

V::I::P

Seminar on the Promotion of Local and International Youth Volunteering for Peace Building and Conflict Resolution in Europe

Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina | 25 – 30 June 2008

FINAL REPORT



EUROPEAN VOLUNTEER CENTRE

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ABBREVIATIONS

AED	– Academy for Education Development
BH	– Bosnia & Herzegovina
CEV	– European Volunteer Centre
CVF	– Community Volunteers Foundation
CSOs	– Civil Society Organisations
EEA	– European Association Agreement
EFTA	– European Free Trade Area
EU	– European Union
EVS	– European Voluntary Service
ENP	– European Neighbourhood Policy
ENPI	– European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
FYR of Macedonia	– Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
IPA	– Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
IPK	– Inter-ethnic Project of Kumanovo
IRA	– Irish Republican Army
LTV	– Long-term Volunteering
MwB	– Musicians without borders
NATO	– North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGOs	– Non-Governmental Organisations
OSF	– Open Society Fund
OSI	– Open Society Institute
OSCE	– Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PATRIR	– Peace, Action, Training and Research Institute of Romania
SAA	– Stabilisation and Association Agreement
SCI	– Service Civil International
SEE	– South and Eastern Europe
SEEYN	– South Eastern European Youth Network
RIVERSEE	– Regional Integration Through Volunteer Exchanges For Reconciliation of South and Eastern Europe
UN	– United Nations
UNDP	– United Nations Development Programme
UNOY	– United Network of Young Peace builders
UNV	– United Nation Volunteers
USAID	– United States Agency for International Development
VIOs	– Volunteer Involving Organisations
V4D	– Volunteerism for Development
YEP	– Youth Energy for Peace

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Mostar bridge, a world heritage site was destroyed in 1993 during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It took more than 10 years to rebuild it. Its renovation is a symbol of the reconciliation process of Mostar and ethnically divided societies. The rebuilding of Mostar Bridge is also a perfect illustration for the V:::P seminar on the promotion of local and international youth volunteering for peace building and conflict resolution in Europe.

The main questions of the project were: What role does local and international youth volunteering play in peace building and conflict resolution as well as in intercultural, inter-ethnic and inter-religious dialogue? How can we promote the contribution that volunteers make to these processes? What are the success stories of local organisations involving young volunteers? What role do government, local authorities and donors have in supporting and promoting youth volunteering for peace building?

Who and where?

Almost 50 participants from 18 different countries, representing 26 local, regional and international organisations as well as United Nations Volunteers (UNV), the Croatian Council of NGOs, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Soros Foundation were trying to address these questions in this European project, financed under the EU Youth in Action Programme. The main project seminar was organised by the European Volunteer Centre (CEV) in cooperation with South East European Youth Network (SEEYN) in Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina between the 25th and 30th June 2008.

Why?

It is important to address this topic as European societies become **multi-ethnic and multicultural** on the one hand, while increasing signs of racism and xenophobia can be seen on the other. Ethnic or religious conflicts occur more and more often even in traditionally very open societies, and mainly at the local level. While international agreements try to provide a legal basis for conflict resolution, it is in the end people in the local communities themselves who have to live together after (often traumatic) experience of conflict. Volunteering, as a means to bring people of different backgrounds together and enable them to work on a common initiative and objective, can be a crucial element in rebuilding divided societies.

But evidence suggests that the work of volunteers (and of volunteer-involving organisations) does not always gain adequate recognition on local, national and international level. Also, young people wanting to actively engage in their local communities meet many **barriers**, for example prejudice and hostility, lack of information about how to become involved, financial problems, legislative and administrative obstacles, etc. In addition many volunteer organisations, especially in South Eastern Europe (SEE), have to work hard to combat the negative associations of volunteering due to its history in this region.

It is therefore important to raise awareness of the wide-ranging **contribution that volunteering makes to the peace building process**, as well as to initiate a debate on the issues and to promote cooperation between different stakeholders.

How and what?

The core of the seminar consisted of eight good practices workshops. These presented success stories of local youth volunteering projects for conflict resolution and peace building; the tools and methods which can be utilised in this kind of volunteering; and case studies of youth volunteering and its role in regional conflict resolutions.

These workshops were:

- Youth Magazine Time Out presented by the Inter-Ethnic Project Kumanovo from FYR of Macedonia;
- Developing Voluntary Work of Children and Youth on Territories in Western Balkans as Means of Civic Education and Preparation for Citizenship in Democratic Society presented by Slovenska Filantropija from Slovenia;
- Volunteers in Peace Building and Community Development in Croatia presented by the Centre for Peace, Non-Violence and Human Rights in Osijek;
- The Peace School and Peace Education presented by Kansalaisareena from Finland;
- Youth Energy for Peace presented by Service Civil International;
- Divided God presented by the Community Volunteers Foundation from Turkey;
- Seed Group and Reconciliation presented by Corrymeela Community with help of the Volunteer Development Agency from Northern Ireland, UK;
- The Balkan RIVERSEE project presented by SEEYN from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In addition to the workshops participants witnessed the work of local volunteers, visiting the projects of local organisations working with volunteers to promote peace, human rights and equality in the region. These included the work of Musicians without Borders BH on musical education for children in Srebrenica, project focussing on women victims of the war run by local associations Žene Ženama (Women to Women), the Human Rights Centre in Sarajevo, and the activities of Education Builds BH which manages different projects for children victims of the war in Sarajevo.

The report also highlights the barriers experienced by young people and voluntary organisations, hindering their active participation in such volunteering projects and it shows how these barriers were overcome in the successful projects. The Report identifies also the perspective of governments and donors and their role in peace building projects. It provides an overview of EU funding opportunities for volunteering for peace building projects (the Youth in Action Programme, the Europe for Citizens Programme, the Enlargement and Neighbourhood policies and others). Finally it demonstrates the wide-ranging contribution which volunteering makes to peace building and to conflict resolution. The conclusions and recommendations of this seminar aim to facilitate cooperation between different stakeholders in the field and to contribute to the further development of volunteering for peace processes.

The good practice workshops have highlighted the following range of ways in which volunteering contributes to peace building and conflict resolution:

- ➔ **Volunteering empowers young people** – through volunteering young people gain education-knowledge, skills and competences – which they can use for the benefit of their communities and later in their lives. Volunteering gives young people new positive energy to act.
- ➔ **Volunteering connects young people back with their communities** – through common voluntary engagement, young people re-establish links with their communities, overcome 'we-they' separation and create opportunities for shared thinking about future community development. Volunteering enables people to be active in the recovery of their own community.
- ➔ **Volunteering increases young peoples' tolerance and intercultural skills, as well as reduces racism and prejudice** – active involvement of young people in common activities increases tolerance between them, helping to challenge stereotypes and resolve conflicts in a safe environment.
- ➔ **Volunteering contributes to intercultural and inter-religious dialogue** – voluntary engagement of young people from different cultural and religious backgrounds helps them to gain respect for and understanding of other cultures.
- ➔ **Volunteers provide the indispensable human resources for the peace projects** – without the voluntary effort of local inhabitants, many peace building and reconciliation initiatives would not be possible. Workers in voluntary organisations depend upon the contribution of volunteers.
- ➔ **Volunteering can enhance the employability of young people** – volunteering can contribute to enhanced employability of young people, provided that it responds to their needs and is structured in the way that enables them to acquire skills which are relevant to existing employment opportunities.

Findings from the workshops, panel sessions, discussions and working groups identified a range of good practices components which form the basis for the following **CONCLUSIONS** and **RECOMMENDATIONS**:

Peace building must be a holistic process

In order to change a community mindset it is necessary to work with teachers and parents, as well as with young people themselves. Schools and families therefore have an important role as they provide the starting point for young people in their peace education. They will also be key influences in encouraging young people to become active themselves.

Recommendation:

- When designing and supporting projects – remember the importance of involving and educating young people together with their families, colleagues and schools.

Community activities and reconciliation processes must be bottom-up

Core activities of projects must be planned with local people and must directly address the needs of respective communities. It is also important that this process involves local authorities and local media. Local government is the key in establishing infrastructure and local media in helping to support local efforts, informing people and creating a positive environment for change.

Recommendation:

- Undertake a careful research before each project planning, by listening to people's stories, wants and fears. Meet people on the ground, listen to them and adapt projects to their needs. Involve local authorities and the media.
- Governments and local authorities should ensure that the local NGOs and young people themselves take part in the policy-formulation and policy-making. All stakeholders should facilitate involvement of young people at the local level in these processes, asking – it is important to ask young people what it is that do they want.

Societal transformation and personal transformation go hand in hand

Through community activities people are enabled to gain new knowledge, breaking down their stereotypes and prejudices, adopting new attitudes and perspectives. The active participation of children and young people in voluntary work in post-conflict regions provides not only a chance for them to take responsibility for their own community, but also to gain knowledge, experience and skills which can help transform both their communities and their personal lives.

Recommendation:

- There should be better links between formal, non-formal and informal learning – it seems important to introduce voluntary activities into school curricula.
- All stakeholders should work towards recognition of volunteering outcomes, though assessment, validation and accreditation of the knowledge, skills and competences learned through volunteering.

Networking is a key to the sustainability of volunteer efforts

The biggest challenge is to enable local organisations to connect and cooperate with one another in the interests of sustainability in their efforts. The role of civil society organisations as part of the third sector is also to liaise with the authorities and to influence their decision-making process, campaigning and advocating for volunteering. Networking provides channels for promoting youth projects and their results between stakeholders, as well as for making organisations stronger and providing better possibilities for funding and for accessing more expertise. The development of good working relationships between stakeholders is central to the process of community recovery and development.

Recommendation:

- Network, connect, integrate and join efforts with civil society organisations, local authorities and business. Disseminate the results of your projects widely.

Concrete and collective actions with a common purpose are the way to build trust and confidence

The projects proved the importance of involving young people from different ethnic and religious groups in the common activities. This gives people a sense of common ownership of the community and responsibility for its future development. In this way young people learn how to be more active and responsible, how to take life into their own hands and how to play a part in changing the world.

Recommendation:

- Design hands-on activities which can be undertaken together by local people from different cultural backgrounds.

For successful peace building processes it is crucial to recruit, train and support multipliers and community leaders

In peace building and conflict resolution community organisers play a crucial role – they act as mediators, they connect community with numerous civil society organisations, schools, local government institutions and donors. They also play a role in the process of needs assessment, planning and conducting project activities.

Recommendation:

- Support and invest in community leaders and multipliers. Local volunteers make their contribution freely, but they need training to better address the community's needs. They can be helpful in translating, adapting and delivering local policy goals and they are key to maintaining the high quality of services.

Peace building is a long process, which does not happen 'over night'

Peace building is a painstakingly slow process and cannot be rushed. It is important to understand that it takes longer than a generation for society to move on. The change in people's behaviour does not happen automatically. Voluntary engagement 'seeds' new ideas in young people, empowering them with necessary knowledge and skills, which can bear fruit later in their lives.

Recommendation:

- Design long-term and sustainable projects for local voluntary engagement. Invest in infrastructure, which will sustain the peace building process.

Creating a safe environment can be very important for change

The success of many projects was that young people could see their national or individual problems through the eyes of others, giving them more objectivity and perspective. Through the shared experience of voluntary activity, young people are empowered to re-evaluate their perceptions of issues confronting their own community, transferring that learning back into both the community and their own lives.

Recommendation:

- Facilitate, support, develop further and provide sustainable funding for volunteers' mobility projects. These can be tools such as volunteers' exchanges, visits, work camps, intergenerational programmes, etc.

Donors have an important role in creating an enabling environment for change

Donors acting in the conflict areas play a very important role. Not only do they provide funding, but they should also encourage autochthonous civic initiatives. They are an important part of the democratisation and legitimisation process in the post-conflict areas and they should support civil society in their reconciliation activities. They should also invest in long-term programmes rather than in short-term, one off projects.

Recommendation:

Donors should:

- Adapt funding to the local needs;
- Support peace building efforts and long-term projects;
- Encourage networking between civil society organisations;
- See peace building both as a process of reconciliation within local communities and as an opportunity to influence and democratise policy processes.

Sustainability of effort can only be achieved if there is collaboration between all the sectors and stakeholders involved:

Donors – because they have the money; **Volunteer organisations** – because they have the human resources to invent and implement projects; **Networks** – as they disseminate and valorise the results of projects; **Authorities at different levels** – because they can model longer term programmes and policy priorities and can serve as convenor for networking; finally other parts of society such as the **business** sector and **media** which are essential for creating an enabling environment for volunteering to flourish.

Volunteering infrastructure and legal frameworks are a key to sustainable change

A volunteering infrastructure which brings together and supports volunteer organisations at local level is crucial as a means of involving people, making projects sustainable and supporting communities in their recovery. It is also essential as a means of ensuring that volunteers are properly trained and prepared to work in difficult conflict situations. In addition, a legal framework helps to increase recognition of its role and contribution in society and to boost its potential. Such initiatives should be developed in participative way, involving civil society organisations and responding to local needs.

Participants of the seminar urge national governments and local authorities to:

- Build and support volunteering infrastructure;
- Never allow volunteers to be used as cheap workers labour or to further some hidden political agenda;
- Recognise economic value of volunteering;
- Introduce peace and civil responsibility education in schools (like Peace schools) and emphasise volunteering as a key element of active citizenship;
- Make the national policies both youth- and volunteer-friendly. Create special policies, which really target young people's needs. In every country there should be a legal framework for volunteering;
- Create a special governmental office for NGOs.

Also participants urge the European Union to:

- Improve EVS – European Voluntary Service and support other forms of volunteering so that they can serve the purpose of peace building projects;
- Focus on quality, not only on statistics – important is not only how many young people volunteer but also the impact of their service on themselves and society;
- Facilitate visa processes for young volunteers;
- Invest in long-term programmes, in which smaller projects could be included;
- Ensure and oblige national governments to consult and support civil society organisations;
- Give more recognition of volunteer work through, for example, adopting a European Year of Volunteering 2011.

Eventually, all the participants agreed that:

Every small step counts and every single volunteer effort is valuable.

At its heart voluntary effort is about working together with a common purpose for a better future. In this sense volunteers are the very important persons – the “VIPs” of society, because they engage, they have energy and passion to do things, they implement creative solutions, they ensure local ownership of projects and they are not driven by a political agenda.

Also, civil society organisations and networks like CEV are “VIPs” for building and facilitating active participation and engagement of young people in their local communities. Even small projects, which may not seem to have a big impact on the conflict itself, are important. They empower young people as active players in the recovery of their communities and enable them to carry on peace work in their countries.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The theme of the V:::P seminar was the promotion of local and international youth volunteering as a tool to promote peace building and conflict resolution, together with intercultural, inter-ethnic and inter-religious dialogue. The aims of the project were twofold: 1) to raise awareness of the potential of volunteering in terms of conflict resolution and peace building, and 2) to show how the synergy of different stakeholders contributes to the role of volunteering being recognised at different levels of public opinion and policy making.

The idea for this seminar was born in 2006. In March of this year CEV organised in FYR of Macedonia the YOU::VOL seminar, bringing together representatives from volunteer centres, volunteer organisations, youth organisations and youth policy-makers from all over Europe to discuss ways of promoting youth volunteering within national youth policies. During the seminar the participants voiced a need to raise awareness of the role that youth volunteering plays in conflict resolution and peace building in the different regions of Europe affected by (post) conflict situations, notably in South and Eastern Europe (SEE), Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Caucasus and Moldova/Transnistria.

Addressing this topic became increasingly important due to the migrations flows of the past few decades, through which European societies have become on the one hand far more multiethnic and multicultural, while showing increasing signs of racism and xenophobia on the other. Ethnic or religious conflicts occur more and more frequently, not only between countries and across borders, but also even in traditionally very open societies, and mainly at the local level. These local communities often struggle with different problems, e.g. unsolved conflicts, lack of communication, and difficulties integrating their inhabitants.

Therefore, the main objectives of the seminar were:

- To bring together and encourage cooperation between representatives of all stakeholders working on peace building e.g. volunteer centres, volunteer organisations, youth organisations, peace organisations, policy makers and intergovernmental and private donors from all over Europe, in order to discuss ways to promote youth volunteering for conflict resolution and peace building;
- To encourage cooperation between the participants from different sectors, different countries and different volunteer traditions through the exchange of ideas, methods, information and good practices related to youth volunteering for conflict resolution and peace building;
- To identify and publicise the 'success stories' i.e. projects which successfully managed to involve volunteers and make a difference in the local communities and to treat those stories as a source of inspiration for further work in peace building;
- To draw conclusions and formulate recommendations for the development of an enabling environment for volunteering at the local, national and European level;
- And finally and indirectly, to stimulate "active European citizenship", via the participation of young people in the community life through volunteering.

Overall, the seminar aimed to answer the question of whether volunteering and volunteers can make a contribution to the peace building process through the integration of local communities and the spreading of a message of tolerance and understanding. The aim was to answer this question and to discuss different approaches anchored in different societal, historical and political traditions and volunteering realities.

The five day seminar gathered almost 50 participants and guests from more than 30 different organisations from within the civil society sector (youth, peace and volunteer organisations), voluntary networks like CEV and SEEYN, and representatives of the Croatian Council for Civil Society Development, UNV, intergovernmental and private donors like the Soros Foundation, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the UNDP.

This report details the discussions, presentations and exchanges, which took place over the course of the seminar. The 'good practices' workshops, panel session presentations, Dialogue Café results were complemented at some points by further research that helped to clarify certain points raised during the discussions.

The core of the seminar consisted of eight good practices workshops. Within these workshops local youth volunteering projects for conflict resolution and peace building were presented, followed by the tools and means that can be used in such volunteering and, finally, by case studies on youth volunteering and the role of volunteering in regional conflict resolutions (**CHAPTER III: Volunteering as a tool to promote peace building and conflict resolution -good practices workshops**)

Participants also witnessed the work of local volunteers and visited the projects of local organisations working with volunteers and promoting peace, human rights and equality in the region. These were the projects of the Musicians without Borders BH on musical education for children in Srebrenica, the projects working with women victims of the war run by the local association Žene Ženama (Women to Women), the Human Rights Centre in Sarajevo and finally, the Association Education Builds BH, which manages different projects for children victims of the war in Sarajevo. (**CHAPTER IV: Description of the local projects**)

A further objective of the seminar was to uncover the barriers for young people and voluntary organisations, which may hinder their active participation in such volunteering projects and to show how these barriers, were overcome in successful projects. (**CHAPTER V: How to encourage involvement in volunteering for peace building and conflict resolution? Barriers identified and good practices to overcome them**)

The seminar also included a discussion of the role of governments and donors in facilitating volunteering in peace building projects. Within this segment participants could listen to a variety of perspectives on the role of volunteering in peace building and conflict resolution (**CHAPTER VI. What Role for the Authorities and Donors in the Promotion of local and international Youth Volunteering in Peace Building?**)

Participants were also acquainted with the EU approach to youth volunteering for conflict resolution and peace building, and specific programmes such as the Youth in Action Programme, Europe for Citizens Programme, Enlargement and Neighbourhood policies and the activities in the frame of the current European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008. (**APPENDIX: EU funding opportunities for volunteering peace building projects**)

This report focuses on the manifold contributions that volunteering makes to peace building and conflict resolution processes (**CHAPTER VII. Contribution of volunteering to peace building and conflict resolution**) and on the basis of the discussions, exchanges and visits, which took place during the seminar, it draws conclusions and puts forward recommendations as to the further development of volunteering for peace building and conflict resolution. (**CHAPTER VIII. Conclusions and recommendations**)

During the course of the seminar the Peace, Action, Training and Research Institute of Romania (PATRIR), a non-profit organisation specialised in promoting peace building, constructive conflict transformation and the prevention of all forms of violence, gave an opportunity for participants to take part in a training course titled 'Volunteers for Peace Actions'. All information about PATRIR as well as other participating organisations you can find in the **APPENDIX: Contact list**.

CEV would like to thank all the participants, workshop presenters and speakers at the seminar, Christopher Spence and two volunteer proofreaders Ríonach Enright and Marie Tuley for all contributions to this publication.

