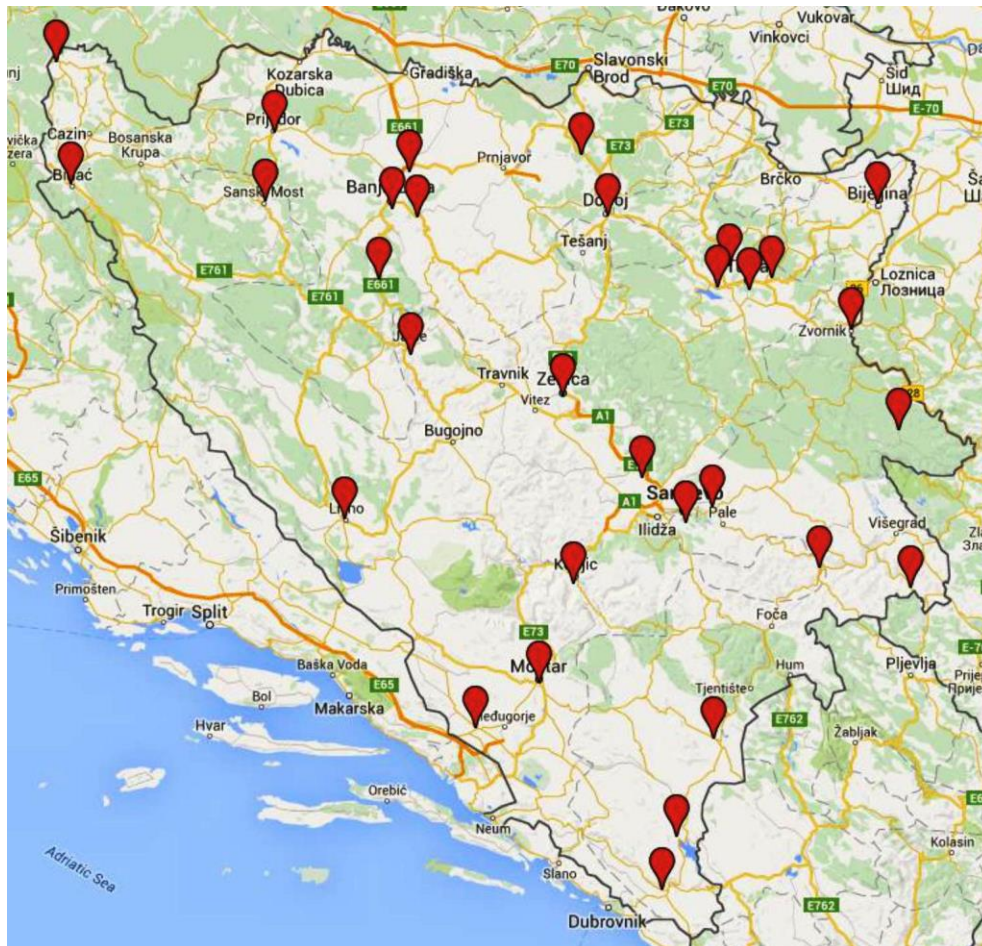
### ***THE MOST SIGNIFICANT RESULTS OF HELSINKI CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY BANJALUKA 1996 – 2015***

Since its establishment in 1996 to this date, Helsinki Citizens' Assembly implemented more than 60 projects at a local and regional level targeted at empowerment of various marginalized groups for more active engagement in public and political life. We would like to stress out our most significant achievements:

1. Organizing the first post-war youth gathering in BiH and establishing Youth Network of BiH which is still active with over 1000 members, youth organizations and individuals;
2. Establishing an Academy for young political leaders, men and women (the Academy is nowadays in charge of “Perpetuum Mobile”, a Banjaluka-based NGO;
3. Support to registration of Alliance of National Minorities of Republic of Srpska and successful advocating of the Law on the Rights of National Minorities in RS;
4. Initiating of start-up of a special show on RTRS public broadcaster ( it is a show called Bono Home which is not broadcasted anymore on RT RS while the show “Korijeni“, dedicated to national minorities issues and nowadays broadcasted once a month on radio of Republic of Srpska);
5. Raising an issue and discussion about discriminatory item “Others“ in the Constitution of BiH;
6. Advocating and support of founding an Alliance of National Minorities as a special advisory body of National Assembly of Republic of Srpska;
7. Initiating and signing the Memorandum on cooperation between Banjaluka and Pula (Memorandum was signed on March 28th, 2011) with the aim of promoting multiculturalism, intercultural dialogue and improvement of trans border cooperation between national minorities rights);
8. Youth campaign „Give us back our spaces“ in which we took an active participation and which resulted in allocating the space to youth organizations in 11 municipalities in BiH (2000);
9. In cooperation with City Administration of Banja Luka, Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banjaluka set up a Bulletin of City of Banjaluka which is nowadays printed once a month.
10. Participation in advocating actions regarding the adoption of the Law on Gender Equality 2003;
11. Analysis of enforcement of the Law on Gender Equality from the aspect of court practice and based on analysis in 2009, initiating of bringing changes and amendments of the Law on Gender Equality ( our most important amendment that was adopted and fitted into changes and amendments of the Law refers to obligatory of state bodies at all levels of authorities and bodies of local self-management to ensure the representation of 40% of one of the genders in management, decision-making and representation);
12. Participation in preparation of BiH Gender Action Plan;
13. Coordination and creation of the Alternative Report on CEDAW Implementation and the state of women's human rights in BiH for the year 2010 ( the report was presented to CEDAW Committee in Geneva in July 2013);
14. Initiating and creating (in cooperation with women's NGOs in BiH) of the Platform of Women's Priorities for constitutional changes with amendments to the BiH Constitution from gender perspective (2013). Amendments were sent to the Board of the House of Representation of Parliamentary Assembly of BiH for consideration;

15. Delivery of amendments to the RS Family Law with the aim of defining the category single “parent” in legal text in accordance with real situation on ground and needs of single parents, initiating the foundation of Alimony Fund in RS ( changes and amendments of the Law Family have not been on agenda of parliament's procedure;
16. Signing the Memorandum on cooperating with RS Employment Bureau aimed at empowerment of position of single mothers at market of labor ( signed in June 2012);
17. Participation in „Global Media Monitoring 2005 (GMMP)” in which, except BiH, 75 countries took part;
18. As a member of BiH Coalition of NGOs „Working and Succeeding Together“ we worked on creating the Agreement on Cooperation between the BiH Council of Ministers and NGO sector in BiH“, “Strategy of BiH NGO Sector Development“, “Code for BiH NGO Sector“ and “Standards of Service Quality between the BiH Council of Ministers and NGO sector in BiH“.
19. Establishing the Journalist Award “Srđan Aleksić” for professional and engaged reporting on marginalized groups in BiH ( since 2011 we organized three awarding ceremonies and since September 2013 this Award is the “ownership“ of BiH Peace Building Network);
20. Establishing the Women's Political Academy for young women from political parties and civil society organizations ( in the beginning of 2014 there was enrolled the second generation of the Academy's attendees);
21. Initiating and establishing the BiH Women's Alternative Government as an informal body on political scene of BiH ( the Government was officially promoted in autumn 2012);
22. Nominating Slađana Ujić, a member of the BiH Women's Alternative Government and president of the SNOP association for “Award for Women's Creativity in Rural Life“ (Slađana Ujić is the first woman from BiH who received this important award and recognition);
23. Networking and strengthening capacities of the least 100 civil society organizations in BiH by education and small grants allocation;
24. Selection to perform the function of Peace Building Network Secretariat;
25. As our achievements we would also like to state many researches and analysis we worked on which resulted in publishing 35 publications available at our web site. According to available server data, the greatest number of visits refers to section Publications and downloading available publications.
26. Owning a library with over 2000 books in fields of women's human rights, violence/non violence, philosophy, political sciences, LGBT, human rights, which all can be borrowed and served as resources for analysis and writing scientific papers in humanities. 27. Through informal coalition of NGOs, we supported the preparation and writing of Shadow Report on BiH Progress for 2013: [http://cps.ba/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/SHADOWREPORT\\_final.pdf](http://cps.ba/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/SHADOWREPORT_final.pdf)

## BiH cities we worked in during 2015



During 2015 Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka realized activities in 31 cities/municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Sarajevo, Laktaši, Teslić, Banja Luka, Visoko, Ljubija/Prijedor, Jajce, Mostar, Bijeljina, Sanski Most, Mrkonjić Grad, Doboj, Gradačac, Tuzla, Modriča, Srebrenica, Bihać, Konjic, Zavidovići, Bileća, Sokolac, Lukavac, Rudo, Trebinje, Zenica, Goražde, Velika Kladuša, Ljubuško, Zvornik, Gacko and Livno.



