

Ludwig Boltzmann Institute
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Research Association



ERSTE Stiftung



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
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Supporting informal citizens' groups and grass-root initiatives in Bosnia and Herzegovina

INTERIM REPORT

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1. Background

1.1 Citizens' protests in 2014

In spring 2014, citizens' protest took place in large parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The protests were caused by the deep discontent of the majority of citizens concerning the prevailing living conditions, injustice, corruption and material and emotional exploitation, which is deeply rooted in all spheres of political, economic and social life.

After months and even years without having received appropriate remuneration, workers started to demand their rights in front of the cantonal government in Tuzla. Corrupt privatisation processes after the war had led to the closure of once successful production units resulting in dismissals and non-payment of workers who lost their means of existence. Soon, students, pensioners and other citizens who shared their discontent and frustration joined the workers' protests, which swept over to other cities. Even though citizen' protests were also held in previous years (2013 JMBG protests), the events in 2014 were characterised by a new social component: for the first time since twenty years, the citizens had the feeling to be able to exercise pressure on respective authorities. They felt that a transformative power is inherent in their joint uprising, which had the potential to lead to long due changes in the gridlocked system.

During the protests, citizens' assemblies (plena) were established in several cities and smaller local communities in the Federation. In the plena, the citizens elaborated demands directed towards the authorities at cantonal and entity level in order to urge them to deal with the problems of wide spread corruption, difficult or even missing access to human rights, unemployment, unjust privileges of elected officials, weak health care, education and social protection systems. In Republika Srpska (RS), plena were not established due to stronger repression mechanisms. However, formal and informal civic groups and activists from RS also supported the protests, unifying the struggle of all citizens of BiH for a better life.

1.2 Civil Society as a Factor for Change – Conference in Vienna

Inspired by the citizens' protests, the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights approached the Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs in order to think about joint efforts and possibilities to support the citizens. Both sides were willing to establish a common framework for possible engagement, in especially because the Western Balkans is a priority area of the Austrian foreign policy, not only due to the territorial proximity, but also due to the common history and long lasting economic cooperation between Austria and the region.

During his visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina in spring 2014, the Austrian Foreign Minister, Mr. Sebastian Kurz, invited activists and representatives of the civil society to a conference in Vienna. This invitation was the green light for the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights to start creating a framework for the conference – in cooperation with the Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, the ERSTE Foundation and the Karl Renner Institute. The EU Special Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Central European Initiative, and the British Embassy in Vienna joined the initiative and provided valuable support and advise during the preparation of the conference, which took place from 8th - 10th September 2014 in Vienna.

The goal of the conference was to offer a platform for exchange on neutral ground, and to encourage a dialogue and networking between civil society actors and activists coming from different parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in order to define a common approach aiming at a strong and sustainable civil society movement. Activists from Austria and the Bosnian diaspora also took part in working groups and discussions.

The most important outcome of the conference was the exchange of ideas and networking between the participants who met each other for the first time. Together, they elaborated joint recommendations aiming at further cooperation possibilities in the future.

2. Initiative to support the civil society

2.1 Follow-up

After the conference, the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights and likeminded partners were eager to continue supporting the citizens in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The conference was not supposed to be a one-off event, but a possibility to enable a framework for further engagement.

During the discussions in Vienna, strong mistrust was visible especially during the first day of the conference. On one side, the participants from BiH did not understand why Austrian and European institutions approached them and suspected a hidden agenda behind the whole initiative. On the other side, a huge gap and tension between the formalised non-governmental and civil society sector and the informal citizens' assemblies and activists was visible due to the following reason: After having recognised that former strategies, which had only included the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina were not fruitful, the EU and International Community started to direct their attention towards the civil society. Plans and strategies thus started to include a civil society component, however without a profound understanding and analysis what civil society really means.

The result of this kind of approach was that different kinds of NGOs and civil society networks were created in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which received a lot of money through project grants. While many of them did implement good projects, the work of a significant number of NGOs did not reach the real needs of the citizens, only serving their own purposes, which caused a deep gap and mistrust between the formalised civil society sector and the citizens who did not benefit from these projects. These shortcomings were also part of the discussions during the citizens' protest in spring 2014. Consequently, NGOs were not allowed to take part during the sessions of the citizens' plena.

Although the plena achieved important results in some municipalities, they lost power due to several reasons: internal conflicts, weak structures and competences, pressure from the authorities etc., so that they are not in the focus of media and public interest any more. Nevertheless, in some municipalities such as Gračanica, Zenica, Bosanka Krupa etc. small, but very motivated groups remained active and continue to implement a variety of activities with the aim to strengthen the local communities. Activists' groups are also very active in Banja Luka and Prijedor.

Considering these aspects, the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights together with likeminded partners and supporters (ERSTE Foundation, Ms. Doraja Eberle and Mr. Vedran Džihić, Western Balkans expert and adviser), reflected on further cooperation possibilities and developed a cooperation scheme allowing informal citizens' groups to implement concrete activities according to the needs detected in the local communities. The continuation of the initiative was also welcomed by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs. The Swiss Embassy in Sarajevo joined the initiative in January 2016.

In the meanwhile, the initiative became known as the "Austrian Initiative" in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Considering this expression, some clarifications are necessary. *Initiative* refers to the fact that Austrian partners were among the first to be willing to provide support to informal civic movements. *Initiative* does in no way mean that civic activism was initiated by the conference or follow-up activities and that it did not exist before. Activists in both entities, the Federation and Republika Srpska, were engaged in different spheres of society for years and worked hard to tackle the political, social, economic and other issues the citizens have to deal with in ever day life. At this point, the never-ending hard work of Oštra Nula, KVART and other formal and informal organisations has to be mentioned, as well as the

never-ending engagement of individuals, which lasts for years. The Austrian Initiative has to be understood from this perspective, namely not as a patronising attempt to impose concepts or a hidden agenda of the EU and International Community, but as an attempt to reach out a hand to those who believe that they can benefit from this kind of cooperation in one way or another.

2.2 New cooperation approach

Supporting the needs of the citizens means contributing to deliberate their potential to act as agents of change at the micro-level, thus initiating changes from the bottom-up.

Eight groups, which had elaborated a plan and defined activities, were selected to receive funds for the period of one year (July 2015 – July 2016): *Plenum of the citizens in Zenica, Plenum Bosanska Krupa, the Informal Group Srebrenik is ours, the Workers' Union Sindikat Solidarnosti, the Citizens' Movement Gračanica, Banja Luka Social Centre, the Informal Group for Social Justice in Prijedor and the Network 5f7.*

The groups are informal, non-registered grass-root initiatives, meaning that an innovative cooperation and funding scheme was necessary based on mutual trust between the involved parties, which enables the selected groups to receive international support without the usual donor-driven procedures and conditionality (proof of registration, application for grants, etc.).

The Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights - Research Association (BIM-FV) is acting as a bridge between the informal groups on one side and project partners and donors on the other side, meaning that the BIM-FV accompanies the activists, administers, and channels the approved funds.

The activists implement their activities in a sovereign and independent way, meaning that they are free to use the financial means for activities they identified as important and necessary in their local communities. This kind of approach allows a high spectre of flexibility by overcoming rigid forms of project implementation. Given the fact that the groups are heterogeneous formations considering their composition and way of working, they develop their own implementation approaches, which also enables them to react spontaneously to current social developments.

After each implementation phase, the groups submit reports about the implemented activities, whereby they are welcome to ask the BIM-FV for support. The BIM-FV, being the coordinating unit, consolidates the reports and submits them to the partners.

The partners and supporters of the initiative hope that the financial support will encourage the activists to act, not only as opinion makers, but also as civic/political leaders and agents of change within their respective communities, especially with regard to the upcoming local elections in 2016.

The results of the first implementation phase were presented on 25th January 2016 in Banja Luka and are very satisfying.





Photo by Okj

Photos taken during the meeting on 25th January 2016 in Banja Luka (Presentation of activities after the first implementation period)

3. Presentation of the groups and activities

The following chapter will provide an overview of the achievements and outcomes from July 2015 – may 2016. The information and description of activities was provided by the groups and compiled by Nina Radović, coordinator at the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights – Research Association.

3.1 Informal Group „Srebrenik je naš“

The Informal group Srebrenik je naš (Srebrenik is ours) implemented several activities during the first implementation period, whereby all decisions were made in a democratic way, inviting everyone to express his or her opinion. Until today, 98 meetings took place.

One of the regular activities of the group is the organisation of protests at the main square in the city center. During the protests, the activists discuss publicly the political and economic situation in especially nepotism, corruption, the selective application of laws and other problems detected in the community and the whole country. Although the municipal government attempted to ban the protests by declaring them illegal, the activists managed to resist by referring to the freedom of assembly and criticised the government for irregularities in their work.

The group invites citizens to be aware and critical about public expenditures, the work of the institutions and politicians by organising public tribunals and meetings such as the public debate with the professors Besim Spahić and Zlatan Begić in 2015. The tribunal was visited by over 250 people. The topic of the tribunal was the political manipulation of the masses hidden behind ethno-nationalistic discourses.

Three municipal councillors, who are members of the group, regularly take part in the sessions of the municipal council and raise critical questions, which were previously discussed in the group. Even though the independent councillors are only a minority in the municipal council, their contribution is important for the citizens. The councillors' speeches are broadcasted on the local TV, which is the only way to break the media blockade and inform the citizens about the work and practices of the elected representatives.

Srebrenik je naš contributes to awareness raising by printing and disseminating posters and leaflets in the municipality. The content of the posters and leaflets is provocative, but true (facts and documents). One example is the publication of names and salary lists of certain politicians and employees in public institutions in order to point out the injustice and corruption (for example, a director of a pharmacy – being a member of a political party – has a salary of 3500 EUR and a retired worker only 160 EUR for 40 years of hard work).

In addition, the group uses internet radio to broadcast their programme via the "Radio Revolution NGG Srebrenik is ours", in especially speeches recorded during the protests, or controversial and untrue statements of politicians, trying once again to show the injustices and irregularities of the current system in a satirical way.

The group also provided support to other informal groups and protests such as the workers' protests of the Workers' Union "Sindikata Solidarnosti" in Tuzla, as they did before during the shutdown of production units *Dita* and *Aida*.

The group's big achievement is the mutual support and trust of the citizens who finally became more active and have the courage to express their opinion and denounce nepotism, exploitation and injustice, which are deeply rooted in the system. Srebrenik je naš, together with the support of the citizens, filed suits against political parties and inspections conducted against them, which was clearly a violation of citizens' rights. Even though the charges were rejected or ignored the group is persistent in these practices, because they are important to demonstrate that corrupt and unjust practices are noticed and publicly discussed. The group hopes that this kind of activism and civic engagement will finally force those who were elected to represent the citizens, do their jobs properly.



Photos taken during the public tribune and protests in the city centre.

3.2 Plenum of the Citizens in Zenica

The Plenum of the Citizens in Zenica is now permanently 'on the street'. With the new office, the plenum has placed itself in the heart of Zenica. Its flags, mottos and posters in the windows and on the walls are visible to all and available to all.

Everyone can come to the Plenum's office and find all the information he or she needs and more. The members of the Plenum insist on the promise they have made to the citizens: the Plenum is honest, transparent and open, being the change that its members want to see in the society. Initially, the group lost some activists because of their persistence to maintain a strictly honest policy. However, new people have joined and the group hopes that the trust they are building in the society will attract many more activists, particularly among the youth.

The most important achievement is that people who were afraid to be seen to support the Plenum in any way, can send their views, come for a quick chat or share their ideas without the fear that they will find themselves in trouble. The main objective of the Plenum is to hear the voices of the citizens, including those who are afraid to speak. The Plenum has created means and possibilities for individuals so that their voices can be heard.

The office of the Plenum has also been used for meetings of NGOs that have nowhere to go, particularly if they have been inactive for some time and want to start working again. One such NGO is the Community of Civilian Victims of War Zenica. Other NGOs have left their literature in the Plenum's office.

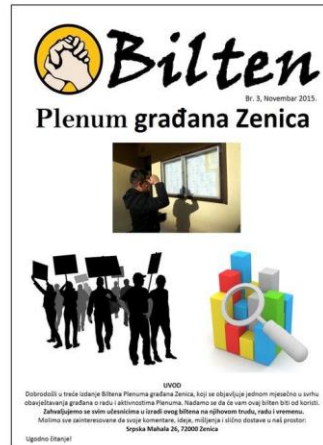
The coordinating team of the Plenum holds weekly meetings where the participants make all the decisions together. It is time-consuming, but this kind of approach allows everyone to participate in the decision making process so that when a mistake is made everyone can all learn from it. These meetings last from two to four hours. The work of the plenum and its members is improving in quality even though they have not yet increased the quantity of their activities. The Plenum continues to hold public discussions once a month (every third Monday), whereby the topics are suggested by all citizens and decided by majority vote. The Plenum tries to participate in as many events as possible organised by other groups and organisations. During the meetings with other groups, the members of the Plenum exchange information and ideas and inform other activists about the Plenum and its meaning.

The monthly bulletin has been very successful as a teaching tool. The Plenum is increasingly receiving compliments about the bulletin and requests for more. However, the members learned that there is a need to apply more effort into explaining how activism works and why it is vital in regards of the responsibility every individual has in a democratic system.