Kamila Czerwińska
CEV – the European Volunteer Centre
Brussels, December 2008



II. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE OF THE PROJECT

Why this topic?

Among its members and partners throughout Europe, CEV counts a large number of organisations with a strong track record of youth volunteering for conflict resolution and peace building. Evidence suggests, however, that their engagement in youth volunteering (and the participation of civil society organisations in general) for conflict resolution and peace building does not always gain adequate recognition on local, national and international level. This happens even if European youth policies often do aim to encourage active young European citizens to engage in intercultural dialogue, peace building, tolerance and solidarity.

Moreover, many volunteer organisations in the South Eastern European (SEE) region have highlighted the negative connotations that volunteering holds in the region, i.e. an association with communist community work or war activities such as voluntary soldiers. There is no true “volunteering culture” established in these societies yet. As a result many parents still have a rather negative stance towards volunteering, which does not provide a supportive environment for young people to engage in volunteering. Because of the difficult financial situation many young people cannot afford to volunteer or even believe in volunteering to be “working for no money and therefore working for nothing”.

While international agreements try to provide a legal basis for conflict resolution, it is in the end people in the local communities themselves who have to live together after (often traumatic) experiences of conflict. Volunteering, as a means to bring people of different backgrounds together and enable them to work on a common initiative and objective, can be a crucial element in rebuilding divided societies. However, although many foreign donors often engage with youth volunteering for conflict resolution and peace building in this region, public authorities frequently provide insufficient support for existing efforts or do not recognise the role of volunteering.

To raise the profile and contribution of volunteering, the synergies between government, civil society organisations, private donors and intergovernmental organisations needed to be stimulated and steered in the correct direction. CEV members and partners agreed that there should be a clearer link between their agendas in order to trigger further collaboration and to establish a clear code of conduct between government, intergovernmental organisations and volunteer organisations with regard to their respective roles and duties. The seminar aimed to assist organisations in the voluntary sector to promote volunteering and to increase their effectiveness in the fields of peace building and conflict resolution.

Why a seminar in Bosnia & Herzegovina?

SEE, as a region with a recent history of severe conflicts, and BH at its centre, appeared to be the ideal place to host this type of discussion. Local and international volunteering and volunteers have played, and still play, a great role in post-war social developments and the reconstruction of the country, while the concept of volunteering is still something that contemporary society has difficulties to embrace, as mentioned above. Furthermore, BH is today a base for many stakeholders and donor organisations working within peace building and conflict resolution, therefore making it a perfect ‘show-place’ for a seminar on the topic of peace building and conflict resolution.

III. VOLUNTEERING AS A TOOL TO PROMOTE PEACE BUILDING AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION – GOOD PRACTICES WORKSHOPS

This chapter aims to present the projects considered as example of good practice and ‘success stories’ of voluntary engagement for peace building. Each presentation includes information about the presenting organisations, the background and rationale of each project and a project description. They also provide details on the source of funding in each case, the activities and outcomes of each project; and finally the good practice components and main lessons learnt.

1) Youth Magazine Time Out

Presented by: Angel Jakimovski, Inter-ethnic Project Kumanovo, FYR of Macedonia

Information about the organisation

Inter-ethnic Project of Kumanovo (IPK) is a local, NGO based in Kumanovo, FYR of Macedonia whose aim is to empower youth and to strengthen inter-ethnic cooperation. IPK was formed out of a need for an establishment centred on the needs of local youth and the promotion of ethnic tolerance in a diverse environment, following the resolution of the 2001 ethnic conflict that has physically divided the residents of Kumanovo and Lipkovo to this day. IPK unites youth leaders of different ethnicities, cultures, and communities who do not normally work together to solve problems and supplies local youth with a platform that allows their voices to be heard and their ideas to be taken seriously. At the same time, IPK also provides youth with the opportunity to travel to other countries to learn about multicultural issues and youth activism, to network with international organisations, and to promote IPK activities.

To achieve this IPK works in and outside schools to prepare young people for the challenges of modern life offering schools support in developing educational alternatives while providing youth with training, voluntary opportunities and assistance in advocating for their interests.

The mission of this organisation is to strive for a society in which young citizens enjoy equal access to opportunities regardless of their ethnicity, have a voice in their community and whose needs are addressed by the institutions that have a direct impact in their daily lives.

Thanks in part to the generous support of the non-governmental organisation IKV Pax Christi and other international partners, IPK has been able to initiate numerous projects that focus on a wide range of civil society issues and interethnic community building in the municipalities of Kumanovo and Lipkovo, FYR of Macedonia, and neighbouring countries since the organisation opened its doors in April 2003. In the organisation’s first three years of operation alone, it managed to successfully implement 29 projects, including a multi-ethnic documentary titled ‘All Equal, All Different’, a public awareness campaign that focused on the various religions in the country; and the production of a free monthly magazine called Time Out which features articles written by IPK volunteers in both Macedonian and Albanian languages.

Background and rationale of the Project:

i ETHNIC PROBLEMS IN FYR OF MACEDONIA

FYR of Macedonia (the constitutional name is the Republic of Macedonia) is a country on the Balkan peninsula. After the Second World War and until 1991 it was one of the six republics of the Yugoslav Federation – the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The country did not take part in the Yugoslav wars in the early 1990s but it had its own ethnic issues with the Albanian population of the country. The main factor, which launched the tensions, was the Kosovo War in 1999, when an estimated 360,000 ethnic Albanian stayed for some time as refugees from Kosovo in the country. This event stirred the radical sentiments of the Albanian population, which launched a claim for autonomy or independence for the Albanian-populated areas of the Republic. In 2001 the civil war began between the government and the Albanian radicals, mostly in the north and west part of the country. The intervention of NATO forces and the Ohrid Agreement put an end to the conflict by giving greater recognition to the Albanian population and by ensuring the recognition of the Macedonian institutions by the Albanians. Despite this agreement, ethnic tensions remain within the society.

Source: Wikipedia, Republic of Macedonia.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republic_of_Macedonia

Since the conflict within Kumanovo in 2001 ethnically mixed schools ceased to exist and each group started to follow lessons in mono-ethnic schools. The city of Kumanovo has a total of 5,300 secondary students, 65% of whom are Macedonian/Serbian and Roma, and 34% of Albanian nationality, attending classes in the Goce. There are 4 secondary schools in 7 different locations, 4 for the Macedonian, Serbian and Roma communities and 3 for the Albanian community. The school division issue between the Macedonian/Serbian community on one side and the Albanian community on the other side is a highly politicised and sensitive issue in Kumanovo municipality. Demonstrations have taken place and various incidents occurred in 2002 and early 2003 between the local ethnic communities around this issue. A temporary solution was found on 20th May 2003 under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, with the support of the Municipality of Kumanovo and the OSCE (separation of Macedonian and Albanian pupils in different buildings). This means that there has been no interaction between pupils from different ethnic background as they study in separate schools and go out in different places and at different times. Within the Kumanovo society, there are very limited opportunities to reduce the existing ethnic tensions. Furthermore, at that time, there was no local newspaper in Kumanovo for the youth population to inform them of local happenings and local people that are contributing to the city.

Project description:

The aim of the project Time Out Magazine was to build a bridge between the youth of different ethnic groups, especially of the Macedonian and Albanian communities. The project is the first high school magazine published in two languages and written by student volunteers from different ethnic groups (Macedonian, Albanian, Serbian and Roma).

“Time Out” is published monthly and printed in three colours in circulation of 2 900 copies. The project aims to serve as an example that a group of ethnically mixed secondary school students/journalists can cooperate for the common purpose of the magazine. It also gives them individually the opportunity to develop their skills to become future journalists (a wish that was expressed by many of the project’s participants).

The origins of the project date to August 2003, when IPK coordinated a nine days’ youth reconciliation initiative involving 30 youth leaders from the Kumanovo region and 30 youth activists from Peja/Pec. Over the course of this seminar, a group of 20 youngsters attended a three days’ basic training course in the field of journalism and printed media. As of September 2003, IPK started working with a core group of 25 high school pupils interested in amateur journalism, most of them former participants of the Ohrid youth seminar, in order to start drafting an editorial line for the newspaper and selecting topics for articles. At the end of September 2003, based on the inputs given by the amateur journalists and the articles submitted, IPK considered the project would be worth implementing in October 2003. IPK invited two professional journalists (former trainers in Ohrid) for a first training session on 24th September, to meet the group of young journalists and identify their needs for further training. All participants agreed that “TIME OUT” would be the official name of the magazine. The magazine launched its first issue in November 2003 and since then it has been published as a monthly issue during each school year (September – June).

Funding: The project was financed by IPK strategic partner, IKV Pax Christi.

Project activities:

- **Production of Time Out:** Time Out Magazine is the very important tangible result of this project. Through Time Out, young people from Kumanovo and Lipkovo have the opportunity to bring their problems and issues to the fore. The production of Time Out involves the following activities: editorial meetings among the journalists, writing of articles with at least two articles focused solely on youth rights, translation of the articles into Macedonian and Albanian, then the editing, designing, printing and distribution of the magazine. This involves the work of an editor in chief, designer, translators and the costs for printing. By involving the journalists in every step of the project, this gives them a strong sense of ownership.
- **Journalism:** The editor in chief is responsible for adoption of the editorial line with the journalists, providing technical support and guidelines to the young journalists on the process of writing articles. She also ensures that the texts are sent for translation and proofreading and works closely with the designer of the magazine. Young journalists receive training in journalism in order to ‘professionalise’ their contributions to the Time Out magazine. This training focus on stimulating critical thinking in the participants.
- **Photography:** With regards to the shooting and selection of pictures, Time Out journalists are responsible for taking pictures with an IPK digital camera. Young journalists also receive training in photography in order to ‘professionalise’ their contributions to the Time Out magazine.
- **Lobby campaign for youth policy:** When setting up the project, youth activists lobbied for and, together with other stakeholders active in the field of youth in Kumanovo, drafted a youth policy for the Kumanovo municipality.

- **Design/Printing/Distribution:** The designer liaises closely with the printing house and manages all technical queries, as necessary. Distribution is conducted by a group of 12 distributors (IPK journalists) in the four Secondary Schools of Kumanovo (Macedonian and Albanian). IPK brings the magazines to the four secondary schools (since the conflict, eight school locations) where these journalists take care of the distribution to all classes.
- **Youth initiative fund:** The youth activists from IPK's youth network can request small grants from the youth initiative fund. The requirements say that the initiatives must serve the needs of the high-school youngsters and must reflect the composition of the actors of multi-ethnic Kumanovo society.

Project outcomes:

- At least 40 young people trained in the field of journalism;
- A unique youth magazine is produced in two languages by a mixed team of journalists;
- A platform is provided to address some problems that young people are facing;
- Better cooperation between high school pupils from Macedonian and Albanian nationalities;
- Voluntary networking;
- More youth initiatives carried out by young people;
- Youth from Kumanovo and Lipkovo are more active in Kumanovo public life and they have the means to direct their interests to the institutions that have a direct impact on their daily lives.

Good practice components of the project and main lessons learnt

Organising youth initiatives, where young people may act upon their own ideas solved many of their problems. The fact that young people were taking personal responsibility for their own actions was a very important aspect of this project. In this way young people learnt how to be a more active and responsible person with the ability to take life in their hands and to make the world a better place for living.

Angel Jakimovski, the project presenter:

'The main lesson learnt was that if we want to cooperate with each other, we have to get to know each other well, and then start to do something that will help us to improve our social lives. For better cooperation and communication between high schools pupils should organise more youth initiatives and other kinds of activities that will be 'by and for' youth. We definitely learnt that we should improve our cooperation with teachers. When you start a project, you should also invest time in setting up a good team, inform the community about the idea and goals of your project, motivate and stimulate young people to participate. We should not let any kind of political or other influence on the project but make it completely neutral with the content.'

2) Developing Voluntary Work of Children and Youth in Territories in the Western Balkans as a Means of Civic Education and Preparation for Citizenship in a Democratic Society

Presented by: Eva Gračanin and Nina Nagode, Slovenska Filantropija, Slovenia

Information about the organisation

Slovene Philanthropy, an association for the promotion of voluntary work, is a non-governmental, non-profit and non-political organisation established in 1992 with the aim of developing and promoting different forms of humanitarian activities in Slovenia and abroad, especially in countries affected by armed conflicts, in the ex-Yugoslavia countries and other countries in SEE. Since its establishment Slovene Philanthropy have been promoting volunteering in the countries mentioned above through the training and education of volunteers, organisers and mentors of voluntary work, by raising public awareness of the importance of volunteers and by developing a network of volunteer organisations in Slovenia.

Background and rationale of the Project:

i SLOVENIA

Slovenia has a very rich and diverse history with regard to its territory. In modern history Slovenia was a part of the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs, then the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Kingdom of Yugoslavia from 1929); partly Kingdom of Italy, between the two World Wars, occupied by Germany, Italy, Hungary and Croatia (1941-1945), and it was part of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from 1945 until gaining independence in 1991. Slovenia's main ethnic group is Slovene (83%), nationalities from the former Yugoslavia (Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian, Macedonian, Montenegrin) form 5.3%, and the Hungarian, Albanian, Roma, Italian and other minorities form 2.8% of the population. Ethnic affiliation of 8.9% was either undecared or unknown.

Source: Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slovenia>

After declaring its independence, Slovenia was the only country from the region, which went smoothly through the process of democratisation and economic reforms, developing its prosperity and joining the EU and NATO. During the Balkans War, Slovenia did not take part in the armed conflicts but it was a country to which many refugees from Serbia, Croatia and BH escaped. Slovenia, due to its historical bonds, felt solidarity with these countries, which were in the difficult process of recovery from inter-ethnic armed conflicts.

The Slovene Philanthropy established relations with organisations from neighbouring countries such as: QPEA – Centre for Promotion of Education (Kosovo), Organisation of Women Sveti Nikole (Macedonia), SRCE – Centre for Emotional Support for Persons in Crisis (Vojvodina, Serbia) and the Institute for Development and Research Alternatives (Albania). All the above listed NGOs have a long track record of different types of cooperation with Slovenia, especially in the field of developing voluntary work of children and youth.

A book titled “Voluntary Work in Schools” (written by Slovene Philanthropy’s president Anica Mikuš Kos in cooperation with several authors) was translated into Albanian, Bosnian and Serb languages and is broadly used as the basic manual in the countries mentioned above.

The long cultural, economic and political cooperation with these countries, the shared cultural, social, political, economic backgrounds, geographical proximity and familiarity together with the languages contributed to the identification of common needs. The rationale behind the project was that these countries’ societies were in great need of human resources and know-how for peace building activities due to the manifold social adversities affecting the population.

Project description:

The objective of this project is to create opportunities for social activism of children and youth combined with civic education and thus to promote the participation of youth in their own process of recovery and the recovery of their communities. The project is designed to develop the sensitivity of children and youth for the social challenges in their communities, e.g. for people with special needs or people living in social deprivation and exclusion, and to develop skills and awareness that a single member of a society (child or adult) can make a difference through social participation.

Funding: The U.S. Embassies in the respective countries sponsored the project. The budget is around 130 000 US dollars.

Project activities:

The project began in June 2008 and will last for 12 months. The main activities are:

1. Two training courses for at least 50 mentors (mainly teachers and professors), approximately ten from each of the countries, apart from Slovenia;
2. Recruitment of volunteers (pupils and students at school). Each mentor is responsible for a group of approximately 15 volunteers. This amounts to at least 150 volunteers in each country and to at least 750 volunteers in total;
3. Volunteers are prepared for their work in an introductory one-day workshop. The workshops are carried out by a mentor at school;
4. Organising voluntary activities and bi-weekly meetings of volunteers with their mentor/s. These meetings aim to monitor volunteers’ work, discuss volunteering-related challenges and especially, to reflect on the social context, the role and strategies of volunteers’ participation and the impact of their activities on individual quality of life (of volunteers and the beneficiaries). The organisation of voluntary activities is a direct answer to challenges in the respective communities and thus ranges from providing help to children with learning difficulties, to children with special needs, and to the elderly and handicapped persons, etc.;
5. Organising of an international conference which aims to present and disseminate the outcomes of the project (good practices, recommendations, barriers, strategies to overcome barriers etc.) and a camp for volunteers aimed at enhancing the sustainability of voluntary work in participating schools.

Good practice components of the project and main lessons learnt

It is difficult to provide concrete results of this Project as it is still in the phase of implementation. However, at this stage it is possible to say that the good practice components of the project are:

- Good cooperation between Slovene Philanthropy and the partner organisations prior to implementation;
- Training multipliers: workshops for mentors and volunteers aims to multiplying the positive effects of the project and as it invests in their education;
- Active participation of children and youth: the programme encourages active youth participation in the post-conflict regions and enables them to gain knowledge, experience and skills through voluntary work;
- Ownership of the project by the local communities: the core activities (voluntary activities, meetings of volunteers with mentors) of the project directly address the needs of the respective communities and will be carried out by the members of these communities;
- Combination of action (voluntary activities) and reflection (meetings of volunteers with mentors);
- Voluntary activities will take place in schools and community organisations.

The programme is a joint action of five organisations from Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Serbia and Slovenia. The cooperation of the different stakeholders is crucial as this programme aims to create opportunities for social activism of children and youth, combined with civic education in the volunteers’ own communities. Even though the programme is developed for certain conflict area, the idea of training mentors and volunteers as multipliers can be easily transferred to different cultural backgrounds, providing that all relevant stakeholders define the needs of their recovering communities together.

3) Volunteers in peace building and community development

Presented by: Igor Dordević, Centre for Peace, Non-violence and Human Rights, Osijek and Jelenka Kamenko, Volunteer Centre Osijek, Croatia

Information about the organisation

The Centre for Peace, Non-violence and Human Rights Osijek is an NGO established in 1992. It focuses on the building of peace, protection and promotion of human rights and freedoms, and the promotion of creative methods of conflict resolution at the individual, group and political level. The Centre pleads for conscious inclusion in the building of the EU as a peace project and for taking responsibility for the common destiny of humankind and the planet Earth.

The Centre for Peace, Non-violence and Human Rights in Osijek has multi-layer experience in post war peace building of multi ethnical communities in East Croatia – Tenje, Bilje, Beli Manastir, dalj, Vukovar, Berak, Okučani, Pakrac. After the ‘Balkan War’ the Centre organised one of the first workshops in Osijek for social workers, psychologists and volunteers who were working with displaced persons. The Centre has subsequently undertaken several other creative programmes to assist displaced persons in and around Osijek.

Other initiatives of the Centre have been a gardening programme and the sewing programme at the Cepin camp, which have provided another source of income to jobless refugees and also have important therapeutic value. A further important international initiative, in which the Centre participated, along with other groups, was the establishment of a 'Peace Bridge' in the town of Mohacs, Hungary. The 'Peace Bridge' programme brought people from both sides of the conflict together in a nearby town located across the border in Hungary, where they were able to meet and to begin to engage in dialogue to try to move towards reconciliation.

The Centre now carries out its work in four broad areas -psychosocial work on behalf of the victims of war, including displaced persons; human rights advocacy; peace education; and peace building and community development. The Centre maintains human rights offices in five locations, including Osijek, with six lawyers working on behalf of individuals whose rights have been violated. With regard to peace education it takes two forms -self-education, and education of others. Finally, the Centre is also working towards reconciliation through its 'Conflict Resolution Training for Religious People and Community Leaders' programme. All activities are exercised for and on behalf of all members of the community, both Croats and Serbs.

Background and rationale of the Project:

When the war started in Croatia, many young people faced a difficult choice as to which army to join, as many of them came from mixed Croatian-Serb families. At that time, more than 21 minorities lived in Osijek in multiethnic communities. After the war people organised themselves in the 'ethnic' communities – this represented the beginning of the separation.

'When the war started I was a witness [to] the hatred which, in a very tangible way, was visited upon us by shelling, by bombs falling directly on our town ... At the same time I was also the witness [to] the way this hatred was spreading quickly and damaging people much more than the bombs were damaging them.'