## Program area:

### Strengthening civil society and transformation of public institutions in the service of citizens

*Goal of this program area are building and strengthening of democracy through raising citizens' awareness on democracy principles and processes, encouraging citizens to launch various initiatives and participate in decision making process on all governing levels. Through different activities within this program area we strive to establish better cooperation between citizens and official institutions. Within this program are, in 2015, we realized projects „IN“ and „Human Library“, and continued to implement activities within „PRO Future“.*

## PROJECT IN

30 months long project „IN“, implemented by Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka and partner organizations: Organization of amputees "UDAS," Federation of Associations for help to mentally disabled persons of Republic Srpska, Association of Paraplegics and people affected by polio in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Association of the Blind of Canton Sarajevo, was finished on 31st of December 2015.

Through the harmonization of national legislation with the UN Convention, strengthening the capacity of organizations of persons with disabilities, their networking and promotion of the concept of human rights as the main approach to solving the problems of people with disabilities, we wanted to contribute to the equal integration of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in social processes and provide an equal enjoyment of the rights and freedoms of persons with disabilities throughout the whole country.

## ACTIVITIES

- The analysis of BiH legislation with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was completed and showed a high degree of non-compliance of laws and other documents with the UN Convention. The analysis showed that only 3% of the bill is in line with the UN Convention. In the analysis, which lasted five months and involved 261 law and regulation, there were 30 experts, most of whom are the persons with disabilities.
- Strategy for effective model of cooperation between organizations of persons with disabilities also was done as part of the project. It provides guidance and models of



cooperation between organizations in various areas, with the aim of a united action towards the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities in BiH. Representatives of umbrella associations and organizations of persons with disabilities who worked on developing a strategy and created the document by the priorities that are considered significant.

- Analysis and Strategy were presented at two round tables organized in Teslić and Sarajevo titled "How much is legislation in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the service of people with disabilities?". The roundtables took participation of more than 100 participants, representatives of disability organizations, government institutions and funds for vocational rehabilitation and employment in BiH.
- Support to the Council for Persons with Disabilities was provided through IN in 2015. 6 out of 10 Council meetings were organized during 30 months of the project. Support was reflected in promotional activities- promotional video clip was done, couple of Press conferences were organized and info flyer was designed and printed.
- Significant part of the Project were media events, total of eight organized in 2015. We specially highlight events on the rights of women with disabilities as Eight March march, presentation of the film "Freedom of birth" and breakfast with journalists on "Sexual and reproductive health of women with disabilities." Volunteering action at PWD organizations was very successful as it gathered 38 institution representatives who volunteered in PWD organizations on 3<sup>rd</sup> of December. Good outreach was achieved with action "Coffee without prejudices" and "Who's got bigger", the sketch by AKT Alija Sirotanović. Also, as part of media events four TV shows were organized.



*Coffee without prejudices, October and November 2015.*

- One of the most important aspects of the project were small grants. Based on 88 submitted proposals, we supported 22 organizations, which are two more projects than planned.

During period from first of November 2014 until 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2015, organizations realized projects in the fields of employment, self-employment, elimination of architectural barriers and accessibility, as well as on education and raising awareness about people with disabilities. Through their activities, projects directly included 3486 users, and were promoted through over 150 articles and other media reports. Small grants showed that it is very important to continue working in communities, directly with users and that great results can be achieved with relatively small funds.

- Part of small grants was also mentoring through which we, with the involvement of 10 people, supported the organizations in the implementation of projects in the form of assistance in the implementation of activities, as well as management of financial documents. All organizations have evaluated this support very positively, saying that they felt more secure and successfully realized their projects.
- In the middle of the year we signed two memorandums of cooperation on the implementation of joint activities. The first memorandum was signed with the Organization MyRight from Sarajevo on the organization of 14 training sessions on advocacy. The second memorandum was signed with PI Special library for blind and visually impaired persons in the RS on the organization of media events and one training of public advocacy.
- From September until the end of November 2015 14 trainings for PWD organizations were organized on the topic of "Public advocacy for improving the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities". Trainings were organized in cooperation with organization MyRight, and as working material the "The analysis of compliance of BiH legislation with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" was used and based on it the advocacy plans were created. Trainings included 161 organizations from whole country and 278 representatives gained new knowledge on this topic.
- Together with trainings in the field of advocacy we organized additional advocacy activities with the authorities at all levels in the form of meetings. A total of 13 meetings with the relevant ministries at the federal and cantonal level as well as with the relevant ministries in the Government of the Republic of Srpska were organized. All received Analysis of laws and presented with the results of the project and pointed to still present major mismatch of BiH laws with the UN Convention.



*Meeting with representatives of Herzegovina-Neretva Canton, 8<sup>th</sup> of October 2015*

- In November 2015, a conference was organized for grantees organizations in order to provide space for sharing experiences, knowledge, establishing synergies and cooperation between organizations. Since the majority of completed projects related to production and employment, the theme of the conference was "Social entrepreneurship" as a proven model for sustainability of the organizations. For this purpose, guest lecturers were colleagues from the group ACT Čakovec, Croatia, SENS network, Serbia, and a good example of entrepreneurship in of BiH behalf of the Association for the social inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities Tuzla was presented.
- Once again in 2015, for the second time we organized a school of swimming and recreational and rehabilitation activities at the pools in Banja Luka and Sarajevo. As in previous years, interest in this activity was big. In Banja Luka 50 participants (mostly children) signed up for a swimming school, and Sarajevo had 60 applicants for recreational activities. The organization of activities at the pools was preceded by fundraising and for this purpose we launched the action on the crowdfunding platform. With the help of online fundraising, but also thanks to donations of other entities, we provided funds in the amount of 7,000.00 BAM for the organization of swimming school and recreational activities in Banja Luka and Sarajevo.
- As part of the project IN, 5 short video clips, that in the positively-provocative manner portray persons with disabilities in different situations, were made with the aim of breaking prejudices, changing negative attitudes and promotion of human rights and equal opportunities for persons with disabilities. Video clips were aired on commercial TV stations for 3 months in prime time, which have significantly contributed to the change of perspective of the public towards people with disabilities.

- Website [www.ukljuci.in](http://www.ukljuci.in) is one of the first, but also best things that have happened within the project IN. Web page has had an average attendance of 2,500 unique visitors from all over Bosnia and Herzegovina and was the first of this type that is dedicated to people with disabilities. This page has a large number of stories about people with disabilities, online library with various publications and laws relevant for this population, as well as three databases which will remain in use for all persons with disabilities in BiH.

### **Overall project results:**

- A total of 205 members from 157 organizations of persons with disabilities adopted the basic knowledge about writing projects at 10 trainings organized throughout the country.



*Training "Public advocacy for improvement realization of the right of persons with disabilities in BiH"  
8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of October 2015, Teslić*

- A total of 22 organizations have successfully implemented projects for "small IN grants", some of which continued its activities after the completion of projects. Of this number, 18 organizations had previously participated in training of writing projects, which, obviously, gave results and strengthen their capacity in the field of preparation and submission of project applications.
- 278 representatives from 161 organizations of persons with disabilities acquired knowledge in the field of public advocacy and created specific advocacy plans for specific topics in the field of disability.
- Analysis of BiH legislation with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was completed. More than 500 recommendations and concrete amendments to the amendment of certain laws have been done based on the analysis of 261 laws and other legal documents. The analysis was submitted to address of parliaments and governments at all levels of government.
- Strategy of efficient model of cooperation between organizations of persons with disabilities was created.

- 5 video clips of people with disabilities was broadcasted on commercial and public TV services in BiH aiming to draw attention to everyday problems and challenges that this population faces, but also to show their capabilities for the same and equal participation in society.
- Website [www.ukljuci.in](http://www.ukljuci.in) continued to operate even after the completion of the project. Administration of website is taken by the Organization of amputees UDAS - a partner organization on the project IN.
- 2 memorandums of cooperation with other organizations were signed which significantly improved the implementation of activities in the project IN.
- Through the project IN support to the work of the Council for Persons with Disabilities has been provided.

**PRO FUTURE- Reconciliation,  
Understanding, Responsibility  
for the future**

Catholic relief service (CRS), in partnership with Foundation Mozaik, Caritas of Bishop's Conference BiH, Forum of Tuzla citizens and Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka, implements 4 yearlong project aiming at building reconciliation and confidence among all ethnic groups in BiH. Goal of the project is to encourage citizens of BiH to advocate for social changes in cooperation with key social actors.

PRO Future acts in 30 municipalities aiming at peace building in and between communities divided by entity borders. Special focus is on youth, women and minorities who will have the opportunity to participate on trainings, peace camps and conferences as well as on other events in order to increase the influence of these groups on social changes and to build firm bases for reconciliation.

PRO Future is financed by USAID, and realization of this project started in October 2013.