Leaflets for specific objectives have also proven very popular among the people in Zenica. The Plenum intended to publish one leaflet every three months. The first topic that people wanted to address was defined as 'Institutional abuse' – that is, unreasonable demands the institutions ask of citizens, while trying to realise their rights. In Bosnia and Herzegovina this is a very widely spread problem. In fact, the complexity of the problem and people's desire to address it has led the Plenum to reprint a leaflet on the same topic. Through these activities, the citizens become more aware of the problems. In especially the youth was shocked to hear that applications for a job should be free of any charge.

While Bosnia and Herzegovina is facing many problems and challenges, most of which are attributed to the system and the government, the role of the citizens in Bosnia and Herzegovina must not be ignored. The Plenum is already working on educating people in Zenica about their role in society and that the citizens can bring along any change they desire in a peaceful way if they are smart, calm and persistent. Through the monthly discussions, bulletin, and open-door policy, the Plenum concluded that the citizens became more aware, although they have not yet overcome their lethargy and fear. In

fact, the members of the Plenum feel that there is a great need for a ‘campaign’ to spread the value and virtue of being responsible and applying oneself to whatever someone believes in. The Plenum will continue to work on these goals in Zenica, and plans to reach out to other cities in central Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Photos of the office of the Plenum, and protests in Zenica

3.3 Citizens' Movement Gračanica

The Citizens' Movement Gračanica was created in 2015, after the split-up of the Plenum in Gračanica. The Movement is engaged in a broad range of activities. One of their slogans is "Think globally, act locally and become a change". Through their work, the Movement has the intention to bring back the trust and hope in a better future to the citizens and to contribute to empowering the social community by implementing projects and social programs. Thereby, participation plays an important role: The Movement stands for participation and asks for the inclusion of all citizens in decision-making processes in especially when it comes to decisions of public interest, concerning the lives of all citizens.

The Movement has set its goal to be the public watchdog and a corrective force of the government and public institutions. To do this, the members of the Movement depend on the awareness and responsibility of the citizens. Out of this reason, the Movement organises meetings and workshops for awareness raising and education purposes of citizens and encourages them to stand up for their rights.

One of the main goals of the Movement is to restore the trust of the citizens in themselves because they have an important role to play in the society. At the same time, the Movement is willing to cooperate with the authorities in order to create synergies and improve their work so that the elected authorities fulfil their duties and hear the voices of the people they represent. Therefore, the Movements is eager to diminish and eradicate the corruption, nepotism and criminal actions staring at the local, communal level, thus restoring the trust in the institutions.

Another very important aspect is empowerment of the youth. Through their engagement, the Movement hopes to enable better working and living conditions in their own city by the creation of new jobs, development of production and tourism, and by giving young people the possibility to have a decent life and perspectives at home, and thus to reduce the brain drain.

The Movement stands and fights for the freedom of the citizens. This is only possible if the authorities work in the interest of the community and the citizens, which inter alia includes a better health and education system, the development of culture and sports and the development of a better non-governmental system.

The activists of the Citizen's Movement in Gračanica achieved remarkable results while strengthening active participation and citizen's engagement in society. The indicators for the growing of civic activism and progress can be described as follows: the first stage was characterised by social revolt, which resulted in the creation of the civic assembly (plenum). The second stage was characterised by the attempts of manipulation and infiltration of members of political parties in the ranks of activists with the aim to sabotage civic engagement. During the third stage, a group of proven activists formed a new movement and developed joint activities, which resulted in the formation of movements in other cities that joined them, based on the principle "If they did it (referring to the activists in Gračanica and their achievements), we can also change things!" As a result, a so-called *Base of trust* was and still is being created during the fourth stage. The fifth stage will be the development of political options as alternatives to existing political parties, in view of the upcoming local elections in 2016.

The Movement calls upon the citizens not to wait for a miracle, but to become the change they expect to happen and to start acting in order to initiate an improvement. The broad range of activities of the Citizens' Movement is summarised in the table attached to this report.



 <p>KAKO NAS PRONAĆI ?</p>	
<p>OBAVIJEST ZA GRAĐANE/KE</p> <p>Poštovani sugrađani i sugrađanke, Kao što smo putem našeg lista predstavljajući i najavili, aktivirali smo adresu poštanskog sandučića na ime POKRET GRAĐANA GRAČANICE.</p> <p>U narednom periodu budite slobodni iskoristiti svoje građansko pravo, to na dole navedenu adresu pošaljite sve vaše ZAHTEJEVE, PRIMJEDBE, ŽALBE, ANONIMNE ILI POTPISANE PRUJAVE KORUPCIJE, NEPOTIZMA, KRIMINALA ILI SLIČNO...</p> <p>U poštansko sandučić također možete kandidovati problematiku sa kojom se nosite lično vi ili vaša riječna zajednica.</p> <p>U svakom obraćanju putem poštanskog sandučića molimo vas da napišete da li želite da se vaše pismo, zahtjev, molba, prijedlog sugestija i javno obznanj.</p> <p>Svi vaši podaci zagarantovano ostaju anonimni ukoliko to zahtijevate.</p> <p>POKRET GRAĐANA GRAČANICE</p>	<p>OBAVIJEST ZA GRAĐANE/KE</p> <p>NAŠI AKTIVISTI ĆE SVIM GRAĐANIMA KOJI SE PUTEM POŠTE PRUJAVE SA MOLBOM ILI ZAHTEJEVOM ZA POMOĆ KOD OSTVARIVANJA GRAĐANSKIH PRAVA PONUDITI SVOJE RESURSE U OSTVARIVANJU ISTIH.... PRIDRUŽITE SE.</p> <p>Adresa : POKRET GRAĐANA 75320 GRAČANICA P.P. 30/II</p> <p>e-mail: pokretgradjanagracanice@gmail.com</p> <p>POKRET GRAĐANA GRAČANICE</p>



Ti si aktivan građanin i zato trebaš:

- POSTATI I OSTATI INFORMIRAN
- FORMIRATI I IZRAZITI MIŠLJENJA I IDEJE
- RADITI ZAJEDNO SA DRUGIMA U ZAJEDNICI
- PODUZETI I POKRENUTI AKCIJU ZA OJAČAVANJE ZAJEDNICE



Photos: Informing citizens in Gračanica about the Movement and its activities; Publication of campaigns: "You are an active citizen and therefore you need to become informed, create your own opinion and ideas, and work together with others in order to strengthen the community."

3.4 Workers' Union "Sindikrat Solidarnosti" Tuzla

The members of the Workers' Union in Tuzla, Sindikrat Solidarnosti, are the main advocates for workers' rights, representing all those workers who have been dismissed, exploited and marginalised due to corrupt privatisation procedures in the past twenty years. The Workers' Union regularly organises meetings, campaigns and protests to raise awareness on the current problems of workers who are deprived of their rights.