Katarina Kruhonja, an Osijek inhabitant cited in Sign of Hope: The Center for Peace, Nonviolence and Human Rights in Osijek; Jegen, Sr. Mary Evelyn, (Life and Peace Institute: Uppsala, 1996), quoted on http://www.gppac.net/documents/pbp/2/6_csijel.htm

Project description:

The project was the third step in post-war peace building in war-affected multi-ethnic communities in East Croatia.¹ It was implemented by the Centre for Peace, Non-violence and Human Rights in Osijek in multi ethnic communities of Beli Monastir, Dalj, Tenja, Vukovar, Osijek, Break and Okucani. These communities were heavily affected by the war and they still suffer its consequences. The main goal of the project was to create sustainable structures (volunteer centres), which enhance activities for community development, peace building and linking the multi-ethnic population.

¹ More detailed information on the Project you can find in the Project Final report 'Final Report Volunteers in Building Peace and Community III April 2004-July 2007, Centre for Peace, Non Violence and Human Rights Osijek, Osijek 2007

Further objectives were:

- To strengthen cooperation between civil society and local self-government on community revival and development;
- To support volunteers from local communities to form community volunteers' centres;
- To provide local volunteers an opportunity to network, to connect them with regional volunteer centres, to sensitise local communities towards creative ways of dealing with conflicts and support development of mediation services.

Funding:

The project main funder was the German organisation Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst e.V. who provided 89% of the total share. Other small donations were received from different Ministries of the Republic of Croatia, Balkan Peace Project Netherlands, the Canadian and Norway Embassies, the National Foundation for Development of Civil Society, the Frederick Naumann Foundation, AED and the Foundation of Tuzla Community. The total budget was 1.860.723,95 of Croatian Kuna (around 260.000 euros).

Project activities:

The main project activities included:

- Recruitment and education of community organisers;
- Education of volunteers and community stakeholders;
- Community building activities;
- Mentoring and support;
- Establishment of volunteer services in the community;
- 'Networking of volunteers' service;
- Implementing research in five communities;
- Promotional activities;
- Evaluation.

The Community activities were developed together with the local people on the basis of 'listening' and conversations through thousands of interviews conducted by project workers. The spaces for discussion were provided in every community, allowing local inhabitants to talk about feelings, confront their stereotypes, prejudices and the conflicts they face in their societies. The process of communication was enriched by educational elements. The various workshops were organised to enhance the personal development, non-violent communication, conflict management and organisational skills of the local population. Thanks to this, people could better deal with their traumas and guilt but also accept responsibility and mobilise themselves for action for the common purpose.

The most important goal was to empower the local communities so they could take on the responsibility for their communities. The process of dialogue enabled them to think together, regardless of ethnic or religious affiliation, about their common future.

A wide variety of activities were implemented in different communities, including:

- The project 'Learning together' implemented in Beli Manastir, sponsored by two ministries (of health and education and sport) to educate Roma children and youth, which focused on creative workshops and multiculturalism;
- Theatre and folklore group 'Luna', which aimed to preserve the dance and musical traditions of Roma and to act against discrimination;
- Creating a local youth club in Tenja and volunteer centres in Beli Manastir, Dalj and Osijek;
- Creating youth journalist groups and youth magazines e.g. 'Vrisak' in Vukovar;
- Organising youth camps, music concerts, photo competitions and different thematic workshops on violence, civil society, cooperation, etc.;
- Creating a common handball Club in Tanja (which was perceived as a particular success as sport is often used in the multi-ethnic communities as an instrument of national discord);
- Beautifying villages, such as the renovation of the Danube coast in Dalj or ecological action 'More flowers, Less rubbish' in Okučani;
- Meeting of amateur poets in Barak, organising an educational project 'Poets for Peace' and a contest 'Good people in time of evil' in which more than 300 authors took part.

The project presenters underlined that it was the local volunteers who, with the help of community organisers and mentors, arranged all activities mobilising different ethnic groups.

Project outcomes:

The careful evaluation of the project through analysis of project documentation, focus groups, surveys and interviews gave the following concrete results:

- In Beli Manastir, the image of Roma people was improved within the community, in schools and in media reporting;
- In Vukovar and Tenja, there are less tensions and more cooperation between Croats and Serbs;
- In Dalj, around 10% of local population was involved in voluntary activities;
- In Osijek, Beli Manastir and Dalj the new volunteer centres instigated a considerable level of active participation among local people.

Furthermore, as a result of the programme a new community infrastructure has been created – three volunteer centres, youth and sport clubs as well as a number of community groups and associations. Strengthened human and organisational capacities present solid foundations for future peace and community building efforts. Communication paths between different groups have been opened and an open dialogue has been established on recognised community problems.

In all communities where the project was implemented, the number of volunteers, civic initiatives and organisations has increased, which has brought a different dynamic and quality of life to these regions. The most important accomplishment that participants and stakeholders recognised in their own communities is the increased tolerance towards other ethnic groups.

Finally, a number of publications were produced during the project, including the specially themed issue of "Culture of Peace" Magazine, research 'Impact of volunteers in creation of peace and community development in multiethnic communities', local community papers in Dalj, handouts from the seminars, the Volunteer Personal Book for Work Evidence, as well as poster and flyers promoting volunteerism and volunteer centres.

Good practice components of the project and main lessons learnt

This project brought young people together, gave them a new perspective of nonviolence and conflict resolution, new skills and knowledge useful for peace building from the "bottom-up". Therefore the general concept of the project is applicable not only to post-conflict areas but also almost anywhere as added value to volunteer engagement.

The first lesson learnt was that the most important thing is to "listen" and talk with local people about their feelings, about their opinions on the current situation and the ways to improve it. People want to share their stories. All activities in the recovering communities should be planned together with local inhabitants on the basis of their needs. This opens communication and the space for civic mobilisation. This process of exchanges shapes communities.

Secondly, society transformation needs to start with personal transformation. People should gain new knowledge; break their stereotypes and prejudices. Empowering a community is empowering individuals.

Thirdly, in all communities, which form part of the project, community organisers should prioritise developing links with the stakeholders of the activities that are important to those communities. Establishing and maintaining this contact, especially with local government, is a long and, in many cases, demanding process, but is indispensable to the project's success. Throughout the period of this peace project, community organisers connected with numerous civil society organisations, schools and local government institutions. They played a crucial role in the process of needs assessment, planning and conducting project activities. Local government is therefore very important in the process of infrastructure establishment.

Finally, there must be an holistic approach to the project – to educate children and young people we need their families and colleagues, we need to involve schools, teachers, etc. as they are directly involved in the social education of young people.

4) Rauhan koulu – the Peace School and the Peace Education Institute with the Peace Union of Finland

Presented by: Tiina Huovili from Kansalaisareena ry, Finland

Information about the organisation and the Project

The project was presented by the Kansalaisareena ry, which is CEV's Finish member organisation. Kansalaisareena ry (the Citizen Forum), the project's presenter works in a volunteer development organisation providing national and international networks on cooperation and counselling.



Logo of the Peace School

Rauhan koulu Peace School is located at the Peace Station in Pasila, Helsinki. It is a workshop-based peace work project, which the Peace Education Institute maintains together with the Peace Union of Finland. At the Peace School students participate in activity days which deal with peace education themes, such as conflict prevention, non-violence, human rights, environmental issues, disarmament and refugeeism. The work method is participatory drama which is intended to awaken the students' own critical thinking and to increase their sympathy and dialogue skills as well as their respect for diversity. The main point is to give the students a vivid experience of the issues under discussion. Inside the method of participatory drama, some role-play, statues are used. For smaller children no real conflicts are used, rather a situation that they can handle and understand, such as basing the drama, for example, in a forest with animals in roles.

The Peace School supports schools and their aim to execute the National Curriculum. Themes such as cultural identity, active citizenship, welfare and security, sustainable development and internationality are embodied in the curriculum. Therefore it should be easy for the teachers to convince the schools that this is not just a daytrip. A day in the Peace School can be seen as a part of social studies or as international education. The main point that a workshop day aims for is to get the students to think for themselves. It wants to give tools for the youngsters to see the factors that have influence in conflicts and in building peace. These tools might help them to see everyday conflicts in a different light. As they see and experience a different way of acting through the drama, they can learn a different behavioural pattern to find a bit more peaceful approach towards the conflicts they face.

The conflicts that are taken into the workshops can be some that are seen in the media or otherwise current topics. These can also be conflicts inside the classroom such as racism or school bullying.

Background and rationale of the Project:

The project addresses the conflicts of everyday life such as those in the school classroom. It wants to raise awareness of the larger idea of peace. The Peace school is about providing experiences to the participants of how a conflict situation can be handled.

The project "Peace School" was first established in the late 1990's to meet the requirements that arose from Finnish school children. Teachers felt a need for a student-based and participatory way of dealing with the issues of war (at that time the Bosnian war in particular) and peace. This was a challenge for the Peace Union of Finland and the Peace Education Institute. Activists and volunteers developed the project called the School for Peace. Soon tools from drama were introduced as a method of teaching peace. In the beginning the Ministry of Education allocated some start-up money.

Funding:

Since the beginning of 2008 the funding for the two-year project comes mainly from the development fund of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.



Source: <http://www.rauhanliitto.org/rauhankoulu/>

Project activities:

The workshops are held in Finnish and Swedish. In every workshop there are two trainers with different educational backgrounds to give more width to the theme. A day in the Peace School lasts from three to five hours, depending on the age of the participants.

A day in the peace school is free of charge for the schools. The students in Helsinki and Turku travel to a certain Peace School location and in other towns the trainers go to the schools. It is recommended that the teacher of the class also joins the workshop.

Teachers have given positive feedback about being able to observe from an outside perspective how their students interact with each other. The peace school workshop can also be tailored to meet the specific needs of the class. The teachers can inform the trainers beforehand if there are problems in the class and these problems can be handled anonymously, brought apart with stories, etc. The real players of the problem would never be pointed out, but the class can work together to jointly find other ways of dealing with conflict situations at school.

Schoolings for new trainers are held twice a year and for the more experienced trainers there is some additional schooling where they can deepen their skills. These deeper training courses are more focused on certain dramatised stories, etc. than on general information. Most of the trainers are students or follow masters of education, social sciences or theatrical sciences, who share a common interest in peace education. The development of the Peace School is also done on a voluntary basis by these trainers with the help of two paid coordinators. Feedback from teachers is carefully evaluated.

Project outcomes:

- The project has existed for approximately ten years, starting in one city and now expanding to different cities. In 2006 the Peace School was visited by about 40 classes, i.e. about 800 students from the capital region. There are also 50 trainers from which 20 are more active and they have worked mainly on a voluntary basis. Overall about 2 000 students per year participate in Peace School. With the new project, which is funded by the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Peace School operates now in 5 cities;
- The Project has produced teaching material;
- Schools have also taken more interest in the project and every year, more peace educators are trained.

Good practice components of the project and main lessons learnt

The teaching methodology can be transferred to other countries as everyday life conflicts occur in every society. Being a visual and participative method, drama is an excellent and powerful means of giving valuable, memorable experiences, which can be transferred into everyday life in every society. The young people, who partake of the workshops, think of their own possible solutions to the conflict in an imaginary way. Giving young people the tools to handle conflict situations and to understand peace in a wide way also serves as a good preventive measure. In this way, the Peace School complements the formal education process with this informal learning.

The one big lesson learnt from the project is that the trainers must also have an open mind and really listen to the children and the youngsters. The participants' thoughts should be taken seriously, no matter how young they are. Most often the youngest participants have an abundance of ideas and answers themselves. In this regard, the trainer works to encourage reflection and to help refine the original thoughts. Both trainers and participants should enter into a true and open dialogue and avoid ready-made answers. Trainers must accept that one can never be truly prepared for every question that may arise within a group and, as a trainer, they should be ready to learn from every workshop.

The process of peace-education does not happen 'overnight'. As people walk out of the Peace School after a workshop there will not be an automatic change in their behaviour or way of thinking. They can, however, use what they have learnt in different moments of their lives. It also gives participants the knowledge of how they can influence their own surroundings and society. The most important is to plant the seed of new ideas in young people.

The biggest challenge the project faces is that of convincing schools to use this form of education in their curriculum, even if it is free of charge. This may be also due to the fact that until now, there has been no formal evaluation of the impact of the methods on young people and community life.

5) Youth Energy for Peace (YEP), ConYoungTion

Presented by: Emilie van Laer, Service Civil International, Belgium

Information about the organisation

The Youth Energy for Peace (YEP) is a project of ConYoungTion, a Dutch foundation dedicated to bringing together and empowering youth with different ethnic, religious and social backgrounds to become agents of social change in their societies.

The project was presented by project leader Emilie van Lear from Service Civil International (SCI). SCI is a peace organisation that co-ordinates international voluntary projects for people of all ages, cultures, religious and economic backgrounds. It has 43 branches and groups worldwide and an ever-growing number of partner organisations. The network spans five continents but is based mainly in Europe and Asia. Volunteers have the opportunity to participate in a huge variety of projects all around the world.

Projects can be both short-term (work camps of two to four weeks) and long-term (placements of three to twelve months) and span a wide range of topics. SCI also organises many seminars, training courses and meetings on both a national and international level. These can focus on specific themes or regions.

Background and rationale of the Project:

The project presented during the V:::P seminar – YEP – focused on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This conflict is an ongoing dispute between the state of Israel and the Palestinians – the Palestinian National Authority, which consists of the area of West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict forms part of the wider Arab-Israeli conflict. Essentially, it is a dispute between two national identities with claims over the same area of land.

i ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

The roots of the conflict go back to the First World War, when the League of Nations approved the British Mandate for Palestine. In 1947, the UN approved the Partition Plan (Resolution 181) according to which the country was divided into two states and Jerusalem was designed to be an international city administrated by the UN. However, the Arab state refused this plan, while the State of Israel declared independence on the 14th May 1948. Consequently, four major Arab-Israeli wars took place one after another involving various countries from the region (such as Egypt and Syria). During the conflicts hundred of thousands of people were displaced. The results of these wars affect the geopolitical situation of the region today and are the key issues of the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the peace process is extremely complicated. Despite efforts, starting with the Camp David Accords of 1978 through the Oslo Accords in 1993 until the last initiatives of the Road Map for Peace or 2002 Arab Peace Initiative, the conflict continues. In 2005 the Israeli government confirmed the route of the separation barrier around Jerusalem, which already started to be built. In 2008, Israel initiated a blockade of the Gaza Strip. The core issues such as Palestinian refugees, Israeli settlements, security threats, borders and international status, division of resources and water, holy places, mutual recognition and others remain a problem.

Source:

Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, <http://www.britannica.com>;

William B. Quandt, 2005. Peace Process. American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict since 1967. Washington, University of California Press

Project description:

The Youth in the World training project "Youth Energy for Peace 2007 – Turn Words into Action" involved youth of the ages of 18-25 from four different national groups: Belgian (Flemish and French speakers), Israeli (Jews and Arabs), Dutch and Palestinian. It was the first large-scale follow-up project of the three Euromed "Samen in Zee" projects and it focused especially on participants of the "Samen in Zee"² projects.

The global goal of YEP was to empower youth to set up their own projects in order to build peaceful societies.



² The Samen in Zee projects were organised by ConYoungTion in 2004, 2005 and 2006. These projects were youth exchanges between Palestinian, Israeli, Dutch and Belgian young people. During 10 days, they participated in intercultural activities, they learnt about conflict management, non-violent communication and mediation. They also participated together in sailing courses.

The aim of this training project was to inspire the youth and give them the skills and knowledge to become an agent of social change in their community, while cooperating on an international and intercultural level with other youngsters. The methods used were non-formal education methods. The participants were trained to practice active citizenship in a spirit of non-violence, mutual respect, tolerance and intercultural diversity. They acquired skills in project management, communication and teambuilding. Working in an international and intercultural group likewise inspired the participants to set up new (peace building) activities together. The organisation team aimed to create a positive teambuilding atmosphere in which the youth would feel safe to express themselves.

During the organisation of the project, YEP networked with other peace organisations (through the SCI network), mainly from the Netherlands for example the United Network of Young Peacebuilders (UNOY). This proved to be helpful as UNOY sent an experienced trainer to provide assistance.

Funding:

The project was financed by the Youth in Action programme through the Dutch National Agency.

Project activities:

The exchange took place in Ransdaal, The Netherlands, from the 12th until the 20th of August 2007. The training was clustered in three main themes:

- **Peace work:** inspiring youth and looking at how they can engage in peace work in their own environment: one day workshop;
- **Cultural diversity:** looking at how to deal with cultural differences within the group and on an individual level, to what extent are you and your actions influenced by culture and how to take that into account when working in a team with members with various backgrounds: one day workshop;
- **Project Management:** practical tools necessary to implement ideas of active citizenship and peace engagement: three days workshop.

Other activities included team building, an organisation fair, visits to Maastricht, Open Space, and Cult Coffees, etc.

The first concrete project worked out by the group was the Presentation Day. That day was held on the last Saturday of the project. Families, friends, organisations and media were invited to visit the project setting for one afternoon. The participants had prepared for this afternoon throughout the whole week. The day consisted of an official welcoming, jam sessions, traditional dances, painting, panel discussions, theatre acts, and an official closure with a self-made song. It was a success – almost 40 people visited the project that day and ended up making pizzas with the participants, trainers and hosts.

Organisation: The training was organised by a team of Dutch and Belgian 'Samen in Zee' participants and ex-team members, in close cooperation with the representatives of the Israeli and Palestinian youth groups. In June a feasibility visit to the Netherlands was organised with the organisation team, the possible trainer, the facilitator and the focal point of each youth group. Further meetings took place regularly by Skype, email or traditional phone calls.

Project outcomes:

About 35 young people participated in the project. The project gave new energy to all participants to continue their good work and to create other volunteer projects. Concrete outcomes were, for example:

- The organisation of a new 'Samen in Zee' sailing camp in the Netherlands in 2008.
- The creation of YadbeYad ('hand in hand'), a group bringing together Israeli and Palestinian participants of YEP and inviting other youth. They meet once a month in Palestine and organise workshops and discussions.
- Several participants travelled to and organised/participated (in) projects in Palestine. The presentations on the project were organised in Belgium and also one project was organised with a local Amnesty International group.

Good practice components of the project and main lessons learnt

Actively involve participants! A positive outcome depends on the involvement of all participants from the beginning of the planning stage until the follow-up phase. Another lesson learnt is that it is important to give people an active role in the learning process about youth from conflict areas.

Train multipliers! Having the right people in the right place at the right time can start a process that will not just expand to other young people but will also become sustainable. Exchanges like this can be organised in every country and applied to different conflict situations/regions.

6) Divided God

Presented by: Can Ercebe, Toplum Gönüllüleri (Community Volunteers Foundation), Turkey

Information about the organisation:

Community Volunteers Foundation (CVF) was established in December 2002. Since its foundation CVF has reached 12.000 young volunteers and more than 500 adult volunteers. CVF has carried out more than 800 local and national projects, provided 595 training courses to its volunteers, opened four Youth Service Centres and three Local Coordination Centres, and provides 397 university students with scholarships, with the active participation of young volunteers and assistance of adult volunteers.

The leading organisation of the project is KUD Pozitiv and DIC and the partners were Terra Film (Novi Sad, Serbia), Filmmarche (Berlin, Germany) and Cultural Studies Programme (Istanbul Bilgi University, Turkey). KUD Pozitiv works on:

- Cultural and art activities (video, dance and theatre, Internet, digital art);
- (Sub-) culture and youth cultural activities (supporting young artists and groups, the organisation of international exchanges - culture and art, etc.);
- Organisation of workshops for young people in the field of culture and art (video, theatre, dance, and other visual art forms).

i RELIGION AND CONFLICTS

Religion could be defined as someone's relation to that which one regards as "holy, sacred, spiritual, or divine", a relationship between a human being and God, gods or spirits. Religions are based on moral dogma, trying to promote peace and happiness. How could this then be a cause of a conflict?

Paradoxically, a religiously motivated "peace builder" might be as dangerous as an armed soldier. Religious extremism could and often does very easily lead to intolerance and hatred. Thus, especially when connected with other issues such as ethnic, territorial, economic or political disputes, religion can contribute to conflict escalation very easily just as it did in the Balkans, Northern Ireland, Sudan or Sri Lanka.