## **ACTIVITIES**

### **Activities of women alternative government**

- In the framework of the PRO-Future Women Alternative Government in cooperation with the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly, Sharp zero and Kvart from Prijedor organized a two promotion of the book "Who is an individual, genealogical questioning of citizenship", by Adriana Zaharijević. Promotions were organized in Banja Luka (02.19.2015) and Prijedor (20.02.2015). Promotions speakers, beside author, were also Milena Karapetrović, Zoran Vučkovac, Dražen Crnomat i Danijela Majstorović.



*Promotion of the book "Who is an individual, genealogical questioning of citizenship", 19.2.2015, Banja Luka*

- Two round tables „Women in peace building” were organized in Srebrenica (9/3/2015) and Modriča (10/3/2015). On the round table in Srebrenica with over 70 participants from Srebrenica, Bratunac, Skelani and Konjević Polje, speakers were Stanojka Tešić and Dragana Đurić from Forum žena Bratunac and Vesna Mustafić, Srebrenica assembly member. Second one in Modriča, organized in cooperation with organization Budućnost Modriča, had around 35 participants from Modriča, Gradačac, Odžak and Šamac, and was hosted by Biljana Topić and Gordana Vidović.

### **Activities of Peace Building Network within PRO Future**

- In April we realized two-day long strategic planning of the Network for period 2015-2020. We revised our mission and vision and did new strategic goals and action plan on the meeting attended by 19 members. Strategic planning was done as a response to the need for new decisions and key strategic points in the work within Network as well as in other fields. The main issues which were listed related to the matters of increased participation of members, common values, regional cooperation, standardization, fund raising, cooperation with the government and donors, and better use of provided opportunities.
- Journalists award Srđan Aleksić was awarded fifth time to journalists who professionally reported in marginalized and vulnerable groups. First price was awarded to Center for Investigative Reporting from Sarajevo, for professionalism and investigative approach to



issues, and for specifically pointing out the anomalies in BiH. Last year's winner Dragan Bursać, columnist from portal Buka, awarded the prize to the editor in chief of CIN, Renata Radić Dragić. She said that CIN was proposed for this year's award by the Centre for Environment from Banja Luka for three stories in the energy sector. The second prize was awarded to a journalist of the daily "Pres RS" from Banja Luka Milovan Matić, and the third to journalist of Radio "Free Europe" Maja Nikolić. Amarildo Gutić, one of the judges, presented award to Milan Matić and Maja Nikolić was presented by a member of the Board of Peace Building Network Amir Hasanović. At the award ceremony, which was attended by over 60 guests, spoke the mayor of Doboj, Obren Petrović, Director of Project PRO Future Majda Behram Stojanov and chairman of the Peace Building Network Lučiano Kaluža. This year the competition received 17 complete proposals of non-governmental organizations that nominated the press and the programs they evaluated to promote professional reporting. So far, the journalism award "Srđan Aleksić" was awarded to 19 journalists or media from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Awarding was organized in Doboj in cooperation with the Town of Doboj.



*Award ceremony "Srđan Aleksić" 2015, Doboj*



End of 2015 Peace Network greeted with 99 member organizations.

### ACTIVITIES

- Peace Building Network in the past year marked the 8<sup>th</sup> of March, International Women's Day. In the period from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> of March, civil society organizations throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina have organized activities within the Week of female solidarity and peace building with a symbolic title "Women, Peace, Solidarity" under the auspices of the Women's Network in BiH and Peace Building Network. During the week of women's solidarity and peace building 63 activities in 26 cities and municipalities were organized. The main event was held in Sarajevo, where we organized a panel discussion Women, Peace, Solidarity.
- Peace Network was a partner organization of the Forum ZFD who organized 10 workshops on pedagogical tools on the culture of remembrance, as well as the exhibition in Zenica.
- Celebrating Europe Day was organized through two activities under the name Legacies and Challenges. First, the competition for literary works on this topic was published, in which arrived a large number of students' work. The best selected works were from Stevan Stančić (first place), Jana Zorić (second place) and Amina Ibrahimspahić (third place). On 8 May we organized a panel discussion titled The legacy and challenges, in which we discussed the current situation in the country, marking 20 years since the end of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, needs and possibilities of building peace and the challenges faced by the European Union.
- On 31<sup>st</sup> of May Peace Network has supported and participated in the marking the Day of white ribbons in Prijedor, organized by the initiative Jer me se tiče. The marking involved thousands of people who laid flowers for 102 children and launched an initiative to build a monument in Prijedor for the murdered children.
- During the summer, the network was a partner in the framework of the Summer School International Summer School Learning from the past - Exploring the Role of Transitional Justice and Rebuilding Trust in a Post-Conflict Society, organized by the International University of Sarajevo.
- On 11<sup>th</sup> of June Association Dante Alighieri Sarajevo, Peace Building Network and the Historical Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina organized a panel discussion on the occasion

of the publication of the book "54" whose theme was Italy and Yugoslavia: construction of myths and counter myths in the novel "54".

- On 23<sup>rd</sup> of June we made a translation of the Scriptures of Don Milani, an Italian priest who defended the young men who refused military service at a time when conscientious objection was punished by imprisonment. Lorenzo Milani was a Catholic priest who was tried for "incitement to commit a criminal offense", since he publicly, in writing, he defended young men who refused to serve military service.
- From 27<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> of August the Forum ZFD and several other organizations organized Youth Event 2015 in Tuzla called - "There is always a choice" - Civil courage in times of war and peace, with the participation of more than 100 people from across the region.
- On 30<sup>th</sup> of August in Sarajevo we marked the International Day of Missing persons, together with the International Commission on Missing Persons
- Peace Building Network and numerous organizations, schools and institutions throughout the country organized very interesting activities during the Week of building peace, 15<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> of September, and especially on the International Day of Peace 21<sup>st</sup> of September. 71 activities in 46 cities / municipalities were organized. Central events were in Doboj, where the journalism prize Srdjan Aleksic was awarded the fifth time and in Sarajevo on 21<sup>st</sup> of September. In Sarajevo, we organized the roundtable entitled "Where are we on the path of peace-building in Bosnia and Herzegovina".
- On the occasion of Peace Day we organized contest named „Say it with peace photography’s“, and best works were published in Peace calendar for 2016.
- On the 7<sup>th</sup> of October Peace Building Network published Resource field on peace building where you can find numerous publications, articles, training material etc. on peace building made by many organizations (CRS, Center for non-violent action, Center for peace, non-violence and human rights Osijek, etc.)
- From 4<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> of December 2015, the Peace Building Network and its member organizations and schools have organized a series of activities on the occasion of Human Rights Week. Under joint name, "From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Make education safe for all" 114 activities in 35 towns and cities were organized. Week of human rights was part of the global campaign 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence.
- As part of the 10 December Peace Building Network with partners organized a screening of the film "Watchers of the Sky" in Sarajevo, Banja Luka and in Gornji Vakuf / Uskoplje, organized by the Youth Center.

- At the ceremony organized in Sarajevo, Danka Zelić from Bosnian Grahovo was awarded with Peace Prize of Peace Building Network for 2015. Previously, the prize went to Marko Oršolić and Ivica Osim. Danka is the third winner of the Peace Prize.
- In the context of social networks, web pages Network reached 235,000 unique visitors (2.5 times more than last year) with over 7,000 releases during the year. Facebook page has 11,000 likes, and Twitter account has reached over 11,000 releases. Information of the Network are shared on several thousand addresses through multiple mailing lists, sister and partners networks, and across the web portal [www.poslovi.ba](http://www.poslovi.ba) and [www.boljiposao.ba](http://www.boljiposao.ba).

## HUMAN LIBRARY

Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka, within Coalition for Equality, worked on implementation of project "Human Library", during 2015. We started with realization in February and implemented activities in Banja Luka, Mrkonjić Grad, Jajce, Prijedor and Sanski Most through partnership with Center for youth KVART Prijedor, Youth organization "Center" Mrkonjić Grad, "Youth center" Jajce and "Center for Peace Building" Sanski Most. Project was based on promotion of Anti-discrimination Law through Human Library methodology. Methodology itself was developed in 2000 in Denmark aiming at violence prevention. Human Library functions as any other library, with difference that books are in fact real humans, and reading process is twenty minutes long dialogue with chosen book. We chose titles for our sessions in relation to groups defined by Anti-discrimination Law, but also according to readers' interests. Therefore this project involved single mothers, persons with disabilities, ex addicts, LGBT persons, returnees, members of religious minorities, unemployed youth, people with psychiatric experiences, and fathers on maternity leave, people who survived deadly diseases, Roma people, atheists, psychotherapists, Ombudsmen and peace activists. During 11 implementation months we organized 10 sessions of Human Library visited by 196 readers. Bestsellers were LGBT person and ex addict, while the readers suggested ex-convicts, HIV positive persons, ex alcoholics, mixed marriages children and ex- combatants for future sessions.