In autumn 2015, members of the Worker's Union organised a protest camp in front of the authorities of Canton Tuzla where the activists, unemployed and dismissed workers, protested against the current situation, the closure of production units in Tuzla, in especially *Tuzla-Kvarc*, *Polihem*, *Poliolchem* and others, against corruption, non-paid salaries and injustice. The protest camp lasted for fifty-two days. Even though the authorities tried to frighten the activists by issuing a new law restricting public gatherings in front of the government's offices and threats by the police, and even though the activists were arrested several times, they remained persistent in their demands and attracted attention of the public and the media. Activists from other towns in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Gračanica, Srebrenik, Živinice), but also activists from other countries (Felix Fritsch from Austria and Lydia Letsch from Germany) joined and supported the workers.

The Worker's Union also submitted an appeal for reviewing the constitutionality of the law on bankruptcy and liquidation in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Sindikrat Solidarnosti is in regular contact with other informal groups, in especially the Citizen's Movement in Gračanica and the informal group Srebrenik is ours. Members of the Union participated in a tribune organised by the Youth Movement Revolt, where representatives of Worker's Unions from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia and the representative of the Union of Employers of the Canton Tuzla took part.

In September 2015, members of the Union visited the National Museum in Sarajevo during the protest "Ja sam muzej" (I am the museum) in order to support the reopening of the national museum which was closed for years due to budget restrictions as result of the missing political will.

Plans of the Worker's Union Sindikat Solidarnosti for the upcoming months are the making of a documentary on the destruction of the industry in Canton Tuzla, another appeal against the discriminatory law on public assemblies before the Constitutional Court, the registration of the Worker's Union and the organisation of public tribunes, to name just a few.



Photos: p.11: Protest camp in front of the government of canton Tuzla; p.12: Meeting with the Austrian Minister, Mr. Sebastian Kurz in the Austrian Embassy in Sarajevo in June 2015; Visit and support for the reopening of the National Museum in Sarajevo in summer 2015.

3.5 Informal Group for Social Justice Prijedor

The Informal Group for Social Justice in Prijedor was created by a group of young people who gathered around the February protests in 2014. After the first meetings, the group began to act systematically in late 2014 in coordination with other activists' groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The group was very involved in different community and volunteering activities such as providing regular visits to Ljubija, a small village near Prijedor with a very difficult social situation, or organising public kitchens and providing support to socially vulnerable groups, all in the spirit of solidarity and social justice. The group consists of about 15 young people. It is open for everyone who wishes to take part and who wants to provide support in the struggle for the realisation of social and workers' rights and the establishment of full and non-selective social equality in the local community and beyond. The group cooperates with activists from all over Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially from Bihać, Sanski Most and Banja Luka.

One of the working groups has the task to monitor the work of local authorities and to send requests for information and complaints about the work of public administration and to publish all material collected through research on social networks in the form of articles and columns. The activities of this working group also include the analysis of the city budget, and spreading the information in order to keep the public informed about the discrepancies they discover.

Through workshops on audio and video journalism, the members are also trained to work as journalists, and they produced several videos and advocacy campaigns. With other activists from the region, the group organised the campaign of singing protest and partisan songs at Kozara. By this activity, the group's intention was to disrupt the program of those in power who through pro-nationalist rhetoric try to revise the history about the WWII and the role the people in Krajina had played during that time, all with the aim to maintain their political power.

As part of the strategy to intensify the presence of the group in the public space, the campaign "Food not violence" was organised in response to the repeated outbursts of xenophobia by irresponsible individuals and general fear induced by the regime's media. The campaign had resulted in excellent reactions of the public.

One of the recent street actions was related to the Radio Free Drvar, which reports all the criminal activities of the ruling party. In cooperation with activists from Banja Luka and Kozarska Dubica, the group supported the work of the radio.

All of the activities are directed directly towards the local community/region and the citizens in terms of empowering civic activism, strengthening voluntary work, reducing social injustice and fighting against the rewriting of history initiated by nationalistic cliques. The Informal Group for Social Justice had a strong influence in the municipality of Ljubija, where their activities contributed directly to the wellbeing of the beneficiaries. Their voluntary work goes hand in hand with fighting against social injustice on a more political level. Based on solidarity and equality, as well as political strategies which are opposite of the mainstream politics, the group tried to influence other citizens who are not socially endangered in order to engage more for the benefit of the whole society.

During the course of this initiative, members of the Informal Group for Social Justice Prijedor, made new experiences in dealing with political themes, social justice, organising of actions, as well as many other practical and administrative tasks. Furthermore, the Informal Group for Social Justice Prijedor became much more aware of their possibilities, which are substantial when taking into consideration the short amount of time the group is dealing in spheres mentioned above. The Informal Group for Social Justice Prijedor created connections with other groups from their town with whom they can work on such issues in the future. They worked out a strategic plan on widening the scope of their activities geographically, focusing on the Krajina region mostly (Bihać, Sanski Most, Prijedor, Banja Luka), but also working on state level when possible. Widening of these circles in efforts of fighting the criminals in power, social injustice, and politics of segregation and fascism is crucial if long-term results are to be achieved. In the future, the group hopes for the realisation of free legal aid, which would facilitate their work and be the starting point for more direct initiatives. A more detailed description is provided in the overview of implemented activities at the end of this report.





Photos: street action: “Food NOT violence”; protest singing at Kozara against manipulative discourses and propaganda to rewriting the past events during WWII and the role of the citizens during that time; Protest in the centre of Prijedor.

3.6 Banja Luka Social Centre BASOC

Banja Luka Social Center (BASOC) advocates for political equality and public and common goods in the post-war and post-socialist Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The activists’ practice and infrastructure of the centre’s work are focusing on social justice and social equality, workers' rights and their self-empowerment, work with the BiH diaspora and minorities as well as gender politics. These issues will be addressed through various interdisciplinary methodological approaches such as cultural and artistic approaches, thus strengthening independent cultural and artistic practices, contemporary historiography, analysis of urban policies and a number of other critical discursive and political-economic analysis.

In short, the center provides a permanent space / house in order to continue building and creating a new post-communist sociability through a horizontal hybrid between academic approaches, theory and activism.

Policies of equality include all those who are not equal, such as dismissed workers, ethnic or gender minorities. Public goods include material legacy such as schools, playgrounds, parks and factories as well as intangible heritage such as socio-cultural heritage and memories including culture and politics of remembering, because the activists strive to preserve the memories of past events, which are endangered to be forgotten due to current political practices.

In this way, BASOC is actively resisting patriarchy, nationalism and economic inequality resulting out of the wars of the 1990s and the post-war transition. An overview of activities organised within the Banja Luka Social Center can be found in the table at the end of this report.





Photos: Entrance to the house; discussion and video screening in the garden of BASOC; Logo of BASOC

3.7 Plenum Bosanska Krupa

Most of the activities of the Plenum Bosanska Krupa had a humanitarian character. During the implementation of the activities, the members of the Plenum tried to animate the citizens to become more involved in civic activism and volunteering. This way, the Plenum hopes to raise the awareness of citizens about the importance of civic activism, which is the only way to initiate changes at the local level. Most of the implemented activities were covered by the local media.