Source: Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, <http://www.britannica.com>. Eric Brahm, 2005. Religion and Conflicts. Available at http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/religion_and_conflict?nid=6725. Centre for Reduction of Religious-Based Conflict. Available at <http://www.center2000.org/>.

The participants of the workshop signalled in the discussion the following issues related to the religious conflicts:

- Religious conflicts can be a source of but also a result of conflicts;
- Barriers to the free expression of one's own beliefs can also be a source of frustration and, as a long-term result, religious conflict;
- We should prevent the use of religion to promote or increase 'nationalism';
- The role of volunteers is not to 'convince' others with regard to religion but to give more information about different beliefs.

Background and rationale of the Project:

The project was based on the conviction that we are presently witnessing a proliferation of negatively polarised social structures, such as the emergence of a new conservatism, which is increasing in Europe and elsewhere. This can be observed in post-communist countries, which tend to revert to left-wing values unacceptable to contemporary capitalism. Many revisionist right-wing histories of World War II are also now being published, attempting to rehabilitate Quislings and Fascists, not only in Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia and Slovakia, but also in Germany and the United States. There are also increasing signs of xenophobia in traditionally open societies such as the Netherlands and France, while religious-based conflicts between Muslims, Christians and Jews continue to develop on a global scale.

Despite – or perhaps as a consequence of – the new logic of globalisation, individual attachments to local environment, family, education and religion do not diminish or disappear. The question arises: Is the increase of the new conservatism, xenophobia and religious fundamentalism reflective of a basic human or social need for identity and a sense of security and belonging to one's own community? Or is it the consequence of social engineering by manipulative religious teachers, politicians, and elders who exert influence on the development of children and young adults?

Key questions that the project intended to investigate were:

- Can religion make a contribution to tolerance and understanding and to the solution of conflict, or is it sometimes actually at the root of the intolerance and conflict situations?
- Can religion provoke intolerance, religious and ethnic polarisation, which is then exploited and intensified by political leaders?
- How important is the role of family education with respect to ethnic and racial intolerance? What are Slovenian children told about Croatians, Serbs, and Bosnians? What do Turkish parents tell their children about Greeks and Jews?
- How do different national educational authorities and institutions decide on, and implement an approach to these issues? And how do the resulting textbooks differ?
- What are different points of view of religious teachers (Orthodox and Catholic priests, Muslim imams, etc.) regarding inter-faith tolerance and understanding, and how do they put across these views?
- What are the thoughts and ideas of ordinary people in the street regarding ethnic and religious tolerance?
- What kind of experiences regarding different races and religions, and also ethnic and religious tolerance, do young people have? And what are their thoughts and ideas about these issues? What kind of impact on the development of the individual does a national and a religious upbringing have?
- How to open up new discourses and dialogues that will address the productive possibilities inherent in the religious and cultural complexity of Europe now?

The Project aimed to explore the levels of tolerance and interaction between different cultures and religions in the Balkan states, Turkey and other states of southern and central Europe.

Project description:

Within the scope of the Divided God project, young people used video technologies to make short films and discussions on religion and the role of religion in people's cultures and lives. The project also included an exchange programme that allows young people to better understand the role of religion in different cultures. It was a long-term project, which was jointly carried out by Bilgi University Youth Studies, Community Volunteers Foundation, and other partner organisations from Slovenia, BH, Serbia and Germany.

The primary target group was young people, aged 15 – 30. The opinions and perspectives of this target group are particularly important because they provided a potential way of finding possibilities and opportunities for a different approach to addressing problems concerning religious and cultural tolerance in the future. Project managers chose this target group on the basis of our action-oriented and therefore future-oriented approach to the difficult and sensitive issues the project was addressing. A focus on youth pragmatically acknowledged that the issues could only be resolved over a relatively long period of time.

Funding:

The project was co-financed by the European Cultural Foundation, EU Youth Programme, City of Ljubljana, Robert Bosh Foundation, Province of Veojevodina, Swiss Cultural Programme Serbia and Montenegro, Ilfor, Kodak, Munzsalon and Stiftung Deutsche Klassenlotterie in Berlin.

Project activities:

The project was executed in 2007 and the first half of 2008 with presentations in all the participating partners' countries. Five exchange programmes have been completed in 2007: July 11th-17th in Mostar, BH; July 17th-23rd in Novi Sad, Serbia; July 23rd-August 5th in Ljubljana, Slovenia; October 25th-November 4th in Berlin, Germany; 2008: April 10th-17th in Istanbul, Turkey.

The Project activities included:

1. Preparation/introduction: setting up theoretical frameworks of the project through e-communication and definition of concrete problems in specific areas;
2. Organising the exchange of the young collaborators (video researchers in the project participating cities) and organising round tables with young participants in the project, academic experts, etc.;
3. Video research in the participating cities where, besides the general questions and research themes, more specific research will be done on 'problems' that are present in specific surroundings;
4. Evaluation and editing of publication on theoretical/empirical issues;
5. Presentation of final outcomes of the project – video documentary and publication.

Project outcomes:

The main project's outcomes are:

- Documentary films: co-ordinated by Zelimir Zilnik and shot in different locations. These productions were subtitled in English and are suitable for television, the Internet and for an educational context.;
- Project website, where the whole project is presented (aims and objectives, realisations, theoretical debates, video clips, and evaluation of the project);
- The publication of a book documenting, analysing and interpreting the approaches, perspectives and analyses of the participants in the project;
- The public presentation of a documentary movie and other project productions to young people, involving discussion and debate in Berlin, Istanbul, Ljubljana, Novi Sad and Mostar.

More than 80 young participants took part in all five exchanges.

The project Divided God established positive intercultural practice, in which young people could explore, in their own ways – and, crucially, based on personal experiences – how religion can be a personal and intimate experience, as well as a cultural value of a particular group, and how it might function without the kind of political and ideological influences that lead to conflict and fragmentation. The practical outcomes of the project are appropriate for educational purposes, in different institutional and intercultural learning programmes – in the form of filmed presentations, theoretical readings and supported discussions.

Good practice components of the project and main lessons learnt

The success of the project was that young people could see their national or individual problems through the eyes of others – it gave them more distance.

The topic was related to concrete questions and problems concerning young people's lives. Thus, the project gave the opportunity to the young participants to face and challenge their opinions and, at the same time, realise their personal ambitions and explore their creativity. This methodology (youth exchanges, video making, round table discussions, film festival, etc.) can be applied in different countries and to different societal issues.

Teamwork is needed and practical art organised in some workshops can be an appropriate medium to establish dialogue between the participants. Target groups, who are related to the problems, conflict situations and consequences under discussion, must be included in dialogue.

The challenge of such a project is how to relate empirical findings to more general policy and theoretical debates and to the life of local communities. Cultural and religious diversity should be understood as positive factors in contemporary European culture: as rich and vital elements out of which Europe should be building its cultural future. Intercultural dialogue and tolerance between different ethnic, religious and social groups is necessary for future stability and for positive cultural development of the European space. In the present context of religious and cultural intolerance in many parts of the continent, it is increasingly difficult to put forward arguments for the value of difference, and for how we can live with difference.

7) The Seed Group and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland

Presented by: Ivan Cross, Corrymeela Community and Sinead Quinn, Volunteer Development Agency, Northern Ireland, UK

Information about the organisation:

The Volunteer Development Agency is a member of CEV and was established in Northern Ireland as a charitable company in 1993. Its mission is strengthening communities through the promotion and development of volunteering and this forms the foundation of all their work. The Volunteer Development Agency recognises volunteering as a vibrant expression of active citizenship, and a tool for empowering people and communities to fulfil their potential and contribute to social change. It values the contribution of volunteers and believes that this contribution needs to be supported in order to maximise its effectiveness. The organisation provides training, help, advice and publications on volunteering, volunteer management, child protection and voluntary management committees. The Agency also administers several grant programmes on behalf of the Department for Social Development (Community Volunteering Scheme, Active Community Initiative and Volunteer Bureaux Initiative) and the Department of Education (Millennium Volunteers). These funding programmes relate to the promotion and support of volunteering and efforts to increase participation in volunteering itself. The Volunteer Development Agency is a membership organisation with some 350 members, all of who are committed to volunteering.

Seed Group and the Corrymeela Community is a member organisation of the Volunteer Development Agency. The Corrymeela Community is committed to reconciliation in Ireland and throughout the world and wishes to:

- Be a Christian community of reconciliation following the way of the gospel;
- Be in positive relationship with people regardless of class, religious opinion or political conviction;
- Create safe spaces where people of diverse backgrounds can come and meet each other, where there is an atmosphere of trust and acceptance and where differences can be acknowledged, explored and accepted;

- Work to realise a society whose priorities are justice, mutual respect, participation of all, concern for the vulnerable and the stranger, stewardship of resources, and care for creation.

The Corrymeela Community has for the last 41 years sought to “address the overall aim of a Shared Future, i.e. to establish over time a shared society defined by tolerance: a normal civil society in which all individuals are considered as equal, where differences are resolved through dialogue in the public sphere and where all individuals are treated impartially. A society where there is equity, respect for diversity and a recognition of interdependence”. (www.corrymeela.org)

Background and rationale of the Project:

The project addresses the conflict in Northern Ireland, also called the conflict in Ulster – as a synonym for Northern Ireland. This conflict represents an ethno-political conflict between a group of Nationalists and Unionists. While Nationalists aim for the unification of Northern Ireland with the rest of Ireland, and thus independence from the United Kingdom (UK), the Unionists want the territory to remain part of the UK. There is also a religious aspect to the conflict since Nationalists are predominantly Roman Catholics and Unionists are predominantly Protestants.

i HISTORY OF THE CONFLICT IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The stability of Northern Ireland became disintegrated in the 1920s. The British-Irish war and claims for Ulster autonomy led to the establishment of Northern Ireland as a distinct administrative subdivision of the UK under the Government of Ireland Act of 1920. However, by the mid 1960s, the disputes over the status of the territory and discrimination issues caused that the stability had begun to erode. The presentation of conflicting demands of Nationalists and Unionists brought Northern Ireland to the edge of a civil war. One of the fighting parties was the Irish Republican Army (IRA), whose main goal was independence of Ulster from the UK. The IRA is classified as an illegal terrorist group in the UK. On so-called Bloody Sunday in 1972, a protest of Roman Catholics against the British government turned violent and 13 Catholics were killed. As a result, the autonomy status was ended in 1972 and Ulster became directly controlled from London. In 1998 the Belfast Agreement, also known as the Good Friday Agreement, was signed between the UK, Ireland and Ulster. The Agreement granted Ulster autonomy, thus its own parliament and government and since 1999 Ulster was returned its Home Rule.

Source:

Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, <http://www.britannica.com>.

Jan Frank, 2006. Konflikt v Severním Irsku [Conflict in Northern Ireland]. Praha, Triton.

A state apart – An interactive chronicle of the Northern Ireland Conflict. Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/learning/history/stateapart/> [3/11/2008].

Project description:

This project enables young people to explore how conflict presents itself within our society. This can be on the level of intra-conflict, exploring how values and beliefs can shape internal conflict and dilemmas within the individual. In addition young people explore inter-conflict and how this manifests itself within the family, the community or our society. This obviously involves exploration of sectarianism, racism, xenophobia, homophobia, gender and socio-economic issues. The group shares learning through their own communities.

Project activities:

Activity	Why is this activity included & how does it relate to project aims?	How will this activity be used to achieve learning outcomes?
Welcome Introduction		
Contract setting	Creating a safe space	
Hopes, aspirations and expectations	This part sets the aims and objectives from the group for the week.	Background on which those outcomes are formatted
Small group discussions- who we are, where are we from, getting to know each other	It enables individuals to express themselves easily and be listened to and feel less threatened	Background work
Adventure learning Team building	Core to this activity is team building and assessing group dynamics, which informs the group discussion throughout the rest of the week.	It will explain participants' outlook on the world around them
Personal sharing Life maps	This explores significant events in each individual's life which shapes their individuality	Background work and how the group will function
Understanding conflict using the silhouette model Theatre of the oppressed	Both of these exercises provide the opportunity for people to share, on a more personal level, life experiences, family backgrounds and values and beliefs which they find important in understanding the context of their environments	They will understand the diversity of the other participants' backgrounds, e.g. class, cultural, educational, parenting, gender, etc.
Power and politics – how it works	It provides an explanation of how stakeholder groups have an influence or input into how our society comes to decision-making and the structures that are developed to enable this to happen. It also provides an opportunity to explore how inclusive or exclusive this can be, particularly for young people	This will enable the young people to begin to formulate ideas around what issues they want to address in the future.
Negotiation skills	Are essential if young people are to feel included and have ownership of decisions made in their community	This will enable young people to assess conflict both within their home environment, within the group, within their own communities and our wider society. This issue is being used as a way of exploring inequality, the 'haves and the havenots'
Environmental issues	Provides an opportunity to have a broader overview about issues that will affect young people's lives in the future	This will generate a sense of shared objectives with a view to planning the on-going programme after this week.
Creative project Team building	To enable a common theme that they all focus on. Core to this activity is team building and developing group dynamics.	This will provide ownership and capacity building for the participants.
Consultation	This will shape the longer-term programme which will draw out issues that are impacting on young people's lives, both within the group and their respective communities.	This will assess how the programme enabled a safe and open environment and group process, which enabled people to participate.
Evaluation	This will be both written and verbal and will be facilitated by an external source	This part of the week is crucial and will inform the longer-term project.

Project outcomes:

Based on a needs assessment, the aim of the project is to support the design and delivery of an appropriate and focussed programme, which enables participants to be skilled-up to deliver and support youth programmes in their own communities.

	Need	Outcome
1.	To train young people in an understanding of the causes and consequences of conflict on a variety of levels	Increased understanding of the causes and consequences of conflict on a variety of levels, within the context of a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic socio-economic setting
2.	To train young people in an awareness of North – South issues pertaining to young adults	Increased awareness of North – South issues pertaining to young adults
3.	Increased capacity of participants to apply learning in their own specific settings	Increased capacity of the participants to design a programme best suited to meet their needs and other participants that are not part of this particular planning process
4.	Increased awareness of class, culture, religion and educational and ethnic issues, which impede community cohesion across the Island of Ireland.	Increased self confidence and self esteem in the participants
5.	The implementation of North – South links which could develop into a network of resources	An increased awareness of the participants' values and beliefs
6.	Development of an "owned" programme, young adult-driven, which meets the needs of young adults, specific to their own environments	On-going process

Good practice components of the project and main lessons learnt

Ivan Cross, the project manager:

'From our work in the past we have discovered that the best way to deliver peace and reconciliation work to young people is to train role models (of between 18-25 years old) in this work to deliver programmes in their own communities. In addition to this, we have to bear in mind that peace building is a painstakingly slow process and cannot be rushed. It will take longer than a generation for society to move on.'

8) RIVERSEE Volunteer Exchanges and Reconciliation on Balkans

Presented by: Steve Powel (proMENTE social research) and Domagoj Kovacic (SEEYN)

i BALKAN CONFLICTS

The Yugoslav wars consisted of a series of violent conflicts that took place in the Balkan region between 1992 and 1995. It can be classified as an intra-state, later internationalised, ethnic conflict caused by ethnic nationalism. The main cause of the conflict was a drive towards the establishment of "ethnically clean" Serbian areas in the territory of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Forepart from the religious and ethnic tensions, other causes of the conflict could be political, economic and cultural problems during the break-up of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Between 1991 and 1995, there were three major conflicts in the region: the war in Slovenia in 1991, the Croatian War for Independence that lasted from 1991 till 1995 and finally the Bosnian war that took place between 1992 and 1995. Further, between 1996 and 1999, the war in Kosovo took place. In 2000 and 2001 Southern Serbian and Macedonian conflicts erupted. The so-called Slovenian Independence War lasted only ten days. The Croatian War for Independence lasted from 1991 to 1995, simultaneously with the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Initially, the conflict was between Croats seeking independence and Serbs who opposed its secession from Yugoslavia. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the situation was similar. The 1990 parliamentary elections led to a national assembly dominated by three ethnically based parties, which had formed a loose coalition to oust the communists from power. Bosnia and Herzegovina with its three constituent peoples (Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks/Bosnian Muslims) remained in an awkward position. A significant split soon developed on the issue of whether to stay with the Yugoslav federation (overwhelmingly favoured among Serbs) or seek independence (overwhelmingly favoured among Bosnians and Croats). Both in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, opposition of a great majority of Serbs followed Croatian and Bosnian declaration of independence. In both countries, the Serbs lost their position of constituent nation and gained status of national minority. Following a tense period of escalating tensions and sporadic military incidents, open warfare began between Serbs, Croats and Bosnians.

At the diplomatic level, several mediators tried to resolve the conflict. At the military level, the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) was the first UN peacekeeping force in Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the Yugoslav wars. It existed from the beginning of UN involvement in February 1992, and its restructuring into other forces in March 1995. The initial mandate of the UNPROFOR was to ensure conditions for peace talks, and security in three demilitarised "safe-haven" enclaves. In 1992, the mandate was extended.

In 1995 the forces of the UNPROFOR were re-flagged under the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR) which initiated the NATO bombing campaign and whose task was to implement the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (GFAP - otherwise known as the Dayton Accords or Dayton Agreement). The signing of the Dayton Agreement in Dayton, Ohio in 1995 by the presidents of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Alija Izetbegović), Croatia (Franjo Tuđman), and Yugoslavia (Slobodan Milošević) brought a halt to the fighting, roughly establishing the basic structure of the present-day state.

Source:
Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, <http://www.britannica.com>;
Mojmír Šlachta, 2007. Ohniska napětí ve světě. Prague, Kartografie Praha.

Information about the organisation:

SEEYN, the South Eastern European Youth Network is a network organisation involving 19 member NGOs from Albania, BH, Bulgaria, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro. It is an initiative that attempts to overcome differences among societies that have a recent tradition of conflicts through bringing young people from the entire SEE region to work together. SEEYN is one of the seven networks established within a programme conducted by the Danish Foreign Ministry. Particularly important is the equal representation of all actors participating in this process, as well as the neutral and independent treatment of the initiatives coming from different countries. SEEYN's aims and objectives are to empower youth to build a stable and peaceful region as active citizens, to create fertile ground and conditions for youth mobility, and to promote and support adequate government policies for the youth.

The main activities of SEEYN are:

- Advocacy as a tool for development of supportive legal framework;
- Work-camps for intercultural learning;
- Volunteering for development;
- Publishing research findings, best practices, toolkits (these contribute to the knowledge base of the non-profit sector in the field of voluntary service).

Background and rationale of the Project:

RIVERSEE Programme was implemented in a very complex, politicised, post conflict situation in the Balkans. SEEYN as an implementing organisation's approach was to create and implement work camps with an educational component. The idea is that work camp participants take part in activities, which are pro-social, challenging, involve self-management, and which involve substantial contact with other cultures, through the involvement of international volunteers. Moreover, SEEYN ensures that the effects of the work camps are multiplied through participants who will promote and transfer interest to peers.

RIVERSEE -Regional Integration through Volunteer Exchanges for Reconciliation of South Eastern Europe Programme

The UNV/UNDP RIVERSEE Programme seeks to develop regional confidence and facilitate valuable linkages between the populations and governments in the Balkan region. Its overall objective is to contribute to regional integration, social cohesion and poverty reduction in the Balkans by strengthening networks through East-to-East volunteer exchanges, promoting volunteerism and proactive citizenship, building the capacity of civil society to deal with local development and governance processes, and establishing regional cooperation.

Source: <http://www.riversee.org/>

Project description:

The RIVERSEE was a programme implemented in seven countries/regions in the Balkans – Albania, BH, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo. Its overall objective was to contribute to regional integration, social cohesion and poverty reduction in the Balkans.

Placements were created with a social inclusion focus, spanning a range of issues such as the inclusion of people with special needs, increasing opportunities for youth, education around the stigmatisation of marginalized groups, etc. Placements also tried to promote regional reconciliation by bringing young people from conflict-affected regions to work together in different community-based projects across the assumed lines of ethnic division.