As a particularly positive result that gave the project a different perspective, we highlight cooperation with the Banja Luka Demofest which included sessions of "Human Library" in its daily program. During the project we established the cooperation with the organization INDEPENDENT from Zenica with whom we jointly applied and got the certificate for the implementation of the methodology of "Human libraries" in Bosnia and Herzegovina of the Council of Europe - Youth Department of the Directorate of Democratic Citizenship.

### Program area: Advocating for gender equality

*The overall objective of the program area is to reduce all forms of gender discrimination and create an environment in which women and men have equal opportunities. We realize it through networking and support of initiatives related to gender issues, women's empowerment, which are currently the largest marginalized groups to participate in public and political life, through education of women and men on issues of gender equality, training for women in developing different skills, awareness, research and policy analysis.*

*Within the program area in 2015, we worked on the project "Localization of CEDAW", "Women's Side of Politics II", "Engendering constitutional amendments" and two partnership projects "Peace with women face" and "Together for a life free of violence".*

In the period from 1st January to 31st July 2015, Helsinki Citizens' Assembly implemented the project "Localization of CEDAW" aimed, among other things, at including as many local organizations in the process of monitoring the implementation of recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

### **ACTIVITIES:**

- On the end of the February of 2015 we held a three-day-long training where the indicators for monitoring the concluding comments and recommendations of the CEDAW Committee were developed in cooperation with representatives of 6 NGO's from BiH. Draft document - table with indicators, sources and methods of gathering information was then sent to the addresses of 14 other non-governmental organizations, of which 8 sent their comments and amendments
- After completion of comments and recommendations, we prepared Manual for monitoring implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Handbooks was printed in 500 copies and distributed to various addresses in BiH, and is also available in electronic version on the site of hCa BL and Women's Network. The manual was translated into English.
- Within the project we also organized 5 trainings "Monitoring the implementation of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women" in Banja Luka, Jajce, Bijeljina, Sarajevo and Mostar, in which participated 82 women from 63 non-governmental organizations from across the country. During trainings the participants learned about the importance and purpose of CEDAW, about the work of the CEDAW Committee and the ways in which NGOs can get involved in monitoring and reporting under this Convention. Participants were also presented with Manual containing indicators, sources and methods for collecting the data necessary to argue the situation on the ground.



*Training "Monitoring the implementation of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women", Banja Luka, 6 June 2015.*

- The final meeting was held in mid-July in Teslić and was attended by 19 women from 12 non-governmental organizations that have expressed a desire to participate in writing the next Alternative CEDAW report. The meeting also resulted with proposal of priorities and advocacy actions for the next two years, concerning the advancement of women in the key areas of life.

## WOMEN'S SIDE OF POLITICS II



*Final meeting "Monitoring the implementation of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women", June, Teslić*

hCa begin realizing Women's side of politics II in October 2013 as continuation of project that started in 2011. Goal was to empower position of women from political parties, especially within management structures and CSOs so that women can equally participate in decision making processes through education within Women political academy II and by supporting activities of



Women alternative government which promotes needs and viewpoints of Bosnian women. Project was finished on 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2015.

### Activities:

During 2015 following activities were realized:

- In the framework of the Women's Political Academy II final third of online module "Gender and Media" was implemented in the framework of which students, from 14<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> January, listened to online lectures: LGBT and the media, Women in advertising, Women in post-socialism, Women and ITC and Women in the media. After each lecture online tests were carried out which were successfully passed by all students.
- The final conference of the project was held in Laktaši from 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> March 2015, and has brought together students of first and second generation of the Women's Political Academy, members of Women alternative government, representatives of the mentoring program and winners of the Najžena awards within the PRO-Future project. At the start of the conference participants were welcomed by Ed Gallagher and Maria Stavropoulos from the US Embassy in BiH. Topic of the conference was Peace-building at the local level, but we have also talked about freedom of birth, and students had the opportunity to present their final works in which they worked on different topics. For example, student Maja Jovanović made a 15-minute documentary about a miner woman from Drenovača that we published on the website [www.zenskastranapolitike.hcabl.org](http://www.zenskastranapolitike.hcabl.org). At the conference we have handed diplomas to students and in the end we joined the Women's Day march in Banja Luka.



*Final conference, 6-8.3.2015, Laktaši*



- Representatives of Women alternative government in the 4th and 5th of February were on a study visit in Zagreb, where they met with representatives of the Centre for Women's Studies, the Center for Education, Counseling and Research (CESI) and the organization B.a.B.e. The aim of this visit was to exchange experiences and information, and talk about the possibilities of future cooperation.
- In the local community Zdena near Sanski Most on February 13th 2015 Women's Alternative Government held a workshop on "Sexual and reproductive health of women."



*Workshop on "Sexual and reproductive health of women,"  
February 13, 2015, MZ Zdena, Sanski Most*

- Representatives of the Women's Alternative Government on the 11th of March 2015, met with Amra Babić, head of the municipality Visoko with whom they discussed the possibilities of cooperation with this municipality and women's non-governmental organizations operating in Visoko.
- At the fair of education and employment, held on March 20th in Banja Luka, we presented the Women's Political Academy, which had a great interest.
- Women's Alternative Government was one of the organizers of the round table held on 25th of March 2016 on sexual and reproductive health of women with disabilities which pointed to the complete marginalization of women with disabilities in this sphere.

## **OVERALL PROJECT RESULTS:**

- 3 modules of Women's Political Academy with a total of 21 lectures were successfully implemented. The knowledge they have acquired or expanded at the Academy, participants have "tested" in practice, through the organization of 10 actions in their local communities.

Three students were also candidates in the general elections in October 2014, and one of them, Indira Muharemović from Brčko, was a candidate for president of the Republic of Srpska.

- By creating an online platform for third module "Gender and the media" of Women's Political Academy, Helsinki Citizens' Assembly has become one of the few non-governmental organizations in BiH which uses modern technology for non-formal education.
- The Alumni Association of the first and second generation of students has 79 members, who communicate via Facebook group of Women's Political Academy <https://www.facebook.com/groups/397538856940046/members/> and that is a platform for the mutual exchange of information.
- Women's Alternative Government organized 22 public events across the country, published 21 press releases and created a database of experts in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Women's Alternative Government has received the Minister of Sport Kada Delić and 10 new associates in the spring of 2014, mostly members of Women's Political Academy.
- After workshops on sexual and reproductive health in Mihatovići and breasts self-examination, three women were sent for further specialist examinations.
- The actor of the National Theatre RS Ljubisa Savanović in June 2014, driven by event "Unusual woman and an unusual profession", organized by the Women's Alternative Government decided, via Facebook, to launch a campaign to collect money to buy computers for elementary school in a small village on Manjača whose pupils do not have the basic conditions for education.
- BH Journalists and the Women's Network of Bosnia and Herzegovina took over the base of BiH Experts established in the project "Women's Side of Politics II", which includes information about 116, mostly young women with impressive resumes and academic achievements in all fields: medicine, law, agriculture, linguistics, biology, political science, engineering, gender equality ... and thus the base became the property of the civil society.
- 69 media reports on the activities of the project were published. Facebook page Women's Alternative Government (<https://www.facebook.com/ZAVBiH?ref=hl>) had a total of 677 releases / articles and 86 photos, a web site of the project Female Side of Politics ([www.zenskastranapolitike.hcabl.org](http://www.zenskastranapolitike.hcabl.org)) had the average attendance of 1,200 visits per month.

- Women's Alternative Government has been involved in organizing the first international conference "Women and War", which was held in Sarajevo, and was attended by more than 150 participants, eminent scientists, researchers and activists from all over the world. (<http://womeninwar.org/wordpress/commemorating-women-war-in-sarajevo-1914-2014/>)
- Women's Alternative Government contributed to writing the Shadow Report on BiH's progress towards European integration in the part relating to the status of women in sport in BiH.
- The number of direct beneficiaries of the project is 1291, and indirectly the project involved a lot more - in our estimation about 100,000 people.

## ENGENDERING OF CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka, as the coordinating organization of the initiative "Women Citizens for Constitutional reform", on July 1, 2015 started the implementation of the project entitled "Gendering the constitutional changes" aimed at strengthening the capacity of members of the Initiative as well as increasing the visibility of the Initiative and Platform of woman priorities for constitutional reform among the citizens of BiH and relevant institutions and bodies.

### ACTIVITIES

- Members of the Initiative participated in the final workshop of the project "Localization of CEDAW" which defined areas on which the non-governmental organizations are going to report in the next Shadow Report. Initiative Women citizens for Constitutional reform will contribute to the writing of this report participating in reporting the parts concerning the constitutional changes and the participation of women in public and political life.
- The capacities and needs of 35 members of the Initiative were mapped and their opinions on the need to reform the Constitution and the importance of the inclusion of woman priorities when the constitutional changes were collected. From the obtained information we created ID cards of members which were published on the website of the Initiative ([www.gradjankezaustavnepromjene.wordpress.com](http://www.gradjankezaustavnepromjene.wordpress.com)), which gives a complete picture of who are the members of the Initiative, why have they joined the Initiative and why it is important to be part of this initiative.