The Plenum was particularly engaged in the reactivation of the humanitarian center and a soup kitchen in Bosanska Krupa. One of the main activities during the last six months was to support socially vulnerable families in the municipality by providing financial means for electricity and water, or by organising a humanitarian concert for collecting financial means.

Several meetings were held with representatives from other humanitarian organisations, such as the Red Cross, LOT, and the center for Social work. During the holiday season, the Plenum provided New Year's presents to socially vulnerable children.

In addition, the Plenum continued its regular work and attended the meetings of the municipal council and followed the work of municipal organs.

The Plenum is trying to induce changes in a democratic way. The members have planned to register the group and to open an office which would be accessible for all citizens and which would serve as a platform for networking and planning of future activities.

His Excellency, the Austrian Ambassador Mr. Martin Pammer, visited the Plenum in October 2015. Together with the members of the Plenum, he visited the mayor of the municipality Bosanska Krupa and the Red Cross and discussed the actual problems the municipality is facing. The high unemployment rate is one of the major issues, which leads to the question of new employment strategies in the form of self-employment in which the Plenum could play an important part in the future. In addition, the issue of a more professionalised self-organisation, especially in regards of the upcoming local elections, was raised.



Photos: Visits of the Austrian Ambassador, Mr. Martin Pammer in Bosanska Krupa; members of the Plenum;

3.8 Network 5f7

The primary goal of the Network 5f7 was to organise and provide free legal aid to activists. Due to some organisational problems, the Network was not active during the last six months. However, after two substantive meetings in Bosanska Krupa and Srebrenik in spring 2016, the Network developed a new working strategy which is described in the table above.

4. Cooperation partners

The Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights-Research Association (BIM-FV) is the linking coordination unit between the partners/supporters and informal civic groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Main partners and donors of the initiative are the ERSTE Foundation and the Swiss Embassy in Sarajevo.

The Initiative is also supported by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (BMEIA).

Informal civic groups and grass-root movements in Bosnia and Herzegovina are:

- Civic Movement Gračanica: Larisa Šuša and Muhamed Okanović
- Plenum Zenica: Meliha Bajramović
- Informal Citizens Group Srebrenik is ours: Sulejman Fejzić, Fadil Duranović
- Plenum Bosanska Krupa: Ermin Hromadžić and Fahrudin Mujakić
- Banja Luka Social Centre BASOC: Dražen Crnomat and Zoran Vučkovac
- Sindikat Solidarnosti (Workers' Union Tuzla): Sakib Kopic and Enes Tanović
- Informal Group for Social Justice Prijedor: Stefan Gvozden and Goran Zorić
- Network 5f7: Dražen Crnomat and Ekrem Ćerimić

5. Main milestones

Month	Year	Description
September	2014	Conference "Civil Society as a factor for Change", 08.-10.09.2014, Vienna
January	2015	First Follow-up Meeting in Sarajevo, 21.01.2015
April	2015	Second Follow-up Meeting in Gračanica, 27.04.2015
May	2015	Meeting with potential partners in the Austrian Embassy in Sarajevo, 11.05.2015
June	2015	Signing of the Cooperation Agreement with selected informal civic groups in Sarajevo, 18.06.2015
July	2015	Submission of defined activities by the groups and begin of the first implementation period
December	2015	Submission of reports (written, financial) after the first implementation period
January	2016	Follow-up Meeting, Presentation of achieved results, 25.01.2016, Banja Luka
January	2016	Begin of the second implementation period
May	2016	Submission of interim reports (written, financial) to the Swiss Embassy in Sarajevo
June	2016	End of the second implementation phase
July	2016	Submission of final reports (written, financial) to the ERSTE Foundation and all partners

6. Second implementation phase and beyond

The financial support for the initiative is secured until June 2016. BIM-FV together with likeminded partners and supporters, in especially the ERSTE Foundation and the Swiss Embassy, hopes to have contributed to create a framework, which will enable the informal groups and grass-root initiatives to continue their work in the future. However, in order to pursue this goal, further financial means will have to be generated after the exhaustion of the existing funds.

At the beginning, many of potential partners were sceptical and chose rather to observe in which direction this initiative will develop, than to support the activists. After the first six months, the activists proved that they are highly motivated citizens who refuse to be passive observers, letting others decide for themselves. To ensure that the important work of the civic groups continues also after the exhaustion of existing funds (in June 2016), it will be crucial to secure additional funds, which would enable the groups to continue implementing their activities for a better future of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Therefore, BIM-FV and likeminded partners hope that this report will inspire additional partners to support the groups and provide financial contributions in order to ensure that the groups can continue their work.

Finally, we would like to express special thanks to the partners and supporters of this initiative, in especially Mr. Filip Radunović from the ERSTE Foundation, without whom this initiative would not have been possible; Ms. Doraja Eberle, who supported the initiative from the beginning; Mr. Vedran Džihić, who contributed to this initiative with many valuable ideas; Mr. Martin Pammer, Austrian Ambassador in Bosnia and Herzegovina, who supported the initiative and enabled several meetings in his Embassy in Sarajevo, among others the meeting with the Austrian Foreign Minister, Mr. Sebastian Kurz; and Mr. Johann Sattler, former Head of the Western Balkan Unit in the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, currently Austrian Ambassador in Albania.

In addition, we would like to thank the Swiss Embassy in Sarajevo for recognising the importance of this initiative and providing a financial contribution for the implementation of activities during the second implementation phase.

Last but not least, we would like to express our thanks to the activists from the informal civic groups and grass root movements in Bosnia and Herzegovina, who remain strong in these difficult times and with their tireless and fearless engagement and hard work contribute to changes from the roots, by showing that every voice, every individual matters in the difficult and long-lasting process of building a society based on democracy, rule of law and human rights.

Thank you for your trust and devotion!

We are looking forward to the months to come!