The main objectives of the programme were to reduce prejudices towards peers among the youth in SEE and in neighbouring countries, to assess their levels of volunteerism, to increase their pro-social values and employability. Furthermore, the impact of volunteer work camps was analysed in the reference to the development of intercultural dialogue competences.

The most important part of the RIVERSEE project was a research project with the aim of assessing levels of voluntarism, pro-social values/behaviour and employability amongst youth in BH, as a more or less typical country in SEE countries. The aim was also to increase the knowledge base of the non-profit sector in the field of voluntary service in SEE, based on theoretical background and with concrete and practical examples. The study also tested the impact of the volunteering camps organised in the frame of RIVERSEE project.

Funding:

The Project was financed by the Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Danish Neighbourhood Programme) and by the UNDP/UNV Programme.

Project activities:

The project activities included:

- Creating a platform for the main actors in SEE and EU countries;
- Creating a SEE volunteer exchange scheme -long-term volunteer exchanges, short-term volunteer exchanges (work camps), school exchanges and regional youth initiatives;
- Creating an online database for volunteers and hosting organisations;
- Advocacy for volunteering legislation;
- RIVERSEE Conference;
- Research.

Project outcomes:

The RIVERSEE programme created new venues for volunteerism and youth engagement in the region. It demonstrated that regional programming is possible. The innovative approach and scope of the programme was appreciated by the donor community regarding youth and development. RIVERSEE volunteers integrated easily into the work and local culture context of the hosting organisation than international volunteers from other regions (according to host organisations).

- People who volunteer are much more pro-social than non-volunteers;
- Work camp volunteers have overall higher levels of commitment to different values than typical students;
- The work camps have been proven to be effective in stimulating a significant reduction of mistrust towards other ethnicities amongst the volunteers from SEE;
- The work camps fostered long-term cross border initiatives.

i Results of the research of proMENTE:

The aim of the research was to increase the knowledge base of the non-profit sector in the field of voluntary service in SEE, based on a theoretical background and with concrete practical examples. The research was conducted in 2006 by proMENTE social research and SEEYN. The sample included 975 complete telephone interviews with young people 16-30, conducted in July and September 2006. The sample is weighted to be representative for BH (on the dimensions of gender and region).

The results were as follows:

- A statistical analysis was carried out to see how ethnic mistrust, attitudes to civil engagement, employability and camp-specific pro-social values/behaviour improved overall between camp-start and camp-end. As far as the disappointing results for positive civil attitudes are concerned, it is possible that at least some of the work camps have a paradoxical effect of actually producing cynical or disappointed reactions in some volunteers. However one can argue that if voluntary activity is to produce real changes in people, it can only do so by providing impulses and experiences on a longer-term path of personal development. Real personal development in the sense of tolerance and pro-social values/behaviour will certainly not come overnight and probably involves some setbacks.
- From this point of view, it is perhaps more surprising that there were no significant improvements on the "employability" measure overall. Perhaps a two-week work camp just does not offer enough opportunity for learning skills relevant to employment in any really substantial way.
- There were quite substantial and significant differences between the effects of the different work camps. There are about five camps in which at least three-quarters of the volunteers made overall improvements and a similar number in which around three-quarters of the volunteers actually scored lower at camp-end than at camp-start.
- Improvement on camp-specific pro-social values/behaviour is significantly correlated with overall satisfaction with the work camps and with satisfaction with the leadership and the socialising. This means that people who improved on camp-specific pro-social values/behaviour were also satisfied with the camps.
- The most important single measure of the readiness to spread voluntarism at the end of the camp - "I am going to persuade other people to go on voluntary activities / become volunteers" - is strongly correlated with all scores for satisfaction with the work camp.
- Work camp volunteers have overall higher levels of commitment to different values than typical students. The biggest difference is that they are interested in adventure; the difference on factors like benevolence is not so strong.
- Most volunteers love work camps, which are part of their commitment to volunteering. But if SEEYN wants to promote them as a tool for reaching particular social goals like pro-social values/behaviour then much more work needs to be done on focussing the kind of camps and activities on those particular values.

Source: "We can, we volunteer - Complete research report: Pro-social values/behaviour and employability amongst young people in SEE and the impact of volunteer work-camps"
<http://www.promente.org/seeyn5>

The RIVERSEE programme also had further outcomes: it has laid the groundwork for regional participation in the European Commission Youth in Action Programme 2007 – 2013 as the East-East exchanges were later funded through EVS (Youth in Action Programme); it introduced a National UNV scheme into countries of the region; and, finally, new laws on volunteerism were adopted in Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, and Republic of Srpska (part of BH).

Good practice components of the project and main lessons learnt

The best practice in RIVERSEE exchanges is that volunteering tackled different issues (mainly environmental and social) and gathered different groups to work together on common challenges. Volunteers were dealing with specific challenges (for example protection of a cross-border river), and by setting volunteers from different backgrounds to work together, and involving others, this contributed to the reconciliation process in the Balkans region.

The project proved that bringing young people from neighbouring countries to work in endangered communities contributes to breaking down cultural and ethnical prejudices. Through such direct contacts and joint activities, volunteers and communities change their values system. Furthermore, the volunteer's home community also profits from such exchanges, as the personal experience is transferred back.

The study carried out by proMENTE showed that the clear success achieved in reducing mistrust towards other ethnicities amongst the volunteers from SEE should be examined in more detail, and that organisers and donors should engage in frank dialogue about the implicit and explicit aims of work camps. It is quite possible that one work camp can have, for example, a significant impact on teaching about the environment but a neutral or even negative impact on, for example, group tolerance.

'We believe that this experience can be transferred to similar regions and that regional youth exchanges in various forms can contribute to reconciliation and better understanding among youth. Also, exchanges between similar regions are an interesting idea and possible next step.'

Emira Mesanovic, SEEYN Director

IV. DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL PEACE PROJECTS

The programme of the seminar included also visits to local projects. The aim of this activity was to give participants a chance to witness the efforts of local organisations and institutions promoting the human rights and peace values, working in the social and educative field.

Below there is a short description of the organisation visited.

1. Human Rights Centre Sarajevo.
2. Žene Ženama (Women to Women): projects about women victims of the war.
3. Association Education Builds BH: different projects for children victims of the war in Sarajevo.
4. Musicians without Borders BH: musical education for children in Srebrenica.

1) Human Rights Centre Sarajevo

The Human Rights Centre of the University of Sarajevo is an organisational unit of the University of Sarajevo. It was founded with the aim to provide University with an expert realisation of international human rights. It was established in December 1996, with essential support by a number of international organisations such as Council of Europe, EU or Raoul Wallenberg Institute for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law and others.

Its mission is to contribute to the implementation of international human rights through information dissemination processes and providing necessary documentation, lectures, expert advice, and research, reporting and publishing relevant materials. The Centre is an interdisciplinary body and is co-operating with other similar institutions, NGOs and national and international bodies dealing with human rights issues.

Its activities include national as well as international domains. The projects of the Centre focus mostly on the human rights matters and minority issues in the countries of the Former Yugoslavia. One of the ongoing projects, "Initiative for Reconciliation in Dayton Triangle: Young Leaders in dialogue process, cooperation, trust and overcoming the past", aims to support the process of reconciliation in the Dayton Triangle (BH, Croatia and Serbia).

Promoting peace remains a core rationale also of the project "Human Security in Western Balkans: the Influence of Trans-national Terrorist and Criminal Organisations on the Peace Development Process in the Region (HUMSEC)". HUMSEC project aims to contribute to better understanding of the relationship between trans-national terrorist groups and criminal organisations in the western Balkans and their role in the process of peace development in region.

2) Žene Ženama Sarajevo / Women to Women Sarajevo

Žene Ženama is a self-organised women's group, which contributes to development of civil society through empowerment of women and women's groups and advocates for respect of women's human rights in all spheres of private and social life. It plays an important role in development of civil society in BH in the area of understanding of the concept of «democracy» and «human rights».

By providing unique creative space for women's empowerment and advocacy in area of education, social rights, security, peace and gender equality, Žene Ženama members built an approach that preserves coherency of women's human rights and women's solidarity in BH. Žene Ženama is an active participant in building of democratic civil society in BH. Through continuity and new models of work this organisation practices equality and support initiatives of all those who recognised their personal need to be a part of the processes aimed at improvement of the life and the future in BH.

Žene Ženama developed a programme, which integrates gender perspective in interpretation of human rights, democracy, feminism and non-violent communication by using an unique and creative model focused on education and activities of women and women's groups in BH context. The programme called «Domestic concept of women's empowerment» is realised through education, support and promotion. Activities of the programme include education, research, publishing and public work.

Žene Ženama believes in and strongly supports and promotes volunteerism. Among other projects, Žene Ženama actively fights against gender-based violence in BH.

3) "Education builds Bosnia and Herzegovina"

The Association "Education builds Bosnia and Herzegovina" was established in 1994 as a non-governmental and non-profit organisation. Since its establishment, the association has been implementing its mission that focuses on children victims of war, by providing moral and material support to pupils and students in order to enable them to receive a good comprehensive education and become productive members of society.

In its present work, the Association has provided over 29.000 scholarships for 2.800 children, including 235 scholarships (for three years) distributed to children that belong to the Roma minority in BH, totalling 2,0m KM (1.000.000 Euro) in value. At the same time, around 1.900 of them have spent summer holidays in BH, Croatia, Italy, Austria, Germany, Spain, France, Belgium, Turkey, Switzerland, Poland, Denmark, Slovakia, Canada and Uruguay and more than 35.000 children and youth are supported in school materials, sport equipment and in a similar material support of 3.000.000 KM value (1.500.000 Euro).

The Association has taken part in projects supported by USAID; the Heinrich Boll foundation, Germany; UNDP, BH; Hilsfwerk, Austria; Civitas, Bosnia-Herzegovina; ACAT, France; La Viva, France; USAID-UMCOR, US; Open Society Fund BH; as well as in many conferences, seminars, and round tables discussing issues of education, civil society and democracy.

Aims of "Education builds BH" focus on:

The contribution to development of BH through moral, psychosocial and material assistance do children of šehids [martyrs] and deceased warriors, civilian war victims, invalid and talented children, as well as on the creation of conditions for them to successfully complete their schooling to become useful members of the society.

Goals:

- Creation of preconditions to enable children to be provided with European standards of education and acquisition;
- Development of awareness of civic society and improvement of the youth involvement in social life;
- Insistence on obeying the principles of the Convention on the Child's Rights and the Convention for Protection of Human Rights and Basic Freedoms;
- Material assistance, scholarships, summer holidays and other forms of help to children whose parents died as war victims in BH over 1992-1995, civilian war victims, and invalid children;
- Support young talents and gifted children through material assistance and scholarships;
- Exert influence on the public by means of lectures, seminars, workshops, media, publishing, etc., to get involved into all forms of assistance to this youth population;

The Association provides scholarship funds through membership fees; donations; sponsorships; voluntary contributions and proceeds from its own non-profit activity of printing and selling wall calendars; publications; organisation of benefit concerts, and art and photo exhibitions. To help eliminating consequences of a mental trauma the Association realised projects of the psychosocial rehabilitation of children and their parents, other educational projects and activities that add to a socialisation and training of users to act in a community.

4) Muzičari bez granica/ Musicians without Borders BH

Presented by Tory Tevis, volunteer and conference participant.

MwB BH works to improve living conditions in local communities by facilitating inter-ethnic/cultural dialogue through music-and related arts-projects and activities. High quality music activities, whether at the community – arts or professional level, are a powerful impetus for social development and renewal. Music, art and other cultural initiatives are used to advance education, social and human development, identity and a new image of Bosnia-Herzegovina. MwB BH strives to build local expertise, remove obstacles to the development of talent, improve professional achievement, and promote community vitality through citizen participation. The long-term goal of MwB BH is to contribute to the revitalization of cultural life in BH, which is essential for a tolerant, peaceful society.

Projects & Activities include:

- The Music Bus – music education/cultural activities for children and youth in the Srebrenica and Tuzla regions of BH;
- Winds of Change – all-Bosnian Wind Ensemble made up of students from the country's three primary ethnic groups;
- Facilitating visits of international soloists and ensembles to BH to participate in MwB BH projects, lead workshops, and deliver high-quality performances, breaking through cultural and artistic isolation;
- Cooperation with MwB International (parent organisation, based in the Netherlands) to share BH skills and experience with other regions.

Because of the wide variety of projects and activities MwB BH conducts, the ways in which the organisation uses volunteers to further the goal of peace building are also varied. The Music Bus uses young local volunteers to help run activities, especially summer camps. These volunteers serve as examples of inter-cultural cooperation and friendship to the children they are working with and teaching.

The ensemble, Winds of Change is led by the artistic direction of Dutch musician and composer Willem van Merwijk. For this work he is paid a symbolic fee, but it does not begin to reflect the amount of time and energy he puts into the project. Additionally, other professional musicians and ensembles which travel to BH to perform or lead workshops come on a voluntary basis with only their travel expenses covered. When these musicians come to BH as volunteers, they not only share their artistic talents with the citizens of the country, but also the spirit of giving. Finally, both MwB BH and International, make use of volunteers to keep their offices, networks and projects running smoothly. While this partly reflects the developing nature of the organisation, it also means that those who work for MwB do so out of a belief in what the organisation stands for.

V. HOW TO ENCOURAGE INVOLVEMENT IN VOLUNTEERING FOR PEACE BUILDING AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION? BARRIERS IDENTIFIED AND THE GOOD PRACTICES TO OVERCOME THEM

Volunteering is frequently perceived as something that easily and simply happens and is often undervalued. Many people also have misconceptions of what volunteering is really about. This is especially the case in the SEE region, where volunteering sometimes receives a partially negative connotation due to its misuse in the past to impose collective, physical and obligatory activities, related to political propaganda. Misconceptions of what volunteering is, are often one of the biggest barriers to involvement in voluntary activities, especially in regions with an undemocratic past.

An additional challenge in the conflict regions is to recruit different ethnic groups to engage together in volunteering projects as the hostility usually overshadows good will. The communities are often so divided, 'closed' and hemmed in by their suffering and painful memories of the past that all peace building efforts are hardly possible.

The projects presented during the seminar also met with many obstacles and difficulties, especially when setting them up or when trying to involve young people in the project activities. At the same time, they demonstrate that it is possible to overcome these barriers.

The participants of the seminar identified the following barriers and the good practices necessary to overcome them.

1) Prejudices, stereotypes, distrust in the local communities

This seemed to be one of the biggest barriers in all projects and at the same time a rationale and the reason for civil society organisations to set up the peace building projects.

In the Croatian Volunteers in peace building and community development project, at the beginning of the implementation the highest barrier was to overcome the distrust that existed in the communities that were, due to war, very divided. In the Macedonian Time Out Magazine project, young people were often blamed by their own friends for becoming involved in activities with young people belonging to 'other' ethnicities. Those barriers were overcome in both projects by educating young people and convincing them that ethnicity should not be an obstacle for gathering young people together. Young people were taught that they should think about the common future and to put their own motivation as the basis for the project they are involved in.

The distrust was also observed in the project Divided God, which talked about religion, which is a delicate and sensitive issue. This topic is hard to talk about as it touches upon some very emotional and intimate areas of personal life. It is very difficult to talk about religion without prejudice. Another issue is that sometimes volunteering and volunteers can be rejected due to religious prejudices and customs as well as gender roles. This had sometimes very practical implications e.g. in the Turkish project it was difficult to obtain a pass to photograph certain people or sacred places.

Another example of distrust between people was well illustrated by the Corrymeela Community project in Northern Ireland. There the biggest problem that was signalled was suspicion amongst young people towards each other as well as a lack of understanding of the backgrounds of participants from other (Catholic and Protestant) communities.

The distrust does not need to be directed towards the members of 'other' community. In the Time Out Magazine, young journalists were in the beginning reluctant to write about their true problems and they did not believe that they would be understood. They were afraid of how their colleagues, teachers, parents and communities would react to their very personal and honest stories.

Careful research should be made in the communities before starting to listen to people, their needs and their fears. This is what the organisers of the Macedonian project or a project of Centre for Peace, Non-violence and Human Rights did. The Time Out project managers underlined that the project would not be successful without mapping the needs of local communities. Because of this, the project managed to bring together young people from different ethnic backgrounds. In both projects, these were the local communities, who had ownership of the project. The core activities of the project directly address the needs of the respective communities and were carried out by the members of these communities.

2) Lack of interest or relevant information on how to get involved in such projects

This barrier might be an effect of:

- ... Young people not knowing their rights. Often youngsters do not know how to engage in volunteering projects, or how to take part in the schools or community life. They feel insecure and are unaware that they can actually bring about change and take an active role in their communities. In the Macedonian project, young people were not interested in participating as journalists in the youth magazine Time Out, until they start to write about their problems and issues. This gave them the feeling of responsibility and ownership.
- ... A project or topic that seems too abstract. Young people react more enthusiastically if the means of communication are adjusted to their age and needs. E.g. in the Divided God project, the project managers accented on-line communication and decided to produce videos about religion.

The problem of 'lack of interest' also concerns the cooperation between different stakeholders. It is not an easy task to find partners and interest for cooperation in volunteering projects for peace. However, as Can Ercebe, the Divided God presenter said: *'in the beginning it is very difficult to interest people and encourage them to act. But once the real activities, interpersonal relations and work on the field begins, once the participants overcome their prejudices, then comes the engagement and passion.'*

3) Finding a sustainable financial support

Many organisations raised this point. Unfortunately the national, regional or local authorities rarely financially support volunteering peace projects. The biggest sources of support are external donors and foreign embassies/ministries. In almost all presented projects, except Northern Ireland and the Peace School projects, there were external donors e.g. Pax Christi (Macedonian project), the U.S. Embassies in respective countries (Slovenian project), Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Soros Foundation and UNDP (RIVERSEE project), German Foundations (Osijek project).

4) Difficulties for rousing interest and support from local governments/authorities

The workshops have shown that in many cases it was hard to convince local authorities to support peace building projects. Sometimes even the local authorities, instead of supporting this type of volunteering, encourage separation and non-cooperation.

A successful way of overcoming this barrier was presented in the Croatian 'Volunteers for peace building' project where, for example, the Volunteer Centre in Dalj organised three days of training for 13 people from the Erdut municipality with the aim of constructing certain projects in the community. The seminar gathered and motivated the local people and governments to create common action plans for the community development.

5) Insufficient investment in recruiting, training and retaining mentors, trainers and multipliers

One of the most important barriers and challenges for the projects is to find, train and retain volunteers and community leaders which later on will be able to lead, sustain, expand, disseminate and value the community activities. In the Finish Project, the Peace School the pilot project has had ten years to develop the concept and now it has expanded to other cities. The main challenge has been to recruit the new trainers. Many of them have prejudices that peace education cannot be 'taught'. So the concept of peace schools should be explained and communicated not only to trainers but also to schools and families. The other challenge is to get new material for the workshops.

6) Little involvement and interest of local media

Media, as individuals, often use stereotypes and scaremongering in their communication methods, stereotypes and 'scaring' people. At the same time, local media can play an important role in the process of recovery of the community as the Time Out Magazine has shown. In the project 'Volunteers in building peace and community', there were many successful examples of involving the local media in the projects. For example, in the region of Dalj, on radio Borovo, every month the community organisers talked about projects, which the volunteer centre and other associations conducted. Moreover, a number of local magazines were created or re-created like thematic youth magazine Vrisak, which is connected to peace building or the local community paper Daljske Novosti.

7) Legislative and administrative barriers

In many of the project partner countries there is no legislative framework and no targeted programme nor policies, which could raise the recognition and profile of volunteers. This is one of the biggest barriers in the further recognition, promotion and facilitation of volunteering. The RIVERSEE project has shown that the civil society initiatives like, for example creating such bottom-up volunteering exchanges projects for peace, can actually lead to the adoption of the legal framework for volunteering.