- The meeting of Coordination committee was held and it resulted with detail familiarizing committee members with “Engendering constitutional reforms” and its plans for realization of forthcoming activities.
- Promotional material of the Initiative was designed and printed and will be distributed through every initiatives’ activity.
- Members of the Initiative participated in writing December demands and comments on Progress report of BiH prepared by Initiative for monitoring EU integration, on the parts about constitutional changes.
- Basic training was organized with aim of strengthening members capacities trough adopting additional knowledge on Bosnian Constitution, complex procedures of changing the Constitution and (im)possibilities of citizens participation in changing the Constitution, as well as familiarizing with feminist argumentation.



*Basic training for Initiative members, 7-9.10.2015, Banja Luka*

- Conference "Constitutional reforms in the light of EU integration and participation of women in the negotiation processes" whose objective was actualization of constitutional changes that have been marginalized in political and public life was organized in 2015. The conclusions of the conference, which was attended by representatives of NGOs, gender institutions, academia and the international community, were forwarded to all relevant offices, national and international institutions and individuals.

- Information on the activities of the Initiative are in continuity published on the website of the Initiative [www.gradjankezaustavnepromjene.wordpress.com](http://www.gradjankezaustavnepromjene.wordpress.com) and through social media (Facebook and Twitter)

## RESULTS

- The initiative received 10 new members, and as of December 2015, have a total of 35 civil society organizations, women's non-governmental organizations and individuals involved in the work of the Initiative.
- Around 120 people was directly involved in the activities of the Initiative.
- The mapping was done and 35 ID cards of members of the Initiative were designed.
- On the Basic training 25 members of the Initiative adopted new knowledge and expanded existing on constitutional procedures and feminist argumentation.
- Three working groups of the Initiative were formed: working group for public presentation, working group for media presentation and a working group for lobbying and advocacy, that will make action plans for each group individually, but also joint Advocacy Plan of the Initiative on the Advanced training planned in February 2016.
- At a conference organized by the Initiative 67 conference participants adopted conclusions relating to the actualization of the necessary constitutional changes and a redefinition of the Catalogue of human rights in the Constitution, inclusion of citizens in the negotiations on constitutional changes and insisting on the participation of women in all kinds of negotiations and decision-making, which were sent to the addresses of the relevant international and national institutions.



*Conference "Constitutional reforms in the light of EU integration and participation of women in the negotiation processes", 22.12.2015, Sarajevo*

- On the web site, Facebook page and Twitter account of the Initiative 88 articles about the activities of the Initiative, as well as on other activities and topics that deal with issues of the Constitution were published, which resulted in significant growth of visits to online platforms of the Initiative.

## **PLANS FOR 2016.**

The members of the Initiative will take part in the writing of the CEDAW shadow report and the Alternative report on the progress of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the organization for at least three meetings with other organizations, initiatives or coalitions that advocate for constitutional reform are planned in order to exchange experiences and establish cooperation. In addition, in 2016, will be organized advanced training for members of the working groups of the Initiative at which members will create action plans of the working groups, to improve knowledge and skills on the subject of public and media representation and advocacy and lobbying, and make joint advocacy plan of the Initiative. Media monitoring will be carried out during the two-month campaign aimed at seeing whether, when and how much is being said about constitutional changes, and at the end of the year conference of the Initiative will be organized on the topic of challenges and prospects of cooperation with politicians on the actualization of constitutional reforms. We will continue with the continuous publishing of articles on the activities of the Initiative and topics that are the focus of action and commitment of the Initiative on the website of the initiative [www.gradjankezaustavnepromjene.wordpress.com](http://www.gradjankezaustavnepromjene.wordpress.com).

**WITH WOMAN'S FACE -  
WOMEN'S INITIATIVE FOR  
DEALING WITH THE PAST**

Helsinki Citizens 'Assembly Banja Luka participates, as one of the partner organizations, in project "Peace with women's face - Initiative for dealing with the past" lead by non-governmental organization" Lara "from Bijeljina in partnership with the organization" Horizonti "from Tuzla, whose implementation began in mid-2015.

Our role in this project consists in collecting stories about women, civilian war victims, whose lives and suffering is almost completely unknown, and in organizing local activities in Banja Luka, aimed at fostering a culture of remembrance in which women have their place, and promoting the contributions that women gave and give to the processes of establishing sustainable peace in this



region. So we on 8 December 2015 organized an action by symbolically placing the names of streets named after women, in the park in front of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Banja Luka, and thus joined activists from Bijeljina, Tuzla, Sarajevo, Mostar, Bratunac, Višegrad, Modriča, Bihać, Zenica and Grahovo who launched an initiative to make December 8, the Day of remembrance on the fallen women during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Among the street names that we set up in the park in front of the Museum of Modern Art you could find the names of women who are little known or completely unknown. So, few people know that the Gizela Januševski was the first doctor in Banja Luka who worked since 1899. After the closure of state offices, she opened a private clinic where she treated mainly women and children from infection, respiratory and sexually transmitted diseases, and has performed couple of minor surgeries. She died on March 2, 1943, in the Nazi concentration camp Terezienstadt, and for her entire dedicated work in 1937 she received the Austrian National Order of Merit. There were also names of Adela Ber Vukić, the first schooled BiH Painter, Julka Popović-Srdić, who was one of the few women who, before World War II tried her hand in literary field in Banja Luka cultural and social life, and Julija Pejnović, who was a prominent Banja Luka opera singer, actress and teacher. Julija studied in Vienna and was officially stepped onto the stage as a member of the Belgrade Opera in 1926. She taught piano and solo singing at the Music School in Banja Luka. There were the names of Nasiha Kapidžić Hadžić, poet, Milena Mrazović, the first journalist and editor in Banja Luka, Vahida Maglajlić, National heroin, brigand Mara and Šemsa Kaduna, the first woman patron in Banja Luka.



This action has been our contribution to the Initiative to 8 December being declared as Remembrance Day on women victims of war, but also the initiative to increase the number of streets that carry the names of women who have influenced the social life and the development of their society in local communities. According to the Research and Documentation Centre in Sarajevo in the period from 1992 to 1995 in Bosnia and Herzegovina 9901 women were killed.



## PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS: TOGETHER FOR LIFE WITHOUT VIOLENCE

Helsinki Citizens' Assembly is one of the partner organizations in the project "Together for a life free of violence" implemented by non-governmental organization "Women's Centre" from Trebinje. The project includes activities for lobbying at the entity level (RS) for the adoption of a package of economic measures to support women who are victims of domestic violence.

One of the first activities was the mapping of problems and needs of women who have experienced violence in a family context for systematic and organized economic support.

Unemployment and poverty are common reasons why women hesitate to leave a violent partner. A large number of women, at the beginning of a relationship, ends education or resigns their jobs due to pressure or jealousy of their partners. Due to a long absence from the labor market they no longer have the same opportunities to find work because they lack education, skills and work experience. On the basis of reports "Data of protection providers for the period January - December 2014" which are available on the website of the Ministry of Family, Youth and Sports of the RS Government, it can be concluded that of the total number of women who reported violence 60% of them are unemployed, that the majority of them is aged between 30 and 50 years and that 80% of them have only primary or secondary school.

The research of "Women's Center" Trebinje has shown that the economic dependence is one of the reasons why women stay in abusive relationships.

RS MoI - the total number of received reports for domestic violence in 2014: 1236			
Number of perpetrators of violence		The number of female victims of violence	
1293		1002	
1136 M	157 F	942 adult women	60 female children

## **The program area: Creating conditions for more intensive involvement of young people in public life**

*The objectives of the program area are creating conditions for more intensive involvement of young people in public life, empowering and connecting young people by interest areas for active participation in public life, as well as increasing the number of young people in political life. We realize it through educational activities, campaigns, analyzes of the situation of young people in various social areas and the promotion of young activists*

### **VOLUNTEERS PROGRAM**

During 2015, HPG has continued to work to strengthen its volunteers program, trying to establish a wider network of volunteers interested in work in the organization. In September we welcomed a new volunteer from Germany Pauline Kindler, who will stay with us one year and we have, once again, organized a free German language course.

### **Visiting Banja Luka**

Volunteers and activists of Helsinki Citizens Assembly Banja Luka hosted, in the period from September 25 to September 27 of 2015, a group of young people from Visoko, Travnik, Brčko, Mostar and Novi Travnik. This visit was realized within the Interethnic peace camp program implemented by the Centre for Peace Building from Sanski Most, under the auspices of the US Embassy in BiH. Guests had the opportunity to visit Banja Luka, as well as attend the session of Human Library in Jajce. The first day was reserved for the introduction to Banja Luka-based organizations working on issues of peace-building, Oštra nula and the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka, after which the participants visited the National Theatre of the RS. After the Human Library session, we organized a tour of the exhibition "Art and Power - landscapes from the collection of Josip Broz Tito" at the Museum of Contemporary Art of RS. The tour during which visitors visited Cathedral of St. Bonaventure, Cathedral Church of Christ the Savior, Ferhat Pasha

Mosque was also organized. There they met with representatives of the religious communities, and they saw Banja Luka in a different way.