7. Annex- Overview of implemented activities

Informal Civic Group	Implemented activities from July 2015 – May 2016
Informal Group „Srebrenik je naš“	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Every Monday, working meetings take place (so far 80 meetings). - Every Tuesday, citizens’ protests take place at the town square (where the group experienced great resistance from the authorities and the police, but they succeeded in launching lawsuits against individuals with assistance by lawyers, which enabled them to reduce the pressure). - The group upholds regular communication with civic activists from other municipalities and cities. - Activists took part in the demonstrations in Tuzla and other cities in order to support disadvantaged workers. - Public tribunes were organised (visit of professor Spahić and Begić) - Posters were printed and distributed in the whole municipality (about 600 posters so far), containing information about criminal activities that are the result of the misconduct of certain authorities in the municipality of Srebrenik; - Broadcasting of a radio program via the internet-radio "Radio Revolution NGG Srebrenik is ours".
Plenum Zenica	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The activists rented an office for the work of the Plenum: the office is open from 11: 00-14: 00 every day for all citizens who are willing to engage in activism, (already more than 15 people are involved in the work of the Plenum, which is a great success for Zenica). Sometimes, the office is open also during the afternoon. Meetings take place every Tuesday afternoon and when the need arises. - Publication of monthly Bulletins. - Publication of leaflets on the work of the Plenum and the importance of civic engagement. - Organisation of public tribunes once a month in order to inform citizens about their rights, as for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17.08.2015: public tribune on the subject of the status of pensioners • 21.09.2015: public tribune on the subject of institutional violence • 19.10.2015: public tribune on the subject "20 Years of Dayton" • 23.11.2015: public tribune on the topic of heating. - Collection and documentation of problems detected by citizens - Weekly visits to other cantons. So far, members of the Plenum visited Maglaj. A public tribune on the subject “the NGO sector” was planned. However, due to severe weather conditions during the winter, the members decided that it would be better to postpone this activity for the spring 2016. - The attempt to get in touch with the mayor remained without success (a request for a meeting was submitted). - Three meetings with the Chairman of the Municipal Council, Nebojša Nikolić, took place. The participants discussed the preliminary requirements of the Plenum, which were raised during the last year. Further meetings are planned; - Meeting with the ZDK Minister of Health, Bojan Gvozdenović, took place. A public debate on health care is in plan.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 04.11.2015: Comments on the alternative report were prepared: http://eu-monitoring.ba/site/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Alternativni-izvje%C5%A1taj-o-napretku-BiH-2015.pdf. - Preparation of the Web site for the Plenum and activism in Zenica is ongoing; - Several meetings with activists from other cities were organised in the office of the Plenum. - Preparation of the petition: Are you in favour that Bosnia and Herzegovina is protected by the law on treason? The intention is to get an overview of the willingness of the population to launch such an initiative. The law should be in line with similar EU laws.
<p>Civic Movement Gračanica</p>	<p>Establishment of a basis for work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The group rented an office – the so called “Base of trust” which operates on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 09:00 to 14:00. - They established an open mailbox for anonymous complaints and detection of problems in the community (detection of cases of corruption, requests for free legal aid etc.); Citizens are welcome to visit the office, to register, to offer or to ask for help. - The Base of trust offers Awareness raising, social work, free legal aid, advising citizens and education on responsibilities of the respective authorities in the complex system of BiH, as some of the services of the Movement. - Registration of the activists has been done and is still ongoing. - Preparation and instruction for the creation and management of the website was accomplished. - A plan of all activities for the next period was developed (including visits to municipalities according to the analysis of urgent problems detected in the municipalities). - Regular meetings are foreseen for every two weeks (also ad hoc meetings) in the premises of the Civic Movement. <p>Promotion of activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Distribution of info-material via social media including daily updates about current issues and distribution of brochures and material in the city center, while wearing the new blue shirts with the logo of the Civic Movement during the promotion (5000 pieces in A5 size containing 4 pages were ordered). - Distribution of information on current social and political issues in other municipalities: Pribava, Donja Lohinja, Orahovica, Miričina, Lukavica, Soko. - Promotion of activities of the Civic Movement through the webpage of the Bosnian Cultural Centre (BKC) in Gračanica: http://bkc-gracanica.ba/ and via Radio Gračanica (activists were guest in the broadcast program “The topic of the day”, and “Info 5”. - Promotion of activities of the Civic Movement on the webpage Gračanica info and the TV channel Hayat. - Promotion through a monthly educational radio program on civic activism on Radio Gračanica is foreseen (once a month in the framework of the program “Indirect” or “Radio parliament” beginning in November 2016). <p>Implementation of activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The group supported the protests of disempowered workers in Tuzla through: daily visits and overnights in tents, meetings with respective

	<p>ministries, the cantonal court, the trustee for bankruptcy and the cantonal tax administration in order to claim the fulfilment of workers' rights.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In this context, information on corrupt privatisation practices of some companies such as Grafopak doo. was published, serving as a basis for two court applications and proofs on irregularities. - In addition, a working group for disempowered workers was created. Due to the pressure exercised by the group, 12 workers of the company <i>koka product</i> were retired and got their pensions, taking into account their years of service, thus enabling social and health services for the unemployed. - The group became part of the movement "Union of women", which will – through three unions of women (UG Plodovi zemlje Lukavica, UŽ Pribava and UG Gračaničko Kreanje) – set an example of awareness raising of the citizens and promotion of civic activism in all municipalities in order to promote civic values as a basis for a social community. - Activists provided knowhow and workshops to women in the field of development and applying for funds conducted by one of the activists. - Also, trainings on the topic "How to be an active citizen" were conducted in Lukavica and Miričina and additional trainings will be conducted in other communities. - A youth initiative "Bring the disco back to our city" was initiated, aiming at motivating the youth to become part of the Civic Movement. - Activists exercised pressure on the municipal commission for education, culture and sports by conducting an analysis on their work in the whole municipality of Gračanica including an analysis of schools. As a result, two projects were developed for reparation works in three schools: the activists of the Civic Movement sent the project proposals to different donors, however they are still awaiting the decisions. - The group raised demands to be included in public discussions on the draft budget for the municipality in 2016. In this framework, the activity "NOTHING WITHOUT US" is being implemented. - Activists exercise pressure on local authorities in order to force them to take into account the demands of farmers while drafting the Strategy for agriculture development for the next five years (in especially demands considering infrastructure such as roads and access to fields, contamination of fields and rivers etc.). - Cooperation with other informal civic groups is ongoing (NGG Srebrenik je naš, Sindikat Solidarnosti, youth initiative REVOLT Tuzla...), as well as active participation in the creation of the "Bosnian Council" for the region Tuzla; - The group developed project proposals together with other partners and applied for grants in the UK Embassy aiming to implement projects for creating bridges between citizens and institutions. <p>Outreach to the Municipal Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Members of the Civic Movement took part in an ordinary and an extraordinary meeting of the municipal council in Gračanica and presented the work of the Civic Movement in August 2015). - Activists conducted an analysis on the political will to initiate changes for the benefit of the citizens. - Official meetings were held with the mayor of the municipality in October 2015, whereby the Civic Movement had the opportunity to present its work to the local council of Gračanica.
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<p>Workers' Union "Sindikatski Solidarnosti" Tuzla</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Workers' union organised protest camps in front of the government of Canton Tuzla (housing in tents for weeks in order to exercise pressure to save a company with 70 employees). - Participation in public tribunals. - The members of the union provided support to activists from other cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and visited the National Museum in Sarajevo as a sign of protest due to the closure of the Museum, which was finally reopened.
<p>Informal Group for Social Justice Prijedor</p>	<p>Voluntary work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Informal group "For social justice" Prijedor organised volunteering work actions/activities with young people, members of our informal group as well as other volunteers, in order to help in some way and ease the everyday lives of socially endangered members of the municipality Ljubija. - The volunteer group consisting of 12 people, out of whom at least 5 participated in each of the organised activities, went to Ljubija several times a month, according to each of the member's available time, and helped the socially endangered people by performing manual labour tasks (painting walls, splitting wood, cleaning homes). The activists split two dozens of cubic meters of wood just before the cold period in order to help those who were unable to perform those tasks themselves, some because of illness, some because of their weak financial situation, or both. - The group also organised a lecture event whereby one of the activists, who has a medical education background, held educational lectures on personal and domestic hygiene, especially for members of the public kitchen, who spent a lot of time together, all with the aim to reduce the risk of diseases caused by the lack of hygiene. The response was good, and some progress was made on defining the issues among users of the public kitchen. Providing information is crucial for progress in this field as well as self-motivation among the members . <p>Monitoring the work of public institutions and advocacy campaigns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IG for Social Justice formed a working group dedicated to research: while analysing the city budget many inconsistencies were found, as well as the general impression that the city budget was very socially insensible. - Following the discoveries, the group proceeded with advocacy for challenging and changing that state of affairs. For this purpose, the group worked together with the "Foundation for Creative Development" (Fond za Kreativni Razvoj), an NGO from Sarajevo, which has experience in the field of media, advocacy of social themes, youth and more. With them, a couple of videos demonstrating the situation in Ljubija as well as in Prijedor were recorded, criticizing the overall politics of town authorities towards the socially endangered population. The videos were shown on federal television as part of the established television series for youth "Hayd u Park". - Following, the IG for Social Justice also went on an advocating mission together with a NGO from Prijedor. Together, they elaborated common standpoints for an upcoming public discussion on the town budget. When

