



**ENCOURAGING DEMOCRATIC VALUES
AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP AMONG YOUTH**

2012/13

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>> ACTIVITIES >>

1. Educational and Skills Development Training

The educational and skills development module was held in Sarajevo between December 1 and December 8, 2012. The aim of this project phase was to introduce participants to fundamental democratic principles, values and cultural characteristics, and to develop skills needed for the active participation in society. Each day of the program was devoted to a specific topic:

1. Democracy

The first day of the program allowed participants to increase their awareness and basic knowledge related to the basic democratic concepts. Participants learned about the history of the development of democratic ideas, formal and legal foundations of democracy, democratic models, main components of effective democracy, democratic values, democratic political culture and political education.

2. Human rights

The second day was focused on human rights including the main human rights categories, basic documents on human rights, core principles of human rights and the instruments needed to exercise them. Special attention was devoted to the assessment and discussion about the state of human rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as dialogue and tolerance as behavioral characteristics that seem to be missing in BiH society.

3. Identity and nationalism

The third day dealt with basic concepts of identity and the influence of social factors, positive and negative aspects of collective identity, prejudice and discrimination based on identity. In the focus of discussions were questions of collective identity in BiH and nationalism. Critical reading and thinking were singled out as one of possible tools for overcoming nationalism.

4. Youth engagement and active citizenship

The fourth day focused on youth engagement and offered the participants insight into how active citizenship and volunteering can influence both individuals and communities. The speakers emphasized possibilities offered through civil society organizations, described ways of youth participation in decision-making processes in BiH, and presented an alternative to the current discourse in the form of civic disobedience and community organizing.

5. Communication skills

The first day of skills development workshops focused on various aspects of the communication process. The participants learned about active listening, assertive and nonverbal communication, public appearance, presentation skills etc., and also received individual feedback on their communication abilities. Part of the day was devoted to the topic of using social media as a tool for promotion of ideas and initiation of actions.

6. Leadership skills

The second skill building oriented day was devoted to the introduction of the concept of leadership, characteristics of leaders, leadership styles, defining participant's styles with personal feedback and review of leadership concept in BiH society. Special attention was

given to developing leadership skills related to time management and managing teams.

7. Research skills

The aim of the last program day was to prepare participants for the next phase of the project. They learned how the research process should be framed, how to develop a research synopsis, research methodology, data sources and what research techniques to use.

Humanity in Action BiH invited a total number of 17 lecturers/trainers and 7 panel participants, selected according to their expertise, recognition in BH society, openness and willingness for future cooperation with participants.



2. Individual Research

The second program phase started in December after the end of the education and skills development training, and ended on March 12, 2013.

Through individual research assignments and with the guidance of an assigned research mentor, the participants addressed issues pertaining to obstacles for the effective participation of youth in their respective communities and other problems and deficiencies in these communities that they would like to see resolved, or those pertaining to examples of discrimination and violation of human rights.

The participants had chosen research topics which delineate a wide spectrum of their interests. Some of them are the following:

- „Activism of Female Students at Traditionally ‘Male Faculties’ in Mostar and its Implications on Women’s Empowerment” (Tin Marković)
- „Perception of Safety among Citizens of Sarajevo Old Town Municipality” (Nađa Huković)

- „Transparency, Accountability and Legitimacy of the Zenica University Faculty of Law Student Association” (Zlatko Sofović)
- „The Reasons for the Lack of Activism and Passivity among Youth in East Ilidža Municipality” (Snježana Čeho)
- „Strategies and Articulation of Social Movements: Case Studies in the Sarajevo Canton” (Minel Abaz)

3. Project and Financial Management Training

The main goal of the third phase of the program was to provide participants with skills and basic knowledge in project and financial management in order for them to be able to plan, implement and report about their group civic campaigns. The second goal was to facilitate a process of planning the campaigns that were implemented solely by program participants from the beginning of April until the end of June 2013.

The four-day intensive training was organized in Fojnica, a small town in Central Bosnia. On the first day of the program participants presented their research findings and conclusions. Each participant had 5 minutes for the presentation, after which the group was given an opportunity to ask questions. Participants showed great interest in the research topics of their colleagues. They offered constructive criticism, suggestions for advancing conclusions, and they discussed how problems targeted by researches reflect on their everyday life.

The second day of the program was fully dedicated to the development of project and financial management skills. Participants were taught what projects are, about the project life cycle, how to translate an idea into a project, how to write project proposals, how to create a budget, how to monitor and evaluate projects and how to do narrative and financial reports. Special attention was given to the proposal writing part where participants learned how to determine the purpose and specific goals of the project, target group, activities and timeline for their implementation, expected results, and possible risks that could occur in the project implementation. Each of these learning segments was followed by practical work and assignments for participants. At the end of this day participants were divided into 3 groups which will act as project teams in the following period. Each group received guidelines on what is expected from them in the next phase of the program, and the keywords that should guide them in developing their project ideas.