## INFO CORNER

### **The Law on Public Peace and Order**

The month of February was marked by the adoption of the Law on Public Peace and Order of the RS and our attempts the act, in the proposed form, was not adopted.

Together with the organization Transparency International, Oštra nula and Buka, we asked the members of the National Assembly of RS and parliamentary committees to withdraw the Draft Law on Public Peace and Order of the RS from the parliamentary procedure, until some provisions of the Act are additionally legally specified and harmonized with BiH Constitution and international standards, particularly with Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and by International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. We warned that expanding the definition of a public space to social networks, without a clear explanation of what is considered offensive and

disturbing content and insult (Articles 7 and 8) on social networks, leaves room for interpretation, which is, from the standpoint of the legal profession, unacceptable.

The Law on Public Peace and Order of the RS was adopted despite warnings and the opposition of the international community and a number of journalists' associations who claim that the law limits the right to freedom of expression in the RS.



Picture taken from: <http://www.6yka.com/novost/73514/novi-zakon-o-javnom-redu-i-miru-u-rs-uvodenje-cenzure-i-strah-od-nezadovoljnih-gradana->

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### **Global study on the implementation of the Resolution 132**

Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General Radhika Coomaraswamy visited in February Bosnia and Herzegovina with the aim of collecting data for a global study on the implementation of the Resolution 1325 - Women, Peace and Security, the drafting of which has asked by the UN Security Council. At a meeting in Banja Luka on February 18 Coomaraswamy spoke with representatives of civil society organizations from the RS. Representative of HPG BL Dragana Dardić, on that occasion, gave information about the status of women victims of rape in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with a special focus on the Republic of Srpska whose laws do not recognize women, victims of rape as a special category of victims. "Civil victims of war in RS are entitled to monthly benefits which depend on the physical injuries and evaluation committee. Unlike the RS, Law of the Federation recognized survivors of rape as a separate category of victims and the threshold of 60 per cent of physical injuries does not apply to them. In addition, civil victims of war in FBiH are also entitled to receive additional non-financial benefits such as priority in housing and employment," said Dardić adding that, nevertheless, women survivors of war crimes are, in both

entities, subject to discrimination in compared to the war veterans and the benefits that they enjoy, and that the funds provided from the budget allocated to civil war victims are to 9 times smaller than those which the veterans receive.

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### **March 8 - Day of women's fight**

In 2015 was organized fourth 8 March march with aim to point out the specific situation of women, with emphasis on woman in labor, mothers and women with disabilities. 8 March march was held under the slogan Freedom of birth and was part of the regional campaign of the same name. Research conducted under this action showed that 59% of women do not feel safe and protected during childbirth in the RS, 85% of women had no privacy during childbirth, 75% of women said that the atmosphere in the delivery room was not pleasant. In general, women feel lonely and scorned, treated as birth machines instead of being actors in their own birth. The march was organized by NGO Oštra Nula, DRIP, Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka, Youth Center Kwart from Prijedor, Peace Building Network, together with independent actors from Banja Luka.



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### **Gledaj od čega ćeš živjeti**

On March 20, Helsinki Citizens' Assembly presented its educational and volunteer programs at the Education and employment Fair and \_ "Gledaj od čega ćeš živjeti" in Banja Luka. Picture testifies about great interest of young people for work of hCa BL.





*hCa BL stand on Fair of employment and education, march 2015*

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## **The exchange of volunteers**

The meeting, which was attended by local non-governmental organizations that work with volunteers, was organized on April 16 on the initiative of the hCa. The aim of the meeting was to establish cooperation and regular information exchange in order to establish more efficient exchange of volunteers between organizations, including volunteers coming from abroad, in order to give them the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the work of various organizations working in the area of Banja Luka. Let's do it, manifestation Creative August, Chain of knowledge, Be a Man Club are just some of the activities through which organizations can cooperate when it comes to networking and the exchange of volunteers.

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## **Open letter to the Minister Lukač**

Citizens' Initiative for Banja Luka "Re: Action", whose active member is also hCa BL, sent an open letter to the Minister of Internal Affairs of the RS, Dragan Lukač, on 29 of April 2015, on the occasion of the release of the draft Law on Public Assembly in RS. "Re: Action" called on the Ministry of Internal Affairs to carefully consider the possible consequences that this law could have on the right to freedom of assembly in the Republic of Srpska and to respect all existing laws and regulations in the process of adoption of legal acts, including the appropriate duration of the public hearings and requesting statements of all stakeholders. After a lot of controversy, comments and negative reactions from the public, the new draft Law was withdrawn from the further parliamentary procedure.



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### **An attempt of limiting the work of civil society organizations in the RS**

In addition to the Law on Public Peace and Order and the draft Law on Public Assembly, the ruling party in the RS, proposed adoption of yet another controversial draft - a draft Law on transparency of work of non-profit organizations in the RS.

Draft Law foresaw labeling organizations that receive foreign donations as "servants of foreign subjects", putting their work under the full control of the RS Government and ban on the implementation of political activities, whereby the "political activities" was defined as "any activity to authorities, institutions or elected representatives of RS in terms of the formulation of the adoption or amendment of legislation and policy of the RS or in terms of political and public interest"! On that occasion, the Civic Initiative for Banja Luka "Re: Action" has sent a letter and comments to all parliamentary caucuses in the RS National Assembly, noting that the proposed draft legally attempts to disable critical thought and activism of citizens, and that the plan is contrary to reason and the legal provisions of the EU. Joint Conference of several non-governmental organizations was organized on May 15 in Banja Luka, which pointed to the negative impact that the law would have on the work of NGOs, and Dragana Dardić participated in the work of the Committee for European Integration of the National Assembly of RS on 17 May on which the draft of the controversial law "was rejected".

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### **Fight against radicalism**

The international four-day conference entitled "Regional dialogue Europe - Bosnia & Herzegovina", which brought together leaders, activists, peacekeepers, fighters for human rights



from 18 countries, among whom was Aleksandar Žolja, representative of hCa BL and Peace Building Network BiH, was held from 4 to 7 May in Bosnia & Herzegovina.

The organizers of the conference "Medica" Zenica, Institute for Peace and Justice from San Diego and The network of religious and traditional peacekeepers have set up fight against radicalism as a primary objective of the conference.

The conference was held in four cities. In Sarajevo, the participants had the opportunity to meet with people who were victims of extremist attacks such as participants from Norway, who survived Breivik's attack on the island Montoya or were supporters of radicalism, such as former activists from Britain, who is a former member of the group of young people who planned to establish a new Islamic state.

In Tuzla, more than 50 conference participants visited the Identification Coordination Facility and in Srebrenica was organized a joint Judeo-Christian-Islamic prayer for the participants at the cemetery in Potočari.

The discussion and exchange of views on the contribution of women in the healing and reconciliation in the post-war period was organized in Zenica, and the participants had the opportunity to hear the experiences of women peacemakers from Bosnia and Herzegovina.



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### **Promotion of publications of Women's Network in Banja Luka**

Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka and Women's Network BiH organized on June 29 in Banja Luka promotion of three publications of Women's Network: "Maps of women's rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina" by Fedra Idžaković, "Maps: from the establishment and management of NGOs to their closedown " by Slaviša Prorok and "Analysis of the participation of women on party lists and the final results of the general elections in 2014 - Political participation of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina" by Edita Miftari. Dragana Dradić, executive director of of hCa BL, spoke about the publications, stressing the importance of these publications dealing with the review of the legal framework and legislation related to women's rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as procedures of establishing and closing non-governmental organizations. After the presentation

publications and promotional materials of Women's Network were distributed to the participant, and promotion was continued with informal conversation and socializing.



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### **The protest march in Oslo**

From 7th to 10th of September 2015 the Executive Director of the Helsinki Citizens' Dragana Dardić attended the Oslo ceremony marking the 20th anniversary of the existence of the Network of Human Rights Houses (Human Rights House Network). This network brings together 90 civil society organizations that operate through the 16 Human Rights Houses in 13 countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Norway, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Switzerland and England. The main objective of the Human Rights Houses is to provide protection and support to human rights defenders. Gathering in Oslo was used to summarize Network's previous work and to discuss strategies for the future. In addition, as part of the celebration of the 20th anniversary, protest march was organized in the capital of Norway in solidarity with human rights defenders who, because of their actions, are in prison, but also in order to draw attention to those who were killed or freed.