that public discussion happened not only the two groups, but also other participants debated on various topics concerning their particular problems, which were related to social issues and the budget. After that public debate, the town authorities increased items for social budget.

- The same working group had also a task of issuing requests for access to information on issues, which were considered problematic in the work of institutions. Several requests for access to information were sent to town authorities, among which a request for clarification on town budget items, request for the copy of audio recordings on discussions on the town budget for 2016, and a request for a copy of the permit for a building that some of the town authority offices were supposed to move to.

Organising of street actions and public events

- The IG for Social Justice with the support from the Centre for Youth “Kvart” successfully realised the street action “Food, NOT violence”, on August 18th 2015 on a town square in Prijedor as a reaction to the increasing number of interethnic incidents. The reaction of the citizens was quite positive: the activists exchanged their opinion with the citizens while enjoying a hot meal, and came to the same conclusions. Interethnic conflicts were caused by actions of irresponsible individuals and were even more emphasised by irresponsible power holders in the local community thus projecting fear and uncertainty. All agreed that these efforts in manipulating the public opinion are not to be taken to heart, and that younger generations are a force to be nurtured if social-economic progress is to be achieved in the long run. Many citizens also agreed that interethnic tensions are but attempts of members of the political elite to divert public opinion from real issues as unemployment, corruption, criminal, poverty and others. Besides giving out vegetarian food, the street action consisted of handing out flyers with the inscription “flags are NOT the issue, unemployment IS” and “(UN)EMPLOYED of all identities UNITE”.
- Members of the group took part in a regional street action, which was organised as a sign of support to the radio station “Slobodni Drvar”. This street action took place in Banjaluka, Prijedor and Kozarska Dubica at the exact same time, with participants wearing the same shirts and handing out the same flyers. This radio station is organised by people from the town of Drvar, and their goal is to reveal all sorts of criminal activities performed by local power holders, which are mainly from the ruling political party in RS. Hence, they were banned and made illegal by those same authorities.

Work on public relations

- The IG for Social Justice made an internet blog where the group informs the public on their past activities. They also have a Facebook page with the same name as their blog “Ustaj Prijedore”, where the group tries to produce and share texts that would be beneficial to the readers, in terms of sharing information that concerns the work and/or political statements that are similar to those of the group.
- A big part of the activities is providing support to other similar groups, most notably “Banjaluka Social Center- BASOC” in whose activities they regularly

	<p>participate. The IG for Social Justice took part in various workshops, presentations, actions organised by BASOC. Therefore, the participants also learned, helped and widened their circle of acquaintances.</p>
<p>Banja Luka Social Centre BASOC</p>	<p>The following is an enumeration of different activities of BASOC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Entering the house while the last negotiations with the owners were underway (August 2015). - One of the first things organised was a first communal lunch within BASOC's space for participants of a two-day training session titled 'Days of Activism' organised by Oštra Nula. Young activists from all over Bosnia and Herzegovina were introduced to BASOC's conceptual pillars and what is intended for the house, and were warmly welcomed to join BASOC whenever they want (August 2015). - Meeting of 'Mreža 5f7' organised in BASOC concerning the funds allocated for legal aid. The meeting was attended by four groups including the Worker's Union Sindikat Solidarnosti, 'Plenum Građana Gračanice', 'Neformalna Grupa za Socijalnu Pravdu Prijedor' and BASOC where the participants decided not to continue with the plan to train and license legal observers in BiH. Instead, the participants decided to think about one (or several) public lectures about the criminalization of protests and to direct the aid towards potential critical cases inside and outside 5F7 Network. The participants mutually decided to refund the travel costs for coming to Banja Luka while BASOC was in charge of lunch and refreshments (early September 2015). - Setting up a cooperation with the Open University from Sarajevo (OU) and organising a complementing program from Sept 25 to Sept 27 2015. A day before the OU, BASOC organised a premiere screening of Kemal Pervanić's documentary Pretty Village and a friendly discussion afterwards with around 15 guests. The day after, on the 25th Sept 2015, right before the OU sessions, BASOC hosted a heated discussion titled 'Let's not talk about culture' with some of the OU guests outpouring to the house during the discussion but mostly young local students. The next day, BASOC tried to problematize something very much overlooked by the OU organisers, which is the question of migrants. That is why at 1 p.m. BASOC held a session with a friend from 'No Borders Serbia' who shared experiences from Belgrade and Subotica parks where Syrian refugees used to take shelter, problems and possible scenarios for migrant routes. Both days ended by a socialising session in BASOC, the house ended up hosting around 150 people over two nights. - October 2015 was crucial for tightening up activities within BASOC. General assemblies were set up on regular basis (every Wednesday) in order to come closer to horizontal decision-making. Along with it came the central ideational pillars of the center: feminism, politics of equality and facing the past or structural problematizing of genocide in BiH. Promotion of sexism, homophobia, and exploitation, profiteering, anti-atheism and hetero-

