



FACT SHEET

PRO-Future: Trust-Understanding-Responsibility for the Future

Project Snapshot

Total Funding: \$4,765,016*

Project Duration: September 2013-September 2017

Implementing Partner:

Catholic Relief Services, with core local partners:
Mozaik Foundation, Forum of Tuzla Citizens,
Helsinki Citizens Assembly, Caritas of Bishop
Conference and Inter-Religious Council BiH

*Includes 14% matching funds from Catholic Relief Services

The Challenge

More than 20 years after the war, deep ethnic divisions continue to paralyze the healing process and prevent the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) from realizing their country's potential as a member of the EU. Conflicting historical and political narratives in which citizens blame each other for the war define the perceptions and attitudes of people at every age and level of society. As a result, achieving societal cohesion, social well-being and economic prosperity is arduous, at best. BiH society needs to restore trust and healthy relationships among the people of its multiple ethnic and religious groups.

Our Program

Through the PRO-Future Project, USAID provides opportunities for BiH leaders and citizens to challenge and change their own beliefs about one another, and then start transforming their local communities. The activity is based on the premise that if people adopt new, positive attitudes and change their behavior toward each other, social trust will emerge. If citizens begin to trust each other's intentions, they will be able to engage and collaborate on issues of common concern. In the resulting atmosphere of solidarity and consensus, they will begin holding their political leaders accountable for fostering stability – political, economic and social – in their communities.

Through this project, USAID provides opportunities for the leaders and citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina to challenge and transform their own beliefs about one another, and then help their communities to do the same.

Implementation and Results

In 2014 and 2015, more than 42,200 people directly participated in or benefited from project initiatives. The project actively engaged BiH political, government, religious and education officials and other key influencers, as well as youth, war victims, women, religious communities, associations of war victims, and civil society groups in 30 BiH municipalities.

More than 1,450 BiH citizens attended “Speaking Out” events during which war victims (usually former war-camp prisoners) publicly shared their war experience and the recovery process for them and invited all participants in these sessions to engage in community and national level dialogue. In addition, the project has so far organized 22 public round-tables, each involving two paired communities that had been close

prior to the war, but have since been divided by entity, ethnicity or other areas of conflict and disagreement. At these events, key influencers and citizens spoke openly about difficult topics and painful memories from the war.

At six public forums about “My Contribution to Lasting Peace,” 17 local Islamic, Orthodox, Catholic, and Jewish leaders gathered to speak jointly on the importance of peace and forgiveness from a religious perspective. High school students from eight PRO-Future municipalities participated in “Open Door Day,” which are study visits to local religious institutions.

During the life of this project, USAID will engage more than 100,000 citizens in up to 60 targeted BiH municipalities.

For more information, write to mpopovic@usaid.gov.