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### **Presentation of the Alternative Report on the progress of Bosnia and Herzegovina before the National Assembly of RS**

Members of the Initiative for Monitoring European integration of BiH Inela Hadžić, Tijana Cvjetičanin and Dragana Dardić presented on September 30th, before the Committee on European Integration and Regional Cooperation of the National Assembly of the Republic of Srpska, the Alternative Report on the progress of Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2015.

Members of the Initiative presented the findings of the report concerning the functioning of the state, parliaments and governments, public administration, civil society and human rights, with special emphasis on women's rights and the rights of persons with disabilities, to members of the Committee.

Dragana Dardić, an activist of the Helsinki citizens' assembly Banja Luka, said that the representations of women in parliaments at all levels are still below 40% provided by the Law on Gender Equality, women in BiH are exposed to discrimination in access to economic and social rights, particularly in the employment and management of public companies, there are still big differences in exercising their right to maternity leave and benefits in BiH, especially focusing on the question of (un)paid alimony for child support. "According to recent research, over 80% of taxpayers avoid paying child support for children and does not contribute to the support of the child, which brings single parents, mostly mothers, and children in a very difficult position," said Dardić.

An alternative report was a joint effort of several dozens of people and organizations, whose common goal was to, from the perspective of civil society, show the current state of integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the aim of influencing the formulation of the official report on the



progress, which is created by the European Commission and is being published every year in October.



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### **Conference SPEAK UP 3**

Conference "Speak Up 2015" brought together around 400 journalists, media analysts, representatives of international organizations and decision-makers from the Western Balkan countries and Turkey on 4 November in Brussels, with the aim to review the media situation and the challenges that the media faces in the countries - potential candidates for EU membership. The Commissioner for EU enlargement policy Johannes Hahn, in his opening address to the participants of the conference, repeated that freedom of expression is not a negotiable value, pointing out that citizens need quality journalism in order to cultivate their critical thinking.

The views from previous years were repeated at the conference. Journalists in the Western Balkans and Turkey are exposed to political and economic pressures, they are not sufficiently protected, the transparency of ownership relations in the media is insufficient and there are fewer investigative stories and critical emissions. Media literacy and ethical and professional standards in the social media and their role in placing and disseminating information were topics of great importance. Speaking about the media situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Borka Rudić, General Secretary of the BH Journalists suggested that the EU Commission, in the framework of the structured dialogue which is being led about reforms of the judiciary in BiH, incorporates the issue of judicial protection of freedom of expression and effective work on investigations of attacks and threats against journalists.



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### **Study visit to the EU institutions in Brussels**

Željka Umićević, representative of the Helsinki Citizens Assembly, in the period from 2nd to 6th of October 2015, was one of the participants in the study visit to the EU institutions in Brussels. The study visit was designed so that the participants from the countries of the Western Balkans firstly had training on lobbying and advocacy at the level of the European Union, and then the teams represented their country at meetings with representatives of various operational body of the European Commission (DG NEAR, EEAS) and members of the European Parliament. At the meetings, among other things, current issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina were discussed as well as the state of women's rights and gender equality in BiH society, the reform agenda, and marginalization of constitutional changes in BiH. Also, organizers of study visits from Kvinna till Kvinna organized the visit of the Permanent Representation of Sweden and the Netherlands for all participants.



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### **Web platform for dealing with the past**

The study on peace activism of non-governmental sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina, issued by the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly, was included in the on-line library of regional website on dealing with the past ([www.dwp-balkan.org](http://www.dwp-balkan.org)) initiated by the forum ZFD. The study on peace activism (2008) was created as a result of the desire and ideas to record the main activities of NGOs which led to establishment of co-existence and reconciliation in this region in the 13 post-war years. The aim of this study is to present information about peace work, inter-ethnic dialogue, the fight for human rights and minority rights, to evaluate the successes and failures of the NGO sector in this area, to define challenges and improve future activities in the field of peace work, but also to raise awareness about values of peace and contribute to the creation of new generations of peace activists.

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### **Young women peace academy**

In 2015, the Young women peace academy was launched, a project of the Swedish foundation Kvinna till Kvinna, that was, in addition to Bosnia and Herzegovina, simultaneously implemented in Kosovo, Serbia, Sweden, Azerbaijan and Armenia. After the training program organized in 2 modules, participants, among who was the representative of HCA BL Ivana Stanković, have adopted the knowledge and skills for their future work in the field of peace-building. Academia itself provided a unique opportunity for young women to empower themselves and take an active role in their communities. This is greatly facilitated by the mentoring program led by the prominent members of the peace movement, the program grants implemented by participants in their local communities, and training sessions in the field of advocacy carried out by the Nobel



woman's initiative in September 2015 in Istanbul. Young participants were also working intensively on the development of national and international peace charter through which they set out their suggestions for the improvement of health, economic and political situation of young women, and formulated demands in the area of prevention of violence and reparations for victims of rape. Peace Charters were presented on 29th of November 2015 in Stockholm, to the representatives of the Swedish Agency for International Development Cooperation (SIDA), the Ministry of democracy and culture, civil society organizations and the media. International and National Charter for Peace BiH were presented in Sarajevo on 14th December, on the final event of the Young Women \_ Peace Academy. As part of this event, publications HIStory is not Herstory and documentary The Voice of Peace were presented.



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### **Book Promotion in Banja Luka**

Helsinki Citizens' Assembly, in partnership with the Sarajevo Open Centre, organized on the 4th of December in Banja Luka, within 16 days of activism, promotion of the book "1995-2015: Women and political life in post-Dayton Bosnia and Herzegovina".

As you can guess from the title, the book focuses on the public political work of women in Bosnia since the war to the present day and gives a chronological overview of activist work of women in this area and their struggle for gender equality, which was also a topic of presentation given by Marina Veličković, one of the authors and Maida Zagorac, from SOC. About their experiences in politics and activism, spoke Nada Tešanović and Nada Golubović, who were interlocutors to authors of the book and whose statements and comments painted content of this book. The book represents an additional contribution to the efforts to take women, their work and manner of operation, away from oblivion and make them a part of the common culture of remembrance.

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## Visits and acknowledgements

During 2015, Helsinki Citizens' Assembly was visited by numerous and various representatives of local and international organizations and students, among who were the group fellows of German Heinrich Boll Foundation and students from Yeil University in the United States. We also welcomed volunteers from Oštra nula, experts from Switzerland who work on the application of Resolution 1325, and several students working on their master or doctoral dissertation on topics related to dealing with the past, the role of civil society in the construction of society and the protection and promotion of women's rights. During the year, we have received many acknowledgments from the Banja Luka Association of Queer activists BUKA, the Association of paraplegics, suffering from polio and other Disabled Persons of the Republic of Srpska, the Association of parents of children with disabilities "Mala sirena" from Zavidovići, Association of single parents f PONOS from Banja Luka and the Association of paraplegics and the poliomyelitis from Velika Kladuša.





### **Strategy of efficient model of cooperation between organizations of persons with disabilities**

This strategy provides guidance and models of cooperation between organizations in a number of areas, with the aim a unified action towards the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities in BiH.

Representatives of the umbrella associations and disability organizations worked together to develop the strategy and created a document by priorities that they considered significant.



### **Analysis of BiH legislation with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

The analysis results confirm the high degree of non-compliance of laws and other documents with the UN Convention. The analysis showed that only 3% of the bills are in line with the UN Convention. 30 experts, most of whom were persons with disabilities, worked on this publication and in the course of five months of work included an analysis of 261 laws and regulations.



### **Manual for monitoring implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women**

The manual was created from the need and desire to incorporate as many non-governmental organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the process of monitoring the implementation of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (eng. CEDAW), and to offer them a tool that \_ can facilitate their field work . This Convention is the most important international instrument for the protection of women's human rights. So far it has been signed, ratified or acceded to by 188 countries, including Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Convention is an integral part of the Constitution (Annex 1), and its full implementation is not only international, but also constitutional obligation of the state authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

- During past year two editions of Peace Newsletter were published. Focus of edition 42 was on marking of International woman day, during which the Network for peace building and Woman Network BiH had numerous activities during Woman solidarity and peace building week „Woman, Peace, Solidarity“. Edition 43 was published in May with introductory article written by Ambassador Lars-Gunnar Wigemark. Focus of number 43 was marking the International day of fighting against fascism and Day of Europe.
- In the past year, the tenth jubilee edition of The Directory of donors of Peace Building Network was published. In the Directory you can find information about 343 donors and calls for project proposals with offices of donors in BiH and / or the world, who fund activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and / or region. What is significant in this directory is that civil society organizations in one place can find information about the various programs, activities and geographical area that some donors fund, deadlines for applications, eligibility criteria, application methods and how to make contact with donors.
- Peace Calendar was printed at the end of the year with a circulation of 1,200 copies, which were distributed to all members, to friends of the Network, institutions and donors.

### EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS OFFER

#### *Civil Society and Human Rights*

##### **Basic Training**

##### *Name of training*

##### *Topics*

##### **Civil Society and Activism**

the concept of civil society; the concept of non-governmental organizations, their role, status and legal framework in BH; the process of forming and registering an NGOs, the concept of activism, etc.

##### **Human Rights in My Community**

human rights and their history; the concept of discrimination, mechanisms for human rights protection, vulnerable groups, models of influencing the authorities for protection of human rights, etc.

##### **Gender Equality**

concepts of gender and sex; the concept of gender-based discrimination, gender stereotypes and prejudices, sexuality, the status of women and men in BH society, the legal framework for gender equality in BH, etc.

#### **Advanced Training / Training for Professional Groups**

##### *Title*

##### *Topics*

##### **Gender-Sensitive Policies**

The concept of gender analysis; gender-sensitive and gender-responsible practical policies, etc.

##### **Media Reporting on Diversity**

The role of media in modern society, stereotypes and prejudices in the media, socially marginalized groups and their representation in the media, discrimination in the media (it is possible to focus on specific topics), etc.

##### **Gender-Sensitive Reporting in the Media**

The role of media in modern society, the portraits of men and women in the media, discrimination in the media, the legal framework for the media in BH, gender analysis of media content (it is possible to focus on specific topics), etc.

## *Organizational Capacity-Building*

<i>Title</i>	<i>Topics</i>
<b>Managing the NGO and Fundraising</b>	the concept of non-governmental organizations; the legal framework for NGOs; the structure of non-governmental organizations and decision-making process; mission, vision, and program activities of NGOs, fundraising for NGOs, etc.
<b>Strategic Planning</b>	Strategic planning and the importance of planning; mission and vision; problem analysis; program planning, goals and results; analysis of internal and external conditions for the realization of the plan; allies and opponents, etc.
<b>Development of Project Proposals</b>	The concept of the project proposal; analysis of problems, objectives and results; the logical framework matrix; filling out the form of the proposal; the financial aspect of the project and project budget, contract with donors, etc.
<b>Basics of financial management in NGOs</b>	The specifics of NGOs work and legal framework; financial obligations of NGOs towards the state and donors; harmonization of donor requirements and domestic financial institutions; organization of financial operations in the NGO.

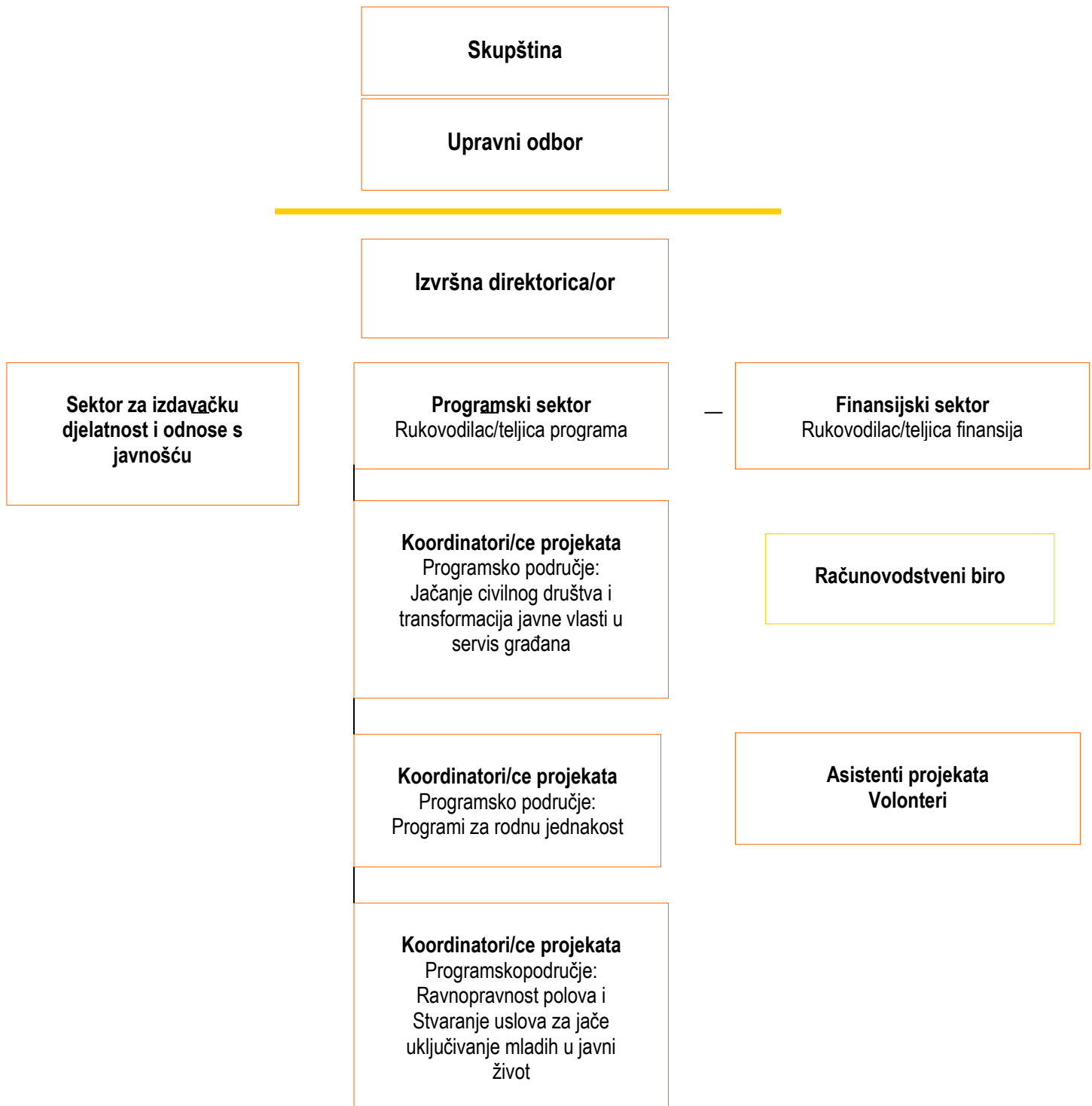
## *Personal Capacities Building*

<i>Title</i>	<i>Topics</i>
<b>Public Advocacy, Campaigning, Lobbying</b>	The concept of advocacy; planning advocacy actions; advocacy target groups; the concept of the campaign, the concept of lobbying, etc.
<b>Public Relations and Media Presentation Skills</b>	The concept of public relations; PR communication methods, media relations; how to become news; how to communicate with the media; press releases, press conferences, specific of television and radio appearances, etc.
<b>Conflict Resolution, Negotiating, and Non-Violent Communication</b>	The notion of conflict; ways of conflict resolution; interest-based conflict resolution; the positions and interests in the conflict; reconciliation and mediation; communication skills - non-violent communication, etc.



<b>Negotiation</b>	The concept of negotiation, interest-based negotiating; positions and interests; negotiating obstacles and the path to an agreement; the phases in the process of negotiation; analysis of options and establishment of proposals, etc.
<b>Facilitation and Decision-Making</b>	The concept of facilitation; group decision-making; communication skills; compromise and consensus; the path to consensus, voting, etc.
<b>Integrated security</b>	The concept of integrated security, identification of challenges and threats, analysis of the context, creating a safe space for the work and activities, development of strategies for the application of the concept of integrated safety ...

# Organizational Structure of the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly Banja Luka



OVERVIEW OF AVAILABLE FUNDS AND EXPENDITURES IN 2015	AMOUNT IN BAM	AMOUNT IN EUR
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Funds available for 2015		
Unspent funds from 2013	596259,06	304862,42
Receipts from partners / donors	147735,94	75536,19
Individual donations	14645,41	7488,08
Membership fees	8355,58	4272,14
VAT refund	3223,23	1648,01
<b>TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE</b>	<b>770219,22</b>	<b>393806,83</b>

EXPENDITURES FOR 2014		
Net salaries	93660,70	47887,96
Taxes and contributions for net salaries	62762,14	32089,77
Office costs (rent, electricity, water, heating ect.)	7681,37	3927,42
Communication costs (phone and internet)	2317,60	1184,97
Accounting and auditing costs	7212,00	3687,44
Bank charges	3356,82	1716,31
Costs of project activities	557510,01	285050,34
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>734500,64</b>	<b>375544,21</b>

Total funds available for 2014	770219,22	393806,83
Total expenditures for 2014	734500,64	375544,21
<b>Unspent funds from 2015</b>	<b>35718,58</b>	<b>18262,62</b>

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Sara Pereula

Meliha Lišančić

Vanja Radmanović

Gordana Ružić

**Donators who supported our work in 2015:**

Evropska unija

Fondacija "Kvinna Till Kvinna" Švedska

Fondacija Instituta za otvoreno društvo - FOSI

USAID

Friedenskreis Halle e.V.