A second important barrier for young people from different countries when engaging in the volunteering projects in other countries or neighbourhood regions is the visa issue. Already in the V:::P project, participants from Armenia, Georgia and Ukraine were refrained from coming to BH due to enormously lengthy, complicated and expensive visa processes. This creates artificial borders between the countries, which often have been linked by strong historical and geographical bonds in the past.

VI. WHAT ROLE FOR THE AUTHORITIES AND DONORS IN THE PROMOTION OF LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL YOUTH VOLUNTEERING IN PEACE BUILDING?

One important aspect of the seminar was to reflect on the role of different stakeholders in the promotion of local and international youth volunteering for peace building. The responsibilities of governments and donors were especially considered, as they play a crucial role in stimulating the peace building process. The main question asked was how can governments and donors foster and harness the role of volunteering and volunteer organisations in peace building and conflict resolution?

1) Why should the governments promote volunteering for peace building?

The background reflection on this question was set up by Salvator Nkurunziza from the UNV.

Salvator Nkurunziza, a Volunteerism for Development and Governance Specialist in the UNV has 15 years experience in conflict resolution and peace building starting with the Burundi civil war in 1993 and Rwanda genocide in 1994.

He says *'Since Burundi and Rwanda conflicts, I was involved directly in peace building policy formulation and programming response planning and implementation, mainly within the Africa context, in Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya, Sierra Leone and Liberia.*

The programming was both in terms of engaging political leaders, enter-faith organisation and Civil Society Organisation leaders at the policy and strategic planning level and with local community leaders and youth and women CBOs at community level. In Burundi, Rwanda and Liberia, the focus was on the integration of psychosocial trauma counselling into formal and non-formal education programmes, the promotion of dialogue and trust building, leadership skill development including non-violent conflict prevention and resolution. In Sierra Leone and Liberia, the focus was on the integration of peace building and reconciliation in the social reintegration of ex-combatants including youth, children and women associated with fighting forces.

With regard to volunteerism, my experience is more in association with the Boy Scout, in Burundi (from 1993). I was a National Youth Commissioner and later on in the Great Lakes Region (covering Burundi, Rwanda, Congo and Uganda) a regional focal person for Youth, Peace building and Human Rights. During this period, I developed simple peace building and reconciliation leaflets and manuals for boy scouts; I organised/managed number youth's camps that focused on peace building through sports and cultural activities, conferences, community reconstruction initiatives. In addition, in West Africa I supported through capacity building a number of VIOs dedicated to peace building, including the Mano River Basin Women Peace Network covering Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, West Africa Network for Peace based in Ghana.'

Defining Volunteerism

According to Mr Nkurunziza and the UNV ethos, to volunteer is to choose to act in recognition of a need, with an attitude of social responsibility and without concern for financial gain, going beyond one's basic obligations. Some principles that guide volunteerism include the following:

- Volunteering is a matter of choice;
- It is a legitimate way in which citizens can participate in the activities of their communities;
- Volunteering is a vehicle for individuals or groups to address human, environmental and social needs;
- Volunteering respects the rights, dignity and culture of others as well as promoting human rights and equity;
- Volunteering work is unpaid, but does not substitute paid work;
- Volunteers do not replace paid workers nor constitute a threat to the job security of paid workers.

Volunteering for peace and development in a post-conflict transitional environment

The following are challenges at national and or community level that justify the need for volunteerism/volunteers:

- The population faces the massive task of rebuilding their political, social, moral and economic fabric;
- State authority has often collapsed or is terribly weakened;
- The state fails in many instances to provide its citizens with security or prosperity;
- State have lost their drive, legitimacy and to a large extent their hold on their citizenry;
- Inability/lack of capacity restores the human and institutional resources needed for reconstruction to begin;
- The inability of the governance system to immediately provide basic services and goods;
- Threats and/or fear of resurgence of the conflict;
- The need for rebuilding of the inter-community and interethnic dialogue, trust and mutual peaceful co-habitation and co-existence;
- States lack accountability and transparency mechanisms, and as a result, the international community refrains from injecting huge financial resources;
- Lack of qualified and competent intellectuals as conflict has killed or forced them into exile;
- In many cases, conflict worsens the already existing low rates of literacy, thus making access to information and active participation in decentralized local governance forum impossible and frustrating;
- Dependency syndrome that resulted from prolonged humanitarian assistance.

Considering the huge social, political and economic needs that transitional states are confronted with and taking into account the scarcity of financial and human resources and the inability and incapacity of the established government to address the aforementioned challenges –

Volunteerism might be seen as an alternative strategy for peace building and development in a post-conflict and transitional recovery process in the following areas:

- Technical and institutional capacity building for local governance, civil society and local private institutions in the areas that promote good governance and access to basic needs and services;
- Peace building and reconciliation as well as civic education;
- Social mobilisation for voluntary community active participation for social and economic action;
- Promote initiatives that contribute to the achievement of MDGs;
- Initiate information and communication technologies that are rural friendly and accessible;
- Support local print and broadcast/digital media through partnerships;
- Initiatives that reinforce rule of law and the local jurisdiction;
- Engendering local governance.

The rationale and role of the states in supporting volunteerism

During the seminar, Mr Nkurunziza also stated that bearing in mind the tremendous role that volunteerism can provide in the rebuilding of post-conflict states through peace building and capacity development, in return states have responsibility and can play the following roles:

- Mutual trust building between the government and the civil society, private sector, community and individuals, achieving peace and development will be challenging;
- Lead and facilitate national dialogue through consultation and engagement of all stakeholders, including civil society organisations, as well as voluntary involvement;
- Resource and volunteer mobilisation through national budget allocation and established multilateral and corporate funding mechanisms and networks;
- Building volunteerism good practice in government: government can create an enabling volunteerism environment by having policies in place that support the civil servant volunteering activities while ensuring that public servants continue to fulfil their professional obligations;
- Recognition of volunteerism's contribution to peace and development by raising the status and profile of volunteering within government and creating public space and publicity of the importance of volunteerism;
- Establishing and nurturing an enabling environment by putting in place national policy and legal framework for volunteerism.

2) How the governments can stimulate the peace building in their country – the case of Croatia

Following the introduction, Ms Branka Kaselj, a member of the Croatian Council for Development of Civil Society of the Government of Republic of Croatia presented how the support of governments can work in practice, using the example of Croatia.

 The Council for the Development of Civil Society

It is an advisory body of the Republic of Croatia. Its main aim is to develop the cooperation between the Croatian Government and Non-governmental, non-profit sector. The Council is in charge of the implementation of the National Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for the Development of Civil Society, development of philanthropy, social capital, partner relations and cooperation among sectors.

The Council's tasks include monitoring and analyses of public politics, reports from the Croatian Government on the drafted regulations referring to civil society development and organising the inclusion of civil society organisations into debates. It is also in charge of co-operation in planning the priorities of the national programme for awarding grants from the state budget funds to projects and programmes of civil society organisations, gathering and analysis of annual reports from state administrative bodies on awarded grants and cooperation in programming and establishing priorities in the use of EU pre-accession programmes and funds.

The Council has 23 members including: 10 representatives of relevant state administrative bodies and the Croatian Government offices, 10 representatives of non-governmental, non-profit organisations and 3 civil society experts in the areas of international co-operation, cross-sectoral co-operation and the European integration accession process. The Council has a President elected by its members – representatives of NGOs, and other non-governmental, non-profit legal persons and civil society experts. The President and the members of the Council are nominated for 3 years with the possibility of re-election.

The Council's work is based on the Decision on the Establishment of the Council for the Development of Civil Society and the Appointment of Chairperson and Members of the Council, adopted in 2002. Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs performs expert and administrative tasks of the Council.

Source: www.uzuvrh.hr

According to Ms Kaselj, during the Balkan war and in the early post-war period (1991 -1998) there was very little peace building process in Croatia. Governmental institutions were concerned with military actions and citizens were traumatized with huge losses of people, children and soldiers. Only a few peace and human rights activists were working in peace building. This was not sufficient, especially if one takes into account the fact that at this time ethnic hatred was politically and socially acceptable. Professionals such as psychologists and sociologists were involved in dealing with traumatized people. Also, international volunteers (trainers, professionals, and peace and human rights activists) were present and helpful in providing peace building support.

During the period of 1999 – 2003 the shift of the political party in power brought positive changes for civil society. First of all it was an establishment of Governmental Office for NGOs, which brought new people to respect peace and human rights activists and made them more willing to enter into dialogue and to provide needed support to NGOs. Secondly, a real dialogue with the civil society organisations was opened, for the first time people were asked – ‘What do you need?’ First concrete steps included development of the Programme of Cooperation between the Croatian Government and the NGOs. The process was done in a participative way with many NGO activists. Finally, the International Year of Volunteers in 2001 created a first opportunity to publicly present at the highest level what people do in peace building. It was also for the first time that NGO activists and volunteers were acknowledged for their great support in various areas.

The last (2004 -2008) years brought new turning points and improvements. At a **policy/strategy level** the National Strategy for Creation of Enabling Environment for Development of Civil Society (2006 -2011) was adopted. It was developed in a participative manner, gathering around 200 various experts and practitioners from both the public and civil sector. The Operational Plan of the National Strategy was developed in a parallel process providing documents with clearly stated objectives, responsibilities, measures and deadlines. Key control mechanisms was given to the Governmental Office for NGOs (Council for Development of Civil Society) which is obliged to monitor implementation of Operational Plan and present an annual report to the Government and the public on its results or problems in implementation. Their role is to monitor the situation and suggest improvements to the Government of Croatia on civil society matters. The Council is involved in monitoring of National Strategy as well.

Legal framework for civil society organisations has been improved as well. After the Law on Associations, Croatia adopted the Law on volunteering (2007), which finally defines the rights, responsibilities and penalties for volunteers and host organisations. The Law was developed in a participative way accepting many of NGO practitioners’ suggestions and amendments. Finally, there is the Code of Ethics (2008) which defines values, principles, and standards for volunteers and host organisations.

There are also different **institutions** and **bodies**, which support civil society in their work.

1. The financial support for NGOs working in the area of civil society development is provided by the National Foundation for Development of Civil Society, established in 2004 (www.zaklada.civilnodrustvo.hr). It is very important for NGOs that the Foundation also gives institutional (operating) grants and provides support for new initiatives, research and media projects relevant for civil society, which makes the essential ingredients for future development of Croatian civil society.
2. Secondly, the Ministry of Family, Veterans’ affairs and Intergenerational solidarity (www.mobms.hr) is responsible for the implementation of the objectives in National Strategy related to volunteers. They also support the work of the Volunteer centre’s network (2005) as resource centres for promotion and development of volunteers, and volunteers in peace building as well.
3. Finally, the National Council for Development of Volunteerism (2007) has a role to monitor implementation of the Law on Volunteering and National Strategy regarding objectives and measures relevant for volunteers.

Taking into account all of the above mentioned developments, Ms Kaselj stated that Croatian civil society has a good institutional framework and infrastructure, which facilitate organisations’ work and development, and enables them to effectively influence policy-making.

With regard to the **promotion and recognition** of volunteering, four National conferences on volunteering (first one in 2001) provided a chance for volunteers, ordinary people active in various areas to have public and institutional recognition. The International Day of Volunteering (5th of December each year) is celebrated on a national, regional, local level. Besides this, awards for volunteering are provided at a national level through the Ministry of Family (MFVAIS) and National Foundation (NFDCS), and at a regional level through four regional volunteer centres. In order to continue with improvements regarding volunteerism, NGOs undertake research projects, develop manuals and various educational publications and provide education on management of volunteers etc.

i Support for civil society and volunteering in Croatia – in a nutshell

- Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs (1998);
- The Council for the Development of Civil Society (2002): an advisory and expert body;
- National Strategy for Creation of Enabling Environment for Development of Civil Society (2006 -2011);
- Ministry of Family, Veterans’ affairs and Intergenerational solidarity: responsible for implementation of objectives in National Strategy;
- National Foundation for development of Civil Society (2004): funding, supporting civil society initiatives;
- Network of Volunteer centres (2005);
- Law on volunteering (2007): rights, responsibilities, penalties;
- National Council for Development of Volunteerism (2007);
- Code of Ethics (2008): values, principles, standards;
- + 4 conferences, awards and volunteers celebrations.

There are however some **challenges ahead and open questions**. According to Ms. Kaselj, the biggest challenge is the professionalism and sustainability of human resources. Civil society in Croatia faced several critical phases when inadequate persons were appointed to key positions in governmental institutions like the Office for NGOs. Such situations created a difficult time for the civil society organisations when many of us thought civil society was going backwards.

The second challenge is to eliminate the attempts to politically influence certain civil society organisations. This is especially visible in some regions setting mainly invisible obstacles for certain NGOs (mainly human rights and peace building) in their daily work.

Another big challenge is the sustainability of the civil society initiatives and recognition for its efforts coming from the society. The measuring of the economic value of volunteering may bring new recognition for NGOs and respect their efforts in providing efficient and economic services to citizens. There is still a large dependence of civil society organisations on international sources of funding, which make them weak in the sense of securing a continuation of NGOs services.

The greatest challenge is the awareness that peace building is a constant process, which does not finish when the war or conflict is over. Today there is a further need to work on the prevention of violence as such, on conflict resolution, mediation and the process must be continued. However, many people ask in Croatia why they need peace building when war is over. For them, the absence of war is considered equal to peace. This is also due to the fact that the situation is different in different parts of Croatia. Some regions have never experienced serious ethnic problems while other areas have continuous problems with ethnic animosity, separation and prejudices. Dealing with the past is still not welcomed by public or political institutions. However, this is extremely important in order to build a society that is resistant for future conflicts based on experience of past traumas. According to Ms Kaselj, it is thanks to the persistence and commitment of several human rights and peace NGOs that the peace building process is continued. The latest initiative is to involve the governments of Croatia, BH and Serbia in the establishment of a regional committee for establishing truth about the war crimes in ex-Yugoslav countries.

3) How the governments can stimulate the peace building through targeted funding – a case of Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its Neighbourhood Programme

This presentation described a different case, where a foreign government becomes involved in the peace building process in a foreign conflict region. The study case was presented by Ms. Alma Masic from the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Ms Masic underlined that it is a part of Danish tradition and the culture of NGOs to focus on volunteers and their valuable contribution in all activities and their active participation in all spheres of social life. The Danish Ministry believed that the volunteers and activists in many cases are a major driving force for spreading a positive spirit of tolerance, respect for others and differences and valuing everybody's culture, national and religious background. This concept was applied in SEE region and had proved to be very successful.

In 1999, the Danish government established the FRESTA, which was a department under the supervision of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. FRESTA is a Danish abbreviation for peace and stability. The FRESTA initiatives provides support to democratic institutions and structures, endeavours to strengthen civil society, works specifically in support of concrete reconciliation activities, and promotes cross-border activities. During the last few years, special emphasis has been given to SEE, but the FRESTA concept/initiative is in principle global.

The SEE FRESTA programme is a specific activity under the general FRESTA programme. In 1999 the FRESTA secretariat invited Danish partners with experience in development and democratisation to take part in developing a civil society programme for SEE. Four components were identified as crucial for the development of democracy, peace and stability: Human Rights, Refugees, Youth and Media. The Danish partners that are involved in the programme are the Danish Association for International Co-operation, the Danish Refugee Council, the Danish Institute for Human Rights, the Baltic Media Centre, the Danish Youth Council and the Danish School of Journalism. They participated in establishing a coherent regional programme for SEE.

In December 1999, following a series of fact-finding missions to the region, a pilot project was initiated with partners from South East Europe. Since then the programme has been developed into an on-going activity with settled structures and strategies. Under the SEE FRESTA programme support is given to collaborative regional civil society efforts within the four, before mentioned focus areas. Through the cross-border civil society networking the aim is to promote conflict prevention and democratic development in SEE. The programme brings together civil society organisations and supports networking between them, media as well as human rights activists, youth and refugees from SEE with the aim of creating innovative constellations of cross-boundary collaboration. Regional networks have been established in order to develop joint and crosscutting activities that can promote democracy and peaceful coexistence.

Since January 1st, 2004 the East Development Department and the FRESTA department under the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs have merged into one department called the office for **the Neighbourhood Programme**. At the same time, all responsibilities have shifted to the region and the people from the region became responsible for designing and overall managing of the programme.

Specifically, the evaluation team found the FRESTA SEE Programme to be 'exceptional and strong' in the following areas:

- Involving and engaging local people in the conceptualisation, design, planning and ongoing implementation of the programmatic activities;
- Recognising local skills, talent, experience and knowledge as the essential bases of the programme;
- Matching the structural design of the programme (Networks and Cross-Cutting Initiatives to link people across dividing boundaries) with its purpose (peace and stability);
- Supporting a large number of interesting and valuable activities across the region;
- Providing important support without creating substantial financial dependency;
- Creating and supporting structures for broad collaboration on shared concerns across lines of division, some of which until recently represented lines of warfare;
- Significantly increasing the number of individuals who meet and co-operate across boundaries;
- Creating structures and enthusiasm for even greater achievements in coming years.

All these facts proved that peace and stability as an overall goal had been accomplished through concrete activities on the ground in SEE region. Therefore they have contributed towards overcoming prejudices and brought people together who have worked on the common issues relevant for every country in the region (social issues, education, human rights, free media) and in this way had created a solid ground for opening up dialogue on sensitive topics such as facing the past, trust and confidence building. This is needed to jointly overcome difficult issues from the past and together to look to a brighter future.

Volunteers and activists of the civil society had a very big role in this process and SEE Programme. Among others, that was one of the reasons for the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs to provide additional funds for the RIVERSEE project. This was described in more detail in the chapter presenting the good practice projects. Having positive experience with volunteer engagement in numerous SEEYN's work camps and believing in the institution of volunteerism, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs supported the RIVERSEE programme hoping to see expansion and further development of the volunteerism tradition in this region.

i THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PROGRAMME

The Neighbourhood Programme is Denmark's bilateral development programme for the EU's neighbouring countries to the east and southeast. The overall objective of the Neighbourhood Programme is to promote open and democratic societies founded on the rule of law and based on a stable political and economic development. The Neighbourhood Programme contributes to avoiding the creation of new dividing lines in Europe between the EU and its neighbours. Thus, the programme supports Denmark's foreign policy priority of promoting a peaceful and stable Europe in progress and prosperity.

A total of DKK 742 mill. has been allocated to the programme for the period 2004-2007. The Neighbourhood Programme will be continued in a second phase from 2008-2012 with a total of DKK 1 billion.

Under the Neighbourhood Programme, 14 major programmes supporting civil society as well as the private and public sectors are being implemented. Geographically, the Neighbourhood Programme encompasses Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Kosovo, FYR of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Russia, Serbia, Turkey, and Ukraine. After the accession of Bulgaria and Romania into the EU the 1 January 2007 the support to these countries are being phased out.

While the overall objective of the Neighbourhood Programme is to promote democratisation in the countries, the aid is being implemented within specific focus areas. These are, for example, the strengthening of human rights for exposed groups such as refugees and minorities; combating illegal migration; reform and capacity development of the public sector; civil society development; business sector programmes; and the promotion of free and independent media.

The Neighbourhood Programme is not open to applications for assistance to individual projects. This is a consequence of the Danish experience with development aid, which shows that aid is more effective when the interventions are provided through larger programmes based on the development plans of the countries themselves. The Neighbourhood Programme is implemented according to Danida's Aid Management Guidelines.

Denmark's bilateral Neighbourhood Programme should not be mistaken for the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) or the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), which is the financial instrument for the ENP. The ENPI, which entered into force in January 2007, replaces (together with the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA)) the previous instruments PHARE, CARDS, MEDA, and TACIS. The objective of both the Danish Programme and European Instrument is to promote the democratic development of EU's neighbouring countries, but they are different in size and do not cover exactly the same countries.

Source: <http://www.um.dk/en/menu/DevelopmentPolicy/DanishDevelopmentPolicyCountries/The-NeighbourhoodProgramme>

In conclusion, Ms Masic stressed that the value of the programme went beyond the funding provided to it and as such sent a message of connectedness beyond the region that has social and political importance. This includes the engagement in the region as a whole, articulation of long-term goals and a commitment to working towards these with regional bodies and regular interaction between people from the region and Denmark.