	<p>patriarchy is not welcome. As a part of this, by-weekly feminist coffee (every other Monday) was set up as an attempt to raise voice against re-patriarchalisation. This is when BASOC started a Marx reading group that evolved into a critical reading group with occasional movie screenings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In mid-October 2015, BASOC managed to arrange a round table discussion with professor Vassilis Fouskas from the University of East London, who talked about possibilities of action in the current stalemate produced by neoliberal policies around the world. Prof. Fouskas also talked about Syriza and the prospects for struggle through formal political institutions, their proneness to financial structures and potential points of rupture. - On October 30th 2015, BASOC organised a communal event titled 'Get to know your neighbourhood' during which they had an open house for the immediate neighbours and everyone else. The event was advertised with posters on small local stores and by word of mouth. After fixing up a homemade pizza oven, the communal lunch consisted of pizzas and vegan beans. Lunch turned to karaoke in the evening with generational span from 22-90 years old guests actively participating. - BASOC hosted Oštra Nula's event on October 7th 2015 concerning culture of memory, with Tamara Šmidling, founder of Sarajevo Peace Academy, as the main lecturer. - November 2015 went through with minor construction tasks like cleaning the garage, setting up an oven in one of the rooms, several movie screenings, and further developments within the standard activities. Working groups were established for 'Memory room', which is supposed to historicise the local government's attempts to eradicate old Bosnian architecture from the Ottoman period as a sign of continuity with the violent 90ies. - Beginning of November 2015, BASOC organised aid collection for Syrian migrants passing through Croatia. BASOC attempted to coordinate the efforts with Caritas from Banja Luka but just as other charitable or humanitarian organisations from Bosnia they had no plan or desire to deal with this problem as they were assured the refugee crisis would not hit the country, so they were not helpful. BASOC received substantial aid from the community in cash, food and clothing and took it to Slavonski Brod by a private vehicle. Although there was some trouble crossing the border and getting volunteer accreditation, BASOC delivered the aid to Adventist Church activists. - Feminist coffee also made some concrete plans to set up an exhibition of archival materials of the Women's Antifascist Front (AFŽ) within the National Library. It will include several institutions like the Gender Center in Banja Luka, the Archive, National Library, BASOC and Oštra Nula. It is scheduled for March 8th 2016 and will be accompanied by a march through the city and a round table on the resistance and self-organisation within the AFŽ. The exhibition will be co-authored by Danijela Majstorović (BASOC), Vladan Vukliš (Archive) and Dražana Lepir (Oštra Nula). The
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	<p>speakers are already confirmed as well, including Banjaluka University students and two prominent feminist scholars from Serbia and Italy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In December, BASOC organised several interesting public lectures, movie screenings and poetry readings. BASOC was also visited by a Belgrade-based independent journalist running an online radio show about the underground scene in former Yugoslavia titled K.U.P.E.K. Noa Triester from the 'Ignorant schoolmaster' co-op came to talk about their experience with Serbian war veterans and attempts to self-organise. After that, on Dec 12th 2015, BASOC hosted Jasmila Žbanić, Bosnian filmmaker who holds a Golden Bear for the movie Grbavica. BASOC screened <i>For Those Who Can Tell No Tales</i> and had a heated discussion about various kinds of activism and its limits in Bosnia. The same day, there was another communal lunch for both the neighbourhood and the people coming to the screening. Towards the end of December 2015, BASOC hosted a versatile artist from Sanski Most, Enes Kurtović, who read poetry and talked about the multi-genre approach to writing. He also agreed to become a co-editor of the bimonthly wallpapers. - So far, BASOC has translated several theoretical texts and uploaded them on their Facebook page until the group gets a proper website and finish the ideational stage of their wallpaper project when the texts will also show up on the house outer wall. - Throughout the last three months, BASOC attended meetings of a potential local initiative titled 'Our space' where several non-governmental organisations gathered around the Center for Environment and actively participated in preserving a local playground that was targeted by the Orthodox church for a temple. The idea is to continue cooperating and tackle some of the government's attempts to privatise public space. - Additional note: BASOC entered into the premises (traditional Bosnian house) during August 2015. The space was used by Merhamet (Muslim charity organisation) almost eight years prior to BASOC. The house and the rooms were extremely ruined and damaged (almost unfit). First days of the group's entry into the house were marked by heavy reconstruction works and adapting the house for the needs of a social center. The extreme conditions meant that the activists had no drinking or running water, toilets, ruined walls, rotten planks and entire floors. Hooligans had already broken the windows when the activists took over the house. The water leakage turned out to be almost lethal for the house. The activists managed to secure (not completely adequate) heating which was the most acute problem during these early months of their work. During this time, they had visits and active participation with the program by people from Slovenia, Croatia, BiH, Serbia, Austria, Germany, Lithuania, Russia and USA.
<p>Plenum Bosanska Krupa</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Plenum rented an office for their work. - The equipment for the office (computer) was enabled through the valuable support of the Austrian Ambassador, Mr. Martin Pammer, and Ms. Doraja Eberle. - The group implemented activities in order to raise critical awareness of the local population particularly on the subject on the fight against corruption and the upcoming local elections. In this framework, they visited other local communities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The group launched a project for the employment of transit workers (long time unemployed and recipients of social assistance), called “Self-made eco jute bags and recycling of jute” aiming at four results: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Employment of socially vulnerable groups 2. Protection of the nature by using jute instead of plastic bags 3. Strengthening of social cohesion also in regard to the upcoming local elections in 2016 4. Strengthening the cooperation between the entities (cooperation with the Banja Luka Social Centre BASOC). - In spring 2016, the group registered the plenum and is operating as a formal organisation of citizens which should allow an easier access to additional financial means in the future.
<p>Network 5F7</p>	<p>On May 17th 2016, the Network 5f7 met in Srebrenik in order to elaborate a new plan and strategy. The participants decided on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To form a new umbrella platform “Network 5f7” with a joint coordinating body based on the principle one coordinator for each group (member). Each group shall appoint a coordinator. The coordinating body decides on the terms and the location for the monthly meetings as well as on joint activities of the Network. - To provide support to disadvantaged groups (workers, veterans, pensioners and other marginalised groups deprived of their rights) in accordance to the possibilities of the Network. - To promote and raise awareness about the Declaration of Human Rights and its implementation at all local levels; Active promotion of ratified human rights declarations by the members of the Network 5f7 in their local communities; Implementation of the activities will be decided by the coordinating body. - To elaborate common paroles and slogans for the joint engagement against exploitation and marginalisation. - To develop a joint strategy and action plan through the above mentioned coordinating body representing all members. - To distribute the financial means (2500 EUR for the first implementation phase + 2500 EUR for the second implementation phase amongst all members of the Network: the Association of Prijedor, Banja Luka, Civic activism Gračanica, Plenum Zenica, Council of the Citizens of Sarajevo, Plenum Bosanska Krupa, the Worker’s Union Sindikat Solidarnosti Tuzla, NGG "Srebrenik is ours". The financial contribution of 300 Euros from the Swiss Embassy in Sarajevo was used for the organisation of the meetings of the Network 5f7 in Bosanska Krupa and Srebrenik in spring 2016. -

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