On the third day, divided in groups, the program participants worked on writing their project proposals, planned project implementation, divided the work between themselves and developed budget proposals. After completing the proposal outlines the groups had to present them to HIA staff and a trainer. Their feedback served as a basis for improvement of the participants' ideas and as preparation for more effective implementation of project.

4. Civic Campaign Implementation

>> Group 1: “Right Choice, Right Student” had an aim of introducing new campaigning practices when electing the leadership of student associations at the University of Sarajevo. Participants of this group (Ilma Aljović, Nađa Huković, Milana Marinović, Tin Marković & Matej Vrebac) at the very beginning analyzed relevant legal acts and made a proposal on how and which newly envisioned practices should be incorporated in the work of student associations. In parallel they also made comparative analysis on student campaigning

practices in USA and UK. As a next step they started intensive promotional campaign and launched the survey among students of University of Sarajevo in order to get their feedback on current and proposed electoral regulations. 90 percent of questioned students thought that given proposal will animate students and help in electing student leadership in a more transparent way.

The group decided to implement the pilot project at the Faculty of Political Science in Sarajevo, aiming to include the proposed changes in their statute. They organized educational lectures about principles of running student associations, for students of this Faculty. During two days they also organized petition in order to gain student support and legitimacy for their activities.

At the end their proposal was included in the statute of student association of the Sarajevo Faculty of Political Sciences where they also organized a public panel to promote proposal to other student associations on the University. Proposal was sent to all student leaders that didn't attend the panel.

The project also received great support from the biggest and most read student portal Studomat. Based on published articles and WOM, this group got few inquiries for help in introducing and implementing proposal, including the one from the Dean and the Student Association of the Pharmaceutical and Medical Faculty in Travnik.

>> Group 2: "Mentor for a Better Future" had an aim to raise awareness about using the benefits of non-formal education and activism by youth in Tuzla, which is known for fewer opportunities for youth engagement. Members of this group (Jovana Kljajić, Esmā Osmanbegović, Denis Bartulović & Salem Suljić) divided the project in two phases.

The first phase of this program had an aim to connect students and professionals which share fields of interest through a mentorship program. 10 students and 5 professionals were paired and held their meetings at the time of their convenience. The students described these meetings as motivational, informative and inspiring. 50 percent of coupled participants continued their communication after the first meeting and some benefited directly from the information provided by mentors (received scholarships, got their first internship, got accepted for study trips etc).

In the second phase of the project, the team organized a panel discussion on the University of Tuzla about the need to involve non-formal education and activism in youth professional development. Around 20 students attended the panel where three panelists from different branches (formal education, non-formal education & activism) presented current state of formal education in Tuzla Canton and the need to tie it up and complement it with non-formal education and activist engagement of youth. Main ideas of this panel discussion were shared afterwards via e-mail with relevant stakeholders.

>> Group 3: "Action against Violence" had an aim to raise awareness about the problem of youth delinquency in Canton Sarajevo which had not been on the government's agenda since 2008 when several young people were shot by minors in public space in different Sarajevo municipalities.

As a part of the project, members of this group (Minel Abaz, Mubera Ademović, Merima Mahmić, Zlatko Sofović & Snježana Čeho) conducted research on the issue-related regulations and activities aimed at solving this problem in the Sarajevo Canton.

Since they discovered that the cantonal government didn't adopt any strategy or the action plan to fight this issue since 2008, group members sent request for immediate adoption of the strategy for solving the problem of youth delinquency and its prevention.

As a following step, group organized online and offline raising awareness campaigns. Offline campaign included petition signing through which over 500 signatures were

collected and handed to cantonal government; and a flash mob in the public surface which simulated violent behavior of minors. This campaign also included intensive communication with media with an aim to achieve wider public outreach. Project was promoted on several local TV stations (e.g. TV of Sarajevo Canton & TV Vogošća – smaller municipality of Sarajevo Canton), some radio stations (e.g. Radio Free Europe) and online portals (Studomat.ba, Depo portal, Infobar.com etc.).

As a result besides giving again visibility to this issue in public sphere, the project team was invited by the responsible committee of cantonal government (Coordinator from the Ministry of Internal Affairs) to present their requests and to stay involved in the process of developing this strategy. The above-mentioned activity will be implemented after the official end of the EDVACAY program.

5. Final event & screening of EDVACAY video

The final program meeting was structured out of two parts. In the first part, program participants spent a day evaluating all phases of the program with the special reflection on the project implementation phase, group dynamics, and lessons learned. With facilitation by HIA BiH Staff, the program participants developed their personal plans for the next 3 years. An important segment of it was discussing what role HIA BiH and its network could play in it. They also had a session about the main principles of networking and were encouraged to use different resources to fulfill their plans. In the second part of the final program phase, public event with EDVACAY promotional video screening was organized. The goal of this event was to demonstrate the ability of young people to bring change in their local communities. Besides video screening, coordinators of the implemented civic campaigns spoke about their experience in the program and shared their motivational thoughts with the present young people.