The Danish programme not only shows the positive role of the governments in stimulating an enabling environment for peace building volunteering projects, but it also shows that such programme can serve as an incentive for other organisations to invest in certain activities. Ms. Masic underlined that the Danish Ministry was proud to see that UNV, a respectful and powerful organisation in this area also showed confidence in local expertise by taking over the funding of the RIVERSEE project and putting SEEYN as its main coordinator, at the same time ensuring its further growth.

4) The role of UNV and UNDP in the region – the example of RIVERSEE Project

Stephanie Roels, the UNV Programme Officer in BH and Zelimir Mijic underlined that the RIVERSEE programme corresponded well with activities of the UN in the region and they underlined the role of the Danish Embassy and the Soros Foundation within.

i UNITED NATION VOLUNTEERS (UNV)

UNV is the UN's focal point for promoting and harnessing volunteerism for effective development. UNV is a strategic source of knowledge and advice about the role and contribution of volunteerism and the benefits of civic engagement in development programmes. UNV is dedicated to using Volunteerism for Development (V4D) to make distinctive contributions to the effectiveness of development. The UN General Assembly created UNV in 1971 at the request of UN member countries in order to be a development partner for the UN system. It is entrusted with raising awareness of volunteerism and its contribution to development, providing technical assistance to develop volunteerism, and mobilising volunteers nationally and internationally. Guided by the principle of Volunteerism For Development (V4D), the UNV programme advocates the benefits of civic engagement, integrates volunteerism into development programmes, and mobilises thousands of volunteers every year in pursuit of distinctive contributions to development effectiveness. UNV directly mobilises more than 7,500 UNV volunteers every year nationally and internationally. More than 75% of UNV volunteers come from developing countries, and more than 40% volunteer within their own countries. UNV is based in Bonn, Germany, and is active in more than 140 countries. It is represented worldwide through the offices of the UNDP. Currently, 3 national and 3 international UNVs are serving in BH [<http://www.unv.org>].

Source: www.unv.org

According to Ms Roels, the RIVERSEE programme succeeded in bringing together different donors and key international actors in the field of volunteerism and local NGO development. It showed that regional programming is possible and that donors and organisations can fruitfully collaborate.

Among its successes, the RIVERSEE programme can also list that:

- 68 volunteer placements took place, resulting in 351 volunteer work months;
- About 1,000 people registered their interest in volunteering by completing an online application;
- And more than 100 CSOs/ViOs registered their interest in hosting a volunteer.

This indicates that there is a stronger than expected interest in volunteering in the region.

Ms Roels said that RIVERSEE had clearly set a milestone in regional programming and how volunteering contributes to peace building and conflict resolution in the Balkans. But more can be done – UNV would like to ensure that many more young people participate in these and similar exchanges. UNV's aim in BH is therefore to work hard to bring the spirit of volunteering to many young people in Europe.

Moreover, in 2008, UNV BH works on developing its long-term programme. Its overall aim is to widen national recognition of the value of volunteerism for greater social inclusion and enhanced human development in BH. This means that UNV focuses on the development of good policies that help and support volunteers and volunteer involving organisations in the country. It also continues to mobilise volunteers and UNV specialists. The International Year of Volunteerism+10 in 2011 will be very central to the programme.

5) The role of donors in the conflict areas – Open Society Fund Bosnia & Herzegovina and the EAST-EAST Programme

Denis Imamovic from the East-East Programme of the Open Society Fund (OSF) BH underlined the highly difficult and often hostile social and political environment that civil society organisations and especially donors must work under in BH.

The Open Society Institute

It is a private operating and grant making foundation established by George Soros, which aims to shape public policy to promote democratic governance, human rights, and economic, legal, and social reform. On a local level, OSI implements a range of initiatives to support the rule of law, education, public health, and independent media. At the same time, OSI works to build alliances across borders and continents on issues such as combating corruption and rights abuses.

Soros foundations are autonomous institutions established in particular countries or regions to initiate and support open society activities. The priorities and specific activities of each Soros foundation are determined by a local board of directors and staff in consultation with George Soros and OSI boards and advisors. In addition to support from the OSI, many of the foundations receive funding from other sources. Soros foundations consist currently of national foundations in 29 countries, foundations in Kosovo and Montenegro, and two regional foundations, the OSI for Southern Africa (OSISA) and the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA).

Source: <http://www.soros.org/about>

Bosnia's social and political context and the work of donors

Mr Imamovic said that, BH society is deeply scarred by the atrocities of the recent war, some as extreme as genocide. The Dayton Peace Agreement provided BH with both a resolution to end the war and a constitutional framework. According to this framework, BH is comprised of two loosely knit entities, the Federation of BH and Republic of Srpska, with complicated institutional structure and decision-making arrangements.

Consequences of the war along with the constellation of power embedded in the constitution have effectively divided the country along ethnic lines. Despite huge international aid efforts that have probably made BH the largest laboratory for social engineering in the world, it still confronts numerous threats in its transition to functional democracy. The Dayton agreement is in itself divisive – it defines the country as segregationist, in that it does not affirm citizenship but rather membership to one of the three major ethnic groups, and on the other hand, it commits to international human rights standards and non-discrimination. The power-sharing mechanisms built into the constitution have put in place a system in which all decisions and important positions have to be decided and allocated equally between the three constituent peoples.

Since people are forced to identify themselves with one of the three ethnic groups in order to be politically represented, political parties in BH cultivate popular support solely on ethnic sentiments. By permanent reproduction of ethnic confrontation and political discourse about “them” and “us”, political elites deliberately and efficiently channel dissatisfaction of citizens toward other ethnic groups. They purposefully make ethnicity the main political cleavage in the country while almost completely blurring social reality. In such an atmosphere informal decision-making structures, which fall outside the processes and methods of democratic verification and transparency, are flourishing. Undermining and eroding institutions and democratic procedures are a perfect match for widespread corruption and rent-seeking.

Around half of BH citizens are eager to collaborate with political elites either out of conviction or for personal gain. For others, the consistent pressure and reduction of political space to ethnic issues render political participation pointless. Therefore, instead of assuming an active role in society, these citizens instinctively move out of the social mainstream in a quest for personal refuge. Media are rather polarised and act more in the interests of the powerful elite and related businesses than of public good and citizens. Instead of playing a watchdog role, journalists struggle to report what they believe the public good is, conflating public interest with ethnic interest in the process. In this way they create ethnically separated public spheres and consequently public opinion.

Thus, structural constraints – the constitutional and institutional set-up of BH along with the high level of ethnic division and distrust, political irresponsibility and lack of civic engagement, mutually reinforcing each other are the main and far-reaching obstacles to open society in BH. The signing of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) with the EU on June 16, 2008 marked a positive step for BH's future development. Nevertheless, membership of the EU remains a long way off.

Donors role in creating an enabling political and social environment

According to Mr Imamovic, donors can, however, play a positive role in conflict areas as e.g. BH. The Soros Fund, being an internationally recognised donor, has an opportunity to influence both the donor community agenda and to recognise and encourage indigenous civic initiatives. There has been a significant portion of the Foundation work that was related to strengthening government/institutional capacities like the education of judges and prosecutors, legislative advocacy on juvenile justice and anti-corruption policies, support to institutions within education system for a reform, etc.

The Foundation also provides a space for alternative views on BH outside the mainstream political agenda and strives to maintain substantiated debates over issues of relevance for BH. To this end OSF continually supports the voice of civil society using different methods -public campaigns, advocacy actions or monitoring reports to shift the focus of the public from ethnic antagonisms to democracy development issues. All this can lead in the long-term perspective to an enabling environment and legal framework for volunteering.

The goal and objectives of the East-East Programme

Soros Foundation is the biggest donor in the region over the last few years. As Mr Imamovic stated, through its programmes OSF BH fosters better understanding of core democratic values, advocates for transparent and accountable institutions, promotes inclusion of marginalised groups and minorities and helps to improve public policies.

The overall goal of OSF BH East-East programme is to support efforts in other foundation programmes through networking activities that link organisations from BH and the wider region together to exchange experiences, best practices, and lessons learned.

The following specific objectives are expected to be achieved with the support of the East-East Programme:

- Advocate for a country-wide changes in education that would lead to abandoning of discrimination practices and reaching consensus on shared set of values in education, in order to support the process of social reconstruction in BH;
- Contribute to a more transparent and accountable government and to the building of the effective legal system based upon international human rights standards that is capable of effective protection of human rights and anti-discrimination in particular;
- Support decentralisation in BH through assisting local government in improving their leadership and management capacities, thus bringing policy-making closer to citizens and improving its inclusiveness;
- Further strengthen the capacity of Roma NGOs to enable them to represent and advocate for Roma rights;
- Build capacity for coordinated action of pro-democracy and good governance NGOs, different civic groups and individuals aimed at advancing public accountability.

The collaboration between different stakeholders – conclusions

During the discussion, the representatives of the different donor programmes said that the biggest challenge was to make the local organisations connect and cooperate with one another to make them more sustainable in their efforts. It was a very difficult task as often, instead of working together, local organisations compete with one another. Sometimes a feeling amongst donors was that too much money is spent for too little result.

Therefore, the investment should be more in long-term programmes rather than in one-off projects; there must be more coordination, cooperation between different stakeholders.

Eventually, all speakers underlined that civil society organisations should do much more to campaign together for volunteering. In BH for example 70 % of national budget is spent on administration. NGOs should do much more to convince the authorities to invest in them and, spend less on administration and more on training local leaders.

The new trend shows that traditional donors are pulling out and the EU is taking over the role of main funders in the Balkans.

European Union and its neighbours

The EU develops its foreign policy towards both neighbouring as well as geographically less or more distant countries. The EU's objective is to strengthen cooperation and promote peace, stability and prosperity.

In 2004 the so-called EU Neighbourhood Policy was developed. This policy applies to the EU's immediate neighbours – Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine. Although Russia is also neighbouring with the EU, the relations with the Russian Federation are instead developed through a Strategic Partnership.

Further, within the European continent, the EU considers a priority of its foreign policy to promote peace, stability and prosperity in the recently war torn SEE countries of Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, BH, the FYR of Macedonia and Albania.

On the 1st February 2005, Stabilisation and Association Agreements (SAA), governing relations between EU and Western Balkans, entered into force. The SAA represents a part of the Stabilisation and Association Process, which is the EU's overall policy framework for the Western Balkan countries. The SAA are in principle very similar to the Europe Agreements signed in 1990s with the Central and Eastern European countries, which were joining EU since 2004.

Croatia, as of June 2004, as well as FYR of Macedonia, as of December 2005, has an official status of candidate countries for EU membership. (The third EU candidate country is Turkey.) The other countries of the region – Albania, BH, Kosovo under UN Security Council Resolution 1244, Montenegro and Serbia – has an official status of potential candidate countries.

Source::

Activities of the European Union – External Relations, 2008. Available at: http://europa.eu/pol/ext/index_en.htm [3/11/2008].

EU-Western Balkans relations, 2008. Available at: <http://www.euractiv.com/en/enlargement/ eu-western-balkans-relations/article-129607> [3/11/2008].

VII. THE CONTRIBUTION OF VOLUNTEERING TO PEACE BUILDING AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The good practices workshops and the panel session have shown that contributions that volunteers and volunteering make to peace building and conflict resolution are manifold. In the conflict regions, voluntary projects and activities affect the lives of young people in different ways. They especially affect those who are most vulnerable, whether they are carriers or targets of projects.

The findings of the V::I::P seminar reveal that:

➔ Volunteering empowers young people

Through volunteering young people gain education, knowledge, skills and competences which they can use for the benefit of their communities and later in their lives. Volunteering gives young people a new positive energy to act.

In the Northern Irish project of Corrymela Community, this educational process was achieved by the group exploring how conflict presents itself within their society. Young people investigated how values and beliefs shape internal conflict and dilemmas within the individual. In addition they explored inter-conflict and how this manifests itself within the family, the community or society. This involved exploration of sectarianism, racism, xenophobia, homophobia, gender and socio-economic issues. The group shared learning with their own communities.

The participants of the youth exchange Youth Energy for Peace 2007 – Turn Words into Action underlined that the project gave them new energy to continue with or to create other volunteer peace projects, back in their countries.

➔ Volunteering reconnects young people with their communities

Through common voluntary engagement, young people re-establish links with their communities, overcome the 'we-they' separation and create opportunities for shared thinking about future community development.

In the Croatian project Volunteers in Building Peace and Community, these were young people who together with their colleagues, families, neighbours and inhabitants of the same villages actively planned and implemented project activities. The Slovenian project Developing Voluntary Work of children and Youth on Territories in Western Balkans as Means of Civic Education and Preparation for Citizenship in Democratic Society enables young volunteers to be active in their own recovery and the recovery of their community.

➔ Volunteering increases young peoples' tolerance and intercultural skills, as well as reducing racism and prejudice

In the Macedonian Time Out Magazine project, active involvement of young people in the activities (through their contribution) built their personal capacities. Young people of Macedonian and Albanian nationality living in separate parts of the city, learning in separate schools and spending their free time separately, could meet each other, to learn more about each other and to spend more time together. This was an excellent way to increase tolerance between young people and to resolve their conflicts.

'Once you realise a project in collaboration with someone you can't look at him as an enemy anymore...'

A project participant quoted in the Final Report 'Volunteers in Building Peace and Community III', p. 60.

➔ Volunteering contributes to intercultural and inter-religious dialogue

In the project Divided God, volunteers came from different cultures, regions and religions and made their beliefs and convictions understandable for others, especially the most vulnerable young people. Volunteers on the videos explained that their beliefs are based not on extremism and 'blind faith' but on tolerant and democratic values, which are imperative for intercultural dialogue. Through the project they opened the minds of the audience and also their own.

In other project, RIVERSEE, evaluation and research of the project showed that ethnic mistrust was significantly reduced among those who participated in the programme. Volunteering also had an impact on local communities/projects/organisations where volunteers were engaged. It also had impact on peers and families of volunteers.

➔ Volunteers provide indispensable human resources for the peace projects

Workers in voluntary organisations depend upon the contribution of volunteers.

In Finnish Peace School project, the input of the volunteer trainers is key for the school activities and to find new methods of teaching. The concept of peace school also requires that in every workshop there are two different trainers with different educational backgrounds that give the opportunity of an interesting cultural exchange between the participants.

In the case of the Croatian project of the Centre for Peace, Non Violence and Human Right, 8 employees and about 130 volunteers have implemented it. Without the voluntary effort of local inhabitants, the project would not be possible. The whole idea was to identify, initiate and encourage people to volunteer for peace building by empowering them with a new prospective, knowledge and skills for participating in the process of community revival and sustainable peace.

➔ Volunteering can enhance the employability of young people

The main source of frustration and extremism in the post-conflict regions is often caused by the difficult economic situation and unemployment of young people. As RIVERSEE project evaluation shows, volunteering can contribute to the enhanced employability of young people, provided that it responds to their needs and is structured in a way that enables them to acquire skills which are relevant to existing employment opportunities. Undoubtedly, RIVERSEE exchanges can be a tool for reaching particular social goals like pro-social values and approach desirable to employers.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of all seminar discussions and findings from good practices and panel sessions, it is possible to draw the following conclusions:

Community activities and reconciliation processes must be bottom-up

Core activities of projects must be planned with local people and must directly address the needs of the respective communities. This opens up communication and the ground for civic mobilisation. These processes of exchange shape communities. For example in the Croatian project the community activities were developed together with the local people on the basis of 'listening' and conversations through thousands of interviews conducted by project workers. Also, in SEEYN or the Northern Ireland projects, the volunteering projects implemented on the local level can be a way of influencing the regional peace building. Thus all activities in the recovering communities should be planned together with local inhabitants on the basis of their needs.

It is also important that this process involves local authorities and local media. With all communities' activities, community organisers should prioritise the development of connections with various stakeholders on planning and implementation of activities important for those local communities. Establishing and maintaining this contact, especially with local government, may be a long and in many cases demanding process, but indispensable to projects success. Local government is key to establishing infrastructure and local media in helping to support local efforts, informing people and creating a positive environment for change.

Recommendation:

- Undertake careful research before planning each project, listening to people's stories, needs and fears. Meet people on the ground, listen to them and adapt projects to their needs, also involving local authorities and the media.
- Governments and local authorities should ensure that the local NGOs and young people themselves take part in policy-formulation and policy-making. All stakeholders should facilitate involvement of young people at the local level in these processes, asking young people what it is that they want.

Peace building must be a holistic process

To reconcile communities, we need to educate children and youngsters. To educate young people we need their families and colleagues, we need to involve schools, teachers etc. as they are directly involved in the social education of young people. Schools have therefore an important role, as they are the first point of reference for young people in their peace education. As a second step they encourage the youngsters to become active. In that sense, volunteering should not only be seen as a "fire-fighter" activity to find solutions to conflicts. Volunteering provides young people with an opportunity to participate and actively engage in society. This changes a community's mindset but for this change to occur reinforced work with teachers and parents is needed.

Recommendation:

- When designing and supporting projects – remember the importance of involving and educating young people together with their families, colleagues and schools.

Societal transformation and personal transformation go hand in hand

To empower communities is to empower individuals. Through community activities people can gain new knowledge, breaking down their stereotypes and prejudices, and adopt new attitudes and perspectives. The most important goal of such projects is therefore to empower the local inhabitants so they can take over responsibility for their community. The active participation of children and young people in voluntary work in post-conflict regions provides not only a chance for them to take responsibility for their own community, but also to gain knowledge, experience and skills which can help transform both their communities and their personal lives. Voluntary activities should also take place in schools and involve all community organisations and structures and focus on early learning. Finally, active participation should be combined with personal reflections (e.g. meetings with mentors, discussion spaces, etc.).

Recommendation:

- There should be better links between formal, non-formal and informal learning – it seems important to introduce voluntary activities into school curricula.
- All stakeholders should work towards recognition of volunteering outcomes, through assessment, validation and accreditation of the knowledge, skills and competences learned through volunteering.

Creating a safe environment can be very important for change

The success of many projects was that young people could see their national or individual problems through the eyes of others, giving them more objectivity and perspective. This can be achieved in the other countries or locally through mobility measures, creation of meeting spaces and by using creative methods (such as forum theatre, etc).

For example, the Northern Irish programme and the RIVERSEE programme in the Balkans also work with the tool of "Changing the perspectives": they bring outsiders into the conflict region to share their views and bring fresh and unbiased impressions and possibly even solutions. The RIVERSEE programme proved that bringing young people from neighbouring countries to work in endangered communities contributes to breaking down the cultural and ethnical prejudices. The Palestine experience showed that where volunteers live with conflict in their day to day life, hearing the same stories from media, parents and politicians, they are overwhelmed and cannot move on.

Through the shared experience of voluntary activity, young people are empowered to re-evaluate their perceptions of issues confronting their own community, transferring that learning back into both the community and their own lives.

Recommendation:

- Facilitate, support and develop further and provide sustainable funding for volunteers' mobility projects. These can be tools such as volunteers' exchanges, visits, work camps, intergenerational programmes etc.

Donors have an important role in creating an enabling environment for change

Donors acting in the conflict areas play a very important role. Not only do they provide funding, but they should also encourage indigenous civic initiatives. They are an important part of the democratisation and legitimisation process in the post-conflict areas and they should support civil society in their reconciliation activities. Moreover, donors' investment should be more in long-term programmes rather than in stand-alone projects; there must be more coordination, cooperation between different stakeholders.

Recommendation:

Donors should:

- Adapt funding to the local needs;
- Support peace building efforts and long-term projects;
- Encourage networking between civil society organisations;
- See peace building both as a process of reconciliation within local communities and as an opportunity to influence and democratise policy processes.

For successful peace building processes it is crucial to recruit, train and support multipliers and community leaders

In peace building and conflict resolution, community organisers play a crucial role – they act as mediators, they connect community with numerous civil society organisations, schools, local government institutions and donors. They also play a role in the process of needs assessment, planning and conducting project activities. Volunteers provide the indispensable human resources for peace projects and therefore are the base component of this project. Having the right people in the right place and at the right moment can start a process that might not only expand to other young people but also will become sustainable. For example the Croatian project has been implemented by 8 employees and about 130 volunteers, which further trained local people.

