



ALBANIA
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
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Young With A Voice

DONOR AND IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS

The project is financed by the European Commission, through the Civil Society Facility (Operating Grants to IPA Associations. Support to regional thematic associations). The main applicant is Open Club Serbia and the partners are: BKTF Albania, Naša Djeca Association Zenica Bosnia and Herzegovina, Children First Montenegro and KOMF Kosovo. The project will be implemented throughout January–December 2015 on behalf of ChildPact, the Regional Coalition for Child Protection.

PROJECT RATIONALE

The project countries had a long history of social protection but the conjunction of conflicts, instability, and transition, have destabilised institutional arrangements and left significant governance deficits.¹ In the last 20 years governments in the IPA countries have been striving to reform the child welfare system and the overall social protection systems. Reforms have been incomplete or inadequate. Recent reports and empirical evidence show that in the IPA countries the number of vulnerable under-age citizens is increasing while their number in the general population has decreased sharply in the past 20 years (aging populations).²

¹ European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit E2, op. cit., page iii.

² European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit E2, Social Protection and Social Inclusion in the Western Balkans. Summary of the synthesis report, Manuscript completed in January 2009.

The vulnerable under-age citizens of today are the marginalized young people of tomorrow. The action aims to build the capacity of a large number of CSOs to collect the views of the end beneficiaries and propose low-cost (or even no-cost) measures to simplify cumbersome bureaucratic procedures that hinder social inclusion.

The action addresses the EU's priorities by:

1. **Building** the skills of networks and NGO leaders to advocate and negotiate on behalf of the vulnerable groups;
2. **Focusing** on the state-civil dialogue by organising an event to bring and discuss evidence regarding the next generations of marginalized groups and the ways regional cooperation can contribute to minimizing the marginalization risks;
3. **Creating** jargon-free instruments and statements that will allow a wide range of stake-holders (including those who are marginalized) to understand and contribute to the work of the CSOs.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Increase the capacity and commitment of ChildPact and its members to give a voice to young people that risk social and economic marginalization and influence social reforms through analysis, monitoring and advocacy by joining their efforts in the regional association ChildPact. At the end of this project the following outcomes will be seen:

1. Tenfold increase of the visibility of 5 national networks and their regional association ChildPact with national and European stakeholders and the wider public;
2. Formal and informal networks from the IPA countries increase their ability to produce and propose policy solutions for reducing the risk of marginalization of young people.

EXPECTED RESULTS

1. Improved co-operation between the civil society organisations (in particular ChildPact and its members) and public authorities at regional level.
2. Better understanding and visibility of the work carried out by ChildPact and its members.
3. ChildPact and its members organize consultations with young people that risk social and economic marginalization and pool their collective expertise to produce high quality research, monitoring and strategic advocacy.

4. Government institutions recognise the value of the participation of the ChildPact members and their members in the reform processes.

10 PROJECT ACTIVITIES

I ENCOURAGE EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY MAKING

1. **Organise a regional conference** to show how ChildPact's Child Protection Index results compare among countries and foster regional learning and cooperation. The regional conference will have two main objectives:
 - a. raise awareness of participants regarding the risks of no-action in front of the vulnerabilities of the current generation of under-age citizens;
 - b. discuss the feasibility of a youth-led Youth Wellbeing Index.
2. Create the framework for and pilot a **youth-led Youth Wellbeing Index**. A group of marginalized young people will be invited to come together to advise a group of experts (drawn from CSOs and youth organisations/movements) in developing the indicators' framework and piloting the index in 1 IPA country.

II INCREASE THE VISIBILITY OF THE PROJECT CAUSE

3. Organise a **social media training** in each participating country to enable the networks and their members to better reach their audiences and better influence their political representatives and public servants.
4. Organise a **regional story-telling workshop** to enable the network leaders to acquire the instruments needed to create the narratives of ChildPact that can be easily understood by the expert and non-expert public.
5. Organise a **national story-telling contest** in each participating country to enable advocates to collect and tell stories of youngsters at risk of social and economic marginalization.
6. Create project website page and link it with official websites of all project partners.

III CREATE AN INNOVATIVE CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY

7. Organise in each country a **Simplicity Workshop** to identify ways for simplifying the legislative and bureaucratic hurdles that prevent youngsters to break the cycles of social and economic marginalization. There are countless examples of too-complex social protection rules and regulations across the region and a study could bring astonishing stories from each participating country. Because of too much complexity, it is hard not only for the CSOs, but first and foremost for the vulnerable groups to understand what their rights are. The workshop participants will be supported to create a task force to advocate for simpler ways to do things across the region. The Simplicity Workshop will be developed in a fully-fledged Simplicity Project in the years to come.
8. Develop in each country a **Simplicity Campaign** to encourage professionals, the final beneficiaries and the wider public to contribute to the simplification of child protection ideas by giving their views on crucial questions regarding social exclusion complex mechanism. This will not only create an impressive pool of legislation improvement ideas, but it will also transform the way we think about the consultation of the vulnerable groups.
9. Organise in each country a **parliamentary hearing / high-level event** to present the list of simplification ideas.

IV INCREASE THE COMMUNICATION & NEGOTIATION SKILLS OF COALITION REPRESENTATIVES

10. Organise a regional seminar to discuss coalition management and train the coalitions' representatives in **negotiations & communications for advocacy**.



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