Many projects, thus, focus on building longer-term capacities through role models/ multipliers. In Israel-Palestine as well as Northern Irish project, young people from both sides came together outside their communities or countries to discuss the conflict and to be trained as role models. This empowered them to deliver programmes and organise projects in their own communities. Those youngsters went back home to organise similar activities first with their friends, their families, which in a long-term can give a snowball effect. One good idea about how to train multipliers comes from Slovenian and Croatian projects: there were special educational workshops for mentors and volunteers. They aimed to educate those people how to multiply the effect of the projects and to invest in their education.

Recommendation:

- Support and invest in community leaders and multipliers. Local volunteers make their contribution freely, but they need training to better address the community's needs. They can be helpful in translating, adapting and delivering local policy goals and they are key to maintaining the high quality of services.

Peace building is a long process, which does not happen 'over night'

One has to bear in mind that conflicts are not solved over night – especially in deeply divided societies. The peace building is a painstakingly slow process and cannot be rushed. It is important to understand that it takes longer than a generation for society to move on. The change in people's behaviour does not happen automatically. However, the skills and knowledge that people gain through such projects can be used for various aspects of their lives and for the future development of the community. The most important thing is to seed new ideas in young people, which can later bear fruit.

The RIVERSEE exchanges' evaluation results have shown that if voluntary activity is to produce real changes in people, it can only do so by providing impulses and experiences on a longer-term path of personal development. Real personal development in the sense of tolerance and pro-social values/behaviour will certainly not come overnight and probably requires some setbacks.

Recommendation:

- Design long-term and sustainable projects for local voluntary engagement. Invest in infrastructure, which will sustain the peace-building process.

Networking is key to the sustainability of volunteer efforts

The biggest challenge is to enable local organisations to connect and cooperate with one another to make their efforts more sustainable. It is often a difficult task as, instead of working together local organisations often compete with one another. NGOs should do much more to campaign and advocate together for volunteering. The role of civil society organisations as part of the third sector is also to liaise with the authorities and to influence their decision-making process, campaigning and advocating for volunteering. Networking provides channels for promoting youth projects and their results between stakeholders, as well as making organisations stronger and providing better possibilities for funding and for accessing more expertise. The development of good working relationships between stakeholders is central to the process of community recovery and development.

Recommendation:

- Network, connect, integrate and join efforts with civil society organisations, local authorities and business. Widely disseminate the results of your projects.

Concrete and collective actions with a common purpose are the way to build trust and confidence

The projects proved the importance of involving young people from different ethnic and religious groups in common activities. This gives people a sense of common ownership of the community and responsibility for its future development. In this way young people learn how to be more active and responsible, how to take life into their own hands and how to play a part in changing the world.

Recommendation:

- Design hands-on activities which can be undertaken together by local people from different societal groups.

Sustainability of effort can only be achieved if there is collaboration between all the sectors and stakeholders involved:

Donors – because they have the money; **Volunteer organisations** – because they have the human resources to invent and implement projects; **Networks** – as they disseminate and valorise the results of projects; **Authorities at different levels** – because they can model longer-term programmes and policy priorities (and also sometimes have money) and can serve as a convener for networking; and other parts of society such as the **business** sector and **media** which are essential for creating an enabling environment for volunteering to flourish.

Volunteering infrastructure and legal frameworks are key to sustainable change

People often do things by using their own initiative – they see a problem in their community and then go ahead to find a solution. This is the essence and heart of volunteering. But how often do people want to get involved without knowing where to go – or even to develop a project without necessarily knowing how to organise it and where to find the necessary resources. A volunteering infrastructure which brings together and supports volunteer organisations at a local level is crucial as a means of involving people, making projects sustainable and supporting communities in their recovery. This volunteering infrastructure is also needed to properly train and prepare volunteers to work in difficult conflict situations.

A legal framework for volunteering also helps to increase recognition of its role in and contribution to society and to boost its potential. Such initiatives should be developed in a participative way, involving civil society organisations and responding to local needs. Some of the countries of Ex-Yugoslavia and many of the Central and Eastern new Members of the EU have recently worked on volunteering laws to raise recognition in society that volunteering is a pillar of participation in society and to get away from the reputation of volunteering as “working for nothing”. This new legal status seems to indeed have had a positive effect on the numbers of people getting involved. But on the other hand it would be detrimental to say that the initiative needs to come from the top-down, from the public sector regulating volunteering. In the early stages of conflicts in society or in new-born democracies, it is very often precisely the independence of volunteering from any kind of relation to public sector / government and the absence of a “hidden political agenda” that makes it attractive to many citizens.

Participants of the seminar urge national governments and local authorities to:

- Build and support volunteering infrastructure! During the seminar participants realised that building an infrastructure was a key factor to its sustainability. In those communities where the volunteer or mediation centres or any other NGO have been established, there is still very vivid volunteer activity.
- Never allow volunteers to be used as cheap labour or to further some hidden political agenda. Volunteers should not replace services, which should be delivered by governments or local authorities.
- Recognise economic value of volunteering.
- Introduce peace education and civil responsibility education in schools (like the Peace schools) and emphasise volunteering as an element of active citizenship.
- Make the national policies both youth- and volunteer-friendly. Create special policies, which really target young people's needs. In every country there should be a legal framework for volunteering.
- Create a special governmental office for NGOs like the one in Croatia.



‘Volunteers are not there to make what governments are not able to do. They are there to add value to communities’ life.’

Conference participant

Also participants urge the European Union to:

- Improve EVS and support other forms of volunteering so that they can serve the purpose of peace building projects.
- Focus on quality, not only on statistics – important is not only how many young people volunteer, but also the impact of their service on themselves and society.
- Facilitate visa processes for young volunteers.
- Invest in long-term programmes, in which smaller projects could be included.
- Ensure and oblige national governments to consult and support civil society organisations.
- Give more recognition to volunteer work through, for example, adopting a *European Year of Volunteering 2011*.

Eventually, all the participants agreed that:

Every small step counts and every single volunteer effort is valuable.

At its heart voluntary effort is about working together with a common purpose for a better future. In this sense volunteers are the very important persons – the “VIPs” – of society, because they engage, they have energy and passion to do things, they implement creative solutions and they ensure local ownership of projects and are not driven by a political agenda.

Also, civil society organisations and networks like CEV are “VIPs” for building and facilitating active participation and engagement of young people in their local communities. Even small projects, which may not seem to have a big impact on the conflict itself, are important. They empower young people as active players in the recovery of their communities and enable them to carry on peace work in their countries.

APPENDIX I: EU FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR VOLUNTEERING PEACE BUILDING PROJECTS

This chapter gives a short overview of the EU funding activities and opportunities especially important for volunteering peace building projects. Especially relevant are four programmes:

1) Youth in Action

Youth in Action Programme provides financial support for a variety of youth projects as well as opportunities to develop new partnerships across Europe and beyond, to promote mobility and active participation in the construction of Europe and to promote non-formal education and offers opportunities to young people, aged between 13 and 30 years.



The principal aims are promoting young people's active citizenship in general and European citizenship in particular; developing solidarity and promoting tolerance among young people in order to foster social cohesion; fostering mutual understanding between young people in different countries; contributing to develop the quality of support systems for youth activities and the capabilities of civil society organisations in the youth field and promoting European cooperation in the youth field.

The participation is open to young people aged between 13 and 30 (individuals or groups), youth organisations or associations, youth workers and youth leaders, public authorities, other NGOs, other institutions and individuals working in the field of youth and non-formal education. The budget for the period of 2007 – 2013 is 885 million €.

Geographically, the Youth in Action Programme covers: 31 Programme Countries (27 EU Member States + Turkey, Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein), 22 Neighbouring Partner Countries (South East Europe, Eastern Europe, Caucasus, Mediterranean Partner Countries) and 111 other partner countries of the world (Asia, Latin America and ACP).

The Programme is structured as follows:

- **Action 1 – Youth for Europe** (aims to increase mobility of young people by supporting Youth Exchanges; to develop their citizenship and mutual understanding by supporting Youth initiatives, as well as projects and activities concerning their participation in democratic life)
- **Action 2 – European Voluntary Service** (supports transnational voluntary service of young people, both within and outside the European Union)
- **Action 3 – Youth in the World** (promotes exchanges and cooperation in the field of youth and non-formal education with other regions of the world)
- **Action 4 – Youth Support Systems** (contributes to develop the quality of support structures, to support the role of those active in youth work and youth organisations)
- **Action 5 – Support for European cooperation in the Youth field** (encourages the exchange of good practice, cooperation and structured dialogue between administrations, policymakers and young people at all levels)

For further information about Youth in Action Programme, consult its website http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index_en.htm or contact youth@ec.europa.eu.

2) Europe for Citizens

The Europe for Citizens Programme has a number of key priorities such as encouraging citizens to become actively involved in the process of European integration, empowering them to develop a sense of European identity, sense of belonging, and enhancing tolerance and mutual understanding between Europeans.

This covers efforts in promoting participation and democracy at the EU level; the future of the Union and its basic values; intercultural dialogue; employment, social cohesion and sustainable development; and boosting awareness of the societal impact of EU policies. In addition to these, the Programme sets short-term annual priorities. In 2008, the Programme focused on intercultural dialogue, women's participation in political life, new institutional developments, sport for active citizenship and social inclusion. Year 2009 should be devoted to creativity and innovation.



The participation in this Programme is limited to European citizens, conditionally the EFTA States that are party to the EEA Agreement, the candidate countries benefiting from a pre-accession strategy and countries of the western Balkans. The programme is open to all non-profit NGOs and other civil society organisations, local authorities, think-tanks, trade unions, educational institutions, volunteer networks, sports bodies, etc. involved in or promoting active European citizenship. Volunteering is one of the horizontal features of the Programme.

The Programme is structured as follows:

- **Action 1 – Active citizens for Europe** (involves citizens directly)
- **Action 2 – Active civil society in Europe** (is targeted to Europe-wide civil society organisations, receiving either structural support on the basis of their work programme or support trans-national projects)
- **Action 3 – Together for Europe** (supports high visibility events, studies and information tools, addressing the widest possible audience across frontiers and making Europe more tangible for its citizens)
- **Action 4 – Active European Remembrance** (supports the preservation of the main sites and archives associated with the deportations and the commemoration of the victims of Nazism and Stalinism)

For further information about the Programme, the programme Guide, deadlines and application form, please consult the website <http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/>.

3) The Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)

The IPA came into force on 1 January 2007, bringing all pre-accession support into one single, focussed instrument. It replaced the 2000-06 financial instruments Phare, ISPA, SAPARD, the Turkish pre-accession instrument, and the financial instrument for the Western Balkans, CARDS.

The principal objective of the Pre-Accession Assistance Instrument is to deliver support to both candidate and potential candidate countries. The Programme includes Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244).

Each programme under IPA (and under the former pre-accession assistance) is made up of one or more projects, which are concrete actions of the European Union to assist candidate and potential candidate countries in their preparations for joining the European Union. There are hundreds of ongoing projects across all sectors, countries and regions. The EU regularly publishes invitations to tender and calls for proposals.

The IPA consists of the following five components:

- 1) **Transition Assistance and Institution Building** (open to all beneficiary countries)
- 2) **Cross-Border Co-operation** (with EU Member States and other countries eligible for IPA)
- 3) **Regional Development** (transport, environment and economic development)
- 4) **Human Resources Development** (strengthening human capital and combating exclusion)
- 5) **Rural Development**

For further information about the Programme, please consult the website http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/how-does-it-work/financialassistance/instrument-pre-accession_en.htm.

4) PEACE III

The PEACE III Programme is a Distinctive European Union Structural Funds Programme with an aim to reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society and promoting reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Regions of Ireland. It is designed to assist Northern Ireland and the Border Region and specifically to focus on reconciling communities and contributing towards a shared society. The Programme PEACE III carries forward key aspects of the previous Peace Programmes – (PEACE I and II) and will have a continued and renewed emphasis on reconciliation.

The eligible area for the PEACE III Programme 2007 – 2013 is Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland (the Border Region comprises counties Louth, Monaghan, Cavan, Leitrim, Sligo and Donegal).

The Programme is structured as follows. Priority 1.2 of the Peace III Programme is subdivided under 3 key headings with indicative funding:

- **Strand 1 – Addressing the Past in Public Memory**
- **Strand 2 – Promoting Participation and**
- **Strand 3 – Securing the Future**

The aim of this Programme is to provide advice, counselling and support services for victims, their relatives and those who care for them; to build the capacity of individuals to deal with the transition to peace and reconciliation and ensure victims and survivors are able to deal with the past.

For more information about the Programme, please consult Special EU Programmes Body Website at <http://www.seupb.eu/programmemes.htm> or contact info@seupb.eu. Application forms and detailed guidance notes are also available online at www.eugrants.org, www.borderaction.ie, www.nicrc.org.uk.

Other programmes that could be used to support the peace building projects are: Lifelong Learning Programme (LLL), European Social fund (ESF) and Europe Aid.

APPENDIX II: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

No	Surname	Name	Organisation	Country
1.	Antonopoulos	George	Conservation Volunteers Greece	Greece
2.	Cross	Ivan	Corrymeela Community	UK
3.	Cseke	Bianca	PATRIR	Romania
4.	Czerwińska	Kamila	CEV – the European Volunteer Centre	EU
5.	Dimitric	Aleksandar	Young Researches of Serbia	Serbia
6.	Đordjević	Igor	Centre for peace, non-violence and human rights	Croatia
7.	Ercebe	Can	Community Volunteers Foundation	Turkey
8.	Forges	Olivier	Pax Christi Flanders	Belgium
9.	Fridberg	Hans	Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Bosnia and Herzegovina
10.	Gavris	Mariana	NoVA – Centre per a la Innovación Social (EN.CPS)	Spain
11.	Golejska	Ana	Youth Initiatives – Skopje	FYR of Macedonia
12.	Gomez Gimenez	Gerardo	SEEYN	Bosnia and Herzegovina
13.	Gračanin	Eva	Slovenska filantropija (Slovene Philanthropy, Association for Promotion of Voluntary work)	Slovenia
14.	Held	Markus	CEV – the European Volunteer Centre	EU
15.	Huovila	Tiina	Kansalaisareena	Finland
16.	Huzejrovic	Vahida	OSMIJEH – Association for Psychosocial Help and Development of Voluntary Work	Bosnia and Herzegovina
17.	Imamovic	Denis	East East Programme in Soros Foundation, Sarajevo	Bosnia and Herzegovina
18.	Jakimovski	Angel	Inter-ethnic Project Kumanovo	FYR of Macedonia
19.	Kamenko	Jelena	Volunteer Centre Osijek	Croatia
20.	Kaselj	Branka	Council for Civil Society	Croatia
21.	Kollou	Elleni	Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council	Cyprus
22.	Kovacic	Domagoj	SEEYN	Bosnia and Herzegovina
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24.	Lucevic	Mirela	Education builds Bosnia-Herzegovina	Bosnia and Herzegovina
25.	Masic	Alma	Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Bosnia and Herzegovina
26.	Mesanovic	Emira	SEEYN	Bosnia and Herzegovina

27 .	Mijic	Zelimir	UNV	Bosnia and Herzegovina
28 .	Milic	Ksenija	Young Researches of Serbia	Serbia
29	Mitevska	Aleksandra	Inter-ethnic Project Kumanovo	FYR of Macedonia
30 .	Nagode	Nina	Slovenska filantropija (Slovene Philanthropy, Association for Promotion of Voluntary work)	Slovenia
31 .	Neziri	Bashkim	YC4CBC.Gjilan	Kosovo
32 .	Nicoli	Isabella	Youth Action for Peace – Yap Italy	Italy
33 .	Nizamic	Samir	SEEYN	Bosnia and Herzegovina
34 .	El Ktibi	Samir	SEEYN	Bosnia and Herzegovina
35 .	Nkurunziza	Salvator	United Nation Volunteers	UNV
36 .	Pejovski	Dimitar	Youth Initiatives – Skopje	FYR of Macedonia
37 .	Persusic	Olga	Local Democracy Agency – Subotica	Serbia
38 .	Quinn	Sinead	Volunteer Development Agency Northern Ireland	UK
39 .	Roels	Stephanie	UNV	Bosnia and Herzegovina
40 .	Salgado Silva	Cândida	CEV – the European Volunteer Centre	EU
41 .	Salihu	Besim	YC4CBC.Gjilan	Kosovo
42 .	Sou	Gemma	Youth Advocacy Team UNOY Peacebuilders	UK/ the Netherlands
43 .	Telalbasic	Zoran	Nansen Dialogue Center Sarajevo	Bosnia and Herzegovina
44 .	Tevis	Tory	Musicians without Borders, BH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
45 .	Van Laer	Emilie	SCIINT Service Civil International	Belgium

APPENDIX III: CONTACT LIST OF PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS AND SPEAKERS

1) Contact of partner organisations

Country	Organisation	Address	Telephone	Website
Belgium	CEV – European Volunteer Centre	Rue de la Science 10, 1000 Brussels	+32 2 511 75 01	http://www.cev.be/
	Service Civil International	St Jacobsmarkt 82, 2000 Antwerpen	+32 2 2265727	http://www.sciint.org/
	Pax Christi Flanders	Italiëlei 98a 2000 Antwerpen	+32 3 225 10 00	http://www.paxchristi.be/ website/wordpress/
Bosnia and Herzegovina	SEEYN – South East European Youth Network	Kemala Kapetovića 17, 71000, Sarajevo	+387 33 522 896	www.seeyn.org
	OSMIJEH – Association for Psychosocial Help and Development of Voluntary Work	Naselje Lamele, bb. 75320 Gracanica	+387 35 702 860	www.osmijeh.ba
	Nansen Dialogue Centre Sarajevo	Hakije Kulenovića 10 71000 Sarajevo	+387 33 556 846	http://www.ndcsarajevo.org/
	"Education builds Bosnia-Herzegovina"	Dobojska 4 71000 Sarajevo	+387 33 710580	www.ogbh.com.ba
	Musicians without Borders	Kemala Kapetovića 17, 71000, Sarajevo	+387 33 718 216	www.se-mbw.org
	Women to Women Sarajevo	Derebent 41, Sarajevo	+387 (0) 33 219640, +387 (0) 33 214 673	http://www.zenezenama.com.ba
Croatia	Centre for peace, non-violence and human rights	Trg Augusta Šenoje 1, Osijek	+385 (0)31 206 886	http://www.centar-za-mir.hr/
	Volunteer Centre Osijek	K. A. Stepinca 15 31000 Osijek	+385 31 211 306	www.osvolonteri.hr
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Kosovo	Youth Council 4 Cross Border Cooperation Gjilan			www.gpkt.org

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FYR of Macedonia	Youth Initiative	Majski Manifest 5, 1000 Skopje		
	Inter-ethnic Project Kumanovo	Done Bozinov 11/08 1300 Kumanovo	+389 31 437 970	http://www.ipk.org.mk/Home.html
The Netherlands	Youth Advocacy Team/UNOY Peacebuilders	Laan van Meerdevoort 70, 2517AN, The Hague	+31 70 364 7799	www.unoy.org
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Serbia	Young Researchers of Serbia	Bulevar umetnosti 27 11070 Novi Beograd	+381 11 (0) 311 66 63; 311 13 14	http://www.mis.org.yu
	Local Democracy Agency for Central and Southern Serbia	Obrenoviceva 28 18000 Nis	+381 18 523 853	http://www.ldacss.org/
Slovenia	Slovenska Filantropija	Poljanska cesta 121000 Ljubljana	+ 386 (0)1 430 12 88	www.filantropija.org
Turkey	Community Volunteers Foundation	Burhaniye Mah. Atilla Sok. 16 Beylerbeyi 34676 Istanbul	+90 216 321 89 88	http://www.tog.org.tr/index.asp
UK	Volunteer Development Agency Northern Ireland	129 Ormeau Road Belfast BT7 1SH	+44 28 9023 6100	www.volunteering-ni.org
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